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A UNIVERSITY E-LEARNING PLATFORM
FOR SPECIALISED FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING
AND COMMUNICATION

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1. Introduction: eLearning systems and the European policy

The need for increased development rate, productivity, employment and social cohesion in the European Union has led, in recent years, to the design of a framework that may allow the European Commission to accomplish these aims. The eEurope Action Plan dated May 2000, with the goal of establishing the European Union as the most competitive economy by the year 2010 (COM 2002), focuses on the widespread availability and use of broadband networks throughout the Union and on the development of Internet Protocol IPv6, aiming at the provision of a dynamic business environment, a secure information infrastructure, and a wide range of modern online public services, such as eGovernment, eHealth, eBusiness and eLearning (seen in Barcelona European Council). It is this last action or series, in particular, that the Commission is attempting to promote in various ways, including through the extensive use of ICT programs and the eLearning initiative.

The eLearning initiative proposes actions alongside the following discernible axes:

- The development of a high quality technological infrastructure—i.e., the connection of schools to high speed networks (of academic / research centres), improvement of the student-PC ratio\(^1\), incorporation of technological methods based on ICT in school curricula, online learning platforms, and support systems, so that eLearning can be made accessible to all—.
- The promotion of training at all levels, with particular emphasis on the technological training of educators, and the most effective use of technology for educational purposes.

- The design of services, content and new digital educational environments (research into NLE, the development of innovative applications for education and training, virtual communities and campuses, as well as virtual networks for cooperation and collaboration).

- The development of a culture of lifelong learning.

For the application of the eLearning Initiative, the Commission proceeded towards the formulation of an eLearning Action Plan, which clarifies the relationship of eLearning and eEurope, and defines concerted key measures for each of its four actions, that is, the infrastructure, training, provision of high-quality multimedia services and content as well as dialogue and cooperation at all levels (COM 2001, 8-9). In the same direction, specific recommendations were made during the European eLearning Summit (2001) in order to accelerate the necessary pedagogical and institutional changes.

Although it is obviously beyond the scope of this study to cite all the documentation related to this important area, let us emphasise the recommendations urged, ensuring connectivity and accessibility of eLearning to every user, the involvement of the private sector and its cooperation with the public sector, an increase in investment for the development of open standards for eLearning and its interoperability, the appropriate training of educators, and especially towards research into eLearning pedagogy, eContent and the development of user-friendly interfaces (ICC 2003, 68-69).

The formulation of the European policy, as described above, suggested initiatives that have applications to all learning objects, while there are certain sectors of strategic importance indicated in all official documents without the development of which the accomplishment of the aims of the eEurope Action Plan will not be possible. These sectors are an increase in Modern Language learning, and the development of Digital Literacy, and even in the workforce, most significantly, for the training of educators, who play a key role in the successful planning, application and functioning of any eLearning system.

2. Why implement an eLearning system in a foreign language department?

Taking such introductory statements as a basic background scope, it seems obvious that the development of eLearning systems for language learning and, if feasible, the simultaneous acquisition of digital literacy is important and in tune with social needs. Furthermore, the development of similar systems should be a
basic priority for those university departments that wish to produce future foreign language teachers.

Several internet applications have been developed in recent years by various European institutions (Thematic Network Project II) within this framework. Some characteristic examples of good practice are as follows:
- "Digitalenklas" (Jager 2002) is a project developed by four Dutch universities (Utrecht, Leiden, Groningen, Tilburg) for the inclusion of ICT in the teaching of foreign languages. The project concerns the development of listening and speaking skills in four languages—English, Spanish, Dutch and Arabic. It makes use of the customised software "Ellips", which is based mainly on closed-type exercises for the web and was developed in cooperation with the Languages Centre of the University of Ghent in Belgium (cf. EuroCALL 2003).
- The University Language Scheme project from the University of Sheffield Hallam, U.K., was designed to function as a complement to the existing program of language instruction in the classroom (Scott, Lyne and Pink 2002). It uses multimedia teaching materials and closed-type exercises to develop students’ listening and reading skills in four languages (French, German, Spanish and Italian).
- The "VDML" (Virtual Departments for Minority Languages) project was developed by the Departments of Scandinavian studies of three British universities under the auspices of JISC. The aim of the program was the development of a virtual foreign language university department for the support of students and teachers (Hughes and King 2002). It uses WebCT and Hot Potatoes software for the production of exercises on the web in order to teach Danish.
- "Approaches to Literature" and "Assessment and the Expanded Text" are projects headed by the Northumbria University, UK, and in which three other British universities participate. They concern the teaching of English literature and the evaluation of students online (Holland and Arrowsmith 2000).
- The "INGENIO" project was designed by Valencia Polytechnic university (Spain) as an online environment for language courses. At the same time, it is a database made up of multimedia language exercises.
- The "Welcome/I4LL" project and the "Kielikompassi" portal (at the Virtual Finnish University) are applications that offer access to sources or to databases of teaching materials, online language activities, cultural information, and others. These materials are usually part of a series of lessons, and parts of them may also be offered.
- Finally, in our own department, the JOBLINE and XENIOS projects
(Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece) are applications aiming at the development of special language skills, since they are addressed to particular
target groups (e.g., employment search in a foreign country, economic idiolects, and so forth).

