



PELLIC

Practice Enterprise
For Language Learning
& Intercultural Communication

English learning in international business: practice enterprise courses in a blended learning scenario

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This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.

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Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

Project #504823-2009-LLP-FI-KA2-KA2MP

Project objectives

To facilitate authentic practice of English business communication skills in **tertiary, advanced vocational** and **continuing education** contexts by combining a **Practice Enterprise** approach with **Blended Learning**



Characteristics of the PELLIC learning scenario

- *Practice Enterprise - Task-based learning*
students manage their virtual business – they improve their English communication skills “as they go along”
- *Blended learning*
the course integrates face-to-face sessions with online (local and international) interaction
 - asynchronous and synchronous, written and oral
 - Moodle, Google Apps, Skype
- *Autonomous learning*
There is plenty of audiovisual language support material for **autonomous study** – students can focus on language, grammar and vocab as they need it for engaging in communicative tasks



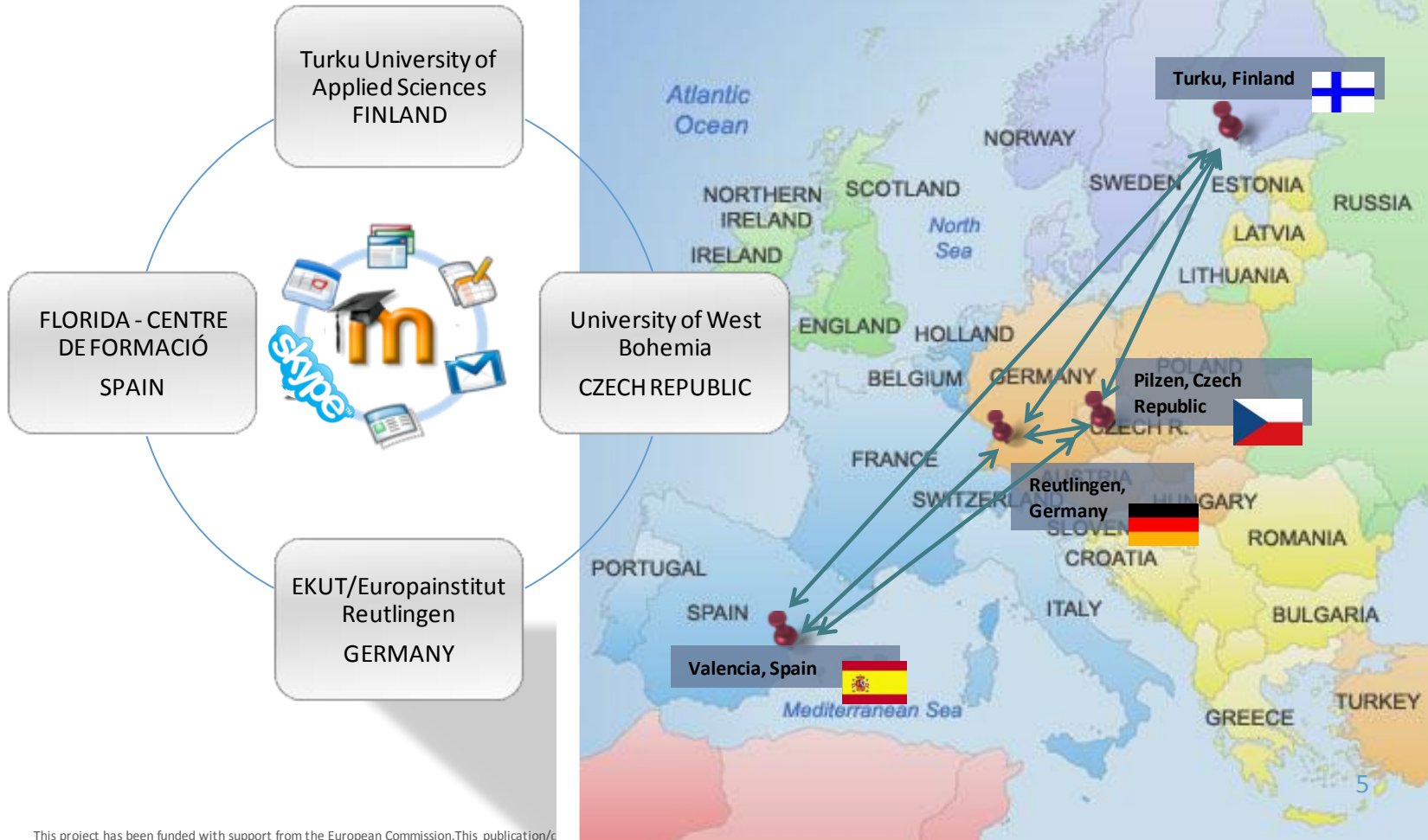
Communicative Business Activities

- writing a business plan and starting up a company
- planning a company website
- developing a marketing plan
- advertising and marketing products
- making arrangements for meetings, sales visits and exhibitions
- sales presentations and negotiations
- sending business letters and e-mails
- making business phonecalls
- running and participating in meetings
- writing reports, minutes of meetings and other business documents



