



Emdel: a Model for Valorization of eLearning in a Knowledge Society

Edited by Ellen Gard



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Final Report

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Vox - National Institute for Adult Learning – Norway

Kaunas University of Technology - Kaunas Regional Distance Education Study
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Swedish Agency for Flexible Learning – Sweden

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CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

Foreword

By Paolo Federighi

The challenge of capitalization of training achievements

The Emdel project - European Model for Distance Education and Learning - is one of the first projects supported by the European Commission DGEAC to understand how to implement valorization practices and policies, that is capitalization and exploitation of training outcomes. When the project was first conceived, in the early months of 2001, the objective and even the concept of “valorization” were new for everybody. For someone talking about valorization represented a problem.

Assuming this perspective means being concerned with the outcomes achieved within training actions - not only with regard to involved people’s learning (project, mobility experience, etc.), but above all with regard to outcomes in terms of products (any kind of material) and of new knowledge produced in the matter of training management processes at macro and micro level (policies, systems, organizations, services, teaching method). In other words, valorization stresses all that can be transferred to other people – of the same or of different countries – and that can be used for training innovation.

Talking about “valorization”, capitalization and exploitation of outcomes and about building on the achievements in training is without doubt very and maybe too ambitious. Transfer of knowledge and innovation is certainly complicated but feasible in economic sectors and systems where there is research and innovation. It is however known that though the Lisbon and Barcelona strategies give as minimum investment standard in research 3% of GNP, the field of training is quite far from such targets. Research on training is reduced to the lowest terms both in European training programmes and in many Member States. Without research investments innovation risks to become a phenomenon linked to individuals’ initiatives or to rare and cautious reform interventions.

Notwithstanding this not very encouraging picture, Emdel project has set the task to test, at European level, the possibility of transferring innovative products and processes. That has been realized in e-learning.

Exchange of e-learning products

Our intention to create systems assisting exchange of e-learning products arises from an actual necessity of the project promoter: the Region of Tuscany. As a matter of fact the Tuscan regional Government, with decision n. 9 of 13 April 2001 and with a following call for tenders, has set up a free, web-based, public e-learning system, addressed to all citizens and provided with contents (about 500 courses) and accompanying services (on-line tutoring, tele-training centres, learning points). The creation of this new learning infrastructure offered a substantial problem to the Region of Tuscany: how to collect the greatest number of learning materials at the lowest costs and in the shortest time.

In this infrastructure the quantity and variety of products constitute the essential condition to attract new people towards training and to enhance the propensity to e-learning consume.

A hypothesis we could put forward is the creation of an area for the exchange of e-learning products at European level, thus producing advantages for all people concerned and, in particular, for learning object providers. The problem is now to understand how this idea can be put into practice in real terms, that is if and what can be transferred from a country to the other, from a supplier to the other; if this can concern simply contents or the whole packages; if other objects can be transferred; what systems are accordingly required; if, finally, there can be benefits in terms of increase of training supply, cost cut as well as time reduction for the expansion in supply and its public.

On this hypothesis the Region of Tuscany, as Project Promoter, has build a work programme with other partners that are:

- University of Liège - LabSET - Laboratoire de Soutien à l'Enseignement Télématique – Belgium
- Vox - National Institute for Adult Learning – Norway
- NFA - Nordic Folk Academy - Sweden
- Kaunas University of Technology - Kaunas Regional Distance Education Study Centre – Lithuania
- Swedish Agency for Flexible Learning – Sweden
- Gdansk University of Technology - Distance Education Centre – Poland
- University of Szeged - Distance Education Study Centre – Hungary

The common work programme, implemented in the framework of Emdel project, has tried to answer the following necessities related to the creation of a European area for the exchange of e-learning products:

- Creating a database capable of gathering information on the whole European production of learning materials
- Defining common quality minimum standards for learning materials to support exchange
- Defining modalities for the solution of problems linked to importation of learning materials
- Defining cooperation forms among learning object suppliers in order to foster learners' virtual mobility.

From database to virtual permanent fair

Establishing a free trade area for learning materials corresponds to the idea of having at one's disposal a sort of virtual permanent fair at European level. If we conceive this area to meet the needs of producers and suppliers, there is the problem of selecting products of trans-national concern, identifying the right presentation forms, favouring different and possible procedures of exchange and acquisition. Thinking about a database in the perspective of a permanent virtual fair mainly means increasing at full the number of producers concerned and disposing of a large number of products offered on different conditions. Nowadays the e-learning market is so developed – not enough yet – that we can suppose what is produced within different countries has already been produced somewhere else and consequently, if located, it could be imported. A similar undertaking has some limits of course: the existence of a VET supply strictly linked to located competences and curricula that are devoid of interest in other places or countries.

On the other side we can say there are competences and curricula that are going to be more and more similar, to be translated into European standards. We are not talking here about different “passports” but we refer, for instance, to exact professional profiles whose competences are substantially defined in a uniform way (for example within the car repairing sector). Therefore it makes sense to set this goal.

Thinking in perspective of a learning object virtual permanent fair goes quite beyond what we can expect to realize at short: an *online database*. As a matter of fact it would require a lot of work to activate and supply additional services. Nevertheless we can assert that through Emdel we have laid foundations for going on this way.

A virtual permanent fair has to be conceived not only for learning object producers, but also for users, in order to make access to online fonts – in particular learning

object fonts – easier. If almost all young people have their mp3 collection installed in their mobile or PC, something similar can be conceived for vocational training as well.

Common quality criteria

Creating a free trade area becomes easier if there is a common model for the control of quality that ‘exhibitors’ guarantee with regard to their supplying. The definition and adoption of a common model for quality control – so as to succeed in adopting a European label - is useful since it provides criteria for the description of e-learning products to be introduced into the database and it inspires the minimum confidence necessary to activate mechanisms of product exchange. Beyond abstract formal quality criteria, what is essential for the database is to comprehend firstly the features of the product, depending on this the advantage of acquisition.

The exchange of products on a European scale requires a guarantee regarding quality standards of e-learning products. The Emdel project has committed it-self in this sector as well, by trying to adapt pre-existing tools to its own needs. Nevertheless the great quantity of existing work, a sustainable solution which gives an added value in relation to the exchange of products has to be yet identified. The relevant quality standards aimed at the valorization of e-learning products can be reduced to two factors: the technological quality and the capacity of producing learning. Regarding the first point the problem presents difficulties related to the evolution and to the various technological solutions, but at the same time, the contents’ transferability can be - in part - assured even if at higher costs. The problem of quality evaluation of the products from the point of view of the capacity of producing learning is instead more complex and has not yet been solved. The Emdel project has not found a solution to this issue, even though it has produced tools focussed on the customer satisfaction. Such a difficulty is also confirmed by the experience and evaluations expressed by partners.

There is one thing left to do for the future: being able to check the real training quality, that is concrete competences that every product can assure to learners. We will take up this subject again in the conclusions.

Exchange & valorization of learning materials

We have worked on the hypothesis that exchange of learning materials is possible and convenient. Problems on which we should still work are related to different aspects:

- elaboration of contents – which, depending on the topic, can be characterized by different degrees of transferability;
- lack of shared languages;
- lack of technical standards

The activation of actions for exchanging and valorising learning materials leads to the result of enlarging the market of single products and consequently cutting marginal costs. At the same time, structuring and favouring of product exchange fosters the circulation of subjects drawn up in minor languages.

Beyond these remarks, we should consider the problem deriving from the lack of a European competence system and of methods for the recognition of credits and certifications. The certification of competences acquired through e-learning training courses and their recognition at European level will favour exchange of products.

Virtual mobility

Through virtual mobility we have wanted to test different ways to guarantee individuals' access to web based learning suppliers from different countries. This work hypothesis has the aim of:

- enlarging the number of users of single learning materials in the original version and language;
- answering vocational training needs - in the mother-tongue - of immigrants and of all those who want to train before moving to another country
- realising conditions of cooperation among web based learning suppliers in arranging accompanying services to help entering on line vocational training (information, registration, managing of blended learning, certification...)

The following writings give an account of the outcomes realized in pursuing these four tasks and provide real information and instruments to favour the development of trans-national cooperation in e-learning. The outcome achieved has been possible thanks to the steady support of Alice Copette and Elisabetta Degiampietro.

The concept of valorization

By Giovanni Bonaiuti

Nowadays the concept of valorization is widely shared by people working in the field of vocational training within the European Community. According to the European accepted meaning the concept of valorization can be described as the process of implementation and building on the achievements of the projects through their experimentation and exploitation in order to increase their value and impact. The dissemination and use of project outcomes make available their added value, optimize and strengthen their impact and integration both in their original systems and contexts and in others.

The valorization and dissemination process needs to start from the outcomes and not from the project general evaluation. The analysis of the outcomes achieved and the identification of the outcomes to be valorized is on a different level with regard to the assessment of the project considered as a complete and coherent number of resources directed to specific aims. In other words, the valorization process does not coincide with the evaluation process. As a matter of fact a product answering the project aims shows good quality from the evaluation point of view; nevertheless it can prove not to satisfy the requirements to be aimed at by the valorization strategy or not to possess the transferability characteristics which it requires. Outcomes, representing the object of valorization, comprise the project final and/or intermediate outputs. They can be both tangible - such as structured didactic material, analysis, research and studies, etc. - and intangible – as, for instance, in case of process innovations or methodologies – provided they are “suitable” for being transferred to other contexts thus maximising their intrinsic value. To be effective the valorization process requires the identification of project outcomes which, on the basis of defined criteria, present:

- *transferability* characteristics multiplying the intrinsic value
- *dissemination* possibilities through actions allowing experimentation and exploitation in new contexts, different from their original context
- capacity of *activating* improvement and implementation processes for the putting into effect of intervention policies

The valorization process can be realized both at *micro* level (promotion, experimentation, exploration and adaptation of outcomes to different contexts) and at *macro* level (that is at level of lifelong learning integrated education systems). The target is to accomplish complete and sustainable integration in local, regional, national and European systems and in education and training practices, also through conventional certification of qualifications.

The valorization proposal arises from the will to answer the education and training operators' growing demand for more innovative products and action models. The European Commission and Regions have been recently supporting innovation projects (under the Leonardo programme, ESF and other financial channels) which have produced interesting but underutilized outcomes¹. The valorization policy of best products and experiences begins with the ability to identify such products/ experiences as concrete operational instruments to optimize time and resources. Valorization intends therefore to realize mechanisms, services and procedures capable of favouring integration among European training operators as well as exchange of products and experiences both at local and international level. In this sense the valorization experience will help the new countries entering the European

¹ Cfr.

http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/leonardo/new/valorisation/doc_en.html

Union to acquire an effective methodology to share the current discussion on training and work systems. Valorization is part of the process leading to the creation of a knowledge society which could arouse development perspectives.

The idea of valorization within e-learning

Competition in the market of the globalization age is largely determined by knowledge management. Productive organisations ask their personnel for ability to face actively and efficaciously the continuous transformations dictated by innovation and international competition. Success lies in the prompt capacity of selection, transformation and use of crucial information within the operational and social context. Education and vocational training of “human capital” are, accordingly, the main resources on which it is opportune to act as to guarantee economic and social development (European Commission, 1996, p. 17). Information and communication technologies (ICT) represent on the other hand the most flexible and effective tool to accept this challenge. E-learning, which fully exploits ICT potentials by applying them to vocational training, represents the solution able to guarantee people’s full access to the knowledge-based economy. E-learning is one of the instruments which can be used to meet in an efficient and effective way the requirements of society (flexibility, competitiveness) and of individuals (competences, but also valorization, self-fulfilment, life quality). According to this perspective there are the conditions necessary to promote the idea of valorization hereby illustrated. Furthermore, telecom networks foster relations among people and systems allow visibility and diffusion of products and services and, through e-learning, promote the development of human capital.

Emdel project, getting into line with the Lisbon European Council of March 2000, considers e-learning a strategic objective for the development of a knowledge-based economy and, in the meantime, intends to exploit ICT benefits to favour greater integration among European Education and Training Systems. European bodies and enterprises working in the training field seem to suffer from the difficulties due to a market which is still uneven and characterized by language differences and cultural specificities. Technologies can offer in this sense tools to valorize, disseminate and make synergistic the results achieved. Emdel sets specific aims within e-learning. It moves from the need to share the experiences carried out by partners for the development of training multimedia online modules through the realization of actions of experience diffusion and exchange. Within the project actions, for example, interesting modalities have been tested for the development of an exchange policy. In the “**internal festival**”, after having examined mutual experiences and productions, each partner has selected the most interesting products and has then reached an agreement for their post-production and localization in his own language. Differences (also linguistic) among subjects have become, even though in an experimental way, a strong point for the development of

synergies capable of disseminating best practices. The exchange of products among partners has permitted to test the difficulties inherent in the process, beginning from selection, translation and technological adaptations, to conclude with legal issues linked to the intellectual property.

Emdel has tried to spread, in the logic of valorization, these outcomes even outside, proposing a model which exploits some potential of the present technologies. Within e-learning important answers to the problem of integration of systems have been drawn up and in particular important technological solutions for the inter-exchange of products have been developed. However, subjects engaged in network learning often do not have at their disposal either the informative channels necessary to know the respective experiences, or instruments for the identification of available products and solutions, so that they often have to re-device them even though they already exist. And this cannot obviously be accepted in the framework of production of training contents for e-learning.

A consolidated praxis in e-learning is to analytically organize knowledge to be proposed in training pathways. This practice allows to produce modules which are potentially arranged to be integrated and used more than once and in different contexts. Such logic fosters and encourages cooperation among subjects operating in the field of content production with the aim of networking and exchanging best practices. In general, among e-learning greater costs – moreover repetitive costs – are those due to the realization of original didactic material (multimedia, interactive, or only textual). The necessity of optimising the cost of interventions is at the basis of the international initiatives engaged in the development of on-line training standard. The main objective of these initiatives is to provide a system for the analytic description of learning materials – through “metadata” – aimed at their finding, re-use and exchange. The aims of projects like IMS, ADL and IEEE² are connected with the possibility of building a “market” for vocational training products (not exclusively on-line) able to guarantee their widest circulation and use. From the theorization of a market for learning materials (LO) – understood as elementary learning components (autonomous, independent, reusable and aggregated)³, we have typically moved to a courseware economy, wider content elements that, on the other side, enable their aggregation in complex training courses and their transferability in different contexts as well. A vocational training economy based on the circulation of those products assures the optimisation of resources and the valorization of best practices. The saving comes mainly from the possibility of reusing the same educational materials in different contexts and training courses, so as to allow the abatement of production and purchasing costs. All those features are of great importance for e-learning.

² <http://imsprojects.org>, <http://www.adlnet.org>, <http://ltsc.ieee.org>

³ IEEE fully defines LO: “any entity, digital or non-digital, that may be used for learning, education or training” (IEEE, 2003)

The exchange of vocational training products allows also the reciprocal enriching through the sharing of knowledge and practices and consequently the possibility for development of new products. This aspect leads to the raising of the quality level of contents and development methods, reducing costs and opening the possibility for the enjoyment of a larger and larger number of users.

The action promoted by Emdel project of an “on line open catalogue”- considered both as repository and as knowledge and fair place to exchange products - takes the step from here. Emdel catalogue develops the products proposed by partners through the logic of presentation and valorization of reciprocal experiences. As a consequence of the opening of the catalogue to the valorization and promotion needs of trans-national and European vocational training experiences, further products added. Therefore the Catalogue has the aim of collecting and organizing information data related to the courseware’s by any European subject interested in making visible, available and accessible his products. This aspect contributes to promote the development of a network for the circulation of ideas and best practices. Many are the subjects interested in accessing the Catalogue. People can look it up, as with a search engine, to find training courses they are interested in and, where possible, they can enter and attend courses. Sector operators, such as bodies, vocational training agencies and content producers, may use the Catalogue to release their products and, at the same time, to find partners to start up specific cooperation and synergies. As a matter of fact, one of the main goals of Emdel project is to promote the exchange of materials – in the form of trade as well – among producers. This process enables valorization as direct diffusion of best practices, but also as promotion and development of partnership and cooperation among those bodies disposed to make use of their reciprocal experience.

Another chance offered by Emdel is the post-production and localization of products in different languages, realized through trade agreements among producers. In this case, the players of the process for transferring innovation are: the export body of the product to be transferred – that puts the courseware at beneficiaries’ disposal – and the beneficiary of the transfer that will combine it with his own vocational training actions. Emdel project realizes in this way the intermediation between supply and demand of vocational training, to realize the transfer of the product at European level. Finally, among all those interested in using the Catalogue, there are territorial public bodies, government agencies and stakeholders in general, that can use the Catalogue as an instrument for monitoring the development of the relationship network and for consequently promoting actions aimed at further valorising the best practices and models of e-learning, within different European countries.

How to perform valorization

Following EU indications for the fulfilment of procedures and instruments for promoting and guaranteeing transfer and circulation on large scale of best practices, Emdel project has organized its action starting from the reconnaissance, inside its partnership, of single activities. Since the beginning, the project has been directed to activate a European Tele-training Network for the development of synergies aiming at the valorization of reciprocal experiences. In this way Emdel answers the needs expressed by EU programmatic lines, through the identification of best practices and the creation of networks and means for the valorization and transfer of the best vocational training methods into new contexts. The EU specifies some actions to realize the process of valorization; among these:

- the choice and the analysis of contents and their transferability;
- the adaptation and localization of experiences and products to potential users' culture, context and needs;
- the application of experiences and materials produced to different sectors and fields;
- the integration of vocational training practices at regional, national and European and/or sectorial level.

The project during these years has been trying to answer difficulties that in most cases prevented the potential vocational training demand from turning into active users through the creation of a European network that could set the necessary synergies and scale economies. One of the core problems outlined is that of the high production and implementation costs of products to support vocational training experiences. The problem of costs is frequently at the basis of the lag of activation of many systems, especially as regards small realities. The European Tele-training System proposed by Emdel promotes the starting up of a process of cooperation at production and organization level for distance learning services aiming at cost reduction, harmonization of local systems and fast growth of training supply. With regard to the latter, a specific attention of the project is represented by the possibility of promoting systems that use an integrated and harmonized model for the qualitative evaluation of training experiences. In fact the Catalogue provides, for each experience in, a homogeneous system of indicators for the evaluation of the training system and of the methodologies of circulation of didactic materials. This system is built through the attribution of a value judgment on structured schemes by different subjects involved in the process of selection and use of products. The production and sharing of the software for the assessment of customer satisfaction and of the quality of Catalogue products make the transfer of new products into different socio-cultural contexts easier. On the basis of this element also, Emdel network wishes to promote the process of dissemination of best practices and the development of models of cooperation within production and organization of distance learning services.

Emdel project answers these needs promoting through its internet web site (<http://www.emdel.org>), of which the Catalogue is an integral part, the research of products and of the most innovative and exemplary experiences, as well as their circulation in national and international contexts. The web site allows communication, exchange of information and diffusion of results gradually achieved in the processes for transferring projects in different contexts.

Therefore Emdel proposes to realize minutely the Community valorization purposes through the transfer from and to different structures (public and private VET centres, enterprises, schools and universities) of innovative contents and products. Valorization actions realized by Emdel will enable distance learning systems to interact with different targets. Besides, amongst EU purposes there is the development of scale economies for the definition of tele-training products and services, because of the increase of e-learning users. Those who will mainly benefit are apprentices, dropping out people, young and grown-up people attending post-secondary vocational training, and elderly people. These users, usually considered marginal, could take the greater advantage from e-learning for the development of knowledge and for the solution of problems of everyday life.

Partners and partnership

By Edi Fanti and Mara Del Sette

Who were the partners

During the planning phase the attention was focussed on e-learning at European level, taking into account the present (at that time - 2001) and future Europe. According to this purpose the network of partners for the Emdel project was created looking at countries already part of the EU and others, from Eastern Europe, close to become members of it in a short time (May 2004).

The interesting element is the co-operative action, realised through the project, which was anticipatory of the integration process for the Eastern countries and has been concluded with their access in the UE.

The Emdel Consortium had foreseen ten Institutions/Organisations, belonging to nine different nations:

- Tuscany Region - Project Promoter, Italy
- Gdansk University of Technology - Distance Education Centre, Poland
- Kaunas University of Technology - Kaunas Regional Distance Education Study Centre, Lithuania

- Nordic Folk Academy – NFA, Sweden
- Swedish Agency for Flexible Learning – CFL, Sweden
- University College of West Jutland - Center for Videregaaende Uddannelse Vest, Denmark
- University of Helsinki - Palmenia Center for Research and Continuing Education, Finland
- University of Liège – LabSET, Belgium
- University of Szeged -Distance Education Study Center, Hungary
- Vox - National Institute for Adult Learning, Norway

In order to deepen the information and knowledge about the mentioned Organisations, a short description of them is given below together with their specific competencies.

Tuscany Region - Project Promoter, Italy – www.regione.toscana.it

Tuscany Region, as the other Italian regions with an ordinary statute, was created in 1970 as an autonomous institution with its own powers and functions. The internal organization of the Region is regulated by a Statute which establishes principles and aims of regional action.

The Institution is comprised of the following bodies: the Council, the Council Commissions, the Regional Board and its President, which together represents the executive body and determines the political direction.

The Region realizes its activities through different departments and the Advocacy. Each department is in turn divided into various Sectors.

For the Emdel project, the E.S.F. and Vocational Training Service is involved, within the framework of the Department of Training Policy and Cultural Heritage. The Department is part of the Aldermanry of Labour Policy, Education and Training, and has the aim to plan and lead the activities concerning education, vocational training and labour policy. The E.S.F. and Vocational Training Service is responsible for the planning and control related to the use of the European Social Fund within the region. It is also responsible for the development of the vocational training system at regional level, with special attention to e-learning. In fact Tuscany Region has been created its own e-learning portal through Progetto TRIO.

Competencies:

Since the institution has many different departments and units, it spreads its competencies in the all sectors and fields needed for the government of a regional territory, such as: health, economy, education, town planning, culture etc.

In relation to the Emdel project, specific competencies and experiences developed through the realisation of Progetto TRIO (www.progettoTRIO.it), together with the skills of E.S.F. and Vocational Training Service staff has been mainly involved.

The TRIO project has developed a web portal as a tool of lifelong learning, which has the aim to give a free access to education and training for everybody, everywhere, at every time. In order to reach this goal, the project is based on the activation of resources such as Technology and Research, paying particular attention to Innovation and Guidance. The ICT competencies of the TRIO project staff have supported the whole realisation of the Emdel project from a technical point of view.

The E.S.F. and Vocational Training Service has a lot of experience in planning and managing European projects due to its institutional tasks and responsibilities dedicated to the development of European policies in this specific sector.

Gdansk University of Technology - Distance Education Centre, Poland –
www.dec.pg.gda.pl

Gdansk University of Technology is the oldest and the largest scientific and technological academic institution in Pomerania region, employing 2500 staff including 1200 academics. The number of students approximates 20,000, most of them studying full-time. Their career choices vary from architecture to business and management, from mathematics and computer science to biotechnology and environmental engineering, from applied chemistry to geodesy and transport, from ocean engineering to mechanical engineering and ship technology, from civil engineering to telecommunication, electrical and control engineering; but their life goals are common: to meet the challenge of the changing world.

