News

Tools members in action during the Eurocall 2013 conference

Languages:
Arabic
Basque
Catalan
Czech
Danish
Dutch
English
French
Gaelic
German
Greek
Irish
Italian
Lithuanian
Maltese
Portuguese
Romanian
Slovenian
Spanish
Turkish

Hop on board and join the pools teams

The 4th international Worldcall Conference took place from July 10-13 at the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre in Glasgow, Scotland (www.worldcall2013.org). The conference was attended by over 300 delegates from around the globe, including 14 students who received full scholarships to attend. The conference programme featured two Tools project dissemination events (1) a Paper Presentation entitled 'On the affordances of CLILSTORE - a multimedia, multipurpose authoring and storage service for L1 & L2 learners and teachers' and (2) an Educational Showcase entitled 'CLILSTORE: A free online multimedia authoring tool and hosting service for language teachers', both delivered by Caoimhín Ó Dónaill of the Ulster Tools team.

Caoimhín Ó Dónaill presenting the Clilstore service

The paper presentation, chaired by Ana Gimeno Sanz of the Universitat Politècnica de València Tools team, was well attended and the presentation generated interesting questions regarding the impact of Clilstore in the various sectors where it has been applied to date as well as positive feedback on the multimedia affordances of the system. The international dimension of the conference also manifested itself in an interesting comment made by a North American delegate who noted the potential for CLIL – Content and Language Integrated Learning and CLAC – Content and Language Across the Curriculum practitioners to share good practice (see http://clacconsortium.org). The educational showcase consisted of a fast-paced presentational format whereby the Clilstore service and sample units were presented on a large LCD screen with delegates assembling in front of the screen to ask questions and explore multidict.net. This intensive session lasted one hour and the rolling presentational format meant that a large number of delegates were able to get a quick introduction to Clilstore and leave with one of our Teacher DVDs in the language of their choice, as well as a copy of our latest project newsletter. Over 100 DVDs and Newsletters were distributed during the conference.

TOOLS partner Sabhal Mòr Ostaig has been successful in a bid to run a "POOLS 3" Transfer of Innovation project, based on the original POOLS project. In partnership with SDE, SMO will "export" the results of that project to new partners in the Catalan, Czech, and Irish languages.
The project will run for two years from October 2013, and will focus on equipping Irish, Czech, and

Two new projects Pools-3 and Methods have just been launched

Catalan teachers in Vocational Education and Training with new skills and practices in Computer Assisted Language Learning. Participants will be helped to produce pools of online audio or video materials, which will provide a foundation for the development of computer-assisted extension and development exercises.

In-service training courses for teachers will be developed in each of the three new languages, together with updated and translated guidance materials. Gordon Wells, project co-ordinator, said "This is a welcome opportunity to extend our links to new language teaching situations around Europe. I have no doubt that we, as an exporting partner, will nevertheless gain valuable new insights from working with partners in other languages. Working together we can pool resources and share experiences of the continuously developing media with which we work, and the new opportunities they present for further CALL development."

Methods
www.languages.dk

The great work done by the pools-m teams will from October 1st be followed by a new project titled Methods adding materials and manuals in new languages to the pools; French, Maltese, and Slovenian. The project will promote five communicative language-teaching methods and prepare videos with subtitles demonstrating how to use the methods in real classes, complete with ready to use lesson materials. The project will adapt and exploit the materials in France (Guadeloupe), Slovenia, and Malta.

During August 2013 members of the Tools team from SDE College, the University of Ulster and Universitat Politècnica de València delivered a two week teacher training course in Malta entitled *CLIL -Tools and applications for teachers working with CLIL*. The course was designed by SDE College and hosted by Executive Training Malta and was eligible for both Comenius and Grundtvig funding as part of the EU Lifelong Learning Programme. Participants in the training course were drawn from the primary, secondary and vocational sectors across Europe and participating nationalities included Italian, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Czech, Estonian, Austrian, Russian, Hungarian and Romanian. Motivation for attending the course among the 30 attendees ranged from current CLIL teachers wishing to avail of in service training in order to enhance and develop their practice, to content teachers who were soon to be required to teach a CLIL curriculum.

