Interactive Teaching in Languages with Technology

EU funded project iTILT (2014-2017)

iTILT Newsletter ISSUE # 1 (June 2015)

Introduction to iTILT 2nd Edition

We were very pleased to be granted funding to take forward the ideas developed in the first iTILT project (2011-2013). The original project looked at using the interactive whiteboard (IWB) in second language teaching. but we are very excited to extend our work to look at the whole range of technology available to language teachers from primary school to university.

The central objective of our new iTILT project (2014-2017) , is to promote effective foreign language teaching and learning by supporting teachers in their integration of a variety of interactive technologies into communicative classroom practice. Our goals are therefore to:

* develop a new area of the iTILT website (an open education resource which can be found at www.itilt.eu to further enhance the existing, widely used iTILT website, with videos and associated resources demonstrating classroom-based examples of a wider range of technologies, such as iPads, tablet PCs, learner response systems, videoconferencing software, both independently and in combination with the IWB.

* create a professional development e-resource based on project results

* pilot an online Community of Practice (CoP) with project teachers

We look forward to working with our partners and will provide you with regular updates on our progress as we work to achieve these goals.

iTILT Kick-off Meeting in Cardiff, UK

The iTILT project team met in March at Cardiff Metropolitan University for its first meeting.

Prof. Gary Beauchamp, local host and project coordinator, kick-started the first session discussing the professional development programme and data collection planning. The German team then presented the first ideas for the initial training module developed by Prof. Euline Cutrim Schmidt and Dr Shona Whyte (see next item in this newsletter for more detail). Huw Hughes, local European Projects Director, proposed some key project management strategies including internal communication & financial reporting procedures and quality assurance and evaluation protocols
The next day the Dean briefly joined the meeting to be introduced to the team and its project mission. Special guest and invited speaker Prof. Dr Thomas Irion (DE) reported on his research related to tablets and their use in primary education in particular.

After sharing & testing some relevant apps, the planning for the dissemination activities and impact assessment was presented by TELLConsult's representative, Ton Koenraad (NL).
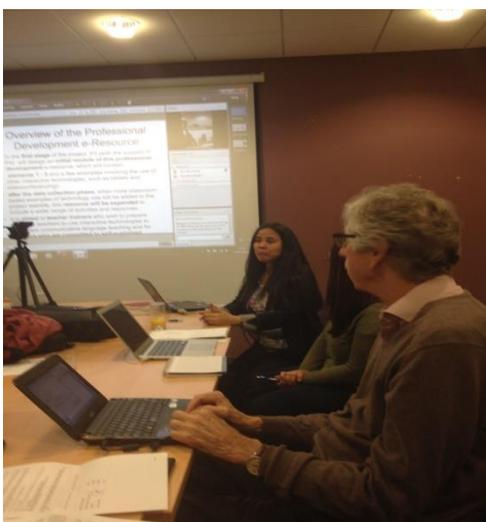For an impression of the meeting see this brief video summary and/or check out the related photos on our Facebook page.

The Design of the
Professional Development E-Resource

In this initial phase of the project we are preparing the first section of a professional development e-resource, which will be further developed throughout the project. In this first stage, the German and French partners are leading the design of a "Training Manual", which will then be used by all iTILT partners to introduce the participating teachers to a professional development programme on the use of interactive technologies for language teaching, starting in September this year. This document will include four main sections:

1. Short introduction to task based language teaching and general principles for task design.
2. Guidelines and step-by-step instructions on how the project website can be exploited for professional development.
3. Examples of in-service and pre-service teacher training activities based on the content of the website (e.g. video clips, teacher/pupil commentaries, other resources).
4. Further examples of technology use (e.g. videoconferencing software and I-pads) with clear references to theories of second language acquisition and language teaching methodology.

Initially, the professional development e-resource is going to be written only in English, but it is going to be translated into other European languages (Turkish, German, French and Dutch) in subsequent stages of the project.

iTILT Partner presentations:
NICE University (FR)

The initiative for the new iTILT project was developed by the same partnership that successfully realized the project's first edition.
We will highlight individual partner organizations in our newsletters, starting with NICE University.
The iTILT team at the University of Nice includes Shona Whyte, associate professor of English, and Florence Garelli, project manager in Pedagogical Innovation.

Shona works in language teacher education, directing the Masters in Teaching English programme in the School of Education and Teaching (ESPE de l'Académie de Nice), and will involve students in this programme, pre-service secondary EFL teachers, as well as more experienced teacher in primary school contexts. She is presently recruiting a research assistant to help develop and maintain the online teacher support community which will allow teachers in all project countries to collaborate throughout the lifetime of the project.