It's time to get creative!

While it is widely used and appreciated, the concept of creativity (from the Latin creare "to make, bring forth, produce, beget") is not easy to define.

Some people understand creativity is an „elite" concept embracing only the creative people with "unusual talents", who are able to make their creative mark without special education and sometimes gain strength from educational failure, or as referring only to achievements in high culture and science.

Others support the „democratic"notion of creativity and maintain that there is a potential for creative achievement in all fields of human activity and that the capacity for creativity belongs to everybody and not only to the few outstanding. In the UK, the Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE) published in 1999 a report which defines creativity broadly. According to the report creativity always involves imagination, since it is the process of generating something original. Creativity also is purposeful: it is imagination put into action towards an end. It produces something original in relation to one's own previous work, to their peer group or to anyone's previous output in a particular field. And finally, it has value in respect to the objective it was applied for. Creativity involves not only the generation of ideas, but also the evaluation of them, and deciding which one is the most adequate.

Despite being a complex entity, difficult to define, there is among the educators some consensus on the creativity characteristics. It seems clear that it is related to the appearance of something new and with some short of value. There is also an agreement that everybody can be creative to some extent. In his view, creativity is seen as an essential feature of human life and learning. Creativity also requires "work" to appear not only as a potential idea, but also as an implementation, as a practical result or solution.

It is on this broad, democratic idea about creativity that the decision of the European Union of making 2009 European Year of Creativity and Innovation was based. The main goal of the Year of Creativity and Innovation was "to promote creativity for all as a driver for innovation and as a key factor for the development of personal, occupational, entrepreneurial and social competences through lifelong learning". In their Manifesto the European Ambassadors for Creativity and Innovation claim that „creativity is a fundamental dimension of human activity", which thrives where there is dialogue between cultures, in a free, open and diverse environment. „More than ever, Europe's future depends on the imagination and creativity of its people" – the Manifesto states.

Another important document linking creativity and education is the Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 22 May 2008 on promoting creativity and innovation through education and training. This document appreciates the fact that all levels of education and training can contribute to creativity and innovation in a lifelong learning perspective. A special emphasis is put on diversity and multicultural environments as stimulating novelty and creativity. The key role of the teachers in the process is acknowledged: „Teachers have a crucial role to play in nurturing and supporting each child's creative potential, and can contribute to this by exemplifying creativity in their own teaching."The emphasis on the link between creativity and the diversity in terms of languages and cultures mentioned above, shows how important it is to invest creativity in language learning in Europe. EU language policy promotes multilingualism and encourages every EU citizen to learn at least two foreign languages in addition to their mother tongue. As one of the key competencies for lifelong learning, the ability to communicate in foreign tongue broadens the horizon of the person, enriches his or her understanding of the world, and enhances the interest and curiosity in languages and intercultural communication, thus paving the way to greater openness to creativity, novelty and diversity. The abilities to communicate in other languages are transferable skills which are useful in different areas of learners' lives and to society as a whole. They enhance creativity, break cultural stereotypes and can help develop innovative products and services. In tackling the issues of creativity and learning some researchers, to mention Prof. Rosemary Sage among others, believe that we have two ways of thinking and understanding. The one is associated with the Left brain, which deals with words and parts of things, thinking linearly in step-by-step fashion. In contrast, the Right brain deals with images and wholes, with intuition and creativity, assembling components for overall comprehension. The effective

language learning is supposed to combine the two perspectives and leave a room not only for analysis, grammar and logic for example, but also for activities which stimulate the Right brain - imagination, music, visualisation, intuition or inventiveness. In such a way we move towards holistic education, working not only for equipping learners with knowledge and skills, but also towards developing their personality and social fulfilment.

It is largely accepted among teachers that multilingualism encourages creativity in so far a good command of several languages broadens the access to information and offers alternative ways of organizing thought.

But in real teaching practice there are a number of factors that inhibit students' and teachers' creativity, pressure to perform, time constraints, teacher's fear of loss of control and fear of failure as well the set syllabus leading to exams are among the factors, which teachers mention often as hindering their creativity. Conditions in the classroom that encourage and enable students and teachers to be creative are the positive attitude in class, the variety of resources; student diversity, team work among teachers, Allowing a sense of fun and curiosity, teacher's commitment to the creative methods.

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What can we as teachers do in order to boost our creativity and develop the creativity of language learners in more practical terms? A report by Margaret Anne Clarke "Creativity in modern Foreign Language Teaching and Learning" (SUBJECT PERSPECTIVES ON CREATIVITY IN HIGHER EDUCATIONWORKING PAPER OCTOBER 2005) gives us some valuable clues on questions we may ask ask ourselves should we aspire to be creative in our work. Let's quote some of the suggestions:
- *Is what we do meaningful to us?*
- *Do we question, explore, experiment, discover things when preparing teaching materials?*
- *Do we actually enjoy teaching, and preparing materials for our students?*
- *When preparing materials, do we openly share in our explorations and mistakes with other colleagues?*
- *Do we organize meetings were creative ways of creating materials are discussed?*
- *Do our institutions provide a safe place in which mistakes can be explored and resolved?*
- *Do our institutions offer staff development workshops, and other related opportunities, in creativity?*
- *Is the creative pursuit an essential part of our courses' curriculum?*
A crucial element in developing creativity is the emotional atmosphere and the attitude of the teachers to their learners, so we need to ask ourselves:
- *Do we provide (sufficient) opportunities in the classroom for questioning,exploration, experimentation and discovery?*
- *Are we providing a sufficiently open-minded environment for creativity to flourish?*

