LMOOCs for university students on the move

Erasmus + Strategic Partnerships for higher education
Convention n°2018-1-FR01-KA203-048165

OBJECTIVES

Each year, thanks to the Erasmus programme, thousands of students in Europe take part of their studies in another country using a second language they know with a proficiency level B1 / B2. As many studies on the subject have shown, and as the analysis of the needs of students on the move conducted in partner universities has confirmed, skills needed for using common and general language differ from the skills and knowledge required for communication in academic contexts. This can have a negative effect on the completion of a cycle of study and on learners' ability to improve language skills in the long term, impeding them in their quest to achieve high levels of multilingualism.

The project MOOC2move therefore aims at creating a learning path, which will facilitate the development of linguistic fluency in academic contexts, supporting the student in acquiring this fluency by proposing methods and support in applying these methods. The "learning how to learn" approach is assumed to be both multidisciplinary (the project will concentrate on methods which can be applied in many domains, like note-taking, performing a short oral presentation supported by slides, interpreting figures, writing a summary, etc.), and more effective than just giving exercises.

The project will centre on the production of two MOOCs (1 for Spanish, 1 for French) in order to make it accessible to the largest number of students on the move. They will be designed for self-study, to make them accessible even while attending other language courses or while studying abroad. The development of language skills will take place together with the acquisition of the ability to learn how to learn. This will allow students to acquire greater autonomy in learning, which in turn leads to better results and lays the foundation for lifelong learning of other languages.

The project will concentrate on French and Spanish languages. Each MOOC will consist of 6 modules, oriented more towards academic communication and interaction than to master the formal aspects of the language, and centred on achieving the following objectives:

- Achieving awareness of the language learning process and knowing how to use effective learning strategies;
- Becoming conscious of the various registers which exist in any language, and which vary according to the situation of communication;
- Developing comprehension strategies in the domain of oral academic discourse (for example lectures); becoming aware of the role of note-taking;
- Developing comprehension strategies of written expository texts relating to academic disciplines;
- Learning how to use electronic media and tools to enhance production of oral expository texts relating to academic disciplines;
- Learning how to use online translators and online searches wisely to enhance production of written texts in the domain of academic disciplines. Becoming aware of the risks of plagiarism, and of the limits of automatic translation.

The modules will include multimedia material and downloadable documents, activities to be performed online with self-correction, and a verification test at the end of each module. Students

will be able to combine individual work with collective activities, using the tools MOOCs offer, i.e. self-correcting quizzes, discussion forums and peer evaluation.

PROJECT STEPS

- producing specific guidelines and a syllabus for creating MOOCs for languages for academic purposes;
- producing specific guidelines for the evaluation of language MOOCs;
- planning, creation and development of two MOOCs respectively for French and Spanish implemented on the FUN-MOOC and FutureLearn platforms;
- creation of Open Educational Resources (OERs) that support autonomous and independent learning;
- planning, creation and development of a portal which will host all OERs created during the project;
- Pilot Phase (delivery and evaluation of the two MOOCs);
- evaluation and creation of monitoring tools;
- impact and dissemination actions based on events and different tools (paper, video, newsletters, web-articles in periodic national/international, social media, inserting links in websites).

EXPECTED RESULTS:

- ➢ Development of an innovative approach to learning languages for academic contexts;
- ➢ Creation of tools to support the development of specialised communication skills aimed at students in mobility programs;
- ➢ Validation of this approach in national and international academic settings;
- ➢ Creation of high-quality open access language teaching resources;
- ➢ Creation of a network where people can share and learn from each other using the resources made available through the project;
- ➢ Improvement of the skills, knowledge, experience necessary for creating OERs for language learning;
- ➢ Improvement of language skills of the thousands of people who will follow the two courses;
- ➢ Increasing awareness of the benefits of "open education" in Europe. The project will examine the potential of MOOCs (courses and communities) for breaking down technological barriers, allowing access to learning for people with special needs or at risk of exclusion;
- ➢ Possibility for the teachers of the target languages to manage language-learning scenarios based on the OERs provided on the project portal which will have the function of an integrated and customizable learning environment
- ➢ Demonstrations carried out in international Conferences organized in centres of excellence in some European countries.

PARTNERSHIP

The project, which is going to last 30 months (11/2018 - 04/2021), is coordinated by the University Grenoble Alpes and implemented by a partnership comprising institutions from five countries: France, Italy, Romania, Spain and United Kingdom.