There are 9 faculties covering almost all fields of science and technology:

- Applied Physics and Mathematics
- Architecture
- Chemical Faculty
- Civil and Environmental Engineering
- Electronics, Telecommunications and Informatics
- Electrical and Control Engineering
- Management and Economics
- Mechanical Engineering
- Ocean Engineering and Ship Technology

Competencies:

DECGUT was established by the Rector of Technical University of Gdansk on April 30, 1997 as a part of the Phare Multi-country Programme in Distance Education (Establishment and Operation of Regional Phare Distance Education Study Centre) project. Thanks to Phare funds, the Centre is equipped with modern computers and literature. DECGUT is an Autodesk Authorised Training Centre. Its specific goals are:

- Creating access for students and staff of the TUG to study materials, correspondence lessons, scripts and communication environment using LAN (Local Area network), MAN (Metropolitan Area Network) and WAN (Wide Area Network) facilities.
- Developing distance education course modules and adaptation of existing EU distance education course modules in subject areas of importance to the economic and social development in Poland.
- Improving access to education and training by establishing the flexible teaching environment concerning distance, time, choice of course providers and teaching resources.

According to these goals, DECGUT offers the related and specific competencies. The Centre has a significant experience in international co-operation, since its involvement in transnational projects and international conferences.

Kaunas University of Technology - Distance Education Centre, Lithuania –
www.distance.ktu.lt

Kaunas University of Technology (**KUT**) is the largest technical university in the Baltic States and is the second largest institution of higher education of Lithuania. E-learning and Distance Education development at University is lead by Distance Education Centre (**KUT DEC**).

Mission of the Centre is to promote and develop higher and further education system supported by information communication technologies.

Centre employs more than 20 persons of permanent staff and number of university teachers in different projects and provision of trainings. The Centre consists of four departments:

1. Distance Education Design and Methodology Department
2. Competence Development Department
3. Technology Department
4. Laboratory of Research in Education Technologies

The centre is actively involved in open and distance learning research. Main research areas are:

- **ICT** - existing and evolving e-learning standards and tools; learning environments and new medias for e-learning; interoperability and adoptability of e-learning content;
- **Pedagogy / Methodology** - user needs in DE (content, methodologies and technologies); new learning scenarios in virtual learning environments; learning methodologies, knowledge assessment and evaluation; didactic aspects of ICT supported learning; instructional design, adults education and learning on-line;
- **Management / Support** - management of education; learning organization; ODL quality assurance; Tutor/student support system; Synchronous distance education, its efficiency and student support system; etc.

DEC participates in great number of Leonardo, Socrates, Phare, Framework 5, Eureka and other international projects in the field of Open and Distance Learning. Centre is also taking leading role in the national project “Development of Distance Education in Lithuania (LieDM)”. According to this project there is established a videoconference network with 22 Distance Learning sites in biggest Lithuanian cities and towns. LieDM network unites main Universities and Colleges and enables to run national wide DL programmes and courses. The Distance Learning programme “Master in Open and Distance Learning” is jointly delivered by 3 major Lithuanian Universities and DEC is making significant input in the delivery of this programme.

According to the EUREKA project E!2447 “Tele-Education Software for Video-Lecturing (TESVIL)” the ViPS system for interactive video lecturing over the internet was developed. All lectures delivered in videoconference mode are also broadcasted and recorded on ViPS server (www.distance.ktu.lt/vips). DEC is also implementing a project for development of XML based e-learning content management system. In the framework of this project it was developed web based software that is called CDK (Course Development Kit). CDK enables to describe e-learning content using Course Markup Language and to store it in XML format. Aiming at maximum CDK’s compatibility with different Learning Management Systems, KUT DEC performs research on LOM, IMS and SCORM standards with objective to implement these standards into CDK and to build standards based repository of reusable learning object.

Competencies:

KUT DEC is a member of European Distance and E-learning Network (EDEN), National Distance Education Association (NDEA), Lithuanian Association of Adult Education (LAAE), Association of IT companies (INFOBALT), European Universities Lifelong Learning Network (EULLearN), European Universities Continuing Education Network (EUCEN), The Baltic- Nordic Network for Exchange of Experience in ODL (BOLDIC), Global Development Learning Network (GDLN).

Nordic Folk Academy – NFA, Sweden – The Institution concluded its activities in 2004.

The Nordic Folk Academy, NFA, is a Nordic course and development centre for life long learning, established in 1968 by the Nordic Council of Ministers. The Academy is a joint institution for Sweden, Finland, Norway, Iceland, Denmark, Greenland, the Faeroes and Åland Islands, cooperating with Baltic and European institutions in the field. The activities of NFA take their point of departure in: Adult pedagogy based on the philosophy of socio-cultural education; dialogue between non-formal and formal education; dialogue between adult education and the labour market; lifelong learning in relation to competence development, information technology, entrepreneurship and active citizenship; Nordic cooperation based on common history, culture and democratic understanding in dialogue with voluntary, non-governmental organizations; international involvement for exchange of information and good practice in adult learning.

Competencies:

The tasks and competencies of NFA are related to supporting and developing cooperation and dissemination of research in the field of adult learning within the Nordic countries, between the Nordic countries and their adjacent areas as well as the rest of Europe. NFA took part in several Socrates and Leonardo projects and played an important role in the field of distance education.

Swedish Agency for Flexible Learning – CFL, Sweden – www.cfl.se

The Swedish Agency for Flexible Learning (Nationellt centrum för flexibelt lärande, CFL) promotes the development and utilisation of flexible learning in municipal adult education, liberal adult education and working life.

The Agency is to:

- develop and provide adult education, primarily at upper secondary level, in the form of distance education,
- allocate funding to and otherwise support projects in the fields of general education and adult education, with a view to develop distance education and flexible learning,
- develop and distribute knowledge on methods and ways of working when using various media to support flexible learning,
- provide further training for teachers, head teachers' administrators and study circle leaders,
- provide descriptive information on the current range of Internet-based software which can be used in our field,
- act as a networked information agency for IT-supported distance education,
- monitor and provide information on research and development work relating to distance education and flexible learning in other countries, and
- develop support for mature students who have sign language as their first language, working in co-operation with the Swedish Institute for Special Needs Education (Specialpedagogiska institutet).

Competencies:

Swedish Agency for Flexible Learning - CFL - gathers and translates concepts, research results and experiences in the fields of distance education and flexible learning to be able to disseminate them to our customers. Hopefully contributing to increasing knowledge of flexible learning options, and bringing about change. Not least of all, experiences resulting from projects supported by CFL are followed up and passed on to education providers.

Within CFL we have extensive experience of pedagogy and methodology adapted for distance education and flexible learning. We make our expertise available by offering further education to teachers, head teachers and study group leaders who wish to broaden their skills to include more flexible forms of education.

CFL offers flexible distance education for adults on upper secondary level. The learners can decide on course structure, time and methodology. Our courses place a distinct emphasis on pure distance education, using the Internet for communication and guidance. Our courses complement the range of courses in flexible study structures that are offered by municipalities and liberal adult education.

CFL works to develop methods, tools and learning environments for flexible learning, both in house, with Swedish partners from adult and higher education, and in different trans-national projects.

University College of West Jutland - Center for Videregaaende Uddannelse Vest, Denmark - The Institution concluded its activities in 2003.

The Danish University of Education is situated both in Copenhagen and in 8 divisions throughout the land. The partner in this project is one of these divisions. We are located in western Jutland with offices in both Esbjerg and Herning. We have a staff of about 25 fully employed employees. In Herning we have specialized in adult pedagogic and didactic. We offer different education pedagogic diplomas as well as several courses for adults from educational institutions or private firms.

Most of our education is formed as distance learning. Our students come from all over Denmark and Greenland. In the area of adult pedagogical education we have ourselves both developed and put into operation two educations based on distance learning: an advanced study called Digitale Læringsrum and pedagogical diploma called Voksplan.

As a smaller part of a big institution we have several opportunities of getting further technical and pedagogical scientific support in our educational developing projects. At the Danish University of Education there are approximately 600 fully employed employees and about 4000 part-time employees. All in all the Danish University of Education has about 2500 students on different studies and courses.

University of Helsinki - Palmenia Center for Research and Continuing Education, Finland - The Institution withdrew from the project in 2003.

The largest and most diversified University in Finland, the University of Helsinki, was founded in 1640. There are nine faculties in the university and it is state owned. The University has 30,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students, 2300 teachers and researchers, including 460 professors and associate professors. The number of docents is 1600 and the non-academic staff 3800. The University signs all the project agreements and commits herself to implementation while using her institutions in operation.

Within the University, the Palmenia Centre for Research and Continuing Education was involved for the Emdel project. The Palmenia Centre (until the 11th of April, 2000 under the name Lahti Research and Training Centre) is an organisation of experts which works through a number of networks and in co-operation with faculties and departments of the University. It offers university-level know-how, based on research, to support individual, organisational and economic development. Palmenia Centre was established in 1979 as a separate institute of the University of Helsinki. From June 1996 it has operated as an independent unit of the Centre for Continuing Education of the University.

Competencies:

The Centre provides Open University studies, continuing professional education, research and development services, both nationally and internationally. The key values determining the activities of the Palmenia Centre are the right to education and life-long learning and equality in education. Activities of the Palmenia Centre are characterized by innovation, customer-orientation and flexibility, together with an interaction between scientific knowledge and practical experience. The Centre has been working in numerous international projects and has collaboration agreements with many universities in Europe, Russia and in North America. The main areas of R & D activities include open learning environments, developing organisations e.g. learning organisations, new working environments and foreseeing changes in the labour market as well as international co-operation and development. The number of annual national R&D projects is about 60 and the number of international projects about 30.

University of Liège – Laboratoire de Soutien à l’Enseignement par Télématique - LabSET, Belgium – www.ulg.ac.be/labset

- LabSET is an European centre of expertise giving policy guidance
- LabSET carries out European expert appraisal and consultancy assignments and evaluates international programs
- LabSET is taking part in research and projects at local, regional, community and federal levels in Belgium and at European and international levels in the fields of distance learning and educational theory in higher education. In these fields
- LabSET is active on the main European networks and on various scientific committees of international journals and organizing international conferences
- LabSET is monitoring technology and educational theory issues relevant to quality of learning, especially distance learning

The Distance Learning Center at Ulg:

- Developing and coordinating the range of online courses offered by ULg, across all faculties
- Running a teachers’ portal, with a series of services including university-level educational theory forums, examples of good educational practice, news, FAQs and multiple links to various types of resources for distance learning and university teaching
- Teaching and organizing a complementary master’s course in educational theory in higher education. This post-graduate degree itself is offered in traditional and distance formats, in both French and English, and benefits

- from numerous international partnerships
- Publishing and contributing to the advancement of learning in its scientific field (models, explanations of terminology, thematic surveys, research reports)

Competencies:

LabSET-ULg, Support Lab for Telematic Learning of the University of Liège, is a 30 people research unit, directed by Marianne Poumay under the Academic Supervision of Dieudonné Leclercq. It operates the Virtual Campus of ULg and helps professors and trainers from public and private organisations design and develop their own courses and activities on the Internet for wide training communities. It also advises ULg as well as external partners (European Commission, Walloon Region, other public authorities and varied training institutes) in terms of measures to be taken to facilitate the deployment of quality distance learning over the Internet. From 2002, the University of Liège also offers a post-graduate degree in Higher Education pedagogy (60 ECTS, specialised Master in 2004), with a full option in distance learning, for the professors willing to innovate and propose blended learning to their students. Innovative and effective approaches are formalized, experimented and illustrated as best practice examples. This program is unique in Belgium. It runs at a distance, in French and in English. LabSET also coordinates a network of 104 training operators (community of practice of about 300 trainers), this type of activity being of paramount importance for many current projects. The pedagogical reflection and the quality of the on-line activities are the cores of the LabSET priorities. For details, see www.labset.net. LabSET-ULg participates in several European projects, sometimes as leader, sometimes as partner.

University of Szeged - Distance Education Study Center, Hungary – www.u-szeged.hu/distedu

The Distance Education Centre of the University of Szeged is one of the 40 study centres established in 1996 through assistance from Phare. The Centre works on introducing web-based distance education (e-learning) relying on a battery of 9 distance educators. While distance education is of minor importance at the university, contacts with domestic and foreign learning providers have enabled the Centre to carry out diverse activities in Hungarian and EU projects.

Competencies:

The activity of the Centre is mainly focussed on delivering courses and developing study materials in three areas:

- language for specialised purposes
- ITC training and retraining
- Course material development and standardised material delivery

This latter activity is oriented toward vocational training of students and private entrepreneurs in the area of standardisation and quality assurance. Training over the Web has been an initiative launched in collaboration with the Enterprise Development Foundation of Bekescsaba, in which it is the Center's task to create the learning environment and provide solutions for just-in-time training and material development. The Center has gained considerable experience in preparing language learning materials for users with access to electronic self-learning packages.

Vox – National Institute for Adult Learning, Norway – www.vox.no

Vox is a national institute for adult learning with special focus on learning at the work place. Vox maps, analyses and disseminate knowledge about adults' learning needs and terms for learning. Vox co-operates with trade organisations, universities and colleges, public and private sectors and the social partners. It has been established by the Norwegian government as a tool for the implementation of the Competence reform, a national plan which targets adults both within and outside the working life.

Vox has an extensive experience in international co-operation, particularly in European projects under the Socrates, Leonardo, eContent and IST programmes and is currently co-ordinating several international projects. Vox has a long tradition for being a resource centre for marginalised groups, such as adults with reading and writing difficulties and certain groups of adult immigrants.

Competencies:

Vox has a long and extensive experience in developing and testing flexible pedagogical methods, tools and models adapted to adults' learning needs. This comprises e-learning and distance learning resources and a multimedia programme for language teaching for minority speakers and other groups with special needs which received a European Label. Vox has also produced motivational programmes for users with no or very low ICT-skills and a similar programme for users who in addition have reading and writing difficulties as well as very low skills in Norwegian languages. In addition Vox has an extensive experience in co-ordinating and participating in international projects about developing models for collaborative, problem-solving learning and the use of internet, and also models for language learning through the use of international on-line role-play. One of these projects, SIMULAB, which developed and tested a model for on-line simulations

in language learning, also received a European Label. Vox is currently co-ordinating a new Leonardo project based on on-line role-play to acquire the New Basic Skills at the work place. Vox also has an extensive network in the field of adult learning on the national and international level which facilitate spreading the knowledge about the Emdel project.

Partners' Organisational Framework

The large numbers of partners, their different roles, functions and competencies (e.g. universities, public organisation, training agencies etc..) suggested since the beginning to adopt an organisational framework which could simplify the processes of collaboration and shorten the procedures.

Tuscany Region as project promoter has been the main co-ordinator of Emdel, assuming directly tasks and responsibilities in front of the European Commission.

The experience and relationship of NFA with Northern and Baltic countries let identify it as the collaborator of Tuscany Region in the co-ordination of partners and activities. In fact, at the beginning of the project (December 2001), Emdel had an organisational framework structured on two levels: one main level coordinated by Tuscany Region which involved the partners NFA, LabSet and Vox; and another level coordinated by NFA involving the so called 'co-partners' which were the Gdansk University of Technology - Distance Education Centre, Kaunas University of Technology - Kaunas Regional Distance Education Study Centre, Swedish Agency for Flexible Learning – CFL, University College of West Jutland - Center for Videregaaende Uddannelse Vest, University of Helsinki - Palmenia Center for Research and Continuing Education and the University of Szeged -Distance Education Study Center. The work realised by the co-partners was reported to Tuscany Region through NFA.

Since the NFA withdrawal, occurred on November 2003 due to the closure of the Institution, the organisational framework of Emdel changed, and Tuscany Region assumed directly the co-ordination of the 'co-partners'. Therefore the former co-partners became effective partners with direct responsibilities and duties.

In the meanwhile some other co-partners withdrew from the project too, and therefore the whole partnership had another structure.

Who withdrew from the partnership - and why

During 2003, for different or similar reasons, three members of the Consortium withdraw from the Emdel project.

The University of Helsinki, with its Palmenia Center for Research and Continuing Education (Finland) decided to withdraw from Emdel due to its internal organisational reasons which brought to a lack of staff dedicated to the project.

The University College of West Jutland - Center for Videregaaende Uddannelse (Denmark) and NFA, withdrew from the project for the same reasons: the closure of the Institutions.

As mentioned above, due to these withdrawals, and especially that one from NFA, the partnership framework and organisation changed, obliging to a new structure and responsibilities for each partner, addressing them to new tasks and challenges.

It is interesting to underline that all of them withdrew from the project due to objective reasons, such as the closure of the organisation or internal problems of it. No one left the project because of lack of interest, or problems in relationship among partners etc.

The withdraw of NFA could represent a critical point for the project. On the contrary, it has been represented an assumption of greater responsibility by the former co-partners, who have decided at unanimity to become part of the project, investing also their own direct and indirect resources.

Therefore Emdel has lost some organisations, but at the same time others have been effectively integrated, demonstrating a significant interest in the project.

Differences and Challenges within the partnership

The institutions belonging to the Consortium were mainly Universities, together with some others adult education organisations. All of them had in common competencies in the e-learning sector and share the same interest in developing and experimenting new activities in this field. Together with similarities related to their internal organisation rules and missions, differences were shown mainly in managing the project, linked to socio-cultural aspects. The project management as a daily activity has revealed differences in approaching problems and finding solutions, in the interpretation of meanings of an action or e-mail messages, in the management and interpretation of time and deadlines, with consequences in terms of misunderstanding or tasks' realisation. All these aspects, after a first moment of disorienting, brought the partners to an enriching of knowledge of each others,

getting more awareness about the other point of views and interpretations, and at the same time getting more awareness also about its own specific characteristic and requests. The meanings are always linked to a context, and at European level the Consortium have had the chance to compare different socio-cultural contexts through the exchange of numerous activities and ways of reaching the same goals.

The good relationship building up during the three years project among the partners has allowed to overcome the possible initial misunderstandings occurred due to the differences and to face the many challenges which a complex project like Emdel presented.

Challenges from a technical point of view in adapting the on line courses or linked to their copyrights issues, challenges in the interpretation of the Virtual Mobility, according to the different social contexts in each country, challenges in overcoming the obstacles due to some partners withdrawals, and especially NFA which has as a consequence the reorganisation of the whole partnership framework and a redefinition of tasks and responsibilities.

Once more, the relationship established among the partners has been reinforced the will to collaborate and reach the project goals, overcoming differences and challenges.

CHAPTER II

CREATING AN ON-LINE CATALOGUE

2.1 Why did we do it

By Gytis Cibulskis and Karin Jansson

The Emdel project website hosts a database of available Distance Learning modules provided by project partners and other registered organisations. Registration to the catalogue is free to any institution interested in selling and exchange of the Distance Learning products

The initial objectives for creating online catalogue stated in the project proposal were following:

- To describe the products belonging to the partners organisations that could be interesting at trans-national level;
- To give the opportunity to the trainers and managers of Distance Learning systems to know what is offered on the market of Distance Learning modules;
- To facilitate the exchange and the purchase of Distance Learning products.

The purpose of the catalogue is to obtain an oversight of the access and production of Distance Learning products, foremost with the project partners, and secondly with the rest of Europe. The need to have a platform for exchange and dissemination of Distance Learning products among different countries, and among different levels of education was targeted with the aim to create a broad selection of products of all types of subjects.

The target groups for the contents of the online catalogue are university students and business owners, as well as adult students in formal and informal education, while the main users of the catalogue are organisations and learners.

2.2 Which were the challenges

The first challenge with developing a framework for the production of a database was to define what a course really is. The countries involved had very diversified images of what defines a course. Examples of definitions included, digitally self

study material on CD, as well as complete web-based university study programs including lectures and tutoring.

Defining the target group proved to be the next challenge. Was the database built for the need of the project partners, or did we create the database to be a national European resource, or was it meant to be something in between? We decided that the database was to be built to suit both the project partners, as well as external parties in our surroundings.

Another challenge is to make the catalogue important and visible at the European arena. For that purpose the benefits of providing the information to the catalogue should be demonstrated and the wide promotional campaign should be cared on. One of the value added services in the catalogue are tools for measuring quality and customer satisfaction, so the organization seeking for the courses to buy already can have an overview on the quality of proposed products. The evaluation of the single course can be made by three different parties: expert, tutor and the students.

While discussing with several organizations that owns their own catalogues of the courses the need for automatic transfer of descriptions of the courses from one catalogue to another was discovered. Upload/Download of the single course card as a separate file would also be useful for facilitating exchange with other catalogues and databases. This need for exchange of products data among different catalogues raises issue of interoperability of databases. In this respect the importance of adopting LOM (Learning Objects Metadata) standard is evident.

2.3 The story

We started with searching for similar projects and activities within this sphere of interests. At our meetings we had invited lecturers with different competence, and at our first meeting in Florence a company, lecturing about different kinds of database standards, were participating. In Gothenburg a representative of CFL attended the meeting and informed us about Kursnavet, a national Swedish drive for sharing teacher resources.

The TRIO project was given the task of developing a proposal for a technical solution. After a circulate for a comment by the parties concerned, TRIO was given the task of building the database, including an user interface of the mentioned database, as well as an user interface for the website of the project on the whole.

The parties have then, according to the plans, registered courses of all types. Every course's card contains useful information about authors, contents, target groups, technical and pedagogical aspects (for an analytical view of the course card, look at the annex 1)

Going through the partial report sent to the Commission it was found that our product – the database, including its quality marking (see below) - was of great interest, and could be serving more people that would benefit from it. Therefore we were given the task of developing a new and more technically advanced website, with a clearer user interface and easier navigation, to suit a larger target group.

2.4 What did we learn

The Emdel portal at the beginning of the project designed as project website turned to become a main gateway to the Catalogue of Distance Learning products. This fact raised new requirements to the design of the portal and the user interface, so it was significantly improved at the end of the project. Some positive features of the latest version of the portal could be highlighted:

- 1) User friendly, light and colour balanced site design;
- 2) Easy and intuitive site navigation system;
- 3) Courses clearly grouped into specific courses categories;
- 4) Very flexible courses search system:
 - it is possible to search by entering words or part of words within course information additionally specifying if these words must or must not be included in search result,
 - also there is advanced search system witch allows for users to search for courses by specifying specific course attributes,
 - search results are displayed in multiple pages, by specifying relevant not overloaded and enough information of course,
 - it is easy to get additional information about find course by means of supplied links.

The main lessons learned from the development of the catalogue are following:

- The great efforts are needed in advertising and promoting the catalogue in order to attract new organisations and to enlarge the supply of the products. There is hope that after some critical mass of supply will be reached the participation in the catalogue will become prestigious and there will be more focus on improving services in order to serve better the existing participants of the catalogue.
- The improvement and perfection of such a catalogue will never end as the technological development in this field is very fast and the growing community of the users will come with the new requests for services

improvement and with the new ideas for new services.

