Methodologies for virtual communication: english language skills and cultural competences for international managers of online projects

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METHODOLOGIES FOR VIRTUAL COMMUNICATION:
ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS AND CULTURAL
COMPETENCES FOR INTERNATIONAL MANAGERS OF
ON-LINE PROJECTS

Doctoral Thesis (PhD)
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In the words of Confucius, every journey begins with a first step. This thesis has been a long journey of many steps with much help along the way. Firstly, I would like to thank Dr. Antonio Lillo, who guided my research and showed me how to put ideas into words. Thanks to the Life Long Learning Agency for funding the pilot projects which served as a basis for this thesis, to all of the POOL, POOL2Business and SKILL2E colleagues who became friends over the years, and, most importantly, the researchers who invited me to participate on these projects. I am grateful to the researchers at both the Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology and Salzburg University of Applied Sciences, who generously allowed me to do the research stays vital to this thesis and whose advice was much appreciated.

The reading and suggestions by Judith Williams were invaluable. I also wish to thank Cheo for her constant support and words of wisdom, all of my colleagues (especially Ignacio and Puri) for their encouragement, and last, but not least, to José, who never had a doubt.
INTRODUCTION
1. INTRODUCTION

Research in the field of Engineering during the last two decades has demonstrated a shift in the type of skills students now need to become part of the engineering workforce. According to Rothwell (1998), Gilleard and Gilleard (2000), Reimer (2002) and Raybould and Sheedy (2005), the changes in the types of skills necessary are due to the changes in the global workplace for engineers making communication skills, group work and language proficiency vital. Pant and Baroudi (2008:124) emphasise the importance of these skills in the working world, but note they still have to be part of many degree programmes.

Most employers today expect workers to demonstrate and excel in many 'softer' skills such as teamwork and group development. They are keen to tap into these vital soft skills obtained during study and periods of work experience, rather than degree-specific knowledge. However, not many institutions have incorporated these changes into their educational programmes.

In other words, engineering students entering the workforce are not only expected to have impeccable technical skills but also excellent soft skills. To complicate matters further, research by Scott and Yates (2002) points out that project management is a regular task for engineers and and Spowage et al. (2008:317) corroborate this stating that "[a]fter graduation engineers rapidly take on responsibility for the management of projects". Recent graduates often find they need further training in this field and this is reflected in the rise of internationally recognised certified programmes such as Certified Associate in
Project Management (CAPM) and Project Management Professional (PMP). Many students feel obligated to continue their training by taking one of these certificates and to date approximately 370,000 PMPs have been certified. Even though these credentials need to be validated every three years, however, these solutions may not provide the expected results. In this respect, Gillard (2009:723) points out the importance of soft skills and technical expertise of effective project managers and comments on how even Project Management International, the organisation that offers the PMI and PMP certificates, “emphasises the required ‘hard (technical) skills’ at the expense of the ‘soft (human) skills’”. There are other internationally recognised programmes such as PRojects In Controlled Environments (PRINCE2:2012), which are used by the British government (the focus was on IT and construction projects) and offer two certificates of differing levels. According to their website, PRINCE2 is essentially a method: “PRINCE2 is truly generic: it can be applied to any project regardless of project scale, type, organisation, geography or culture.” Nevertheless, in the pocket guide to the 2009 edition of the method, Hedeman and Seegars (2009:10) specify that “leadership and other social skills are inherently important in project management but impossible to codify in a method.” Thus, once more, students are often trapped in a lack of soft skills cycle caused by the imbalance of technical skills and soft skills training.

These problematic areas have been the focus of research, but perhaps it is necessary at this point to look more profoundly into what soft skills like teamwork and communication are really based on. In the case of international engineering

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1<www.professionaldevelopment.ie/fetac-project-management-course>.


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employment the answer would inevitably be English language skills and cultural competences.

Globalisation has led to the need for a common language for communication in international settings. As a result, many international companies use English as the lingua franca. However, are all engineering students equally qualified in English language proficiency? What exactly does language proficiency mean regarding engineers? Next, the fact that many engineering graduates need to manage international projects with multinational dislocated teams brings up the issues of intercultural competence and virtual management. What is being done to ensure that students develop these competences (intercultural communication and dealing with virtual environments for dislocated team management)? All of these issues are now at the forefront of necessary changes in tertiary level studies for Information Technology (IT) Engineering to ensure that students will be prepared to enter the global workforce as well as for engineers who need to continue their professional training.

1.1 A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE LIFE-LONG LEARNING PROGRAMME

The need to bridge the readiness-to-work gap is an important issue for the European Union (Commission of the European Communities, 2000; Tuschling and Engemann, 2006; cf. Svensson, 2004), although some researchers like Brine (2006) do not find the approach to be as focused as needed. However, many initiatives have been created to encourage and co-ordinate actions along the lines of co-operation of higher education institutions and organisations that train future workers. One such initiative is the Life-Long Learning programme, which has a series of sub-programmes to be able to carry out its various objectives.
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The POOL project was carried out under the Leonardo da Vinci Pilot project initiative. The Leonardo da Vinci programme (LdV) goes one step beyond student/teacher mobility or equivalent qualifications across European universities such as the Erasmus programme. This programme, known as the “European laboratory for innovation”, proposes innovative answers to the need for new qualifications, new occupational profiles and a more flexible method of training to achieve its goal of bringing education and industry closer. This is done through ambitious pilot programmes which attempt to increase the integration of students in the workforce.

This goal includes many characteristics not present in other European initiatives for higher education such as (a) fostering the development of methods of self-training at the workplace and of open and distance learning and training, (b) encouraging the development and integration of key skills and linguistic skills in vocational training and (c) promoting cooperation in respect of skill requirements and training needs and (d) encouraging the acquisition and transparency of qualifications and an understanding of the key skills relevant to technological development. 3

The POOL2Business project was funded by the Life Long Learning Erasmus Programme multilateral projects under the section of Co-operation Universities and Enterprises (ECUE). 4 The goals of these projects are “to create concrete deliverables such as learning, testing and training materials, new curricula,


\[4\] ERASMUS became part of the EU’s Lifelong Learning Programme in 2007 and covered new areas such as student placements in enterprises (transferred from the Leonardo da Vinci Programme), university staff training and teaching for business staff. <http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/erasmus_en.htm>.
strategy and policy documents developed jointly by a formal or informal grouping of organisations or institutions.\(^5\) This is achieved by co-operation between higher education institutions (HEI) and enterprises. The project must support activities bringing together higher education and enterprises/professional organisations and prove that there exists real cooperation between the world of work and higher education areas, with the participation from both sides.

The premise behind the objectives of the programmes is to allow for life long training in European Union member countries with recognised certification of a broad range of skills which encompass technology, language and professional skills. These initiatives will ideally lead to professional mobility in the European Union. In the case of this research, it was the programme that funded both of the projects which will be briefly described in the next two subsections.

1.2 THE POOL PROJECT

The University of Alicante was invited to participate in a two-year Leonardo da Vinci Project (2004-2006), called Project Organisation On-line (POOL), which was led by the FH Salzburg University of Applied Sciences in Austria. The primary objective of the POOL project was to enhance existing project management standards and practices for university engineering students by combining technical skills with soft skills training in a distributed environment. The end result would be that students would be equipped with the skills to efficiently carry out technical projects in a distributed and transnational environment.

environment. This type of project needs a theoretical basis as well as hands-on training under conditions students will be faced with in their future careers.

This project within the framework of the Leonardo da Vinci programme included participants from various European countries and was tested within an educational setting. The lingua franca for all the participants from university staff to student teams was English. This was proposed to facilitate the communication process throughout the entire project mirroring the use of English as a lingua franca on any international project. The main goal was to enhance existing project management practices combining technical skills with soft skills training in a distributed multinational environment, and was further profiled by the development of a curriculum for transnational students in Finland, Austria, Romania, Lithuania, Estonia and Spain which would enable virtual student mobility. This would ideally simulate an international project within the industry environment. In total there were nine groups that collaborated on the project, made up of seven universities and two private companies. The universities were FH Salzburg University of Applied Sciences in Austria, Kemi-Tornio Polytechnic in Finland, Kauno Kolegija in Lithuania, the Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology in Ireland, the Tallina Tehnikaulikool in Estonia, the Universitatea Tehnica Cluj-Napoca in Romania and the University of Alicante in Spain (see Annex 1). The private companies that were invited to participate were Click and Learn and 3S, which were both Austrian based.

The project was then divided into six work packages to simplify the task of working in a multinational virtual setting. Each university was assigned one of the work packages in collaboration with another partner on the project. The following
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diagram illustrates the different work packages into which the project was divided (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Framework of the POOL project and the work packages.

The group of collaborators from the University of Alicante was assigned a work package on Presentations and Soft Skills which included (a) voice presentations through the Internet and (b) written presentations sent via the virtual platforms. There was further collaboration with the team from Kemi-Tornion Polytechnic in Finland to work on (c) team skills for working on international teams in virtual environments, and the University of Alicante also collaborated on the Intercultural skills work package with the company 3S from Austria. All the work packages were developed as modules within the framework of the project. The soft skills work packages were at the centre of this case study. It is noteworthy that the POOL project was selected as the second best project across Europe in 2008 for Skills Development corresponding to labour market needs (New skills for new jobs).

6 <www.pool.fh-sbg.ac.at/).
1.3 THE POOL2BUSINESS PROJECT

The POOL2Business project was conceived shortly after the completion of POOL. The University of Alicante was invited to participate on this new project for the duration from 2008-2010. In this project the focus was quite different now that the target groups for training were professionals. The results of POOL showed that changes had to be made to undergraduate programmes in order to effectively integrate soft skills in the needed measure to course syllabi. Now, it was clear that there had to be a type of training and certification for those graduates who had become part of the workforce to be able to continue their training in international on-line project management. Once again, English was chosen as the lingua franca at all levels of implementation for communication within the project consortium. The FH Salzburg-University of Applied Science was the project promoter and several institutions from the original POOL project participated: Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, Galway Mayo Institute of Technology, Kaunas College, University of Alicante and the company Click and Learn. There were two new members: Cockpit Consulting, an Austrian based consulting firm, and the IREAS Institute for Structural Policy from the Czech Republic (see Annex 2).

The development of the project was divided into different work packages which were assigned to the different participating institutions. The University of Alicante was assigned two work packages, Intercultural Communication and English Language Skills. These courses were developed at three different levels of difficulty and piloted in the training and certification course: Conversion course, Basic Course and Advanced course. However, for the project, a special pilot course was created and tested.
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Figure 2. Framework of the POOL2Business project⁸

There were four major outcomes of Pool2Business⁹:

1. The training programme consisting of a didactical concept and on-line-courses.
2. A configurator, to allow a participant to adapt the on-line courses to the specific needs of a country and/or an organisation.
3. The certification processes, which describes the certification requirements, the certification levels and the assessment processes.
4. A process handbook, which is a guideline for implementing the Pool2Business-approach in companies and organisations. The outcomes were implemented in a pilot training programme and certification.

This was done in collaboration with two companies, who provided the participants to test the course framework. The course was a combination of face-to-face sessions, on-line training with trainers and independent work via the on-line platform. In this course, great premium was placed on both individual and group work in an attempt to emulate industry conditions for international project work.

1.4 THE HYPOTHESES AND OBJECTIVES

This thesis will attempt to provide a framework for the acquisition of soft skills that students studying engineering need for future project management and for professionals who need to manage international projects on-line. An additional issue regarding the use of virtual environments for communication must also be addressed in reference to the management of on-line projects.

The hypotheses of this study are the following:

a) The inclusion of industry in the planning of higher education course curricula and professional training curricula will change the overall objectives and outcomes of the university courses and the work training in the new training models proposed.

b) The use of English as the lingua franca in the academic and training courses will modify the course contents by identifying both a specific discourse community related to ICT engineering and the importance of English as an International Language (EIL).

c) Using a virtual environment will affect the course contents and methodology and will alter the role of the teacher.

d) Courses will have to be designed based on industry researched needed competencies and provide clearly stated outcomes.

e) The use of virtual environments for teaching and training will help develop a greater awareness on behalf of the students by simulating future professional applications similar to project management.

f) Extensive evaluation mechanisms will need to be put in place to verify the methodology and outcomes of the courses and of the new models proposed.
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g) Students will be more autonomous learners due to the types of course and the dislocation of the course.

In order to provide an adequate framework for the study, the followings research questions must be posed and answered:

a) Why is English the lingua franca in today's world?

b) How important is the concept of EIL?

c) How can industry collaborate in bettering course curricula?

d) Do university curricula reflect the needs of students in their future careers in the area of English language competence and intercultural competence?

e) How can training courses be designed for professionals to better develop their soft skills?

f) What are competences and outcomes and how are they defined?

g) What forms of evaluation validate course methodologies and outcomes?

h) How do classes in virtual environments affect course content and design?

To test the hypotheses, the main objective of this study is to design innovative courses for the acquisition of specific competences in English for specific purpose and intercultural competences in virtual environments. In order to carry out this objective, further research needs to be done on the following secondary objectives:

a) To examine the manner in which the involvement of industry changed the course curriculum and lead the way to further research.
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b) To observe how the use of a technological interface for classes altered the format of the classes and the interaction between student-student and student-teacher/trainer.

c) To determine learning frameworks for language applicable to the ICT engineering *discourse community*.

d) To identify the learning frameworks for intercultural competence for ICT engineers.

e) To validate the competencies and outcomes through an effective evaluation mechanism.

f) To propose alternative models for the use of ICT in the learning paradigm.

1.5 The Analysis Model and Methodology

The methodology used as the basis for this model can be considered eclectic as it draws upon various fields of knowledge: adult education, professional training, language acquisition for specific purposes, acquisition of intercultural competence as well as the applications of virtual environments for educational purposes. The analysis model used in this study may be represented diagrammatically as follows (Figure 3):
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Figure 3. The initial analysis model of the study.

The nature of the study requires a combination of fields which are necessary in effective course curriculum planning for a specific group such as international managers of on-line projects. As we all know, the area of adult education is a complex one in which learning styles, personal motives and professional requirements are almost always intertwined. This leads to the need for in depth analysis of the type of participants and the application of knowledge required not only during the academic phase but also in further training once the students are active in industry. In addition to these factors, professional training courses are unique in that specific knowledge is presupposed and the new learning/training must be practical and not only theoretical. The need to incorporate the acquisition of intercultural competences has been recommended by recent research and it is a complex soft skill to develop. Therefore, the outcomes of a course for soft skills must be clear, attainable and applicable to serve a useful purpose. Moreover, the limited time frame for professional training in the working world is a reality thus, more and more training is offered on-line, where many tasks can be done
individually, anytime and anywhere. Regarding international training for project management, the additional need for group work must also be contemplated and allowed for in virtual environments. One final important feature is the scope and type of learning methodologies used in a multidisciplinary field such as project management, which leads to a more complex teaching and learning paradigm overall. This crossover between social, linguistic and technical skills presents a challenging panorama for both the students and the teachers. To sum up, the complex issue at hand requires a mixed methodological approach to effectively reach the objectives outlined above in section 1.4.

1.6 The structure of the thesis

This thesis will be divided into ten sections which will attempt to answer the hypotheses proposed above. The first section provides the initial motivation for the research topic. There is also a brief description of the European projects POOL and POOL2Business which are a pivotal part of the research framework. Additionally, the hypotheses and the objectives of the research as well as the analysis model will be addressed. The second section focuses on the importance of language in reference to international project management. The issue of how English has become the international lingua franca is highlighted and the implications of English as an International language are discussed. A brief overview of language teaching methodologies and current language frameworks are outlined. Section three sets the groundwork for the importance of culture by providing multiple definitions and giving a panorama of different cultural models which have been used for research in this field. A model for intercultural competence is presented. Section four offers a summary of the most relevant
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theories on both adult and professional education methodologies. The concepts of competences and outcomes are defined. In section five, the characteristics and tools of virtual learning platforms as well as a brief history on computer assisted language learning (CALL) are illustrated. A full description of the virtual platforms used in this study as well as of the courses is given. The next section, section six, focuses on the POOL and POOL2 Business courses. The course objectives, the course planning and outcomes are shown. Section seven outlines the general framework for evaluation carried out throughout the courses for teachers and students to validate the course curriculum being proposed. Section eight will present the proposed a new model based on the previous research done. New learning paradigms for language and culture are debated. The final section of this study, section nine, will summarise the conclusions and highlight any issues for further research. Each these sections will culminate with a brief summary of the ideas presented therein. Section ten contains the bibliography used for the thesis, all references being cited in accordance with the APA manual of style. Section eleven, the Annex, contains all of the relevant additional information necessary for this thesis. The last section, twelve, is a short summary of the thesis in Spanish.

1.7 SUMMARY

In this first section the reasons for conducting this study are presented. The need for further research into how to assist future IT/ICT project managers acquire the necessary soft skills are discussed. The current models show that this is a problematic field in the training of IT/ICT engineers. The working experiences of two European funded projects in this field – POOL and POOL2Business –
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illustrate the background of the initial inquiry how English language and cultural competence (soft skills) can be attained. Both projects attempt to establish a training course for this purpose. The first POOL project centres more specifically on university undergraduates, while POOLBusiness is focused on professionals. The initial analysis model is illustrated and the hypotheses regarding the course contents, mode and medium of delivery are outlined and industry implications are presented.
THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION IN THE ICT WORKPLACE IN ENGLISH
2. THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION IN THE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) WORKPLACE IN ENGLISH

In our globalised world there are a variety of keywords that identify essential work skills, and communication is one of them (Williams, 1983). If we look upon studies and surveys regarding necessary work skills according to European employment centres, it is easy to find the following three categories: communication skills, literacy and user knowledge of communication technologies (ICT). Surprisingly, research has shown that "[employers] consistently rate the ‘communication skills’ displayed by recruits to the workforce as more important than their literacy skills or their facility with ICTs” (Cameron, 2002:71).

Why has communication become so important? More international work groups, be they for business, academic research or any other purpose, make new demands on people. Now people are simply expected to be good at communication, and this in turn has led to many studies that draw attention to the linguistic aspects of this demand. Fairclough (1992) and contributors to Cope and Kalantzis (2000) have demonstrated that communication is something that a person is expected to become good at. In other words, communication is a learnable skill.

Globalised communication needs an ICT component, but this combination presents a paradox. Previous studies have shown that ICT can ‘encourage alienation by reducing face-to-face contact, yet this same technology, from an opposing point of view, provides a nexus of connectivity, social interaction and
community building, albeit in a novel formation” (Kramsch & Thorne, 2002: 85).

The table below shows Graddol’s interpretation of the changes in patterns of communication now arising in many industries. These changes illustrate how English is really used in today’s work environments. It is evident that new technologies are clearly affecting the way we communicate, as technology itself is cultural, while at the same time increasing the need for English language communication skills. In the table below, the emphasis on virtual communication highlights the need for English as its lingua franca.

Table 1. English as an international lingua franca: post-modern/globalised model (Graddol, 2000:33).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Traditional international trade is associated with:</strong></th>
<th><strong>In a globalised model, English is associated with:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Physical movement of goods</td>
<td>- Services and “knowledge-intensive industries”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Interactions with all foreign countries conducted in English</td>
<td>- Working is dispersed – employees do not need to be in physical proximity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Key intermediaries (negotiators /interpreters) with language skills</td>
<td>- All (or most) team members need English language skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Manufacture / business conducted in local language</td>
<td>- Local interactions may not be in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Locations of workers based on labour costs</td>
<td>- Location of workers sensitive to available skills / knowledge and communications infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Communication technology used to control and monitor remote operations</td>
<td>- Communications technology used to integrate work of dispersed teams</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the right-hand column of the table, the importance of English is clearly demonstrated in virtual media as the principal language of communication. The need for English as a lingua franca in a globalised world market is indeed essential.
for effective communication, but how did it become the lingua franca par excellence?

2.1 ENGLISH AS THE LINGUA FRANCA FOR INTERNATIONAL PROJECT MANAGEMENT

History has seen the rise and fall of several languages for international communication; for example, Latin in the Middle Ages, French, especially for diplomacy, in the 18th and 19th centuries, and German for academic and scientific research at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, to name just a few. Nowadays, English dominates practically all fields of international communication. Kachru and Nelson (1996:71) describe English as "the most widely taught, read, and spoken language that the world has ever known".

The use of English as the lingua franca in today's global market is not simply a fortuitous occurrence. Over one hundred years ago, it was possible to predict the surge of English as a world language. In 1898 Bismark noted that one of the most decisive factors in modern history was "the fact that the North Americans speak English" (Crystal, 1997:77). However, North Americans should not have all the credit for extending English as a world language in such a short period of little more than one hundred years.

The present-day world status of English is primarily the result of two factors: The expansion of British colonial power, which peaked towards the end of the nineteenth century and the emergence of the United States as the leading economic power of the twentieth century. It is the latter factor which continues to explain the world position of the English language today [...].

(Crystal, 1997:53)
M. Tabuenca Cuevas

These same factors are also mentioned by Cenoz and Jessner (2000:vii) as the historical reasons for the spread of the English language. The essays in Kachru (1992) highlight another reason: the importance of the English language in certain professional areas. Strevens (1992) states that the importance of English is due to worldwide agreements, for example the agreement to adopt English for air-traffic control, international relief, space science and computing technology. Fishman (1992:24) goes even further stating that “English is viewed as richer, more precise, more logical, more sophisticated and more competence related.” This makes it perfect for professional use. Lastly, an additional factor is that the English language is extraordinarily flexible and is constantly increasing in vocabulary as it adapts to the new needs of its users. A study by The Global Language Monitor\(^9\) claimed in June 2009 that English had passed the 1,000,000-word threshold. In December 2010 a joint Harvard/Google\(^10\) study counted 1,022,000 words and noted that the language seems to expand at the rate of 8,500 words per year. However, as early as 1996, Tom McArthur estimated the one million figure in the Oxford Concise Companion to the English Language, and another well-known expert, David Crystal, in the 2003 edition of the Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language, also suggested that the one million word count had already been reached. Crystal (2003) further states that the number of all words including slang and specific jargon would bring the word count well up to two million words.\(^11\) It is this flexibility in word creation that makes English perfect to name

\(^9\) <http://www.languagemonitor.com/no-of-words/language-stats/>
\(^11\) On the other side of the word count debate are specialists such as Dr. Pagel, an evolutionary at the University of Reading, who studies words across history. He points out that the one million words mark is not a large number. According to his research, using any combination of seven consonants with two vowels could create more than 100-million potential words (Pagel 2008).
new technologies, describe new processes and coin new expressions for these applications.

2.2 ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING METHODOLOGIES

The spread of the English language has had important allies in the field of applied linguistics and language teaching methodology. Another key to the successful spread of the English language has been the efforts of linguists and teachers in developing new models and methodologies for English language acquisition (for a view on second language learning in general see Pastor, 2000, 2004, 2005). Studies in this field by Alcaraz Varó (1993) and Howatt and Widdowson (2004) describe from a historical perspective the shifts in language acquisition methodologies. For this study, the trends during the last century to the present are of great relevance; consequently, both structural methods and interactive methods/approaches for language learning will be described.

As modern languages began to be part of school curriculums in the 19th century, the grammar-translation method that was used for classical languages was simply transferred to the teaching any language (Richards & Rodgers, 2001:4). The classes were given in the student’s native language and the goal was on accuracy of form. Grammar was memorised and then put into practice with drills and translation of sentences and texts. There was no emphasis on listening or speaking but, rather, the reading and writing were used almost exclusively. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001:7), the grammar-translation method is

Other studies in ELF corpus such as VOICE had already registered 1,023,127 orthographically defined words (http://www.univie.ac.at/voice/page/index.php) by 2009 and the ELFA corpus had registered one million words of spoken academic ELF by 2011 (http://www.uma.fi/hu/en/english/research/projects/elfa/corpus.html).
one “for which there is no theory. There is no literature that offers a rationale or justification for it or that attempts to relate it to issues in linguistics, psychology, or educational theory.”

Understandably, a need for a shift in methodology became apparent as students could neither speak nor understand the language being studied. The Direct Method arose in reaction to the grammar translation as it became apparent that language teaching should be done in the target language (Berlitz, 1887; Krause, 1916). The basic premise was that no translation was allowed. With this method, meaning is conveyed directly in the target language using demonstration and visual aids, with no recourse to the students’ native language (Diller, 1978). Grammar is taught inductively and the syllabus is based on situations and/or topics and not on linguistic structures. This method centered on communication and the focus was on everyday language where the students should speak as much as possible. To this end, new material was introduced orally and other skills such as reading and writing were developed at a more higher levels (Larsen-Freeman, 2000:24-25).

The next method, the Audio-lingual Method, had a strong base in linguistics and psychology (Fries, 1945; Skinner, 1957). Students were drilled in the use of grammatical sentence patterns. Repetition, inflection, replacement and restatement were typical drills in this method (Richards et al., 2001). These types of activities have many drawbacks, as pointed out by Alcaraz Varó (1993:95): a) the absence of authentic material, b) decontextualisation, c) analysis at the sentence level, d) based on stimulus-response, and e) not communicative but manipulative.13

13 My translation
Language learning was thought of as habit formation and structural patterns as more important than vocabulary acquisition.

Chomsky (1955) was one of the first to question the methods for language learning based on structural linguistics, as he believed that language was an innate process for humans. This paved the way for other linguists and teachers to question the status quo for language acquisition which was teacher-centered and based on habit-forming patterns.

Shortly thereafter, two alternative methods appeared, Gattegno’s Silent Way (1963) and Lozanov’s Suggestopedia, developed in the 1970’s. In the first method, students were encouraged to explore language learning and they did most of the talking in class. However, grammar again was learned through induction and more attention was placed on functional vocabulary. In the second method, there are four steps in the instruction process (Bancroft, 1979; Lozanov, 1979). In the introduction, the material is taught in a playful manner. The “concert session” includes reading while music is being played and at times joining in. The third step is the most active for the student while the teacher becomes more passive in the process. The final step is the production where the student speaks without interruption or correction. Although both of these methods were more student-centered and were much more interactive than any of the previous methods, the growing interest in how language is learned and the reasons for language acquisition began to shift the methodologies in the teaching/learning paradigms.

Krashen and Terrell (1983) developed a method known as the Natural Method. Krashen outlined five hypotheses in his model (adapted from Markee, 1997):
1. The acquisition-learning hypothesis. There is a strict separation between conscious learning of language and subconscious acquisition of language. Only acquisition can lead to fluent language use.

2. The monitor hypothesis. This states that language knowledge that is consciously learned can only be used to monitor output, not to generate new language. Monitoring output requires learners to be focused on the rule. According to Krashen (1982:12), “[t]he performer must also be focused on form, or thinking about correctness”, and “[i]n order to think about and use conscious rules effectively, a second language performer needs to have sufficient time”.

3. The input hypothesis. This states that language is acquired by exposure to comprehensible input at a level a little higher than that the learner can already understand. Krashen names this kind of input "i+1".

4. The natural order hypothesis. This states that learners acquire the grammatical features of a language in a fixed order, and that this is not affected by instruction.

5. The affective filter hypothesis is based on research that illustrates “that part of the internal processing system that subconsciously screen incoming language based on ... the learner's motives, needs, attitudes and emotional states” (Dulay et al., 1982:46). Learners who are nervous or distressed may not learn features in the input that more relaxed learners would pick up with little effort.

In the early 1980s, however, the trend towards comprehensible and communicative language learning had started to come to the forefront of teaching methodologies. It became clear that all of the skills are necessary in language acquisition and that communication should be real and effective. Alcaraz Varó (1993:116-7) points out the following features of this methodology: a) the use of real language, b) the unit of analysis is the written text and oral discourse, c) interest in the learning process not only the result, d) the objective is communicative use of the language: conversations, dialogues,
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etc., and e) the interdisciplinary nature of linguistics with the field of psychology, sociology and information technology.\(^4\)

The jump to a much more communicative model was the next logical step and the five features of so-called Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) illustrate how the methodology of language teaching had undergone a radical shift to being student centered, interactive, relevant in content and allow for student autonomy in the process according to the descriptors given by Nunan (1991):

1. An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.
2. The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation.
3. The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on language but also on the learning management process.
4. An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning.
5. An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activities outside the classroom.\(^5\)

The shift over time of language acquisition solely for scholarly purposes to a necessary communicative tool can be seen by the parallel change in language teaching methodology. This short foray into the history of English language teaching is meant to illustrate how the focus on English as a communicative skill has been reflected in the many changes and alternatives in methodologies employed in English language teaching. This focus on language methodologies has inevitably led to the need to reflect on and define what types of English exist and what is being taught and who the learners are.

\(^4\) My translation
\(^5\) For a full discussion of CLT, see Richards and Rogers (2001:153-177).
2.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA

Since the 1980's, the issues concerning English as a lingua franca have been the leitmotif of many studies. As explained by Trudgill (2000:132), lingua francas are used when it is necessary for groups that speak different languages to communicate between themselves. This means that a lingua franca develops when people from many different language groups learn one specific language to use for communication purposes. Another definition provided by Firth (1996:240) is also particularly relevant: "English [...] used as a 'lingua franca' [is] a 'contact language' between persons who share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture, and for whom English is the chosen foreign language of communication". The choice to use a language that is not a native language for any of the speakers as a lingua franca creates a unique situation. Meierkord (1996, 1998) found lingua franca communication to be different from other forms of intercultural communication such as native/non-native communication. Participants in these studies demonstrated that at least three, but sometimes even more, cultures are involved in lingua franca communication. This occurs as speakers in lingua franca conversations are representatives of their own culture which has communicative norms and standards. Consequently, there are interferences from the different mother tongues. Additionally, as a rule, speakers have (to some degree) acquired the norms of either British or American English when learning the language. This means that unless the speakers are familiar with the others' mother tongues, the amount of different cultures interacting in these situations demand that speakers cope with the unexpected as a result of the imperfect knowledge of and competence in the language they use (Knapp, 1991).

This field of study includes a large number of researchers who have looked at the
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effect of ELF in communication. Firth (1996) looked into the effects of ELF on telephone conversations, Jenkins (2000) deals with the phonology of ELF, her focus being on the phonological features that have to be present if non-native speakers want to remain intelligible as speakers of EIL, and House (2002) has looked at the development of pragmatic competence in ELF. Nevertheless, and even though an international standard for English as a lingua franca does not exist, ELF or EIL is commonly used in areas like business, technology and international politics (Rubdy & Saraceni, 2006:6-8). There is an ever growing interest in the field as the features and implications of ELF are being studied. It is noteworthy that both Pullin (2010) and Ehrenreich (2010) centre on lingua franca use in international business while other researchers delve into the multiple issues on discourse interaction where pragmatic strategies (Cogo, 2010), fluency (Hüttnner, 2010) and finally the issue of correctness and effectiveness (Hülmnbauer, 2010) are central themes.  

