



LANGUAGE LEARNING AND SOCIAL MEDIA
6 KEY DIALOGUES

Language learning: resources and networks



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Language learning: resources and networks

Foreword

It is with great pleasure that we present the following study, based on the work of the Team "Language Learning, Social Media and Language Resources", a part of the European Network "Language Learning and Social Media: 6 Key dialogues".

We are grateful to all who have contributed to this study; its preparation and its production. Our thanks go particularly to Emmanuelle Bastide, whose journalistic experience was vital to edit the text for wider public accessibility.

None of this work would have been possible without the contributions of over 150 language resource providers from across Europe. Of these, over 20 creators of products most representative for our study agreed to give in-depth interviews.

The information they provided gave us an initial insight into the changing landscape of online language learning through the Social Web.

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Introduction

« What influence does Web 2.0 have on language learning resource providers? » This is the question our team started with. It was understood from the start that we weren't interested in abstract speculation, but rather in combining empirical observations with information gleaned from the sector's key players. First of all, we had to agree on a definition of both Web 2.0, and 'language resource provider'. Next, a methodology was needed for collecting data and developing hypotheses.

This work resulted in classifying ten types of 'Web 2.0 practices' in four dossiers.

Some definitions

The term "Web 2.0" was coined in 2005 by Dale Dougherty of O'Reilly Media at a conference of innovators driving web revival in the aftermath of the dot-com crash (Musser, 2007): 'Web 2.0 is a set of economic, social, and technological trends that collectively form the basis for the next generation of internet — a more mature, distinctive medium characterized by user participation, openness, and network effects'.

N.B. 'Network effects' are the effect a user has on the usefulness of a product: a 'network effect' occurs when the usefulness of a product increases in proportion to its number of users. Although the authors provide several classifications of Web 2.0 practices, some technological and some commercial, for the purposes of this study, we will examine three criteria: [horizontal platforms](#), [user generated content](#) (UGC) and [accessibility](#).

Horizontal platforms highlight the importance of user exchanges (all to all), in contrast to more traditional websites, which are run on a vertical basis (one to all). UGC means that users participate in the creation of content. Accessibility refers to the openness of websites and whether or not they have fee-paying formats. 'Being Web 2.0', is then, as Dohn writes (2009): 'not a binary function but a question of degree'.

This applies as much to the horizontal structure as to content creation. When it comes to payment, things get more complicated: a site financed by advertising cannot be considered as being completely free of charge, whilst a pay system may encourage social networking practices within the community of paying users.

The first language providers we approached were international broadcasters, textbook editors and large language learning institutions. Where e-learning providers and mutual language learning websites are included, they are either start-up enterprises or not-for-profit organisations.

Aims, methodology and hypotheses

The aim of this study is to provide an overview of social networking-related developments affecting resource providers. *The study by no means claims to be exhaustive.* Since the developments it charts are often in their infancy, an attempt to analyse usage (a study focussing on users) would have seemed premature and would also have cost too much time. We have therefore turned to what was already available on the Internet (including subscription websites), and to the observations of key players and institutions in the field with experience of social networking.

The study follows a dual methodology: meetings with e-learning language practitioners and observations gathered from the Internet. We carried out 24 interviews over a period of three months (April – June 2010), following a collectively agreed set of criteria. These criteria were as much about the interviewees' experiences of social networking (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) as they were about insights into current practices and future developments.

One of our initial hypotheses was that social networking practices would be in their infancy and would therefore come into conflict with business models, or even with educational objectives. In other words; how do you reconcile open access and profit making with quality of content, user generated content, horizontal platforming and linguistic accuracy? This hypothesis was confirmed by our research, but by prioritising our criteria, we were able to avoid crude 'one-size-fits-all' conclusions separating "good" from "bad" students. Instead, we concentrated on probing the advantages and limitations of social networking for all types of participants.

Organisation of the study

We have divided the language learning practices we encountered into four dossiers - each based on case studies. The first dossier introduces projects focused on language learning packages designed to take advantage of certain Web 2.0 characteristics. In this dossier, the key players are textbook editors, e-learning companies and an EU project. The second dossier focuses on virtual worlds and examines the role language learning institutions can play. The third dossier tackles the presence of social networking in the language services of various international broadcasters. The fourth and final dossier looks at mutual language learning, something which pre-dates social networking, but is now experiencing a revival. In this final dossier, the key players are website administrators.

Bibliography

Dohn, Nina Bonderup (2009). *Web 2.0: Inherent tensions and evident challenges for education.* International journal of computer-supported collaborative learning 4(3), p. 343–363. <http://ijcscl.org>

Musser, John (2007) (with Tim O'Reilly & the O'Reilly Radar Team). *Web 2.0 principles and best practices.* O'Reilly Radar. <http://radar.oreilly.com/research/web2-report.html>

Dossier 1 :

**The Social Web as
a teaching aid**

Introduction

Many providers of educational language content - whether textbook publishers, online learning providers, producers of educational radio programmes or EU projects, are looking to capitalize on the new tools offered by the Social Web.

This dossier looks at the developments attributed to the Social Web and horizontal exchanges.

A complementary medium

Some people see Web 2.0 primarily as a complementary medium where language learners can create social links, for example with [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#). In the case of e-learning, new communication tools also enable educational resource providers to establish direct contact with their users, thus enabling them to better adapt services to their needs.