- *Do we provide a safe and non-judgmental, un-biased environment in which mistakes can be made and corrected?*
- *Do we react positively when students make mistakes?*
- *Do we create opportunities to show how mistakes can be handled?*
- *Do we recognize talent in the students' output?*
- *Do we let them know how good they are at something? How frequently?*
- *Do we know enough about our students: their likes, dislikes, talents, interests, learning styles, etc.?*
- *Do we provide enough opportunities for students to engage in our own teaching material preparation?*
- *Do we include creative type of exercises in both our teaching materials and assessments?*
- *Are our students sufficiently motivated by the class/ course?*
- *Are they afraid of asking questions?*
- *Do they feel accepted by us?*
A number of creative projects in the sphere of language learning have been developed within the frames of the Lifelong Learning Programme. Teachers can find valuable information and resources at:

http://ec.europa.eu/languages/index_en.htm

Verina Petrova, ICCF, Bulgaria

Creativity in language learning

'Creativity in language learning' is a project aimed at valorising the importance of the intercultural and creativity dimension in language learning and at promoting and encouraging linguistic and cultural diversity.

The project target groups are school teachers (foreign language teachers in particular) and other educational workers who work with children and youngsters; school principals, adult educators, life-long learning providers; students, etc., as well as decision-makers from different levels of the educational systems in the project partner countries.

Emotions and feelings are often kept out of language courses, as if learning involved only the rational part of an individual. As a consequence, the learner does not feel involved and often has only a passive role in the learning process.

The project is based on the assumption that creative and less conventional devices such as drama, songs and video clips are very effective methodological tools in language teaching and that they can target different audiences, from children to adults, being thus consistent with the objectives of the transversal programme.

The four project partners – Lewis School of English, Southampton, UK, Federazione Nazionale Insegnanti Centro di Iniziativa per l'Europa (FENICE), Naples, IT, Kulturring in Berlin e.V, Berlin, Germany, and the Intercultural Co-operation Foundation (ICCF), Sofia, BG – shared their comepetences in order to evaluaate, definite, and disseminate the best practices aimed at making language learning more effective through creativity. On one hand, the project foresees the dissemination of these four succesful

language learning projects relying on these methodological approaches and on the analysis of the transferability of these didactic choices. On the other hand, the project carries out a research of the good practices in other European projects, then paving the way for the building up of a virtual library of best creative practices in language learning, to be inserted in the website www.languagelearning.eu

The project complies also with the objective of the promotion of multilingualism because it foresees:

- Four interactive "matching sessions" to bring together supply and demand organized in UK, BG, IT and DE. In each session there will be interactive exchanges between the 4 CREALLE project promoters and the users, with the aim of facilitating the transfer and exploitation of the project results to meet new users' needs. The projects and products will be presented as a "point of departure" towards the broader issues of adaptability and utilizing the products, as well as towards the possibilities for innovating the traditional teaching methods with creativity-based methods.

- 2 newsletters in five languages (EN, FR, DE, IT, BG) sent by e-mail to representatives of target groups. The first one aims at disseminating creative learning language projects; the second one at reaching and involving a wider audience in the International Conference.

- The program of a training course to be inserted on the Comenius/Grundtvig database addressed to the in-service teachers/trainers in FL interested in exploring creative approaches to language teaching.

- **An International Dissemination conference and Project Fair** that will be held in Brussels on 15th and 16th November and that will be aimed at bringing together and displaying some good practices and products from already implemented European educational projects – the 4 CREALLE target projects and others aimed at contributing to creativity in language education.

The four CREALLE projects are:

- **Theatre Express** www.theatre-express.co.uk

- **Language and Integration through Singing** www.languagesbysongs.eu

- **Digital video streaming and Multilingualism** www.divisproject.eu

- **Broad Sweeps of Imagination** www.bsiproject.com

A very important outcome of the project will be the creation of an international informal network of teachers that support and promote creativity in language teaching and learning. In order to increase the possibility of contacts among teachers and other stakeholders, the project partners have created also a CREALLE Facebook page.

To have further information about the project and to know a wide range of teaching methodologies, please visit our website http://www.languagelearning.eu

And for updatings about project's activites and news, subscribe to CREALLE newsletter!

Theatre Express

A new language-learning theatre project by The Lewis School of English

The world over, TIE (Theatre-in-education) is extremely popular, with theatre companies visiting schools and performing productions that range in their content from history-learning to raising awareness on environmental issues. Peter Wynne-Wilson (1998 Creative Britons Award nominee for his contribution to arts for young people) expresses TIE's valence very well in the following quote: "Theatre-in-education is a genuinely hybrid form, with its roots more firmly in education than in theatre. The form was originated by a group not of actors but of teachers, in Coventry in 1965. It is built on the simple truth which is at the base of all sensible education: that we all learn best through experience. The process of creating good TIE is the process of creating strong, relevant, memorable 'experiences' for every young person that is taking part. The theatre comes in as a uniquely powerful means to that end. Drama is seen as an extension of play - the natural process by which children explore and learn about the world in which they live".