- The conformance to the standards and interoperability with other databases of distance learning products will become a key issue in the future in order to expand the supply through catalogue. The ways for integrating information from other databases without transferring it physically should be found as it would help to solve problems with attracting big providers and with updating the database records.

2.5 Future perspectives

The future perspectives of the catalogue very much depends on the availability of resources for further Emdel portal development and partners commitment to continue updating and promoting of the catalogue. In any case, the catalogue has the characteristics to become a European market place for Distance Learning products.

At current stage the most urgent things to do are:

- The adaptation of LOM standard for the catalogue should be of the highest priority;
- The interface for integrating of Emdel catalogue with catalogues of courses providers should be developed;
- Improvement of quality evaluation tools and definition of field of application in the catalogue's enlargement perspective

Some other improvements can be considered as well:

- The product groups in the catalogue should be alphabetically arranged and sub-groups for main groups, that potentially will have a lot of courses might be introduced,
- Development of the database of experts and the mechanism to motivate them to evaluate products,
- Decide who should be the responsible organisation for maintenance in the future.

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CHAPTER III

QUALITY EVALUATION – A CHALLENGE FOR ONLINE COURSES AND CATALOGUES

By Marianne Poumay

3.1 Quality evaluation: purpose and challenges

Courseware catalogues should follow the general tendency of providing potential users with descriptions of the products and services in a purely descriptive (so called “objective”) way but also in a more evaluative way (so called subjective) provided by experts, users (tutors) and end-users (learners). Opinion on quality of products contained in a catalogue is an important issue. This trend, in our domain, is nevertheless facing a series of obstacles. The Emdel project has shed light on several issues, via the conception of quality grids and their uses (Poumay, 2003).

In industry, the quality approach in ISO terms is based on the principle that “the product must answer the promise”. But what should the promise be? For Glassik & al. (1997), the keyword should be excellence. But what is excellence? And who should define it?

As Brennan (1997) stresses, the quality criteria are mostly a problem of **values**. This explains that quality not only results from judgements, but that the criteria the judges have to consider are themselves defined subjectively by experts. Indeed, a scientific approach to quality is not the one that excludes subjectivity (objective can never be warranted or demonstrated) but that explains the rationale, the underpinning criteria, the values and theories on which they are based.

We believe that, as Thune (1997) states, **transparency** is the crucial point of a system of quality description. No regard whether the product or service has been judged by a learner, an expert, a tutor using the courseware or the author, provided the user is aware of which kind of person made the evaluation that could even become nominal as in art critics. The implication of the authors themselves in judgement should not surprise since, according to McLeod (2002), quality is essentially the responsibility of the institutions themselves.

This section not only describes the quality grids used in the Emdel project, but also explains their origins – especially their pedagogical grounds- and their potential of uses. Two different grids have been adapted for Emdel:

- one for the tutors (professors, trainers, persons in charge of the interactions inside the courses) and the experts (external eye, not involved in teaching that specific course but belonging to the distance learning field)
- one for the students/participants/trainees.

The first grid, to be filled in for each online course by both the course tutor and an external expert, is more detailed and demanding in terms of analysis of the course than the second one, filled in by the course participants (students). The first one also comprises comments, which are not asked to students. Hereafter, we first present and justify the tutor/expert grid, then the students' grid, before commenting the interest of both of them.

3.2 Experts' and tutors' grid criteria

A triple consistency

Both experts and tutors think in a modular way, considering, for each piece of resource:

- The **objectives**, the prerequisites and the clarity of their communication (questions I2 to I5 in the expert check-list – see Annex 2).
- The **methods** and more specifically the activities (questions II1 to II3 in the expert check-list).
- The **evaluation** processes and their properties such as the diagnostic property of their feedbacks, their repeatability (to allow for progress measures), their consequential validity, i.e. whether they have an impact on students' behaviour (questions III8 to III11 in the expert check-list). The **self-evaluation** process is also questioned: if there is any, is it valid? Is it easy to understand? Etc. (questions III5 to III7 in the expert check-list).

In the quality grids, several questions are devoted to the so-called “Triple Consistency”, namely the coherence between objectives, methods and evaluation. This important pedagogical principle has been translated into several quality indicators for online courses.

Focus on learning methods

A second set of quality indicators is derived from the principle of variety of teaching and learning methods.

The experts and the tutors address general objectives of education, in particular whether the methods “insure that the instruction will encourage students to learn, will promote their autonomy, their creativity, their communication skills and appetencies” (Romainville & Boxus, 1998, 18).

To insure (or try to insure) that this happens, Leclercq & Poumay (2003) claim, on the basis of research made in learning psychology, that learning experiences must be as varied as possible. The goal is here not only to empower them as learners but also to make them appreciate learning since it will more and more become an important part of their life. Due to an increasing speed of change of our societies, the “learning necessity” has replaced, in our advanced societies, the “learning capacity” that is so typical of mankind, since “We are the learning species” (Kolb, 1984, 1).

In order to instrument the concept of “variety of learning experiences”, Leclercq & Poumay (2003) distinguish 8 types of “Learning Events”, just as Gagne & Briggs (1974) defined 9 “Events of Instruction”. They consider these events, which can be identified and observed in time and space, as atoms that can be recognized in a huge variety of combinations or molecules, i.e. the methods of teaching & learning. This model (the 8 Learning Events Model or 8LEM) has inspired a series of questions in the expert quality grid (questions II4 to II10 and II15 in the expert check-list).

These 8 Learning Events are the following:

- Learning by **observation**, imitation of models, essentially models of behaviours, but also impregnation by images, sounds, smells, and moods.
- Learning by **reception** of messages (from being told or from reading) that implies the learner and the teacher (the transmitter) share the communication “coding system”, i.e. they speak the same language, a condition that was not necessary in the previous Learning Event.
- Learning by **practice**, by exercising, by following a series of paths prepared by an expert, with the performance being commented and judged by an expert either in real time conditions or via a self training package.
- Learning by **exploration**, by asking questions, by browsing in the books of a library or on the web, i.e. having personal queries, personal searches in documents, selecting information into data and knowledge from information.

- Learning by **experimentation**, by developing hypothesis and by testing them on reality or on other people to know their reactions (and on oneself, especially in terms of learning experiences).
- Learning by **creation**, by developing one's own models, new for the learner (even if not new for humanity).
- Learning by **meta-reflection**, from the observation, judgements, analysis and regulation of one's own learning processes.
- Learning by **debate**, by confrontation of one's ideas, one's view of the world with other's (specially peers') representations.

The quality grids check whether each course features a variety of learning events or is just based on a quite weak combination of a few of them. Experts are asked to make comments on that diversity. Implemented into the quality grids, this second important principle of the variety of methods available to the learner is the core piece of the grids, the set of criteria that will really make the difference between some categories of courses, highlighting well thought of and highly interactive e-learning courses.

Specific technological criteria

Given the specificity of the objects to be evaluated, the experts and tutors take into account some criteria such as:

- Ergonomics, in terms of:
 - Navigation (not to be lost in hyperspace !) with considerations for menus, permanent signs, maps, indications, buttons, etc. (questions III1 to III4 in the expert check-list).
 - Readability in terms of concision of pages, vertical and horizontal scrolling, etc. (questions IV5 to IV7 in the expert check-list).
 - Communication and transfer facilities : from files to paper, from servers to users, in terms of simplicity and requirements of hardware and software (questions III9 to III12 in the expert check-list).
- Aesthetics and multimedia, related to:
 - Channels of communication in terms of texts, images, sounds
 - The balance of these resources
 - The quality of these resources
 - Their added values (questions V1 to V6 in the expert check-list).

Use of the courses

An important set of criteria concerns the ways the courses are used. Those “Modes of using” (questions VI 1 to 15 in the expert check-list), relate to practical and organisational issues such as:

- Clarity of roles definition
- Availability of training material for tutors
- Adaptability of resources by tutor
- Availability of monitoring information (what students attended, their scores to the tests) for the tutor as well as for the learner.

Those criteria can even be assessed if the course has not been used, as it only consists in tracking the availability of information and documentation. We are still in what is called “static evaluation”, without any necessity for the judge to participate to a real training session. The whole expert evaluation grid is conceived on this same principle of static evaluation, asking for a lighter involvement of the expert and giving a chance to new courses.

3.3 Students’ grid criteria

In the Emdel project, the users of the course are often called “customers”, although this choice is not a unanimous one. In this report, we’ll talk about users, comprising all kinds of users, from students to customers.

Users share a series of concerns with experts and tutors, such as:

- relevance (questions I1 to I5 in their questionnaire – see Annex 2)
- clarity, layout, efficacy (questions III to III0 in their questionnaire)
- activities (questions III1 to III6 in their questionnaire)
- evaluation (questions IV1 to IV5 in their questionnaire)
- ergonomics and aesthetics (questions V1 to V10 in their questionnaire)

Students have an opinion on the experience they have lived, i.e. the actual (and not the anticipated) interactions with the tutor(s). As opposed to the static evaluation, we are here in a situation of dynamic evaluation. This explains an additional series of criteria in their questionnaire (questions VI1 to VI5), namely:

- the rapidity of feedbacks
- the relevance of tutor’s inputs
- the motivational aspect of interactions

3.4 The quality grids and the catalogue

In the Emdel catalogue, the quality evaluations are designed to fit the visitor's needs. Anyone interested in checking the course offer can either be satisfied with the objective description of a course (title, number of hours, level, etc.), or want to get some information about its quality. Two icons inform the visitor on the availability of quality evaluation for each course. If the icons are present, the visitor can click on them and access the quality grids, results of the course quality evaluation by tutors, experts and users.

Evaluation by tutor and expert is displayed in two steps. The visitor first access a summary of the evaluation of tutors or experts as illustrated below. Criteria are grouped in six sections and only the main comments of the evaluators are displayed. In a second step, the visitor can also access the grids (questionnaires) themselves, to obtain the 77 criteria with, for each of them the judgement made by tutors or experts. We chose this two steps approach, to allow the tutors and experts to summarize themselves what they thought were the most important quality or drawbacks of a course in the 6 main sections displayed, keeping the visitor from having to summarize it him/herself.

The user's evaluation is displayed as a graph, automatically transforming the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the users into quantitative measures incrementing numbers in the same 6 main sections. The user questionnaire is composed of 38 questions instead of 77, in order to increase the chances of getting a maximum of questionnaires filled in (77 questions would discourage the users).

Here is an example: the expert quality evaluation displayed for the course of "Audio Visual and Learning" (Prof. Leclercq, University of Liège).

Contents: A large amount of pieces of information are available and split in chapters in which the learner will have to browse in order to achieve activities.

Activities: Each activity starts with the exploration (of the book), cutting and pasting others' arguments (receptive mode) to create a personal production or to apply principle, to practice routines. Then comes a comparison with peers' answers, followed by a debate. Then the learner is required to produce a synthetic second answer (meta-cognition). Conclusion: activities offer a large variety of Learning Events.

Evaluation: Memory is not tested since it is an open book exam. Comprehension and application are scored, as well as originality and meta-cognition (here the ability to compare one's performance with peers'). As a conclusion, evaluation is largely multidimensional.

Technical aspects: Easy and simple.

Aesthetic and Multimedia: Well illustrated with icons (still pictures). No sound neither animations but they are not necessary for understanding. They should have added attractiveness.

Mode of using: The tutor can adapt by changing the number of exercises, the instructions and the available help.

If the visitor wants to know more about one of these aspects, he/she clicks on this specific aspect and receives the details. For instance, for this course, clicking on "Mode of using" displays the following expert's answers for this aspect:

Mode of using	
Is the tutor's role clearly stated?	Yes
Are there any training material provided for tutors?	No
Can the tutor easily adapt the course according to his/her needs?	Yes
Is there an estimation of time necessary for student supervision?	No
Is tutor(s) time distribution for the course indicated?	Yes
Is it easy to plan the course structure (is there an estimate of hours allocated for each topic and module)?	Yes
Etc.	

3.5 Obstacles and lessons learned

For both the expert/tutor and the users' questionnaires, the definitions of the questions themselves have been discussed, before and after their use by experts, tutors and students. Some questions have been rephrased, others better explained.

Apart from the usual technical difficulties in getting the system to work, other difficulties were encountered in the use of the quality grids:

- Translation problems: questions had to be asked to experts in their own language. The questionnaires had to be translated, which is not an easy task in such a specific domain, if we want to make sure that each item is understood the same way in its English translation, Lithuanian, Polish, Swedish, Italian, etc.
- Variety of levels: some courses are targeted to the primary or secondary school levels, others to unemployed adults or to university students.
- Difficulty to find experts: judging the quality of courses asks for a good mastery of pedagogical concepts and takes time, if you want to answer the 77 questions of the grid. The expert, in his/her mother language, has to enter the course and check its deep structure, understand the activities to be performed by the users. This double problem of time and competence made it difficult to find experts in each partner country.
- Difficulty to ask tutors and learners for additional work: filling the grid takes less time to the tutor than to the expert, as the tutor already knows the course, but tutors are usually very busy and not necessarily paid extra time for filling in questionnaires. The users are quite solicited by a variety of questionnaires throughout their training and realize they don't get a direct interest in filling in one more of them.
- In Emdel, we thought that quality evaluation of each course of the catalogue could give an important added value to the catalogue itself. In case of redundancy of courses in a same domain for example, the visitor could have found guidance in the choice of one product instead of another one, based on the quality of those concurrent products. Unfortunately, testing that hypothesis would have asked for a visitor access to numerous evaluations, including evaluations of concurrent products. The catalogue didn't comprise enough courses in each language to allow for this testing, not enough grids were filled in either to ensure a possibility of comparison of two similar courses. Such an ambitious project would ask for a catalogue corresponding to international standards, in which important training providers would copy their offer. It would also ask for a more systematic approach of

evaluation, with dedicated experts in several countries and different groups of disciplines.

3.6 Conclusions and perspectives

The Emdel project has tested the interest of proposing a quality evaluation of online courses as a service to catalogue visitors. We can't draw any final conclusion about this service, as it hasn't been widely used yet inside the consortium itself.

Nevertheless, we can foresee the application of this kind of technique in conditions where the course offer would be more important (the problem of technical and pedagogical norms will have to be taken into account), the number of evaluations as well. In order to reduce the workload for evaluators, it would be realistic to select a set of criteria to be judged as priorities, in order to collect more filled in questionnaires. This is a general principle applied in various contexts. For instance, at Ann Arbor University (of Michigan), James Kulik offers to each professor the possibility to select questions (from a pool of dozens) to be asked to his/her students in order to evaluate their courses. Of course, in this framework of a commercial catalogue, the criteria set selection cannot be left to individual initiative but has to be centrally decided upon, in order to avoid the transformation of the quality approach into a fully subjective commercial selling tool.

If advice should be given to funding authorities or national agencies, we'd say that a powerful model for running intensively this quality evaluation would be to leave at a local level the task of having tutors and users (students, "clients") evaluate the courses in their native language and to centrally organize an expert evaluation. This centralized expert evaluation would be realized through a series of experts from different domains but all of them with a recognized competence in pedagogy and instructional design, on the same model than paper reviewing for international journals. The centralized structure would act on demand and deliver qualitative comments. If tutor and expert evaluation are available and demonstrate a strong consistency with a high level quality of expert's comments, the centralized structure could also, still on demand, deliver a quality label that would serve as a reference for users. This model would both leave a maximum of initiative at a local level and, in parallel, organize centralized European quality recognition. The costs of the centralized structure could be partially financed by the course providers who ask for the service, but not only, so that the price for a quality evaluation would remain accessible for all training operators.

Catalogues are growing at the European and International levels. We think that the quality of the European online training offer will largely depend upon the awareness of the whole chain of actors, from the designers to the users. What does quality mean in distance learning? Associated to e-learning catalogues, quality

grids can be important training tools, not only for the tutors and users, but also for the catalogue visitors. By consulting the experts' comments and going to the criteria to understand why a course is considered as better than another one, the user (including training operators) will get acquainted with those criteria and understand what quality means. The tool itself could play a role of awareness raiser for wider communities. It could also speed the process of gathering an offer of a good quality by naturally eliminating the very bad courses and, even better, by showing some authors how to improve their products.

For its potential of increasing awareness about what is a quality course and, therefore, of improving the quality of the e-learning offer itself, we consider quality evaluations as a crucial tool to accompany the development of European course catalogues.

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CHAPTER IV

VALORIZATION OF EXISTING E-LEARNING PRODUCTS

4.1 The goals and the products

By Edi Fanti

The Emdel project is a ‘Valorization Project’ funded by the Leonardo da Vinci Programme. As such, Emdel intended to valorise the results and ‘best practices’ of other distance learning and e-learning projects carried out earlier within the framework of the European Community’s initiatives.

In order to valorise and facilitate the use of the best and most interesting products already realised within the Partners’ Organizations, there have been exchanges of on-line courses: partners offered their on-line courses and, after a post production phase (translation and adaptation), some of them have been adopted by other partners in different countries.

The valorization of the existing e-learning products arose as an important issue since the planning phase. The project aimed to verify the possibility of reducing the production costs and to accelerate the time for the enrichment of the on line courses’ repositories of each partners. According to this purpose, it was foreseen originally in the project, the post production of ten on line courses belonging to the partners but, since the success of the initiative, the post produced courses have been twelve.

The reaching of this goal is a result of a procedure started with a selection phase, and carried on facing some challenges such as the technical aspects and the copyright issues. Nevertheless, the Consortium decided to enlarge the numbers of the post produced courses, demonstrating its great interest on this project’s action.

In order to show to the partners the on line products belonging to each of them, a specific event was created: the ‘Internal Festival’ held in Florence in December 2002. Partners was invited to explain the contents and show their on line courses. The problems of different languages and the technical aspects which needed sometimes explanations were clarified during the two days of seminar.

Afterwards a selection phase started, taking into account the following criteria:

- contents
- target groups
- costs
- intellectual and property rights
- distribution/platforms

The courses' contents varied from language to pedagogy, labour market, ICT, communication etc...addressed to target groups such as students, apprentices, elderly, adult learner etc...

The first phase of post production was finished in December 2003 with a post production of seven courses. Due the success of the initiative, partners decided to curry on with a second phase, concluded in December 2004. The twelve post produced courses are listed in the following table, where also the partner course's provider and the related partner course's user are mentioned.

‘PROVIDER’ AND COPYRIGHTS OWNER	ON-LINE COURSE TITLE	‘USER’
Gdansk University of Technology- Distance Education Centre	1) Ethics on line	Vox- National Institute for Adult Learning
Gdansk University of Technology- Distance Education Centre	2) Ethics on line	Tuscany Region
Gdansk University of Technology - Distance Education Centre	3) Ethics on line	Kaunas University of Technology- Kaunas Regional Distance Education Study Centre
Kaunas University of Technology- Kaunas Regional Distance Education Study Centre	4) Telecottages	University of Liege-LabSet
Kaunas University of Technology- Kaunas Regional Distance Education Study Centre	5) Telecottages	Gdansk University of Technology - Distance Education Centre
Kaunas University of Technology- Kaunas Regional Distance Education Study Centre	6) Use of IT in human resources management	Gdansk University of Technology - Distance Education Centre
Tuscany Region	7) How we learn in the job that is changing	Vox- National Institute for Adult Learning
University of Liege - LabSET	8) Formasup (in English)	University of Liege – LabSET
University of Liege - LabSET	9) Formasup (in Lithuanian)	Kaunas University of Technology- Kaunas Regional Distance Education Study Centre
Vox- National Institute for Adult Learning	10) Studit	CFL/Swedish Agency for Flexible Learning
Vox- National Institute for Adult Learning	11) Studit	University of Szeged- Distance Education Study Center
Vox- National Institute for Adult Learning	12) Konsept	University of Szeged- Distance Education Study Center

4.2 The challenges

By Edi Fanti

The choice of the on line courses for the post production has been a result of a selection which included the consideration of issues such as the adaptation to the socio-cultural contexts of partners' countries for the course contents, the costs, the technical aspects, the intellectual and property rights, etc... These challenges have been faced and overcome time by time, demonstrating the will of the partners in reaching the project's goals.

The meaning of 'post production', which is translation and adaptation of courses, has brought to face problems of transferring of contents in contexts absolutely different sometimes, which required not only a technical adaptation, but also a reorganisation of the whole course according to the economic, social and cultural milieu of the different country, affecting the translation (on this regards see paragraph 4.4 by Maria Andersson) of it and its whole structure. This kind of adaptation implied a work of analysis and research which have brought to an enrichment of each course in it-self, developing new aspects of it.

Another kind of 'adaptation' has been the technical one, which has been creating sometimes problems related to platforms and other issues. In order to overcome these problems, the courses' selection included the description of the technical aspects of each course. The information was gathered through a specific grid (see Annex 3.1), as a tool realised on this purpose.

One of the aims of the valorization of products in Emdel, realised through the exchange of them, was checking the costs effectiveness of the post production. On this regard it's possible to affirm that within Emdel the post production has been really an effective tool for the costs reduction (for details see Chapter VII, paragraph 2), and therefore an effective tool for the enlargement of partners' e-learning supply.

During the selection phase the partners became aware of the great attention which should be paid to the intellectual and property rights issues, due to the many difficulties in using the products present in the partners course repository, respecting the rules of copyrights. On this regards, Tuscany Region realised a brief research on this broad and complex topic, gathering some interesting and useful information in order to define the 'copyrights agreement'. The agreement (see Annex 3), was signed by the both partners, the 'provider' and the 'user', in order to certify the post production of each course exchanged in Emdel.

In relation to post production, it's necessary to remark the importance of each single aspects related to it, from the respecting of rules to the attention at the technical aspects, together with the contents harmonisation within each country.

Below, some information about useful web sites on copyright issue, as a result of the brief research on the topic (updated at March 2003 - time of 'Copyright Agreement' definition)

Copyright issue - Internet resources

By Luca Santoni

At the following page some information about useful web sites on copyright, linked also to the Emdel issues (updated at March 2003 - time of 'Copyright Agreement' definition).

The starting point of an Internet documentation research about this matter is represented by DG "Internal market" site (http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/en/intprop/index.htm). This site is well structured and offers an almost complete overview in the sections "Useful links" and "Official documents".

The "Official documents"

(http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/en/intprop/docs/index.htm) section is a collection of Directives on various aspects of copyright and the intellectual property. The link

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/lif/reg/en_register_1720.html offers an analogue result from the "legislation in force" point of view.

The "trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights" can be found at the address http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/trips_e/trips_e.htm of the World Trade Organisation. The WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organisation) site (<http://www.wipo.org/index.html.en>) presents an international framework on the matter; at the address <http://clea.wipo.int> can be found an international electronic archive of intellectual property legislation.

Brief analysis of some Directives issued by the European Council

There are some Directives regarding copyright and the legal protection of computer programs. Although Directives are not directly applicable in the state law, they are a useful analysis tool.

