

# News

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The ultimate target group; students testing one of the pools-t project outcomes

## Languages:

- Basque
- Danish
- Dutch
- English
- Gaelic
- German
- Greek
- Italian
- Lithuanian
- Maltese
- Portuguese
- Romanian
- Spanish
- Turkish



Hop on board and join the pools teams i.e. pools, pools-t, pools-2, and pools-m

**T**he POOLS teams will welcome your active participation and feedback in their ongoing work. To enroll as a grass root member just register at [www.languages.dk/membership](http://www.languages.dk/membership) We also very much ask for other projects to join us in our work for language teaching and learning, we would especially welcome any CLIL oriented project.

**A**ll three projects under the pools umbrella (pools-t, pools-2, and pools-m) have been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



Overview of project pieces

**E**ach of the three projects has aims and objectives that are different from the other two projects, but together they cover main aspects of language teaching and learning: I.e. Production of tools for creating eLearning materials, courses on how to make ICT supported materials, and courses on how to make use of communicative teaching methods:  
 -Pools-2 continues the work of the original pools and deliver videos and materials to be used in teacher training

courses on how to produce and make proper use of eLearning material in Cyprus, Malta, and Portugal.

-Pools-t produce tools that automate / ease the production of eLearning materials.



Finding the right recipe for a successful new project start

**T**his issue of the newsletter has been extended so each of the three ongoing projects can have a page on its own to report aims, activities, achievements, but also difficulties that the teams have experienced.

**A**ll three projects have subcontracted external quality evaluation. This is needed because an external critic can make a huge difference by being the "fly on the wall" with only one objective; to check milestones and match these with the application with regards to delivery and quality of outcomes. Both in pools-m and pools-t the subcontracting went through a procedure where three renowned experts were asked to submit bids with description of experience, proposed assessment and monitoring method, and a price (including travel costs to two project workshops). In pools-2 the Spanish national agency had reduced the sum that could be used for quality subcontracting so a bidding procedure would not make sense.



## Latest news: The TextBlender has been restructured with new layout to make the use more intuitive

Pools-t is developing two different types of software tools a TextBlender, which is a desktop based tool, and WordLink, which is an internet based utility.

The TextBlender, which is the tool that can produce webpages with graphics, video, audio, and texts where all words are linked to online dictionaries, has undergone a major restructure process since the last newsletter. The new layout and function is based on feedback from the pilot teams in Switzerland, Greece and the Netherlands as well on assistance from the Scottish team.



The textBlender now supports outputs with Greek characters

Some improvements may be invisible to the end user like improved use of dictionaries, a warm thanks to Caoimhín (the Scottish programming genius), while others are more flashy like a new navigation system and improved support for text blocks and several videos on the same webpage (embedded YouTube and Google videos).

One of the visible improvements is the choice of interface language. The TextBlender now has interfaces in Danish, English, German, Greek, Italian, and Dutch. And in the near future we expect to add

more languages thanks to other projects who make use of the tool, e.g. a Turkish partner in Pools-m has offered to translate the interface into Turkish.



Entry screen in the TextBlender where the user selects the interface language

There is still a choice of different media types that can start when a user enters a webpage, but in the new version it is also possible to have up to nine videos on a page, this may be useful in e.g. an instruction text with examples.



Selecting media



Selected media files are later automatically copied to a save folder from where the

resulting webpage and files can be uploaded to a server or distributed on a CD-ROM etc.

A new main improvement, we hope, is an assembly page where the author (that is you:-) can put together graphics, YouTube or Google videos, with or between blocks of texts. It is also possible to export a webpage linked to one dictionary and then return to the TextBlender and select a new dictionary so a class of mixed students can be served with individual pages and dictionary help.



The "assembly" page

Also WordLink, the internet tool has undergone major changes and improvements. Please visit the Wordlink page: [www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/wordlink/](http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/wordlink/) and do not forget to experiment with the different settings.



Next step in pools-t is to produce Do It Yourself videos demonstrating how to make best use of the Wordlink and TextBlender tools

## Latest news: POOLS-2 has started the first development cycle with adaptation of the pools materials to three new languages

**P**ools-2 is a Leonardo supported TOI (Transfer Of Innovation) project based on the POOLS project (2005-2007). POOLS was in 2009 awarded the Leonardo da Vinci silver medal for innovation and creativity.

The original POOLS resulted in:

- a digital library with videos for nine languages, each video is transcribed and graded to match students according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.
- a teacher course on how to develop materials for computer assisted language learning
- a teacher course on computer assisted language learning methodology
- a course book and Do It Yourself videos showing how to develop online materials

It is the aims of pools-2 to adapt and transfer the results of POOLS for use in Cyprus, Malta, and Portugal. For each of the languages pools-2 will develop sets of videos and materials and pilot teacher training courses on eLearning material development and methodology.



