

Interactive Classrooms 2.0: An e-Learning Platform for Teaching Languages for Occupational Purposes

Antonia Paín Arias, Pilar Reyes Ortíz, Eva María Domínguez Gómez, Paula Ferreira da Silva

E-mail: tonipain@gmail.com
University of Extremadura (Spain)

Abstract

Recognition of professional competence over the last few decades has become a key issue for member governments of the European Union. As a result of this demand, the purpose of the project herein presented is two-fold. On the one hand, official recognition and certification of foreign language levels, for both general and specific purposes, as based on national and European guidelines, frames the content and development of the first of the main objectives we pursue. On a professional level, the users of this proposal consist of individuals with specific language learning needs, be those beginner levels established in the project, be those refresher levels of previously learned content, or simply those pertaining to life long learning.

On the other hand, the second cornerstone on which this project is based is that of utilizing information technology as the means of support through which the education for linguistic certification takes place. In this sense, technology becomes the second major focus of the project herein, specifically with the creation of courses in CD multimedia and the Moodle platform. Nonetheless, and although Moodle offers the adequate environment for language-learning programme development on the Web, the features of the courses and the levels covered in the project call for the compulsory design and integration of new tools that allow for acquiring communicative skills (oral and written expression), in addition to course management on behalf of the teachers and administrators.

This paper describes the online/multimedia courses designed, contextualizes the specialized content developed, and specifies the technological teaching tools implemented as conducive to professional foreign language competence for EU certification. It will also explore the role that Web 2.0 technologies can play in enhancing language learning development by facilitating social interaction, exposure, authenticity, feedback, and learner autonomy.