When it comes to learning a new language, we have found that drama is an extremely powerful way to tap into this "natural process" Peter Wynne-Wilson refers to of learning through experience. By giving students a character to perform, a costume to wear, words to speak, intonations and intentions to explore and an imaginary situation to experience, language learning occurs magically almost, as a result of the heightened interest that is generated through giving students the chance to perform onstage in a foreign language.

Let's look at the different stages in the Theatre Express process.

1. Our first meeting with the students: creating the right atmosphere

Meeting a group of students for the first time is an exciting and important moment which can really define the experience which will follow. This is the moment to create the right vibe, to begin to get to know the students and for the students to get to know us. Our aim in our first meeting is not to impose ourselves in any way, but rather to gently introduce the students to the work which they will be involved in throughout the project and to introduce the right vibe for good group work. This is done through a series of simple theatrical games which are a lot of fun for the students and don't require any

particular linguistic ability. However these games, being games, have very clear rules and are challenging in their own right and moreover, require group efforts to be successful. Indeed the "challenging element" is very important right from the start, in order to give the students real aims to work towards as a group. It cannot be emphasized enough how important group identity and team-building is for us, an element which we like to get across to the students in a very practical way.

The reason we wish to steer clear from over-challenging their linguistic abilities on our first encounters (albeit still communicating with them entirely in English) is that we wish to encourage team-building before we do so, creating good ground-work upon which to build up their linguistic

ability. We don't want anyone to feel excluded nor superior due to linguistic skill differences (which are common in any language learning context) but on the contrary we want everyone to feel they are participants in a project where all shall learn and improve individually, wherever they are at in terms of knowledge, within the trusting environment of a team.

2. Communication and getting to know the story

The next stage is for the students to explore the story of the play they will perform at the end of the project. This is done before any scripts are handed out, parts are assigned or lines are learnt. This we do through a series of exercise-games which are aimed at bringing the story to life in the students. For example in our latest project which took place in February 2010 at the Liceo Linguistico "L. Radice", Catania, Italy, we worked with a group of more than 60 14-year old students and the theme was William Shakespeare's works. 6 groups of 5 students had to prepare 5-minute versions of famous Shakespeare plays (which within the larger story of the play-narrating the trials and tribulations of an all-girls theatre company in Elizabethan England- are then performed in front of Queen Elizabethan at the fictional "Royal Shakespeare Festival"), entirely written and staged by them with our help and guidance. This was a way to give students with a lower level of English an opportunity to nevertheless play an important role in the play, learn about Shakespeare, devise their own pieces and improve their English by writing short, simple dialogues which they and the audience could understand. Preparing staged summaries of stories is an excellent way for students to explore English communication in a fun and exciting way. It allows them to internalize notions and language in a very effective way and gives them a real impetus for expressing themselves in English.

3. Preparing the performance

This is when we hand out scripts and parts to the students and the rehearsal process begins. It is a very exciting stage of the project, where a lot of learning takes place. How and in what way do the students learn at this stage?

• The first most evident way is in terms of new vocabulary and phrases. Each character speaks certain words and sentences which the students need to know off by heart. Here it is interesting to note that the expression "by heart" is really very befitting to the work we do with the students, but paradoxically in a way that is very different to the usual use of the expression. "By heart" usually connotes "by rote" in the English language. However, when we ask the students to learn these words and phrases we are not asking them to learn them by rote at all, on the contrary, we ask them to think about why they their character uses these phrases, how he or she says them, and all this happens in a situation and in movement. So in our case, learning by heart is very much absorbing the words and generating strong associations not only in the mind, but also in the emotional sphere and the physical.

• This leads us onto the question of the added dimension of language, namely intentions and intonations. Once the students have understood the literal meaning of the words they speak we begin to ask them, quite literally, to ask questions. Why does my character say this? What is he/she trying to achieve when he says these words? How will I say these lines in order to obtain what my character is trying to achieve? Here we draw upon a widely used theatrical methodology made popular by Out Of Joint, one of the UK's best known and cutting edge theatre companies, called "Actioning". Transitive verbs such as "to admonish", "to charm", "to encourage", "to blame" are used as objectives behind the words spoken by one character to affect another. We give the students a long list of transitive verbs which they can refer to and which we explain to them one by one. By adopting this method and getting the students to engage with transitive verbs, we are opening up the door to A. The students learning new verbs which describe attitudes and ideas which they may have been aware of in their own language but not necessarily in Eng-

lish, hence increasing their awareness and knowledge of the English language and B. They transform an abstract concept such as a verb into a living intonation in the voice and certain use of the body. This means they create stronger, more permanent associations which remain in their memories in a different, more complete way.

• This leads us onto the non-verbal aspect of communication which the rehearsal process allows them to engage with. An important benefit that theatre has in language learning is the fact that it engages the physical element which is a language in itself. When Luana Cannavò, one of the students who took part in the Shakespeare project in Catania, played the part of Oliver in the play they performed, the character she played would often have a shy nature. This came across in the way she engaged with the fact that the character is shy and hesitant on a physical level, by holding her body in a certain way, using the space and relating to other characters in a certain way, and all this combined with the words she spoke and the intonations in her voice made for a believable experience for the audience in the final performance, but more importantly perhaps, it allowed her to have a sense of what it means to communicate with the whole of herself, her body included. These, amongst many other important elements constitute the main benefits which occur through the rehearsal process leading to the final performance. Fuelled by the desire to prepare some-

thing good for the audience, team-spirit and channelled through exercises and methodologies designed to improve the students' English holistically, the day of the final performance arrives!