1. The University Grenoble Alpes (UGA), Grenoble, France has 45.000 students and is renowned for its experience in language didactics (second language acquisition research): https://www.fun-mooc.fr/courses/course-v1:grenoblealpes+92007+session03/about). Grenoble has already participated in many European projects, the first ones about intercomprehension in Romance languages (Galanet, Galapro, Miriadi), the two most recent ones about tele collaboration (Intent, Evolve). UGA has experience in distance teaching via Internet (Master of French as a foreign language at a distance), in tele collaboration, in teaching French for academic purposes, and conducts research in all these

fields (Laboratoire de linguistique et didactique des langues étrangères et maternelles, Lidilem). A Lidilem team designed in 2016 one of the first French MOOCs (4500 enrolled), dedicated to language teacher training in the use of digital technologies (Teaching and training in languages with digital), implemented on the FUN-MOOC platform

2. Federazione Nazionale Insegnanti Centro di iniziativa per l'Europa (FENICE), Napoli, Italia is a professional association of teachers which has designed and produced seven European projects related to teaching/learning a foreign language (including Italian L2) based on the use of new methodological approaches such as theatre and music (one of them awarded as Star project in 2012). It has been a partner in other six projects always aimed at the creation of teaching materials, which make foreign language learning easier. 13 out of the 22 European projects in which it participated as a coordinator or partner were addressed to the linguistic sector, which has not only permitted a significant development of skills in the sector but also the realization of a very wide network of contacts with experts in language teaching. It publishes the periodical «Scuol@Europa», equipped with a scientific committee and referees and a newsletter sent out in three languages (IT, EN, FR) all over Europe to 10000 teachers, institutions and policy makers.

3. The Open University (OU), United Kingdom - is a university for distance learning and research that awards degrees, postgraduate qualifications and a range of other diplomas, certificates and certificates of continuing education. With over 174,000 students, the OU is the largest academic institution in the United Kingdom by number of students, and one of the largest in Europe and the world. The OU is renowned worldwide for its experience in distance learning, language teaching and the use of new technologies for collaborative learning. In addition, the organizational unit is a leader in the production of MOOC and works closely with the FutureLearn MOOC platform to provide learning for hundreds of thousands of students. Recently, the OU has produced two highly successful Spanish and Italian MOOC programs for beginners. The organizational unit has participated in numerous relevant European projects, including Move-Me, ExplOERer and MAGICC (Multilingual and Multicultural Academic Communication Skills).

4. The University of Bucharest (UB) Romania (30,000 students) has a long experience in European Projects and is the largest University in Romania. As published in Special Eurobarometer 386, after Belgium, the European country where the French language is the best second language to study is Romania. In fact, Romania is in Europe the country with the highest number of students of French and of French speakers and a large number of university students complete their studies in France. The Department of Distance Education CREDIS offers a form of distance education characterized by the use of specific electronic, computer and communication resources, through Google Apps platforms, Classroom Automation. Tutoring activities integrate self-learning and self-assessment activities. CREDIS specialists have proven skills in creating online lessons for various disciplines.

5. The University of Leon (ULE) Spain (13.000 students) is a founding member of the Santander Group and the Compostela Group of Universities. ULE is involved in researching online teaching such as the EVALUATE and EVOLVE (Erasmus+ projects under development). Its school for Professional Development offers online courses on new teaching technologies. The ULE also runs teaching innovation projects focused on distance learning, which involve designing peer strategies to assess generic skills in college students using Moodle. Furthermore, ULE offers distance language teaching through the platform Tell me more and Virtual Classroom Spanish Institute Cervantes.

6. The University of Alicante (UA) Spain (20,000 students) has been very successful in Training and Capacity Building programmes such as Lifelong Learning, Erasmus+ as well as Edulink, Tempus and Alfa programmes, involving partners in more than 80 countries worldwide. The previous experience on MOOCs and NOOCs is extensive (see: https://uaedf.ua.es/#MOOC and https://web.ua.es/es/ice/moocs-noocs/mooc-y-nooc.html). The MOOCs at the UA also include the collaboration with the courses of UNIMOOC

(https://unimooc.ua.es/) with more than 60.000 students, and collaboration with Google. The UA also has experience with Miriada and other MOOC platforms.