This use of English as a lingua franca for intercultural communication has developed a field of English studies called English as an International Language (EIL). Some researchers have attempted to map the spread of English in order to further define the extent to which English is being used and how it is being used. McArthur (1987), Kachru (1988) and Modiano (1999b), among other scholars, have created visual maps to this end. The forerunner is McArthur’s wheel model which appeared in 1987 and is still considered the basis for later models. McArthur’s (1987:11) model had what could be considered World Standard English (WSE) in the centre of a circle. This centre was surrounded by another

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16 For collected essays on the topic see Mauranen and Ranta (2010).
circle divided into standards based on geographical areas, such as Canadian Standard English and British and Irish Standard English, National/local varieties such as Frenglish (also known as franglais), and Scottish English, and other varieties like Network Standard were placed in the secondary circle.

Figure 4. Tom McArthur’s Circle of World English (1987)

The next model, the three concentric circles of English by Kachru (1988), is considered the standard model for the spread of world Englishes. The 'Inner Circle' represents the base, the 'Outer Circle' reflects the countries where English is important historically and/or has official importance. The last circle is the largest and is known as the 'Extending circle', where English has no formal role, although it is used, for example, for international business.
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Figure 5. Kachru’s model of World English (1988).

Interestingly enough, Canagarajah (2006) argues that the three circle model is no longer applicable and needs to be revised as the shift of people from outer to inner circles is transforming the language of speakers from the inner circle.

Modiano (1999b) bases his model of centripetal circles on international comprehensibility of EIL, where the inner circle is formed by people proficient in comprehensible English. This would mean that those who speak English as a first or second language, but are not proficient in EIL, are part of the second circle, and those who are learners of either regional or standard Englishes (that is, the type of learner profiled in Lillo, 2009:4-5) are in the outer circle (Modiano, 1999a:25-26).
These models bring various questions to mind as the current number of non-native English speakers outnumbers native speakers by three to one (Crystal, 1997). If there are more L2 speakers of a language than L1 speakers will, this in any way change a language? How do different varieties of English, the lingua franca, affect the way English is spoken? Shariffan (2009:5) points out that “the focus in the EIL paradigm is on communication rather than on the speakers’ nationality...”, which corroborates Modiano’s model.

Delving further into these issues, a report by Seidlhofer (2002) for the Council of Europe (COE) divided the issues regarding international English into the following three areas:

Conceptually: this concerns people’s perspective on and attitudes towards this global role of English; the question here is whether ways of thinking about English have kept pace with the rapid development in the functions of the language, whether concepts in people’s heads have changed as the role of English in the world has changed.
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Linguistically: an (open) empirical question – what does EIL actually look like and sound like? How is it spoken and written? Are there salient linguistic features which can be said to characterise EIL (perhaps regionally, e.g. in Europe)?

Pedagogically: an (open) educational question – what would/could teaching EIL actually mean, and how would it differ from teaching English as a foreign language or English as a second language?

(Seidlhofer, 2002:11-12)

These factors have inevitably led to a new conceptualisation of how, why and which English is used and taught nowadays. Seidlhofer (2003:23) states that it is necessary to abandon “the elusive goal of native-speaker competence” and embrace “the emergent realistic goal of intercultural competence achieved through a plurilingualism that integrates rather than ostracizes EIL.” Sharifian (2009:2) states that “EIL emphasizes that English, with its many varieties, is a language of international, and therefore, intercultural, communication”.

One of the possibilities is the concept referred to as a scope of proficiency. This concept can be seen in the centripetal circles of EIL proposed by Modiano (1999a:25), where he defines proficiency as including “the ability to generate comprehensible English as well as skill in comprehension”. In this model, he points out that the EIL speaker does not need to be native and, moreover, if the speakers have “excessive” regional accents and dialects and are incapable of switching to EIL, they do not belong in the category of proficient in EIL.
Following the lines of Modiano, another possibility is discussed by Melchers and Shaw (2003:39), who suggest the idea of a user’s “scope of proficiency”, rather than terms like “native” or “non-native”. In their model there are four levels. The table below shows how the scope of proficiency could be defined.

Table 2: Scope of Proficiency Model (Melchers and Shaw, 2003).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internationally Effective</th>
<th>Able to use communication strategies and a linguistic variety that is comprehensible to interlocutors from a wide range of national and cultural backgrounds.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nationally effective</td>
<td>What a South African would need to communicate with other South Africans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Proficiency</td>
<td>The proficiency someone needs to deal with people in his or her area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective</td>
<td>The level of the language learner who knows some English but cannot communicate in it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This would mean that speakers of English as a first language would not be considered more proficient as any English speaker, no matter what their background, could become internationally effective. This model, however, would
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need to be further developed to be applicable on a large scale for teaching and assessment. This is further reinforced by the assertion of Canaragajah (2006:233), when referring to EIL, that “in a context where we have to constantly shuttle between different varieties and communities proficiency becomes complex...one needs the capacity to negotiate diverse varieties to facilitate communication.”

Clearly these models lead to the need for new considerations when teaching EIL, as discussed by Nunn (2005), who goes into the concepts of competence and the teaching of EIL, or McKay (2002), who begins to outline a framework of goals and approaches. This need to quantify and qualify the uses of English at an international level has paved the way for an attempt to assess what the minimum requirements are for specific language use. These changes are also reflected in the need to categorise and assess how and where English is being used and in the attempt to provide a framework assessing language skills according to their purpose. The scope of such a large undertaking is immense and would involve many organisations, specialists and academic institutions. In Europe, starting in 1998, such an effort was started to create a Common European Language Framework. The Council of Europe has produced this framework to measure and unify criteria for language use and evaluation. This will be discussed in further detail in the following section.
2.4 THE COMMON EUROPEAN LANGUAGE FRAMEWORK OF REFERENCE (CEFR) AND THE ASSOCIATION OF LANGUAGES TESTERS (ALTE) FRAMEWORK

The Council of Europe was one of the first European institutions to deal with the obviously necessary changes in the use of English as a result of English becoming an international language. The Council of Europe, established in 1949 by ten member states, today has over forty members. The Council's primary objective is to diversify and intensify language learning to promote plurilingualism, understanding and respect for cultural diversity in Europe. As early as the 1970s, the Threshold Level for English published by van Ek (1975) and funded by the Council was a clear step towards communicative based syllabi for language learning. He had established these six broad functional categories: a) giving and asking for information, b) expressing and inquiring about opinions, c) expressing and inquiring about emotions, d) expressing and inquiring about attitudes, e) persuasion and f) social greetings. Language learning, from this viewpoint, should help learners be able "in certain situations (of relevance to the learner) to express certain functions (e.g. asking questions, getting information) and notions (e.g. time, quantity, space)" (Rogers, 1996:33).

The tendency towards communicative competence in language learning was taken up by Hymes (1966a, 1972b), who coined the term. Hymes was moving towards a clearer definition of competence that included communicative form and function. This idea was further developed by Canale and Swain (1980), who defined communicative competence in terms of three components: grammatical competence (words and rules), sociolinguistic competence (appropriateness) and strategic competence (appropriate use of communication strategies). Shortly thereafter, Canale (1983b) added another component, discourse competence
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(cohesion and coherence). As teaching methodology in the foreign language classroom became more based on communicative methods in the 1970's and 1980's (Robinson and Selman, 1986), Sauvignon (1997) put forth the idea that communicative competence should be the goal of language education and that it is central to good classroom practice. Consequently, it seems logical that the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages has defined the components of communicative competence from the perspective that "[c]onsiders language to be above all a social instrument. Communicative competence (sociolinguistic, linguistic, pragmatic) is viewed as a form of general competence leading to language activity (interaction, production, reception, mediation) using tasks, texts and strategies" (Coleman, 1998: 172).

Table 3: The components of communicative competence identified by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General competences</th>
<th>declarative knowledge (savoir)</th>
<th>knowledge of the world</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>knowledge of the world</td>
<td>socio-cultural knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>intercultural awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skills and know-how (savoir-faire)</td>
<td>practical skills and know-how</td>
<td>intercultural skills and know-how</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>existential competence (savoir-être)</td>
<td>language and communication awareness</td>
<td>general phonetic skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ability to learn (savoir-apprendre)</td>
<td>study skills</td>
<td>heuristic skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicative language competences</td>
<td>linguistic competences</td>
<td>lexical competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>grammatical competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>semantic competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>phonological competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>orthographic competence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17 For further discussion on the topic see Celce-Murcia et al. (1995)
18 Taken from Perry (2007) and based on the discussion in Bally et al. (2002: 25-26).
The Council has now published the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) with the aim to (a) encourage personal mobility, (b) increase the effectiveness of international cooperation, (c) foster respect for cultural identity and diversity, (d) intensify personal interaction, (e) improve working relations and (f) achieve a deeper mutual understanding (COE, 2001b). One of the first steps towards these aims is by dividing general competences in knowledge and skills with specific competences in linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences. The CEFR also considers the contexts where communication takes place and presents four domains: educational, occupational, public and personal. The descriptors for each domain are listed below.

Table 4. Description of communication domains CEFR (2001a:15)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public domain</td>
<td>Everything connected with ordinary social interaction (business and administrative bodies, public services, cultural and leisure activities of a public nature, relations with the media, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal domain</td>
<td>Comprises family relations and individual social practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational</td>
<td>Everything concerned with a person’s activities and relations in the exercise of his or her occupation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational</td>
<td>Concerns the learning/training context (generally of an institutional nature) where the aim is to acquire specific knowledge or skills.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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These domains are then further subdivided into locations, institutions, persons, objects, events, operations and texts which describe the external context of use (see Annex 2). The CEFR describes what a learner is supposed to be able to do at each level and divides learners into three broad divisions, which are themselves sub-divided into six levels for the skills reading, listening, speaking and writing.

Table 5. CEFR levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>Breakthrough or beginner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Waystage or elementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>Threshold or intermediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>Vantage or upper intermediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>Effective operational proficiency or advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>Mastery or proficiency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second step is by uniting language qualifications across Europe and using comparable scales. As early as 2001, the COE began working with the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) to achieve this aim.

ALTE has defined the use of language in three main domains: for academic purposes, for work purposes and for social/tourist purposes (see Annex 3). For both the POOL and the POOL 2 Business projects purposes, the areas of concern were study and work. The ALTE scales for English illustrate through the four traditional language skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing – and what a person would need to be able to do in each of the environments where English would be used as a lingua franca (ALTE, 2001). The table below shows the general descriptors for the categories.
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Table 6. ALTE Study Statements (overview of concerns and activities)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONCERN</th>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>LANGUAGE SKILL REQUIRED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Lectures, talks, presentations and demonstrations | 1. Following a talk, presentation or demonstration  
2. Giving a lecture talk, presentation or demonstration | Lecture hall, classroom, laboratory, etc. | Listening/ Speaking Writing (notes)    |
| Seminars and tutorials                | Participating in seminars and tutorials                                    | Classroom, study                                                             | Listening/ Speaking Writing (notes)    |
| Textbooks, articles, etc.            | Gathering information                                                      | Study, library, etc.                                                         | Reading Writing (notes)                |
| Essays                               | Writing essays                                                            | Study, library, examination room, etc.                                       | Writing                               |
| Accounts                             | Writing up accounts (e.g. of an experiment)                               | Study, laboratory                                                            | Writing                               |
| Reference skills                     | Accessing information (e.g. from a computer base, library, dictionary, etc.) | Library, resource centre, etc.                                               | Reading Writing (notes)                |
| Management of study                  | Making arrangements, e.g. with college staff on deadlines for work to be handed in | Lecture hall, classroom study, etc.                                          | Listening/ Speaking Reading Writing    |

The importance of using specific parameters related to academic and work purposes in relation to the objectives of the Pool and Pool2BUSINESS projects takes on a special relevance, as English for Academic Purposes and English for Specific Purposes are two key issues that underpin the general theoretical framework of the language courses used in the projects.
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Table 7. ALTE Work Statements (overview of concerns and activities covered)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONCERN</th>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>LANGUAGE SKILL REQUIRED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Work-related services       | 1. Requesting work-related services  
2. Providing work-related services | Workplace (office, factory, etc.)  
Workplace (office, factory, etc.)  
customer’s home | Listening/Speaking  
Writing  
Listening/Speaking  
Writing |
| Meetings and seminars       | Participating in meetings and seminars             | Workplace (office, factory, etc.)  
conference centre | Listening/Speaking  
Writing (notes) |
| Formal presentations and demonstrations | Following and giving a presentation or demonstration etc. | Conference centre  
exhibition centre  
factory, laboratory, etc. | Listening/Speaking  
Writing (notes) |
| Correspondence              | Understanding and writing faxes, letters, memos, e-mail, etc. | Workplace (office, factory, etc.) | Reading  
Writing |
| Reports                     | Understanding and writing reports (of substantial length and formality) | Workplace (office, factory, etc.) | Reading  
Writing |
| Publicly available information | Getting relevant information (from e.g. product literature, professional-trade journals, advertisements, web sites, etc.) | Workplace (office, factory, etc.) home | Reading |
| Instructions and guidelines | Understanding notices (e.g. safety)  
Understanding and writing instructions (in, for example, installation, operation and maintenance manuals) | Workplace (office, factory, etc.) | Reading  
Writing |
| Telephone                   | Making outgoing calls  
Receiving incoming calls (inc. taking messages/writing notes) | Office, home, hotel room, etc. | Listening/Speaking  
Writing (notes) |

The ALTE Framework was developed simultaneously with work on the CEFR. ALTE has conducted several studies to verify the alignment of the ALTE

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Framework with the CEFR, and a project was carried out using the ALTE Can Do scales (Jones, 2000, 2001, 2002), providing a strong empirical link between test performance and perceived real-world language skills, as well as between the ALTE Framework and the CEFR scales. The two frameworks were complementary in their aims. Following the publication of the CEFR in 2001, ALTE members adopted the CEFR levels. These specific areas of language use have been divided into six different levels, from way stage A1 (basic) to C2 (proficient), which would satisfactorily map the linguistic knowledge of a person.

Table 8. The relationship between the CEFR and ALTE levels. (COE, 2001: 249)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CEFR levels</th>
<th>ALTE levels</th>
<th>ALTE scale labels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>Breakthrough</td>
<td>Beginner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lower Intermediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Upper Intermediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Lower Advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Upper Advanced</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The framework also provides a comprehensive guide for the evaluation of language learning. As students increase their mobility, the certification of language competence has also become much more important. The first measure has been to collaborate in the diffusion and application of the can do scales in an attempt to reflect this needed change in European language curricula planning across all academic institutions.

The development of the can do scales to explain what a person is capable of doing within their linguistic ability in a specific environment has been a long and detailed process. The validation process is aimed at transforming the can do statements from an essentially subjective set of level descriptions into a measuring...
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In the POOL and POOL2Business projects, the CEFR and the ALTE frameworks were applied as all of the students were from European countries and participating on a European funded project. Their past experiences in language learning could be used not only to establish knowledge, but also to corroborate the application of the frameworks. For example, in one of the first steps of the POOL and POOL2B projects, the ALTE levels were used to establish the language level necessary to recruit the participants from the different universities and companies who could participate on the innovative language course. The can do statements in the work/study scales were seen as adequate descriptors for identifying the entry level language skills for participants on the project.

Table 9. ALTE Study can do statements sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVELS</th>
<th>Listening/Speaking</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>CAN understand jokes, colloquial asides and cultural allusions.</td>
<td>CAN access all sources of information quickly and reliably.</td>
<td>CAN make accurate and complete notes during the course of a lecture, seminar or tutorial.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 5</td>
<td>CAN follow abstract argumentation, for example, the balancing of alternatives and the drawing of a conclusion.</td>
<td>CAN read quickly enough to cope with the demands of an academic course.</td>
<td>CAN write an essay which shows ability to communicate, giving few difficulties for the reader.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>CAN give a clear presentation on a familiar topic, and answer predictable or factual questions.</td>
<td>CAN scan tests for relevant information and grasp main point of text.</td>
<td>CAN make simple notes that will be of reasonable use for essay or revision purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>CAN make accurate and complete notes during the course of a lecture, seminar or tutorial.</td>
<td>CAN write an essay which shows ability to communicate, giving few difficulties for the reader.</td>
<td>CAN make simple notes that will be of reasonable use for essay or revision purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For our purposes, the minimum level requirement for the students was B2 Level 3, and students who had higher levels, such as C1 Level 4 or C2 Level 5, could also be part of the POOL course. This was an important element to bear in mind as many tasks would need to be evaluated and graded. The previous table
outlined our expectations on the specific skills necessary to study using English as the lingua franca and it was possible to select a group of students who could participate in both pilot projects.

Table 10. ALTE Work can do statements sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVELS</th>
<th>Listening/Speaking</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>C2</strong></td>
<td>CAN advise on/handle complex delicate or contentious issues, such as legal or financial matters, to the extent that he/she has the necessary specialist knowledge.</td>
<td>CAN understand reports and articles likely to be encountered during his/her work, including complex ideas expressed in complex language.</td>
<td>CAN make full and accurate notes and continue to participate in a meeting or seminar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 5</td>
<td>CAN contribute effectively to meetings and seminars within own area of work and argue for or against a case.</td>
<td>CAN understand correspondence expressed in non-standard language.</td>
<td>CAN handle a wide range of routine and non-routine situations in which professional services are requested from colleague or external contacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C1</strong></td>
<td>CAN take and pass on most messages that are likely to require attention during a normal working day.</td>
<td>CAN understand most correspondence, reports and factual product literature he/she is likely to come across.</td>
<td>CAN deal with all routine requests for goods or services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The students would be learning professional language competency in a non-professional setting; therefore, it was imperative to consider the basic language production requirement for the work scales in order to ensure that the students would be able to follow an ESP course that was part of an international project on management. Only some of the students had professional experience. However, they did have between one and three years of higher education in engineering, where many courses are given in English. They could therefore respond to a series
of questions based on the work can do scales as an indicator of their skills or lack thereof. Subsequently, the scales were used as a type of checklist of what language users can do and thus define the stage they are at. It also made it easier to see what areas we as teachers should focus on for material development.

For the POOL project, the scales were used to select the twelve students who participated in the pilot course. Four were from Finland, four from Romania and four from Austria. Surprisingly, no other groups could be formed as the students from other countries lacked either the language skills at a minimum B2 level or the work skills or both. This limited the number of students who were able to participate on the course. The second table based on more specific work language helped us to see what elements were missing in the student training and helped in the choice of tasks that could be successfully completed by the students.

This second measure that the COE has undertaken includes the organisation of existing language exams into a framework that reflects the six stages in both the ALTE and the CEF across the European Union to allow students and professionals to verify their language competencies across borders. In the POOL2B project, this method was used to be able to identify who could participate on the project. The participants had to provide certification of their language level. It should be noted that the areas of interest to the course planner went from general English Exams to Business English Exams. Interestingly enough, most participants had a general English certification rather than a business English qualification.
Therefore, the mechanisms used to select participants in both the POOL and POOL2B projects applied the current language reference and testing frameworks that have been researched and validated on a large scale. Nevertheless, the next steps included the creation of course materials based on a syllabus that would satisfy the linguistic soft skills necessary for international project management.

2.5 ICT ENGINEERS: A SPEECH COMMUNITY OR A DISCOURSE COMMUNITY?

Language tells us many things about its speakers. As the research in the project will focus on communication, it is necessary to reflect for a moment on the differences between *speech communities* and *discourse communities*, as well as to decide whether all English speaking ICT Engineers are part of the same *speech*
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community or discourse community. This issue needs to be discussed as it will affect the structure of any English course that is specific for ICT engineers.

The concept of speech community has changed to the point that the concept itself is being questioned. Now that English as an International Language (EIL) is not only recognised as a specific form of English but also that this affects learning and teaching methodology, it could be argued that all speakers of EIL who are ICT Engineers belong to the same speech community. The diversity in the concept of speech community will be outlined below in an attempt to answer this issue.

Bloomfield (1926) was the first scholar to use the term speech community. However, new interest in this area of study arose in the 1960’s, when Gumperz (1968b) began to do research in the field. Gumperz (1982:24) defined a speech community thus:

[A] system of organised diversity held together by common norms and aspirations. Members of such a community typically vary with respect to certain beliefs and other aspects of behaviour. Such variation, which seems irregular when observed at the level of the individual, nonetheless shows systematic regularities at the statistical level of social facts.

During the same time period, Hymes (1967:72) came to the conclusion that one can participate in a speech community without being a member of it, but the lines of demarcation are not fixed or universal which can been seen in the accent, ways of speaking, grammar, etc. in different communities or at different times in one community.

In the 1970’s, Labov (1972) and Corder (1973) also define what a speech community is. According to Labov (1972:120-1), “[t]he speech community is not defined by any marked agreement in the use of language elements, so much as by
participation in a set of shared norms. These norms may be observed in overt
types of evaluative behaviour, and by the uniformity of abstract patterns of
variation which are invariant in respect to particular levels of usage”. Interestingly
enough, Corder (1973:53) provides a more succinct definition: “A speech
community is made up of individuals who regard themselves as speaking the same
language; it need have no other defining attributes”.

By the end of the 1990’s, Romaine (1994) gives a synthesis of Gumperz and
Hymes and goes further by explaining that the boundaries between speech
communities are essentially social rather than linguistic. Duranti (1997:82),
working along the same lines, defines it as “the product of the communicative
activities engaged in by a given group of people”. It is at the turn of the century
that the influence of EIL clearly influences the concept of speech communities.

Saville (2003) stresses the importance of second languages explaining that
“[s]peech communities which primarily use one of the world languages (such as
English) are more likely to be ‘soft-shelled’, because it will be known as a second
language by many others, and interaction across the boundary will be relatively
easy in both directions.”

Therefore, summarising the different definitions of speech communities
illustrates that they all have these different attributes to some extent: shared rules
about how to use language and a shared understanding about what purposes
language serves: a) that language allows people to order their interactions with
each other and b) allows people to recognise their shared membership in a group.
Speech communities are also connected by a shared sense of the way the world
works therefore, speaking should be understood as engaging in a cultural display,
a performance that follows and illustrates specific rules of interaction. On the one
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hand, the conclusion that may be reached is that professional communities can share particular sets of vocabulary, grammatical structures, speech styles and genres. Consequently, it can be assumed that ICT engineers are a *speech community* as they do have a shared set of goals, a shared language, and a format for engaging in communication.

On the other hand, the concept of *discourse community* seems to make more sense. The term was first used by sociolinguist Nystrand (1982), and quickly taken up by Swales (1990) when writing about the acquisition of academic writing styles of those who are learning English as an additional language. Swales (1990) presented six defining characteristics for a *discourse community*:

1. Has a broadly agreed set of common public goals.
2. Has mechanisms of intercommunication among its members.
3. Uses its participatory mechanisms primarily to provide information and feedback.
4. Utilises and hence possesses one or more genres in the communicative furtherance of its aims.
5. In addition to owning genres, it has acquired some specific lexis.
6. Has a threshold level of members with a suitable degree of relevant content and discoursal expertise.

According to Bizzell (1992:225), Swales places great emphasis on the fact that a *discourse community* is “a social group using language to accomplish work in the world[.]” The same author also points out that the language used by *discourse communities* can be described as a register and members generally join a *discourse community* through training or personal persuasion – they are not born into it which contrasts sharply with the concept of *speech community*.

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Another researcher in the field, Porter (1992:106), defined the *discourse community* as: “a local and temporary constraining system, defined by a body of texts (or more generally, practices) that are unified by a common focus. A *discourse community* is a textual system with stated and unstated conventions, a vital history, mechanisms for wielding power, institutional hierarchies, vested interests, and so on.”

All of these definitions show that *discourse communities* depend more on choice than circumstances and that there are specific genres and lexis to achieve an end result. It is also possible to be part of a *discourse community* temporarily (for example for the duration of a specific project) or be part of many *discourse communities* simultaneously (for example, on many projects).

Further research by Zappen (1989), Irons (1998) and Pogner (1997, 1999) into the *discourse community* in scientific and technical communication, the *discourse communities* of organisational and technical communication, and writing by consulting engineers, respectively, illustrates that most research on communication in the field is based on the concept of *discourse community*. This distinction is important because it makes the focus of language acquisition for ICT engineers who will be project managers much more specific.

2.6 ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES (ESP)

It is now necessary to delve into the specific field of language study and learning referred to as English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The interest in ESP has grown in the last fifty years as the need for specific language learning has become apparent, especially in professional degrees based on the importance of *discourse communities*. In the case of engineering, the concept of what is valuable knowledge in the field is an integral part of ESP and this is a result of the
The importance of communication in the ICT workplace in English

necessary changes in language learning in a global context. Although setting a
date for the first studies in the field is not easy, Halliday et al. (1964:189-190)
state in The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching that:

Only the merest fraction of investigation has yet been
carried out into just what parts of a conventional course
in English are needed by, let us say, power station
engineers in India, or police inspectors in Nigeria; even
less is known about precisely what extra specialized
material is required.

This is one of the tasks for which linguistics must be
called in. Every one of these specialized needs requires,
before it can be met by appropriate teaching materials,
detailed studies of restricted languages and special
registers carried out on the basis of large samples of the
language used by the particular persons concerned.

In order to work on oral and written communication skills, Hyland (2002:394)
states that “[e]ffective language teaching in the universities involves taking
specificity seriously. We must go as far as we can”. Therefore, to achieve this goal
it is necessary to introduce students to relevant genres to allow them to participate
in specific and purposeful activities as part of a discourse community
(Canagarajah, 2002; Harwood and Hadley, 2004). For this reason, courses
intended to prepare students for the workplace can be expected to have different
purposes, which introduce questions about appropriate learning and literacies. For
example, there is starting to be a small shift across university curricula in English
communication skills as part of engineering courses based on research by Reimer
(2002) and Norhedge (2003), as many students need writing and oral skills that
must be applied to their professional environments once they graduate. This factor
is important, as pedagogies must transform to adapt, especially in professionalised
degrees, to the current changes in work contexts. Swales (2000: 59-60) describes

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how the following features set the agenda for the analysis and instruction of language for specific purposes:

(1) Research into language use should be descriptive, looking at what kind of language is used in particular contexts and how it is used;

(2) The real language used by regular people (not famous or literary figures) should be the focus of analysis;

(3) Current, everyday language is of primary importance;

(4) Language as it is spoken or written in specific contexts should be the focus of study (not “authorial motives for linguistic choices”); and

(5) There should be an analysis of functional grammar along with the contextual factors that influence language use.

The importance of ESP in the workplace has been a growing field of research during the last two decades. Workplace texts are shown to be areas which can cause problems in communication. Carter (1990) explored the concept of what a report is in both academic and non-academic contexts. Bhatia (1993) focuses on the analysis of genre and language use in professional settings while Charles (1996) illustrates the interdependence of discourse and the business relationship. Both Louhiala-Salminen (1996) and Crosling and Ward (2002) delve into the needs of business communication in the workplace and what students are being taught. Nevertheless, Bhatia (2011: 1), has recently stated that there is “a wide gap between the ESP work in the classroom and the requirements of the world of work”. Therefore, much research is now being done on the problematic encounter between workplace and academic genres (Baynham, 2000; Hoadley-Maidment, 2000; Forey, 2004). ESP and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) are relevant in degree courses such as engineering because both are used. EAP is not opposed to ESP. However, the focus of EAP can be quite different. Students do their
The importance of communication in the ICT workplace in English

courses in an academic environment, thus they need to use academic English in their course work, but the material used is focused on engineering English and the future use of the language is in a work environment. The end result is that these hybrid forms of EAP/ESP make it difficult to design course curricula and establish the outcomes clearly. Therefore, at many universities, there are neither clear generic guidelines for tasks nor outcomes in the field of ESP for engineering (McGregor, 2000). Moreover, once students have finished their studies and enter the workforce, each professional organisation has its own work culture and applies its own norms for carrying out tasks. Students thus need to apply implicit knowledge to this new situation. A resolution for this dichotomy can be found by proposing new types of learning which involve skills that can be transferred from the academic context to the work place context (Tynjälä, 2008; Dovey, 2006).

It became clear that the ESP courses for the POOL and POOL2Business projects should be geared towards competencies that blend knowledge and skills rather than separating them. The production of understood knowledge and situation-specific competencies on behalf of the student/participants would be encouraged and would require more contextual learning where students could work collaboratively.

In the POOL2Business scenario it was possible to ascertain what type of additional English courses the participants had taken during and after their university degrees and if they had any English course materials available at their workplace. The most frequently mentioned materials could be categorised as ESP and had a clear focus towards students in technical/ vocational education and company employees in training at work. A brief list includes: Cambridge
University Press\(^{19}\) which has three textbooks namely, *Infotech, 4\(^{th}\) Edition, Cambridge English for Engineering* and *Professional English in Use: ICT*. Pearson ELT\(^{20}\) has the *Technical English Series* Levels 1-4 (Elementary to Upper-Intermediate) and two elementary books: *English for Work: Everyday Technical English Book*, and *English for Information Technology Level 1*. McGraw Hill\(^{21}\) has the *Send Me an Update* and *Send Me a Message* for business communication. The publisher Heinle\(^{22}\) has quite an extensive selection, from a four book series on *Business Skills* to *Technical English: Vocabulary and Grammar*. What is interesting is to see the appearance of books like *In Detail 1- English for Global Communication* and *In Detail 1- English for Global Communication* where the focus is on international communication.

Other reference materials considered useful deals with intercultural communication: *Market Leader ESP Book – Working Across Cultures* by Pearson ELT and *Communicating Across Cultures* published by Cambridge. The description of this textbook states: “Students will gain the essential skills and techniques they will need to ensure they can work effectively with colleagues and business partners the world over.” At this point, it is necessary to begin the discussion of how important culture is in communication.

### 2.7 SUMMARY

In this second section central themes regarding the English language, its use, and teaching methodologies are presented. The section begins by outlining the

\(^{19}\) <http://www.cambridge.org/es/elt/catalogue/subject/item2561588/English-for-Specific-Purposes/?siteLocale=es_ES>

\(^{20}\) <http://www.pearsonelt.es/ib/corporate/catalogue2.asp>

\(^{21}\) <http://www.mcgraw-hill.es>

\(^{22}\) <http://elt.heinle.com>
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importance of communication (Cameron, 2002) and illustrating the model of English as an international lingua franca (Gradoll, 2000). The historical reasons for the rise of English as a lingua franca are then presented (Crystal, 1997) followed by a more contemporary and perhaps pragmatic example of the speed with which new words are created. The section then moves onto explain how teaching methodologies (Alcaraz Varó, 1993) have also shifted to a more competence based and communicative approach. This leads to the importance of English as a lingua franca (Firth, 1996; Trudgill, 2000) and the concept of English as an international language (EIL). The models of world Englishes are shown (McArthur, 1987; Kachru, 1988 and Modiano, 1999) and the implications are discussed. The issue of teaching and learning EIL (Seidhoffer, 2002) leads to the concept of a scope of proficiency (Melchers & Shaw, 2003) and the CEF framework applicable to the teaching of English in the context of a European project. The concept of discourse communities (Swales, 1990) are presented and the importance of English for specific purposes (Halliday, 1964; Forey, 2004) in reference to course design are debated. This leads to the next section which deals with the influence of culture.
WHAT IS CULTURE?
I know that you believe you understand what you think I said, but I'm not sure you realize that what you heard is not what I meant.  
Robert McCloskey

3. What is Culture?

In order to talk about intercultural communication, it is necessary to first define the term *culture*. There is much debate concerning what elements comprise culture and what types of culture exist. In his study on communication in international business, Gibson (2002:8) presents a list of types of culture which have repercussions on communication. These types may prove to be more relevant than national culture in binding people together:

a) corporate culture  → (for example, the culture of Microsoft)
b) professional culture → (for example, the culture of lawyers or doctors)
c) gender → (the different cultures of men and women)
d) age → (the different cultures of young, middle-aged, and old people)
e) religious culture → (for example, Catholicism, Protestantism, Islam)
f) regional culture → (for example, Northern and Southern Italy)
g) class culture → (working class, middle class, and upper class).