In our opinion, the exchange of distance learning products is an example of "lending" as defined by the article "1, par. 3 of the Council Directive 92/100/EEC of 19 November 1992, since two principle conditions are in force: the exchange takes place between public institutions and it's not for direct or indirect economic or commercial advantage. It's clear the difference between "lending" and "rental", as defined in the premises of the Council Directive 91/250/EEC of 14 May 1991; of course, in case of rental, the lucrative goal is predominant.

In both cases the agreement on the assignment has a limited duration.

In distance learning, we have to consider the "on-line" service nature, as well. In fact, this feature can represent an autonomous object in the legislation about copyright (see the 29th paragraph of premises - Directive 2001/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 May 2001).

In case a partner is using a distance learning product made by another partner, we think he has to be holder of two rights:

- the translation and adaptation right, without the content modification (as stated in article 4, lett. b of the Council Directive 91/250/EEC);
- the guarantee of product interoperability with the host Learning Management System (LMS) and its software architecture (article 6, par.1 of the Council Directive 91/250/EEC): in this case, it has to be possible to adapt the source code to infrastructure needs.

Other useful information can be found at:

<http://www.ipr-helpdesk.org/controlador.jsp?cuerpo=cuerpo&seccion=principal&len=it>

4.3 The stories

Tuscany Region: Ethics on line

By Alice Carminati and Salvatore Pulvirenti

Tuscany Region decided to post produce the ‘Ethics on line’ course, provided by the polish partner, Gdansk University of Technology.

The course was selected since the topic was evaluated as innovative for the TRIO project’s catalogue (regional e-learning portal), and interesting for a large public.

The original course was a simple text in english, while the italian post production comprehend a lot of additional integration and changes, with the aim to enrich the course in itself, according to the other courses developed in TRIO.

The following activities were carried out:

- identification of a translator and a developer of contents, expert in ethical issues
- training, for the contents’ developer, about TRIO internal format
- translation from English to Italian of the original course
- contents re-organization
- adoption of the TRIO graphical layout

It was decided to add:

- bibliographies of the Italian authors
- references to Italian web sites
- authors’ pictures or other images dealing with the topics
- additional texts
- audio streams
- course introduction and entry tests, according to TRIO format

The course was organised, in the Italian version, in 3 lessons:

- Elements of Ethics: basic concepts
- Elements of Ethics: ethics in times
- Ethics in our life: tools and problems

Each lesson was divided into sections. The text in the different sections is the translation of the original text, while the order of each sections and lessons was revised.

The lessons were revised adding audios, images and additional information related to the topics.

Each inserted image was documented with the author's name and with the reason for being inserted there. Further information was provided when deemed useful/necessary, accessible through a specific icon.

Within the additional information, the text of the audio stream was inserted in case the audio card is not available on the learner's computer.

This module teaches the learners how to deal with problems rather than providing the solution; therefore it was not reasonable to propose a final test asking for the right solution, and then the final test has been realised as an exercise.

The glossary, already available in the original module, was extended: in the final version new terms were inserted, such as: Analogy, Caste, Concept, Conscience, Constructivism, Deontology, Philosophy, Inference, Free will, Objectivism, Deductive reasoning, Inductive reasoning, etc.

Links were divided per topics, as addressed by lessons and new links were added. Furthermore, a "siteography" was added, that is a list of websites dealing with the topics relating to the module contents. Particular attention was paid to the ethic/philosophic currents in the Italian culture. In particular web sites dealing with ethics and philosophy in the broader sense and with specific concepts such as ontology and cosmology were privileged without changing the course objectives at all. Web sites that are becoming de facto references for web services on philosophy were listed as well. Texts in the original languages were added to the bibliography that was divided according to the course topics.

What did we learn from doing it?

We experienced both problems and satisfactions in post-producing the Ethics on line.

We chose to design and implement the course according to the TRIO format, trying to enrich the course itself of some contents in order to help the final user to better understand the most difficult concepts. Having in mind this, we decided to introduce a list of sites as a guided web surfing. More than this, both the bibliography and the glossary have been filled up with new references close to the concepts of ethics in the Italian culture.

Also, we have inserted images with well-reasoned captions and audio contents to better help the final user. Some “ad hoc” points have been inserted in important part of the course and they have been properly commented to exactly understand the reason of their presence there. Among other tips, some parts of important philosophical masterpieces related to that topic have been inserted and well explained.

All this has been done to give the user all the necessary tools for a proper introduction to the concepts of ethics and to urge him/her to search for new topics and philosophical disquisitions, even deeper and more complex ones.

This significant work gave us the opportunity to recognise and valorise the creative competencies within TRIO staff, really necessary in transforming the course in the new Italian version.

From another point of view, having faced the post-production of a course about ethics, gave us a great opportunity to get acquainted on such an interesting topic, never met in TRIO before.

CFL - Swedish Agency for Flexible Learning: Post production

By Maria Andersson

At CFL - Swedish Agency for Flexible Learning - we choose to translate a Norwegian course, the subject being English. We worked on the course on three different levels that was fused together. The design of the course was changed, the work being done by the CFL's own web developers. The course was translated from Norwegian to Swedish. Lastly an analysis of the contents and structure of the course was made. The analysis was partly based on an interview with the author of the script, who developed the original course in cooperation with Vox.

The translated course was adapted to the design of CFL's website. The design was changed to fit in with the navigation of CFL's web pages. Space had to be made for links and extra information that were to complement the main text. Headlines and other graphics were also changed to make the text legible and easy on the eyes.

The parts of the course originally written in Norwegian was translated into Swedish, the parts written in English for the students were of course left in English. At first the aim of the translation was to keep to the original text as much as possible, but very soon questions were raised whether to adapt the expressions of Norwegian culture into Swedish, or not, and in that case, how much? It became clear that it is difficult to translate a course without making an adaptation of the

contents as well. In the end we choose to keep to the original and make an analysis, forming meta-questions, of the translating- and adaptation process of the course.

The discussion of the analysis concerned whether it is at all possible to translate and adapt a course to be used in different countries and, above all, from one country's educational culture to another's. The subject in question, which was English, was not the focus of the analysis; the discussion concerned only socio- and education cultural questions likely to arise in a situation of translating and adapting courses.

Which were the challenge, and what did we learn from them?

An Internet based course should be easy to navigate, legible, easy to follow and easy on the eyes, text read on screen is demanding on the eyes, compared to a text read from a book, and has to be adapted accordingly. The text should also graphically correspond with the other texts offered on the same website, and therefore has to be put in an already existing template.

In this case we reached a compromise where both the design of the original course was changed, as well as CFL's design, so that the whole would work out well. The navigation of the course provides a concrete example. CFL's templates are made so that detailed navigation is offered on every web page; however, the Norwegian course was constructed in a way that a linear navigation suited it better. We changed it accordingly, which means that a detailed navigation was only offered on the start page of the course, every part then contained a link to the next part, allowing a student to follow the course chronologically.

We learned that it is important to have access to the original templates. To be able to compare is an advantage when making decisions on how to deal with, for example, paragraphs that are hard to fit in with an existing template. It is also important that the documents that are to be coded into HTML are as clean from formatting as possible, a bold text where needed, subheadings and word-wrapping is enough to make a text legible. The more "decorations" a text has got; the more work it will be for the web developers.

In the end it is the translator who has to breathe life into the linguistic adaptation that will be done. A lot of work is put into understanding also the parts of the text that is *not* going to be translated, the context in which the course is to function, and the purpose of the course. To be able to make reasonable choices of words and terminology, as well as making interpretations, the translator needs to understand the whole context. The translator benefits greatly from receiving a text that is *finished*, that is to say properly proofread. Misspelled words, grammar mistakes, syntax errors, contradictions in structure or content, are all mistakes that should have been taken care of before the translator gets the material in his or her hands. A revision of the original material may still be necessary.

The most important is to think ahead! The employer should know what he or she really want done to the text. Yes, a translation is to be made, but often it is not that simple. A translation can be made in many ways. A text can be interpreted and remade; it can be given a whole new voice, or a new purpose, without changing the actual content. The translator needs to know from the start what message the employer really want the text to convey, what the purpose of the translated text is, what it will be used for, and who will use it, and so on. The translator also needs to know how much he or she is allowed to change the original text. Is the translation to be as close to the original as possible, or is there a wish for the translator's creativity and ability to interpret and adapt the text?

The course analysis concerned both the contents of this specific course as well as a discussion about distance education on the Internet, exchange of courses between different countries and the possibilities and problems that can arise in connection with said exchange. One of the most important experiences made from this analysis is how important it is to know of, and take into consideration the difference in different country's curriculum. At an exchange of education material between countries, an adaptation to the new country's curriculum is more or less inevitable. A concrete example would be the 'goals' that the Norwegian course had included into the actual study text, as in Norway you are obligated to inform the students of the curriculum they are to fulfil.

To study and compare different country's education culture and curriculum from the start, as well as finding a mutual platform where there is still room for enriching differences, is a reasonable starting point to begin a production of study material that can be exchanged over the borders.

We also reached the conclusion that there are many problems to consider even *after* the course has been translated, adapted and given a form on the Internet. Someone should, for example, be responsible for to keep the Internet published course up to date. Should there be a continuous cooperation between the countries exchanging the material concerning updates and management? It is important to make use of the advantages that the Internet possesses and which printed media does not, to the same extent – its 'up-to-dateness'.

Vox: Ethics on-line becomes Minimalistic Ethics

By Randi Husemoen

In the Emdel action 3, Exchange of products, Vox chose an e-learning product developed by the University of Technology in Gdansk, "Ethics on-line". One of the reasons for choosing this product was that the topic was philosophy and ethics. At

the time we started to work on this action, there was a lot of media discussion in the Norwegian society about ethics in business life as well as ethics in general. So the timing for choosing this product seemed very good. In addition, philosophy and ethics are topics of international interest and as such not culture specific. On this background we presumed that there would be less problems connected to translating and adapting it to a different cultural setting.

When all the formal procedures regarding contracts and copyrights were settled, we could start the creative part of the post production process. Since this process was a part of a collaborative project, it lasted for some months. The formal procedures started already in January 2003 and the Norwegian version of Ethics on-line was finished in November.

The translation of ethics on-line from English to Norwegian was non-problematic since it was assigned a translator with expert knowledge in the field of philosophy. Simultaneously with the translating process, we started to look for a firm which could help us in the process of making the Norwegian version. The firm chosen for this work was the Norwegian firm Mintra www.mintra.no/filosofi.asp which is specialised on interactive learning and the blending of pedagogy, technology and design. The original Ethics on-line had not fully taken advantage of the possibility that lies in the new technology, it was rather an electronic textbook. We wanted to make a different product by taking advantage of the new technology. We aimed at creating a new product that was problem-based, interactive and stimulating, but within the budget limits of the project.

Our first priority was to develop a learning resource that was more activating and based on problem solving than the original Ethics on-line that was mostly descriptive. We also considered this a way in which to adapt Ethics on-line to the Norwegian reality, since Norway has an educational system that encourages students to think independently, being critical and not necessarily accept ready-made answers.

Minimalistic Ethics

We decided to add to the presentation some more philosophers than in the original version to get more variety in points of view, gender and epochs. The new product was named *Minimalistic Ethics* because it is a short presentation of various philosophers. It can be described as a product that has two levels. The first level is a short presentation of philosophers and their ideas covering the period from the Antiquity up till today. But the learning resource also contains a collection of links which gives access to a more thorough presentation of ideas and thoughts, thus adding a second level to the product for more advanced users.

The most important change in the process of post production, except from the design and layout, is that Minimalistic Ethics is a much more problem based learning resource. The purpose of the learning resource is to help and encourage

the users to discover ways of action that are worth while pursuing, to ask questions that results in valuable discussions, to get insight into the ethical implications of frequent attitudes and convictions and to get accustomed to find information and analyse it.

We have also introduced interactive exercises, and some central questions and ways of presenting problems. We have chosen not to give answers to all the questions, since some of them are intended to constitute sources and inspiration for reflections and thoughts. To some of the questions it would not be possible or desirable to give ready answers either since these are questions that concerns the individual's beliefs, moral and values. One example of such a way of presenting problems is the question weather the objective of an individual's action should be to ensure his or her happiness. We would claim that there is no obvious, correct solution to such a question.

How to learn at a work place that is changing

On the background of the enjoyable work of producing Minimalistic Ethics, Vox decided to start another post production process within the frames of the project. In the Italian TRIO (Tuscany Region) database www.progettoTRIO.it we found a very interesting an relevant e-learning product dealing with current trends in modern society's work market; the idea of lifelong learning and that the employees have to face and deal with the fact that the work places are continuously changing. As a consequence lifelong learning has to be implemented in work places that are changing. The product was called "How to learn at a work place that is changing."

In this process we faced some practical and technical challenges. It was not possible to have the original file from TRIO, so we had to copy the text directly from the TRIO module and get it translated to Norwegian. This product was mostly text based, but there were also some illustrations and animations. When the translation had been accomplished, the text had to be adapted to Norwegian society and circumstances since the original text was based on particular conditions and circumstances in Italy but also in France. The adaptation to Norwegian circumstances consisted among other things to insert elements related to the validation of prior learning and how this is arranged in Norway.

What have we learned from the postproduction processes?

It is feasible to adapt and use distance and e-learning products developed by institutions in other countries. It can be an inspiring and interesting work since there is already some content ready made. But before embarking upon such a task, one should be aware of the potential difficulties and work it may imply. If the content is too culture specific, it may not be a rational way of developing new products because the adaptation will require a substantial amount of work. In such a situation it may be easier to start from scratch, except from the added value of

studying interesting cultural differences.

Gdansk University of Technology: How can we benefit from the Action 3

By Anna Grabowska

In case of Gdansk University of Technology the most difficult issue in the Emdel Action 3 “Exchange of products” was a decision what should be translated and adopted.

Our first choice was to post produce the “Spanish course” developed by Swedish Agency for Flexible Learning, but due to unsolved copyrights issues, we had to find another course for translation and adaptation.

Looking carefully at our users needs regarding online training we decided to translate a course produced by Kaunas University of Technology “Are You Prepared to Work at Multipurpose Community Telecentres?”. In order to localise the course Learning Management System was needed.

We decided not to buy a commercial LMS software, but to adopt an “open source” solution. The following open source platforms had been tested before the final decision was made:

- ATutor <http://www.atutor.ca/>
- Claroline <http://www.claroline.net/>
- Covidia <http://www.covidia.com/>
- Ilias <http://www.ilias.uni-koeln.de/ios/index-e.html>
- Jones Standard <http://www.jonesstandard.org/>
- Moodle <http://moodle.org/>

As a result of experiments and tests, Moodle was chosen as the most effective and user friendly solution. Polish interface of Moodle was developed and implemented.

Having good experiences with adaptation and localisation, Gdansk University of Technology decided to translate another course which was also developed by Kaunas University of Technology “IT in Human Resource Management”.

Finally all courses are located in Moodle at the address

http://www.dec.pg.gda.pl/moodle/course/category.php?id=22



Fig.1. Emdel courses in Moodle

What did we learn

Summing up the experiences gathered in Emdel action 3 it should be underlined that translation and adaptation costs could be higher than development from the scratch (copyrights issues e.g. content, pictures, sounds).

On the other hand it is possible to find a product which is attractive, useful and easy to adopt. Additionally while offering the same course in two languages (English, Polish) the added value is linguistic one.

Finally one of the most significant achievements of the Emdel project is the document titled “Agreement between Partners” which can be used in the future (see Annex 3.2 copyright agreement).

Post-production activities of the University of Szeged

By Károly Fábri

The Open and Distance Learning Centre of the University of Szeged, Hungary, undertook to adapt two learning packages within the Emdel Project. Both packages originated from the Vox Institute, Norway. The packages represent web-based learning packages prepared in HTML, with Javascript functionality. They can be run in any HTML 4.0 compliant web browser capable of processing standard Javascript commands.

Learning Package 1: Konsept

Konsept is a full-fledged introductory course for the study of sociology, and, in a wider context, politics, economy, in the form of an interactive dictionary for immigrants. As the name suggests, Konsept assigns basic concepts that the student is expected to master while taking one lesson after the other.

Following an administrative procedure related to clarifying terms of use, copyright, deployment of code, etc., we set up a team of 3 persons to accomplish adaptation of the material. Since Konsept is meant for use by Norwegian students, certain decisions had to be made in order to identify the portions of the learning material that are relevant to Hungarian learners. Thus, issues concerning various walks of life typical of Norway were eliminated from the material. Then, a schedule was prepared to enable us to keep track of the progress we were making. While we managed to complete the post-production task on time, there were a number of unforeseen difficulties encountered (see the section entitled Lessons Learnt further below). You can take a look at the adapted version by visiting <http://www.u-szeged.hu/distedu/Konsept>.

Learning Package 2: Studit

As we obtained favourable experience in cooperating with Vox, we decided to select another learning package for adaptation that was also prepared by Vox.

This time, we selected a part of the Studit learning package which deals with teaching English. Studit in itself is a set of learning materials embracing various fields of study including English, Norwegian, History, Mathematics, Natural Science and Social Science. As with Konsept, arrangements were made to take care of legal issues and a contract was signed between the materials providers and the developers in which terms of use of the source material were specified. Then we set up a small team of developers, prepared a schedule, and adapted the module in such a way that a stand-alone, self-contained module was obtained for use by learners of English in Hungary.

You can get acquainted with the adapted version of Studit by visiting <http://www.u-szeged.hu/distedu/Studit>.

Lessons Learnt

Adaptation of existing study materials available in a form suitable for e-learning has a number of difficulties any post-producer may want to consider when deciding on undertaking an adaptation project.

1. Preparing materials from existing sources requires that the developers have at least the same level of expertise as that of the originators. Lack of an appropriate professional background may jeopardize the success of the whole project. Expertise in this case means not just sufficient training in the subject matter but also skills in web design, programming, etc.

2. Adaptation of only a part of the source presupposes that the developers have a thorough knowledge of the preliminary knowledge acquired by prospective users of the e-learning material. Thus, being aware of the expected level of student knowledge in the specific field of study is essential for the product to be sufficiently relevant.

3. Assessing all the pitfalls associated with adaptation may appear difficult at the outset. The following aspects may appear worth considering:

a. whenever you shorten a piece of material, it may involve eliminating parts of the code as well — that may lead to having to re-code the whole application;

b. the success of your adaptation may depend to a large extent on how the new material will be accommodated in the new cultural context;

c. source materials tend to be fully adaptable if they are standardized in terms of the subject material to be delivered to students;

d. adaptation of modules from packages has the risk of having to cope with inter-connected portions of text and references;

e. adding items to the source material in order to make it more appropriate for the given cultural and/or educational context may involve interference with the original course material, with consequences as to its content representing a breach of the original copyright arrangement;

f. when adaptation involves translation, it should be ensured that only translators competent in the subject matter are hired.

We at the ODL Centre of the University of Szeged will try and keep the above aspects in mind in the course of oncoming adaptation projects.

4.4 Socio-cultural aspects of the translating and adaptation process

By Maria Andersson

Introduction

The purpose of this text is to describe and discuss how socio-cultural aspects can be dealt with in cases of translation and adaptation of Internet based education material for adult students. To do this we will refer to experiences gained during the Emdel project.

Education material is not created within a vacuum. All material, regardless of content or purpose, has been created by human beings who are a part of a cultural and social context. Learning takes place on several interlaced levels, and the means we use in learning are also a part of the same context.

Many social and cultural differences are obvious, and it seems to be easy to avoid the possible problems that may arise by simply avoiding the differences. Most of the time it is not that easy, socio-cultural differences can also be subtle and discrete, and possibly will not be noticed at all, until it is time to handle them in a given situation – such as the task of translating a course.

Socio-cultural theory

Socio-cultural theory is a pedagogical theory formulated by Lev Semenovich Vygotsky (1896-1934). Advocates for socio-cultural theory are of the opinion that learning is a part of social contexts, and will be different in different cultures.

The Socio-Cultural Theory says that learning is embedded within social events, and occurs as the student interacts with its environment, and with other people, thus learning will be different within different cultures.

(James P. Lantolf, *Introducing socio-cultural theory.*)

The mediated mind is an important concept within the socio-cultural theory. The concept refers to the fact that the culture in which a person lives influences that person, serves as a basis for that person's thoughts and view of things. However the individual does not interact with his or her environment directly, but uses a *mediator*, that is to say, linguistic, intellectual and physical tools. These tools are called *artefacts*, and they mediate reality to a human being. The language is a non-physical artefact; and is the most significant artefact to the human being. It is in using language that we communicate with our environment and controls it; it is through language that we pass on our knowledge. Educational material is such an artefact.

Even if the actual use of artefacts is universal among human beings, the artefacts in themselves are different; we speak different languages for example, but to translate word by word rarely produces a satisfactory result, showing that language is more than just different words for the same objects or context. This is where the socio-cultural aspects will become a question.

It seems natural to separate linguistic aspects, and socio-cultural aspects – language versus contents – in education material, which is to be translated and used in other countries than its original country. But both of these elements can be said to be a non-physical artefact, and as a translator it is difficult to separate the two. Since the language in itself forms a socio-cultural aspect we can never really avoid dealing with these elements during translation. Regardless of whether it concerns similarities or differences, no matter if it means an asset that can be used, or a problem to be solved, we need to deal with it.

Experiences from the Emdel project

Using a questionnaire sent out to all of Emdel's project partners, the participants was asked to share their experiences in exchanging, translating and adapting educational material for Internet based distance education. The answers received are the basis for this text.

The following questions were asked:

1. On what levels would you say that the complex of socio-cultural problems lies? Language, content, communication, structural, aesthetic, or technical aspects? Others?
2. In adaptations of education material, how have you chosen to handle socio-cultural aspects of the texts?
3. Can socio-cultural complex of problems be prevented? How?
4. Can socio-cultural differences in the education material be an asset in learning? How can it be used as a resource?

5. In general, what are your observations, thoughts and reflections on the subject?

Based on the answers given we can make the following disposition over possible ways of approaching the complex of problems:

- A *Avoiding* differences
- B Seeing the possibilities in *preserving* some differences while it is necessary to *adapt* others
- C *Using* the differences in the learning process in a concrete way

When going through the answers, one of the first things noticed is that the focus is on point A or B. The choice of using the differences as an element in learning (point C) has not been made anywhere, even though the questionnaire brought it up as a possibility. Rather the question has been how much adaptation is needed/ should be made, and if so in what way. In one of the answers though, there is a mention of the importance of the teacher's role. A good teacher can make socio-cultural aspects present in the education material into an asset. Several answers bring up the importance of considering a possible adaptation of the material at an early stage. To prepare can also mean to search for material that, as far as it is possible, does not need an adaptation.

In some cases the complexity of the problems is not seen, or is not perceived as a problem. Some respondents are also of the opinion that many subjects are "neutral", consist of a well known terminology, or are aimed at students with a high level of education and awareness of possible socio-cultural differences, and that a radical adaptation, apart from the actual translation, is therefore not needed.

