

'English++' – Ict Language project as an example of good practice

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'English++ Project'

"English++" - an ICT language project was awarded European Language Label in 2008 in one of the three distinct categories as a winner of the competition for institutions of tertiary education in Poland. European Language Label (ELL) is a quality label for innovative initiatives in language learning and teaching awarded since 1998 in all countries participating in the Lifelong Learning Programme.

*The main objective of the project is improving the quality of specialist vocabulary teaching and learning thanks to the development of a course book in a printed and electronic format, which features **authentic ICT materials** to be used during language courses staged at TE and attended by IT students at intermediate or advanced levels (B2+) and their teachers.*

*Project participants and beneficiaries have developed a bank of IT materials indispensable for the implementation of a teaching/learning programme including a specialist glossary, which helps to improve the knowledge of professional jargon (ESP) and use authentic communication situations for the development of effective communication skills (official and informal correspondence with text authors, project documentation and reporting). Audio, video materials and published texts may be used during any ICT language course at B2+ level. The project participants were stressing **good practice** during their activity, e.g. respecting copyright and created a model for similar initiatives to be taken by the Jagiellonian University Language Centre. The project identifies the fields of IT's, to which the texts should pertain and the requirements for specific articles (word content, mathematical content, formulas, etc.) 'English ++' articles were acquired from researchers at the Institute of Information Technology at the Jagiellonian University, as well as from Google or other respective international IT companies or institutions.*

The project is a venture of a non profit character and educational purpose. It is available at the Jagiellonian University Language Centre web site: www.icj.uj.edu.pl

1. Introduction

1.1. The Project origin

The English ++ project started its career at the Jagiellonian University Language Centre at the beginning of the academic year 2007/2008. The project was carried out by a group of 3rd year students from the Institute of Computer Science at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland. The students were inspired by their teacher of English, Monika Stawicka, M.A., from the Centre, who transformed the way our English classes were conducted as they described it later in the preface to the course book. The result of the project is a complementary English course book for computer science students and their teachers. The paper version or e-version of the English++ book can be used for self-study or in the classroom.

English ++ is the first language project initiated at the centre which was established in 2005.

1.2. The Jagiellonian University Language Centre

Jagiellońskie Centrum Językowe [Jagiellonian University Language Centre], known also under its Polish acronym JCJ, was established on 1 October 2005 as a result of the fusion of two Jagiellonian University units: Studium Praktycznej Nauki Języków Obcych [Centre for Foreign Languages] and Studium Doskonalenia Językowego. JCJ continues the traditions of both of them.

The aim of JCJ is to improve students' command of foreign languages necessary for university studies. At present JCJ employs over 120 academic teachers who conduct classes for almost 19,000 students every year. We teach several foreign languages, such as English, German, French, Russian, Lithuanian and Chinese, following the requirements of the Common European Level System. We also teach Latin and run additional language courses for the students of our university. We give classes to hearing- or vision-impaired students.

JCJ teachers are qualified to run language courses that finish with internationally approved examinations, such as General Russian, Business Russian, DSH (German), FCE, CAE, CPE (English).

2. 'English++' Project main objectives

2.1. Improvement of the ICT glossary

One of the project main objectives was to improve the quality of specialist vocabulary teaching and learning thanks to the development of a course book in a printed and electronic format, which features authentic ICT materials to be used during any language course staged at the higher education and attended by IT students at B2 or B2+ levels, referring to CEFR.

The course book includes reading, listening, presentation and additional ICT materials, including audio and visual exercises. Below, an example of a reading part structure is presented:

"This section contains 'technical' information on a reading text, such as IT sub-areas the article covers, the length of a text expressed in a number of words, levels of the English language complexity, computer science or math content, summaries in English and Polish, keywords with their definitions and learning objectives. This part has been designed for both teachers and students to make their preliminary choices for reading easier. The evaluation of the English level difficulty and subject matter complexity has been provided by the students.