This implies that the definition of culture for the purposes of this study must contain the concepts of a group, language, beliefs and attitudes, behaviours and responses. After much research, no one definition was found that contained all of these features. The following definitions show the difficulty of one clear idea, but the compendium does demonstrate that a comparison of these definitions regarding culture does permit a general interpretation along the parameters that should be present.

To begin with, Adler (1998:232) states that "[c]ulture gives meaning and form to those drives and motivations that extend toward an understanding of the
M. Tabuenca Cuevas

cosmological ordering of the universe. All cultures, in one manner or another, invoke the great philosophical questions in life concerning the origin as destiny of existence, the nature of knowledge and the meaning of reality, the significance of the human experience.” This definition concentrates on the beliefs and attitudes of a group.

During the same period, Singer (1998:99) bases his definition on the perceptual approach stating that “[a] pattern of perceptions, values, attitudes and behaviours that is accepted and expected by an identity group is called a culture. Since by definition each identity group has its own pattern of behavioural norms, each group may be said to have its own culture.” The concepts of behaviour and attitude are included in this definition.

Scollon and Scollon (2001:139) define culture saying it “[i]s any of the customs, worldview, language, kinship system, social organisation, and other taken-for-granted day-to-day practices of a people which set that group apart as a distinctive group.” This definition includes the concept of language as part of culture.

Hofstede (2001:10) shows us that “[c]ulture could be defined as the interactive aggregate of common characteristics that influence a group’s response to its environment. Culture determines the uniqueness of a human group in the same way that personality determines the uniqueness of an individual.” In this definition the uniqueness of culture is being highlighted, and it is made evident that people can be culturally distinguished by their responses to their environment.

Finally, Spencer-Oatey (2004:5) states that “culture is a fuzzy set of attitudes, beliefs, behavioural conventions, and basic assumptions and values that are shared by a group of people, and that influence each member’s behaviour and each


What is culture?

member’s interpretations of the ‘meaning’ of other people’s behaviour.” The most important feature is groups of people. This definition introduces the idea that culture can be distinguished by the responses of people of a particular culture. These many definitions include the terms: beliefs, values, attitudes, behaviours, not to mention language.

This compendium of definitions concerning the concept of culture clearly demonstrates that culture is a multidisciplinary area that needs to draw upon many fields of study in order to deal with all of the aspects that pertain to intercultural studies. Intercultural communication therefore is a field of study that draws upon Anthropology, Social Psychology, Psychology and Sociology (Hofstede, 2001). The following illustration shows all of the entwined attributes of culture in their varying aspects.

Figure 9. Manifestations of Culture at Differing Layers of Depth

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3.1 CULTURAL DIMENSIONS

Due the complexity of intercultural studies, extensive research has been done on intercultural dimensions and many approaches to the definitions of cultural dimensions have been made. Even though research in this field goes back to the 1920's (Levy-Bruhl, 1923), and has continued much later by Aberle (1968), the father of Intercultural Studies is considered to be Edward Hall, who began publishing his studies in 1959. Therefore, in what follows, Hall's model will be discussed and analysed. I will also analyse the most relevant models researched during the last two decades by Kluckhohn and Strodbeck, Trompenaars, Geert Hofstede and finally the Globe Study, as possible frameworks for this study.

3.1.1 THE EDWARD HALL MODEL

As noted above, Edward Hall (1959) is considered in many ways the father of intercultural studies. The categories in his model have been the basis for many subsequent cultural studies and can still be applied to intercultural analysis today. There are three general categories which are then further subdivided to deal with specific issues within the cultural dimensions. The primary axis consists of the following three categories: a) context, b) space, and c) time.
What is culture?

Figure 10. The Edward Hall Model (1959)

These three principal divisions are broad categories of the cultural dimensions, but they need to be described for their real purpose to be analysed. Firstly, the dimension of context is defined by the sub-categories low and high. These subdivisions refer to the amount of information given in communication. A high context message means that little is said because the context provides all the information. On the other hand, a low context communication can be said to be explicitly stated communication. According to Hall (1998), high-context communication involves emotion and close relationships, while low-context interaction uses the logical part of the brain and is less personal.

The second category, space, is subdivided into four sections. In general terms, it refers to the invisible boundaries (Carroll, 1988) of a person. Thus the more specific term territoriality defines the relationship of ownership and power; for example, often more space in strategic locations in an office are given to the most powerful. Personal space refers to the way people use physical interaction in the communicating process; for example patting someone on the shoulder, when you say goodbye. This can indicate the intimacy of a relationship. Proxemics can be
defined as “the interrelated observations and theories of man's use of space as a specialized elaboration of culture” (Hall, 1966:1). The reaction people may have when their personal space is invaded can affect the communication process. Spatial categories can extend to the five senses; for example shouting can invade the physical space of another person which is better known as multisensory space. This can be seen in the reaction of northern Europeans to the loudness of southern Europeans.

The final general category, Time, is divided into two sections, which refer to *linear organisation of time* (monochronic) and *simultaneous actions at a time* (polychronic). This is particularly relevant to project management as it conditions many other aspects of behaviour and beliefs of an individual. The table below demonstrates the differences of monochronic and polychronic cultures.

**Table 11: Monochronic and Polychronic Cultures (Hall & Hall, 1990:15)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monochronic</th>
<th>Polychronic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do one thing at a time</td>
<td>Do many things at once</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make commitments (deadlines)</td>
<td>Time commitments are flexible and low priority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committed to job</td>
<td>Committed to people and relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentrate on job</td>
<td>Easily distracted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasise promptness</td>
<td>Base promptness on relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accustomed to short-term relationships</td>
<td>Tend to form lifelong relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are low context and need information</td>
<td>Are high context and already have information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adhere to plans</td>
<td>Change plans often</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The realisation that culture can be defined and studied through Context, Space and Time leads to further studies in identifying cultural dimensions to develop cultural awareness.
What is culture?

3.1.2 The Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck Cross-Cultural Framework

The framework proposed by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) is based on anthropological studies from the following point of view: there are a limited number of problems that are common to all human groups and there are a limited number of solutions. This framework is based on the belief that values in any given society are distributed in a way that creates a dominant value system. So, Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck used anthropological theories to identify five value orientations: Relationship with Nature, Relationship with people, Human activities, Relationship with time and Human nature. These dimensions are further divided into three areas, as shown in the table below.

Table 12. The Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck cross-cultural framework (Nardon & Steers, 2009:4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural dimensions</th>
<th>Scales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human Nature</td>
<td>Good – belief people are inherently good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral – belief people are inherently neutral.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evil – belief people are inherently evil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Activities</td>
<td>Being – belief that people should concentrate on living for the moment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Becoming – belief that individuals should strive to develop themselves into an integrated whole.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Doing – belief on striving for goals and accomplishments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with Time</td>
<td>Past – In making decisions, people are principally influenced by past events or traditions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Present – In making decisions, people are principally influenced by present circumstances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Future – In making decisions, people are principally influenced by future prospects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with People</td>
<td>Individualistic – belief that social structure should be arranged based on individuals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collateral – belief that social structure should be based on groups of individuals with relatively equal status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lineal – belief that social structure should be based on groups with clear and rigid hierarchical relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with Nature</td>
<td>Mastery – belief that people have the need or responsibility to control nature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Harmony – belief that people should work with nature to maintain harmony or balance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subjugation – belief that individuals must submit to nature.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This model has been applied in several studies where the participants were engineering students or part of project management. Robbins (2003) conducted an extensive study which also looked at different values associated with time and with nature which can affect business relationships. Other researchers like Hamel and Prahalad (1989) and Chang (1995) mention how cultures differ in how they value time in their studies. For example, some Southern Mediterranean people emphasise a focus on the past. Maintaining traditions, and in contrast, Americans are present-time oriented, often using phrases like *time is money* or *there is no time* like the present (Homblyower, 1997). In another study by Rodriguez-Falcon et al. (2011), this model was used to elaborate a questionnaire answered by two hundred and fifty future engineers. The subsequent analysis of the results showed that the students had created, albeit only to some degree, cultural awareness for application in future project management.

### 3.1.3 THE FONS TROMPENAARS MODEL

The Trompenaars model is based on a study of fifteen thousand managers across twenty-eight countries. He identified five dimensions that can have contrasting perspectives. These will be discussed in more detail below.

Figure 11. The Fons Trompenaars Model (1997).
What is culture?

Universalism is the belief that ideas and practices can be applied everywhere without any modification. For example, on international construction projects, the Dutch insist on formal rules and contracts when conducting business. But particularism is just the opposite: things depend on the circumstances and there is more emphasis on personal relationships and trust, which would be the case in most Middle Eastern countries as shown by Maharan and Geraedt (2009).

Anbari et al. (2003) look at the implications of this model for international project management. If we look at the way people regard themselves, two different groups emerge: individuals, which would be a North American perspective, and collectivists which would be a more Mediterranean concept, where people consider themselves part of a family group. This would explain why there are more than two million small to medium sized companies that are family-owned in countries like Spain (Rodríguez Alcaide, 2012).

The Neutral/Affective dimension refers to the way people show their emotions. The British are known to be stoic, even considered emotionless but in sharp contrast, the Italians are quite affective and effusive expressing themselves openly and naturally.

The next dimension refers to how people consider the concept of space. If they are specific, they only share their private space with family and close friends. On the other hand, countries like China have a more diffuse concept, where entry into public space also means entering into private space.

The last dimension deals with how status is awarded. In the USA, achievement is based on individual performance. If you work hard, you will go far. Ascription, in contrast, is the awarding of status based on who and what a person is (Trompenaars, 1996).
3.1.4 THE GEERT HOFSTEDE MODEL

Many studies after Hall were done by other researchers drawing on a variety of disciplines as previously mentioned, but until the 1980’s, Hall’s model was still considered the most relevant model. Then, in the 1980’s, a revolutionary book appeared on the market called *Culture’s Consequences*. In Hofstede’s own words in the preface to the second edition (2001): “I wrote down findings that seemed obvious to me, but they proved to contain news value for others, practitioners and theorists alike, across almost any discipline that compares data from any country.” It is the most widely cited, and used while at the same time is the most criticised model. McSweeney (2002), Schwartz (1992), Lindell and Arvonen (1996) and Smith (1998) have written articles questioning not only the methodology but also the findings of the Hofstede study.

After more than ten years of surveys and studies of personnel at IBM across more than fifty countries, Hofstede created a model of five dimensions to analyse culture. The five categories are: a) Power Distance Index (PDI), b) Individualism (IDV) c) Masculinity (MAS), d) Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI) and e) Long-Term Orientation (LTO). It is important to note that the last dimension cannot be applied to all cultures. Another two dimensions have recently been added through research with collaborators: Indulgence vs. Restraint, and Monumentalism vs. Flexumility.
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Figure 12. The Geert Hofstede Model (1980-2011)

Vinig et al. (1998), Hulkkonen et al. (undated) and Ghemawat and Reiche (2010) have used this framework for studies in the field of project management. A brief description of the dimensions will illustrate the framework.

The first dimension in the model is Power Distance. It explains the extent to which the weaker members of organisations and institutions (like the family) accept and expect unequally power distribution. In other words, how much of a society's level of inequality is endorsed by the followers as much as by the leaders.

The next dimension in the model, Uncertainty Avoidance, deals with a society's tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity. It indicates to what extent a culture programs its members to feel either uncomfortable or comfortable in unstructured situations. This would mean, for example, the need for more or less norms at the workplace. The opposite types are more tolerant of different opinions, beliefs and try to have as few rules as possible.

Individualism is the degree to which individuals are integrated into groups. Individualist societies are those where everyone is expected to look after
themselves perhaps including their immediate family. On the collectivist side, societies integrate people into extended families, who take care of each other.

Masculinity versus its opposite, femininity, refers to the distribution of roles between the genders. In the masculine countries women are more assertive and competitive than women in feminine countries.

Long-term versus short-term orientation is related to the choice of focus for people’s efforts: the future or the present. This fifth dimension was found after a study in twenty-three countries around the world, using a questionnaire designed by Chinese scholars. Long-term orientation attributes include austerity and persistence; in contrast, values for short-term orientation are respect for tradition, fulfilling social obligations and protecting one’s honour.

Indulgence versus restraint has been included more recently into the Hofstede model. Indulgence refers to allowing gratification of some desires and feelings. This gives the members of the society a perception of freedom, health, and control over life. In contrast, cultural restraint means that the gratification of certain desires and feelings are controlled. This is mirrored in the perception that life events can be controlled.

Monumentalism versus flexumility stands for a society which rewards people who represent pillars of society. The monumentalism dimension emerged from an analysis of a theory proposed by Heine (2003). Flexumility stands for a society which rewards humility and flexibility.

In spite of the many criticisms of Hofstede’s work, Mead (1993) states that, with its simplicity and well structured approach, the model is still the major influence in comparative cultural studies and will continue to be for a long time to come.
3.1.5 THE GLOBE STUDY MODEL

A team of 160 scholars have worked together since 1994 to study societal culture, organisational culture and attributes of effective leadership in 62 cultures. *Culture, Leadership, and Organisations: The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies* reports the findings of the survey of over 17,000 middle managers in three industries: banking, food processing, and telecommunications. There are several dimensions which are based on the Hofstede model and so only the new concepts will be discussed.

Figure 13. The Globe Study Model (2004).

One of the new dimensions that resulted from this survey is Future orientation. It refers to the extent to which a society encourages or rewards either present/past orientation or future oriented behaviours. Another new dimension is Assertiveness. This measures to what extent an individual, organisation or society is assertive, confrontational and aggressive in social relationships. The third dimension that varies from the Hofstede model is Performance orientation. This dimension measures how much a society encourages and rewards achievement and excellence. As many of these dimensions were based on the Hofstede model,
there has been great debate among researchers and practitioners on the validity of the Globe and/or the Hofstede model. Maseland and van Hoorn (2009), Smith (2006) and Tung and Verbeke (2010) try to go beyond the debate to improve the quality of cross cultural research.

What can be said is that all of the approaches discussed generally argue that culture is a viable explanatory variable as it is conceptualised in a multi-dimensional structure (Kitayama & Cohen, 2007). In the POOL and POOL2 Business projects, a combination of the Edward Hall model and the Hofstede model were used in large part based on the validity of the models (through proven research) and the clear concepts behind each of the dimensions. This allowed for a flexible approach which could be changed according the participants’ culture and needs.

3.2 CULTURAL COMPETENCE

There are many definitions of cultural competence. Fitzgerald (2002) identifies general cultural competence as more of a context-bound, practice-based, awareness, knowledge, attitude and skills concept. Other researchers like Ramburth (2000) define it as an understanding and acknowledging of similarities and differences in a first step that is followed by taking action to address the issues of difference. Trahar (2007) explains that effective intercultural encounters that foster sensitive learning require a personal, intimate and empathetic approach. Spitzberg and Cupach (1984a) define intercultural communication competence as being both effective (getting the job done) and appropriate (acting according to the norms of the culture). This definition includes a three tier concept: knowledge (cognition), motivation (affect, emotion) and skills (behaviour). From these
What is culture?

definitions it is clear that becoming interculturally competent is no easy task. There are many models for the development of cultural competences but only three of the most relevant will be discussed.

3.2.1 THE CULTURE SHOCK MODEL

The first concept that must be taken into consideration is the culture shock model. Oberg (1960) proposed a U-shaped model where people who move to a new culture go through four stages: honeymoon/euphoria, anxiety/crisis, recovery and, finally, adjustment. In the first phase, everything is new and exciting. In the second phase, the differences in culture begin to manifest and this creates stress and frustration (Pederson, 1995). As the person begins to develop routines and skills to adapt to the new environment, they move into recovery. Finally, in the last stage, a person can participate comfortably in the new culture. However, many times, there is a second experience which requires going through the same steps when a person returns to their own culture. Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963) saw the need to expand the original U-curve model, proposing a W-model having two connected U-periods (or a “W” shape) linking the phenomenon of initial entry culture shock with reverse culture shock.
Researchers like Woesler (2009) have looked into the difficulties of returning home and show that it can even be more difficult to return to the initial culture. Others like Christofi and Thompson (2007) name this process *you cannot go home again*, referring to how the new incorporated cultural competences acquired have changed the person. The next model to be discussed appears to be more linear in its conception, but is, nonetheless, as intricate in its concepts.

### 3.2.2 The Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

In his article “Becoming Interculturally Competent”, Bennett (2004:62) starts out with these words:

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After years of observing all kinds of people dealing (or not) with crosscultural situations, I decided to try to make sense of what was happening to them. I wanted to explain why some people seemed to get a lot better at communicating across cultural boundaries while other people didn't improve at all, and I thought that if I were able to explain why this happened, trainers and educators could do a better job of preparing people for crosscultural encounters.

In Bennett's first extensive study, in 1993, it became apparent that there were two clearly different groups of people characterised by their world view. The first group, categorised as ethnocentric, is characterised by "the experience of one's own culture as 'central to reality'." And the second group, categorised as ethnorelative, has a world view where one's culture is one of many possibilities viable (Bennett & Bennett, 2004). These two large groups were also subdivided by different experiences in a sequential manner. Denial, Defense and Minimisation are ethnocentric, while Acceptance, Adaptation and Integration are ethnorelative.

In the Bennett Model, in the ethnocentric stage, people go first from denying cultural differences to then defending their own culture, to finally trying to find the similarities between cultures in the minimisation stage. The next three steps, which are part of the ethnorelative stage, include the acceptance of the differences between cultures and the adaptation and integration of the new cultures without losing one's own culture. This model is shown below.
Figure 15. The Milton Bennett Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) (2004)

Bennett (1993: 26) explains how going through these stages is associated with personal growth and must be seen as multidimensional. This progression involves the whole personality, one's thinking, feeling and acting:

Initial development is cognitive - the generation of relevant categories for cultural difference. The reaction to this development is affective - a feeling of threat to the stability of one's world view. The developmental treatment for a threat response is behavioural - joint activity toward a common goal - and the response to this treatment is cognitive - consolidation of differences into universal categories. Subsequent appreciation of cultural difference is affective and is combined with increased cognitive knowledge of differences. This change is followed by behavioural applications involving the building of intercultural communication skills. Finally, all three dimensions are integrated in the operation of 'constructive marginality'.

In this model, it is must be pointed out that the progress towards intercultural competence requires going through each stage - someone cannot jump a phase of experience.

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3.2.3 The Deardorf Model

Moving one step further, Deardorf (2004:478) defines intercultural competence in terms of its outcome:

The overall external outcome of intercultural competence is defined as the effective and appropriate behaviour and communication in intercultural situations, which again can be further detailed in terms of appropriate [author’s italics] behaviour in specific contexts (appropriate behaviour being assessed by the other involved in the interaction).

There is an important change in the concept of competence in which there must be a mind shift in attitudes by showing respect, openness, curiosity and discovery. She points out that cultural self-awareness, deep cultural knowledge and sociolinguistic awareness make up the necessary knowledge to be able to change their world view. Thus the internal change in a person can produce a desirable external outcome. This change should also be perceived by the receiver of the actions who will see this behaviour as appropriate in the cultural situation. Figure 16 illustrates this concept of competence.
Figure 16: Deardorff Process Model of Intercultural Competence (Spitzburg & Changnon, 2009:33)

In the Deardorff model, the neverending loop provides an appropriate framework, where cultural competence is acquired by going through a learning loop that effectively allows an individual to move from one stage of the Bennett model to the next.

### 3.2.4 INTERCULTURAL TRAINING

In the *Handbook for Intercultural Training*, a timeline for the interest in intercultural training shows that it surfaced towards the late 1950’s and early 1960’s. Some examples are the Standard Vacuum Oil Company which created their first in-house company intercultural training in 1954 (Renwick, 1994) and The Peace Corps, which was founded in 1961 and published their first manual *Guidelines for Peace Corps Cross Cultural Training* in 1970. It was becoming apparent that as globalisation was taking off, the need to develop skills for this
new global concept was also being deemed as necessary. As noted by Brislin and Yoshida (1994), there are three main goals in intercultural training discussed in:

a) Awareness, knowledge and information about culture
b) Attitudes related to intercultural communication
c) Skills or new behaviours

The objectives of intercultural pre-departure training, as defined by Gudykunst et al. (1996:65), can be divided into three areas:

a) Cognitive (focusing on knowledge and awareness to help trainees understand how their culture and attitudes influence their interactions with members of other cultures).
b) Affective (focusing on helping trainees manage their emotional reactions when interacting with members of other cultures).
c) Behaviour (focusing on developing the skills need to interact effectively with members of other cultures).

Caudron (1991), Forsberg (1993) and Gudykunst et al. (1996), the subject of how much time needs to be set aside for intercultural training has been addressed. In these studies, the suitability of training anywhere from four hour sessions to three weeks has been discussed. For this reason, the training is considered a step towards awareness which has theoretical and practical components. Two main issues illustrated in Gudykunst et al. (1996) are didactic versus experiential training and culture general versus culture specific training. The first issue presents the importance of theoretical frameworks as well as practical activities in the training sessions. The training participants must have a notion of what the similarities and differences are between cultures if then they are going to participate in an experiential activity such as a role-play to see what situations they
M. Tabuenca Cuevas

may find themselves in on their time working abroad. The second issue deals with the need for participants to understand how culture can influence behaviour (in general) before more culture specific training can be done for more specific guidelines and more in depth culture analysis. The table below illustrates the underlying design concept of training.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Desired Outcomes</th>
<th>Training Methods and Activities</th>
<th>Evaluation Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (facts and information)</td>
<td>readings, lectures, brainstorming, programmed instruction, debates, panels.</td>
<td>Application in other training activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The learner will understand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills (manual thinking, planning, etc)</td>
<td>demonstration or instruction followed by practice with feedback to correct mistakes, role-playing, games, case studies, simulations.</td>
<td>Observation in role-play, case studies with decision making, observation checklist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner will able to do something</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes</td>
<td>discussions, role-plays, values classification exercises, case studies, critical incidents, debates, games, simulations.</td>
<td>Indirectly, by observing behaviours, interpersonal relations, approaches to issues and problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner will adopt new values and perspectives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The use of different training exercises can be used for specific purposes to achieve specific outcomes, some examples are:

a) culture specific readings (to create awareness of differences and commonalities)

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25 Table adapted from Landis (2004:46). Also see Kohls (1995).
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b) culture-specific simulation games (an interactive opportunity to practice new behaviours and experiment with new attitudes and points of view)

c) culture-specific role plays (two participants take on characteristics of people from a particular culture in order to learn how to interact in specific situations with members of that culture)

d) critical incidents /case studies exercise (brief descriptions of situations in which there is a misunderstanding, problem or conflict arising from cultural differences. They should be conflict situations students can expect to encounter in interacting with people from another culture in order to discuss in groups to find an explanation/ and determine possible solutions.)

The description of these types of exercises is meant to illustrate how important the concept of awareness is in intercultural training. This need for the development of awareness differentiates intercultural training from other forms of training.

3.3 SUMMARY

The third section focuses on the importance of culture. Definitions of culture by Adler (1998) and Scollon and Scollon (2001), among others, are compared to find a description that includes beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviours. The most current models of cultural dimensions are shown and discussed: Hall (1957), Kulickhohn and Strödtbeck (1961), Trompenaars (1997), Hofstede (1980) and the Globe Study (2004). Next, some definitions for cultural competence are highlighted (Spitzberg & Cupach, 1984; Fitzgerald, 2002) and two models for
intercultural competence development are presented: the Culture shock model (1963) and the DMIS model (2004). The last section takes a look at how intercultural training can be planned (Gudykunst, 1996) and what objectives could be outlined (Kohls, 1995).
EDUCATIONAL METHODOLOGY

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4. EDUCATIONAL METHODOLOGY

On the one hand, there are currently over fifty learning and instruction theories to choose from for use in the classroom (Atherton, 2005); on the other hand, there is a growing field of research which states that "learning and education is in a crisis" (Jörg et al., 2007), as the skills needed in an industrialised society are very different as a result of the changing needs of a post industrialised world. This same fact is pointed out by Friesen and Jardine (2010), who show in their report that the "factory model" of schools is no longer valid in the 21st century knowledge society. Other researchers like Carolan et al. (2006) also put forth the idea in their report that it is necessary to make more personal approaches salient in teaching rather than sticking to pre-established models. The current state of education presents contrasting stances which need to be discussed and put into perspective to lay the foundations for the major concepts in adult education, technical training and professional training. Subsequently, a brief look at the five main philosophies on adult education in the last century will be presented.

4.1 A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF ADULT EDUCATION

The first adult education theory is known as liberal adult education. This process is oriented towards conceptual and theoretical understanding rather than mere transmission and absorption of factual knowledge or development of technical skill. Van Doren (1943) and Adler (1982) have done extensive research as proponents of this methodology. This was considered a lifelong process and refers to rational or intellectual education which would allow people not only to
learn the facts but to apply them (through wisdom) to new situations. The classical
tradition is part of the theoretical basis of liberal learning.

The second theory, called progressive adult education, is chiefly concerned
with developing a learner centred approach to education. This necessitated
removing learners from the passivity and uniformity of traditional education.
Manual training was introduced into the curriculum and an effort was made to
begin the educational process by attending to the needs and interests of the
learners (Dewey, 1956). This meant that, in addition to learning, education had a
role to play in social reform and reconstruction through the use of
experimentalism. This was a huge change from the liberal learning tradition,
which in many ways did not challenge the status quo of classical teaching
methods.

The next theory, humanistic adult education, may seem similar to liberal
education, but it includes the concept of development of a person as a whole, not
based on the works of the past but on the freedom and dignity of the individual.
There are six basic elements of this theory that can be summed up in the following
terms: autonomy, individuality, self-actualisation, perception, responsibility and
humanity. Maslow (1976) and Rogers (1969) did extensive research into the basic
elements of the learner as well as the role of the teacher. This research introduced
the idea of the teacher as a “facilitator of knowledge” (Rogers, 1969: 164).

Radical and critical education stands outside the mainstream theories of
education. According to this theory, adult educators need to focus less on
technique, methodology and administration, and more on philosophical and
political ideas that lie at the heart of the enterprise (Griffen, 1983). This
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transformation of pedagogy is also proposed by Collins (1998), who calls for political involvement as well as theoretical work, teaching and analysis.

The final theory to be discussed is referred to as behaviourist adult education and is highly influenced by the field of psychology. The main idea is that education must ensure survival of the human species, societies and individuals. To this end, the teacher becomes "a contingency manager, an environmental controller or behavioural engineer to guarantee the fundamental aim of survival" (Skinner, 1968). This theory introduces new concepts such as accountability (Popham, 1973; Caire, 2003), competency-based education (Brown et al., 2001) and instructional strategies (Skinner, 1968; Herman, 1977).

There are three areas where behaviourist adult education methodology is still currently employed: basic adult education, continuing professional education and training in business and industry. The behaviourist method in these areas of education proposes that, at the individual level, there should be an emphasis on the acquisition of job skills to ensure survival in our contemporary society. It also proposes the theory of "learning how to learn", which ensures the possibility of adaptation in an ever changing work field and places emphasis on cooperation and interdependence on a global level, which is necessary in our global work environments. In order to achieve these goals, the role of the student in the learning process must be active and the teacher must be subject to educational accountability.

There has been much debate over how learning can be measured. However, Popham (1973) was one of the first to introduce the idea that organising outcomes clarifies course contents, which would in turn aid teachers to measure outcomes
objectively and lead to more effective teaching and learning. Moreover, the teacher would be responsible for the results that are produced by students.

A proposed model of how to design instruction using this theory can be found in Comings (2003:2), where the following steps are numbered:

1) basic and applied research upon which to build programs which are then
2) evaluated for their effectiveness in conjunction with
3) the practitioner’s knowledge in improving implementation.

As a result, the behaviourist theory has a practical application in computer assisted instruction. The idea that no student should fail a subject due to uncontrollable factors on his/her behalf has led to programs that in many ways shape the student’s behaviour through a gradual progression toward the course objectives. This is reinforced by constant and immediate feedback and self-pacing, which gives the student more control over the time factor in the learning process.

Other approaches have built on these five main philosophies, as does the constructivist approach pioneered by Bartlett (1932), one of the most relevant for our study. Constructivism accepts multiple perspectives but maintains that learning is a personal interpretation of the world. This approach allows learners to construct their own reality or at least interpret it according to their perceptions of experiences. According to Jonassen (1991), what someone knows is based on their perception of the physical and social experiences which are comprehended by the mind. Therefore, according to this theory, learners come to see the implications of new knowledge and apply their knowledge under appropriate conditions (Collins, 1991). This is a result of the following (Merrill, 1991):
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a) knowledge is constructed from experience;
b) learning is a personal interpretation of the world;
c) learning is an active process in which meaning is developed on the basis of experience;
d) conceptual growth comes from the negotiation of meaning, the sharing of multiple perspectives and the changing of our internal representations through collaborative learning;
e) learning should be situated in realistic settings; testing should be integrated with the task and not a separate activity.

Subsequently, this theory which deals with experience and the application of new knowledge, is particularly adaptable to new technologies and innovative learning. In the case of Jonassen (undated), the application of these two seemingly different theories can be justified by using them for different types of learning:

1. Introductory Learning – learners have very little directly transferable prior knowledge about a skill or content area. They are at the initial stages of schema assembly and integration. At this stage classical instructional design is most suitable because it is predetermined, constrained, sequential and criterion-referenced. The learner can develop some anchors for further exploration.
2. Advanced Knowledge Acquisition – follows introductory knowledge and precedes expert knowledge. At this point constructivist approaches may be introduced.

Ertmer and Newby (1993) also adhere to the use of multiple theories in instructional design. They stress that instructional strategy and content addressed depend on the level of the learners. Similarly to Jonassen, they match learning theories with the content to be learned. Finally, according to Mergel (1998), it is
possible and logical to have instructional design move from the behaviourist
tradition, as changing learning processes coupled with advancements in
technology, to make constructivist approaches viable.

Although all of these theories can be proposed for adult education, for our
purposes, the behaviourist tradition in combination with constructivist elements in
adult education is the eclectic theory which is most frequently applied, not only in
traditional academic settings for adults, but also in professional settings and
vocational learning centres. It encourages the use of clear outcomes, constant
evaluation and active participation on behalf of the students, as well as learner
autonomy. It is also applicable to non-traditional learning environments such as
distance learning and computer-based learning. Therefore, this was part of the
theoretical basis of the professional training to be proposed in the POOL and
POOL2Business projects.

