

Eurocatering Language Training

Romana Padovnik Rajšter

E-mail: romana.padovnik-rajster@guest.arnes.si
Secondary school of catering and tourism (Slovenia)

Abstract

EuroCatering Language Training (ECLT) is a web-based interactive language course and a social platform in 7 languages for the catering sector developed by a project team of language teachers and trainers from Belgium, France, Ireland, Norway, Spain, United Kingdom and Slovenia. Following the second priority of the 2008 European Language Label -languages in the business world the project aimed to:

raise the quality of foreign language teaching as the professional language of gastronomy and hotel industry

improve the linguistically and culturally determined elements of mobility in the same sector

promote the awareness of multilingualism in the catering community and in the public at large, including lesser spoken languages like Dutch, Norwegian, Slovenian

The specific objective within this framework was to produce clear, concise and particularly user-friendly and freely-accessible materials and language tools for specialized language teaching and learning in catering sector.

The final product of the project is the webpage <http://www.eurocatering.org> which offers a freely-accessible language course (The Cloche) and a social platform for a broader exchange of experience. (The Tray).

The Cloche consists of 34 workplace scenes starting with realistic interactions and including more than 400 interactive exercises with immediate correct/wrong feedback. The innovative point of the course is the visual and audio support of all words, phrases and sentences used in exercises. It is available in 7 languages (English, French, Spanish, Galician, Dutch, Norwegian and Slovenian) offering combinations of any 2 languages.

The Tray includes professional vocabulary with about 2000 words, cultural facets of the participating countries, video clips with common features of non-verbal communication and the EuroCatering Language Portfolio which was adapted to the course and created to monitor the students' linguistic progress and self-evaluations of acquired competences in the field of specialized language thus introducing personal responsibility for linguistic and cultural headway into the learning process. The portal also offers various possibilities of exchanging professional and/or mobility experience in the form of blogs, videos, live chat and forum among all people active in the fields of gastronomy and hotel industry. The webpage lends itself to independent or guided learning as an add-on to any language course in the catering sector.

By actively participating in, and contributing its own expertise in this project the Secondary school of catering and tourism Celje has upgraded its long-standing tradition in educating catering and tourism personnel as well as strengthened the role of Leonardo da Vinci projects as a constituent part of its international school policy.