Language and *content* are what is mainly focused on when a course is selected to be translated and adapted. Communication, and that the student will be able to assimilate the educational material without major problems, is considered to be the most important. As a consequence, most agree that an adaptation to the language; culture and curriculum of ones own country is necessary, even if expressions of other cultures and views are thought of as both interesting and enriching.

Not as much importance has been placed upon other aspects of the adaptation process, for example structure and aesthetics, even if a few respondents mention how differently structured a course can be in different countries. The purpose of asking questions, for example, can be different. In some countries the use of questions to start discussions rather than receiving correct answers, are more often used than in other countries. What is regarded as formal or informal language also differs.

That cooperation between countries within the EU concerning exchange of education material *is* enriching comes up several times. One answer describes the increasing cooperation with another country as very stimulating, both on a personal and professional level. It is emphasised that socio-cultural differences should not be regarded as either good or bad, and that socio-cultural aspects do not only have to be a question of handling *differences*, but also about finding *similarities*.

Discussion

Before a discussion of possibilities and/or a possible number of problems, we need to know that we are talking about the same thing. Even if we believe that we agree on a literal meaning of a certain concept, there may be a difference in how emotionally charged a word is in different countries, and with different individuals. What do socio-cultural aspects really mean? The participants gave several different interpretations of this concept; which shows that the questions asked and the interpretation of them also originates from a social- and cultural context.

Not all participants saw the complex of problems or thought of them as problems. This could be because of the nature of the questions, they could have been unclear on the subject, and the definitions could have also been unclear. It could have been a question of language barriers, as the communication took place in English, which in this case is not the natural language of any of the participants. It could also have been a question of different views of the concept of discussions in different parts of Europe. In Sweden it is common practice to illustrate situations by raising a number of fundamental questions which have to be answered. In answering these questions the problems that a situation may give rise to are lifted up and solved. This can be seen as a focus on the negative.

The best way is to take the adaptation far enough to ensure functioning communication and avoid mistakes and misunderstandings, at the same time as trying to preserve the socio-cultural characteristics of the text, which can enrich the learning process. When planning new educational material there are several aspects to consider. Regardless of the choice of subject the possibility of a future dissemination across borders should be taken into consideration, just as the fact that the course will become Internet based should be kept in mind. This does not mean that there should be a restricted process. There are countless opportunities to seek new methods, and to exchange experiences with each other.

The concrete use of socio-cultural characteristics within educational material in the actual learning process can be very demanding. At first sight the adaptation process does not seem to be necessary in such a case, but a large amount of work on complementary material will be necessary, as well as the teachers supporting the students.

Cooperation on more levels within distance education can lead to a standardisation of structures and similar elements where these things are really needed. At the same time the likelihood of learning from each other increases. To increase the cooperation beyond the actual exchange will give social, cultural and economic advantages. In the future an exchange of courses can be an exchange on many levels. The material is hopefully not static, and as it will eventually be used by students, changes and updates will be necessary. Who will be responsible for these updates, the original producer, or the new user? Both? Cooperation does not have to end with the exchange.

To work out a standard for structure, terminology to a certain extent and other practical questions is an important aspect. To find solutions to such fundamental questions greatly increases the likelihood of concentrating more on the content. It is also important to make the technology accessible to as many as possible so that the Internet as a forum really can be used in a way that makes use of its unique possibilities for quick communication, constantly being up to date, and enormous storage of data.

Whichever way the situation is viewed; to completely avoid taking into consideration the socio-cultural aspects is probably not possible. The risk of missing out on valuable education material increases if the choice of courses is made on those premises. No matter what is chosen, taking a stand on different levels concerning language, structure and content is unavoidable. To raise the level of consciousness to ones own socio-cultural heritage is to have access to a treasure trove of knowledge, and creates an opportunity to think outside of the box, and share other's treasures.

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CHAPTER V

VIRTUAL MOBILITY BY USING EXISTING E-LEARNING PRODUCTS

By Edi Fanti and Randi Husemoen

5.1 Why did we do it

Virtual mobility is one of the actions of the Emdel project and aims at demonstrating the values of e-learning and what can be gained through it. The Virtual mobility action allows users in the partner countries to access on-line courses developed by partner organisations in the original languages and original versions. This action also puts services of support, like a tutor operating at the local level as well as on-line and in the original language, at a potential learner's disposal.

The target group is foreigners living in the country in question or their sons and daughters who would want to study the language of their parents or study in the language of their parents. Other target groups are people who are interested in language studies or content based language studies. This may be traditional students or learners or employees in small and medium sized enterprises involved in exports or going to work abroad. These are users who want to learn the language and the culture in question, but at the same time would prefer the flexibility a distance or e-learning course can offer and not wanting to attend to a traditional course.

The following text presents how two of the partners in the Emdel project, Tuscany Region and Vox, approached the Virtual Mobility action.

5.2 How did we do it

Tuscany Region, being the project promoter and having a broad overview of the situation concerned, soon realised the necessity of contextualization of the activities for a European project, based on national contexts. The different social backgrounds in the different countries within the Emdel consortium made us realize that we could not reach the same goals following identical ways. Instead,

each partner could give a different contribution to the project's aims on the background of their specific national situation. It was decided that the partners would play different roles in this action: some partner could provide courses (partner 'provider'), while the other could be the users of the courses (partner 'user'). The 'providers' usually belonged to countries where there are not immigrants, but have emigrants towards other countries of the consortium. On the other side, the countries of the 'users' have a long tradition of immigrants, and therefore their training needs could find an answer through the 'Virtual Mobility' action.

5.3 The challenges

The challenges related to the Virtual Mobility action would naturally be different in different countries. Italy, and therefore Tuscany, does not have a long history and tradition of immigrants. The economy of Italy started to be attractive to foreigners in the 90's, especially for those coming from North Africa, Asia and also Eastern Europe. Due to this social context, and in accordance with the goals foreseen regarding 'Virtual Mobility', the crucial aspect has been to identify target groups: people who speak one of the languages of the Emdel consortium and are interested in the topics of our on-line courses. Due to the collaboration within the partnership, contacts with some associations have been activated and therefore the 'Virtual Mobility' process was started.

One of the challenges for Vox, Norway, has been to find external organisations interested in using the products made available for this purpose. When we were approaching the organisations, another challenge was the explanation of the project's aims and the benefits that the organisation could get in taking part in the process, using our e-learning courses in their original languages.

There is a considerable variety of DL products in the database, and also in the DL products that have been made available by each of the providers for the purpose of Virtual Mobility. The variety of on line courses made it more difficult to select one particular organisation. The choice of the external organisation depended on several factors, such as the language of its members, the potential target groups and the topics which could be of interest for them. Success in this action very much depended on direct contacts with potentially interested organisations, making clear what could be the benefits for them.

5.4 The experiences

Tuscany Region

Tuscany Region got in contact with other public institutions (the employment office, the prefecture's immigrant office etc.) for the Virtual Mobility action, discussing with them the possibility of its realisation. A real occasion for the identification of a target group came from our Emdel partner, Gdansk University of Technology, which gave us a contact in Florence. We started the collaboration with the Italian-Hungarian Cultural Associations in Tuscany. Some of their members are choosing the on-line courses and they will attend them within the project time.

Vox

Vox managed to find three different organisations for the purpose of Virtual Mobility. Vox got into contact with a coordinator for the Polish organisations in Norway. After direct contacts with the coordinator, Vox reached an agreement with The Polish Association in Norway which chose, for the Polish minority group in Norway, a product provided by Gdansk University of Technology.

The two other organisations was the Italian language school in Oslo "Språkskolen CiaO" and the Norwegian-Hungarian Association in Norway.

The agreement with the Språkskolen CiaO foresaw the use of the Italian products provided through TRIO LMS. After some initial technical difficulties, the Språkskolen CiaO found the products interesting and intend to use them for their students.

Vox also accomplished an agreement between the Norwegian-Hungarian Association and the Szeged University in Hungary and enabling direct contact between the two organisations. In this case the target group is Norwegian students going to study in Hungary, children and spouses of Hungarians in Norway and Hungarians in Norway wanting to refresh their Hungarian language.

5.5 What did we learn from doing it

Due to the different social backgrounds and circumstances in the partner countries, what we learned from the Virtual Mobility action in the Emdel project concerned mainly the different ways of approaching and reaching the same goals, according to the specific national contexts. The work on the Virtual Mobility action also lead to some reflections on the feasibility of the aim and activities of this action.

Having to reach the aims of Virtual Mobility, we realised the speed and the extent of the development within the information and communication technologies the last few years since the Emdel project was initiated. We have learned that most educational institutions in Europe now have their own websites which provide easy and direct access to the courses and services they offer. Due to effective search engines and easy access to these websites, the Virtual Mobility may seem a less relevant course of action than it was a few years ago.

However, this does not mean that external organisations will not find relevant courses in the Emdel database in the future. By approaching external organisations with a small and diverse selection of courses as in the Virtual Mobility action, it proved difficult to realise the aims of this action. When external organisations have access to all the products in the Emdel database, they will certainly be able to find high quality DL products suitable for their goals and purposes.

A European project, not only Emdel, always comprehends many different socio-cultural contexts, and therefore it has to face many different issues, seen sometimes as a problem, challenge or as an opportunity. A certain flexibility in the application of some rules is necessary, with the aim to respect differences and valorising own characteristics and resources, towards the creation of a proper Europe.

CHAPTER VI

FORMASUP MASTERS DEGREE: AN EXPERIENCE INTERTWINING VALORIZATION AND VIRTUAL MOBILITY ACROSS EUROPE

By Marianne Poumay

6.1 Introduction

In September 2002, the University of Liège launched a postgraduate degree (called FORM@SUP) in Higher Education Instructional Development⁴. This FORMASUP degree (Poumay, 2003a) is coordinated by LabSET, support Lab for Telematic Learning, a research unit of the University. The degree aims at helping enrolled colleagues develop their projects in one of the two following areas: PBL (Problem Based Learning) or ODL (Open and Distance Learning).

The orientation dedicated to PBL is under the responsibility of the Educational Board of the Faculty of Medicine, coordinated by Prof. J. Boniver. The faculty of medicine of the University of Liège has adopted (and adapted) the PBL approach in 2002, as described in Boniver 2004.

The orientation dedicated to ODL design, production and delivery leads to the production of quality courses in local languages over the Internet, through a TECCC approach⁵. This degree also acts as an incentive (due to formal accreditation) as well as recognition for the involvement of the faculty members and external trainers in the continuing improvement of their courses of which they are “both the designers and the actors, having to consider as well long term objectives and short term constrains” (Leclercq, 1998, 103).

This chapter will first present the FORMASUP curriculum, then will focus on the learner support in FORMASUP, to allow for a better understanding of the Emdel components of this program before discussing future possibilities.

⁴ This degree is organised by the LabSET under the responsibility of Dieudonné Leclercq and Marianne Poumay, creators of this curriculum coordinated by Chantal Dupont and Laurent Leduc.

⁵ Training Embedded Coached Course Construction, as detailed in Poumay 2003c

This chapter is partly based on the authors' presentation at the EDEN 2003 Oldenburg research workshop, where FORMASUP had been presented as an innovative international curriculum.

6.2 The FORMASUP curriculum

We describe hereafter the 7 main characteristics of FORMASUP.

Focused on the Participant's Personal Project

FORMASUP is mostly targeted towards University Professors and Teaching Assistants and, more generally, Higher Education Specialists. The main thread of the whole curriculum will be the Participant's Personal Project (PPP) that usually consists, in the ODL orientation, in developing one or several online pieces of a course that has been fundamentally reconsidered according to the NEC-OME-RER methodology (see below). Therefore, this approach, apparently concentrated on eLearning, constitutes a Trojan horse for the global revision of the instructional design of each participant's course.

The NEC-OME-RER acronym stands for the successive steps of course development:

- Needs analysis (N), analysis of the Existing (E), Conception or design (C);
- Refining the conception stage: definition of Objectives (O), of Methods (M) and Evaluation principles (E);
- Development of the resources (R), field testing or Experimentation (E), Regulation or constant feed-back loops (R).

FORMASUP will provide theoretical contents just in time to parallel the development of the PPP that should evolve at the same pace than the "virtual class".

Conditioned by a selection process

To be selected in FORMASUP, candidates have to submit a written application. They describe their project, the needs it would answer, the time and team available to work on the project, the institutional support proposed, etc. After a first selection, they are invited to an interview. Criteria for selecting participants include the degree of feasibility of the project (realism in goals, existing material, past experience, available time in the participant's schedule) and, most of all, the motivation of the candidates.

In 2002, 11 ODL projects had been selected. 14 new ones have been selected in 2003 and 18 in 2004. Those projects cover a wide content diversity, each course concerning a different domain. The professors involved come from different higher education institutions (including the university of Liège) and different countries (Belgium, France, UK, Morocco, United States and Lithuania).

Offering options in its 60 ECTS curriculum

This one year curriculum “weights” 60 ECTS (European Credits Transfer System), subdivided into four parts:

- The common core courses weight 18 ECTS. Contents concern:
 - General Issues (mainly philosophical, sociological and political ones) such as the academic professionalism, the students’ motivation, the quality and long-term objectives of Higher Education, ethical issues, etc.
 - Pedagogical Issues such as the definition of objectives, of methods and of evaluation principles and tools, insuring a “triple consistency” between the three poles.
- The specific orientation courses weight 18 ECTS for each of the two orientations (ODL / PBL). Each participant chooses one orientation.
- The PPP development weights 18 ECTS.
- External Valorizations weight 6 ECTS. As often proposed in adult learning, they consist in reporting on readings, participations to conferences, round tables, contacts, visits, poster discussions, etc.,

For credits

The PPP is judged via an individual (written) report and its public presentation and discussion facing a jury of five members. For the ODL participants, the quality of the final online course is also assessed using a quality grid, 4 times per year, on demand. Only the final assessment is graded.

The mastery of the common core courses and specific orientation courses contents are judged by

- Their integration into the personal report (including proper references).
- Exchange seminars (4 per year) where each participant presents the stage of development of his/her PPP.
- Virtual seminars (4 per year also), in which, for each of those and in a very formalized way, synchronous (chat sessions) and asynchronous meetings (forums) as well as an online test help prepare an individual exercise of transfer of those new contents and ideas into the PPP.
- A collaborative assignment based on a theme chosen out of 4 and evaluated first through an oral presentation (formative exercise), then through a written report.
- The final grade is a combination of those upper-mentioned notes.

Featuring active and varied methods

Activities are organised, in which the professors themselves (target public of FORMASUP) are exposed to a variety of teaching and learning approaches: they create, explore, practice, experiment, imitate, receive and debate and metalearn. These 8 *Events of Learning Model* (8LEM) can be seen as the post-Copernician revolution⁶, in response to Gagne & Briggs' (1974) *Events of Instruction*. This variety of learning approaches is qualitatively important for the program (Leclercq, 2004; Poumay, 2003b). It applies the “practice what we preach” principle, where the staff really tries to diversify the learners representations of what could be. It also applies the “isomorphism” principle, i.e. to have those teachers live learning experiences that they could help their own students live.

Exploiting eLearning

Courses are organised partly at a distance. The WebCT platform facilities are exploited to make the professors familiar with:

- The usual communication tools (e-mail, bulletin board, calendar, portfolios, group spaces and several chat rooms)
- Road maps and a detailed planning of the distance and face-to-face (or videoconferencing, for the remote groups) activities
- Precise descriptions of the objectives and sequence of each activity
- Multiple links to deepen pedagogical and technical resources
- Practical grids and tools corresponding to the ODL design steps
- Slides and videos presenting some theoretical points, testimonies and “best practice” examples

Formative tests allowing for feed-back loops and revisions of the course.

Videoconference is used to have international partners participate as invited experts to some debates and case analyses or, most of the time, simply to allow for communication between our French and English speaking groups of participants. As our Lithuanian participants, for example, don't come to Belgium to share with their colleagues, the whole curriculum has to be organised at a distance.

Collaboration with Kaunas Technical University (KTU) in Lithuania has given to this aspect a particular quality since the ODL Centre of KTU has developed a system called VIPS (Interactive Video Presentation and Lecturing System) and allowed us to use it for FORMASUP. This system enables real time videoconference accessible from any point of the world as well as interactive

⁶ This expression refers to the educational movement that has placed the learner (and not the teacher) in the centre of the scholar system just as Copernic placed the sun (and not the earth) in the centre of the solar system.

online questioning and recording with possibilities of re-accessing and re-editing the interactions later. The VIPS postproduction facilities have not been widely used so far but they will be more and more important for us in the next few years.

Dedicating a central role to learner support

Following Charlier & Perraya (2000), we define learner support as “ all the functions, roles and tasks aiming at guiding, helping and supporting the learners engaged in a training system partly or totally at a distance in achieving all the individual or collaborative activities. Tutoring concerns the learning aspects, but also the technological, relational and meta-cognitive aspects”.

As an introduction, Brindley & al (2003, 138) mention Salmon (2002, 1) who clearly indicates the necessity of tutoring and its importance in distance learning: “Successful and productive online teaching is a key feature of positive, scalable and affordable e-learning project and processes. Regardless of the sophistication of the technology, online learners do not wish to do without their human supporters.”

More than just answering the students’ expectations, tutoring also improves the quality of the learning process. For Fox (2003, 250), “ A moderate level of CMC participation substantially improves the overall quality of the DE learning experience”.

Humans are needed!

In FORMASUP, the learner support is very demanding, just like in all those environments considered “interactive” as described by Mary Thorpe (2002, 107): “Courses at this end of the spectrum will have been designed from the beginning in order to take advantage of the interactive potential of online learning. (...) tutors must of course be content experts, but they will also need even more skills of learning facilitation than the conventional tutor (...) There may be some course materials prepared in advance, but (...) It is the purpose of the online interaction to use the learners themselves as a resource, and to build on their experience, reading and perspectives.”

To facilitate contacts between the participants, but also between participants and coaches (at least at the beginning), a section of the Website allows for a description of each one, with pictures, texts and links. Peters (2003, 67) notes that “ All participants think that photos and biographies are a general enrichment of any distance education course ”. Peters explains the reasons for the interest of such presentation in the upper mentioned Master of Distance Education. However, FORMASUP organises frequent visual contacts (face-to-face or videoconference) with its participants, what lowers the mid- and long term interest of those presentations. They can still play an important role at the beginning of the year in facilitating first contacts, accelerating group building and establishing a personal relationship between the participants and their tutors/coaches.

Illustration: close coaching in two different activities

Each participant is in close contact with two or three LabSET staff members. We really consider this close coaching as one of the key success factors (Delfosse & al, 2003) of this combination of training and course development. This close and personalised relation is mentioned by the participants as one of the best points of this (although very demanding) experience. To better understand the central role of human tutors or coaches in FORMASUP, we describe hereafter the role they play in two of the main features of the curriculum:

- Close coaching in the core common activity. It mainly consists in a collaborative study of one theme chosen out of four, one tutor being responsible for the animation of each theme. The tutor posts introductory messages, guides the sub-group in making first reading choices in the proposed literature, agrees deadlines with the sub-group for intermediate productions, discusses arguments, etc. Each group of 3 individuals studies one theme, presented as a practical case (Hohl & Kanouté, 1999), one of the themes being studied both in French and in English. The cases comprise a title, a humoristic drawing (see below), a few paragraphs to set the scene and a selected and commented bibliography (minimum 40 commented documents in French or English). After 4 months, face-to-face (or videoconferencing for the Lithuanian groups) presentations give the sub-groups the opportunity to present their work to the whole group. Comments and feedbacks from the other sub-groups allow for improvements before the submission of the final reports. Of course, all participants have access to all the discussion areas, but they are so deeply involved in one of them that they usually dedicate less time in exploring and commenting others' work. For most participants, the oral presentations are a unique opportunity to discover unexplored fields. In 2003, the 4 themes were the following, subject to change with actuality:
 - Being a teacher, what does it mean nowadays?
 - What are the objective and missions of Higher Education?
 - How to lead an innovation in Higher Education?
 - How to set up a quality process in Higher Education?
- Close coaching in the PPP. If we use as example the projects developed in the ODL option of FORMASUP, the PPP is the online course each participant will design, develop and experiment during the program. Their coaching is structured by common tools, which each coach proposes to his/her participants. Coaching is either face-to-face for those who can travel to Liège or through other synchronous facilities (mainly chat and videoconference) for those coming from France, UK or Lithuania. It also takes place asynchronously, since an enormous amount of emails are necessary to keep close contact. From the experience of the former years, we can estimate this

individual project coaching to about half a day per week and per project, which represents a heavy workload for both coaches and participants. In 2004, we grouped the projects in order to both reduce the coaching time and favour peer-to-peer interactions. Each coach works now with a group of 3 projects progressing at the same pace. This new modality might also reduce the stress of not meeting the deadlines, the participants sharing now more in their group of 3 than when they were either in the large group, or alone with their coach. In the PPP, the coach is also the link-person with the graphic designer and web technician, in order for each project to make the best use of the existing resources.

6.3 The Emdel input

As mentioned earlier, FORMASUP is now available for any English speaking European. The curriculum has even evolved into a multicultural experience, benefiting from international tutoring. This process developed through several steps detailed hereafter, giving our curriculum a real international added value.

In our university, giving FORMASUP an international life asked for an additional coordination. Laurent Leduc, from LabSET, organized the international contacts and coordinated all the actions listed below. Not only did this real challenge ask for a mastery of the content and processes of the curriculum, but also for abilities in planning and project management, creativity in finding new solutions, flexibility in the dialogue with our new partners and constant negotiation with the internal team in charge of the FORMASUP French groups.

In addition to the Emdel funding for the translations, reflections and numerous necessary meetings, the whole internationalisation of FORMASUP has been facilitated by a CGRI (administration for international relations in Wallonia and Brussels, Belgium) funding. The Lithuanian participants were reimbursed their tuition fees, comprising some videoconferencing fees for KTU and a grant covering continuing training for the International Tutor (see further). This financial aid was crucial to allow our Lithuanian colleagues to enrol in a northern degree.

English contents and English tutoring

FORMASUP, in 2002, was entirely and only in French. Both the content and the tutoring were in French, keeping non-French speakers from participating and getting the diploma. In 2003, the Emdel project allowed us to translate the whole curriculum in English, in order to test the possibilities of “exchanging” this product throughout Europe. European enrolments were a real challenge for our institution. The admission procedure as well as the enrolment documentation and forms have been translated also, to allow the whole administrative process to happen in English.

The translations have been made by an external translation company, but we had to carefully select this company to make sure that the translator that would work on our documents would be someone having worked or knowing well the teaching/ learning field. In a second step, the translations were edited by the LabSET team, in order to make sure there weren't any major comprehension problem. The "field specific" issues had to be taken care of. The elements of the curriculum that have been considered as too specific to the Belgian school system or Belgian experiences were not translated but were replaced by videoconference discussions with our "remote" participants, focussing on their local context.