In these applications, we can observe a swing from teaching to acquisition and from the traditional teacher-centred approach to a learner-centred educational model in which, with the use of information and communication technologies, foreign language students can become autonomous (Benson and Voller 1997, 25), use alternative sources, and determine the time, place, amount of content, and the pace and direction of the learning processes.

The present research relies on the design of a distance learning program of courses included in the graduate studies curriculum of our Foreign Language Department, which aims at the development of new professional abilities for students, enabling them to respond to the needs of the labour market in foreign languages for specific purposes, which, due to the increase in natural and virtual mobility, continue to rise.

In parallel, the designed program aims at the development of students' language abilities and their acquisition of cultural knowledge concerning the country where the foreign language is spoken, on the one hand, and, on the other, at the acquisition of technological knowledge.

This latter parameter is particularly important since technological ability constitutes a basic characteristic of the future foreign-language-teacher profile, in agreement with the demands of the new digitally-enhanced learning environments. In this new type of contexts, the foreign language teacher is called upon to play a new role, no longer as the absolute owner of knowledge, but now as the tutor, facilitator, researcher, and integrator of new media, while, certainly, as the designer of learning materials and scenarios (Fitzpatrick et al. 2003, 42-45). Therefore, it is a fact that a basic level of technological knowledge is not sufficient, as foreign language teachers should be in a position to make the best use of technological environments in order to search, evaluate and select information and means appropriate for the aims they set, as well as to design lessons and activities with additional value for their students (Shulte 2001, 38). Consequently, it seems reasonable that future teachers should become familiar with the technological tools available, not just through learning to use them, but also by using them themselves as students during their training. This work should allow them to make more effective use of new learning environments in the future, integrating them in the most effective way into more traditional teaching methodologies (Osborne 2001, 138); in addition, improvement of professional abilities to open up opportunities in the job market should be a priority at this level.

This particular distance-learning program of courses is believed to provide solutions to other problems faced by the French Language and Literature Department at Aristotle University, in the curriculum of which it is to be
included. Firstly, it will offer an alternative solution to the problem of lack of classroom space, allowing certain numbers of students to attend remotely while at the same time will provide an answer to the problem of staff shortages. Secondly, our teaching personnel will, in this way, be able to cater for a greater sub-division of classes. In addition, it will ensure that students with special needs or students who cannot attend the conventional curriculum for different reasons (work, geography, finances, and so on) can access at least part of their studies.

3. Technological options

The first step in the creation of a distance learning system is the choice of the technological platform that will host it. Of course, the choice of technologies for the delivery of the teaching materials, the support of the learning process and that of the users are subject to various criteria, such as cost, availability of technologies, number and accessibility potential of users, type of teaching materials, and others (Bates 1995, 3-12). In any case, the technological solutions that will be applied should cater for the needs of the system, as presented below in Figure 7-1.

It is obvious from the applications described in the next section that either complete technological platforms, such as Virtual Learning Environments (VLE), or combinations of technologies—commercial or custom made—are used, depending on the case, to fulfil the requirements presented in Figure 7-1.

Of course, in the case of institutions of Higher Education, the infrastructure and technological platforms that can be used are usually already available. In recent years, the tendency in European tertiary institutions is the installation of VLEs that work either independently or within the framework of the broader managed learning environments that the University possesses (UCISA 2003). Equivalent systems are currently available at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, especially via the use of the VLE Blackboard, one of the most complete and widely-recognised software of its kind, as well as of the Claroline platform, likewise popular as low-cost installation.
However, a new choice was made for the establishment of a website that might develop the distance learning program of the Department subjects.