4. The Final Performance: gathering the fruits of the work

A Final Performance is an aim which gives all the work that has taken place a tangible shape and meaning. Without this aim it would still be possible to work on the things mentioned above, but the presence of a final experience for parents, family, friends and teachers to witness is truly galvanizing and adds something special to the projects. What greater barrier to overcome than the fear of walking onstage and speaking words in English!! And what greater satisfaction therefore, in having done it! The final performance is a way for the student to realise "Yes, I can speak English, I can communicate, because I enjoyed myself and the audience did too". So for the linguistic scopes of our projects the final performance "seals the deal" between the student and English, confidence is gained and doors are opened.

This is the aim of Theatre Express and this is what we wish to keep aiming for, improving more and more as we go along.

Adelle Spindlove
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Languages and integration through singing

1. The musical approach

The musical approach in foreign languages teaching in secondary schools, university and adults courses has been tested and has shown its effectiveness in the rapid acquisition of communicative abilities also in case of autonomous learning. (Santiago Palacios Navarro – e-Learning Papers Nº13 • April 2009) It also strengthens the intercultural knowledge of the students (taking into account that the songs' texts contain historical-socio-cultural references) and promotes the integration of immigrants in the schools and in the centres for adult education.

However this method is not really widespread and in the teaching practice great importance is often given to the knowledge of grammar rules rather than to communicative skills and often the words taught don't have the least connection with the reality students live in. The international indicators (Pisa, OCSE, TIMMS), practically without exceptions, underline that youngsters coming from deprived environments and foreign pupils are at the greatest disadvantage. The deficits refer in first place to the fundamental abilities (reading, writing, speaking in the foreign languages, etc). Here it is opportune to remember that linguistic education and digital competences are transversal (they are two of the 8 key competences!) and besides interact among them in the curriculum and in to create relationships and community.

We observe then that the schools in Europe must always make forehead to an increasing increase of the number of immigrants. This new situation asks for new didactic and methodological answers as also the use of new proper technologies for the groups target.

2. The creativity in LIS project

The originality of the LIS project lies with the match of a musical approach based on songs with the use of ICT based on Internet, Youtube, karaoke and the interactive whiteboard. This integrated set contributes not only to the improving of listening and speaking but also to a better knowledge of inter-

cultural aspects through video, taking into account the wide diffusion of Internet and YouTube. It has proven its effectiveness for rapid building of communicative skills in foreign language learners and can be used also in case of autonomous learning.

The materials are based on lyrics with a poetic or literary text, that becomes the best way to communicate emotions and will develop the socio-cultural references present in the texts. The products, tested by teachers in several countries in order to ensure suitability and effectiveness, were improved and made accessible through the web portal www.languagesbysongs.eu

It is important to underline that this project increases the value of linguistic, cultural, relational and intercultural aspects and focuses on the multilingual character of the European Union.

- reinforcing the acquisition of competences in 2 LWULT languages (PT and RO);
- improving the intercultural dialogue in Europe helping both migrants and non migrants in learning languages through songs;
- developing and promoting methodologies to motivate learners and to enhance their capacity for language learning;
- developing innovative ICT-based content, techniques and practice for lifelong learning;
- promoting access to language learning resources, awakening and reinforcing creativity of foreign language teachers/trainers offering them to upload songs, activities and worksheets & intercultural contents directly in the website.
- showing the effectiveness of songs, karaoke and video clips in addressing and in resolving typical language learning difficulties (e.g. shyness in oral expression), providing learners with lively teaching sessions adaptable to the individual needs.
- transferring these methodological ideas in adult education promoting the acquisition of key competences (Communication in foreign languages) to other contexts across Europe being music language universal;
- creating a network of teachers who will disseminate the method, developing and adapting it to their educational practices.

3. The content of the web portal

The teaching materials inserted in the site can be used by teachers of Italian, Romanian, Russian, French, Spanish and Portuguese interested in using songs in their classroom, by their pupils who wish to practise at home and, finally, by autonomous learners. To use the materials at their best students

should be at least at the A1 level of the Common European Frame of Reference (CEFR). The linguistic levels mainly used in the site are between A2 and B2.

The website, in 7 languages (IT/FR/ES/PT/RO/RU plus EN), features:
-Information about the project, objectives, activities and results of the project

-The "Teachers' area" with methodological procedures on the use of songs in the classroom to learn a language and guidelines on the use of the material and the production of one's own;

-Sample learning materials in the "Karaoke & exercises" page – i.e. for each song, the lyrics, a video, a karaoke, a worksheet and a file with the keys to help the learners' self-assessment. Besides the language exercises, the worksheet contains information relating to the history, culture and traditions of the country whose language the student is learning, musical themes, glossaries, grammar contents and oral exercises with the use of karaoke. In order to allow teachers and learners to choose the best option for their objectives, at the beginning of each worksheet we have specified: Level (what CEFR level the song is for), Focus (grammar and vocabulary practised in the song) and Time (the length of the activity)

- information on the partners, the authors of the teaching materials and the teachers who experimented with them as well as the report on the results of the experimentation.