4.1.1 ISSUES IN PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

After having reviewed some of the main philosophies on adult learning, it is
necessary to look at current trends within professional training. The global
economy demands a new kind of worker – one that is flexible, autonomous and
group oriented, possesses critical thinking skills, can solve a range of problems, is
capable of multitasking and is committed to lifelong learning (Keegan 1996;
Springer et al., 1997; Collis & Moonen, 2001; Grabinger & Dunlap, 2001). Career
and technical education places emphasis on the following three areas:

a) identifying the skills needed to perform in an occupation,
b) teaching those skills, and
c) requiring a certain standard of performance in those skills.
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Therefore, the focus on professional training is usually based on the outcome rather than the process. However, a revolutionary model for professional adult learning based on the constructivist theory was first applied by Kolb in the 1980’s.

The principle of Kolb’s learning cycle is that learners follow four stages of learning as they acquire knowledge, experience and skill, namely a) concrete experience, b) reflective observation, c) abstract conceptualisation, and d) active experimentation. Concrete experience provides a basis for reflective observation. These observations can be distilled into abstract concepts, which are then actively tested with experimentation. Concrete experience of the experiments starts over the learning cycle. The following model (Figure 17, Kolb, 1984:28) is the representation of the four types of learners and the steps in their learning process.

Grasping (the vertical axis) is the process of taking in information through either one’s sensory or conceptual faculties. One also transforms (the horizontal axis) what has been taken in, through either reflection or action. In this way, the model integrates all four quadrants, or mores — experience, reflection, abstraction, and experimentation. Though learning often begins with the learner’s current or prior experience, individuals may enter the learning cycle through any mode, depending upon their preferences and the particular learning situation.
Consequently, this model, in combination with behaviourist theories, became the basis for many theoretical frameworks in professional training. These four stages of the learning process – concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation are, however, many times poorly interpreted and even inadequately applied. These inadequate models (abstract conceptualisation) lead to poor design of learning interventions (active experimentation). This design deficiency in turn restricts the experience of learning on the part of both the designers and the participants (concrete experience). Such deficiencies also lead to inadequate observation and reflection (reflective observation), which in turn feeds back into poor conceptualisation of learning (abstract conceptualisation). These deficiencies reinforce each other and are exported to new contexts as program designers implement learning in different
contexts (active experimentation). The net result can be seen in Figure 18, in what Senge (1992) and Hampden-Turner (1990) describe as a “vicious circle”.

Figure 18. Vicious circle (Based on Kolb 1984).

The National Standards for Training and Development model (1992), which is based upon the Kolb model, is an attempt to clarify and guide trainers in the four main steps to achieve adult training in a work environment. It attempts to base the theoretical framework within concrete steps so that trainers can easily identify the practical means through which training is to be delivered. This is meant to facilitate the interpretation of the cycle and impede misunderstanding which can lead to poor implementation. (Nevis et al., 1995; Hodgetts et al., 1994).

Figure 19. National Standards for Training and Development Model (Training and Development Lead Body Great Britain, 1992)
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For this reason, the POOL and POOL2Business projects have considered it is necessary to include industry and students in all of the processes of education – from the original design of the core competencies to the final evaluation of the outcomes. Consequently, this combination of theories was applied in the POOL and POOL2Business projects to develop a course programs for the different work packages on language and culture.

4.1.2 DEFINITIONS OF COMPETENCES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

It can be claimed that technical education places too much emphasis on defining competences and setting outcomes (Butcher 2005). However, as technical education is based on the acquisition of specific competences, it is necessary to define what it is. According to a summary presented in a report by the Organisation for Economic co-operation and Development (OECD, 2007), a possible definition could be:

[A] competency is more than just knowledge and skills. It involves the ability to meet complex demands, by drawing on and mobilising psychosocial resources (including skills and attitudes) in a particular context. For example, the ability to communicate effectively is a competency that may draw on an individual’s knowledge of language, practical IT skills and attitudes towards those with whom he or she is communicating.

Wojczak (2002) presents the same basic elements in his definition, whereby competence means the possession of a satisfactory level of relevant knowledge and acquisition of a range of relevant skills that include interpersonal and technical components at a certain point in the educational process.
Educational Methodology

In order to measure these competences, the trend towards developing measurable outcomes has become commonplace for vocational and higher education. There is no single definition, so the following four have been selected as they present a general overview of the concept.

1. Statements of what a learner can be expected to know, understand and/or do as a result of a learning experience. (CHEA, 2003)
2. Student learning outcomes are properly defined in terms of knowledge, skills, and abilities that a student has attained at the end (or as a result) of his or her engagement in a particular set of higher education experiences. (CHEA, 2003)
3. Learning outcomes are statements that specify what a learner will know or be able to do as a result of a learning activity. Outcomes are usually expressed as knowledge, skills, or attitudes. (ENQUA, 2005)
4. Learning outcomes (are) specific measurable achievements. (European Commission, 2003)

The advantages of being able to design courses based on competences development through measurable outcomes is described by Adam (2007) as beneficial not only for the person designing the course but more importantly for issues on quality assurance and standards, for the learners and lastly, for educational transparency on a national and international level.

4.2 SUMMARY

The fourth section begins by delving into educational methodology for adult education and for professional training. Traditional theories like humanistic adult education (Rogers, 1969), behaviourist adult education (Skinner, 1968) and constructivism (Jonassen, 1994) are outlined, as well as professional training
theories like the Kolb model (1984). Professional training models, based on Kolb are then discussed as many times the implementation of this theory is not done adequately. The importance of having clear course structures is heightened by the emphasis on competence and learning outcomes, both of which are described and defined by researchers and academic organisations. Butcher (2005) questions the possibility of using outcomes for soft skills.
TEACHING IN VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENTS
5. TEACHING IN VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENTS

There have been numerous and continuous studies on the elements and analysis of curricula in education that started by the mid-20th century with Tyler (1949) and Bloom et al. (1956), followed by Krathwohl et al. (1964) and Gagne (1965). New models of curricula analysis continued to appear in the following decades. Taylor (1975), Steinhous (1975), Kelly (1982), Tanner and Kennet (1988), and more recently Toohey (1999) are the most well known. These studies, however, did not deal with the effect of ICT on curricula or course design, as the technology for such courses was not readily available at all higher institutions. The implementation of ICT has been researched very recently in studies by Collis and Moonen (2001), Kirkuk and Kirkwood (2005) and even more specifically in the studies of the impact of new technologies on academic models by Salinas (2004). Within the POOL and POOL2Business projects, the relevant issue at hand was how to understand the key factors which have evolved in the curriculum development of on-line courses in order to apply them to a new transnational on-line course for language learning.

As there is no extensive research done on the e-learning curriculum, it is essential for our study to begin by consulting a number of reports and documents that provide design guidelines and benchmarks for distance education environments. For the POOL and POOL2Business projects, the model provided by the Institute for Higher Education Policy (National Education Association, 2000), which outlines twenty-four benchmarks for course design, delivery and
learning outcomes will be used. Those of particular interest are the fourth to the sixth:

4. Guidelines regarding minimum standards are used for course development, design, and delivery, while learning outcomes – not the availability of existing technology – determine the technology being used to deliver course content.
5. Instructional materials are reviewed periodically to ensure they meet program standards.
6. Courses are designed to require students to engage themselves in analysis, synthesis, and evaluation as part of their course and program requirements.

Therefore, the general course structure was defined using these guidelines and the next steps were to establish the necessary competencies, then to analyse the course content, and finally decide upon the learning outcomes. The importance of following this structure was to create a course model that could be implemented and assessed transnationally with total transparency.

5.1 A BRIEF HISTORY OF COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING (CALL)

Rod Paige, the former American Secretary of Education, has stated on more than one occasion that “education is the only business still debating the usefulness of technology”. This can be applied directly to the research into Computer Mediated Communication for Language (CMCL), also called Computer Assisted Language learning (CALL), and second language learning (SLA) as this field is fairly recent and there are many trends and little consensus on methodology.

Before discussing the specific tasks CMCL it is advisable to take a brief look at the three phases of the history of CALL. Although it is difficult to pinpoint exact dates (Bax, 2003; Jung, 2005), the general timeline outlined by Warschauer and Healy (1998) can be used for this purpose.
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CALL was first used in the mid-1960's. This initial phase can be referred to as the *behaviourist phase* as CALL it was used to provide drills for individuals especially on reading and writing. The second phase, which began in the 1980's, is commonly referred to as the *communicative phase*, as speaking and listening were used but machine-student interaction was still the norm. The last phase, from the 1990's to the beginning of the twenty-first century, is known as *integrative CALL*. Multimedia, the Internet and a variety of new media allow for the use of several skills at once. The interaction is not only between machine and students, but also between student and student, student and teacher, etc. It is in this phase that Lamy and Hampel (2007) identified the importance that CALL has had in the field of language learning. They were able to pinpoint the following two highpoints along a timeline after extensive research of published journals and non-journal materials. In 1996, chat and conversation come to the forefront; collaborative platforms show a steep rise in 1999. It is at this point that CMCL began to appear as an acronym as on-line courses were starting to be offered by institutions.

Jung (2003) puts forth the concept that CMCL materials for second language learning should be designed according to the three second language acquisition (SLA) perspectives: input perspective, output perspective and interaction perspective. The input perspective means that students acquire language using what they already know coupled with new information. The last of these is particularly problematic in an on-line environment. Researchers such as Johns (1991), Fernández-Villanueva (1996) and Dodd (1997) have done studies where the input perspective was studied and verified in the CMCL environment for specific contexts and case studies. However, there is no one formula for this process and the studies were limited to specific groups in specific contexts.
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In contrast, many studies on the output perspective often compare the traditional type of instruction to drill and practice and/or tutorial. Swain (1985) states that output can be independent of comprehensible input. In this approach students would use output to test new language forms and validate their knowledge. Studies by Nagata (1998) and Kern (1995) follow the research trend of comparative studies, although these are limited to the types of CALL programmes and to try to emphasise the importance of comprehensible output.

The interaction perspective is based on the belief that linguistic input needs to be comprehended both semantically and syntactically in order to be understood. Research in this field started in the traditional classroom with studies by Gass (1997), Long (1996) and Alcaraz Varó (2000). Effective computer mediated interaction was studied by St. John and Cash (1995) and Schultz (2000) for text studies between high-low level students and combined computer and face to face courses. More recent studies include those by Thorne (2003) and Svensson (2003), which use newer technologies in learner management systems for greater and more experimental interactions.

These three perspectives must be added to further studies by Moos (1979) on social climates of a classroom, Spolsky (1989), who defines seventy-four conditions for second language learning, Salomon (1992), who explains the importance learning environments and novel technologies from a constructivist viewpoint and, finally, Chapelle (1998), who states seven hypotheses for developing a CALL environment. The combination of all of these leads to a compendium of factors which affect the language learning potential of students.

This type of interaction can be visualised according to Mercer et al. (2004) by the following diagram (Figure 20), where the types of tasks, the technology and
the way language is mediated by the other students create a new field for consideration: how the medium affects the outcomes.

Figure 20. A model of mediation in CMCL (Mercer et al., 2004)

This is a central issue in the POOL and POOL2Business projects, as the learning outcomes are the measuring stick by which the effectiveness of the course will be measured in the assessment stage. These outcomes are inevitably affected by the medium and this is one of the hypotheses of the study.

5.2 DEFINITION OF A VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (VLE)

There is no unified definition of what virtual environments are, which means that some current definitions are highly restrictive, while others are more open. The most extensive virtual environments nowadays are collaborative environments. This may be due to the fact that, rather than being oriented towards user interaction with virtual environments, they focus on interaction and collaboration among the users themselves.

The model developed by Janit (2004) contemplates the effect of noise on communication. In his model (Figure 21), noise can be equated with anything that
can distort a message as it affects the channel of transmission and the type of feedback that the receiver sends back to the source.

Figure 21. Jandt's Transmission Model (2004).

In this model, the context is the frame in which an idea (source) is encoded by the sender, who gives a message orally or in writing which is received and interpreted before a response is given. It is easy to see how any distortion like technology or culture could affect the content, understanding and response to a message.

Whittaker et al. (1994), Jonassen (1995), Paloff and Pratt (1999) and Evard et al. (2001) have demonstrated that patterns of interaction are crucial in the sharing of work-related information and the development of collaborations. Therefore, the more specific term collaborative software applies to cooperative information sharing systems, and is usually narrowly applied to the software that enables collaborative work functions. This technology is used for seven functional or task areas: a) information sharing and knowledge exchange, b) collaborating and team work, c) decision making/voting, d) document sharing, e) project management, f) scheduling and g) e-training.
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The tools used in social software applications include communication tools and interactive tools. Communication tools typically handle the capturing, storing and presentation of communication, usually written but increasingly including audio and video also. Interactive tools handle mediated interactions between a pair or group of users. They differ from communication tools in their focus on establishing and maintaining a connection among users, facilitating the mechanics of conversation and talk. Communication tools are generally asynchronous, while interactive tools are synchronous (phone, Net phone, video chat) or near-synchronous (instant messaging, text chat), allowing users to communicate in real time (Boyd, 2006).

5.3 A DESCRIPTION OF A VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

Throughout the POOL and POOL2Business projects, classes were held in what is commonly referred to as virtual classrooms. Communication in virtual classrooms differs greatly from face-to-face interaction even though the structure and the content of the classes are basically similar. According to Kramer (2005), both environments have similarities such as the classes, homework and assignments. There is also teacher-student interaction and some type of evaluation to set a grade, but what differs is the way information is passed on from the teacher to the student.

In a virtual classroom, classes are given using on-line recordings, on-line voice/audio meetings, discussion boards, chat rooms, email, virtual whiteboards and other on-line material. The difference between these modes of delivery and those found in the real classroom is that they are many times text-based and are not necessarily complemented by verbal discussions or explanations. Traditional
classrooms have face-to-face communication and many virtual classrooms aim to match this by having regularly scheduled chat room interactions or permanent open forums where students can interact with each other and the teacher as they would in a real classroom (Wang & Newlin, 2001). However, verbal and visual tools that are typically found in the real classroom (body language, eye contact and other verbal/visual cues) are not present in virtual classrooms.

Written communication/dialogue in the virtual classroom has been traditionally highly text-based. It occurs asynchronously or synchronously, depending on the communication tool. Gibbons and Wentworth (2001) state that this text-based dialogue is the “heart of the on-line learning paradigm” and is the key to successful learning in a virtual classroom. The communication known as asynchronous describes events not coordinated in time, for example emails. The other type of communication between the teacher and groups is synchronous, which describes events coordinated in time. A goal of both the POOL and POOL2Business projects was to focus more on the on-line part of virtual courses to increase interaction and communication. One of the methods is through the number of on-line synchronous lectures, the on-line demonstrations and finally the on-line group presentations.

Classes in virtual environments have a varied effect on the participants. The following table is a summary of thirteen areas which can be affected by the difference in medium and the possible consequences of these differences. This table has been adapted from an extensive study by McConnell (2000) into the elements that effect on-line classes bearing in mind the types of platforms used in the POOL project. These areas have been chosen as they deal with the effects on
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interaction that can occur between teachers and students, or group members in
general, using synchronous or asynchronous oral or written communication.

Table 14. Elements that affect on-line classes (adapted from McConnell, 2000).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>On-line</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Teacher/Instructor’s sense of control | 1. Less sense of instructor control  
2. Easier for participants to ignore instructor |
| Condition of classes       | 1. No waiting for participants to arrive  
2. No latecomers or early leavers, etc. |
| Mode                      | 1. Notes and documents uploaded with text only; can be structured, dense; permanent; limited; stark  
2. Oral discussions can be affected by the medium, interferences, and can be limited and uncertain |
| Physical context           | 1. Don’t meet in a room; no shared physical context (other than text or voice) |
| Time                      | 1. Concept of to meet is different since no scheduled date and time and location  
2. Time less important and doesn’t limit group – at least span of time is greater  
3. No sense of leaving the meeting  
4. Less controllable  
5. Sometimes deadlines are not adhered to since it is possible to extend beyond deadline to next period of on line work |
| Work/discussion            | 1. Work on multiple issues at the same time  
2. Work not condensed-fluid and interweaved with other activities  
3. Group contact continually maintained  
4. Depth of analysis often increased on-line.  
5. Discussion stops for periods of time, then is picked up and restarted  
6. Members sometimes lose sense of where they are in the discussions over long periods of time (information overload)  
7. Level of reflection high  
8. Able to reshape conversations on basis of ongoing understandings and reflection |
| Group dynamics             | 1. Group dynamics not same as face to face; participants have to learn how to interpret them on-line  
2. Less sense of anxiety  
3. More equal participation, especially for females; participants can take control of this  
4. Less hierarchies, etc.  
5. Dynamics are "hidden" but traceable  
6. No breaks – constantly in the meeting  
7. Can be active listening without participation |
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| 8. | Medium (technology) has an impact on dynamics |
| 9. | Different expectations about participation |
| 10. | Slower time delays interactions/discussions |

| Accessing other groups | 1. Can access other groups easily |
| 2. Can see who is working in other groups |
| 3. Can participate in other groups easily |

| Effects of medium | 1. Effects of group software |
| 2. Effects of technology |

| Absence of rejoining | 1. Psychological/emotional stress of rejoining is high |

| Giving feedback of people's work | 1. Feedback on each individual's piece of work very detailed and focused |
| 2. Whole group can see and read each other's feedback |
| 3. No one can "hide" and not give feedback |
| 4. Permanent record of feedback obtained by all |
| 5. Delayed reactions to feedback |
| 6. Sometimes little discussion after feedback |
| 7. Group looks at all participants' work at same time |

| Divergence/choice level | 1. Loose-bound nature encourages divergent talk and adventitious learning, since it is an open system regarding time, place, source and recipient |
| 2. Medium frees the sender but may restrict the other participants (receivers) by increasing their uncertainty |
| Total effort of group | 1. Greater using on-line learning |

In the POOL and POOL2Business projects, the factors regarding on-line courses were kept in mind in the creation of activities and tasks in an attempt to maximise the use of the virtual environment for learning. These types of exercises will now be discussed in more detail.

**Narrated PowerPoint® presentations**

One of the most common methods of complementing on-line courses has been the use of PowerPoint®. These presentations provide a framework for a topic and often add some meaningful graphics to help explain relevant data. In traditional
classrooms, guidance and verbal directions help students along; this is absent in on-line courses and can be supplemented by adding voice to the presentation (Cramer et al., 2006).

In the POOL project, the course module was supported by the use of PowerPoint® and every presentation was embedded with a narration. The narration was the more dynamic part, using the power point slide as a visual framework for the material and the annotations for specific terminology or bibliographical references. This served several purposes: students could watch and listen to the presentation as many times as they wanted which gave them more autonomy and simulated to some extent a real classroom situation where anecdotal information could be included. The second advantage was that students could follow the written information on the slides and the presentation provided the simulation of a classroom activity with the advantage of asynchronous timing. In the POOL2Business project, Articulate® was used for some of the course material as it provided a much more interactive format: students could see the content in the left hand menu and decide what they wanted to see/listen to, and it provided the possibility for more interactive templates.

Video Classes

In a study by Morita (2000) regarding effective on-line presentation learning, it is highlighted that language skills, organisation and visual aids are just as important as the awareness of effectiveness in presenting through participatory activities, including watching other student’s performances. One of the objectives of the POOL module was to make students comfortable with presenting in an on-line environment. So it is not hard to imagine why the taped video lecture is so popular. Students in general find videos appealing and convincing in an on-line
environment. Students also have the possibility of storing the classes in an audiovisual format rather than in the form of notes. In a study of one hundred and ninety-nine on-line learners, Young (2006) reported using meaningful examples and communicating effectively among those factors indicative of effective on-line teaching. Thus, for example, the students were guided through video sessions on how to do presentations by looking at structure, techniques, and do’s and don’ts.

Figure 22. Video image of oral presentation session.

It is interesting to note that, although it was not part of the course for students to tape themselves (as there were on-line sessions for their presentations), many students used the video format to practice, share information and even record their own progress.

Texts/Readings

Even though Choi and Johnson (2005) have demonstrated that video material can be more effective than text material for on-line courses, texts are still a very popular component for these types of courses. According to Rosen (1998), linking texts to reference sources on the internet and to Learning Management System
(LMS) glossaries help to make this format more interesting. This allows those students who wish to delve deeper into the subject matter; it also provides the students with opportunities to add terminology onto the glossary which benefits the whole group.

**Exercises**

These types of materials are often used for drilling and self-practice in on-line platforms. In the both projects, the review of specific writing formats, self-tests on language and vocabulary and lastly, revision checklists for students regarding specific topics in the modules fell under this category. As the aim of the course was to increase collaboration, these types of input exercises were reduced to the bare essentials. Other kinds of exercises that were encouraged were collaborative texts written by the group using shared documents and individual writing tasks.

**Podcasts**

The term **podcasting** was first mentioned by Ben Hammersley in *The Guardian* newspaper in a February 2004 article, along with other proposed names for the new medium. It is a blending of the words *pod*— from *iPod*— and *broadcasting*. Despite the etymology, the content can be accessed using any computer that can play media files. In the **POOL2Business** course, podcasts were used in the courses as a new feature so that interviews from experts in the field would be available on the CMS.

**Glossaries and External resources**

Links, for example to **Wikipedia**, **Encarta** and on-line dictionaries, were the norm in the interactive texts provided to the students. Additionally, a specific wiki-glossary was created as part of the platform for student use. As students work parts of the course alone, it was necessary to provide support in the form of links.
so that the feelings of frustration were reduced in situations of confusion or lack of comprehension. Interestingly, the wiki-glossary became an interactive document for shared information as the students also began to put in new terms for the use of the whole group. This allowed for greater interaction.

Forums

The forums allowed synchronous and asynchronous debates/forum discussions. This became an extension of the classroom that could be accessed twenty-four hours a day. Students in the POOL project continuously used the forums to access the instructors, thus maintaining constant written contact. These forums became a fundamental tool for information exchange, since students used them to organise themselves as a group as well as to organise their ideas.

In the next section, the two platforms that were used throughout the project, Fronter® and Moodle®, will be discussed in greater detail, as will the different applications.

5.4 FRONTER® AND MOODLE® PLATFORMS

In the POOL project types it was vital to choose an adequate learning management system (LMS) in the years 2004-2006. Wright (2006) lists a series of issues regarding the choice of LMS: cost of ownership, technical, student record keeping, learner perspective, instructor perspective and other general issues. The idea behind the decision was to make technology not only a delivery mechanism but also an instructional tool.

In the POOL2Business project, which began almost four years after the first project, the choice was made by the consortium to use an open source content
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management system (CMS) that was already used at all of the participating universities and was familiar to the teachers. This was different from the use of Fronter® in the first project, which was a learning management system (LMS).\textsuperscript{26} The decision to use as Moodle® was made as the open source system has types of features that both students and teachers can use easily and it provides the flexibility, features, and reliability (Hepburn, 2005) that platforms should have. Another benefit is that the cost of maintenance is minimal and once the course is set up there can be multiple administrators assigned to the upkeep of the courses, so each teacher can control, modify and monitor the content on the course. There is a difference between learning management systems and content managing systems. A LMS allows for greater control of the participants and includes more features that track the learning process. A CMS does not control the learners, it does however provide the possibility to manage course contents and thus allows for greater flexibility. The use of Moodle® is quite extended\textsuperscript{27} and is in line with the social constructivist learning philosophy (Wright, 2006) which adapted perfectly to the project needs. This platform allows for a course set up where participants can use chats and forums, to work with others and glossaries, resources and quizzes, for independent study.

The first platform, Fronter®, will now be discussed in detail. Currently, Fronter® is one of the most widely used virtual environments across Europe at all levels of education. The tools available on the platform make it the ideal platform for student–teacher interaction as well as student–student interaction. Although the

\textsuperscript{26} The distinction between CMS and LMS has become blurred in the last five years, as many CMS have adopted tools that are more usual in LMS. This has made the use of many CMS or LMS practically the same for the purposes of course delivery.

\textsuperscript{27} The platform has been translated into over forty languages.
platform offers a wide range of tools, for the purposes of the POOL project, only specific tools were selected. The following table will present the twenty most frequently chosen tools. Their uses and purposes will be discussed further in greater detail.

Table 15. Fronter® platform tools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Forum</th>
<th>Today portal</th>
<th>My resources</th>
<th>My calendar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Archive</td>
<td>Test</td>
<td>Hand-in</td>
<td>To-do list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fronter® document</td>
<td>My public resources</td>
<td>External repository</td>
<td>Shared Documents</td>
<td>(PIM) Fronter® Instant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chat: Real-time</td>
<td>Video</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>My homepage</td>
<td>Messenger</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a) The Course tool allows different courses or modules to be uploaded. It is even possible to have several course or modules to be running simultaneously on one platform. This was ideal considering that the students in the POOL project worked on several work packages at the same time. The results and progress of the students were logged into the portfolio which will be discussed later.

b) The News tool is used for publishing news in public or private rooms. It is used ideally by teachers and even administrative staff to ensure that any changes to the course are notified and visible for all the students in all the work packages.

There is a second tool called the Today portal, which provides the latest information from rooms in Fronter® and external RSS feeds (content delivery vehicles). It is an automatic service that is useful for keeping the students updated on any new materials without having to use the News tool.

c) As debates and discussions are an integral part of the learning process, the Forum is an area for doing just this to contribute to the topic of a class session. Teachers and students can create topics for debate that can be discussed for a
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controlled period of time. There is another tool for this purpose, the Discussion tool, which is an unlimited thread-based discussion forum. These types of written interaction are the norm for any platform (Boyd, 2006; Gibbons and Wentworth, 2001) as they provide twenty-four hour access to the communication process. Here, the contact is between teacher and student. However, there is a third tool which is often only used between students, the real time Chat tool. In a study by Hartman et al. (1991) this provides positive social interaction on-line while serving an educative purpose as well. Most students also use the fourth tool, Frontier® Instant Messenger, the internal instant messaging, while they are on the platform. This allows instant informal communication.

d) There is an area known as the Archive. Any kind of electronic document can be stored here. This is usually used by the teachers as they can control who has read and write access to the files stored here. The second tool of this nature is the External Repository Search, which allows students to search in predefined external repositories.

e) The section called Hand-in is the tool which allows students to submit work done. This can be done individually or as a group. Instructors can comment and grade the work submitted and upload it back into this section for the students to retrieve their work.

A unique tool is the Frontier® document. It allows several authors to produce cross-platform documents collaboratively and simultaneously. The content of previous versions as well as the current one can be accessed at all times. This is ideal for group work even if the members are in other countries. The Shared Documents tool is the inbuilt editor for documents with one or more authors.
The *Test section* allows the instructor to design exercises, tests surveys and evaluations. Both students and teachers want to keep track of their progress. This is achieved through *My Portfolio*. It is a personal portfolio and display folder that gives teachers statistics of activities, progression and hand-ins. It is also available to the students so they can keep track of what activities they have done.

The following tools, *My Resources* and *My Public Resources*, are especially useful for students. The first is a network-based hard drive for personal files and content. The second makes it possible to share a selection of personal documents. This makes group work possible in transnational situations. In the POOL project, it was scheduled that the student participants would only meet face to face twice. Therefore, the tool *My homepage*, which was a personal web page, provided a necessary link between the participants.

The tools *My calendar* and *To-do list* are meant to help students organise their time. The first allows students organise personal appointments and meetings with other students or instructors. The second is a personal task list with progress indication. The *Video* tool was necessary for language classes to show video clips and other multimedia files from the resources available.

Moodle®, which is more of a content manager, was used to organise the three courses and the pilot course for the POOL2Business project. Many tools are similar but an interesting feature with Moodle is the easy interface which makes the platform quite user-friendly.
5.5 CONFERENCING PLATFORMS INTERWISE® AND ADOBE®

The lexeme *voice conferencing* ultimately comes from the Latin *vox* ‘voice’ and *conferens*, the present participle of *conferre*, which means ‘to bring together’. Voice conferencing has become almost commonplace today, as it allows international workgroups to overcome distance as a barrier for collaborative work. Most computers nowadays have the components necessary to access and use a voice conferencing system: high resolutions monitors, a powerful microprocessor, speakers and the possibility to connect a microphone and headset. In the case of both the POOL and POOL2Business projects, classes could be scheduled on-line and people could attend them literally anywhere a wifi system was available. Conferencing platforms are a tool meant to increase peer to peer collaboration.
Coghlan (2004) found in his study that people enjoy on-line sessions because they provide better social relationships, greater interactivity, warmth, and are more dynamic and motivating. According to Hentschel (2001), the more the participant likes the on-line learning environment, the more effective their learning will be. In addition, Rodine et al. (1999) and Coghlan (2004) have shown the effectiveness of synchronous conferencing, as it offers the opportunity to develop oral skills, be spontaneous, in contrast to written communication, and additionally it provides immediate contact. The tools of both conferencing systems will be discussed. Interwise was used in the first project (2004-2006) and it has six basic elements, as shown in Figure 24.

Figure 24. Interwise® interface.
Teaching in Virtual Environments

The platform Interwise© uses a variety of mechanisms to increase the potential for communication. The first of these are emoticons. In most on-line cases where there is no video, verbal communication can be accompanied by or even replaced by emoticons. So, the first element is directly connected to the fifth. The emoticons replace the image of the student on screen and it can also replace their actions.

Figure 25. Interwise© classroom and emoticons.

It shows (with images) who is currently in the class, who is speaking, who has stepped out for a moment, etc. It also shows who has protocol at any given moment. This is a visual stimulus which maintains the interactivity of the students on-line.

The second element is a whiteboard. Whiteboarding on a virtual platform mimics the same activity in a physical room. It allows participants to share a space where they can upload texts, generate texts, and draw images that later can be saved as part of the meeting minutes or used on-line for the benefit of the participants, as shown by Wilcox (2000).

IBM researcher Scott Fahlman is credited with typing the first smiley face in an on-line message on September 19, 1982. Emoticons (from the phrase emotional icons) are a form of paralanguage commonly used in email messages and a means of expressing emotion via Internet chat rooms and private messages.
M. Tabuenca Cuevas

The third element is video windows. In this project, this option was not used. The option of voice-only was used. The voice option allowed for the different work groups from different countries to meet in real time (Wilcox, 2000).

The fourth element was the option connection status. This allowed the participants to control the technical elements of sound and visualise the connection status.

The last tool is the materials window. All of the material used on the whiteboard are uploaded and accessed from this section. All of the participants can see which documents are being used at that moment.

Figure 26. Interwise® materials interface.

The on-line classes were synchronous events. These classes were held on the Interwise® platform which contains a series of options and possibilities to maximise communication possibilities on-line. It is interesting to note that there are two forms of voice conferencing: the traditional telephone system and the computer IP phone. All of the POOL participants used the computer IP system. This means using a headset and a microphone to speak and listen.