An interesting added value of such an internationalisation is the culture mix that it favours. Each participant can choose where to go and in which language and switch from one to the other one whenever he/she wants. All participants have the schedule of the activities and can participate, if they want, to a French activity or / and an English one. They can discuss with participants in several forums if they master several languages. For example, some Belgian participants (from the French speaking group) attended the videoconferencing sessions with the Lithuanians, to be aware of their projects and gain an additional experience.

Lithuanian contents

At the end of 2003, a second step was made in agreement with our Lithuanian participants. We decided that the most important pieces (like the main pedagogical models, working charts and tools as well as some organizational data) would also be translated into Lithuanian. If English might be used as an "international language", we should also provide the most we can in the native language of the participants in order to facilitate their appropriation of the learning material.

At that time, on the FORMASUP course website, three languages were displayed for some contents, tutoring remaining in English for any international participant.

International tutoring

The next improvement took place in 2004, when we concluded an agreement with one of the participants from the first "English speaking cohort" of FORMASUP. Airina Volungeviciene, who had brilliantly succeeded as a FORMASUP participant, became our international tutor in Lithuania. Her roles were precisely described in a formal agreement signed by the universities of Liège and Kaunas. This agreement could serve as guidelines for any European university wanting to set up this kind of international support for an existing program.

The main role of the International tutor is to assist the international participants (in this case, the Lithuanian participants) in their FORMASUP studies. This comprises a support in the development of their individual projects and in the understanding of the main pedagogical models behind. It also includes an organizational role of

reminding the deadlines and helping the participants meet all the program requirements. This important role especially asks for a perfect mastery of the content, for an ability to plan and monitor several projects in parallel and for a good human contact with the participants.

International jury

In her facilitation role, the international tutor is also in charge of contacting local professors and authorities to serve as jury members for the local participants. In a balanced partnership, local scientists should be questioned on the quality of the work done and the results obtained as well as their Belgian counterparts. Professor Ostacevicius, Vice-rector of KTU, has participated as a member of all Lithuanian juries. All final oral presentations in English have taken place in videoconferencing conditions.

International study exchanges

To keep up with the latest developments of the program, its content and its methods, the international tutor is invited to participate in two weeks of continuing training in Belgium, together with the Belgian FORMASUP team (one week in October, one week in March). This team work seems essential, to get detailed feedbacks from the international tutor and feed the curriculum with interesting inputs from all its actors. Face-to-face meetings and activities are also important for affective reasons, if we want to consider those actors as a real team, valuing each other.

Virtual mobility

Made possible by the first steps of translation and localization, this last step of signing an international tutoring agreement can be seen as a logical follow up of the two first ones. It is, but it brought much more than just another formal agreement. It pictured an innovative way of knowledge and experience sharing in Europe.

Indeed, this international tutoring feature, not only defined and agreed upon but also practiced in an online full degree granting curriculum, illustrates a real “virtual mobility” process, allowing international participants to virtually take part in a localized foreign curriculum, taking the best out of it and benefiting from a scientific and organizational local support. At a European scale, the growth of this kind of agreements could largely contribute to an increase of the global level of instruction and training, avoiding the well-known process of “reinventing the wheel”.

Virtual mobility, through e-learning courses and local tutors, is certainly one of the good answers to the need for high-level qualifications throughout Europe.

6.4 Discussion

In Belgium, the critical mass of ODL courses is not yet reached, but is really in progress. Quality courses are developing, thanks to regional initiatives and university curricula. At the same time, we address the problem of staff development, impacting the quality of the course offer at the university and, consequently, trying to address the problem of the huge failure rate. FORMASUP is at the crossroad of those important challenges.

Emdel contributed to an international enlargement of the curriculum, offering translations, localizations, then international tutoring to insure a virtual mobility in order to spread the impact of this innovative curriculum. The multiplier effect of FORMASUP is one of the reasons for its success: touching 15 to 20 faculty or teaching assistants per year and profoundly revisit their practice impacts thousands of students each year with, we hope, an increase of the quality of their learning and, in consequence, of their academic success.

In 2004, more Lithuanian participants have registered, including a teacher at Roosevelt University in Chicago. In Lithuania itself, two different institutions are now involved in FORMASUP. We see universities as more and more aware of the importance of having faculty and teaching assistants design and implement quality eLearning courses in their own institutions.

In 2004, some changes have been brought to the FORMASUP curriculum, keeping the same objectives but adding some virtual seminars and synchronous communication (moderated focus chats). We think that those new measures will facilitate the learner support and allow for a better simultaneous monitoring of learning in several countries. The Lithuanian experience has played a role in those decisions, bringing us advice from our Eastern colleagues. International experience sharing should be further explored. We will focus on this important aspect through the evaluation of the new international (starting with Lithuania) tutoring experience organized with Emdel. There is space for both research and valorization in this interesting field of tutoring!

And finally, we'd like to underline the real pleasure we had in working with our Lithuanian colleagues in FORMASUP. We discovered a different culture, we visited each other and we felt closer and closer. Europe enlargement brought us new colleagues, new partners, new friends.

6.5 The FORMASUP experience viewed by the Lithuanian users

By Airina Volungeviciene and Gytis Cibulskis

Introduction

The first six Lithuanian participants from Distance Education Centre at Kaunas University of technology joined FORMASUP postgraduate degree in Higher Education Staff Development (Poumay, 2003) being partner institutions in Leonardo da Vinci Emdel pilot project (<http://www.Emdel.org>) . The degree suggested ODL (Open and Distance Learning) option for Lithuanian participants, with close coaching and tutoring by using WebCT learning environment and e-mail, and video conferencing sessions for experience sharing and presentations. It was very challenging for Lithuanian participants to join this programme. All these staff members from Distance Education Centre (DEC) at Kaunas University of Technology (KTU) were engaged in the development of ODL not only at the University, but all over Lithuania, actively participating in activities of National Association of Distance Education in Lithuania (<http://www.ndma.lt>), in Lithuanian Distance Education Network (<http://liedm.lt>) and development of new strategy for ODL implementation in the country.

Once the Centre was established at the University, our responsibilities mainly were directed towards the development of distance education in the University, to introduce distance education, to create the system of online learning design and delivery, teacher and learner support and management of this process.

Though slowly, but firmly, the Centre started designing and delivering distance learning material in a variety of forms, to various specialists, and, of course, to University teachers. However, very different skills and learning needs required very individual approach to each teacher and learner, and the Centre started the creation of a system that would help to supply the needs of various specialists, on different levels and subjects. This way proceeding, the need for teacher training on course design, course delivery and learner support were distinguished as urgent needs in the Centre and the University.

Moreover, Distance Education Centre had strong skills and experience in development and application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools (focused on technological side of the matter) and it was just the starting point to perform research and find the way to apply these tools methodologically, so that learning and teaching efficiency were maintained and increased.

Though we felt that the need for research and training on educational use of ICT is evident, there was no experience or evidence that could be followed in Lithuania, as Distance Education Centre was among the leading institution in the field of ODL in the country.

However, though teachers had and still have to overcome their fears of losing control over their students, of having insufficient ICT skills, of giving up their traditional methods and starting new, unknown ways of delivery, distance education centres, other units responsible for the development of distance education, should provide them with all possible help and support.

Thus the advent of FORMASUP to Lithuania with a possibility to study and participate in the programme, to gain new skills and get acquainted with the ready and tested model on ODL methodology, suggested by the programme developers⁷, was not only what was useful, but, moreover, what was badly needed and necessary for further steps in order to build up the tutor and learner support systems at the University, and, further on, broader in Lithuania.

Realisation of institution needs

Though offered a variety of courses, University teachers still were not offered training that would cover the aspects of online learning planning, designing and delivery, as such courses did not exist not only at our institution, but all over Lithuania.

Supervision that was suggested for the participants in FORMASUP programme was to train our staff members on how to design courses for tutors themselves, as well as how to plan and implement course design. Thus we saw the process of learning not only as designing our courses on various subjects, but we saw it also as practice that would be applied later on with tutor training at our University. In other words, the programme suggested served as a „process template” or again, as Marianne Poumay calls it in the previous chapter, „the “isomorphism” principle, i.e. to have those teachers live learning experiences that they could help their own students live”(Poumay, 2004).

Our main activities are the contribution to the development of ODL systems and theories all over Lithuania, analysis of ODL policy in Europe and the development of ODL policy in Lithuania, design of ICT tools for ODL delivery, and, of course, tutor training on ODL design and delivery. Therefore, the courses chosen for

⁷ LabSET at University of Liege under responsibility of Dieudonne Leclercq and Marianne Poumay, curriculum coordinated by Chantal DUPONT and Laurent Leduc. It offers also a PBL (Problem Based Learning) orientation (not developed here) under the responsibility of the Faculty of Medicine (Prof. J. Boniver) of the University of Liège.

personal projects in FORMASUP programme corresponded to these topics in order to respond to these needs. Thus the projects to be implemented in FORMASUP by Lithuanian participants were the following:

- ODL Theories and Systems (2 participants decided to implement this project with different target audience)
- National and International Policy of Open and Distance Education
- Synchronous/ Asynchronous ICT Tools (2 participants decided to implement 2 different projects focusing on 1) synchronous and 2) asynchronous tools)
- Online Tutoring

Though the courses had to have different target groups and audience, all of them were in one or another way addressed for University teachers and academics, as they were intended to train the end-users on how to design ODL, how to use ICT tools in training and how to deliver online learning for students. Thus here again we may see two beneficial levels of apparition of future courses:

1) the supervision and training in FORMASUP helps to develop participants competencies to design online courses of high quality, with learner support system assurance via active and practical learning, and,

2) these competencies are transferred further on to other course participants and learners (University teachers, students and adult learners) who will participate in these ready made courses, as they will observe the courses being students themselves and will benefit from the new approach and methodology that the courses will be based on the idea of 8 Learning Events (8 LEM, Leclercq, Poumay, 2004).

Though there were different topics for personal projects, all the projects were implemented according to the same NECOMERER model (Poumay, 2004). Thus all the participants were expected to perform (N) needs analysis for their online course, analysis of the (E) existing resources, to design (C) conception of the course by defining course (O) objectives, (M) methods and (E)evaluation, design the course online by designing online (R) resources, (E) experiment the course with real

We should note here that a very important issue in the possibility to participate in FORMASUP programme was the English language option. Only 2 out of 6 participants would have had a possibility to participate in the programme, and would have not benefited so much from its contents, but only partially, if the programme had been in French. Translation of the programme, to our mind, tremendously enlarged the number of participants from other EU countries for the future. Though even further on, much additional communication and explanation was necessary for some participants in order to completely benefit from the

Curriculum thus bringing the idea to have translation into the native language of the participants, too.

Tutor training needs at KTU

Kaunas University of Technology is the biggest technological university in the Baltic States, and the variety of subjects, mainly in the area of exact sciences, usually have several teachers delivering the same course. In other words, course teachers are not necessarily the course authors. Therefore, the teachers at the University target group of course tutors is much broader than the group of course authors, and the authors who design a course are already acquainted with certain ICT and methods used in a particular course, while future tutors need introduction to methods and tools from the very beginning, and much more support later on.

Needs analysis – the first part of NECOMERER model – guided all the participants to evaluate the needs for the courses and personal projects at the institution, among the tutors and the learners. It was the right moment for us to analyse the existing resources and tools and to evaluate the situation. Needs analysis was important not only to find out about existing resources, skills and needs, but also to discuss the appropriate methods to be used for course design and delivery.

As one of the courses was planned to be *Online Tutoring*, the needs analysis performed for this personal project could represent the needs for tutor training at KTU in general, and the results of that survey could illustrate the overall situation and bring some evidence on the overall needs of FORMASUP programme for the reasons mentioned above.

The personal project *Online Tutoring* implemented in FORMASUP was just a small part of the training necessary for University tutors, while FORMASUP programme would cover all the aspects and would help University teachers to develop the competencies to be able to design and implement online learning themselves.

The survey performed for FORMASUP confirmed the necessity for the courses, helped to decide learning methods and delivery, as well as to find out the needs of though small, but definite number of respondents, their position and thoughts, as well as expectations. After the needs analysis, it became much easier to define learning objectives for the courses, general and specific ones, and approved usage of active learning methods.

For example, for *Online Tutoring* course, the following topics were chosen for the course activities after the survey (they were indicated by the respondents as really necessary ones):

- tutor roles and tasks
- learner support and motivation
- experience and expectations
- problem based interaction (encountered problems and their solutions)
- looking for solutions for “partner” problems
- developing of learning tasks
- reflections on each other’s presentations
- playing tutor roles and exchanging experience
- the differences between traditional teaching and online tutoring
- interaction between the tutor and the learner, learner – learner, learner and virtual learning environment
- activating/ moderating/ motivating students
- evaluation principles and feedback.

The topics were chosen for the course after the interviews with University teachers, as these issues turned to be very important and urgent for the respondents.

Besides, the survey revealed some aspects that are of great importance for further activities in teacher training, like dissemination of information about Centre’s service and support provided for teachers. It is expected that the course contributes to the learning process at the University, because after the training, we should improve and evoke:

- positive changes in teacher-student relationships
- quality assurance of online learning process at university and other participating institutions
- open discussions and teacher participation in online learning process development
- teacher self-confidence and autonomy in subject teaching and tutoring.

Analysis of existing recourses

After Needs analysis the second step - the Analysis of the Existing - was also implemented by all the participants.

The Quality criteria grid developed in the Emdel project by the LabSET (see also their website⁸) that was very helpful in defining the quality criteria of the course. It let the participants to produce the grid for the analysis of existing resources for their courses. The Quality criteria grid helped to concentrate on the aspects and criteria that determine whether a resource is worth suggesting for the learners, whether it is of appropriate quality or not. There were some useful ideas related with this grid, like introducing readings and resources into a course using similar

⁸ <http://www.labset.net>

forms and selection criteria. This again was contributinal as it let the participants find their own way of further steps: introduce references, introduce resources, introduce criteria and encourage their learners to apply ready made ones or define new grids in the forms of activities and practical learning. So even simple tools designed in FORMASUP programme serve as potential templates for individual approach, for elaboration of their usage, for adaptation and elaboration of their forms, as well as individualisation of tutor and learner needs.

The activity on analysis of the Existing also was beneficial for us because we found lots of interesting online resources for our courses, the ones that we never came across. Help and support were again provided by our supervisors at LabSET, University of Liege, who found international resources, even in our native language – the ones we never came across!

It could be mentioned here that, for example, while Form@sup project *Online Tutoring* was implemented, it was evident that there existed various literature resources written, and lots of websites with useful information on Tutor roles, competencies, evaluation strategies and forms, problematic issues and other things. For example, it would not be worth introducing another classification of tutor roles, when there was one presented by Zane Berge (1995) at http://www.emoderators.com/moderators/teach_online.html, or classification of competencies, when there were nice grids produced by G.Salmon at <http://www.life-longstudy.com/chart.htm>. So this activity helped in finding the resources and including them into our courses.

New philosophy and new approach – the model and the solution

Again, in FORMASUP training, we were guided to learn and plan the situations that our future learners, including teachers from various institutions and other target groups, will be studying the courses with their individual and possibly very different experiences, will bring different problems encountered in their professional experience, as well as different attitudes. The “Pyramidal Architecture of Competencies” (D.Leclercq, 1999) helped all of us to get prepared to produce courses which would not be based on specific issues and questions, but would suggest future learners to gain skills and develop competencies that would help them to become independent and autonomous actors themselves. This model could be referred to and used as an example in various learning situations and events, while designing interactive, practice based learning.

It was really challenging for us to get acquainted with 8 Learning Events⁹ and to use them in designing our course conceptions. The last learning/ teaching event – Meta-learning – was especially interesting and useful for us, once there was

⁹ Leclercq D. Technologie de l'Éducation. DES FORMASUP 2003-2004.

considerable part of the Curriculum dedicated to describe metareflective activities in learning on FORMASUP website, and we tried to apply it as the basis for our whole projects and online courses. We realised that our learners with very different and specific experience should be trained according to their specific and individual needs, and probably the only possibility to do this could be to invite them for meta-reflection, to see how they succeeded, to find out their specific problems, and to try to find a solutions (all together, with all co-learners, the tutor and available resources). This way, they would apply not only meta-reflection method, but the rest of the learning and teaching events – again, all 8 events would be actively used!

Reflection on experience and practice evaluation

FORMASUP programme was not only an active practical training programme including possibilities of observation and modelling, but also it suggested to us, the learners, a tool and a model for further expertise and evaluation of our products and the products produced by our target group – mainly University teachers. Approach that we encountered in FORMASUP emphasised the focus on consistent implementation and evaluation of learning needs through reflecting on our personal practice, activities and projecting our perception onto our learners.

The model introduced by our supervisors introduced the milestones for evaluation process which could be the starting point in the process of practice improvement. We are really happy that we not only received knowledge, examples and models, but we consciously underwent the process of training ourselves, that led us to further applications of this experience and revolutionary changing of existing and creating non-existing in Lithuania approaches.

As the main outcome of all this, we created conceptions of our own courses that are now based on active participation, where our students learn and gain practical skills not just by receiving, but also by creating, investigating, exploring, debating, practicing, experimenting and reflecting on their own actions. We learnt to define the measurable learning objectives, and the system of evaluation in our courses now brings challenges for ICT specialists to create new evaluation tools. These tools would help to reduce tutors' workload to evaluate and provide feedback to individual and open tasks, rather than just create virtual tests with automatic responses for large student groups.

What does it mean being a learner?

For Distance Education Centre staff members, who design and deliver online learning themselves, it was really useful to feel what our learners feel being limited by a distance and hostile virtual learning environments, though we did not, probably, feel the latter aspect. It was a great experience to find out learning

objectives, to discover learning methods and even evaluation criteria and forms, and, of course, to do our best to try to reach our learning results. It was interesting for us, first international FORMASUP learners, to learn cultural differences, language and terminology difference, and, of course, different pedagogical approach that had never been encountered by ourselves in Lithuania. We learnt a lot in terms of communication and in terms of presentation of the Curriculum, in course organisation and administration.

We received really close and high level supervision, and our human relationships and personal communication were to a great extent leading to positive and encouraging steps in our personal projects in FORMASUP. Moreover, we had a possibility to observe our supervisors and to evaluate their work from the professional point of view, too.

Emdel provided the possibilities

First, we had a possibility to participate in Emdel project and meet the team of international experts and people with various experience, and to benefit from participation in the project in various aspects, including the exchange of courses and best practices. If Emdel project had not existed, we might have not met the people, we might have not had a possibility also to learn about FORMASUP, and even to have the programme in the English, and consequently, in Lithuanian language.

We should also acknowledge the fact that this project provided possibilities for all the meetings, development of ideas and bringing them to life and reality in various forms of cooperation and collaboration, including FORMASUP. If not Emdel, Lithuanian trainers would have not had possibilities to participate in the programme.

Moreover, the Lithuanian version of FORMASUP Curriculum has been added to the programme website thanks to Emdel project, and this is very beneficial for the learners to facilitate perception of the curriculum.

Emdel project also provided other possibilities for broadening the scope of performed activities and dissemination and valorization of them all over Lithuania. Namely, after successful completion of FORMASUP programme among the first Lithuanian participants, this information was spread to other Lithuanian institutions who joined EDMEL Project data base, as well as expressed their wish in participation in a new FORMASUP study year.

6 Lithuanian teachers from other Universities and other education institutions and 1 Lithuanian teacher in the USA joined FORMASUP 2004-2005, and Distance

Education Centre at Kaunas University of Technology undertook facilitation functions of their learning process, as well as facilitation of implementation of their personal projects for FORMASUP and administrative aspects.

Thus new and new people get involved in continuous Emdel project idea dissemination, by joining, sharing and contributing, as well as gaining and receiving by learning and discovering.

We hope this process once started and gaining the form of FORMASUP and other cases will continue and will not stop, but, on the contrary, will change overall philosophy of teaching by using existing models and solutions, experience and results, and will build on them applying individual needs and expectations.

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CHAPTER VII

Dissemination

By Anna Grabowska

What does dissemination mean, and how is it performed in the Emdel project?

In the Emdel project it is declared that “dissemination should be done through the presentation of a model of realization, of a European Teletraining Network in order to demonstrate the concrete possibilities of construction, starting from an existent distance training system based locally but with trans national connections. The dissemination also aims at extending the number of agencies of distance training which want to co-operate for the maintenance of the catalogue developed in the Emdel project and for the increase of the exchange of products”.

Being more concrete while thinking about effective dissemination actions project’s partners should be aware about creating interest, curiosity and enthusiasm about the Emdel project by taking part in the following actions:

- Organising seminars and meetings at local level
- Organising seminars and meetings at international level
- Presenting the project and it’s results at the conferences and exhibitions
- Writing articles in specialized magazine
- Taking part in the final seminar

Finally as a result of these actions more visitors should have been visited the Emdel website and more registered users should be in the database.

Summary of the partner dissemination actions – see Annex 7

Reflections from an economy of training perspective

*By Paolo Federighi
(Consultant of Tuscany Region)*

Convenience

The object of this volume was to contribute towards building a European E-learning System. As first conclusion we propose that such an aim must have a twofold effect: fostering cooperation among the different suppliers and favouring learners' virtual mobility.

The main difficulties derive from the intrinsic weaknesses characterizing e-learning and from obstacles to individuals' mobility.

Following Ramble (2001) the possible weaknesses of distance education are: "(i) interactivity, the dialogue between the student and the teacher, which is the Achilles' Heel of distance education, where this kind of student support tends to be a cost-driver taking away the efficiency advantages of distance education; (ii) the wide scope of courses and disciplines, which tends to erode scale economies; (iii) and time lags between development and delivery as well as shelf life, which may endanger reasonable scale economies and may lead to content obsolescence".

As regards obstacles to individuals' mobility, the real problem – beyond digital divide – is represented by the monopolist attitudes of learning institutions that adopt policies of detention of learners inside their walls.

Yet the development of cooperation forms in e-learning is possible and advantageous since it can favour the solution of some economic problems raised by Ramale: scale economies and time lags.

The institutional costs of a fully developed e-education system would include:

1. Developing e-materials
2. Teaching (and assessing) students online
3. Accessing the web site
4. Administering students online
5. Providing the infrastructure and support within which e-education can operate
6. Planning and managing e-education at the macro-level.

Emdel experience makes us conclude that cooperation at international level allows reduction of costs and of time for developing e-materials and, through virtual mobility, of scale economies linked to assessing students on-line as well.

Valorization of learning materials in Emdel highlights the following essential data:

- Products valorised: 12 Distance Learning Courses
- Key characteristics: average duration above 20 learning hours (67 h)
- Average cost of Valorization per product: 8.767,00 euro
- Average cost of Valorization per hour: 182,66 euro ⁽¹⁰⁾
- Minimum cost: 1.000,00 euro
- Highest cost: 31.400,00 euro

Analysing expenditure categories, we can try to propose the following comments making evident where it is possible to have cost reduction effects. We should stress that cost reduction *varies considerably* because it is mostly connected with working hours and that the *amount of time involved in developing courseware varies significantly depending on media and how jobs are packaged*.