- links to relevant websites (language learning resources, language teaching with music support, radio and TV channels).

The website is the outcome of three European projects Grundtvig Learning Partnership coordinated by FENICE: "Languages and Integration through Singing" dedicated to Italian, Romanian and Russian, "French and Spanish language competence through songs" (FRESCO) concerning French & Spanish and "Find A Delightful Opportunity to learn Portuguese through Internet and songs" (FADO) devoted to Portuguese.

Federazione Nazionale Insegnanti Centro di iniziativa per l'Europa – FENICE – Naples, Italy – is a non-profit teacher association which supports any initiative favouring the integration of the intellectual resources of schools in the cultural growth of society, promotes and plans initiatives, training projects, refresher courses, the cultural improvement of teachers as well as research and experimentation in the teaching field, and takes part in the research and development of technologies in order to make learning easier.

The FENICE's partners are eight institutions from five countries – Bulgaria, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Spain:

-Euroinform Ltd - Sofia, Bulgaria - is a company concerned with designing and introducing modern teaching methods in adult training and language teaching.

-University of Porto Faculty of Arts (FLUP) – Porto, Portugal - has long-standing experience in the teaching of Portuguese as a foreign language or second language (PFL/SL), as well as in the training of teachers of PFL/SL. FLUP's students of PFL/SL are generally short-term university students of other nationalities, but there are also regular students, particularly immigrants.

-University of Bucharest - Department of French in the Faculty of foreign Languages and Literatures - Bucharest, Romania - with its 50 members, offers great opportunities of training in linguistics, literary studies, translation and translation studies, applied modern languages, teaching methodology and anthropology.
- University of Bucharest - Department of Romance Linguistics, Ibero-Romance Languages and Literatures, Portuguese Section - Bucharest, Romania - offers the students the opportunity of specializing in Portuguese literature and linguistics, as well as in Portuguese literary translation.

- E-KU Institute of Language and Intercultural Communication - Nitra, Slovakia - is a language education provider, operating with all age groups interested in learning any of these languages: English, German, Italian, Russian, French, Spanish and Slovak for Foreigners.

- The Official Language School (EOI), Malaga, Spain - one of the Official Language Schools who form a wide network of non-university level schools dedicated to specialized teaching of modern languages, offers the study of eleven languages with two kinds of education: presential classes and non-presential classes..

Giampiero De Cristofaro
www.languagesbysongs.eu

Digital video streaming and Multilingualism

YouTube announced in May 2011 that it has reached 3 billion page views per day. Just two years ago this figure was one billion - which gives an idea about the fast growth of online video. It also indicates that non-professional content, which is the main material presented on YouTube, is becoming a major part of the modern media world, which was formerly controlled by only professionals.

Most modern media devices include a built-in video camera. An up-to-date smart phone has a video device with better quality than a purpose-built video camera of five years ago. Most recent stills cameras also have good quality video features. As well as this video editing has become a lot more accessible. In the past it was a complicated procedure requiring a lot of technology, but nowadays has become something which can be done with existing computer technology and a short introduction.

New technologies are often motivating tools to bring to the classroom. Young people find it more interesting to create their own media texts instead of engaging with standard textbooks. They like the idea of sharing their outcomes with groups outside the classroom instead of being confined to the same group of fellow students all the time. At the same time they can learn more about the media themselves. Integrating new technologies supports digital and media competence. They will need to decide on messages, think about the effects of their material on possible audiences and will experience productive teamwork in order to get their project done.

Young learners are familiar with the technical requirements of video production. They are often more advanced than teachers themselves. This is not a problem though - teachers don't need to be professional video producers. They will need to know about how they want to include video production in their teaching, what the pedagogical framework is and what outcomes they would like to achieve. The production itself can stay in the

hands of the learners.

Getting started - the pedagogy

Most important for any video project is the pedagogical framework of where and how video features within teaching. Before we go further I would like to point out four important things:

- **Keeping things simple:** With no experience with video production in the classroom it is most important to start with very simple exercises. It is not wise to plan a long feature film - this will quite likely end up with problems and frustrations. Small camera exercises with one or two camera shots with no editing are enough to get started

- **Rely on team work:** Media productions need team work. It is a good idea for three or four students to work together in a **team**. The process and need for discussion and exchange is an important part of every media project. Particularly when it comes to the editing of the video a fruitful exchange of selecting messages and discussing how different messages are perceived is important.

- **Get permission from the parents**
  It is too easy to put video outcomes online - it needs only a USB stick and online access at home. We advise every teacher to get written permission from the parents for their children to be seen on the videos. This also means that no names of children, of the class or sometimes even the name of the school can be mentioned (and obviously no phone numbers, email addresses, home websites, …)

- **Observe copyright issues**
  Copyright has become a major concern in the modern world of sharing and publishing. It is important that no commercial music is used within the video productions. Care also needs to be taken with clips recorded from television or videos and still images taken from the internet.