There are several reasons that have led to this choice. Firstly, administration of the VLE was impossible for us, since it is carried out centrally by the University, a fact that deprives us of the possibility to customise it according to our needs. Secondly, the design of the courses does not, at present, require many of the VLE capabilities (for example, the ability for students and teachers to communicate and collaborate online). Furthermore, administrative characteristics that VLEs are particularly useful for (studies management, support of list of participants, grades, etc.) were not of critical importance in this specific case. Therefore, the use of a VLE would seem to complicate matters, increase teachers’ workload, and create more problems for the users than those it might solve.

At this point, it should be mentioned that the level of digital literacy (or computer literacy) of the staff and students of the department is generally far from sufficient for the satisfactory feeding, use, and maximization of benefits from a VLE. Therefore, in the case of the use of a VLE, additional training costs of both teachers and students from the department should be considered. This would require both financial and human resources, neither of which was available.

The development of a website, customised to the needs of the program, was believed to offer certain advantages and would help to avoid the restrictions imposed by the VLE (Panagiotidis 2005, 227-239).

In particular, this choice would enable the following:
To make possible the incorporation of the database that supports the lessons designed under exact specifications (see section 4.2 below).
- To enable the integration of the “timeline” application, specifically adapted and developed for the courses.
- To allow for the design of a user interface that would be appropriate for the specific subjects and teaching materials (see section 4.1 below).
- To allow for easier incorporation of exercises designed with exercise production software for the web.
- To be functional and offer a working environment similar to the rest of the departmental websites, providing the same experience to each student from the department and each user of the system (see bibliography for the department’s web site).
- To make use of already existing technological know-how’s from similar applications developed in the department over the past years (see bibliography).
- To offer students the opportunity to be trained with tools that they will be called upon to use (e.g., Hot Potatoes).
- To offer greater freedom concerning the management of the multimedia materials and the degree of interactivity.

4. Design principles of the eLearning platform

The basic principle for the design of the distance learning system of the Department of French Language and Literature (which will be referred to as eFRL from now on) was the creation of an eLearning platform model that could host an unlimited number of courses consisting of different subjects. Each lesson is to be combined with several learning objects in this platform.

Using the definition adopted by the Learning Object Initiative (cf. Allert, Dhraief and Nejdl 2002; IEEE-LTSC), a learning object may be defined as any grouping of materials that is structured in a meaningful way and is tied to an educational objective. These “materials” can be documents, pictures, simulations, movies, sounds, and so on. Structuring these in a meaningful way implies that the materials are related and arranged in a logical order. Yet, without a clear and measurable educational objective, the collection remains simply a collection (Johnson 2003).

In our case the learning object is a unique entity with specific characteristics comprising texts, images, sounds, etc., and is saved in a specially designed multimedia database (see section 4.2).

Its structure requires the production of individual pictures, animation, sounds, music, video sequences, and any other digital media (Horton and Horton 2003, 12). Many such entities with a coherent navigational structure form a lesson, and 10 to 12 lessons form a complete course.3
This conceptual design led us to formulate the research according to three basic parameters:
- the development of the appropriate user interface
- the design of a database capable of supporting multimedia materials
- the design of a common structure concerning the organization of the teaching material

4.1. The user interface

Specifications were set from the beginning in the design of the user interface. These were due, on the one hand, to the variety of learning objects it would have to support and, on the other, to the level of computer literacy of future users of the system, that is, students from the Department.

Therefore, what we decided can be summarised as follows:
- The adoption of complete uniformity of graphic design on the pages of the different lessons, to ensure the users’ rapid and easy familiarisation with the environment.
- The division of the screen into areas that serve different purposes. This division is maintained throughout the system structure, and is common to all courses.
- A common way to navigate the course content. This concerns not only the succession of lessons in each course, but also the evaluation and communication with the teacher.
- A common structure of the lessons of a course concerning the pedagogical aspect: Presentation of the teaching material/activity/(self)evaluation.
- The adoption of “floating” windows. While the basic content of the lesson remains accessible on the screen, the activities and the accompanying applications are offered as floating windows.