The second conferencing platform, Adobe®, was used in the POOL2Business project (2008-2010). As technology advances, in the short space of three to four
years, there were additional features that were included which are useful to discuss. In general, this platform was more compatible with newer media trends and could for example connect to Twitter streams. It also integrated more easily with other programmes like Microsoft Live Communications Server (LCS) and Microsoft Office Communications Server (OCS), enabling chat conversations to be set up from the conferencing platform. Nevertheless, the biggest jump in user-friendliness can be seen by being able to gain access "from anywhere, anytime on virtually any device, including PCs and mobile devices (iOS, Android™, and BlackBerry PlayBook)".29 The last feature was the possibility to integrate the conferencing platform into the Learning Management System (LMS) so that it was a more integral part of the course.

5.6 SUMMARY

This section delves into virtual environments. A short history of CALL is reviewed (Lamy & Hampel, 2007; Mercer et al., 2004) and the characteristics of virtual environments are described (McConnell, 2000). The tools of the virtual platforms used in both projects are described in detail. Research in the field is presented to show the utility of such tools (Rosen 1998; Young, 2006). A comparison is drawn between the CMS and LMS platforms, Fronter© and Moodle®, and the videoconferencing platforms Interwise© and Adobe ©.

POOL AND POOL2BUSINESS COURSES
6. POOL AND POOL2BUSINESS COURSES

The courses in the projects were given during the project period. The POOL course was offered during the academic year 2005-2006 and the POOL2Business course was offered in the academic year 2009-2010. Each course had a different group of participants as well as different course contents and outcomes. In POOL the course emphasis was on English language acquisition, while in POOL2Business the courses had both language and culture competence acquisition in the planning. The first POOL course will be described in more detail.

There were twelve participants in the POOL project, all of whom were male Telecommunications university students. They were divided into three groups, usually (though not always) depending on their country of origin: Austria, Finland and Romania. Each group was made up of four students. This allowed for larger group interaction (all three groups) and smaller group interaction (only one). It was also possible to vary the nationality composition of each group for some activities. This flexibility was used to maximise interaction in the classroom according to the type of activity being done.

6.1 POOL INDUSTRY QUESTIONNAIRE ON COMMUNICATION SKILLS REQUIRED

In order to establish the course content, these necessary competences had to be defined. The POOL pilot project was intended to equip students with professional competences, as studies by Knight and Yorke (2003) have demonstrated that employers expect higher education to contribute to the development of skills
which promote higher employability. The course content was thus based on the
needs for the English language in industry settings. In previous studies by Slemon
(2007), a list of necessary communication competencies for engineers had been
previously identified. These were divided into the following three categories, each
of which is followed by a detailed description.

Competency 1: Communicate effectively in the English language

a) Communicates fluently in written and oral expression at an experienced
   professional standard.

b) Collaborates in the preparation, interpretation and presentation of
   information.

c) Correctly interprets engineering instructions received.

d) Selects appropriate methods of communication.

Competency 2: Present, report on and advocate engineering ideas

a) Prepares and presents lectures at a professional level.

b) Prepares papers for publication in professional engineering journals.

c) Communicates engineering information effectively within the
   engineering work-force and to others.

b) Conveys engineering information effectively to any engineering and
   non-engineering level in the enterprise.

Competency 3: Prepare, comprehend and communicate engineering documents

a) Prepares professional engineering reports.

b) Prepares documents such as specifications, standards and graphical
   representations.

As our course was focused on oral and written skills in English, all three
competencies in the study were of special interest. It was decided that a
survey/questionnaire should be developed that would corroborate those language
POOL and POOL2 Business courses

needs and that it should be distributed among as many companies as possible from Romania, Austria, Finland, Spain, Ireland, Lithuania and Estonia. Over a period of one month, thirty-six companies responded to the on-line questionnaire producing just over one hundred and fifty responses from the seven countries.

The questionnaire should allow the participants not only to tick the responses but also to add any information that could be considered particularly relevant to the needs of industry. An initial simple question was posed that dealt with the importance of these three skills: organisational language skills, English skills and ICT skills. These skills were chosen because they are a combination of traditional skills and new skills that are necessary in a global job market. The idea was to verify, as well as add to, the previous research. The table below illustrates the results:

Table 16. Sample of general question from POOL questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organisational language skills</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English language skills</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of technology for communication</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next part of the survey needed to profile these skills in detail and asked the participants to tick the key elements for specific skills and to leave blank those that they did not consider important. There was an additional section where the participant could type in comments which could then be collected for further study. The next table shows an example of the question type.
Table 17. Sample of specific question from POOL questionnaire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In your opinion, organisational language skills includes the following</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identifying key ideas for oral and written presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Logical order and coherence and relevance within presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Adequate use of audio visuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Adjusting style to types of presentation (Oral and written)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Handling questions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional comments:
Adapting presentation to medium (Video/voice conferencing, face to face, etc.)

Once the precise details for these skills had been tabulated, the next step was to analyse the additional comments. These were of particular interest, as they provided the real industry needs and it validated the research by Becher (1999), Trowler and Knight (2000) and Coleman and Keep (2001), according to which professionals learn more in the workplace than in academic settings. By reading and analysing all of the results, the course content could begin to be developed.

6.1.1 POOL SYLLABUS FOR ORAL AND WRITTEN REPORTS

The new course would be based on the questionnaire results, as the survey validated the original premise of the instructors and extended the focus on the skills proposed in the survey. The development of the content then underwent the following analysis to determine the learning outcomes which could be assessed at the end of the course.
POOL and POOL Business courses

Competency 1: Language Skills (includes the following:)

Grammar
Style (written and oral presentations)
Specific vocabulary
Correct pronunciation, rhythmic groups, joining words, word accent, etc
Word connotation

Competency 2: Presentation / Organisation Skills (includes the following:)

Identifying Key Ideas
Logical order
Order of importance / relevance
Coherence
Use of audio visuals
Maintaining interest
Types of presentation (Written reports, persuasive, etc.)
Medium of presentation (Video conferencing/ Online, Face to Face, etc)
Handling questions

It was then possible to begin to think about what students should be able to do by the end of a particular module. In the case of presentations, the following list of outcomes for the presentations module. The researchers on the project decided on the following:

By the end of the presentations module students should:

1. Be familiar with virtual environments for online presentations.
2. Be able to use appropriate visual aids to get the message across depending on the data to be presented and the type of presentation.
3. Differentiate between types of oral presentations and their respective formats.
4. Be able to prepare an introduction, body and conclusion of an oral presentation as well as communicate it effectively.
5. Be able to use linguistic resources to handle questions and use appropriate body language.
6. Differentiate between types of written presentations and their respective formats.
7. Be able to prepare an introduction, body and conclusion of written presentation.
Learning outcomes are statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to do at the end of a period of learning. The format chosen for this analysis is the standard descriptor format for skills, abilities and knowledge, where the statement for these characteristics specifies the performance, abilities, actions and outcomes. Tables 18 and 19 are examples of this process.

Table 18. Competency description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wp05L01: Language Skills (Adequate use of language skills)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students should be able to identify the language skills needed for oral and written presentations. They should also be able to identify weak areas and present a logical programme for the acquisition of the necessary language skills. Students must be able to distinguish the language and the subsequent format differences between oral and written presentations. This should also extend to using the necessary linguistic resources for further explanations and answering questions on the presentation/report.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics (skills, abilities, knowledge)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Statement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proficiency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Assessment Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Be able to deliver an oral presentation and communicate the content effectively.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Be able to prepare an introduction, body and conclusion of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AM 1-5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**POOL and POOL.2 Business courses**

| Written presentation using the linguistic parameters necessary. |
| Be able to explain visuals to get the message across depending on the data to be presented and the type of presentation. |
| Be able to use linguistic resources to handle questions and use appropriate body language. |

**Training Package**

| Block A: |
| Lectures 1-4 |
| Block B: |
| Lectures 2, 4, 5 |

Table 19. Competency description

| Wp05L02 Organisational skills |
| (Organising a presentation adequately and for the proper type of medium) |

Instructors should be able to help students identify the advantages and limitations of the delivery medium: face to face or on-line. It will also be necessary to instruct students on how to develop the coherence and cohesion of the information presented. Students must be able to organise a logical format in oral and written presentations. This also includes using the most appropriate visual aids for the type of information that is meant to be given.

**Characteristics (skills, abilities, knowledge)**

| Statement | Text |
| Condition | Organisation. |
| Performance | Effective use of visual material, formats. |
| Ability | Using the appropriate medium for presentations. |
| Action | Maintaining coherence in the presentation and getting the message across effectively. |
| Outcome | Develop skills to identify, organise and develop an effective presentation for the appropriate medium. |

**Learning Outcomes**

- The ability to identify and effectively use audio visuals in written and oral presentations.
- Be able to prepare an introduction, body and conclusion of an oral presentation as well as communicate effectively.
- Be able to adapt presentations to the communication medium required.
Once these outcomes were described, the next step was to organise the logical sequence for the learning process. This led to the further development of the modules of the on-line course. It was necessary to decide on the number of hypothetical hours to be given. It was decided that each block (A, B and C) would have between twenty to thirty hours, making a total of seventy five hours for the module. In Table 20, the basic course outline and the organisational format is shown using the competencies and the number of lectures to be given in the Pool pilot project for this module.

Table 20. Basic course outline for WP5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning outcomes for competences</th>
<th>Wp05C01: Language skills</th>
<th>Wp05C02: Organisation of language skills</th>
<th>Wp05C03: ICT Communication skills</th>
<th>Lecture 1 Block A</th>
<th>Lecture 1 Block B</th>
<th>Lecture 3 Block B</th>
<th>Lecture 2 Block B</th>
<th>Lectures 2-3 Block A</th>
<th>Lectures 4-5 Block B</th>
<th>Lectures 1-2 Block C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lecture 4 Block A</td>
<td>Lecture 6 Block B</td>
<td>Lecture 3 Block C</td>
<td>Lecture 3 Block B</td>
<td>Lecture 4 Block C</td>
<td>Lecture 3 Block C</td>
<td>Lecture 4 Block C</td>
<td>Lecture 1 Block A</td>
<td>Lecture 2 Block B</td>
<td>Lecture 3 Block C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wp05C01: Be able to use linguistic resources appropriately
Wp05C02: Organising a type of medium for the presentation
Wp05C03: Ability to choose the best system for work
Wp05C04: Be able to arrange the presentation of the data
Wp05C05: Be able to reproduce the format of oral/written presentation
Wp05C06: Be able to prepare an introduction, body and conclusion coherently
Wp05C07: Be able to use ICT for effective communication
POOL and POOL2 Business courses

It was important to bear in mind the number of hours the students would have to do as class work and tutorials, and the number of hours for independent work. It was decided that between six to eight hours of on-line sessions for each module would be enough. Once this had been done, the course material for independent study needed to be developed keeping in mind the different competencies and the outcomes which would later need to be assessed.

As the course had been divided into three blocks, (A, B and C) the next step was to complete the syllabus using the different types of exercises for on-line training. Tables 21 and 22 are samples of Block C and Block B.
Table 21. Module outline example Block C

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning outcomes</th>
<th>Educational activities</th>
<th>Amount of time</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Block C: Video/voice conferencing</strong></td>
<td><strong>Lecture 1: Videoconferencing / Voice conferencing</strong></td>
<td>45 mins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competencies: ICT Communication.</td>
<td><strong>Demonstration:</strong> Demonstration of systems for voice conferencing/videoconferencing. To allow students to become familiar with systems. To understand the advantages and limitations of both types.</td>
<td>3hrs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectives:</td>
<td><strong>Text Study/Demo:</strong> Anecdotes and real experiences with voice conferencing. Protocol and tools.</td>
<td>3hrs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To determine the best system (video / voice) for your presentation. To be aware of the limitations of video / voice conferencing.</td>
<td><strong>Experimenting:</strong> Testing and selecting tools such as whiteboard, notes, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protocol for video / voice conferencing.</td>
<td><strong>Check List:</strong> Students should verify their understanding of the different tools and protocol.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of accessories (i.e. whiteboard) during conferencing.</td>
<td><strong>On-line Test:</strong> Completion test assessing: protocol, use of tools and type of conferencing.</td>
<td>45 mins</td>
<td>On-line completion test</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

30 The set of knowledge, skills and/or competencies an individual has acquired and/or is able to demonstrate after completion of a learning process. Learning outcomes are statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to do at the end of a period of learning.
**Table 22. Module outline example Block B**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BLOCK B: Written Reports</th>
<th>Lecture 1: Visual Aids for Written Reports</th>
<th>45 min</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Competency: Written Communication</td>
<td>Text Study: Studying texts and identifying the different types of visual aids, how to prepare them and use them effectively. (See lecture notes.)</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing the most appropriate visuals in written reports for the data being presented.</td>
<td>Online: Choose one or more of the visual aids described and use it to present the data to be included in your presentation. To be sent for peer assessment. and trainer assessment.</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To identify the different types of reports: (periodic, observation, progress, feasibility, proposal and research).</td>
<td>Lecture 2: Types of Written Reports</td>
<td>1 hr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To understand the importance of correct organisation and the best approach to get your message across.</td>
<td>Text Study: Reading list of relevant literature, e.g. plus a prepared summary of the content of these recommended readings. Theory behind written presentations. How to identify the purpose and organise the structure.</td>
<td>5 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of key concepts and terminology for presentations.</td>
<td>Lecture 3: Preparing the Introduction / Abstracts</td>
<td>1 hr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding the different elements of an introduction. Learning to write an abstract for a research report. Learning the functional language.</td>
<td>Text Study: Reading different introductions and identifying the key elements from the lecture material.</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revising the key points of the six different types of written reports.</td>
<td><strong>Lecture 4: Preparing the body of the presentation: techniques</strong></td>
<td>45 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn to write with the appropriate style for each type. Use of correct technical vocabulary and functional language.</td>
<td><strong>Text Study:</strong> Studying texts and identifying the different types of visual aids, how to prepare them and use them effectively. (See lecture notes)</td>
<td>4 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Online Activity and Checklist:</strong> Prepare 2 bodies (the six types shared by the 3 students in each group) using two of the frameworks. To be sent via the platform and has trainer assessment (See assessment form on p. 14.)</td>
<td>5 hrs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To learn the correct type of structure and vocabulary for effective conclusions.</td>
<td><strong>Lecture 5: Concluding</strong></td>
<td>1 hr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Text Study:</strong> Studying texts and identifying the different types of conclusions, how to prepare them and write them effectively. (See lecture notes)</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Online Activity and Checklist:</strong> Prepare the conclusion for the 2 previous reports. Now, two complete reports should be sent via the platform for trainer assessment.</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.2 POOL2BUSINESS COURSE

The POOL2Business Course was part of the second project during 2008-2010. The course was developed during the first year 2008-2009 and then piloted during the second year of the project in 2009-2010. The participants on this course were quite different from the first POOL course – they were all professionals who had been working for at least five years. There were six participants from the Skidata company in Austria, five from the Czech company IREAS, and two from Hewlett-Packard in Ireland. These students were asked to form a virtual team during the course. The term virtual working is used to describe many different activities. Virtuality (space, time, and modality) is a matter of degree, and teams may be considered highly virtual or less virtual (Gibson and Gibbs, 2006). A team’s degree of virtuality relates to the type of communication media typically used by members to accomplish tasks (Townsend et al., 1998; Gibson and Cohen, 2003) and the separation of team members in time and space. A highly virtual team, for example, may communicate using only chat rooms, or instant messenger; in contrast, a less virtual team is likely to meet face-to-face periodically and use richer media (Daft and Lengel, 1986) such as videoconferencing or teleconferencing to communicate otherwise. Additionally, a highly virtual team may have members located around the globe, whereas a less virtual team may have members located in the same building. However, in this study the definition that will be used is the one proposed by Kirkman and Mathieu (2005). The term team virtuality will describe “the extent to which team members use virtual tools to coordinate or execute team processes, the amount of information value provided
by such tools and the synchronicity of team member virtual interactions’ (Kirkman and Mathieu, 2004).

The POOL2Business programme put a strong focus on the practical training (based on a study project) and networking. It also provided e-Learning modules and on-line sessions to deepen the learners’ knowledge through independent learning and instructional teaching. The programme concluded with the assessment and presentation of the project that had been elaborated, where learners worked under supervision to assess their practical skills. The figure below gives a brief overview of the didactic approach of the POOL2Business course programme.

Figure 27. POOL2Business course model (Haber et al., 2010)

In this course it is clearly seen greater emphasis is placed on both networking through virtual teamwork and project work, which are key steps to successfully completing the course curriculum. This was done to mimic industry conditions for virtual project management.

6.2.1 POOL2Business Industry Questionnaire on Language and Culture Skills

As with the first POOL course, an extensive survey was undertaken to see what companies and professions consider to be obstacles to successful virtual project
management. The companies were selected through the corresponding Chamber of Commerce in each country and the survey was done on-line. The graph divides the 138 responses to show the number of and type of participating companies by sector. The responses show a high participation in the information technology and engineering fields which was particularly relevant to the POOL2Business project (see Annex 6).

The questionnaire had a series of questions related directly to the work packages on communication and culture. A breakdown of the questions and results are in the figure below.

Figure 28. POOL2Business questions regarding project management difficulties.

It is interesting to note that the biggest difficulty was identified as “bad communication” (43.5%) and that other issues such unstructured communication
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(27.1%), language problems (25.9%) and even lack of social skills (18.8%) were rated quite high. However, the question regarding cultural barriers was rated quite low (16.5%) in comparison. This evidenced that the majority of the participants in the questionnaire were not aware of the importance of culture or the underlying effects it can have on communication in international project management.

6.2.2 POOL2 BUSINESS SYLLABUS FOR LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

After looking at the structure of other project management courses, a three tier course design was decided upon where participants with different types of experience could follow a course tailored to their needs. The structure can be seen below.

Table 23. POOL2Business three tier structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Blended Approach:</strong></th>
<th><strong>POOL2Business Conversion Course</strong></th>
<th><strong>POOL2Business Basic Course</strong></th>
<th><strong>POOL2Business Advanced Course</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module Level:</strong></td>
<td>CONVERSION</td>
<td>BASIC</td>
<td>ADVANCED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Type:</strong></td>
<td>Preparatory Course</td>
<td>Fundamental Training</td>
<td>Practical Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Main Target Group:</strong></td>
<td>Learners with lack of prequalification</td>
<td>OPM Learners</td>
<td>OPM Practitioners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language:</strong></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prerequisites:</strong></td>
<td>Formal PM education</td>
<td>PM experience (1 year)</td>
<td>OPM experience (1 year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instruction Design:</strong></td>
<td>Preparatory</td>
<td>Task centered</td>
<td>Problem centered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Effort Hours:</strong></td>
<td>15 hours</td>
<td>50 hours</td>
<td>100 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration:</strong></td>
<td>1 month</td>
<td>4 - 5 months</td>
<td>6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Credit Value:</strong></td>
<td>anytime</td>
<td>2 ECTS</td>
<td>4 ECTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Entry:</strong></td>
<td>anytime</td>
<td>anytime</td>
<td>per semester / per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pass Requirements:</strong></td>
<td>100% Attendance</td>
<td>80% Attendance</td>
<td>80% Attendance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>80% Success Rate</td>
<td>80% Success Rate</td>
<td>80% Success Rate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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POOL and POOL2Business courses

It was then necessary to think of what language and cultural competences would need to be included. The PMI/PMP model lists the following soft skills in their 2010 exam content outline: a) cultural sensitivity and diversity, b) negotiating, c) oral and written communication techniques, channels and application, d) targeting communications to intended audiences (for example, team, stakeholders, customers) and e) presentation tools and techniques. Previous research for the first POOL course corroborated the types of skills required, so, within the three-tier structure, the following points were isolated as essential for soft skills development and stated in the development of the didactic approach in work package four. The main category for development was named Soft Skills, Intercultural Communication, Documentation and contained the following elements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intercultural Aspects in International Projects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ understanding new cultural work environments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ communicating with different cultures and languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ differences of organisational cultures and work attitudes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ negotiating and co-operating in different cultures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ managing multinational team identities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication Strategies in International Projects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ understanding effective virtual communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ on-line communication strategies and shortcomings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ formal vs. informal communication in on-line projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ principals of project communication and on-line administration / reporting procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ team communication and collaborative information engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ creating relationships between teams</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next step was a breakdown of the learning outcomes necessary to cover the different course needs. These outcomes were assigned to the corresponding course
level. In some cases, the same outcome could be desirable in different course levels.

Table 24. Partial list of learning outcomes for the POOL2Business course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>CONVERSION</th>
<th>BASIC</th>
<th>ADVANCED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LO-CT01</td>
<td>Be aware of cultural differences and the effects on communication.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LO-CT02</td>
<td>Develop comprehensive written and oral skills for oral and written presentations.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LO-CT03</td>
<td>Acquire comprehensive language skills for project submissions and further amendments.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LO-CT04</td>
<td>Be aware of communication tactics for negotiation and conflict resolution.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the project purposes, a pilot training course was developed that would pilot the material in a short period of time using a reduced workload and a shorter evaluation of a specific selection of learning outcomes (see Annex 7). In contrast to the POOL course, this project blended all of the different skills to be developed within the different topics. Tables 25 and 26 will show how the skills were intertwined in the course programming.
### Understanding Soft Skills and Intercultural Communication in Online Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LO-PP07: Knowledge of relevant intercultural aspects of planning, both in terms of work and time commitments. WP04L10</th>
<th>Aspects of IC &amp; Soft Skills in PP &amp; TM</th>
<th>Self Study</th>
<th>1 hr</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identification of the most effective ways for individual and team organisation using electronic tools LO2:</td>
<td>Technology support to overcome the intercultural barriers</td>
<td>Self Study</td>
<td>1 hr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity to identify collaborative interaction in the virtual space LO6:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge on the methods and tools for the correct application of intercultural communication/documentation/presentation skills in the virtual environment LO10:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of the need for clear written and spoken communication. Understanding how to correctly fill in formats, how to describe problems, objectives, results, indicators, activities and inputs in logical framework as well as describing risks and preconditions of the project. Awareness of presentation / organisation skills, language skills Understanding collaborative skills, team building and interpersonal skills in teamwork. WP04L13: Becoming familiar with multicultural differences in work attitudes and/or behaviours of team members of distributed work groups.</td>
<td>Introduction to the Importance of Communication – why is it important to communicate well? International Writing/Documentation Standards</td>
<td>Self Study</td>
<td>5 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presenting Successfully</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The impact of Culture on Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Keys to successful teamwork: Dynamics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 26. Advanced POOL2 Business Module

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning outcomes</th>
<th>Topic Unit</th>
<th>Educational activities</th>
<th>Estimated student work time in hours</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability to prepare a project plan and document as well as communicate it properly, WP04L04</td>
<td>Planning Excellence (ADV)</td>
<td>Self-Study</td>
<td>1 hr</td>
<td>Scenarios, Self-tests / check lists, Quizzes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge on efficient communication and collaboration practices in virtual frameworks</td>
<td>Virtual collaboration processes: a) factors and stages, b) risks and benefits</td>
<td>Self-Study</td>
<td>1 hr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge on criteria for monitoring, reporting and self-organisation in virtual spaces</td>
<td>Categories of tools and criteria in selection of virtual collaborative tools: features, benefits, concerns</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate ability to identify and track the collaboration problems in an online project</td>
<td>Fundamental criteria in assessment of virtual collaboration in online project management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be aware of cultural differences</td>
<td>Guidelines for data collection to analyse the virtual collaboration processes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand teamwork</td>
<td>Self-assessment tools for readiness in virtual collaboration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>&gt; synchronise with PP &amp; TM</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31 The set of knowledge, skills and/or competences an individual has acquired and/or is able to demonstrate after completion of a learning process. Learning outcomes are statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to do at the end of a period of learning.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning outcomes</th>
<th>Topic Unit</th>
<th>Educational activities</th>
<th>Estimated student work time in hours</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Development of a project schedule that supports the timely progress of the whole project and the ability to communicate the project information properly and in time. WP04L06 | Work Efficiency  
- Project Controlling (key indicators of online projects)  
- Finding appropriate and available human resources  
- Achieving consistency in the project | Self-Study | 5 hrs | Practical work (assessed by experts) |
| Being familiar with the process of project planning and the efficiencies derived from planning. WP04L07 | Conflict Prevention  
- Managing goal conflicts between different locations  
- Problem solving and prevention strategies through planning & management (in the team / as a team manager)  
- Risk Analysis and preventive measures | Self-Study | 5 hrs | |
| Ability to always estimate and redefine the scope and effort of project activities (in work and time), to break this scope into manageable packages and activities, and describe the project in details. WP04L02 | Work Efficiency  
- Designing the requirements for the virtual collaboration environment  
- A step by step guidance checklist to design and to manage virtual collaboration  
- Practical guidelines in designing virtual collaborative events  
- Practical criteria in managing and assessing the virtual | Self-Study | 5 hrs | |
| To be skilled in designing, setting-up and maintenance of technology-supported collaborative spaces  
To be proficient in tracking the project activities and identification of specific patterns for virtual collaboration  
Prove availability for online relationships and | | | |

32 See previous note.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collaborative Skills</th>
<th>Collaboration</th>
<th>Training Method</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Facilitate the collaboration by various means            | - Best practices in facilitating virtual collaboration  
- Selecting the right staff for online facilitation  
- Performing the design and implementation of the virtual collaboration plan  
- Achieving the expertise in the evaluation framework of virtual collaboration in online projects |
| Capacity to collaborate for the creation, implementation, as well as adaptation of the online communication plans. |                                                                                                          |                 |          |
| Prove capacity for organise and use shared resources and to develop collaborative interactions in the virtual space |                                                                                                           |                 |          |
| Good practice in project related communication / intercultural skills | **Work Efficiency**  
- Leadership skills (know your team as a whole and individually and what motivates them) — good practices  
- When and how to modify project proposals (amendments)  
- How to use culture as a benefit not a handicap.  
- How to communicate persuasively. /How to inform.  

**Conflict Prevention**  
- Conflict Management / Negotiation skills (communication tactics) | Self-Study                                                                                              | 5 hrs           |          |
In the case of the Advanced course, it becomes apparent that the language requirements go beyond presentations and written formats. This required a different focus on language to provide frameworks that would help students understand language as a tool for negotiation and persuasion and would enable them to look more in depth at how elements like jargon can be used more effectively. Elements of social English are also inherently part of this scheme.

All of the participants wanted to focus more on the techniques and language for negotiations, as this is a large part of their communication needs. Much of the learning material available for business meetings and negotiations in general is based on certain principles such as the cooperative principle of Grice (1975) and the politeness theories of Brown and Levinson (1987) and Leech (1983). It was essential to keep in mind however, that the interactions would be at an intercultural level. This meant that the content and focus of the material was a blend between English language and intercultural business communication.

In the case of the intercultural training, the guidelines presented earlier by Gudykunst et al. (1996), and the training suggestions by Landis (2004) were used. As there was no way to measure the level of intercultural competence and the participants were professionals who had international experience, a new element had to be addressed – resistance to intercultural training. It was anticipated that some participants would be unready to deal with intercultural training, since the expectations of even a best planned training programme may exceed the ability of the participant to question their own beliefs (Caligiuri et al., 2000; Bennett 2004). Thus, it was essential to be able to anticipate and diffuse resistance and manage reluctant participants. This can be done in a variety of manners, as shown by Bennett.
M. Tabuenca Cuevas

(2008:79), who proposes types of resistance in educational and corporate contexts with possible strategies to overcome the difficulties. The list below illustrates some possible obstacles and solutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Strategies for intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It's a small world – can't we all just get along?</td>
<td>Differentiate between simply international and truly global companies. Provide interview data from other culture groups in the corporation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just do it! Common sense is all that is needed.</td>
<td>Give examples of common sense that doesn't work cross-culturally. Note that experiential learning combined with theoretical competence is consistent with current learning theory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People who believe they are already “experienced” and “never have culture shock”.</td>
<td>Show how intercultural concepts exist at different levels of analysis. Mention how really sophisticated travellers have culture shock.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let's plan a disaster to learn from adversity.</td>
<td>Demonstrate state-of-the-art intercultural tools that get results without rancor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sink or swim – that's the way I had to do it.</td>
<td>Point out that the global market is faster and less forgiving than in years past. Note that recent improvements in intercultural tools provide much greater efficiency and leverage in learning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This blend of culture and language training was based on the concepts in the Deardorff model, whereby one becomes interculturally competent not only with deep cultural knowledge, but also with sociolinguistic awareness.

6.3 SUMMARY

In section six, the POOL and POOL2Business courses are dealt with in more detail. A description of the participants and the time frame is given for each of the
POOL and POOL2 Business courses

courses. The industry questionnaires for both projects on the needs for project management are discussed. Other studies on course curriculum and other syllabuses are highlighted (Venkatraman, 2007; McGregor, 2000). Then samples of the course learning outcomes and course planning are shown, and a brief description of the course content is made regarding language and culture.
7. COURSE CURRICULUM EVALUATION

The question of how people learn has come to the forefront of many studies once more as the need for lifelong learning has become an issue in higher education institutions. Knight and Yorke (2003, 2004) show that not only the concept of what is understood but also the way this understanding is assessed have a significant effect on the extent to which learners develop understanding. Currently, the debate focuses on the age-old learning-by-analogy paradigm: a student who understands something should be able to apply this knowledge to a new situation or evaluate a new situation. This means that assessment strategies should have students apply data in appropriate ways. The mechanism for this to occur in adult learning involves learners becoming more aware of their learning processes and being able to direct their thinking.

Thus, it is clear that the measure of understanding is the true goal of training. For this purpose, it is necessary to see what processes are best to help learners achieve understanding, how far learners are intended to develop their understanding, and the evidence and standards that this evidence has to measure up to in order to indicate that students have developed their understanding successfully.

There is uncertainty about what counts as understanding. In a study by Knight and Yorke (2003:48), the following two suggestions are made:

[A] student who understands something is able to apply it appropriately to a fresh situation (demonstration by far transfer) or to evaluate it (demonstration by analysis). Understanding cannot be judged, then, by evaluating the learner's retention of data or information, rather, assessment tasks would need to have the student apply data or information appropriately. Where far transfer
and evaluation are clear indicators of understanding, assessment tasks will not be low-inference, right or wrong tasks, but high inference ones, judged by more than one person with a good working knowledge of agreed grade indicators.

Taking into consideration the need for understanding and the need for a clear reflection of this understanding, the evaluation of the POOL and POOL2Business online courses had to be carefully thought out, as the virtual environment would necessarily affect the kinds of evaluation applied to the participant’s online work. The type of software being used had to be considered, as well as the characteristics of the work students could do on the platforms available. Virtual learning environments should by nature be active, social, learner centred, show synthesis and be supportive. These elements must be taken into even greater consideration when dealing with online course evaluation. In general, evaluation is always an issue that consists of planning, reflection and feedback.