Every video project needs an outline and it is important to put some effort into the planning. An outline helps with the steps needed and can be linked to a timetable. It should also include the main learning goal of the project. Evaluation needs to look into the process of making the video and into the final outcome to help the students reflect on what they have done.

Easy level video work

Easy level video work is about introductory exercises - keeping the production efforts low but still offering enough space for exploring the visual language. The creative use of the camera device can be explored through different framings, camera positions and movements (a useful video introduction: http://youtu.be/qVEnqoRJRLU)

Exercises could include:

- **Short video messages** in the foreign language sent to other learners via simple online platforms such as mailVU. The camera images can add an interesting dimension to plain text messages (http://mailvu.com/).

- **"Video-words":** Selected words which are recorded with the corresponding object / background. Students can prepare their recordings with storyboards and discuss how they want to use the camera (http://divisproject.eu/video-words).

- **" Photo stories":** This involves no video recordings but the combination of still images in a simple video editing

package such as Moviemaker or iMovie. A theme is selected beforehand

and small teams work together on their messages (http://divisproject.eu/photo-story)

Sound is important for video language work. It is useful to be close to the built-in microphones and record the images in quiet environments to make sure that the words can be understood afterwards.

Advanced video work

With advanced video projects editing will play a crucial role. Video editing is a very creative process. This is where different single messages can create a new overall message. Sounds, music and text can add or extend meaning. Basic video editing software is enough to get started (a useful first tutorial: http://youtu.be/Y9uVx2t8ihI).

Possible project ideas:

Drama: Drama refers to short sketches or performances which are recorded with the video camera. The drama is separated into different sequences which can be recorded separately and then put together in the editing phase. Titles and music can make the project more interesting (http://divisproject.eu/drama).

Music clip: Projects can vary from simple one-shot recordings to more edited sequences with additional images put on top. Subtitles can be useful additions to strengthen the language learning.

News programmes: News programmes are based on written scripts which will then be recorded in a "news room". This can vary from a simple table in the classroom to a specially designed set-up in a separate room with extra lights. The editing can add separate video clips which are recorded on different locations or still images. Small groups can work on different articles which can be brought together in one news programme (http://divisproject.eu/television-news).

Advanced projects can also include edited documentations of language projects or school presentations done in the foreign language (and then exchanged with partner schools across Europe / the world).

Sharing and extending through on-line tools

Online tools linked with video production and sharing have developed strongly over the last years. Sharing options open up a new world of connecting with other learners across the globe. Projects are not limited to the classroom and feedbacks can open up unexpected conversations.

YouTube (http://youtube.com) has been continually developing its interface and now includes options for putting subtitles on (with automatic translations), but also has an online editor where already uploaded video clips can be re-edited into new programmes. YouTube has also removed the 10 min length limit and has very good high-definition capabilities. Having said that - it still has the feature that similar videos and adverts are shown next to your own video which is not very useful for presentations in the classroom. Vimeo (http://vimeo.com) in this sense has a cleaner interface and is very popular with independent video makers. It has also high-definition but has less options with annotations and subtitles. Both platforms offer easy "embedding" options, where the videos can be easily included on social platforms. The ad-

vent of cloud services come along with more and more online editing sites. All video footage needs to be uploaded and this can become time consuming and complicated for bigger projects. For smaller projects online editing can be a very exciting tool for collaboration - students from different locations can work on the same film. Examples we have used include WeVideo (http://www.wevideo.com/) and stupeflix (http://studio.stupeflix.com/).

Other useful online services include free subtitling sites where subtitles can be created collaboratively (http://www.universalsubtitles.org), or

special video search engines to help you to find interesting video examples (http://www.blinkx.com).

Join us and go further

This was a very brief tour of how video can be used within the language classroom. The DIVIS website (http://divisproject.eu) will offer more ideas, lesson plans and video examples. If video education in itself has caught your interest then you might want to explore the viducate network where educators across Europe connect (http://viducate.net). The viducate website has different papers, a 170 page book, a booklet and handouts about video education in different languages for free download. Best practice video examples and tutorials for video production are included. You can also subscribe to our free bi-monthly newsletter there.

And finally - we offer video education training within European Comenius teacher training courses (http://course.mediaeducation.net) and free online sessions (information on the viducate site). These take place around twice a year.

Armin Hottmann
Kulturring in Berlin e.V.

PREPARATION
- Still images & text
- Photo story
- Comics

FIRST STEP
- First contact with camera
- Camera technology
- Animation tricks
- Video concepts

SECOND STEP
- Video letters
- Video words
- Interviews
- Advertisements
- Short stories
- Drama plays
- Documentaries
- Television News

ACTION!

EDITING

© adapted from Masats, Dooly & Costa (2009)

Broad Sweeps of Imagination

In the field of language teaching, many educators have expressed an interest in the "communicative method", showing how learners can learn the language in a way that will allow them to use it for interpersonal relationships in everyday life. This method has had a massive impact on foreign language teaching, changing not merely the methodology, but also the syllabuses themselves.

Knowing at least one foreign language is vital today, regardless of your age. However, people can still find it somewhat intimidating. Foreign language teaching should ensure that it is possible to understand and speak the language in question in day to day life, but learners are often unable to do this because teaching is still largely dependent on the grammar translation method.

