

SHORT TERM SCIENTIFIC MISSION (STSM) – SCIENTIFIC REPORT

The STSM applicant submits this report for approval to the STSM coordinator

Action number: CA16105 enetCollect

STSM title: Analysis of Language Learning Platforms and Online Websites in Europe and Beyond

STSM start and end date: 16/08/2018 to 02/09/2018

Grantee name: Michal Bodorik

PURPOSE OF THE STSM/

In contemporary society mastering any foreign language is a need and for that reason many people are in search of suitable resources that provide learning material – content which helps to improve during their acquisition process. In regard to this situation the main purpose of STSM was the analysis of online websites and language platforms that support language learning in Europe as well as for learners worldwide. As stated in the application the idea was to carry out an in-depth analysis of the already gathered data arranged by the researcher from the previous scientific mission.

This in-depth analysis looked closer into the list of web sources which dealt with learning various languages online. More specifically languages that are spoken in the countries involved in this enetCollect Action. The idea was to inspect these language learning websites and define features that they have in common and aspects in which they differ. The analysis of approachable content specified several categories and codes referring to language skills, variety of tasks, focus, level of learner's knowledge, design and finally yet importantly the aspect of crowdsourcing technique. The analysis brings about information that uncovers the status of current online language learning resources and indicates the availability of free accessible websites that assist learners in the process of foreign language education.

The participant spent 18 days at the University of Iceland where he focused on the revision of the provided list of online websites that are linked to education of languages from 36 European countries. At the same time content analysis of these websites was provided and this the process of categorizing and coding was discussed with the host Mr Branislav Bedi.

DESCRIPTION OF WORK CARRIED OUT DURING THE STSMS

On the first day of the STSM a meeting took place with Mr Bedi at which time we discussed options connected to my stay and the analysis of the online sources for language learning. He explained and provided me with the list of all websites that were gathered by the previous researcher. We both had agreed that the list had to be reviewed to check the appropriateness of these for the analysis as well as to fill in some further possible options and sites. During the first half of the scientific mission the list was reviewed and found that some websites were not included or that online content was not suitable for the analysis.

After the list was completed, the second half of the research took place whereby each website was browsed and evaluated according to certain rules as stated in Cohen L., Manion L., & Morrison K. (2011) – *Research Methods in Education*. The important part was to set up relevant categories and codes that would be applicable for any online website. In this regard 9 categories were designed one of which was based on the need to find out information about the presence of crowdsourcing techniques on these online sources. Furthermore the focus of the analysis was narrowed down and oriented to the websites that provide learning materials for only one foreign language and the services were available for free. One language only for the reason that any learner from the comfort of his home can learn basic knowledge of a favoured foreign language. Each country that participates in the enetCollect Action and the official language that is spoken in that country was surveyed. Within the process of searching for these language websites other relevant aspects for further investigation appeared. The complex space of the Internet also offers online platforms (more complex websites) where one source provides learning materials for various languages, meaning that a learner can on one site simultaneously pick up knowledge for two and more languages of interest. The content analysis in this field was not provided due to the shortage of the time of the stay.

Lastly an abstract for the forthcoming *International Conference on Language, Literature and Culture LLCE 2018* in Vienna was drafted. Hereby the presentation of partial research results is going to be presented and so become available for the broader public. Each step carried out in this STSM was discussed with the host.

DESCRIPTION OF THE MAIN RESULTS OBTAINED

In addition to this analysis and its subsequent results it has to be stated that it was not simple to directly define the state-of-the-art website as the main scope of this analysis was to determine what online platforms and courses exist in the world wide web. Reasonable for this situation is to focus attentively on only one type of online sources and specific features to finally define the state-of-the-art for that particular type. As for the crowdsourcing elements these are present on only few occasions.

The results from the analysis have shown the following:

- A) Selected websites provide learning materials that in major circumstances support the skills of listening, reading and writing. The speaking skills were barely mentioned.
- B) The main focus of the practise is oriented toward vocabulary broadening and the theoretical layout of grammar.

- C) Only some websites provide tasks and exercises necessary for language acquisition.
- D) In some cases to gain the free access to materials it is necessary to fill in registration format.
- E) The language of instruction is English and in some cases extra languages are added.
- F) The crowdsourcing techniques were rarely applied among these particular online sources and if so only in a limited way.

FUTURE COLLABORATIONS (if applicable)

For future collaborations several important steps should be taken.

One of them is confirmation of the present content analysis which should be reviewed by a second coder to ensure the reliability and validity of the research findings.

The next step should be another study and analysis to ascertain in which online sources crowdsourcing techniques are efficient and if or to what extent they support the learning process of a foreign language. Subsequently the results should be mutually compared to draw conclusions for possible advancement implementation.

In regard to these platforms a survey focusing on investigation of YouTube courses, online games, available software and applications, skype lessons, real classes' offers should be planned.

A refined research paper should be written and published to explain the whole procedure of this analysis to present the gathered results in a detailed way.

A meeting of WG3 group members of enetCollect Action should be organized to discuss further research steps.

A presentation of already gained results by participation on an international level – conference, symposium, guest lectures should take place.

The above scientific report is herewith approved by:



Signature, Reykjavik 5 September 18

Branislav Bédi

University of Iceland

Host institution of the STSM