- Anatomy of the Linux Kernel by *Tim Jones*
- Computer Facial Animation from *Wikipedia*
- Computer Simulation from *Wikipedia*
- Cyber Warfare: Reality or Box Office Hit? by *Randy Nash*
- Evolutionary Database Design by *Martin Fowler, Pramod Sadalage*
- History of Computers by *Roderick Hames*" [1]

An example of an introduction to a reading exercise on Tim Jones's Anatomy of the Linux Kernel:

Anatomy of the Linux Kernel , Tim Jones

Number of words	2730
Computer science content	high
Math content	low
English language complexity	low

Sub-areas covered

- Linux kernel and its subsystems

Learning objectives

- to acquire basic vocabulary related to operating systems
- to understand the basics of Linux kernel architecture

Keywords (examples):

kernel (*jądro*)

the central component of most computer operating systems (OS). Its functions include managing the system's resources (the communication between hardware and software components)

Linux kernel (*jądro Linuksa*)

Unix-like operating system kernel

VFS(Virtual file system) (*wirtualny system plików*)

an abstraction layer on top of a more concrete file system

GNU

a computer operating system composed entirely of free software, initiated in 1984 by Richard Stallman

GPL

a widely used free software license, originally written by Richard Stallman for the GNU project

buffer cache

a collection of data duplicating original values stored elsewhere or computed earlier, where the original data is expensive to fetch (owing to longer access time) or to compute, compared to the cost of reading the cache

Summary

As the title suggests, this article is about the Linux kernel. It starts with a historical introduction, which includes information on unix and minix, the predecessors of Linux. The next section is about the Linux kernel in general and how it is constructed. The third section is divided into sub-sections which describe the subsystems in the Linux kernel. Subsequent sections deal with memory management, process management, drivers layer or network stack. The article is not very complex, being only an introduction to the Linux kernel. It concludes with a list of links to longer articles about the Linux kernel and its subsystems.

Jak wskazuje **tytuł, artykuł ten jest o jądrze Linuksa. Na początku mały wstęp historyczny. W tej części zawarte są informacje o unixie i minixie, poprzednikach linuxa. Następną część traktuje o jądrze linuxa jako całości, czyli....** jak ogólnie jest ono zbudowane. Trzecia część jest złożona z mniejszych podczęści. Każda.....

Pre-reading questions

1. What are the most popular operating systems?
2. What are the advantages of Linux?
3. What are the disadvantages of Linux?" [2]

The following example refers to the text and exercises included in the course book:

A short tour of Linux history

".....While Linux is arguably the most popular hardware in the hardware's language. The lack of an operating system meant that only one application and open source operating system, its history is actually quite short considering the timeline of operating systems. In the early days of computing,



programmers developed on the bare one user could use the large and expensive device at a time. Early operating systems were developed in the 1950s to provide a simpler development experience. Examples include the General Motors Operating System (GMOS) developed for....

Comprehension questions

1. Name a few of the earliest operating systems.
 - o GMOS, FMS.
2. Who created MINIX?
 - o Andrew Tanenbaum

Possible topics for discussion

1. Which operating system, Windows or Linux, is better and why? What is your opinion?
2. Which operating system architecture is better: one with a number of distinct subsystems or one with a single microkernel?

Possible difficulties

The article can be hard to understand because of a big amount of words and phrases from the area of IT.“ [3]

2.2 Development of IT materials bank

The example on the '*Anatomy of the Linux Kernel*' improves that another project objective was achieved by the students – the development of a bank of IT materials indispensable for the implementation of a teaching and learning program including specialist vocabulary: improving the knowledge of professional jargon, the use of authentic communication situations (official and informal correspondence with text authors, project documentation and reporting. The project participants stressed **good practice** during the activity by respecting copyright and created a model for similar initiatives taken by the Jagiellonian University Language Centre.