In addition, given the technological level of the students from the department and the type of access they have from their homes (primarily PSTN or ISDN), choices were made concerning technological means. Thus, it was decided that:
- only tools offered as standard by the operating system (Browser, Windows Media player, Outlook), as well as certain very commonly used free software applications, such as Adobe Reader, would be used,
- whatever auxiliary tools (see section 6) are used, they would be part of and accessible through the interface;
- the course content must be directly accessible and printable so that the students will not have to follow links on the internet in order to locate the relevant materials (McVay Lynch 2002, 93-94).
- the basic content of the pages should be light in size (kb) and the multimedia archives should be accessible on demand.
It should be noted, however, that nothing prevents the parallel use of other software tools, depending on the communication type in particular, programmed to take place during the extension phase of the system.

4.2. The database

In accordance with the user’s needs and the specific requirements of the courses, a conceptual model for the multimedia database of the distance learning system has been developed. This database consists of a data security layer for the protection of the stored content, a data management layer (Elmashri and Navathe 2000, 56; Date 1995, 35-42), and a storage/retrieval system (Conolly and Begg 2005, 44).

A dynamic delivery user interface provides access to students (learners), teaching staff (instructors) and the system administrator. Instructors are provided with a user-friendly interface to store course materials. Using pre-defined templates, they can thus develop an entire course or individual modules by using existing learning objects or by creating new ones. A very important aspect was the digitalisation of the learning materials and their storage on the designed database, which acts as a main Learning Object Repository that stores and manages all multimedia information (texts, sounds, graphics, still images, video streams) plus all metadata information for each learning object.

The “learning object” is also defined by Ip, Young and Morrison (2002, 317) as a piece of educational information including content based on specific learning objectives, while “content” is the material used to convey the subject matter (text, graphics, audio, video) plus all the interactions between them. Each learning object has a set of descriptive metadata, which describes what the object contains. Typically, metadata includes all the necessary information about the educational content (language, date, duration, size, author, copyright information, and so on) and through this, the learning objects can be indexed, searched and re-used more efficiently (McGreal 2004, 124).

In the procedure described above, there are two main problems. First of all there is the difficulty posed by the lack of standardisation and guidelines of the learning object (Alvertis, Dhrarief and Nejdl 2002). However, to re-address this issue, numerous workgroups and institutions have already been established in order to standardise both the learning objects and guidelines mentioned above. For example, initiatives such as the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative, IEEE, IMS Global Learning Consortium, Alliance of Remote Instructional Authoring and Distribution Networks for Europe, Aviation Industry CB Committee, Advanced Distributed Learning Initiative, and so on, can illustrate such efforts at standardisation.
Secondly, a potential problem may arise from the fact that the learning objects are not designed exclusively by educators. There may not always be then one specific methodological approach to account for the specific needs of language and literature teaching.

5. System structure, contents, and aims

The basic design options described above have led to the creation of an e-learning platform model capable of supporting a variety of learning objects. However, its application and customisation, especially in the case of the eFRL, have been dictated by the organizational demands and the teaching needs of the Department.

The Department offers a variety of courses on French language and culture, linguistics, didactics, translation and, in recent years, new technologies and their application to the teaching of foreign languages. The idea for the creation of the eLearning platform was to offer distance users a variety of subjects covering, as far as possible, all these sectors. Therefore, in its first application, the system offers users the opportunity to deal with nine courses, divided into three general directions.

The first direction concerns European Civilization. The courses are:

a. Literary trends in Europe: Middle Age – 18th Century.

b. Literary trends in Europe: 19th and 20th Centuries.

c. European Theatre.

The second direction concerns didactics and the linguistic training of professional adults. It also consists of three subjects:

a. Analysis of linguistic needs.

b. Design and development of programs for linguistic instruction.

c. Development of language learning packages for professionals.

Finally, the third direction concerns Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) for language learning. Here, too, three subjects are offered:

a. New learning environments.

b. The development of multimedia didactic material for language learning.

c. Linguistic databases and electronic dictionaries.

The content of the above courses was developed by groups consisting of two / three people, specialists in each area, based on common specifications concerning the internal structure of each course and the standardisation of the learning process. In this way, each course includes the didactic material, relevant bibliography, links to websites on the subject chosen by the teacher, and multimedia files (video or sound). Activities and, in certain cases, auxiliary applications are also included.
A University E-Learning Platform for Specialised Foreign Language
Teaching and Communication

It should, of course, be noted that the aims of each course are different. Given the fact that the students from the department already have quite a good knowledge of the French language, the development of language skills is sought together with the development of professional and technological skills, as such are main aims in the project.