Communication becomes possible when teachers succeed in creating a stimulating environment, helpful both to them and to their students. Students feel encouraged to get deeply involved with improvisation and with their own creativity, while the rest of the class watch them attentively, as if they were watching their favourite artist or a comedian in a film.

Language teachers' experience has shown that language learning is improved when attention moves from the language to the content. Teaching content which is not purely linguistic using the language being studied puts the use of that foreign language into context, in the sense that it establishes a connection between the language and real life situations. Thus the language can be used in a more realistic and significant manner, while also providing variety and stimulation for a wide range of learners. In addition, spending time teaching content using the foreign language means that learners receive education which is not just linguistic.

One interesting approach to language teaching is based on a collection of different teaching tools which form the main elements of the **BSI (Broad Sweeps of Imagination)** method: *enthusiasm, pronunciation, correct use of texts, "clumsy" pictures, dramatizati-*

Broad Sweeps of Imagination

on, activities outside the classroom, "reflection files" and assessment. This integrated system is intended for the teaching of foreign languages to beginners of all ages.

BSI has shown itself to be able to create the prerequisites for developing learners' communicative abilities in a particularly lively and creative learning environment. It also develops multicultural awareness, intercultural skills and respect for the values of other cultures, all integrated into the process of learning a foreign language. Classroom work has become diversified thanks to a wide range of authentic materials – objects, images, music, dramatizations of customs and habits – typical of the countries whose languages are being learnt.

BSI also makes extensive use of modern technological aids for displaying teaching materials and for communication in the foreign language studied. Using computers and the internet is an important part of the process of teaching and learning – not just to find materials to be presented in class, but also as an environment for communication in which students and teachers interact using applications such as instant messaging, chat, text messaging, video conferencing and other forms favoured by young people.

A segment of the project is linked to learning based on **simulation**. Students are given new identities, which reduces the inhibitions they feel when learning languages. Learners address each other using a new identity: they choose a new name, job, country of origin, a different personal history, and play characters who have different tastes and characteristics to their own. The students research their character and learn aspects of their new country of origin.

Part of the success that we have encountered with learners taking on a different identity relates to the fact that they can wear these new identities like a mask, via which they can easily communicate in the language being learnt. This technique helps acceptance of cultures other than one's own.

To stimulate a desire among the learners to learn a foreign language, it is vital to create a relaxed, comfortable atmosphere. Naturally, that can in practice be provided by the behaviour of the teacher during the lesson. Quick, short games are introduced either at the beginning of a lesson (when the students seem preoccupied, for example because of a maths test) or at the end when there are only a few minutes left and the scheduled lesson has been completed. An example of a game starts with a single word written on the blackboard (say, "yesterday"). Then you ask a pupil to say a word that starts with Y (yellow). Having written that word on the blackboard, you ask another student to add a word that starts with W (war) and so on. It is best to keep the rhythm as high as possible. The game ends when the bell goes or when the intriguing word-snake (yesterdayyellowar...) covers most of the space on the blackboard.

Phonetic symbols *can improve communication through the teaching of correct pronunciation*. If teachers and students are familiar with phonetic symbols, it is easier to explain which errors may arise and why. How can that be done in class? Using symbols for study can overburden students if they are asked to write using phonemic script. Rather than forcing learners to actually write them, we recommend teaching the phonemic alphabet associated with images to allow the symbols to be recognised gradually and meaningfully. For example, if we wanted to teach the sounds th, r, p o ŋ, we could show the images associated with the words 'mother', 'right', 'parrot' and 'singer' together with the phonetic symbols ð , r, p e ŋ and a full transcription of the words / /mʌðər/, /raɪt/, /pærət/ .

The BSI project wants to raise awareness of the effectiveness of a method called "vi-simulation". A distinctive feature of the method is the teaching of languages using "clumsy pictures" which the teacher draws on the board. Clumsy pictures (CPs) are quickly drawn mnemonic icons which represent the key vocabulary and phrases learnt in a lesson. By presenting stories in different ways – with CPs for each word, with just a few CPs or without using them at all – the step becomes easier to understand and memorise while encouragement is given to practical application and representation supporting CPs with gestures. This way, students are able to encode the message with the aid of visual elements.

Dramatisation can take on many forms, including imitation, exaggeration, movements and gestures.

The emphasis on real communication in language learning also means that while teaching, consideration has to be given to the context, intonation and body language as much as the actual words in oral communication. Through dramatization, children improve their world knowledge, learn ways of behaving in society and develop their communication skills. When they take on the role of another character, they take into consideration the thoughts, feelings and points of view of people who are different from them. At the same time, recitation is a natural component of children's games. There is a growing consensus among educators that children learn best through two experiences: dramatic play and interaction with their own environment (Brown and Pleydell, 1999).

And dramatization is also useful for adolescents and adults. Teachers can try to 'wind back the clock' for older learners, putting them in the position of a child learner since learners in later life face different obstacles to learning a new language. This process of 'infantilisation' requires learners to be involved in the learning process by taking on a different personality and activating the 'paraconscious' aspect of the mind. As observed by Larsen-Freedman (1986), activating the state of 'infantilisation' is recommended because it makes the learner more open to learning. In this respect, dramatic activities are ideal, since they develop every form of social and linguistic ability in the learners.