Staffing

Cost of staff time spent on developing material:

- instructional design, *moderate cost reduction*
- content development, *high cost reduction*
- text authoring, *high cost reduction*
- software development, *low cost reduction*
- multimedia design and production, *high cost reduction*
- course specific software development, *low cost reduction*
- content integration and testing, *no cost reduction*

⁽¹⁰⁾ For a comparison between the valorization costs and the production costs of on line courses, we use as an example the TRIO project's experience (Tuscany Region). The production of on line courses in TRIO project has an average cost per hour of 1.270,28 euro. The cost is calculated on a sample of 500 on line courses of 3 hours each.

- post-test modification costs, *no cost reduction*
- training, *no cost reduction*

Third party copyright can be a significant expense, but in Emdel partners solve this matter through different kinds of convenient solution (see Chapter IV-4.3.)

Materials production

Production costs:

- text production, *high cost reduction, but translation is needed*
- audio production, *no cost reduction*
- video production, *cost reduction*
- graphics production, *cost reduction*
- software production, *no cost reduction*

Staff costs, *high cost reduction*

Stocks, *high cost reduction*

Consumables, *no cost reduction*

Materials – annual revision (maintenance function)

Possible cost reduction based on a specific agreement with the original producer

Developmental testing of course

No cost reduction

As regards virtual mobility, cost analysis is more complicated since; concerning an experimental activity it required a special investment in the projecting and marketing phase. Nevertheless, the experience realized at the Lièges University shows how citizens of third countries could have their chance of accessing certified distance learning courses extended and at lower costs than physical mobility (average cost per enrolled user: tuition fee - 850 euro). At the same time it shows

how the increase of training supply could enhance the exploitation of products through the growth of costumers.

Building a European e-learning system

The essential tasks that we think should be assured with a view to building a European e-learning system are related to the following fundamental fields:

1. creating instruments favouring the knowledge of the supply of e-learning materials guaranteed by different European producers. This is fundamental non only for structured training courses but also for single didactic unity. Structured and lasting training courses could be relevant for individuals' mobility and to attract students' attention on different virtual university campus. Thus it is important to favour information and exchange or acquisition of single e-learning didactic units as well. These answer in fact two kinds of demand currently on the e-learning market: individual demand for self-training and the demand for vocational training institutes working on blended learning.
Actually it means to built a special information net capable of implementing a database and illustrating the outcomes. Emdel shows how it could be possible and profitable, but also how it is necessary to work for the stabilization and improvement of actions undertaken to achieve the fulfilment of an e-learning virtual permanent fair.
2. promoting virtual marketing of the whole supply, in mother-tongues if not with additional languages, with the aim of extending the knowledge of current opportunities.
3. introducing accompanying services to access e-learning supply at European level. This action requires technological support to help the relation among different producers of e-materials, between producers and customer institutes, between e-learning suppliers and individual learners. Beyond technological support we could conceive some political demand forms to sustain financial backing of individual costs (e-learning vouchers...).
4. supplying technical support services to acquire, exchange and valorise learning materials.

Vocational training quality and competences

Even though valorization of learning materials and other solutions can help in cutting e-learning costs, all analyses agree on asserting that e-learning costs keep anyway high and that they can be justified only on condition that e-learning could guarantee a high quality level.

Works on e-learning quality are many and full of promises. Nevertheless, as for physical training, the problem and final criterion is individual learning quality.

Emdel didn't take into consideration this e-learning feature. Yet, even with regard to learning object exchange and exploitation, what becomes necessary is to define a European competence system capable of supplying European vocational training with a common reference frame. If and when we will have a European classification system for competences, then it will be possible to identify the content of each learning material. We will clearly know which competences every single e-learning unit can supply and in which professional profile these competences can be spent. That will enable the development of exchange of products, promote virtual mobility and reword it with certifications that can be spent everywhere, and it will offer European citizens greater transparency guarantees related to the potential learning quality of learning products they are going to buy and because of which they will back up considerable indirect costs. That's why we should possibly build not only a system but also an internal organized and democratic market for e-learning.

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ANNEX 1 – The Catalogue

Organization card

This card contains information about course providers.

The screenshot shows the EMOEL website interface. At the top left is the EMOEL logo. The top right contains navigation links: "Join us | Contact us | Links | F.A.Q." and a "Printer area" button. A sidebar on the left lists navigation options: "CATALOGUE", "Browse categories", "Courses search", "Organizations list", "Organizations search", and "Glossary". Below the sidebar is a "PROJECT HISTORY" section. The main content area is titled "Organization description" and displays details for Gdańsk University of Technology. The details include Name, Email, Dept/Center Name, Responsible Dept/Center, Address Dept/Center, Country Dept/Center, Phone Dept/Center, Fax Dept/Center, Web Site Dept/Center, and Kind of Organization. Below this is an "Information" section with a paragraph describing DECTUG as an experimental didactical unit established in 1997. At the bottom of the page is a footer with navigation links: "Browse categories | Courses search | Organizations list | Organizations search | Glossary | PROJECT HISTORY" and "For all e-learning matters, visit: #learning@utp.edu.pl".

EMOEL

Join us | Contact us | Links | F.A.Q. | Printer area

CATALOGUE

- ▾ Browse categories
- ▾ Courses search
- ▾ Organizations list
- ▾ Organizations search
- ▾ Glossary

PROJECT HISTORY

Organization description

Name	Gdańsk University of Technology
Email	lerniad@p.gdansk.pl
Dept/Center Name	Distance Education Centre
Responsible Dept/Center	Anna Grabowska
Address Dept/Center	ul. Narutowicza 11/12 80-952 Gdańsk
Country Dept/Center	Poland
Phone Dept/Center	+48 58 3471240
Fax Dept/Center	+48 58 3471730
Web Site Dept/Center	http://www.dem.zg.gdansk.pl
Kind of Organization	University

Information

DECTUG is an experimental didactical unit, which realises pilot national and international projects involving computer networks and multimedia techniques in the process of continuing learning. The Distance Education Centre at Technical University of Gdańsk was established by the Rector of Technical University of Gdańsk on April 30, 1997 as a part of the Phare Multi-country Programme in Distance Education (Establishment and Operation of Regional Phare Distance Education Study Centre) project. Thanks to Phare funds, the Centre is equipped with modern computers and hardware. DECTUG goals are creating access for students and staff of the TUG to study materials, correspondence lessons, single and communication environment using LAN (Local Area Network), MAN (Metropolitan Area Network) and WAN (Wide Area Network) facilities, developing distance education course modules and adaptation of existing EU distance education course modules in subject areas of importance to the economic and social development in Poland, improving access to education and training by establishing the flexible teaching environment concerning distance, time, choice of course providers and teaching resources.

Go to our Courses

Browse categories | Courses search | Organizations list | Organizations search | Glossary | PROJECT HISTORY

For all e-learning matters, visit: #learning@utp.edu.pl

Home page | Join us | Contact us | Links | Help | Printer area

Course description card

This card contains all the information about the courses.

Basic information					
Identifier	SP1301				
Title	Spanish, step 1				
Location	http://demo.ssvh.se/kurser/SP1301/				
Author or creator	Märet Wik-Bretz				
Publisher	Swedish Agency for Flexible Learning				
Course's languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spanish • Swedish 				
Date of creation (dd/mm/yyyy)	08/12/1999				
Date of last updating (dd/mm/yyyy)	20/01/2002				
Date of beginning (dd/mm/yyyy)	00/00/0000				
Date of end (dd/mm/yyyy)	00/00/0000				
At the end of the course will NOT be delivered certificates					
Course is NOT provided free of charge	Cost in euro (€) Around 11 euros				
Learning-related information					
Subject covered	Foreign languages				
Target group/Beneficiary	Basic course for adults				
Course description					
<p>The course is internet based with a text/workbook ("all in one-book") and an audio cd or tape. It is divided into six units. Every unit ends with an autodiagnostic test and an assignment to submit to the teacher. Spoken tasks on the telephone are part of three assignments. One physical meeting (two days) out of three is compulsory. The length of the course is planned to be 20-25 weeks, but the start and the pace are individual and flexible. Examination opportunities are given once a month at five places in Sweden.</p>					
Course duration (total amount of hours)	200				
The course is organized in modules:	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Number of modules</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Average duration of each module (in hours)</td> <td>20-35</td> </tr> </table>	Number of modules	6	Average duration of each module (in hours)	20-35
Number of modules	6				
Average duration of each module (in hours)	20-35				
Level of course's complexity	-				
Prerequisites	Basic computer skills				
Course level - according to ISCED97	Level 3 - (Upper) secondary education				

Student and the teacher roles

The student makes her/his own planning (filling in an empty study plan) and sends it to the teacher. Then it is the student's responsibility to follow it. The dates for telephone conferences, the meeting and the examination are planned together. The teacher comments on the assignments and sends them back to the student within a couple of hours or 1-2 days. The teacher is available on telephone and via e-mail at office hours.

Kind of assignments and assessment

See above Short description of the course.

Comments

Course dates are flexible

At the end of the course will NOT be delivered formal credits**On line information****Medium used**

- Audiocassettes
- text books, etc.
- Website

Kind of on line communication system

- telephone
- e-mail
- teleconferences

Kind of on line services

- telephone
- help desk
- on-line guide
- on-line tutoring

Compliant of the course to the e-learning standard

-

E-learning platform

-

Go to course demo

ANNEX 2 – Quality table

By M. Poumay & D. Leclercq

In the Emdel project there have been defined tools for the quality evaluation: the expert and tutor questionnaire and the students' or customer satisfaction grid. One of them (expert quality evaluation) is shown below.

TELECOTTAGES

Are you prepared to work at multipurpose community telecentres?

Expert for Kaunas University of Technology

Contents	Course content presented on CD-Rom that is intended for autonomous learning or learning with tutor.
Activities	Activities presented in the form of practical tasks, that could be checked by the tutor if course provided with support.
Evaluation	There are no formal evaluation in the course. Self assesment is based on questions that linked to the appropriate answer in the learning material.
Technical aspects	This course is developed for the CD but also can be placed on the Web or local area network.
Aesthetic and multimedia	As the course primary intended for CD-Rom the video files are quite big in order to have high quality of sound and video. For the Web there should be used a different compression of video.
Mode of Using	The course is intended for autonomous learning and facilities for the tutoring are not provided. Still the e-mail and additional facilities such as forums, chats, etc. can be used if needed.

Quality table

YES / NO

Contents	YES / NO
1. Are webmaster or authors of the course displayed?	
2. Are course objectives clearly stated?	
3. Is the target audience clearly defined?	
4. Are the prerequisites clearly defined?	
5. Are the prerequisites tested?	
6. Is the course layout clearly stated?	
7. Are contents relevant to the objective?	
8. Are contents exhaustive?	
9. Are contents correct?	

10. Is information presented in the meaningful manner?
11. Is information well composed and clearly organized?
12. Is information broken down into logical, digestible parts?
13. Is there a bibliography?
14. Are there useful and updated links?
15. Is there a search engine?
16. Are the contents well written?
17. Is there a large number of typographical, grammar and spelling errors?

Activities

1. Are activities clearly defined (Do they have an objective, purpose, instructions, assessment criteria, desired length, and examples?)
2. Do activities prepare for the final evaluation?
3. Are activities adaptable to the needs of the students of various academic levels?
4. Is the learning method based on students learning by imitating a given model or example?
5. Is the learning method based on transferring of knowledge between the professor and the student?
6. Is the learning method based on completing activities by students?
7. Is the learning method based on the use of course resources and reference materials? (ex.case studies)
8. Is the learning method based on carrying out experiments?
9. Is the learning method based on enhancing creative thinking?
10. Do students learn by discussing topics among each other?
11. Is the learning method adapted to the subject being taught?
12. Does the course promote the independence of the students?
13. Do the activities encourage communication, co-operation, and collaboration between students?
14. Is the student-tutor interaction encouraged?
15. Does the course stimulate reflection on the learning process (meta-cognitive thinking)?
16. Does the on-line course offer a learning possibility which cannot be achieved in traditional teaching?

Evaluation

1. Is evaluation relevant to the objectives?
2. Is evaluation relevant to the content?
3. Is evaluation relevant to the activities?
4. Is there an uniform system for grading and evaluation of acquired knowledge?
5. Is the self-assessment possible?
6. Is the self-assessment valid?

7. Is self-assessment instruction unambiguous?
8. Can the assessment be repeated?
9. Does the assessment give appropriate feedback to the students?
10. Does feedback provide explanation of errors?
11. Is the assessment useful for students?

Technical aspects

1. Is there a site map that would simplify navigation?
2. Are icons, menus and directional symbols pertinent and functional?
3. Are there good "back" and "forward" links between pages?
4. Is it possible to easily get back to the homepage?
5. Are the web page concise?
6. Is vertical scrolling used in moderation?
7. Is it ever necessary to use horizontal scrolling?
8. Do the user have to go through a pre-defined route (no possibility to find his/her own way on the site)?
9. Are pages downloaded fast?
10. Are pages format appropriate for printing?
11. Is the software necessary for navigation mentioned?
12. Does using the site require specific computer skills?
13. Does the site take into consideration ICT standards to incorporate accessibility for disabled and elderly people?

Aesthetic and multimedia

1. Is the balance of text , images, links, headers, font size, and spaces good?
2. Is the size, color, and animation of the images appropriate and uniform?
3. Is the size of multimedia file reasonable enough to transfer and download?
4. Are sound and video files of high quality?
5. Do graphics bring an added value to the course?

Mode of Using

1. Is the tutor's role clearly stated?
2. Are there any training materials provided for tutors?
3. Can the tutor easily adapt the course according to his/her needs?
4. Is there an estimation of time necessary for student supervision?
5. Is tutor's time distribution for the course indicated?
6. Is it easy to plan the course structure (is there an estimate of hours allocated for each topic and module)?
7. Is it easy to plan activities?

8. Did site creators take into consideration the limitations of student supervision?
9. Can tutor obtain information regarding student "attendance", i.e. frequency of course page visits?
10. Is it easy to obtain and regulate information supplied by students?
11. Is there a possibility of interaction between tutor and students (e-mail, forum, discussion boards)?
12. Can tutor obtain overviews of posted assignment, test scores, etc. for each student?
13. Can tutor obtain overviews of posted assignments, test scores, etc. for individual items such as activities or questions?
14. Does the site provide technical support?

[Return to Quality table](#)

ANNEX 3 – Exchange of products

Annex 3.1 – This grid was used in order to analyse the technical features of the courses with the aim to select them for the post production purposes.

EMDEL INTERNAL FESTIVAL

TECHNICAL SPECIFICS GRID

Please, fill in the grid according to the technical specifics for each of your DL Modules.

PARTNERS / COMPANY:

DL Module – Title:.....

DL Module’s WebAddress:.....

Owner of Intellectual and Property Rights:.....

• DL Module Information

1) Is the DL Mod. completely on line?

Yes No

1.1) If No, specify the following:

- CD ROM
- Books
- Other.....

2) Server's requirements:

- Operating system:.....
.....
- Application server:.....
.....
- Database:.....

3) E-learning Platform:.....

4) Corresponding between DL Module and the following standards:

- AICC Version.....
- SCORM Version.....
- IMS Version.....
- other.....

5) File format used:

- HTML
- DOC
- XLS
- PDF
- RTX
- TXT
- Other.....

6) DL Module's cost (if there is any):.....

• **Software requirement Client/User side**

- 1) Operating System.....
- 2) Browser (Netscape, IE, etc.....)

Version:.....

3) Plugin.....

4) Hardware requirement:

- microphon
- videocamera
- other.....

5) What is the minimum kind of connection to internet?

- modem 28.8
- ADSL
- T1
- Other.....

Comments :

Annex 3.2 - This ‘copyright agreement’ has been used for exchange and postproduction of partners modules.

LEONARDO DA VINCI PROGRAMME
European Model for Distance Education and Learning
EMDEL Project
(I/01/C/F/TH-81403)

Agreement between
Partner A.... and Partner B...

Agreement in application of the art.5 “Industrial and Intellectual Property Rights” – ref. Contract between Tuscany Region (Promoter) and Partners.

1. Subject

The subject of this agreement is the exchanging of the following product:

- product A (*title and web site*)

Product A is composed by:

- software programme (executable code, source code, libraries needed etc...)
- technical documentation, consisting of

The Partner A intends to exchange its product named “product A” to the Partner B within the sub-project 3. “Exchanging Products” of the project “*EMDEL - European Model for Distance Education and Learning*” - Leonardo da Vinci Programme.

2. Copyright - Ownership

The parties acknowledge that:

- the Partner A is the owner of the product A;
- the product A is copyrighted by _____

If Partner A is not the unique owner of the product, the declaration of ownership has to be integrated with a redeeming declaration, in which the owners agree upon all the conditions inserted in this agreement.

3. Duration

This agreement lasts from **dd/mm/yyyy** to **30/11/2006**. After this date the parties can make a new agreement concerning the terms and conditions of use. In case the

parties do not make a new agreement, they undertake to bar any further access to the product both on-line and off-line.

4. Pricing

The copyright and the exchange are completely free of charge.

5. Rights

Partner B has the following rights on the product mentioned in paragraphs 1-2:

- a. *translating*: Partner B can translate the product and its technical documentation in its language;
- b. *adapting*: Partner A permits the adaptation of the Product, i.e. the modifications necessary to a localisation in the national Partner B context. The inserted modifications must be necessarily highlighted in a specific document enclosed to this agreement.
- c. *reproducing*: Partner B can physically reproduce the product only for backup reasons or for distributing needs (see letter e);
- d. *modifying*: Partner B can modify the product source code in order to interoperate with his Learning Management System (LMS) or with any other software necessary to its operation. The inserted modifications must be necessarily highlighted in the source code;
- e. *on line - off line spreading*: Partner B permits the public access to the product via an on-line service (e.g. through a LMS) or in off-line mode (e.g. through the distribution of printed material); in any case, the product owner and the copyright holder must be mentioned

6. Faculty of Acquisition

Partner B can permit to Partner A the use, free of charge, of the modified product A according to paragraph 5 letters a-b-c-d-e. The terms and conditions of use must be written and signed from the parties.

7. Trading

- a. All commercial use of the product, or part of the product, is prohibited;
- b. The on-line/off-line access to the product must be free of charge.

8. Warranty - Liability

The product is exchanged without any warranty and the parties agree that no liability for loss or damage, whether real or consequential, can arise from their use in a different operating environment.

9. Jurisdiction

The agreement is under jurisdiction of __ (Country of Partner A) __ law.

10. Final clauses

Any modification of this agreement must be written and signed by partners.
The agreement is effective with the parties' stamp and signature.
A copy of this signed agreement must be sent to Tuscany Region.

Date, ____/____/____

Partner A

Partner B

ANNEX 4 – Virtual Mobility agreement

This agreement is used for regulation of third parts engagement in the use of existing modules.

ON HEADED PAPER

Leonardo da Vinci Programme

EMDEL Project

Sub-Project 4. - “VIRTUAL MOBILITY”

Name of Partner/Provider:

- Title of DL Course:**
- Web addresses:**
- Name of Partner/User:**
- Name of the External Organisation involved:**
- Target Group involved
(number and kind of target):**
- Period of accessing the
DL module during the project lifetime:**

Place..... Date.....

**Signature of the Partner User
Stamp**

ANNEX 5– Monitoring tools

Starting from the activities foreseen, the partners filled in the template (contents and budget) according to what they have realised every project semester.

Leonardo da Vinci Programme

EMDEL Project

MONITORING PLAN

Period:

Partner:

LEONARDO DA VINCI PROGRAMME

EMDEL

MONITORING PLAN

WP....

Period:

Partner:

Objectives/ Phases	Expected Activities	Time forseen	Realized Activities (in details)	Time realization	Partners' Role (Who is doing What)	External Consultants (Specify characteristics of Subcontracting)	Output/ Achieved Results

Problems and solutions adopted:

WP.....

BUDGET

Period:

Partner:

TYPE OF COST	FORSEEN BUDGET	USED BUDGET
STAFF COSTS		
OPERATIONAL COSTS		
Travelling		
ICT(max 15%)		
Overheads (max 7%)		
SUBCONTRACTING COSTS		
Products description		
Data Base Construction		
PARTNER TOTAL COSTS		

ANNEX 6 – Evaluation

This evaluation plan has been filled in by partners on the half of project time. Another similar plan will be filled in at the end of the project.

EMDEL PROJECT

EVALUATION PLAN

Period:

Items:

- 1) Process Evaluation
- 2) Products Evaluation
- 3) Financial aspects
- 4) SWOT Analysis
- 5) Dissemination
- 6) Valorization

1) PROCESS EVALUATION

1.1) Do you think the project is respecting and realizing the initial planned aims?

Project main aim:

- To create an European E-learning System in order:
 - to increase the variety of e-learning supply
 - to reduce the time in enlarging the supply
 - to reduce costs of production
 - to reach new targets at worldwide level

.....

1.2) Would you please describe your experiences and opinions in relation to the following 3 macro-areas of Evaluation?

- a) LEARNING VALUE
- b) NETWORK VALUE
- c) ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL VALUE

a) LEARNING VALUE

- Individual learning (also *non formal* and *informal learning*)
-

- Organizational/Institutional learning

b) NETWORK VALUE

- 'Added value' of the partnership at local, national and transnational levels
-

- Relationship with partners: positive and critical aspects
-

- Relationship with the coordinator: positive and critical aspects
-

c) ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL VALUE

- Local and global advantages of the project
-

- Expected impacts of the project
-

- Unexpected impacts of the project (e.g.: initiatives which have indirectly taken place from our project)
-

2) PRODUCTS EVALUATION

- ***OUTPUT***

- Usability

.....

- Usefulness

.....

- Added value

.....

3) FINANCIAL ASPECTS

- Positive and critical issues

.....

4) S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS

- STRENGTHS: 'Strong' aspects of the project

.....

- WEAKNESSES: 'Weak' aspects of the project

.....

- OPPORTUNITIES: New areas of development and other opportunities

.....

- THREATS: Risks and threats for the project in a middle and long term

- Suggestions for the improvement of the project

.....

5) DISSEMINATION

5.1) What is in your opinion the meaning of ‘dissemination’? (3 main synonymous/ meanings)

5.2) In a scale 1 to 10, what is in your opinion, the importance covered by dissemination in our project?

Min.

Max.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

5.3) Which kind of concrete initiatives are you going to undertake for the project’s ‘dissemination’?

.....

5.4) Who are, in your opinion, the main stakeholders of our project at local, national and transnational levels?

.....

- Ideas for a Dissemination Plan:

.....

6) VALORIZATION

6.1) What is in your opinion the meaning of ‘valorization’? (3 main synonymous/ meanings)

6.2) In a scale 1 to 10, what is in your opinion, the importance covered by valorization in our project?

Min.

Max.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

6.3) Valorization of the previous experiences and products:

- Which previous experiences did you bring in this project?