A group of teachers preparing a CLIL based lesson at the ETI course centre in Malta

The course delivery team, Cecilia Le Boeuf, Caoimhín Ó Dónaill and Ana Gimeno Sanz conducted a number of surveys amongst the group to gauge their prior and emerging

knowledge of CLIL theory and methodology, and their experience of using ICT to support the delivery of a CLIL curriculum. Classroom observations conducted by the Tools team during the course and the qualitative and quantitative data obtained from the survey responses have highlighted a number of interesting issues which warrant further analysis and discussion.

Getting CLIL experience During the Tools course in Malta

The needs of CLIL teachers working in the field are complex, and while the course participants were all able to clearly articulate their personal requirements and attitudes in relation to CLIL, we were able to identify general themes and trends among the data which have implications for the growth and quality control of CLIL programmes at a national/European policy level.

Training in the integration of Clilstore, Multidict & Wordlink into CLIL lessons was a central part of the course, however, this was underpinned by a comprehensive introduction to CLIL theory practical sessions on the use of the CLIL lesson planning template which forms part of the Clilstore Guide-

Latest news: Tools based courses have been tested in Malta

book. Given that one of the main problems highlighted by the participants was the lack of suitable materials to support their content delivery, the teachers were naturally excited about the potential benefits of Clilstore. In addition to registering with Clilstore and creating units, the participants were also required to reflect on how they would use the facility within their personal pedagogical context and to compile detailed lesson plans which they would be able to put into practice on their return to the classroom.

Caoimhín Ó Dónaill presenting the Tools results in Malta

It is likely that a thoroughgoing introduction to CLIL and Clilstore such as this will have a knock on effect once the teachers have returned to their schools, and naturally anyone intending to pass on the good news about Clilstore will have the Guidebook, the multilingual teacher and student DIY videos and www.languages.dk to assist them. One of the points raised by the teachers was the need to feel part of a community of practitioners and mutual support networks, this serves to highlight the importance of the Tools Project's community building initiatives such as the Tools4CLIL Teachers group on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.

The University of Evora had the pleasure of hosting the 20th Eurocall meeting, which leading theme was: Learning from the Past, Looking to the Future. This conference celebrated the 20 years of its existence as a European Association. This beautiful and charming venue, a UNESCO World Humanity heritage site, welcomed 150 investigators, researchers and teachers of languages.

The TOOLS teams ready for action during the Eurocall conference in Evora

The programme started on Wednesday at 14.00 with an opening keynote session given by Ana Gimeno, from the University of Valencia; and finished on Saturday the 14th with the closing session. The other keynote speakers where Christopher Jones from Carnegie Mellon University and Thierry Chanier, from the Université Blaise Pascal, Clermont-Ferrand. After the Conference, the 4th TOOLS meeting took place. All the partners were present and reported on the progres made between April 2013 and September 2013 e.g. the pilot-courses held at Malta, Denmark, Spain, Lithuania, Scotland, and Portugal.

Over the last few weeks, SMO have been delivering Clilstore workshops to adult learner students on the Gaelic language. Clilstore proved very popular indeed. A typical comment was, "Why have we not heard about this before?" I came across some of the students using it for themselves in the evenings and weekends outside of classes.

Demonstrations with an overhead projector were ok, but hands-on workshops worked much better. The Clilstore interface is now clear enough that it doesn't need much of any demonstration beforehand. The students' familiarity with computers varied widely though, so it was good to have them on individual computers and be able to sort out individual problems and questions.

The classes which most appreciated Clilstore were the intermediate level classes – the "breakthrough" level classes who would otherwise be struggling to find any authentic Gaelic language material on the Internet which they could cope with. The higher level classes found the Guthan nan Eilean videos wonderful, but they managed to cope with them ok with the help of the transcripts and made little use of the dictionary, whereas the intermediate level students used the dictionary a lot. One thing which emerged is that it would be good to have more advanced level material in Gaelic, at levels C1 and C2.