The following sections will deal with some of the general considerations regarding evaluation in a manner that will help establish those formats that were feasible for the POOL and POOL2Business online courses. In the case of the POOL project, GMIT was assigned the task of developing assessment strategies and Kaunas Kolegija worked on quality control. It should be noted that in the second project, POO2Business, the same higher education institutions held the same roles and developed the same tasks. This collaboration on both projects led to frameworks which were tested to ensure the validity of the methods. Thus, what follows is a description of the frameworks established by Mündler (2006) and Baultrusaitis (2006).
Course Curriculum Evaluation

According to Baultrusaitis (2006), to verify that an assessment is valid, reliable and fair, provides ongoing review, comparison and feedback from the students a framework must be established as shown in the assessment process in figure 29. In the POOL and POOL2Business courses establishing learning outcomes and appropriate assessment criteria were vital.

For each course the LO’s were divided into three categories: skills, competencies and knowledge. These LO’s were clearly defined and were the main instruments used in the assessment process. The second step in creating valid and reliable assessments is the definition of assessment criteria. They should judge the skills, competencies and knowledge acquired during the course (Assessment Criteria, 2006). Assessment criteria describe what makes an appropriate or less appropriate answer. According to Baume (2006), the advantages for assessment criteria are:

- Their use makes assessment more measurable and comparable.
- Sharing the criteria with students clarifies the aim of the course and the necessary student achievements to get a specific grade/pass the course.

These clearly defined criteria should be open and understandable to all the participants. Using learning outcomes and assessment criteria helps students to understand what they are supposed to learn. Moreover, assessment criteria provide clear guidelines and let students know what to expect. It also permits course efficiency / assessment efficacy to be compared and evaluated in a predefined way, which increases reliability.

The third step in developing an assessment is the question of design. More time is required for development in an on-line environment than in traditional assessments, because the questions and answers have to be very well defined. After the assessment
criteria are defined, the questions should assess the specific criteria, using different kinds of question types.

The fourth step provides the assessment to the students. Regarding on-line assessment, different processes have to be defined as well. Figure 29 shows that once the questions are designed, depending on the assessment software, there are two ways of doing assessment. For students with different educational, cultural and technological it is necessary to provide an introductory session for them to become familiar with the whole system. If necessary, a tutor can be available through audio conference or text chat to support students during the on-line assessment and to clarify any questions.

The fifth step in developing a valid and reliable assessment is the grading and evaluating of the achieved results. This can be done either automatically through the VLE or manually. If there are open-ended questions, which need to be corrected manually, the VLE must provide a user-friendly correction and feedback area.

The sixth step is the feedback concerning the assessment. There are two important considerations on feedback: when it is given and, secondly, why it is necessary. In general, students prefer to give feedback about the assessment and lectures after they have received their course results to be sure that their final grade is not influenced by the feedback given. Nevertheless, feedback should be given immediately after something happens, otherwise the statements and complaints will lose strength and the importance of giving feedback decreases. As shown by Race (2005), feedback should be given within twenty-four hours to be reliable and useful. For teachers and institutions it is necessary to get feedback from the students to improve the course or, in this case, the assessment. Furthermore, the student that is giving the feedback should know the purpose, otherwise the answers may not be effective.
Course Curriculum Evaluation

The seventh step in creating an assessment is to compare the assessment outcome achieved with the previously defined learning outcome to verify that this has actually been achieved. To make an assessment valid and, especially, reliable a comparison with results from other students or from the same students, but taken at different times, is necessary. Questions which achieve on average the same results are reliable.

Figure 29. Assessment Processes (Baultrusaitis, 2006)

The descriptions that follow in the next section outline the types of assessments and questions in the evaluation framework (Mündler et al., 2006).
7.1 CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT

Continuous assessments are carried out periodically during a course to measure the level of learning and are usually not used for grading, but rather for giving feedback and diagnosis. Feedback is very important to inform students on how they are progressing and it motivates them to do more work. It also gives teachers feedback to know what students are having difficulty with in a course, so that teachers react appropriately. Feedback deals with many aspects: perhaps the course content is boring and students need more challenges during class; or another possibility is that some elements of the content cannot be understood because of too little or too much information. Knight (2006), who was a main analyst of a review of 681 research publications on continuous assessment, clearly showed evidence that this type of assessment improves learning.

Continuous assessments can be done in oral and/or written forms. Continuous assessments have to be well planned, structured and organised to get the desired results; they also have to be reviewed all the time to see if there is need for improvement or change. In spite of the possible difficulties, Race (2005) has shown that the methods used in a face-to-face class can be used in a virtual environment with some modifications. Research assignments, tests, self-assessment and group work are some examples of continuous assessment, and so are on-line discussions and conferencing sessions, which can be recorded and reviewed for feedback.

According to Mann (1998), feedback is most useful when learners receive it in time to use it effectively. Furthermore, learners are most likely to use feedback productively when they are oriented beforehand to its purpose and significance, and when feedback is provided in a consistent format. In addition, Nelson (1998) notes that feedback, particularly on graded assessments, should always be based on
consistent, clearly communicated standards, or rubrics. This can be facilitated in many ways through a virtual environment where specific rubrics can be part of the on-line platform and used repeatedly.

Receiving written and oral feedback from students in a virtual environment can be as easy as in real life situations (Hricko, 2005) however, a clear structure for effective feedback is required. For example, students can be asked to answer questions on-line after each course, otherwise they cannot continue or they will not be evaluated in an on-line assessment. A discussion can be held in a forum so that students can contribute and state their opinions on the course or the lecturer. There are many different feedback possibilities in a virtual environment; they just have to be recognised and used for the right purpose.

7.1.2 SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

According to the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (2006), students should know their achievements, and one way to measure them is by setting a final exam, which is usually summative assessment. Summative assessment is carried out at the end of a course and gives “feed-out” like a diploma, certificate or simply a grade and it is the main method used to grade students. All the learning outcomes from the course should be assessed in this formal exam. If students are given enough feedback after a final examination, this summative assessment can contribute to the learning process. In a virtual environment, the quality aspect of this examination method is very important, because the final examination should assess the learned skills, competencies and gained knowledge of each student individually.
7.1.3 CRITERION REFERENCED ASSESSMENT

As student’s achievements are graded in terms of knowledge, skills and competencies, an issue that appears is the reference to grade knowledge levels. In criterion referenced grading, fairness and reliability are guaranteed if the work of defining valid, reliable and fair learning outcomes or criteria is done thoroughly. According to Johnson (2006) this requires a lot of experience in teaching and in-depth knowledge of the subject. The definition of criteria and the evaluation of these criteria is long and complicated process and, thus, it is necessary to plan and develop this grading system very well to verify valid, reliable and fair assessments. However, it should be noted that criterion referencing is being used more often in education as it compares students’ achievements to learning outcomes and criteria, which should be the most common way to mark student’s achievements, as suggested by Knight (2006).

7.1.4 SELF-ASSESSMENT

Self-assessment is a good strategy to consolidate the knowledge and skills of students. Students automatically get feedback about their performance, especially in a virtual environment reflecting the content provided after each course. Interestingly, it is easier to provide students with self-assessment capabilities in a virtual environment, as shown by Kerka (2000), compared to traditional classrooms where it can be difficult due to lack of time and privacy.

In an on-line environment, after each lesson/course, students have the option to take a test/quiz and get instant feedback. This means that more time needs to be invested in the design of a whole course, but self-assessment can equip students with in-depth knowledge, skills and competencies. Self-assessment questions (SAQs) are
mainly multi-level multiple response/choice questions. The students will answer a question, after that, they receive instant feedback as to whether the answer was correct or wrong. Depending on the answer, a new multiple choice or an open-ended question will show up, asking them why they have chosen this answer or why another answer is wrong. The students are forced to reflect on their answers and are additionally provided with information through links/files for further information. Bull (1999) showed that if students were not able to determine the right answer, the solution should be explained with strong recommendations, including further reading material. Designing such questions requires time however, once a whole course is extended with these kinds of questions, they can always be used to support students learning and self-evaluation. Additionally, the tracking of students on a virtual platform provides more feedback to the teachers than in real life situations.

7.2 POOL AND POOL2BUSINESS ASSESSMENT QUESTION TYPES

There are two main question types: open/open-ended questions, where students have to fill in answers, and closed/close-ended questions, requiring specific information, where students can choose between given answers or give their own very short and precise answers. The following figure presents a summary of the most frequent types of assessment in on-line courses.
Figure 30. Assessment question types (Mündler et al., 2006)

The structure of the evaluation in the POOL and POOL2Business courses was based on the six questions categories in Bloom’s Taxonomy (Bloom et al., 1956). In summary, open-ended question types measure the higher level of thinking, using words such as discuss, describe, interpret and explain or questions like “What do you think caused this difficulty?”. Closed or direct questions request lower level thinking, triggered by such words as who, when, where and what. Bull and McKenna (2003) illustrated a series of on-line evaluation methods based on these question categories.

The following table shows the types of assessment exercises that can be used for both types of thinking.

Table 25. Assessment question types (Bull & McKenna, 2003).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open ended – indirect questions</th>
<th>Closed – direct questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>Multiple choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report</td>
<td>True / False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Matching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral presentation</td>
<td>Short Answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fill in the Blank</td>
<td>Hot Spot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minutes sheet</td>
<td>Tree node</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation sheet</td>
<td>Plot question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research assignment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Curriculum Evaluation

In what follows, the characteristics of the various question types will be discussed in greater detail.

Multiple-choice questions

Multiple-choice questions are the most popular assessment method for assessing competence/knowledge on-line. This methodology has been researched, tested and proven through extensive studies. Currently, different kinds of multiple-choice questions can be used (for example: true/false, check-box, etc.) as long as the CMS/LMS permits. The student has to respond to a statement or answer a question choosing one out of three, four or more given possible answers. The downside of multiple-choice questions is that there is almost no possibility to measure communication skills. There are many kinds of multiple-choice questions (MCQs), some of which are listed below.

- Multiple response, Multiple answer – Multiple-choice (Check Box)
- Single answer – Multiple-choice
- True/False or Yes/No
- Likert scale (surveys opinion, satisfied, not satisfied…)
- Realisation: Check boxes, Drop Downs, Select List

These types of questions measure a wide range of knowledge. They also have the potential for measuring, understanding, analysis and use of problem solving skills. This format is often useful when there are many students to be assessed and this can be done through the varied MCQ formats (True/False/Reason/Assertion).
Short-Answer questions

Students have to answer a question with just the key elements or features. The format of the question depends on how the instructor writes the question. It could be a simple question with one answer box at the end or a sentence with many fill-in-the-blank answer boxes. These are less structured and easier to design than MCQs and are useful to start an exam and for formative assessment. However, if they are used too frequently, students get into a learning habit of revising to produce the “right” answer.

Matching questions

Students are provided with many possible answers, but just one correct answer for each blank area in the text, sentence or equation. Matching questions can be realised with fill-in-the-blank methods, as well as graphically drag and drop possibilities, ordering sentences or matching the relationship between items. It is possible to assess a large amount of information compared with MCQs and guessing the answer is difficult if the questions/statements are well prepared. The downside of this type of assessment is that it assesses recognition more than recall of information.

Case studies/Scenarios

Students get a case study or a written scenario containing problems, solutions and mistakes. After they have read or seen it, they are supposed to answer questions about the case study, analyse the situation and express their opinion so that their critical thinking, ability to judge, compare and their use of theory and rules may be measured.
Course Curriculum Evaluation

- Would you act differently? How could you prevent such a situation?
- Who made a mistake? Which mistakes were made?
- Did each role player act appropriately?
- What was positive, what was negative?

For example, in the case of oral presentations, the teacher provides the student with a short text. They have to read it and then prepare a presentation to deliver the content of the text to the others using presentation techniques and different presentation tools. Another possibility is that each student has to write a speech about the text and write down the presentation techniques and tools — including the why aspect. For example, “Why did I use power point rather than other tools?”

The case study provided to the students can be realised with video and audio. For example, a special situation is displayed. Students watch an ineffective oral presentation. They should recognise that the presentation is ineffective and either answer multiple-choice questions about the video or write a short essay on how to improve the presentation.

Written texts

A written scenario is given to the students and they should answer questions about the content/situation of the written text, provide a solution to the problem that arises or explain how to prevent the problem. All levels of Bloom’s taxonomy are included, which is only achievable by essays, reports, interviews or oral presentations. This means that the student has:

- The ability to use general rules and theory in particular situations.
- The ability to judge methods, develop opinions and make decisions.
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- The ability to interpret, describe situations.
- The ability to remember facts, terms, definitions.

These questions can provide useful information for formative purpose – periodical measuring of student achievement. In combination with other question types or assessment methods it is a very good solution as well as easy to mark (in short cases). However, the design and development of more complex case studies / scenarios, especially with video, is challenging, as is establishing an effective marking scheme.

Report / Essay

This type of assessment is applicable to any topic and different writing and thinking types can be measured. It applies all the six questions categories in Bloom’s Taxonomy. It is usually easy to set up and to mark. However, in VLE environments the possibility of plagiarism cannot easily be controlled. There is another interesting assessment method in connection with essays: Modified Essay Questions (MEQs). These are questions based on a written text. Once students have answered one question, further information and another question are given. This procedure continues, usually for half an hour. They are easy to set up and easy to mark. These are used as a formative assessment as well as a self-assessment. They offer high reliability, validity and manageability. Unfortunately, the choice of the text content can be complicated and demanding.

Research Assignments

The final type of assessment to be discussed is research assignment (group/single work). Students get a task or problem which they try to solve using the internet,
libraries or knowledge in a specific time. This can be applied to any topic and is easily set up by a teacher. It also develops autonomous working, project management and communication skills in a group, although it is time intensive work for students.

7.2.1 TEACHER EVALUATION OF POOL COURSE

As seen, the development of a valid, reliable and fair assessment is a lot of work, especially when it comes to on-line assessments. In the case of on-line assessments, the platform must provide different assessment types which can be accessed easily on behalf of the teacher. In the POOL and POOL2Business courses, the virtual learning platforms provided the possibility to elaborate adequate assessment using the most appropriate formats (Mündler, 2006; Baultrusaitis, 2006). The next figure is an example of the Fronter© interface.

Figure 31. Fronter© assessment interface.
All of the assessment types were used in some form throughout the POOL project. The goal was to evaluate the acquisition of skills, competences and knowledge by assessing the learning outcomes. In the language module this was done by using self-evaluation (checklists), reports and on-line group presentations.

7.2.2 STUDENT EVALUATION OF POOL COURSE

Student evaluation has traditionally focused on teaching and rarely on course design and curriculum. However, there has been a change in recent years whereby, according to Marsh (1984), student evaluations are the most commonly used source of data for both summative and formative evaluation. Even though they are mandatory, and standardised questionnaires are the most widely used tool for students' feedback, the information can be used by individual instructors to improve the teaching (Simpson & Siguaw, 2000) or course design in future years (Chen & Hoshower, 2003).

The criteria chosen are based on the analysis of existing widely used criteria for traditional face-to-face class and on-line learning quality evaluation. There are three main studies that were chosen for use in the POOL pilot project (Baultrusaitis, 2006):

a) Student Evaluation of Education Quality (SEEQ) instrument (Coffey & Gibbs, 2001)

b) Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) (McInnis et al., 2001)

c) Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education (Chickering & Gamson, 1991)

These three made up the basic framework for the course and course delivery evaluation criteria lists. By compiling these criteria lists and adding some new ones (bearing in mind the specific nature of the POOL project, i.e. on-line language
training and culture training), the following list of twenty criteria for the pilot project training programs was created. For each criterion definition guiding questions are used (see Annex 8). This type of definition was chosen for practical reasons – these questions with slight changes can be used in the questionnaires for course and teaching quality evaluation (Baultrusaitis, 2006). The twenty core areas are in the table below:

Table 26. Twenty core areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning/Academic Value (LV)</th>
<th>Breadth of Coverage (BC)</th>
<th>Learning Community (LC)</th>
<th>Intellectual Motivation (IM)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instructor Enthusiasm (IE)</td>
<td>On-line Learning Community (OC)</td>
<td>Virtual Learning Environment (VL)</td>
<td>Learning Resources (LR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-Teacher contact (ST)</td>
<td>Relevant Assignments (RA)</td>
<td>Appropriate Workload (AW)</td>
<td>Small Group Teaching (GT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examinations/Grading (EG)</td>
<td>Generic Skills (GS)</td>
<td>Appropriate Assessment (AA)</td>
<td>Student Support (SS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation/Clarity (OG)</td>
<td>Clear Goals and Standards (CG)</td>
<td>Project work (PW)</td>
<td>Overall Satisfaction (OS)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The evaluation of the teaching and coursework was an important part of the POOL pilot projects, as this would lead to course improvement of on-line teaching.

The evaluation of the teaching in this framework is based on Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) and course evaluation by the student. The survey has two parts, one part for closed-responses and the other part for open-ended comments. The SET process is guided by the instructor at the end of a semester when the students have an overview of the teaching and learning experiences and SET feedback is most effective.

The on-line course on oral and written reports for the POOL (WP5) course was evaluated by the group of twelve international students. They filled in a questionnaire (see Annex 9) which asked twenty general assessment questions and then three more specific short answer questions. A summary of the responses will be discussed. The
students who chose strongly agree or agree will be grouped together as a positive measurement and those responses that are neutral will be counted as not satisfactory.

The highest grade was given to question number eighteen, which reflected the teacher’s attitude. All twelve students felt that the teacher was positive and helpful whenever contacted. Nine students graded nine questions positively. These questions dealt with the following issues:

a) the learning outcomes and expected standards were clear,
b) the course enabled them to achieve the learning objectives,
c) the course content in general was structured and delivered in ways that assisted their learning and needs,
d) the material was useful, sequenced and well prepared,
e) the teacher was accessible in a suitable timeframe,
f) the course helped them develop information literacy skills,
g) in general they were satisfied with the course quality.

These aspects were graded positively by eight students:

a) the resources provided for the course were helpful and the recommended texts and on-line resources were available,
b) they felt encouraged to delve deeper into the materials and activities of the course,
c) the amount of work was appropriate for the course,
d) the teaching was effective.
Course Curriculum Evaluation

The following aspects were graded positively by seven students:

a) the course was stimulating,

b) the course organisation was organised in such a manner as to provide positive feedback,

c) the assessment types and order helped them learn and allowed students to demonstrate what they had understood.

The lowest grade was given to the question that dealt with the possible opportunities to have contact with students on-line. Only six students were satisfied with the amount of contact time.

The three short answer questions generally made positive commentaries. In response to the question “What were the best aspects of this course?”, students stated “good and skilled teachers, very interesting and helpful, there were a lot of additional documents available, a nice video, learned some news tips that are invaluable, the teacher was motivated and made us participate”. One student even stated that it was the “best course!”.

In response to the question “What aspects of the course are most in need of improvement?”, some interesting feedback was given. The answers ranged from absolutely well done to wanting to increase the possibilities for communication with other students. One student commented that perhaps the feedback of the trainers after the presentation could be nicer. This was an interesting perception on behalf of this particular student, since none of the others perceived the tone of the assessment as “not nice”.

In response to the last question, “Your comments related to on-line learning”, once again the answers were varied. Some students believed that it was the ideal way
to learn and others stated that it was too much work or that they preferred face to face learning.

The high number of positive comments was gratifying. However, it was the neutral or negative comments that led us to take a look at the delivery mode, the content and the timeframe, as these were commented on at least once, in order to reconsider these aspects of our course design.

This course was also evaluated with regard to the other work packages in the pilot project. The results of this comparison can be seen in Annex 10, where it is shown that WP5 was the highest graded work package in the POOL pilot project.

The results for the work package on average were above the mean averages of the other work packages in general. However, there is one exception regarding question thirteen: the teacher was accessible by email/forums within a suitable timeframe. Although nine students had found the teacher’s accessibility satisfactory in the individual work package assessment, in comparison with other work packages students felt that there could have been a more prompt response to emails and/or forums. This has led to the reflection on the difference in time zones of the participants and the teachers, which may have been a contributing factor.

7.2.3 TEACHER EVALUATION OF POOL2BUSINESS COURSE

In the POOL2Business course the assessment was done through the Moodle® platform. Here, the participation on the course was more complex and used more assessment tools: self-assessment (through training with quizzes), student monitoring (during project), and presentations (on-line). The course however, was graded with a final on-line exam which had to be done in person. The figure below shows the Moodle® interface with the final exam.
This exam had a total of forty-two questions. Many were multiple choice and four were short answer questions that dealt with student application of theory to a new situation. This method was chosen in the pilot program too, as one of the aims was to test the possibility of having only on-line assessment in the future. The student results on the final exam would be compared to their work and participation to see if it could adequately reflect the acquisition of the knowledge and skills required.

7.2.4 STUDENT EVALUATION OF POOL2 BUSINESS COURSE

The evaluation of this course centred on four main aspects of the courses: a) learning/academic, b) organisation and clarity, c) breadth and coverage, class/group interaction, and d) the overall average (see Annex 11). In this project a random sampling of four participants were asked to fill in the evaluation. A summary of the responses will be now discussed in more detail.
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The first category which evaluated the interest on behalf of the students was well rated as they understood the learning material, found it stimulating and had learned something valuable. This was reflected in the answers to all of the questions in the category. The section rated slightly below the others was whether or not they felt their interest had increased.

The second category reflected very clear satisfaction of the explanations and the material preparation. However, the discussion and debate setup of many of the sessions did not seem of facilitate notetaking. The issue of proposed objectives was also rated a little low and should be noted.

The third category presented the lowest grade. The focus on intercultural training is based on developing awareness nevertheless the participants viewed intercultural training as another subject matter that could be learned without realising that awareness is a key factor in the development of cultural competences. The students couldn’t understand how awareness could be an outcome of a course. There was also great debate on the question of language and use in international contexts. These discussions brought many issues to the forefront which will be dealt with in the next section.

In the fourth question, the amount of interaction was rated very high as the activities used were meant to foster discussion, idea sharing and eventually lead to reflection. The participants, once again valued the interaction, but did not grasp the intention behind it. Interestingly enough, the soft skills work package was the highest valued among the courses in the POOL2Business pilot programme.
7.3 SUMMARY

Both the POOL and the POOL2Business courses set up evaluation mechanisms for the courses and the teachers. First, the achievement of learning outcomes were measures by continuous assessments (Knight, 2006), summative assessments and criterion referenced assessments (Johnson, 2006). The different types of questions based on higher-order thinking (Bloom et al., 1956) are described. The types of questions permitted on an on-line platform are also described in great detail. The course evaluation interface is shown for both the POOL and the POOL2Business courses. The student evaluation of the course is presented and discussed in detail.
NEW CONSIDERATIONS
8. NEW CONSIDERATIONS

This brings this research back to the starting point. If the participants seem to understand each other apparently well working in English with other non-natives in a virtual environment and are able to complete the tasks set for them - and pass the courses - where are the communication difficulties that seem to haunt the international project manager?

Thus, to recap, the previous learning theories in the frameworks for the P00L and P00L2Business projects were centered on two main concepts: a) behaviourism-constructivism, which included the use of technology, and b) single-loop learning to achieve previously defined and set outcomes. The evaluation results of the courses and the student evaluation of the courses began to point in a new direction towards an alternative model including new concepts.

One of the consequences of globalisation is that the rapid increase in the capacity of technologies for future engineers in today's classrooms means they will be in unchartered territory perhaps in just a decade. So, they will be using new technology that has not been invented, describing processes and concepts with words that have yet to be created, communicating on technological devices that we cannot imagine in order to develop projects that escape our grasp today. This is a new context which needs to be contemplated. The previous model in this research worked. Although it was successful, issues arose in the language and culture training that began to point towards a new direction. As previously stated, life long learning is an integral part of
international project management where technology, terminology and communication platforms are constantly changing.

Currently, the concept that people must learn how to learn (Schuck, 1996) is becoming much more important in professional fields and for many reasons. There are many characteristics in virtual project management that can be problematic: inevitable teamwork, which means increasing dependency on each other, more cultural diversity on those teams, extensive task related communication for project development, etc.

As seen in the results of both POOL projects, guided learning with set outcomes does provide verifiable results. Yet, it became clear that the missing concept in the equation was awareness on many levels. The world of project management is not based on certainties: people do not work with the same people, doing the same tasks using the same technology. Thus, regarding the concept of awareness, more needs to be done, and this is where the model needs to be expanded. Set courses with set outcomes provide a base from which a person can continue to develop, but it is necessary to adapt and change in a field that is constantly progressing.

This can be done in many ways. According to Jörg (2007:152), one possibility is "rather than being framed in ends-oriented terms, education might become possibility-oriented". This author further suggests that this would involve abandoning the tendency to pre-determine outcomes for learning. Although this may seem radical, there are other options. One measure is to lay the groundwork for this concept of possibility using reflection and double-loop learning.

Proposing a change may not seem necessary and may even be difficult due to many factors: the many learning theories students are already exposed to, the varied subject matters, the use of multiple virtual environments an the use of a lingua franca
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for communication, among others. Nevertheless, a shift towards reflection and double-loop theories may provide a complementary framework which could allow students to take a more active role in their learning. The new model, which can be superimposed on the initial model, is shown below.

Figure 33. New proposed model

In this new model, the focus on language will change, since the need to incorporate the concerns of EIL as well as ESP has been made clear by the nature and scope of linguistic interactions of project managers. Secondly, the introduction of a valid mechanism, the intercultural development inventory (IDI), for measuring intercultural competence gain is a novel step which provides new ways in which to approach intercultural competence development. Next, virtual environments may also be used as tools for management of knowledge, which can be both linguistic and cultural. Lastly, self-monitoring should be incorporated into the learning process to help students become more autonomous.

The frameworks for the new considerations will introduce two new concepts: double-loop learning and reflection, which are more malleable and may provide the flexibility to adapt to the necessary changes in the ever-changing field of project
management. This in turn leads to a change in educational methodology which will now be discussed in more detail.

8.1 Double-loop Learning

In their seminal work, Argyris and Schön (1978) presented their models of single-loop learning and double-loop learning. The first, single-loop learning, has already been discussed as part of the framework for the two completed projects, POOL and POOL2Business. Single-loop learning is routinely used by many individuals when a problem arises. Most individuals will use single-loop models and will choose from a range of previous, acceptable solutions until one works well enough for the problem to disappear or become less serious. However, double-loop learning can change set behaviour, beliefs, attitudes, etc. by using reflection. Building upon the Kolb model, Argyris and Schön (1978) developed the double-loop model which can be understood as a reflective problem solving routine. The interior loop is a single-loop problem solving routine that centres on behaviour, the outward aspect of change. The outer loop looks at the reasoning behind the behaviour. Reflection on the reasoning behind behaviour can lead to permanent change. Argyris et al. (1985) and Greenwood (1998) have shown that double-loop learning can be defined as the result of reflection on the norms, values and social relationships which underpin human action.

Following the description by Henderson et al. (2012), double-loop learning requires four distinct and difficult stages:

Stage 1. The articulation of existing theories in action (called mental models and paradigms) that lead to both the definition of the problem and the axiomatic solution set;

Stage 2. The creation of new meanings and understandings as a result of failure of
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stage 1;

Stage 3. The derivation of new actions as a result of stage 2;

Stage 4. The generalisation of a new theory resulting success at stage 3.

The following figure looks at the difference between single and double-loop learning as illustrating how behaviour and reasoning are affected in the cycle.

Figure 34. Single and double-loop learning model (adapted from Argyris & Shon, 1978; Thomas, 2012).

![Diagram of Single and Double-Loop Learning Model]

This framework allows an individual to go beyond the previous single-loop solution by incorporating reflection in the process. This reflection allows for resolution at a level that will change action, beliefs and values permitting new paradigms to be formed.

This corresponds with the idea that metacognition has an important role in the development of expertise. It has been debated that to gain expertise it is necessary to facilitate the growth of reflection and to develop higher order thinking skills (Kuhn, 2000; Davidson et al., 1994). Other researchers have described three interrelated
aspects of metacognition: (1) knowledge, (2) judgments and monitoring, and (3) self-regulation (Borkowski, 1996). All three aspects are vital in the case of international project managers who need to be more skilled at time allocation, strategy selection, prediction of task difficulty and monitoring (Ertmer and Newby, 1996; Sternberg, 2001).

8.2 Reflective Practice

Reflection is part of double-loop learning and reflective practice is a relatively new concept based on the work of Schön (1983; 1987). This author emphasises the importance of reflection in professional or complex activities, particularly in unpredictable contexts. Yorke (2004) explains how students should be able to become more effective in their jobs and continue to change and grow as they meet new situations. In a study on job requirements, Harvey and Green (1994) have shown that employers use terms such as willingness to learn, self-motivation, self-evaluation and self-management when they describe the requirements of workers, and even though the word reflection is not used, upon closer inspection, these concepts do involve reflection.

According to Moon (2004:4), reflection has many names: reflective learning, reflective writing and reflective practice, and she defines the concept using these words:

Reflection is a form of mental processing – a form of thinking – that may be used deliberately to fulfil a purpose or to achieve some anticipated outcome, or there may be an unexpected outcome from a state of ‘being reflective’. It is applied to relatively complicated or unstructured ideas for which there is not an obvious solution and is based on the
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further processing of knowledge and understanding and emotions that we already possess.

Reflective practice is also associated with awareness and the process of learning to learn (Ertmer and Newby, 1996). This metacognition is once again associated with employability, as noted by Yorke (2004). One way of achieving this act of reflection with engineering students and professionals is the use of diaries (Boud et al., 1985; Selje and Arbabi, 1986).

8.3 INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT INVENTORY (IDI)

Gauging the developmental stage of a person in terms of cultural competence was not truly feasible until the recent development of the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI). The IDI in its current version (IDI v3) is a 50-item instrument and takes about 15-20 minutes to complete. It is based on actual statements selected from interviews of a directed sample of 50 subjects representing cross-cultural and situational diversity. The IDI is user-friendly, free of cultural bias, available in many languages and theory based. There are two scores, the actual cultural orientation and the perceived orientation (a score that indicates how the respondents sees themselves along the developmental continuum, which is indicative of their most likely cultural (non-)openness in an intercultural interaction). This tool is highly effective in assessing a person’s initial cultural stage to be able to design a training programme that moves the participant along the developmental scale for intercultural competences. Most importantly, it is based on the Bennett DMIS theoretical model, which states that any training must be designed along training needs. Therefore, the

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33 For a discussion of the validity and reliability of the IDI test, see Hammer et al. (2003) and Hammer (2009).
IDI is a useful instrument that could be used to this effect. According to Paige (2004:87), the initial IDI assessment will “provide the learner with the kind of information that will promote better understanding of the self”. He argues that IDI is a multipurpose instrument "useful for personal development and self-awareness, audience analysis, examining topics salient to training programs, organisational assessment and development, and data-based intercultural training".34 As noted above, this tool is the first step in a reflection process that was not present in intercultural training beforehand. Knowing where an individual is in his or her development allows for both a more effective intervention strategy and techniques for reflection that are suited to the individual’s developmental stage.

Figure 35. Image of IDI individual score.