In terms of ‘tangible’ experiences (e.g.: products, skills) and ‘intangible’ experiences (e.g.: enlargement of competences, mobility, cooperation among partners at transnational, national, local levels etc..)

‘Tangible’ Experiences:

.....

‘Intangible’ Experiences:

.....

6.4) Valorization of the present experiences (Emdel project):

- Which present experiences do you think that are valorizable?

‘Tangible’ Experiences:

.....

‘Intangible’ Experiences:

.....

6.5) What are, in your opinion, the most innovative aspects of our project?

.....

6.6) What do you think could be transferred from our project?

.....

- Ideas for a Valorization Plan:

ANNEX 7 – Dissemination

Summary of the partner dissemination actions

1. Tuscany Region - Department of Training Policy - ESF Service and Vocational Training System – Italy

- European Commission - Meeting of Promoters, Brussels - January 2002
- European Commission, EARLALL and Tuscany Region - Valorization of the Results of European Programmes as a Tool for Regions to Build a Knowledge-based Europe, Florence - December 2002
- E.M.D.E.L. Project - Internal Festival, Florence - December 2002
- European Commission - Valorising Good Products and Experiences in Educational and Vocational Training for an Enlarged Europe - Stockholm - April 2003
- European Union - Committee of the Regions - Employment and Social Policy, Brussels - April 2003
- WEM - World Educational Market, Lisbon - 20-23 May 2003
- EARLALL – General Assembly , Gothenborg 8-9 september 2004
- Expo e-learning 2004, Il Salone della Formazione in Rete – Ferrara, Italy 9-12 October 2004
- TED - Innovative Technology for Education and Training – Genova, Italy 25-27 November 2004
- ONLINE EDUCA Berlin. Germany, 1-3 December 2004.
- Strengthening European Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training – Maastricht, The Netherland, 13-16 December 2004
- Emdel final Conference – Brussels, 1 February 2005

2. Univeristy of Liège - LabSET - Laboratoire de Soutien à l'Enseignement Télématique - Belgium

- Firenze (Italy) in December 2002, during the Internal festival: Leonardo conference
- ICEM 2002 (Granada)
- Kaunas (KTU, Lithuania) in May 2003 : TELDA Conference
- Stokholm (Sweden) in April 2003 : workshop on “Vocational and educational training, systems, quality assurance and reforms”
- Sherbrooke 2003
- Rhodos EDEN conference in June 2003 : quality in distance learning
- Kirchberg 2003
- AIPU Marrakech May 2004
- Boulder (USA) 2004
- Cornell (NYork, USA) 2004
- Gdansk workshop on Emdel and Formasup in June 2004

3. Vox - National Institute for Adult Learning – Norway

- Presentation of Emdel at the Employment Week in Brussels, November 2002
- Presentation of Emdel at the internal festival in Florence in December 2002
- Article about Emdel in a periodical for adult educators called CV (Curriculum Vitae) no 1/2003.
- Notice about Emdel and the project meeting in Gdansk in June in general and about Minimalistic Ethics in particular in our electronic newspaper New from Vox (reaches around 300 readers) in June 2004
- Articles about Emdel in two periodicals in the field of adult learning and learning and pedagogy in general
- Presentation the 5th international conference in Virtual University in Bratislava, December 16-17/2004; the abstract we have written has been accepted
- www.vox.no - presentation in Norwegian and English
- Multimedia presentation of the Final report
- Emdel final Conference – Brussels, 1 February 2005

4. Kaunas University of Technology - Distance Education Centre- Lithuania

- Conference “Development of distance learning in the context of European education dimensions”. Siauliai. Lithuania, 7-8th October 2004, Siauliai University
- 11th International trade fair of Information Society Technologies INFOBALT 2004. Vinius. Lithuania, 20-23 October 2004.
- Special seminar in the Congress of Lithuanian Distance Education Network (LieDM) members. Sviedriske, Lithuania, 29-30 October 2004.
- ONLINE EDUCA Berlin. Germany, 1-3 December 2004.
- Valorization conference Experience and Perspective of Leonardo da Vinci programme. Vilnius, Lithuania 2-3 December, 2004.
- Strengthening European Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training – Maastricht (Nr) 13-16 December 2004
- Seminars and meeting with partners from other projects related to Distance Education
- Web campaign
- Emdel final Conference – Brussels, 1 February 2005

5. Swedish Agency for Flexible Learning(CFL) – Sweden

Conferences and seminars

- Eskilstuna 29 November 2004, Flexmöten 2004
- Stockholm 25 October 2004, Skolforum
- Uppsala 17 November 2004, Kraftfält för flexibelt lärande 2004
- *Local seminars*
- 5 local seminars in Sweden

At CFL we have personnel al that travel and visit educators in municipalities and talk about flexible learning, distance education and projects. Target groups are teachers and head masters in local schools for adults. The plan is to let our colleagues inform about Emdel.

Articles

- We will publish articles in two Swedish pedagogical papers, with results from our work in sub project 1-3.
- Pedagogiska Magasinet
- KOM Tidningen

Web site

- Information about Emdel at the web site of CFL:
<http://www.cfl.se//default.asp?sid=914>

6. Gdansk University of Technology- Distance Education Centre – Poland

- IASTED International Conference WEB-BASED EDUCATION 2005, Grindenwald, Switzerland, 2005.02.21-02.23, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) article, (EN) leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets
- Conference Virtual University, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 2004.12.16-12.17, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) article, (EN) leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets
- ONLINE EDUCA, Berlin, Germany, 2004.12.01-12.03, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) posters, leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) posters, leaflets
- Conference Lifelong Learning for engineers and managers, Katowice, Poland, 2004.11.18-11.19, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (PL) article, (EN) leaflets
- The 2nd Symposium Distance Education - methods and tools, Gdynia, Poland, 2004.10.18-10.19, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets
- The 6th International Conference on New Educational Environments ICNEE. International Symposium of IGIP/IEEE/ASEE, Neuchatel, Fribourg, Switzerland, 2004.09.25-09.30, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) poster, leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets
- ICETA 2004 - 3rd International Conference on Emerging Telecommunications Technologies and Applicants. Information and Telecommunications Technologies in Education, Kosice, Slovak Republic, 2004.09.16-09.18, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets

- SEFI 2004 Annual Conference “The XXI century, the golden opportunity for engineering education”, Valencia. Spain, 2004.09.08-09.10, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) article, (EN) leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets
- 20th Conference “Informatics at Schools”, Wroclaw, Poland, 2004.09.06-09.09, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (PL) article, (EN) leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets
- International Symposium for Handicapped, Sopot, Poland, 2004.09.03-09.04, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (PL) article, (EN) leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets
- 18th IFIP World Computer Congress “EduTech: Computer-aided design meets, Computer-aided learning”, Toulouse, France, 2004.08.26-08.27, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) article, (EN) leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets
- Dissemination meetings with university staff, De Montfort University, Leicester, UK, 2004.07.20-07.25, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) leaflets, (EN) presentation in Flash, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets
- UK & International Moodle User Conference - MoodleMoot 04, Oxford, UK, 2004.07.19, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets
- EDEN - Open, Distance and e-Learning in Support of Modernisation, Capacity Building and Regional Development, Hungary, 2004.06.15-06.19, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) article, (EN) leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets
- Workshop “Creating environment for training and support high-tech entrepreneurship using new information technologies”, Sofia, Bulgaria, 2004.06.10-06.13, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) presentation, (EN) leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets
- Workshop at Gdansk University of Technology “Introducing Emdel”, Poland, 2004.06.07, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) presentation in Flash, (EN) leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets, Liege University (EN) presentation
- 4th Conference and Workshop “Virtual University: model, tools and practice”, Warsaw University of Technology, Warsaw, Poland, 2004.06.03-06.05, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (PL) article, (EN) leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets
- The Distance Learning Workshop at University of Silesia in Katowice,

- Sosnowiec, Poland, 2004.06.03-06.04, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets
- Prague Meeting at National Training Fund, Prague, Czech Republic, 2004.06.01-06.02, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) presentation, (EN) leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets
 - Seminar “Program Leonardo da Vinci and EQUAL, New City Hall, Gdańsk, Poland, 2004.05.25 Materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) presentation, (EN) leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets
 - Conference “Information Technologies”, Poland, 2004.05.16-05.18, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets
 - International Conference “Academy On-Line”, Polish Virtual University, Bronisławów, Poland, 2004.05.13-05.15, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets
 - 7th School of CAD/CAM/CAE , Military Technical Academy, Jurata, Poland, 2004.05.10-05.14 , materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (PL) article, (EN) leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets
 - 8th National Conference „Teachers ICT training”, Kraków, Poland, 2004.01.21-01, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets
 - 9th International Conference on Technology Supported Learning & Training - Online Educa, Berlin, Germany, 2003.12.03-12.05, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets
 - Symposium “ Tolls for Supporting Distance Education”, Gdynia Maritime University, Gdynia, Poland, 2003.11.27-11.28 Materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (PL) article, EN (leaflets)
 - Workshop “Challenges and Opportunities of Vocational Training and E-Learning in the EU Accession Countries”, Budapest, Hungary, 2003.11.11-11.13, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets
 - EADTU Annual Conference “E-Bologna” Progressing the European Learning Space, Madrid, Spain, 2003.11.06-11.09, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets
 - IFIP Open Working Conference eTrain 2003. E-Training Practices for Professional Organisations, Pori, Finland, 2003.07.07-07.11, materials

done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) leaflets, Tuscany Region: (EN) leaflets

- 12th EDEN Annual Conference “Searching for evaluation procedures for Web Based courses - cases from EU projects. The Quality Dialogue. Integrating Quality Cultures in Flexible, Distance and eLearning”, Rhodes, Greece, 2003.06.15-06.18, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) article, (EN) posters
- 3rd Conference “Virtual University: model, tools and practice”, Warsaw University of Technology, Warsaw, Poland, 2003.06.05-06.07, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (PL) article
- 5th International Conference on New Educational Environments INCEE 2003. The know-how hub for blended learning., Lucerne, Switzerland, 2003.05.26-05.28, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) article
- Workshop “Professionalism in Software Engineering”, Private Vocational High School, Giżycko, Poland, 2003.05.07-05.09, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) article
- Conference “Polish Optical Internet, Technology, Services and Applications, Poznań Supercomputing and Networking Center, Poznań, Poland, 2003.04.09-04.10, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (PL) article
- Internal Festival, Florence, Italy, 2002.12.13-12.14, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) leaflets
- Conference “ETHICOMP 2002 The Transformation of Organisations in the Information Age: Social and Ethical Implications”, Lisbon, Portugal, 2002.11.13-11.15, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) article
- Meeting with Finnish universities at Gdansk University of Technology “Finnish-Polish co-operation”, Regional Contact Point for the 5th Framework Programme, Gdansk, Poland, 2002.10.29, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) leaflets, (EN) presentation
- 4th International Conference „ Lifelong Learning in Engineers and Managers. Using ICT in Adult Education”, Kielce University of Technology, Centre For Lifelong Learning, Kielce, Poland, 2002.10.27-10.29, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (PL) article
- Prometheus Paris Conference “Improving Learning through Technology - Opportunities for All” , Prometheus, Paris, France, 2002.09.29-09.30, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) leaflets

- Workshop “Virtual University - model, tools and practice” , Warsaw University of Technology, Warsaw, Poland, 2002.06.06-06.08, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) leaflets, (PL) article
- Chapter in the book “Teaching in distance”, Gdańsk University Press, Gdańsk, Poland, 2002, materials done by Gdansk University of Technology: (EN) article
- The detailed information about dissemination activities is located at the address: <http://www.dec.pg.gda.pl/pro/leonardo/emdel/dissemination/>.
- Emdel WWW page on Gdansk University of Technology server <http://www.dec.pg.gda.pl/pro/leonardo/emdel/>.

7. University of Szeged - Distance Education Study Center – Hungary

- Identification of prospective target groups for the modules developed
- Raising awareness to the modules produced (target audience: high schools, colleges)
- Production of a leaflet and delivery of same to those showing an interest in the modules produced
- Notifying prospective users of the availability of the book on Emdel
- Connecting the Emdel project’s outcome (valorization) with that of the LELA project – an initiative which is aimed at identifying language teaching courses in Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary plus some EU countries (France, Italy, Portugal).
- Presenting the Emdel project to the National Agency of Lifelong Learning (April 14, 2004, Budapest, Technical University)
- Creating the relevant web links to allow those speaking Hungarian learn about the Emdel project and its outcomes
- Taking part in the final seminar.

PRODISS – prototype for the Project Dissemination System

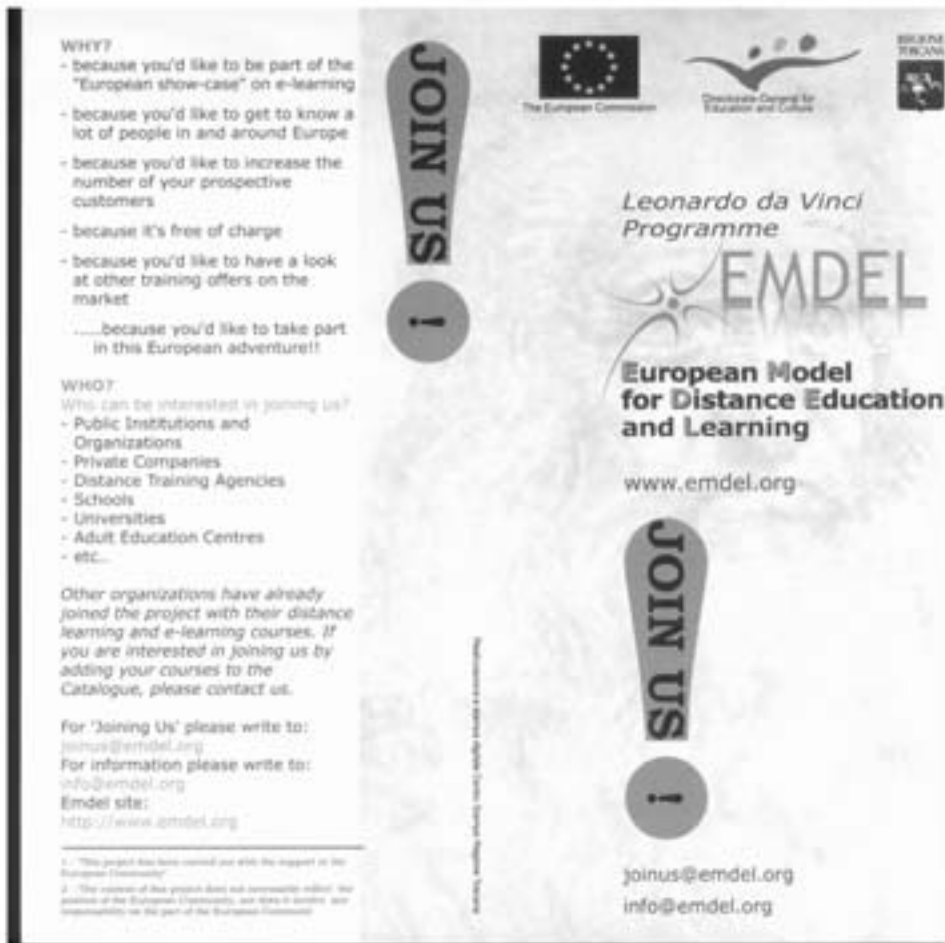
Taking into account experiences gathered in Emdel project Gdansk University of Technology developed a prototype for Project Dissemination System (ProDISS), which enables gathering information about dissemination activities. ProDISS is a small and lightweight web-based system for dissemination management. All

elements are based on open software. Registered users can add/remove/modify dissemination activities and attached materials. All other users can only view data. Every activity has name and dates of beginning and end, list of authors and list of attached materials. Materials are attached by uploading material files (Fig.1). Data is stored in relative DBMS - MySQL. WWW interface is served by Apache placed on Linux Debian platform. The whole system is written in PHP4 with XML and XSLT support. All is constructed as a bunch of modules (classes).



Fig.1. ProDISS – main screen

Example promotional materials



The poster features a background of faint, overlapping text. At the top left, it lists reasons to join under 'WHY?' and identifies potential participants under 'WHO?'. It includes logos for the European Commission and the Directorate General for Education and Culture. The central text reads 'Leonardo da Vinci Programme' and 'EMDEL European Model for Distance Education and Learning'. Contact information for 'Joining Us' is provided at the bottom, along with two 'JOIN US!' call-to-action buttons.

WHY?

- because you'd like to be part of the "European show-case" on e-learning
- because you'd like to get to know a lot of people in and around Europe
- because you'd like to increase the number of your prospective customers
- because it's free of charge
- because you'd like to have a look at other training offers on the market
-because you'd like to take part in this European adventure!!

WHO?
Who can be interested in joining us?

- Public Institutions and Organizations
- Private Companies
- Distance Training Agencies
- Schools
- Universities
- Adult Education Centres
- etc...

Other organizations have already joined the project with their distance learning and e-learning courses. If you are interested in joining us by adding your courses to the Catalogue, please contact us.

For 'Joining Us' please write to:
joinus@emdel.org

For information please write to:
info@emdel.org

EMDEL site:
<http://www.emdel.org>

JOIN US!

JOIN US!

joinus@emdel.org
info@emdel.org

1 - This project has been created and will be supported in the European Community.
2 - The success of this project does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the European Commission, nor does it involve any responsibility on the part of the European Commission.



Leonardo
da Vinci
Programme

European Model for Distance Education and Learning

The European Council of Lisbon (March 2000) has identified the development of e-learning as a strategic objective for the improvement of the economy of knowledge. Therefore, European systems of education and training currently undergo considerable transformation in order to reach the said objective. Distance training is increasingly attracting large sectors of public and private enterprises, and numerous institutions have already started projects for the creation of distance training systems.

The E.M.D.E.L. project - European Model for Distance Education and Learning - is a 'Valorisation Project' funded by the European Programme Leonardo da Vinci. As such, Emdel intends to valorise the results of other distance learning and e-learning projects carried out earlier within the framework of the European Community's initiatives. Starting from these results and the 'good practices' tested, and in line with the European strategy on e-learning, Emdel has set as its main goal the creation of a European e-learning system through cooperation among partner institutions and enlargement by adding new organisations.

Emdel is a 3-year project (Dec. 2001 - Nov. 2004) that is promoted by Tuscany Region (Italy) and is being realized thanks to the presence and experience in the sector of e-learning of other public and private organisations, mainly from Northern and Eastern Europe.

PARTNERS

Project Promoter: Tuscany Region - Italy - www.regione.toscana.it

Gdansk University of Technology - Distance Education Centre - Poland - www.dec.pg.gda.pl - www.pg.gda.pl

Kaunas University of Technology - Kaunas Regional Distance Education Study Centre - Lithuania - <http://distance.ktu.lt>

Nordic Folk Academy - Sweden - www.nfa.se

Swedish Agency for Flexible Learning - Sweden - www.cfl.se

University of Liège - LabSET, Laboratoire de Soutien à l'Enseignement par Télématique - Belgium - www.ulg.ac.be/labset/

University of Szeged - Distance Education Study Center - Hungary - www.u-szeged.hu/dtededu/

VOX - Norwegian Institute for Adult Education - Norway - www.vox.no

Aims

To create a European e-learning system in order:

- to increase the variety of e-learning supply
- to reduce the time for enlarging the supply
- to reduce the costs of production
- to reach new targets at a world-wide level

Outcomes

Catalogue

The on-line catalogue is a "European show-case" for e-learning courses. It gives an opportunity to see what is on offer in the European market about distance learning and e-learning. It contains hundreds of courses. Their number is increasing and they cover a wide range of topics on various levels and for a variety of target groups.

Quality & Customer Satisfaction System

Emdel has created a common 'model' of quality evaluation in terms of both products and customer satisfaction. It is intended to submit all courses in the Catalogue to quality certification.

Exchange of Courses

In order to valorise and facilitate the use of the best and most valuable products already realized by partner organisations, several on-line courses have been exchanged. Partners offered their on-line courses and, after a post production phase (translation, adaptation and dissemination), some of them will be adopted by other partners in the countries concerned.

Virtual Mobility

This is an example of using e-learning with the aim to obtain the same benefits as one would have through physical mobility, but without the need to move.

Emdel has the aim to allow people who live in other countries to access on-line courses developed by partner organisations in their mother tongue.

EMDEL

European Model for Distance Education and Learning



Founded
by the Leonardo
da Vinci
Programme

The main objectives

of the project are following:

- Production of an on-line catalogue

for the assessment of customer satisfaction
and quality of Distance Learning Modules.

- Exchange of the best Distance Learning Modules,
through on-line utilisation of Distance
Learning Modules installed on the servers of the partners' net;
- Utilisation of distance training products in original language
by a person living in a partner country without an action
of post production.

- presence of tutors operating in local
systems, accompanying both locally and on line (in the original
language).

- through the presentation of a model of
realisation, of an European Teletraining Network to
demonstrate the concrete possibilities of construction,
starting from an existent distance training system based
locally but with transnational connections. The dissemination
also aims at extending the number of agencies of
distance training which want to co-operate for the
maintenance of the catalogue and for the
increase of the exchange of
products.

About Ethics Online

This course is designed to give
students the opportunity to exercise
greater sensitivity, reflection and
method in moral decision-making
and also learn the skills of research,
analysis and discussion appropriate
to the study of ethical issues and
decision-making. Thanks to program
Leonardo da Vinci EMDEL the course
Ethics online is offered in the
following languages:

- English
- Italian
- Lithuanian
- Norwegian

Partners:

- Tuscany Region, Italy
- University of Liege, Belgium
- VØX, Norway
- Kaunas University of Technology,
Lithuania
- Swedish Agency for Flexible learning
- Gdańsk University of Technology,
Poland
- University of Szeged, Hungary

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Leonardo da Vinci



Regione Toscana

dectug





Regione Toscana

Emdel

European Model for Distance
Education and Learning

founded by the Leonardo
da Vinci Programme



VIRTUAL MOBILITY at DECTUG

TeleCAD - Teleworking and AutoCAD

Project Management

Meeting of Generations

Introducing into Distance Learning

Basic of Adult Learning

How to Communicate with other People?

How to be an Effective Volunteer?

What is a Multipurpose Community Telecentre?

IT in Human Resource Management





www.emdel.org

**European Model
for Distance Education
and Learning**
founded by the
Leonardo da Vinci
Programme
(2001 - 2005)



Exchange Courses:

In order to valorise and facilitate the use of the best and most valuable products already developed by partners, several on-line courses have been exchanged.

The postproduction phase consists of translation, adaptation, dissemination and the course delivery. Several of exchanged courses will be offered in the „Virtual Mobility“.

“Virtual Mobility“:

This is an example of using e-learning with the aim to obtain same benefits as one would have through physical mobility, but without the need to move.

Emdel has the aim to allow people who live in other countries to access on-line courses developed by partners in their native language.

Virtual Mobility at DECGUT:

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- Project Management
- Meeting of Generations
- Introducing into Distance Learning
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- How to communicate with other People?
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