One of the results of pools was a DVD with Do It Yourself videos on how to develop eLearning materials

**T**he start of pools-2 has not been an easy one. The two experts who evaluated the

proposal at the Spanish national agency basically butchered the proposed budget: The experts decided that only one person from each partner should travel to the project workshops. It is during these workshops that the transfer is implemented by coaching the teachers who will then become multipliers after the workshops by coaching teachers in their own countries. It is difficult to grasp such decisions as pools-2 is a Transfer Of Innovation project where the impacts should be significant. The partnership will try to amend for this by increasing the amount of self financing (It is already 30% of the budget) and call for voluntary work from grass root teachers, so your input will be appreciated:-)



Like in pools the pools-2 project will produce 20 videos per new partner language, i.e. Greek, Maltese, and Portuguese

**T**he transfer of innovation is not just a translation and adaptation exercise; after adapting the POOLS core outcomes course participants from the CY, MT, and PT teams will be coached in video recording and editing techniques, in software production, and in CALL methodologies suitable for CLIL and Task based learning. The course participants will then produce videos that can be used in multimedia applications for teaching GR, MT, and PT.

When the videos are ready the CY, MT, and PT teams run similar courses in their countries. The first course in each country is peer reviewed by teams from the original POOLS partnership (ES and DK). The courses will then be adapted following the recommendations from the peer review and further piloted in the second project year in different regions of the three countries to ensure exploitation of the results and value for money. Each course will be evaluated and the compiled recommendations and feed-back will result in the final project course book and materials at the end of the project funded period.

**O**ne of the first visible results from pools-2 is the project brochure, which can be downloaded from the website [www.languages.dk](http://www.languages.dk). From the same address you can also download the original project application, project schedule, workshop agenda, reporting framework, etc.

**T**he original pools project produced a course book with different examples of computer assisted language learning. In pools-2 the Maltese team is responsible for updating the material from 2006, This includes the task of adding a new unit on how to make use of social spaces (e.g. LinkedIn and Facebook) in language teaching.

## Latest news: POOLS-M had a successful kick-off workshop in Brussels

**P**ools-m is a Leonardo supported TOI (Transfer Of Innovation) project. based on the BP-BLTM project, which delivered manuals with descriptions of five communicative language teaching methods complete with teaching materials ready to use in classes. The manuals were complemented with videos demonstrating the five methods. It is the aims of pools-m to adapt and transfer the materials for use in Italy, Lithuania, and Turkey as well as to develop materials for teaching these languages. But it is also our objective to cluster with other language projects.



Lone Olsen teaching Danish through a task based approach

**T**he project started with a kick-off workshop in Brussels where the teams taught one another their native languages through different teaching methods.

Each of the teams presented a method and the strengths and weaknesses were debated.

The methods used for teaching Danish, Italian, Lithuanian, and Turkish were simulations, task based learning, computer assisted language learning, and the PhyEmoC method (Physical, Emotional and Cultural approach).

**D**issemination is always important in projects, but even more so in a TOI project like pools-2, We have therefore

already started the dissemination in the partnership countries and through other means like season greeting cards. In Turkey Serhat Tuna will appear on the NTV Channel in a live broadcasting program in order to give information about POOLS-M project. NTV is a widely watched news channel in Turkey, which also works in cooperation with BBC and CNBC. In Lithuania, the project team makes use of the local "English" club where teachers (not only language) practice their English. As part of one of those meetings the Lithuanian team presented the pools-m objectives.

**T**he project Products include:

- A video library (DVD and online) with commented recordings of the methods used in classes. The videos will have subtitles in Italian, Lithuanian, Turkish and the existing subtitles in eight other languages (Basque, Danish, Dutch, English, Gaelic, German, Romanian, and Spanish).

- A manual with method descriptions, instructions and ready to copy and use materials in Italian, Lithuanian, and Turkish

- A Course guide for teacher training courses on how to use the methods

- Ready to use materials for teaching Italian, Lithuanian, and Turkish based on the different language teaching methods.

- A guide for students preparing for work placement and mobility

- Pilot courses for teachers across Italy, Lithuania, and Turkey

-A website with all the materials ready for download for free, e.g. manual, guides, teaching materials, and videos (in streaming format).



Jolita teaching Lithuanian by painting words on the participants' backs

**T**eambuilding in pools-m was not just based on the project activities during the workshop. Thanks to Stefano Tirati (the Italian coordinator) teambuilding was enhanced through his marvelous cooking. Each day he prepared three dishes supported by different team members, even our external evaluator took an active role in his cooking:-)



Stefano and Lone serving the soup, which was the first part of a delicious three course meal

**Y**ou can follow the project activities in the main website for the pools-m project, which is [www.languages.dk/methods](http://www.languages.dk/methods) From here you can download the project brochures and all project related documents like the application, meeting agendas, schedule, and reports