The score is presented in a visual form and then a full report explains where the participant is and what the next steps are. In the IDI methodology, it is important, perhaps even vital, to discuss the exam results with a trained IDI examiner. The experience initiates the participant to begin reflecting on the idea of what culture is and what culture really does affect. This starting point allows a person to know what steps are needed to progress.

As the IDI is based on the DMIS model, it is easy to correlate the stages and the developmental needs. This list is a short summary of these correlations.

34 My italics.
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a) Denial → Recognition of cultural differences.
b) Polarisation (Defense) → Reduce feeling of “us and them”, overly critical of other cultures, need to equalise criticism and find common humanity.
c) Polarisation (Reversal) → Reduce feeling of “us and them”, overly critical of own culture, need to equalise criticism and find common humanity.
d) Minimisation → Focus on understanding cultural differences.
e) Acceptance → Work with culture-general and culture specific frameworks to help participants make judgements and decisions across cultures.
e) Adaptation → Bridging through cultural shifts.

Thus, the key concept behind the IDI is awareness. Awareness concentrates on helping both trainers, who can plan adequate training, and participants, who can monitor their own progress, to move along the developmental continuum to become more culturally competent.

8.4 EIL AND ESP

The importance of second language learning is a forgone conclusion, as knowledge of more than one language increases not only job and educational opportunities, but also the intensity in which an individual can participate in activities such as politics, travel and, perhaps more importantly, self-fulfillment (Cook, 1991:1). In section two of this thesis, the importance of ELF and the use of EIL were discussed but, in the case of EIL, no frameworks were presented. There is good reason; this is a field of great debate where the models are still being established. Nearly twenty years ago Kachru (1993:238-9) began to discuss the implication of EIL and teaching models:

In discussing English as an international and international language it is difficult to raise the question of choice model. The local, national and international uses of English [...]

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raise questions about the validity of didactic models, those which emphasise a monomodel approach to the teaching of English. One has to be realistic about such questions and aim at a dynamic approach, based on a polymodel concept. The choice of a model cannot be separated from the functions of a language.

According to McKay (2002:125), this means that there cannot be one model, but rather many models supported by “a comprehensive theory of teaching and learning English as an international language”. This is in fact different from second language teaching. Subsequently, many elements need to be taken into account before attempting even general guidelines, especially the demonstrated cross-cultural nature of EIL, which creates new issues which need to be contemplated. McKay (2002:127) has identified some priority issues for such a model, whose goals could be the following:

1. Ensuring intelligibility rather than insisting on correctness. Paltridge (2009:1) say that language “is the property of its users, native and non-native speakers alike”, which means that there is not only one correct way to speak.

2. Helping learners develop interaction strategies that will promote comity (friendly relations). Melchers & Shaw (2003:192) also point out that EIL should aim to build proficiency in cross-cultural language communication.

3. Fostering textual competence (reading and writing skills for learner-selected purposes). This is also supported by Huckin (2003: 17), who believes that ESP students should become “astute analysts of the specialist discourse” by learning skills and necessary strategies to be responsible for their own development (Swales & Feak, 2004).
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For this to occur, the following approaches need to be considered:

1. Sensitivity in the choice of cultural content in materials.
2. Reflexivity in pedagogical procedures (my italics).
3. Respect for the local culture of learning.

Once more, the need for reflection appears as one of the key elements of the approaches that should be considered in new frameworks for teaching EIL. There are other researchers who also see the need for changes. Burns (2005) points out that it would be necessary to develop curricula that take into account the socio-cultural and linguistic complexity of English. Others like Kirkpatrick (2007), Jenkins (2006) and Holliday (2004) also look into the implications of teaching EIL as the framework necessarily must change.

Sharifian (2009:4) has gone further linking the areas of EIL and intercultural competence stating,

EIL has also started to develop a close affinity with research in the area of intercultural communication. As said before, EIL recognizes that English is widely used for intercultural communication at the global level today. It is becoming increasingly recognized that ‘intercultural competence’ needs to be viewed as a core element of ‘proficiency’ in English when it is used for international communication.

What Sharifian points out presents an interesting conundrum. Even though a speaker has learned a language following a “correct model”, this does not imply that the cultural connotations behind a language and the choice of words are also understood by the learner. This idea has been at the root of much debate and there are many studies in the field (see Scollon and Scollon, 1981 and Gumperz, 1992).
Blommaert (1991) notes that intercultural communication is based on the interpretation of the perceptions and concepts understood by the speakers. For example, the word combination *spend time* is taught as the correct form; however, many non-native speakers do not correlate the concept behind the word *spend* with the concept of *time*. Although any student of English would use this combination, the implications that time is valuable, it can be spent or wasted or even saved, may not reflect what they believe or how they behave regarding the concept of *time*. This is what Sharifian (2009:4) calls *meta-cultural competence*: understanding what is really being said. The difficulties are shown in the following model.

Figure 38. Multidisciplinary nature of the model cultural conceptualisations and language (Sharifian, 2009: xvii)

The idea that EIL was in fact different became apparent in the POOL2Business project as the participants debated the validity of learning concepts related to English
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language use when their interaction was done with other second language speakers of English who may not have those linguistic paradigms in mind. This idea that language does not always represent what the speaker means becomes much more complex when neither of the speakers of English are aware of the implications of their words.

8.5 The SKILL2E Project

The SKILL2E project\textsuperscript{35} will now be used as an example where the proposed model can be applied. There are currently six higher education institutions and four companies that are participating in the project (see Annex 3), where the main objective was the acquisition of cultural competences. The University of Alicante was responsible for the pre-departure intercultural training plan in the project consortium.

One of the steps in the project was to design a double-loop model to explain how the interventions are organised. In the model, all of the key steps for cultural competence acquisition are linked in the order which is necessary for reflection and experience. It can be seen that the model involves intercultural training, the use of an on-line platform for reflection and English as a lingua franca and work experience abroad (Abermann, 2012). The model is illustrated below.

\textsuperscript{35} <http://skill2e.fh-salzburg.ac.at>
Figure 39. SKILL2E Double-loop learning model

The model shows (in blue) the steps that are reflective, such as the diary and the final report on the placement. The steps in red illustrate the use of the IDI and the intercultural training in the process.
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8.5.1 Intercultural Training

The three main goals in intercultural training discussed in Brislin and Yoshida (1994) can be compared to the three important concepts in IDI training sessions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brislin and Yoshida (1994)</th>
<th>IDI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awareness, knowledge and information about culture</td>
<td>→ Awareness of self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes related to intercultural communication</td>
<td>→ Awareness of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills or new behaviours</td>
<td>→ Creating bridges between culture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this phase it is important to include practices that make students reflect. One method that can be used is to ask about expectations before an event. In the case of SKIL2E, students were asked to fill in a form answering three questions on what they expected from the training (see Annex 12). It is noteworthy to comment that some of the answers were very surprising showing that the students did not see intercultural competence a skill, but rather as an abstract concept.

It was also important to have immediate feedback from the participants on the training. This would provide the trainers with a general opinion on how the training session met the expectations and if the expectations students had of the training had been met (see Annex 13). At the University of Alicante, the training sessions proved to be full of surprises regarding what culture was and provided new concepts for the students according to the questionnaires.

These two interventions serve a purpose, to make the participants reflect on what they think culture training is and what they have learned from the session(s). This is vital for knowledge management for the participants as well as the teachers. VLE's
can be used in this case to create forums for these purposes to provide a basis for learning and a shared public space for opinions.

8.5.2 INTERFLECTION DIARY

The on-line diary provided the scenario for individual intercultural reflection using guided eleven questions (one a week). The idea was that students would reflect on their previous cultural theory training models and learn to recognise cultural problems and adequately find solutions. In previous studies by Moon (2004:3) on diaries it was observed that “[t]he aim of reflective writing is to set down the steps that we worked through when we were trying to give a coherent shape to our reflections. What we learn from that process might be considered to be secondary learning”.

Figure 37. Interflection Platform with sample question SKILL2E project
New Considerations

The online platform creates an environment which fosters interaction through a willingness to communicate. The tasks allow for self-monitoring and facilitate the theory of the pre-departure training to be integrated into their daily practice (Tabuenca et al., 2012). Most students are comfortable with the medium and it can be done privately or made visible to all the participants.

The diary started with tasks that collected visual impressions of other cultures and progresses with eleven questions of increasing profundity. These questions are based on the cultural dimensions identified by Hofstede (1981, 2010) and Hall (1959) among other cultural frameworks. This was done to attempt to reach more multifaceted views triggered by the questions. Students should move beyond description and show meta-reflection on the issues to develop awareness of the invisible boundaries (Carroll, 1988) of values, beliefs and attitudes (Spencer-Oatey, 2001). The eleven questions are listed below.

1. During the first two weeks take 10 photos that show situations, things, or actions that surprised you or confused you. You can upload your photos to Flickr, Picassa, etc. Under each photo say what is happening or what it is. This week just take 5 photos.

2. Continuing on from last week, take another 5 photos that show situations, things, or actions that surprised you or confused you. You can upload your photos to Flickr, Picassa, etc. Under each photo say what is happening or what it is.

3. This week we’re going to reflect on greetings. How do employees greet each other in your placement? Are there any differences in the way people greet each other at work or outside work? What do you think about how people greet each other?

4. Please comment on eating habits in your placement situation (restaurant, café or elsewhere). Do employees talk to each other? If they do, in what way? Have you noticed who generally eats with whom? Give one or more examples and comment in detail (don’t give actual names!).

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5. What mode of transport do employees mostly use to get to work? How do they behave on the journey? Describe and comment on any differences in how they behave when they arrive and leave work.

6. Do workers have to check in or out at work or ask for permission for a break? If so, how does this work? What about pauses in the working day? When do they occur, where do people go, how to they get there, and who do they go with? Are there any specific practices? Mention examples and give your opinion.

7. How were you introduced to your colleagues in the placement? How did you know what you were expected to do? Did you receive instructions or specific tasks to do from a superior or from someone in a more specific role? Did you feel welcomed and that you fit in?

8. Please describe the organisation and the use of time in meetings and appointments (date, length, scheduling, advanced warning). Did the people involved arrive on time? Is punctuality considered important? Do you think you have too much, too little, or enough time to complete your tasks, and how do you manage time pressure?

9. Do you have a flexible work schedule which meets the needs of the employees? Is there a crèche? How important or visible is the work-life balance? How are professional and personal work lives reconciled? Is this an issue at all? Also, how important are environmental issues taken? Give examples and compare with your home country.

10. Describe communication in your workplace – how open or transparent is it? In the workplace, is it normal to communicate criticisms, problems, or praise openly? Is there a feedback culture, that is, one which shares observations and suggestions? If so, how, where, when and with whom? To what extent are you involved in these communication processes? Is there an Open Door policy?

11. Please describe and analyse one more situation where cultural differences were important, for example when you weren’t sure about something. How did you feel, and what did you do? Looking back, what would you do differently now? What did you learn about yourself? What lessons have you learnt from this experience?
New Considerations

The application of this approach based on the double-loop learning model led to the creation of an expected set of correlations that would correspond to the DMIS stages. The result of such a process should be the development of competences to deal with cultural displacement and the development of cultural competences and the ability to carry out double loop learning might been seen as symbiotic. The correlations are described in the following table.

Table 29. Impact of the IDC Stages on Double Loop Learning (adapted from Henderson et al., 2012).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Denial</th>
<th>Polarisation</th>
<th>Minimisation</th>
<th>Acceptance</th>
<th>Adaptation and Integration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage 1</td>
<td>Unwilling to accept cultural basis for problems</td>
<td>Willing to accept cultural basis for problems</td>
<td>Willing to accept cultural basis for problems</td>
<td>Willing to accept cultural basis for problems</td>
<td>Signals from home (or other) culture may identify problems more readily than host</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 2</td>
<td>Culturally blind – no incentive to change thinking</td>
<td>Cultural problems trivial in context – reluctant small changes to perspective</td>
<td>Cultural problems trivial in context – willing to make small changes in perspective</td>
<td>Willing to accept greater changes in the direction of the host culture</td>
<td>Wider cultural base may make elaboration or discarding of theories less painful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 3</td>
<td>Likely to find frustration with existing actions rather than change behaviour</td>
<td>Reluctantly makes small, single loop changes</td>
<td>Willingly makes larger single loop changes</td>
<td>Unwilling to move from the accepted host practices even if these are ineffective</td>
<td>Unwilling to retain accepted practices if ineffective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 4</td>
<td>Limited engagement – no basis for developed thinking</td>
<td>New theories likely to be pejorative to host culture</td>
<td>New theories likely to emphasise customs and manners rather than deeper reflection</td>
<td>Restatement or uncritical elaboration of existing ideas.</td>
<td>Cultural relativity may assist elaboration of new theories</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These cells are predictions of likely behaviours related to the application of
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double-loop learning and gains in intercultural competence. The double-loop learning
process was looked for in the on-line diary for reflection, and the collection of the
diary material and analysis led to the insights of how students constructed their
experiences. An example of student reflections will be shown so that the double-loop
mechanism can be seen. The three tables below show how the model is applied.

Table 30. Denial

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Denial (defense)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 2</td>
<td>Found the big city boring, too perfect, impersonal and cold, little or no culture, everything is over-priced and limited recreational facilities available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 3</td>
<td>Focuses on improving technical skills and non-technical ways of communicating with customers Flexible working hours suits him perfectly. Worries about being part of the team was immediately dismissed as he was easily integrated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 4</td>
<td>The student met his own personal goals and found the placement very successful and would work for the same firm again. No cultural differences were noticed except for the “anonymity” in the big city.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Minimisation</th>
<th>Acceptance</th>
<th>Adaptation and Integration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
New Considerations

This student does not demonstrate any reflections at a higher stage. All entries occur in the defence/denial part of the continuum, and most concern technical aspects of the work. The student does not articulate any reflections of differences in culture. On the one hand, one could infer that the cultural differences between Austria and Germany are small, and therefore do not prompt the double-loop problem solving routines. However, such an answer ignores the student’s attribution of cultural issues to “the city”, rather than himself. The result is the withdrawal of the student from his host environment into the safer work place routines based around technology and team goals. There are no cultural reflections as such; consequently, there is little to identify in stage four – other than new reasons for cultural disengagement.

Table 31. Minimisation 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denial</th>
<th>Polarisation (defense)</th>
<th>Minimisation</th>
<th>Acceptance</th>
<th>Adaptation and Integration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Says that everyone speaks English and it is the workplace language. However, does not mention any difficulties with the language.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Talks about a community spirit, flexible hours, team meetings. Very work focused and notices the communality.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Notices that he was not received by the person in charge of his area and had to wait a week to meet him. Says that he couldn’t really start his job.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 4</td>
<td>Says communication is very good because everyone has signed a non-disclosure agreement.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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This student has some insights into the commonalities of his new situation but he only looks for those attributes that unify him to his environment. He has an interesting idea about what “good communication” is. He also shows that his orientation is work based and that he does not try to question or think beyond the obvious.

Table 32. Minimisation 2
Student Engineer 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Denial</th>
<th>Polarisation (defence)</th>
<th>Minimisation</th>
<th>Acceptance</th>
<th>Adaptation and Integration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage 1</td>
<td>Notes that his colleagues do try to mimic his accent and he claims they do it badly.</td>
<td>Assumes that the language and the customs are similar enough. And says there are no real cultural differences.</td>
<td>He proceeds to think about this and decides that it's a good thing even joking “enjoy your meal”.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 2</td>
<td>Realises eating habits are different and that there is a ritual for preparing breakfast at the company once a week.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 3</td>
<td>Notices that workers are treated equally.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Values that the distance in hierarchies is non-existent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 4</td>
<td>Notices that most workers come to work on an old type of racing bicycle. Does not try to reason why.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The student's entries show some reactions in defense, most entries in minimisation and one leap to acceptance. This student makes a great effort to fit in – not just at work but in day-to-day interactions – like joining in the weekly breakfast routine. His reflections are not deep – he questions very little – but he is open to experience and observes, albeit superficially, how people behave. Although quite
reflective and open, his changing mental models at stage 4 are geared towards making himself invisible, at a superficial level at least.

Although it was not expected for the students to achieve the highest levels (their placements were short in time, 3-4 months), most of the jobs were at lower positions and the students were young and had had little experience living abroad. The second IDI, which they took on their return, showed in some cases a slight increase and in others full percentages of change. The preliminary results show increases that vary from 0.1% to 8% in total. In short, the juxtaposition of intercultural competence and double-loop learning routines strongly support the idea that the former is a specific case of the latter. This evidence demonstrates that reflective practice has a measurable contribution to the acquisition of soft skills like intercultural competences. In this case, a way to increase self-learning by employing the reflective diaries in an on-line environment led to the application of some indications of double-loop learning and, thus, metacognition. The platform also provided a communication scenario that lead to knowledge management regarding cultural competence. This makes virtual environments key for knowledge acquisition rather than only being a source of content for courses. Thus the role of VLEs has also changed.

8.6. SUMMARY

This section presents a number of considerations which could be complementary to the initial analysis model. These include the new IDI test to measure cultural competence, which is discussed in detail. Then, double-loop learning (Argyris and Schon, 1987), reflective practice and the concept of self-monitoring (Ertmer and Newby, 1996; Moon, 2001) are shown to be useful additional methodologies. These
tools and methodologies are shown to develop metacognition (Kuhn, 2000; Davidson et al., 1994), which is necessary for the acquisition of expertise. The idea of metacompetence is also reflected in the acquisition of language and culture (Sharifian, 2009), which is the basis of intercultural communication. An example of the application of these methodologies can be seen in the project SKILL2E.
CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH
9. CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This thesis has attempted to delve into the planning and outcomes for courses for specialised training, namely for engineers. The review of the hypotheses will now be discussed.

The experiences of POOL and POOL2Business made the challenges of developing soft skills for international managers of online projects much clearer and simultaneously provided frameworks that could be tested at a higher institution level and at a professional training level. But the running of the courses and the evaluation provided invaluable experience. In both projects a series of ideas came to the forefront:

a) Students saw English language use in project management as a vital instrument for communication. However, this view is limited to genres specific to project management (for example, reports, etc.). Engineers do communicate in predetermined ways for project management, reports, presentations, the use of ESP for process description and instructions reflecting a clear discourse community. It could even be said that the participants used adequate communication strategies (Faerch and Kasper, 1983), both grammatical and discourse (or textual) competence and demonstrated sociolinguistic and illocutionary competence for the required formats of reports and presentations (Bachman, 1990). In fact, the students did their tasks at a high standard.

b) Judging from Thompson and Coover’s work (2003), we expected greater confusion and less understanding of team discussions for the course on-line

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sessions as a result of computer conferencing. However, the very structured courses which provided clear outcomes seemed to have provided an adequate framework of reference. The field of expertise of the participants may also have contributed to the ease with which the medium was used. Thus, virtuality, in general, was not problematic for the participants; moreover, they worked well on the platforms and conferencing systems. There are other possible reasons for this. On the one hand, in a study by Kersten et al. (2002) intercultural e-negotiations in professional environments seem to leave less room for culture specific rituals and behaviour. This means that culture may have less of an effect on computer supported negotiations. On the other hand, studies by Sanford et al. (2004) have shown that participants adapt their communication styles in voice on-line meetings, they interrupt less, and produce longer and more complete turns of talk. Moreover, Driskell et al. (2003) suggests that virtual team working encourages social loafing, which reduces the amount and quality of the interactions.

c) The inclusion of industry in the course planning did have an effect on the course planning. The responses to the questionnaires showed that communication was often the problem in project management. This bad communication was not a result of using technology or ESP as the medium for communication, but rather it resulted from the use of English as the lingua franca and the effect of culture.

d) The issue of learning autonomy was apparent as the students successfully completed their courses. Still, this could be better translated into the use of methodologies that are based on double-loop learning, which fosters
Conclusions

metacognition. This is essential to create expertise, which is beneficial to any project manager.

This brings us to our first issue for further research: the main priority for project managers should be a greater emphasis on EIL, which values comprehension, that is, linguistic and cross-cultural intelligibility rather than perfection. Many times the message behind the words is much more important, and the ability to use language for this purpose is a skill that needs to be developed.

The link between culture and language also became apparent. This importance was not obvious until the second course, POOL2Business, had been completed. The need for more cultural awareness development led to the discovery that culture and language are so intertwined that both may be at once responsible for the communication problems cited by industry. It also became apparent that culture training is a personal developmental issue, that each person moves at a different speed and that reflection practices need to be included in the training processes.

All this leads us to the following suggestions:

a) Single-loop learning should be transformed into double-loop learning mechanisms where possible in training courses to allow for the development of metacognitive strategies.

b) that more awareness on EIL and the difficulties associated with intercultural communication be contemplated rather than focusing on standard ESP for language instruction.

c) Self-monitoring (for example, in writing diaries) should become part of a personal evaluation mechanism which provides more space for reflective practice.
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d) Virtual environments should be used for reflective purposes, not only as management platforms of information.

In conclusion, the POOL and POOL2Business courses were based on outcomes that industry questionnaires helped decide. The training courses were planned, delivered and evaluated with apparent success. However, the speed with which industry changes needs to be reflected. This can be aided by the introduction of learning methodologies which help learners become more aware of what is happening and encourage them to ask why it is happening and adapt their behaviours and reasoning accordingly. By including double-loop learning and reflective practices, the scope for action of an individual increases, as the underlying reason for certain behaviour is brought to the forefront. This metacognitive approach towards learning needs to be incorporated into project management course planning as the ever-changing needs of a global economy will demand more flexible and adaptable project leaders in the future to successfully carry out international projects.
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11. ANNEXES

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ANNEX 2. LOGOS OF THE POOL.2B PARTICIPANTS.

ANNEX 3. LOGOS OF THE SKILL.2E PARTICIPANTS.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Locations</th>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Persons</th>
<th>Objects</th>
<th>Events</th>
<th>Operations</th>
<th>Texts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>Home: house, rooms, garden Own Of family Of friends Of strangers Own space in hostel, hotel The countryside, seaside</td>
<td>The family Social networks</td>
<td>(Grand)Parents, offspring, siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins, in-laws, spouses, intimates, friends, acquaintances</td>
<td>Furnishing and furniture Clothing Household equipment Toys, tools, personal hygiene Objets d’art, books, Wild/domestic animals, pets Trees, plants, lawn, ponds Household goods Handbags Leisure/sports equipment</td>
<td>Family occasions Encounters Incidents, accidents Natural phenomena Parties, visits Walking, cycling Motoring Holidays, excursions Sports events</td>
<td>Living routines: Dressing, undressing Cooking, eating, washing DIY, gardening Reading, radio and TV Entertaining Hobbies Games and sports</td>
<td>Teletext Guarantees Recipes Instructional material Novels, magazines Newspapers Junk mail Brochures Personal letters Broadcast and recorded spoken texts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Public spaces: street, square, park Public transport Shops (super)market Hospitals, surgeries, clinics Sports stadia, fields, halls Theatre, entertainment Restaurant, pub, hotel Places of worship</td>
<td>Public authorities Political bodies The law Public health Services clubs Societies Political parties Denominations</td>
<td>Members of the public Officials Shop personnel Police, army, security Divers, conductors Passengers Players, fans, spectators Actors, audiences Waiters, barpersons Receptionists</td>
<td>Money, purse, wallet Forms Goods Weapons Rucksacks Cases, grips Balls Programmes Meals, drinks, snacks Passports, licences</td>
<td>Incidents Accidents, illnesses Public meetings Law-suits, court trials Rag-days, fines, arrests Matches, contests Performances Weddings, funerals</td>
<td>Buying and obtaining public services Using medical services Journeys by road/air/ship/air Public entertainment and leisure activities Religious services</td>
<td>Public notices and announcements Labels and packaging Leaflets, graffiti Tickets, timetables Notices, regulations Programmes Contracts Menus Sacred texts, sermons, hymns</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Student Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>Halls of residence</td>
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<td>Laboratories</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ancillary</th>
<th>Assembly</th>
<th>Debates and discussions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authentic texts</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(as above)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Textbooks, readers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reference books</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blackboard text</td>
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<td>OP text</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer screen text</td>
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<tr>
<td>Videotext</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exercise materials</td>
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<td>Journal articles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abstracts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dictionaries</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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ANNEX 5. COMPLETE ALTE TABLES FOR STUDY, WORK AND SOCIAL/TOURIST PURPOSES.

**TABLE 1. STUDY PURPOSES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVELS</th>
<th>Listening/Speaking</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>CAN understand jokes, colloquial asides and cultural allusions.</td>
<td>CAN access all sources of information quickly and reliably.</td>
<td>CAN make accurate and complete notes during the course of a lecture, seminar or tutorial.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>CAN follow abstract argumentation, for example the balancing of alternatives and the drawing a conclusion.</td>
<td>CAN read quickly enough to cope with the demands of an academic course.</td>
<td>CAN write an essay which shows ability to communicate, giving few difficulties for the reader.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>CAN give a clear presentation on a familiar topic, and answer predictable or factual questions.</td>
<td>CAN scan tests for relevant information and grasp main point of text.</td>
<td>CAN make simple notes that will be of reasonable use for essay or revision purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>CAN understand instructions on classes and assignments given by a teacher or lecturer.</td>
<td>CAN understand basic instructions and messages, for example computer library catalogues, with some help.</td>
<td>CAN write down some information at a lecture, if this is more or less dictated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>CAN express simple opinions using expressions such as 'I don't agree'.</td>
<td>CAN understand the general meaning of a simplified text book or article, reading very slowly.</td>
<td>CAN write a very short simple narrative or description, such as 'My last holiday'.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>CAN understand basic instructions on class times, dates and room numbers, and on assignments to be carried out.</td>
<td>CAN read basic notices and instructions.</td>
<td>CAN copy times, dates and places from notices on classroom board or notice board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breakthrough level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Annexes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVELS</th>
<th>Listening/Speaking</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>C2 Level 5</strong></td>
<td>CAN advise on/handle complex, delicate or contentious issues, such as legal or financial matters, to the extent that he/she has the necessary specialist knowledge.</td>
<td>CAN understand reports and articles likely to be encountered during his/her work, including complex ideas expressed in complex language.</td>
<td>CAN make full and accurate notes and continue to participate in a meeting or seminar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C1 Level 4</strong></td>
<td>CAN contribute effectively to meetings and seminars within own area of work and argue for or against a case.</td>
<td>CAN understand correspondence expressed in non-standard language.</td>
<td>CAN handle a wide range of routine and non-routine situations in which professional services are requested from colleague or external contacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B2 Level 3</strong></td>
<td>CAN take and pass on most messages that are likely to require attention during a normal working day.</td>
<td>CAN understand most correspondence, reports and factual product literature he/she is likely to come across.</td>
<td>CAN deal with all routine requests for goods or services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B1 Level 2</strong></td>
<td>CAN offer advice to clients within own job area on simple matters.</td>
<td>CAN understand the general meaning of non-routine letters and theoretical articles within own work area.</td>
<td>CAN make reasonably accurate notes at a meeting or seminar where the subject matter is familiar and predictable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A2 Level 1</strong></td>
<td>CAN state simple requirements within own job area, such as 'I want to order 25 of...'.</td>
<td>CAN understand most short reports or manuals of a predictable nature within his/her own area of expertise, provided enough time is given.</td>
<td>CAN write a short, comprehensive note of request to a colleague or a known contact in another company.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A1 Breakthrough level</strong></td>
<td>CAN take and pass on simple messages of a routine kind, such as 'Friday meeting 10 am'.</td>
<td>CAN understand short reports or product descriptions on familiar matters, if these are expressed in simple language and the contents are predictable.</td>
<td>CAN write a simple routine request to a colleague, such as 'Can I have 20X please?'.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 3. SOCIAL AND TOURIST PURPOSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVELS</th>
<th>Listening/Speaking</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>C2 Level 5</strong></td>
<td>CAN talk about complex or sensitive issues without awkwardness.</td>
<td>CAN (when looking for accommodation) understand a tenancy agreement in detail, for example technical details and the main legal implications.</td>
<td>CAN write letters on any subject with good expression and accuracy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C1 Level 4</strong></td>
<td>CAN keep up conversations of a casual nature for an extended period of time and discuss abstract/cultural topics with a good degree of fluency and range of expression.</td>
<td>CAN understand complex opinions/arguments as expressed in serious newspapers.</td>
<td>CAN write letters on most subjects. Such difficulties as the reader may experience are likely to be at the level of vocabulary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B2 Level 3</strong></td>
<td>CAN keep up a conversation on a fairly wide range of topics, such as personal and professional experiences, events currently in the news.</td>
<td>CAN understand detailed information, for example a wide range of culinary terms on a restaurant menu, and terms and abbreviations in accommodation advertisements.</td>
<td>CAN write to a hotel to ask about the availability of services, for example facilities for the disabled or the provision of a special diet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B1 Level 2</strong></td>
<td>CAN express opinions on abstract/cultural matters in a limited way and pick up nuances of meaning/ opinion.</td>
<td>CAN understand factual articles in newspapers, routine letters from hotels and letters expressing personal opinions.</td>
<td>CAN write letters on a limited range of predictable topics related to personal experience and express opinions in predictable language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A2 Level 1</strong></td>
<td>CAN express likes and dislikes in familiar contexts using simple language such as 'I (don’t) like...'.</td>
<td>CAN understand straightforward information, for example labels on food, standard menus, road signs and messages on automatic cash machines.</td>
<td>CAN complete most forms related to personal information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A1 Breakthrough level</strong></td>
<td>CAN ask simple questions of a factual nature and understand answers expressed in simple language.</td>
<td>CAN understand simple notices and information, for example in airports, on store guides and on menus. CAN understand simple instructions on medicines and simple directions to places.</td>
<td>CAN leave a very simple message for a host family or write short simple 'thank you' notes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ANNEX 6. PARTICIPANTS OF POOL2BUSINESS INDUSTRY QUESTIONNAIRE
AM3 - Intercultural Soft Skills Advanced

This course module focuses on the following topics:

- Business Communication / Marketing
- Cultural Dimensions
- Intercultural Challenge

1. Web Based Training
   - Advanced Course

2. Readings
   - Business Communication
     This document deals specific behaviours in business communication.
   - Cultural Dimensions
Annexes

This document deals with the different types of non-verbal communication.

Intercultural Challenge
This document deals with the types of cultures and difficulties and barriers, which can occur when dealing with different cultures.

3 Further Readings
Reconceptualising cultural identity and its role in intercultural business communication
To complement past emphasis on understanding other cultures, the field of intercultural business communication needs a stronger focus on understanding oneself. Cultural identity is an individual's sense of self derived from formal and informal membership in groups that transmit and inculcate knowledge, beliefs, values, attitudes, traditions, and ways of life. A broad conception of cultural identity should not privilege nationality but instead should balance components related to vocation, class, geography, philosophy, language, and the social aspects of biology. Cultural identity changes over time and evolves emotions. It is intertwined with power and privilege, affected by close relationships, and negotiated through communication. The proposed model of cultural identity highlights components directly related to business, such as economic class and professional affiliation, and demonstrates how culture not only connects people but also defines them as unique individuals. This model can expand research and enrich teaching in intercultural business communication.