Pilot courses

(2 companies each)





Course representation in Moodle (the “pedagogic control center”)

- 4 modules with a basic structure
- Unit outline + expected outcomes
- **Task instructions, resources and focus activities** (language, business, intercultural)
- Support material for autonomous learning

The screenshot shows a Moodle course page for 'MODULE A: STARTING UP'. The page is annotated with several callout boxes and arrows pointing to specific elements:

- Module title:** Points to the header 'MODULE A: STARTING UP'.
- Module outline & list of outcomes:** Points to the unit description and the 'Expected outcomes' list (1. Personal profile, 2. Email exchange, 3. Meeting invitations, agenda and meeting, 4. Business plan draft, 5. Final version of business plan).
- Task instructions:** Points to the 'Personal profile' task description.
- Resources:** Points to the 'Videoclips: Five managers introducing themselves' and 'Example - Business plan' links.
- Support material:** Points to the 'Language & communication support' section.

At the bottom of the page, there is a link for 'Study module: The Language of Meetings'.



activity tools (tailored to purpose w/ CSS) [link](#)

❖ Database activities

❖ Company file repository

❖ <http://u-002-segsv001.uni-tuebingen.de/pellic/mod/data/view.php?id=1595>

❖ “Yellow pages” – International directory

❖ <http://u-002-segsv001.uni-tuebingen.de/pellic/mod/data/view.php?id=79>

❖ Forum activities

❖ Personal introduction

❖ <http://u-002-segsv001.uni-tuebingen.de/pellic/mod/forum/view.php?id=619>

❖ Advertisement (w/ annoying email alert!)

❖ <http://u-002-segsv001.uni-tuebingen.de/pellic/mod/forum/view.php?id=1995>

❖ Questionnaire activities

❖ Self/peer assessment via complex questionnaires

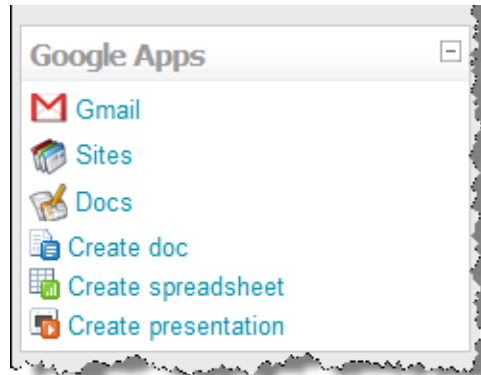
❖ <http://u-002-segsv001.uni-tuebingen.de/pellic/mod/questionnaire/report.php?instance=48&sid=48&action=vall>

❖ Detailed feedback

❖ <http://u-002-segsv001.uni-tuebingen.de/pellic/mod/questionnaire/report.php?instance=99&sid=99&action=vall>

Google Apps in PELLIC

(accessible right from the course page – SingleSignOn)



- Gmail für business correspondence (offers, enquiries, etc.)
- Gdocs (docs, spreadsheets, presentations) for collaborative writing
- Gsites for putting together a company website (without being technically demanding)

[moodle-google](#)

[An SSO integration between Moodle and Google](#)



Google Docs



Feedback from students

“ It’s a whole different experience sending an email in English to a business partner abroad – from just writing a letter at home that only the teacher will ever see ”

“ The project helped me in several ways: working in a team over a longer period, distributing tasks just like in a “real” company, taking responsibility - and also the consequences, if team members haven’t done their “homework” ”

“ I learned how to create a Google website, which I have never done before. I think it is a very good idea to make every company create a website. ”

Lessons learned from piloting

- ❖ The **Practice Enterprise** scenario can unleash an impressive amount of **creativity** and **motivation** in students – “playing company” feels natural very quickly
- ❖ Students’ **security** and **comfort** with **their own English** is generally enhanced by the experience of communicative success in authentic interaction (using English as a Lingua Franca)
- ❖ Not all students are equally autonomous when it comes to using the resources and material provided – a **flexible balance** between **guidance** and **autonomy** is needed



Lessons learned from piloting

- ❖ **Moodle** is an invaluable for **keeping contact** in between sessions, **eliciting feedback** and **tracking progress** (“pedagogic control center”)
- ❖ Neither Moodle nor any other application are **exciting by themselves** – things that *can* be **done face-to-face** *should* be done that way
- ❖ **Perspicuity of instructions, clear structure** and **technical support** are immensely important (the “**it didn’t work**” threshold is fairly low)
- ❖ Some of the **Google Apps** are the best choice for special task formats – **collaborative writing, emailing, website creation** – and have an **added value** in enhancing web 2.0 literacy (but they aren’t intended for teaching, so lack some of Moodle’s capabilities!)
- ❖ **Skype** seems still to be the only viable solution for free **VoIP** in most educational contexts (Second Life turned out to be problematic in the piloting context), but it’s not “open” in any way.



Google Docs



Gmail
by Google BETA



Thank you for your attention!

...and if you'd like to see more, have a look at the
demo area at
www.pellic.com