Materials:

“Appendixes

- **Appendix A: Mathematical terminology**
 - o [Read](#)
 - o [Download audio file \(mp3\)](#)
- **Appendix B: Mathematical formulas**
 - o [Read](#)
 - o [Download audio file \(mp3\)](#)
- **Appendix C: Greek alphabet**
 - o [Read](#)
 - o [Download audio file \(mp3\)](#)

Download the English++ book

- [English++ Complementary Course Book \(pdf\)](#)
- [Cover 1](#)
- [Cover 2](#)

Download listenings

- [Agile Software Development \(mp3\)](#)
- [Open News Episode 25 \(mp3\)](#)
- [Open News Episode 29 \(mp3\)](#)
- [Open News Episode 31 \(mp3\)](#)
- [What Is Artificial Intelligence \(mp3\)](#) [4]

"The project members are grateful to Professor Stanisław Migórski, Dr Igor Podolak and Dr Piotr Kalita from the Institute of Computer Science of the Jagiellonian University for giving us permission to reproduce extracts of their work in our book: "An Introduction to the Modelling of Real-World Problem by the Simplest Ordinary Differential Equations" by Stanisław..... We are also grateful to the following authors for permission to reproduce extracts of their work in the English++ book:

- [Joel Spolsky for "Lord Palmerston on Programming"](#)
- [Martin Fowler and Pramod Sadalage for "Evolutionary Database Design"](#)
- [Tim Jones for "Anatomy of the Linux Kernel"](#) [5]

3. English++ Project description

The project participants identified the fields of IT to which the texts should pertain as well as the requirements for specific articles, such as word content, mathematical content, formulas, etc. The variety of reading and listening texts were established so that they may be used in any ICT learning course. Students also acquired articles from researchers at the Institute of Information Technology at the Jagiellonian University and prepared exercises and staged internal validation of questions to the texts. The examples given in the paper prove that authentic language was presented, including students' minor language mistakes and errors.

The 'English++' authors included mathematical formulas, Greek alphabet and mathematical expressions consulted by a researcher at the Jagiellonian University Institute of Information Technology (audio recording: *How to Read Mathematical Formulas, Greek Alphabet and mathematical Expressions*).

The interest in the project was highlighted by the university authorities, staff of the IT Institute, and teachers of English. Students obtained support in the scope of IT, including server links. The project is available at the Centre web site: www.icj.uj.edu.pl as well as at the project site: <http://skrypt.hauru.eu>

The authors of the project recorded a variety of presentations, including videos that illustrate right and wrong approach to this form of public speaking: *Successful Presentation, a Few Tips from English++, (Un)Successful Presentations*:



4. Summary English ++ as an example of managing and motivating teachers and students

The 'English++' project improves M. Kay Alderman's motivation theory that expresses a basic premise about the role of motivation which leads to possibilities for fostering the development of students' potential or 'life chances'. Most of the project participants acquired skills and knowledge essential to start their professional career and by the time they graduated their university courses they had been employed by the respective international institutions and IT companies. The leader of the project, a teacher of English, had a primary responsibility in education to help students cultivate personal qualities of motivation that could give them resources for developing aspiration, independent learning, achieving goals, and fostering resiliency in the face of setbacks. Perhaps this responsibility was even more important in the context of the motivational problems and challenges faced by the teacher than any other aspects, including further financial bonuses.

The teacher's efforts were recognized by a positive feedback, i.e. **European Language Label** award, and potentiality of independent project focused work. The students' efforts were recognized by IT Institute researchers and future employees. *The 'English++'* was a primary guideline for the next project, launched in 2010 - **Extreme English**.

"Education is, at least, the endeavor to get people to do things they could not previously do, to understand things they did not previously understand, and perhaps, to become the people they did not expect to become." [6]

References

- [1] English++, Monika Stawicka, Jagiellońskie Centrum Językowe, UJ, 2008, www.englishplusplus.jci.uj.edu.pl/materials
- [2] English++, Monika Stawicka, Jagiellońskie Centrum Językowe, UJ, 2008, p.29-30
- [3] English++, Monika Stawicka, Jagiellońskie Centrum Językowe, UJ, 2008, p.31, 39
- [4] English++, Monika Stawicka, Jagiellońskie Centrum Językowe, UJ, 2008, p.191
- [5] English++, Monika Stawicka, Jagiellońskie Centrum Językowe, UJ, 2008, www.englishplusplus.jci.uj.edu.pl/acknowledgement
- [6] Motivation for Achievement: Possibilities for Teaching and Learning, M.K. Alderman, Taylor&Francis, 2008, p. 3