

# Languages @ Warwick: Creating an international language learning virtual environment

## Final Report

### Changes to submitted project plan:

Several changes were made to the project plan as a result of decisions which were beyond my control. These affected the timeframe and some of the partners involved. The timeframe was shorter as the funding was not agreed until June 2012 and the first team meeting was held in February 2013. Concerns about the institutional situation for moodle use were also raised with IATL on 29th January 2013. Nonetheless, dissemination continued from the beginning of the academic year 2012-13 around the Languages@Warwick portal development and the opportunities that it had supported

The original continuation proposal included German (who decided not to participate) and IGGY who also declined the offer to be included. However, this allowed space for other partnerships to evolve as the report highlights, including the Coventry University MexCo project, the work on telecollaboration and further development of the e-portfolio space. Furthermore, I designed and implemented a student language learning strategy course SILA open to all Language Centre students which used both physical and online spaces to connect students in order to support their language learning progress.

### Summary:

The progress of the work using Languages@Warwick has continued strongly as you can see by the outputs below. The nature of the work is collaborative and interdisciplinary and despite changes to staffing (Elisabetta left Warwick) new collaborators continue to build on the work that has been done. We are hoping to continue to develop this activity with further support from IATL.

### Dissemination activities:

Conference and event presentations made linked to Languages@Warwick. All are shared on my [slideshare profile](#).

Sept 2012: ALT conference presentation:

**Holes in the wall: benefits of computer-mediated communication for international language learning.**

January 2013 AULC conference:

**“Taking matters into your own hands”**. (Chromebooks/Google apps for education in language teaching.)

**“The context for collaboration in Language Learning”**

January 2013 LLAS e-learning symposium:

**“Exploring the collaborative potential of web 2.0.”**

February 2013 UCML/HEA event on collaboration:  
**“Telecollaboration”**

April 2013 Blackboard Teaching and Learning conference, Aston  
**“Supporting interaction between language learners.”**

May 2013 Westminster Uni away day:  
**“Language teaching in the digital age”**

May 2013 HEA Changing the Learning Landscape:  
**“Managing your identity”**

June 2013 #cwil conference  
**“Affordances of CMC tools:Effective international computer-mediated communication”**

July 2013 mahara conference:  
**Mahara: Creative spaces”**

September 2013: Paper and presentation at Eurocall conference, Evora, Portugal.  
**“Creating and nurturing a Community of Practice for language teachers in Higher Education.”**

#### **Internal dissemination and contacts with Warwick networks:**

October 9th 2012 Meeting with Sarah Pasfield-Neofitou, Monash

February 2013 contributed to QAA review as part of enrichment activities at Warwick

March 2013 TELL presentation video in Languages@Warwick

Meetings with CLL (Liz White) Chemistry (Lynne Bayley) IATL (Adam Cartwright) Med School (David Davies)

June 2013 Clermont Ferrand planning

Collaboration with WIE (Jo Trowsdale) re: implementation of e-portfolio for Teach First.

#### **Research grants and funding awards:**

My work with telecollaborative tools has been recognised by the HEA who have [published my report](#). This was also communicated through the University of Warwick’s Facebook and twitter channels:

facebook Search for people, places and things

University of Warwick Timeline Now

3 people like this.

Write a comment...

Valerie Bailey-Loo very interesting  
Like · Reply · 2 July at 15:43

University of Warwick shared a link.  
1 July

Warwick Language Centre's Teresa MacKinnon on using e-tools to enhance language teaching & learning in #highered  
<http://bit.ly/14kZlei>

**Using e-tools to facilitate international collaborations and enhance language teaching**  
bit.ly

This report investigates the ways in which e-tools and virtual learning environments (VLEs) are being used to facilitate international collaborations and enhance

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The Language Centre recently facilitated an online international conference called Developing digital literacies and intercultural communicative competence for the 'global graduate' - Computer Mediated Communication for Interaction in Language Learning (#CWIL) a joint conference on telecollaboration with Coventry University bringing together top academics in the field of Computer Mediated Communication from Spain (Robert O'Dowd), Australia (Monash, Sarah Pasfield-Neofitou) and New York (Sunny Centre, Sarah Guth). This was a practitioner event which raised awareness of the outputs of the [INTENT report](#) such as the [Uni-collaboration](#) database which supports practitioners in finding international collaborators for their students.

The online day was run from Warwick. A series of interviews with leaders of existing successful online communities were made: [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLAwTp2E3Ebgg-RJrP2\\_f-sk6kPTykMLyw](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLAwTp2E3Ebgg-RJrP2_f-sk6kPTykMLyw) to inform and inspire participants. A google+ community was used to extend the activities beyond the event <https://plus.google.com/u/0/communities/108727421627367013571>

My expertise in this area has also led to the funding award below.

No	Date Awarded	Project Title/Details Duration of Award	Funding Body	Involvement PI?	Names of Other Holders	Total Awarded	Total to University if amount split
1	July 2012	<i>Intercultural Language Learning Exchanges (ILLE): Exploring intercultural Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) and metacognitive thresholds in international language exchanges</i> 07/2012-01/2014	HEA TDG	Technical consultancy and researcher. PI is Dr Marina Orsini-Jones	Beatriz Vera Lopez, Felipe Bustos Cruz	£60,000	£16,000

I am also pleased to be supporting a digital course space for Nick Monk's Forms of Identity module for 2013-14 where Sarah Pasfield-Neofitou will be able to encourage online interaction between students of Warwick and Monash.

#### **Italian Department report:**

This academic year has accompanied some important developments in the Punto d'incontro Moodle site for the Italian department and its year abroad students. This has included both important testing and problem resolving of key functions, as well as looking forward to future changes, and a significant re-design of the course's front page.

The change of the front page has constituted an important stage of negotiating the available website structures of Moodle in line with the demand for this website: given that it, ideally, will remain fairly constant over a period of academic years, and not function as a constantly updated and revised course or accompaniment to a course. As such, the time spend re-designing has experimented with the 'social' layout of the page, and designed images, re-coloured according to the theme of the site, which then function as links across the webpage. This creates a more user-friendly website for the students, who are able to navigate with greater ease, and at the same time easier functionality to the department. It nevertheless retains flexibility, where links can easily be hidden or re-shown.

The experimentation of functionality has been furthered thanks to the department's broader shift to electronic submissions. This has affected the year abroad students, who have been *required*, for the first time, to submit assignments undertaken on the year abroad through the Moodle site. This has

also led to a greater usage of the site, which, as the page statistics have begun to reveal, has led to increased visitation and use of the further pages (e.g. the quizzes and wiki).

With regard to future projects, there remains a broad intention to push for greater compatibility across the languages department (and a collaborative project would be welcome in that regard). The same objective of developing a greater usage of the site across the department, for the home students, is also a major aim in the long term; this has been brought a step closer thanks to the revisions of the site structure.

**French Department report:**

Attached separately.

**Fellowship review and future look:**

The two years of support that we have had from IATL have been absolutely crucial to development of this digital open space innovation and all collaborators are hoping that it can be developed and extended further in coming years. It is also hoped that the documented learning in terms of effective use of technologies to enhance teaching and learning inform Warwick's e-learning policies and practice. Given that the project's aims were not only met but exceeded despite a shorter timeframe than originally planned, we hope that IATL feels we have established a proven track record.