Another thing which emerged is that we have a bit of work to do on lemmatization within Clilstore/Wordlink/ Multidict. Even though the Faclair Beag does lemmatization, other Gaelic dictionaries do not and the current compromise of throwing out 'h' when it appears as second letter is not good enough. This applies even more so to Irish Gaelic.

Incidentally one of our full-time distance learning students told me that she found Wordlink tremendously useful for something which I had never expected – namely going from English into Gaelic. I had never expected that because nearly all Gaelic speakers these days know English better than they know Gaelic, and that was true of this student too even though she is German and living in Germany.

We have now reached the last co-funded project year in Tools and have started running a large number of teacher training workshops, where teachers experience how to create units in Clilstore and how to exploit the Clilstore units in a sound CLIL pedagogical context. The purposes of the workshops are twofold; to make final adjustments to the Tools outcomes and to ensure a wide exploitation of the outcomes. The Tools courses are offered by the partners in Denmark, Ireland, Lithuania, Portugal, Scotland, and Spain thus covering a wide area of Europe. We are also willing to run courses in neighbour countries if you can put together a team of teachers and ensure wi-fi access. Please mail ka@sde.dk to enquire about the upcoming courses near you, or even better you may offer to host a course in your institution.

The Tools outcomes will be presented in Athens during the EfVET conference
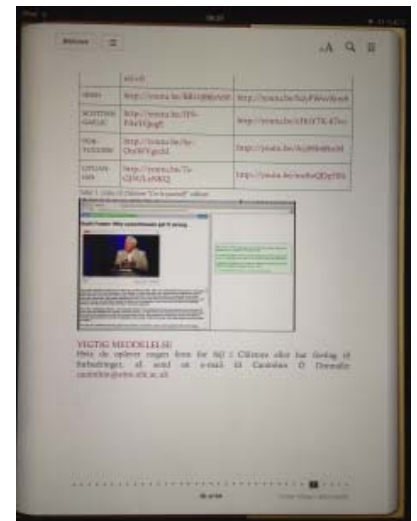
You can meet two of the Tools teams in Athens at the EfVET 2013 conference. The Tools presentations are scheduled for October 25th and will be presented by Rasa Zymantaite and Kent Andersen. The Tools project roundtable/ workshop will present the final version of our web based tool for language teaching/learning, supported by a teacher's guide and Do-It-Yourself videos in 7 languages. For almost two years an international team of language teachers and computer professionals have been creating a web-based educational tool for language teaching/learning. As a result, a free online service / tool was developed, which enables language teachers from LdV, Erasmus, and Grundtvig sectors to create multimedia webpages for language learning with all words automatically linked to online dictionaries in +100 languages where a teacher (or student!) can paste in text, select the language of the text, add graphics and video (if wanted) and then with one click automatically create an online webpage - in less than five minutes. Like the TextBlender the new online service seamlessly links all words to multitudes of online free dictionaries in +100 languages and supports all language characters (UTF8) including Arabic (right to left writing). The roundtable presentation of the Tools project will actually be more a workshop than a simple presentation, where all interested will have an opportunity to try and create their own on-line learning material and evaluate the tool. Being a 30 month project, this will be the second roundtable presentation delivered by the Tools project at the annual EfVET conference. In the intervening period Caoimhín Ó Donnaíle (SMO expert on PHP and JavaScript) has implemented a series of design changes and improved the user interface.

The guide book in the Danish version displayed on a "Kindle Paper White" reader

We have finished writing the project course book, now titled "Clilstore Guidebook". The core work and authoring was done by Ana Gimeno, Caoimhín Ó Dónaill, and Rasa Zygmantaite. The course book is available in English from the project website www.languages.dk/tools in different formats: .pdf for printing, .epub for eBook readers like iPads and other tablets, and in .azw3 format for reading from e.g. Kindle Paper White. Please note that we are still making a few updates to the book, so even if you have already downloaded it, a new version may be worthwhile to come back for. The book will in October be available in Danish, English, Irish, Lithuanian, Portuguese, and Spanish.

The guide book, here displayed on an iPad, features embedded video in the ePub versions