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e-learning for languages the human dimension

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Robo-teacher?

- ❖ **The threat of the 1990s**
 - Teachers will soon be replaced by the multimedia PC
- ❖ **The comforting message**
 - Teachers will NOT be replaced by computers – however, teachers who are not able to use computers for pedagogical purposes will be replaced by those who can
- ❖ **What are teachers afraid of today?**
 - That they might not be able to keep up with the speed and diversification of technological development? - YES
 - Since the mid-1990s, the technological options and challenges have changed and multiplied with dazzling acceleration: from multimedia (texts, images, podcasts) to communication and interaction with social media and in social communities
[> Nik Peachy, Russell Stannard]
- ❖ **Does knowing all the educational gadgets make you a successful technology-enhanced language teacher?**
 - NO, it doesn't
- ❖ **What is the magic ingredient?**



Getting your priorities right

- CAN e-learning play an innovative and enhancing role in foreign language learning and teaching?
- YES – provided pedagogic exploitation proceeds from a sound understanding of the HUMAN NATURE of the needs, conditions and processes involved
- Just throwing computers and technological “solutions” at teachers and learners is a huge waste of money and pedagogical energies
- There is clearly a need for technological language teacher education
- However, technological education must proceed from what human language learning and teaching is all about
- It is a lot more challenging for teachers to understand the human dimension of language learning and teaching than to understand (as an informed user!) the secrets of educational computer technology

We need to get our priorities right: Who is in the driving seat?

Pedagogy over Technology!



The human dimension

- ❖ The way we think and talk about language influences the way we think and talk about language learning and teaching
 - Language as a **system** of structures or rules
 - Language as **use**
 - Language as **communication**

- ❖ Language learning as individual and social construction
 - **Autonomy, authenticity, collaboration**
 - **Ownership and agency**: helping learners develop the kind of English they feel comfortable with

- ❖ Language learning for and through communication
 - Look at how little **children** acquire their first language
 - Look at **natural** language second acquisition:
 - Lexis over grammar – Communication first**
 - The lexical approach [Lewis 1983]
 - Task-based learning approaches > CLIL
 - The “dogme” approach [> [Scott Thornbury's blog](#)]



Pedagogical affordances of e-learning technologies

Contributions of e-learning in an overall social constructivist and communicative approach

❖ Multimedia communicative practice & authoring

- Skills: reading, listening, writing, speaking
- Knowledge: lexis, grammar, pragmatics

e.g. Telos Language Partner →

❖ Pedagogic corpus explorations of (real) communication

- Noticing, awareness raising
- Skills practice and lexical searches
- Moodle integration

e.g. BACKBONE →

❖ Intercultural communication

- From classroom simulations to REAL-LIFE contact and communication in the web

e.g. icEurope →
e.g. PELLIC →

❖ Collaborative interaction

- Networking, sharing, community building
- From learning to teaching to teacher education

e.g. TILA →





TELOS Language Partner – Multimedia learning & authoring

www.sprachlernmedien.de
> Learning Modules

© Copyright 2010 BACKBONE

Focus on vocabulary

Now drag the words into the gaps.

Hurling and camogie are played with a , the wood ash. The

© Copyright 2010 BACKBONE

Video: Camogie gear and outfit

Listen to Teresa.



So the aim of the game is just to hit that off it. And I'll put it down.

Valerie: You just mentioned about hurley and the sliotar. Can you just show us some of the gear?

Teresa: Yeah. This is called a hurley. It's made of ash, the wood ash. And this is basically where you hit the ball. You're gonna be hitting this. This is a sliotar. So the aim of the game is just to hit that off it. And I'll put it down. But this is called the pole of the hurley and this is called the butt. You just need one of these grips for really wet weather. It's easier to, just a rubber grip, so, that's it.

Valerie: And what's the proper way to hold it?

Teresa: Proper way to hold it, well if you're right-handed, you have to have your right hand on top, which is here, you put your right hand there. And then put your left hand like that for extra support. So then you just hit it like that. That's it.

Comprehension

Answer the following questions. Listen to the video.

1. Players use the hurley to hit the ball.

True False

2. A sliotar is the ball that is hit with the hurley.

True False

3. You only use one hand to hold the hurley.

True False

4. The outer part of a sliotar is made of wood.

True False





BACKBONE –

Pedagogic Corpora for Content and Language Integrated Learning

A European LLP (KA2) project with 8 partners from 7 European countries: France, Germany, Ireland, Poland, Spain, Turkey and UK (Jan 2009 – Dec 2010)

Coordinator: University of Tübingen, Applied English Linguistics (Germany)

<http://projects.ael.uni-tuebingen.de/backbone/moodle>

<http://purl.org/backbone/searchtool>

[Kohn 2012]