The last, but also the most important, of the activities outside class is the keeping of "incredible journals". In this way the learners can reflect on the lessons, meditate on successes and obstacles and achieve a deeper understanding of lear-ning and of the language. The Reflection File draws together everything that has been produced during the learning pro-cess, including the drawings of CPs, texts written at home, the 'incredible journals' and so on.

The BSI method, drawn up by English teacher Pelin Gerceker and her Turkish colleagues has become widely known across Europe thanks to the project "Broad Sweeps of Imagination: a new method to teach a foreign language", implemented with financial support from the European Commission under the Comenius LLP action programme (134405-2007-TR-COMENIUS-CMP). More than forty teachers attended trai-ning courses on BSI in Turkey, Bulgaria, Italy and Romania in 2008 and have since experimented with the method, adapting it to their own educational circumstances.

The outcomes of the BSI project

- **The BSI Guideline Book** – available on paper and on a CD-ROM in five languages. Includes the basics of the BSI method and teaching materials. The re-sources included in the manual are sourced from the implementation and adaptation phases of the BSI method in the different educational contexts in the partner countries.

- **An e-platform** set up to serve as a re-source centre for foreign language teachers and to encourage exchanges of information and opinions between trai-ners and teachers. The platform was created to encourage the formation of an international network of BSI implementers and continues to operate on the project website.

- **An in-service training course** for foreign language teachers, intended as a tool that brings together a range of useful materials and techniques which allow students to communicate their needs and get their voices heard. Many of its sessi-ons have been included in the Comenius/Grundtvig database of in-service training courses offered to European teachers.

Marina Villone

What is ![fenice] ?

Federazione Nazionale Insegnanti
Centro di iniziative per l'Europa

FENICE is the acronym for the National Federation of Teachers - Centre of initiative for Europe, a professional association which takes Salvemini's ideas about school's secularism and the protection and promotion of public schools as its point of reference, with the aim of contributing to the construction of a common European educational space. In this perspective, the Association promotes and develops initiatives, training projects and cultural and professional updatings for the development of teachers, as well as research and experimentation in the field of methodology and didactics. FENICE also researches and experiments innovative ways aimed at paving the way for a wider participation in education and training for citizens of all ages and / or belonging to socially disadvantaged groups.

The principal activities and European projects (already implemented or still running):

- implementation of 20 projects in the framework of Socrates, Leonardo, Youth and Lifelong Learning Programmes
- Production, publication, and diffusion of didactic materials in several disciplines, foused in particolar on pedagocical, methodological and cognitive aspects of the teaching-learning
- Initial and in-service training for school staff (135 courses in 30 years);
- Organisation of more than 30 seminars and conferences
- Online dissemination through the website www.fenice-eu.org, www.languagesbysongs.eu, www.languagelearning.eu and through a three languages (DE-EN-FR) newsletter sent to more than 6500 instituions and experts from all the EU countries

LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMME	**Comenius Multilateral Projets**	**"Broad Sweeps of Imagination: a new method to teach a foreign language**" Project Number 134405-2007-TR-COMENIUS-CMP
	KA2 Languages	**"CreaLLe: Creativity in language Learning"** Project Number r 518909-LLP-1-2011-1-UK-KA2-KA2AM **"Be My Guest: Russian for European Hospitality"** - Project Number 135699-LLP-1-2007-1-BG-KA2-KA2MP; **"Learning Arabic language for approaching Arab countries"** Projektnummer 143422-LLP-1-2008-1-ES-KA2-KA2MP
	Grundtvig (Learning Partnerships)	**"Find A Delightful Opportunity to learn Portuguese through Internet and songs" (FADO)** Project Number r 2011-1-IT2-GRU06-24012-1 **"French and Spanish language competence through songs" (FRESCO)** Project Number 2010-1-IT2-GRU06-14018-1 **"Languages & Integration through Singing" (LIS)** Project Number 2008-1-IT2-GRU06-00532-1 **"Competences in e-Learning and Certification In Tourism" (CELCIT)** Project Number 06-ITA01-S2G01-00283-1 - **E-Quality Label 2009**
SOCRATES, LEONARDO and Youth	**Joint Actions**	**"Una ricerca di nuove idee per prevenire la dispersione scolastica" "INNOschool"** Project Number 119487-JA-1-2004-1-DE-JOINT CALL-ACYP
SOCRATES	**Dissemination Activities**	**"Integrated Intercultural Language Learning" (IILL)** Project Number 2006-4675/001/001
	Lingua 2	**"Le français par les techniques théâtrales**" Project Number 89874-CP-1-2001-1-IT-LINGUA-L2
	Lingua 1	**"Join Your Grandchildren in Foreign Language Learning**", Project Number 89735-CP-1-2001-1-BG-LINGUA-L1
	Grundtvig 2	**"Training of Educators of Adults in an intercultural Module" (TEAM)** Project Number 05-ITA01-S2G01-00319-1
LEONARDO	**Pilot projects**	**"e-GoV – e-Government Village"** Project Number I/04/B/F/PP-154121 **"Nuova Versione di Organizzazione di Linee di Apprendimento" (NUVOLA)** Project Number I-02-B-F-PP-120439 **" Un Portale per la New Economy"** Project Number I-02-B-F-PP-120423 **"TES – Telework Education System"** Project Number I-00-B-F-PP-120788