More specifically, the lessons in the first course, which concerns European Civilization and European Theatre, chiefly target the development of text strategy approaches. The texts provided to students and their analysis aim to help develop mechanisms that will enable learners to deal with similar texts. The exercises have also these aims.

The lessons in the second course, concerning didactics and the linguistic training of professional adults, concern the future language teacher, who should be able to:

- diagnose the language needs of a target group,
- plan language training programs for specific audiences,
- acquire the know-how's for the development of communicative activities and the design of appropriate exercises (Figure 7-2 displays an example).

Finally, the lessons in the third course, concerning Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) for language learning, aim at the development of technological skills (see section 1). This involves the knowledge of web search techniques, as well as additional knowledge concerning software for multimedia editing and production, videoconferencing, web page authoring, electronic exercise development, and the use of virtual learning environments.
6. System performance

The general structure of the courses mentioned in the previous section can be seen on the introductory page of the eFRL. Here, the user is called upon to select the course to be followed.

An introduction to the course (advanced organiser) and its aims are presented on the introductory page of each course. This framework helps the user to become aware of the use of the lessons to be taught and the relationships between them, while, at the same time, provides motivation to learn and the opportunity to assimilate new knowledge more easily (Melton 2002, 42-43). As mentioned, the working environment is common to all courses and follows a particular format (Figure 7-3).
The lessons that form the teaching material of the course appear on the left-hand side of the screen. Each course consists of 10 to 12 lessons. The student can handle them autonomously, at their own pace and in their own time. The content of each lesson appears in a sub-menu and differs according to the category of the course. It consists of three / five different learning objects handled at each time, which include theory, extracts from authentic learning materials, PowerPoint presentations, pdf files, or activities relevant to the topics dealt with in that particular lesson. The content of each learning object appears on the central area of the screen, which is the only frame of the environment that varies depending on the user’s choices.

Concerning the multimedia material that the teacher wishes to accompany each lesson with, audio-visual utilities are provided on the right-hand side of the screen. A large number of multimedia files of any kind (sound, video, animations, etc.) can be placed here. These can be of a purely informative kind, or form the basis for a project or an activity. The multimedia files can be played via separate floating windows, which allow the user to access them while having simultaneous direct access to the theoretical content of the lesson (appearing in the middle of the screen).

At the end of each lesson, the student is called upon to deal with an activity. The rubric for the activity and the relevant instructions for the project that should
be done appear within the central framework, while the material for the activity—written or in multimedia form—appears within a floating window. The student is provided with extra help in the form of written explanations, if requested. The activities are submitted by email, using the relevant key on the menu that is adjusted and sent to the teacher of the particular course.

In the present phase, tutoring is carried out by email and, according to the experience acquired through the application of the system, the possibility of using other means of teacher-student communication will be examined.

A system of self-evaluation is also included in each course. In some courses it consists of questions accompanied by the correct answers (which appear only after the activation of the relevant button), while in others it is the format of Hot Potatoes exercises which allow the user to check the knowledge they have acquired. In this case, the choice of an exercise leads to the opening of a floating window that contains both the exercise and the evaluation system. The user must simultaneously use the multimedia archive which the exercise refers to in another window, while they can read the theoretical part of the lesson at the central part of the interface at the same time.

The final evaluation of the students will be conducted at the end of the semester by an on-site, rather than distant, written examination to ensure both the security of the system and accordance with the constitutional policy framework of the University.

At all times, a series of tools ("outils" on the menu), adapted to the course being covered, is at the student’s disposal. The top right-hand area of the screen is reserved for these tools. This category includes links to the bibliography suggested by the teacher for each course, external sources on the internet which are suggested for further study by the student, as well as certain applications developed for the eFRL.

The first of these applications is the glossary ("Glossaire"). This is not an extensive dictionary but one that is especially adapted to the course content, so that the student can find specialised help concerning terms, expressions, or words used in the course. The glossary opens in a floating window and is accessible and printable at any time.