Authentic language support for CLIL settings

- ❖ Creation of **7 corpora** of video-recorded spoken interviews for CLIL secondary, higher and vocational education:
 - lesser taught languages: **Polish** and **Turkish**
 - regional & socio-cultural varieties of **German**, **French**, **Spanish** and **English**
 - European manifestations of English as a lingua franca (**ELF**)
- ❖ Pedagogic **design** with regard to topics, annotation & enrichment, and online search modes
- ❖ Pedagogically designed '**do-it-yourself**' tools for corpus management, annotation, enrichment, and search





icEurope –

Intercultural Foreign Language Communication and Learning

A European Comenius project with 6 partners from 5 European countries: Bulgaria, Germany, Hungary, Italy, and Turkey (Dec 2009 – Nov 2011)

Coordinator: University of Tübingen, Applied English Linguistics, (Germany)

<http://projects.ael.uni-tuebingen.de/iceurope/moodle>

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

[Kohn & Warth 2011]

At the cross-roads of telecollaboration, communication across cultures, foreign learning, and English as a lingua franca

- ❖ A blended learning **classroom/Moodle** approach:
 - **secondary school students** from Bulgaria, Hungary, Italy, and Turkey collaborate online in Moodle
- ❖ Learners **negotiate intercultural topics & contents** with their peers and thereby
 - raise their awareness & tolerance for intercultural differences
 - explore and co-develop their own English (ELF)
 - develop communicative-strategic competence
 - acquire media literacy





PELLIC –

Practice Enterprise for Language Learning & Intercultural Communication

A European LLP (KA 3) project with 6 partners from 5 European countries: Bulgaria, Germany, Hungary, Italy, and Turkey (Dec 2008 – Nov 2010)

Coordinator: Turku University of Applied Science (Finland)

[Glombitza 2012]

<http://projects.ael.uni-tuebingen.de/pellic>

Authentic English business communication & collaboration in a 'practice enterprise' approach

- ❖ Content and language integrated learning (CLIL)
- ❖ The *lingua franca* and target language of the project is English, as is commonly the case in real-life international business encounters
- ❖ A virtual learning environment (VLE) based on Moodle, Google Apps and Skype
- ❖ The PELLIC VLE enables learners to develop their *business English* skills by setting up and running virtual companies, interacting and trading with other PE companies
- ❖ The PELLIC VLE integrates audiovisual resources from real-life business situations, thereby enhancing the *authenticity* of the PE learning experience
- ❖ The materials, once piloted, can be *adapted* to other European languages





TILA –

Telecollaboration for Intercultural Language Learning

A European LLP (KA 2) project with 12 partners from 6 European countries: Czech Republic, France, Germany, Netherlands, Spain, UK (Jan 2013 – June 2015)

Coordinator: Utrecht University (Netherlands)

www.tilaproject.eu

Teacher education - intercultural communication & learning - telecollaboration

- ❖ to develop teachers' **pedagogical competences** in relation to telecollaboration and intercultural communication through experiential learning
- ❖ to explore the added value of **telecollaboration** for language learning and intercultural communication among **secondary school pupils** (aged 13-16)
- ❖ to offer hands-on experiences in telecollaboration using **video conferencing** tools (e.g. Skype or BigBlueButton) and **virtual worlds** in OpenSim as well as **asynchronous tools** like blogs and wikis
- ❖ to address **technological, intercultural, pedagogical and organizational concerns** for the successful integration of telecollaboration practices in language education
- ❖ Target languages: English, French, German and Spanish





Continuity of change

❖ The holy grail syndrome

- Intelligent tutoring systems – early and mid 1990s
- Multimedia – mid and late 1990s
- E-learning – late 1990s and early 2000s
- Blended learning – early 2000s [> to enhance e-learning!]
- Flipped classroom – today [> to enhance the classroom!]

[Kohn 2009]

❖ Technological cherry picking

- Web 2 media > creation and exchange of user-generated content, e.g. forum, conferencing, blogging, podcasting and wiki collaboration
- Communication > Skype, BigBlueButton, 3D virtual environments
- Community building > e.g. facebook, twitter, second life, serious games
- Latest technologies: Interactive whiteboard learning - tablet learning - smartphone learning - cloud learning - mobile learning

❖ Horses for courses

- Consider ALL options – pick a few! Create your own pedagogical BLEND!

Use the human dimension for pedagogical orientation!



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- Lewis, M. (1993). *The Lexical Approach. The State of ELT and the Way Forward*. Hove: Language Teaching Publications.

Useful blogs and resources

- Scott Thornbury's Blog "An A-Z of ELT" [<http://scottthornbury.wordpress.com>]
- Nik Peachy's Learning Technology Blog [<http://nikpeachey.blogspot.de>]
- Russel Stannard's Teacher Training Videos [<http://www.teachertrainingvideos.com>]
- Chia Suan Chong's Blog [<http://chiasuanchong.com>]
- ELT Knowledge [<http://www.eltknowledge.com>]



Over to you

Now think of *your own preferences*.

But never think of *technological solutions* in isolation – always think of *what you want to do in pedagogical terms*.

Technologies can be successfully used for pedagogical purposes. They should, however, never replace *pedagogical purposes and reasoning*.

Technologies have an *enabling function* – they should not be allowed to assume control.

Never forget the *human dimension* of e-learning and e-teaching.



Thank you