Personality and negotiation styles
This article contends that although studies on the relationship of personality traits on negotiation styles have generated mixed results,
incorporating cultural context could provide some interesting results. Given this premise, this study explores the moderating effects of cultural context on the personality and negotiation relationship. The personality variables of conciliatory predisposition, trusting nature, and risk propensity, and their interrelationship with the problem-solving style of negotiators were investigated. The study utilized a sample from two culturally diverse groups: American and Filipino industrial exporters. The results show that personality variables had little direct impact on problem-solving. As for the moderating effect of cultural context, the findings suggest that context moderates the relationship between the negotiator’s conciliatory nature and problem-solving.

4 Podcasts & Other Media

- Business Skills - Difficult People
  Business Spotlight interviews Bob Dignen on how to deal with difficult people.
- Intercultural Communication - Ethnic Marketing
  Business Spotlight interviews Robert Gibson on trends in ethnic marketing.
- Video: Culture and Small Talk
  Are you a coconut or a peach? No, we’re not talking about your colour or your size — we’re talking about your culture. Bob Dignen explains why it’s important to know the difference, in particular when you want to improve your small-talk skills.
- Video: Dealing with Difficult People
  When colleagues interrupt you for the tenth time in a meeting, do you want to shout at them? In the fourth video in our series of five on the topic of meetings, Bob Dignen has a more productive suggestion. He recommends using the TUF approach.

5 Case Study

- Missing the Meaning - Student
  Student training on the difficulty of language and getting the meaning across.
- Missing the Meaning - Trainer
- Synthetic Culture Lab - Student
  Student training based on the four cultural dimensions of Hofstede. Students take on roles and negotiate.
- Synthetic Culture Lab - Trainer

6 Quizzes
Annexes

ANNEX 8. GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR POOL COURSE EVALUATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Description – Guiding questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning / Academic Value (LV)</strong></td>
<td>1. Students found the project work intellectually challenging and stimulating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Students have learned something which they consider valuable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Students' interest in the project work has increased as a consequence of this course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Students have learned and understood the subject materials in this class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instructor Enthusiasm (IE)</strong></td>
<td>1. Teacher was enthusiastic about teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Teacher was dynamic and energetic in conducting the group work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Teacher enhanced presentations with the use of humour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Teacher's style of presentation held students' interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student-Teacher contact (ST)</strong></td>
<td>1. Teacher was friendly towards individual students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Teacher made students feel welcome in seeking help/advice in or outside class</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Teacher had a genuine interest in individual students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Teacher was adequately accessible to students during office hours or after class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Examinations/ Grading (EG)</strong></td>
<td>1. Feedback on examinations/graded materials was valuable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Methods of evaluating student work were fair and appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Examinations/graded materials tested course content as emphasised by teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organisation/ Clarity (OG)</strong></td>
<td>1. Teacher's explanations were clear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Class materials were well prepared and carefully explained</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Proposed objectives agreed with those actually taught so you knew where the class was going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Teacher gave presentations that facilitated taking notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Breadth of Coverage (BC)</strong></td>
<td>1. Teacher presented the background or origin of ideas/concepts developed in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Teacher presented points of view other than his/her own when appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Teacher adequately discussed current developments in the field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relevant Assignments (RA)</strong></td>
<td>1. The purpose of assignments was clear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. The assignments were at an appropriate level for me</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M. Tabuenca Cuevas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. The assignments were relevant to the course objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The assignments covered material from diverse perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The assignments were well integrated with course topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The assignments helped me improve my skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Generic Skills (GS)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Students have learned to think more critically as a result of this course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The course helped to develop students problem solving skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Students have learned to work more independently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Students were given the opportunity to choose some of their own learning experiences in this course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The course improved students skills in interpersonal communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. The course improved students skills in intercultural communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The course improved students skills in collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The students learned better different languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The course improved students skills in team building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clear Goals and Standards (CG)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The teaching staff made the goals clear right from the beginning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. It was often hard to discover what was expected of students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The course content was structured and delivered in ways which assisted students learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. It was always easy to know the standard of work expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appropriate Workload (AW)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The volume of work in this course prevented students from learning it all thoroughly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The workload was too heavy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. There was a lot of pressure on students to do well in this course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The workload in this unit is appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Unit pace was too fast and students have no enough time to understand things they had to learn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. There were too many on-line activities in this unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The number of on-line activities in this unit was about right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Annexes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Appropriate Assessment (AA)** | 1. The assessment items for this course were clearly stated at the beginning of the semester  
2. It is obvious how the assessments in this course relate to the aims and objectives  
3. Marking in this course was fair  
4. The students received constructive feedback on their assignments |
| **Project work (PW)** | 1. The project work was valuable for students understanding of the subject  
2. The project work stimulated students interest in the subject  
3. The project work could be completed within the allocated time  
4. The assessment of the project work was fair  
5. Students received adequate feedback on their project work  
6. Access to on-line learning activities gave for students greater control over the pace and timing of their learning |
| **Learning Resources (LR)** | 1. Recommended texts and resources were available in the library or electronically accessible  
2. This course helped students to further develop library/information literacy skills  
3. Where it was used, the information technology in teaching and learning was effective  
4. It was made clear what resources were available to help students learn  
5. The study materials were clear and concise  
6. Course materials were relevant and up to date  
7. On-line notes made available prior to lectures aided students learning  
8. Students valued being able to access learning resources at a time that suited them  
9. Accessing on-line resources for this course was trouble free |
| **Student Support (SS)** | 1. Students were able to access information technology resources when their needed them  
2. Relevant learning resources were accessible when their needed them  
3. Sufficient advice was provided regarding how to access on-line resources for this course  
4. Technical support in the computer labs was satisfactory |
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>The teacher was sufficiently available on-line to support students learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Learning Community (LC)
1. Each individual student felt part of a group of students and staff committed to learning
2. Each individual student was able to explore academic interests with staff and students
3. Each individual student learned to explore ideas confidently with other people
4. Students' ideas and suggestions were used during the course
5. Students were invited to share their ideas and knowledge in discussion
6. Students were encouraged to ask questions and were given meaningful answers

### On-line Learning Community (OC)
1. Group activities on-line were well designed
2. Group activities shared multicultural experience
3. Asynchronous on-line communication activities (e.g. Discussion Board) enhanced learning
4. Synchronous (real time) on-line communication enhanced learning
5. Each individual student felt part of a learning community while studying in this unit
6. The on-line discussion site aided students learning

### Small group teaching (GT)
1. The small group activities in this course were beneficial to student learning
2. The teacher managed group situations in a way that helped me to learn
3. The aims and objectives of the tutorials/seminars were clearly explained
4. The tutorials/seminars were valuable for student understanding of the course
5. The tutorial/seminars were well organised to maximise student learning
6. The student received sufficient guidance on how to participate in tutorials/seminars.

### Intellectual Motivation (IM)
1. Students found their studies intellectually stimulating
2. Students found the course motivating
3. The course has stimulated students' interest in the field of study
4. The inclusion of on-line information and materials enhanced students learning
**M. Tabuenca Cuevas**

| Virtual Learning Environment (VL) | 1. Access to my unit in VLE was easy  
2. The design of the site aided my learning in this unit  
3. The on-line learning activities in this unit were unaffected by technical problems  
4. The instructions for using the on-line resources in VLE were clear  
5. Submitting assessments on-line was successful  
6. The facility to choose when and where student learned in this unit was valuable  
7. Having access to on-line resource material assisted students learning in this unit  
8. The on-line resources available through the VLE site aided students learning in this unit  
9. The on-line quizzes were valuable learning exercises  
10. The use of regular on-line quizzes helped keep student on track in this unit  
11. On-line quizzes provided student with important feedback about my understanding in this unit |
| Overall Satisfaction (OS) | 1. Students were very satisfied with the educational experience an instructor provided  
2. Overall, student learned a great deal from this course  
3. Overall, student rate this instructor an excellent teacher  
4. Overall, student rate this an excellent course  
5. Overall, student was satisfied with the quality of this course  
6. This course comparison with other courses was very good  
7. This teacher’s comparison with other teachers was very good |

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Annexes

ANNEX 9. STUDENT EVALUATION OF POOL COURSE

*Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements*

1. The learning outcomes and expected standards of this course were clear to me

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. The course enabled me to achieve the learning objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. The course content was structured and delivered in ways which assist my learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Average</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. I found the course to be intellectually stimulating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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M. Tabuenca Cuevas

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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. I found the resources provided for the course to be helpful

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. The organisation of the course supports my learning and needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>58.3%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. The course was organised in a way that allowed the instructor to provide timely and constructive feedback on my work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. The teaching in this course helped me to learn effectively

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

260
Annexes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>16.7%</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. The teacher encourage me to engage in the materials and activities of the course at a deep level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total    | 100.0% | 12 |

10. The assessment in this course allowed me to demonstrate what I had understood

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total    | 100.0% | 12 |

11. The type and order of assessed work in this course helped me to learn

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total    | 100.0% | 12 |

12. The overall amount of work required of me for this course was appropriate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

261
13. The teacher was accessible by email/forums within a suitable timeframe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. Recommended text and resources were available in the library or on-line

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. This course helped me to further develop information literacy skill

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. The teaching material were well sequenced and well prepared

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. The teaching material contained good explanations
### Annexes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>12</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18. The teacher was positive and helpful whenever contacted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19. There were opportunities for me to have good contact with other students on-line

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20. Overall I was satisfied with the quality of this course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21. What were the best aspects of this course?
M. Tabuenca Cuevas

Response

nice presentation

good feedback

Really good and very a skilled teacher

The motivation was really stimulating

there were a lot of additional documents available

the presentation of the project helped to understand and apply the learned techniques

I joined the project when it was already running for some time

and I didn't have much information. This course was the only one

that I attended, it was already started and my colleague, Victor,

had already done the presentation. So I couldn't have a global idea.

it was the best course

very interesting and helpful

it was very interested because it's important to have a good presentation

No comment

No comment.

The fact that the teacher was motivated and made us participate.

The teacher could collect a feedback from us in one week (a small presentation), and she made some suggestions in order to improve our skills.

This course was well prepared and had many materials

Well, here, I can just say that presentation training done by the teacher was amazing... she has done so much, nice presentations, always listening to our remarks, and also a nice video)))

As we have done so many presentations during our studies, we are used to, but I learned some new tips that are invaluable

_Good presentation training

22. What aspects of the course are most in need of improvement?

Response

-
Annexes

Also the possibilities for communication with other students
Perhaps the feedback of the trainers after the presentation could be nicer
Everything was clear to me, and well documented, so it needs no improvement.
Keep simplicity, short the time in the presentation
no idea
I thing the the time for the course should be shorter and more dynamic.
It helps us to improve our presentation via powerpoint for example.
No comment
No comment! It was absolutely well done!
No comment.
one
nothing)

23. Your comments related to on-line learning

#   Response
1   - improve technical equipment (microphone crackling)
1   It was a very interactive course.
   there were lots of additional material, some were too much to read
1   All was clear, and well structured
Although I am involved in this project only from one month, I think there are many new things to learn, but in the main time they should be more clearer, and the presentation should be shorter.
1   Good way to learn
   I thing that the online training is good, but I prefer the face to face meetings.
1   it was perfect
1   No comment
1   No comment.
1   no comments. this was the best course
The teacher was motivating and quite interesting but as I knew those things already.
ANNEX 10. COMPARISON OF POOL WORK PACKAGES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q1</th>
<th>Q2</th>
<th>Q3</th>
<th>Q4</th>
<th>Q5</th>
<th>Q6</th>
<th>Q7</th>
<th>Q8</th>
<th>Q9</th>
<th>Q10</th>
<th>Q11</th>
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<th>Q13</th>
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<th>Q16</th>
<th>Q17</th>
<th>Q18</th>
<th>Q19</th>
<th>Q20</th>
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<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
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<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
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<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
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<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

M. Tabuenca Cuevas
### Annexes

**ANNEX 11. STUDENT EVALUATION OF POOL2BUSINESS COURSE**

POOL2Business student feedback survey about **Mis Maria** modules and his training

1 - Strongly Disagree, 2 - Disagree, 3 - Neutral, 4 - Agree, 5 - Strongly Agree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Learning/Academic</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean = 4.19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1. You found the subject intellectually challenging and stimulating</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2. You have learned something which they consider valuable</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3. Your interest in the subject has increased as a consequence of this modules</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4. You have learned and understood the subject materials in this modules</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Organisation/Clarity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean = 4.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1. Instructor’s explanations were clear</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2. Class materials were well prepared and carefully explained</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3. Proposed objectives agreed with those actually taught so you knew where the class was going</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4. Instructor gave presentations that facilitated taking notes</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Breadth of Coverage</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean = 3.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1. Instructor contrasted the implications of various theories</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2. Instructor presented the background or origin of ideas/concepts developed in class</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3. Instructor presented points of view other than his/her own when appropriate</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4. Instructor adequately discussed current developments in the field</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Class group interaction</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean = 4.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1. Students were encouraged to participate in classroom discussions</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2. Students were invited to share their ideas and knowledge</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3. Students were encouraged to ask questions and were given meaningful answers</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4. Students were encouraged to express their own ideas and/or question the instructor</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Overall Rating</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean = 4.63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1. This instructor modules compare with other at this course was very good</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2. This instructor compare with other instructors at this course was very good</td>
<td>4.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
POOL2Business student feedback survey about **Mis Maria** modules and his training. Total records in survey: 4.

**Results:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Learning/Academic</th>
<th>1.1. You found the subject intellectually challenging and stimulating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Answer</strong></td>
<td><strong>Count</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Learning/Academic</th>
<th>1.2. You have learned something which they consider valuable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Answer</strong></td>
<td><strong>Count</strong></td>
</tr>
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<td>Agree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Learning/Academic</th>
<th>1.3. Your interest in the subject has increased as a consequence of this modules</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Answer</strong></td>
<td><strong>Count</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>1</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Learning/Academic</th>
<th>1.4 You have learned and understood the subject materials in this modules</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Answer</strong></td>
<td><strong>Count</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
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</tr>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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</table>
### Annexes

#### 2. Organisation/Clarity

2.1. Instructor’s explanations were clear

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
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<td>0.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
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<td>0.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2. Class materials were well prepared and carefully explained

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>Agree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3. Proposed objectives agreed with those actually taught so you knew where the class was going

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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2.4. Instructor gave presentations that facilitated taking notes

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<th>Answer</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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<td>25.00%</td>
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</table>
### 3. Breadth of Coverage

#### 3.1. Instructor contrasted the implications of various theories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
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<td>50.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### 3.2. Instructor presented the background or origin of ideas/concepts developed in class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 3.3. Instructor presented points of view other than his/her own when appropriate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
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<th>Percentage</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### 3.4. Instructor adequately discussed current developments in the field

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</tr>
<tr>
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### Annexes

#### 4. Class group interaction

4.1. Students were encouraged to participate in classroom discussions

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
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<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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<td>50.00%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

4.2. Students were invited to share their ideas and knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
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<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

4.3. Students were encouraged to ask questions and were given meaningful answers

<table>
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</tr>
<tr>
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4.4. Students were encouraged to express their own ideas and/or question the instructor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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5. Overall Rating

5.1. This instructor modules compare with other at this course was very good

<table>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

5.2. This instructor compare with other instructors at this course was very good

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>75.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. What are the most important characteristics of this instructor that have been most valuable to your overall learning experience?

very intoxicating :-)

motivating the audience to participate in discussion respect of other opinions examples from daily life of (project manager) positive attitude perfect English

7. What are the most important characteristics of this instructor that your feel is most important for him/her to improve?

8. Please use the additional space to make other comments.
ANNEX 12. PRE-DEPARTURE TRAINING EXPECTATIONS

PRE-DEPARTURE TRAINING EXPECTATIONS

1. What do you expect the pre-departure training to be like? What things do you expect to do in the training session?

2. What do you want from the pre-departure training?

3. Using a scale from one to ten: How important do you consider the following for students going on work placement abroad? (1=not important, 10=very important).

1. Independence ______
2. Sense of curiosity ______
3. Ability to “fit in” to new groups ______
4. Can communicate across barriers ______
5. Demonstrate self-confidence / self-knowledge ______
6. Respect for difference and diversity ______
7. Accept responsibility for actions ______
8. Ability to solve problems ______
9. Demonstrated initiative ______
10. Motivation ______

ANNEX 13. PRE-DEPARTURE TRAINING EVALUATION

Please indicate your impressions of the items listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The training met my expectations.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. The training objectives for each topic were identified and followed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. The content was organized and easy to follow.</td>
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<td>4. The materials distributed were pertinent and useful.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. The trainer was knowledgeable.</td>
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<td>6. The quality of instruction was good.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Class participation and interaction were encouraged.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Adequate time was provided for questions and discussion.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Using a scale from 1 to 10 (1=very poor, 10=excellent) How do you rate the training overall? ______

What aspects of the training could be improved/changed?

Other comments?

273
SUMMARY IN SPANISH
12. SUMMARY IN SPANISH

12.1 INTRODUCCIÓN

Durante las dos últimas décadas, la investigación en el campo de la ingeniería ha demostrado que se ha producido un cambio en el tipo de habilidades que los estudiantes necesitan adquirir ahora para llegar a convertirse en profesionales. Según Rothwell (1998), Gilleard y Gilleard (2000), Reimer (2002), y Raybould y Sheedy (2005), las modulaciones en los tipos de habilidades necesarias se deben a que el lugar de trabajo de los ingenieros se ha hecho global, lo que requiere de la concurrencia de habilidades comunicativas, trabajo en grupo y dominio de un idioma internacional. Pant y Baroudi (2008:124) ponen de relieve la importancia de esas habilidades en el mundo laboral, aunque reconocen que éstas todavía deben incorporarse a los programas de muchos grados.

En otras palabras, no solo se espera que los estudiantes de ingeniería que se convierten en profesionales posean excelentes habilidades técnicas sino también buenas habilidades blandas. Para complicar más las cosas, las investigaciones de Scott y Yates (2002), y Spowage et al. (2008:317) determinan que “los ingenieros, tras su graduación, asumen rápidamente la gestión de proyectos”. Los recién graduados a menudo descubren que necesitan más formación en este campo y esto se refleja en los programas de certificación reconocidos internacionalmente como el Certificado de Asociado en Gestión de Proyectos (cuyas siglas en inglés son CAPM), y el de Profesional en la Gestión de Proyectos (cuyas siglas en inglés son PMP). En este sentido, Gillard (2009:723) señala la importancia de las habilidades y los conocimientos técnicos de los directores de proyectos eficaces y recuerda cómo alguna vez Gestión de Proyectos Internacionales, la organización que expide los diplomas PMI y PMP “enfatiza la exigencia de las habilidades técnicas ligadas
a las *blendas*. Hay otros programas internacionalmente reconocidos, como proyectos en ambientes controlados (PRINCE2: 2012), que son utilizados por el gobierno británico (la atención, no obstante, se centró en proyectos de TI y de la construcción), y ofrecen dos certificados de distinto nivel. Sin embargo, en la guía de la edición de bolsillo del método para 2009, Hedeman y Seegars (2009:10) señalan que “el liderazgo y otras habilidades sociales son intrínsecamente importantes en la gestión de proyectos, aunque resulte imposible codificar éstas en un método”. Por lo tanto, una vez más los estudiantes son a menudo víctimas del desajuste entre los conocimientos técnicos y el dominio de destrezas culturales y comunicativas.

Estas áreas problemáticas han sido objeto de estudio, pero quizá en este momento habría que reflexionar sobre qué habilidades y destrezas convendría profundizar. En el caso de los ingenieros parece claro que éstas deben ser el conocimiento de la lengua inglesa y la adquisición de destrezas culturales.

La globalización ha dado lugar a la adopción de una lengua común para la comunicación en el ámbito internacional. Así muchas empresas usan la lengua inglesa como lengua franca. Cabe preguntarse entonces si todos los graduados en ingeniería tienen la suficiente competencia en inglés. Y más aun: ¿Qué nivel de inglés necesita un ingeniero? El hecho de que la gestión de proyectos implique un alto grado de movilidad internacional de los ingenieros, explica que éstos deban ser capaces de expresarse en inglés, así como de dominar ciertas habilidades culturales y de gestión virtual. ¿Qué se está haciendo para que los estudiantes de ingeniería adquieran estas competencias (comunicación intercultural y dominio de entornos virtuales para la gestión de proyectos deslocalizados)? Todas estas cuestiones están ahora en la vanguardia de los cambios necesarios en el
Summary in Spanish

curriculum de los estudios de la Tecnología de la Información (TI) de ingeniería para asegurar que los estudiantes estén capacitados para incorporarse al mundo profesional, así como para los ingenieros ya graduados, que necesitan de formación continua.

12.2 Base para el estudio

Se ofrecen a continuación los motivos que han llevado a la realización de este estudio. Se discute la necesidad de nuevas investigaciones sobre cómo ayudar a futuros IT y gestores de Proyectos TIC para que éstos adquieran las habilidades sociales necesarias. Los modelos actuales muestran que éste es un campo problemático en la formación de ingenieros IC/ICT. Las experiencias de trabajo de dos proyectos europeos financiados en este campo (POOL y POOLBusiness) ilustra los antecedentes de la investigación inicial, de cómo se puede alcanzar la competencia en la lengua inglesa a la par que las destrezas culturales. Ambos proyectos tratan de establecer cursos de capacitación para este fin. POOL se centró sobre todo en los estudiantes de ingeniería, mientras que POOLBusiness se consagró a profesionales. Se ilustran el modelo inicial de análisis en cinco partes, los contenidos del curso, las hipótesis y las implicaciones que todo ello tiene para la industria.

12.3 El inglés como lingua franca y sus implicaciones

En esta segunda sección se presentan los temas centrales sobre la lengua inglesa, su uso y las metodologías de enseñanza. Se empieza con la descripción de la importancia de la comunicación (Cameron, 2002), lo que lleva a plantear del modelo del inglés como lingua franca (Gradoll, 2000). Se enumeran asimismo las
razones del auge del inglés (Crystal, 1997), seguidas de un ejemplo más pragmático y contemporáneo sobre el éxito de la creación constantes de nuevas palabras en la lengua inglesa. Se estudia después cómo las metodologías tradicionales de enseñanza de lenguas han dado paso a otras basadas en la comunicación (Alcaraz Varó, 1993). Así se forjaron los conceptos de inglés como lingua franca (Firth, 1996; Trudgill, 2000), y como lengua internacional. Se da cuenta también del modelo de los diferentes tipos de inglés en el mundo (McArthur, 1987; Kachru, 1988; y Mediano, 1999). El tema de la enseñanza y el aprendizaje (Seidlinhofer, 2002) implica el concepto de competencia (Melchers & Shaw, 2003). La concurrencia del Marco Europeo de Referencia aplicable al inglés en un entorno internacional se relaciona asimismo con el concepto de comunidades discursivas (Swales, 1990). Se ofrece también la importancia de la lengua específica dentro del curso (Halliday, 1964; Forey, 2004). De ahí que se deba tratar de la importancia de la cultura, llegados a este punto.

12.4 LA INFLUENCIA DE LA CULTURA


12.5 Enseñanza virtual de adultos y metodologías de enseñanza
La cuarta sección empieza profundizando en la metodología educativa para la educación de adultos y la formación profesional. Las teorías tradicionales como la educación humanística del adulto (Rogers, 1969), la educación conductista (Skinner, 1968), y constructivista (Jonassen, 1994), entre otras, son descritas así como la formación profesional, siguiendo el modelo de Kolb (1984). Se insiste finalmente en la importancia de crear estructuras claras del curso poniendo de relieve los resultados de las competencias y el aprendizaje, que son descritos y definidos.

12.6 Entornos virtuales
La siguiente sección se adentra en los entornos virtuales. Se traza una breve historia de la enseñanza de lenguas con el uso de ordenadores (Lamy & Hampel, 2007, Mercer et al., 2004), y se describen las características y las herramientas de estos entornos (McConnell, 2000). Las plataformas CMS y LMS Fronter® y Moodle® son usadas en ambos proyectos: se discuten y comparan las plataformas de videoconferencia Interwise® y Adobe®.

12.7 Los proyectos POOL y POOL2Business
En este apartado, los cursos POOL y POOL2Business son tratados con más detalle. Se describen asimismo sus participantes y cronología. También se abordan
los cuestionarios destinados a la industria para ambos proyectos sobre las necesidades en la gestión de proyectos. Se incluyen asimismo otros estudios sobre el curriculum del curso y otros programas relacionados (Venkatraman, 2007; McGregor, 2000). Finalmente se da cuenta de los resultados del curso así como de su planificación.

12.8 EVALUACIÓN DEL CURRICULUM DEL CURSO

Tanto POOL como POOL2Business establecen métodos de evaluación de los cursos y los profesores. En primer lugar, los resultados del aprendizaje son valorados mediante evaluación continua (Knight, 2006), evaluación sumativa, y evaluaciones cualitativas basadas en criterios establecidos (Johnson, 2006). Se describen también los diferentes tipos de preguntas (Bloom et al., 1956). Ambos cursos fueron muy bien valorados por los alumnos. Por su parte, el profesor comienza a plantearse la inclusión de otras metodologías que contribuyen a fomentar la concienciación y la sensibilización.

12.9 CONCLUSIONES

En la tesis se ha tratado de profundizar en la planificación y los resultados de cursos de formación especializada para ingenieros. La revisión de la hipótesis se detalla abajo. Las experiencias de POOL y POOL2Business pusieron de relieve las dificultades de desarrollar las destrezas lingüísticas y culturales para administradores/gestores de proyectos on-line. A la vez, esta experiencia proporcionó marcos para ser comprobados en el ámbito de la institución académica y en la formación profesional. El funcionamiento de los cursos y la evaluación hicieron lo siguiente más evidente:
Summary in Spanish

a) los estudiantes valoraron el uso del idioma inglés en la gestión de proyectos como un instrumento vital para la comunicación. Sin embargo, esta visión se limita a géneros específicos para la gestión de proyectos (por ejemplo, los informes). Los ingenieros se comunican de maneras predeterminadas para la gestión de proyectos con informes, presentaciones y el uso de ESP para la descripción de procesos y las instrucciones que refleja una comunidad de discurso. Incluso podría decirse que los participantes utilizaron estrategias de comunicación adecuadas (Faerch y Kasper, 1983), tanto la competencia discursiva como la grammatical. Además los participantes han demostrado competencias sociolinguísticas e ilocutivas para los formatos requeridos: informes y presentaciones (Bachman, 1990).

b) A juzgar por el trabajo de Thompson y Coover (2003), se esperaba una mayor confusión y menor comprensión de la discusión del equipo por alas sesiones online de video conferencia. Sin embargo, los cursos que estaban muy estructurados y daban pautas de evaluación muy claras parecen haber proporcionado un marco de referencia adecuado. El campo de la experiencia de los participantes también puede haber contribuido a la facilidad con la que se utilizó el medio. Así, la virtualidad, en general, no era problemática para los participantes y, además, funcionó bien el uso de las plataformas y sistemas de conferencia. Hay otras posibles razones para esto. Por un lado, en un estudio realizado por Kersten et al. (2002) e-negociación intercultural en entornos profesionales parece dejar menos espacio para los rituales de la cultura y comportamientos específicos. Esto significa que la cultura puede tener un efecto menor sobre las negociaciones a través de plataformas
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virtuales. Por otra parte, los estudios realizados por Sanford et al. (2004) han demostrado que los participantes adaptan sus estilos de comunicación de voz en línea para reuniones, interrumpen menos, y producen turnos de palabra más largos y más completas. Además, Driskell et al. (2003) sugiere que el trabajo en equipo virtual, fomenta la holgazanería social, lo que reduce la cantidad y calidad de las interacciones.

c) La inclusión de la industria en la planificación del curso tuvo un efecto sobre su planificación. Las respuestas a los cuestionarios mostraron que la comunicación era a menudo el problema en la gestión de proyectos. Esta mala comunicación no fue un resultado del uso de la tecnología o ESP como el medio de comunicación, sino más bien el resultado del uso del Inglés como lengua franca y el efecto de la cultura.

d) La importancia de la autonomía en el aprendizaje fue evidente a medida que los estudiantes completaron satisfactoriamente sus cursos. Se ha visto que las metodologías que se basan en el aprendizaje doble, promueven la metacognición. Esto es esencial para crear conocimientos, lo cual es beneficioso para cualquier gestor de proyectos.

Esto nos lleva a nuestro primer tema para nuevas investigaciones: la principal prioridad para los directores de proyectos debería ser un mayor énfasis en la EIL, que valora la comprensión, es decir, la inteligibilidad lingüística e intercultural en lugar de la perfección. Muchas veces el mensaje detrás de las palabras es mucho más importante, y la capacidad de usar el lenguaje para este propósito es una habilidad que necesita ser desarrollada.
El vínculo entre la cultura y la lengua también se hizo evidente. Esta importancia no fue indiscutible hasta que el segundo curso, POOL2Business, se completó. La necesidad de un mayor desarrollo de la conciencia cultural llevó al descubrimiento de que la cultura y el lenguaje están tan entrelazados que ambos pueden ser a la vez responsables de los problemas de comunicación citados por la industria. También se hizo evidente que la formación de competencias culturales es una cuestión de desarrollo personal, que cada persona se mueve a una velocidad diferente y que las prácticas de reflexión necesitan ser incluidas en los procesos de formación.

Todo esto nos lleva a las siguientes sugerencias:

a) que bucle sencillo de aprendizaje debe ser transformado en doble bucle de aprendizaje en los cursos de capacitación para permitir el desarrollo de estrategias metacognitivas.

b) que se contemplan EIL y las dificultades asociadas a la comunicación intercultural en lugar de centrarse en ESP exclusivamente para la enseñanza de idiomas.

c) la auto-evaluación (por ejemplo, el escribir diarios) debe formar parte de un mecanismo de evaluación personal que proporcione más espacio para la práctica reflexiva.

d) Los entornos virtuales deben ser usados para fines de reflexión, no sólo como plataformas de gestión de información.

En conclusión, los cursos de la POOL y POOL2Business se basaron en los resultados de los cuestionarios de la industria que ayudó a decidir el currículo de los cursos. Los cursos de formación fueron planeados, entregados y evaluados con éxito aparente. Sin embargo, la velocidad con la que cambia la industria no
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quedaba reflejada en este planteamiento. Esto puede se puede remediar con la introducción de metodologías de aprendizaje que ayuden a los alumnos a ser más conscientes de lo que está sucediendo y animarlos a preguntar por qué está sucediendo y adaptar sus comportamientos y razonamientos en consecuencia. Al incluir el aprendizaje doble y prácticas reflexivas, las posibilidades de acción de un individuo aumentan, ya que la razón subyacente de un determinado comportamiento se hace evidente. Este enfoque metacognitivo hacia el aprendizaje debe ser incorporado en la planificación de cursos de gestión de proyectos. Las necesidades siempre cambiantes de una economía global demandará líderes de proyectos más flexibles y adaptables en el futuro para llevar a cabo proyectos internacionales.