The second application was designed by using the "Timeline Creator" freeware program developed at the Centre of Educational Recourses of John Hopkin’s University. Its aim is to offer students a complete picture of the field the course deals with and its evolution in time, connecting the knowledge, historical figures and social developments with the era in which these took place or existed. It is a chronological table (timeline) on which the writers, their works, the important editions, and the great social and political events are placed. The application covers the period from the 8th Century (Charlemagne in France) up until and including the 20th Century, and is also displayed as a
floating window. Users can have slides at their disposal, with the help of which the date can be selected. Important events appear for each date with explanatory symbols that can be selected for further information to consult. The application covers four thematic areas: European history, French history, Social life, and French writers and their works (Figure 7-4).

Fig. 7-4: The timeline application. Course “European Theatre”/ Module by Jean Anouilh

At present, the eFRL platform is going through a period of experimental application, evaluation, and correction. As part of the initial phase, three courses have been presented to a group of 40 students from the department, one from each of the directions mentioned in Section 5. The students were asked to comment on issues such as course structure, user interface, navigational system, auxiliary tools and all other multimedia elements. Feedback from these students has been very encouraging, while their first impressions (recorded in evaluation questionnaires) have also been positive. In particular, students felt satisfied with the course content and the activities as well as the auxiliary tools. The courses of “Literary trends in Europe” and of “Didactics and the linguistic training of professional adults” have aroused great interest due to both the way material is presented and the support offered through multiple activities (according to recorded answers).

Several of the comments and suggestions have provided feedback on the original design, correction of errors, and oversights. For the second phase, all
suggested activities will be tested at length by a new group of 40 students so that possible malfunctions can be fixed prior to regular inclusions.

7. Conclusions: Future extension and support

The distance-learning program of the Department of French Language and Literature presented is to be included in the department curriculum in October 2008. Our belief is that the eFRL platform is a step in the direction indicated by the promotion of language learning, as it tries to provide a solution to the problem of the ICT gap growth at our institution of higher education. It also aims to face up to the educational challenge of inadequate levels in digital literacy (i.e., where training of foreign language teachers is needed). To this end, it offers a combination of courses in an effort to cover the priority areas for innovation and development of the eLearning Action Plan, i.e., languages, technology and culture.

The eFRL system is one of the initial applications of the eLearning platform and the database designed to constitute an expandable and adaptable platform of distance learning training. This model can be expanded to host different courses with corresponding lessons, while maintaining the same structure, interface and form of data storage on its database.

In its present application, this model has been adapted to suit the technological restrictions set by the reality of Greek telecommunications. Certain elements, such as the provision of streaming multimedia or the provision of help through video-conferencing, have not yet been realised, despite the fact that the original planning foresaw these. At this point, the situation appears to be changing, as the cost of telecommunications is rapidly falling, and, even more so, as the promotion of privileged wideband connections to university students is taking hold. Thus, the program will be able to offer real-time audiovisual communication and richer multimedia content at a later phase. In the light of this, research will continue into the issue of self-evaluation, while the addition of new courses will be considered, depending on the results of the program and on how well it is to be received by students.

Notes

1 The target proportion has been met as 1/15 in all EU schools by the end of 2003.
2 A significant rate of teaching should be delivered using eLearning tools and methods, according to current EU reports on eLearning planning (e.g., COM 2001, 172; COM 2002, 263). Naturally, this presupposes that the students themselves will have a sufficiently high level of computer literacy concerning office applications, telecommunication software, and internet procedures.
A University E-Learning Platform for Specialised Foreign Language Teaching and Communication

3 Horton and Horton (2003, 14) propose the following structure in the system: Curriculum, course, lesson, pages, media. Based on this, our own structure is: Course, lesson, learning objects (texts, pages, media).

4 Most European initiatives are related to the Resource Description Framework (RDF), the Warwick Framework, and to other activities of the World Wide Web Consortium. They are also connected with activities whose aim is to establish common standards for the development of the Semantic Web.

5 Since ADSL connectivity is not particularly widespread in Greece, the majority of the students will be connected to the system via PSTN or ISDN connections. This lack of infrastructure is the main reason the solution of video-conferencing was not examined at this stage.

6 The software “Hot Potatoes” (Half-Baked Software Inc) allows for the creation of interactive exercises of closed type, such as Cloze, Quiz, Cross, Match, and Mix.

7 The cost of ADSL connections in Greece (in June, 2006) was 20 euros per month (for 512 Kbps). The "DIOLOS" Project caters for the provision of such connections to students at half the cost.

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