Others use specific Web 2.0 tools, such as blogs and wikis. These tools can be used in combination with a specific online learning course, enabling language learners for example to create and share special glossaries. The tools can also be offered as part of a general package, either in an open access format or in exchange for payment.

Online production

A Spanish publisher is offering a hybrid method - combining class work with exercises developed for a specially designed social networking platform that is open to any internet user. There is also a European online project offering exercises on a dedicated website. The students' results are published on the site, and other Internet users are free to comment on them. This all happens independently of any textbook-based course. Sweden's educational broadcaster is also encouraging online publication.

These different applications of Web 2.0 technology are not mutually exclusive. In the three chapters in this dossier, we distinguish between content providers offering optional social networking activities versus those with integrated social networking in their e-learning products. We also examine a project which places social networking at the heart of its educational principles.

1.1 Web 2.0 activities as a teaching aid

Breaking open the classroom:

The original Web 2.0...

The publisher Difusión was already experienced in French language learning production, but only on paper. Now, this textbook publisher understands how to utilize three aspects of Web 2.0 in order to improve its teaching.

These include: open access, user participation and the impact of social networking. Eight blogs complement level one of Difusión's *Version Originale* (V.O) textbook.

These blogs are open to anyone, without needing to subscribe, and correspond to the textbook's eight units. Online users can, however, participate fully without having read the books. It's a bit like joining a social community and everything possible is done to encourage users to contribute their own texts and comment on other people's work.

The blog encourages users to contribute extra material such as annotated photos, pictures, files and even video clips: "Show us where you live", "what are the shops like?", "what is there to see?" Other users are then asked to comment and respond.

What do people eat in your part of the world?

The eight blogs distinguish themselves not so much through the originality of the topics they cover ("everyday life in different cultures, my area, my world"), but through the collaboration facilitated by the Social Web with suggestions such as: "Tell us where you live, What do people eat in your part of the world?", "Has something funny, moving or surprising happened to you lately?",

"Share your experiences with us, you can even add photos if you like, or why not post a video?"

Writing for someone other than the teacher

Lucile Lacan, editor of Difusión, explains she developed the idea for the eight blogs because she is a big fan of the Social Web. The aim was to harness the Internet "to access something true, something rooted in the real world, whilst at the same time offering just a little bit of supervision".

The users post directly to the *Version Originale* blogs. The posts are not moderated. This allows responses to appear quickly.

With Web 2.0, the virtual world of the Internet becomes, paradoxically, more real than traditional textbook based dialogues.

But Lucile Lacan is well aware of the downside: "by leaving books and classrooms behind", the project risks slipping out of the publisher's hands.

The essential question of the role of the teacher

Like a teacher, Version Originale sets objectives and exercises and explains linguistic concepts. The language learners are then invited to use this information and its corresponding guidelines.

The teachers, however, are not able to change the educational content, which is published in PDF format. In addition, as Lucile Lacan admits, some teachers may not feel comfortable with their students being able to publish whatever they like on the Internet. In essence, it comes down to the essential question of the role of the teacher within a Web 2.0 context, where the teacher often becomes more of a facilitator.

Students contributing to the first Version Originale blog will have studied little more than eight hours of French!

How do you offer a blog for beginners which enables them to network, whilst ensuring that they do not become discouraged? That's the big question facing educational publishers. At present, the Web 2.0 version is only available for level one of the Version Originale textbook (V.O1), the second level is currently in planning, along with other activities.

Lucile Lacan says that the publisher intends to monitor the development of Web 2.0 before extending it to levels 3 and 4. For the moment, this type of project has very few competitors, but things are moving fast. Web 2.0 enriches the role of the publisher, but it also complicates it as well.

VO VERSION ORIGINALE

Version Originale 1 - French as Foreign Language
<http://versionoriginale.difusion.com/>
Difusión publishing house, Spain, 2009
Web 2.0 activities for 'Version Originale' in blog form. Eight blogs (corresponding to the eight units of V.O 1) are open to all: foreign language learners, native speakers, VO users or anyone else who might visit the website.

Expert opinion

The advantages of Version Originale

Inspiring learners to write and communicate online, from absolute beginners' level and in a format open to everyone, is a seductive and very original idea. This is just the kind of positive action envisaged by the Council of Europe. Nevertheless, it is not without risks.

Limitations

The absence of moderation can lead to things getting out of control, and this worries many teachers. Also, will the blogs remain readable once they become more successful and in turn attract more contributors? Perhaps the publisher should think about providing a little more monitoring, for example by treating student exchanges like long-distance collaboration projects.

« What interests us most of all in educational terms is that 2.0 activities enable students to leave the classroom behind and to write for someone who isn't the teacher.

Interaction and responding to others is a key part of our educational philosophy' ».

(Lucile Lacan)



1.2 Online language courses: experiments in social networking When Web 2.0 is an innovative tool but not an end in itself

Collective activities online

For over 50 years Grupo SM has been one of the biggest publishers of educational manuals in Spain.

This traditional publisher has branched out with "Hola, ¿que tal?", a multimedia teach-yourself package created in partnership including; TVE, l'Institut Cervantes and the regional government of Rioja. Its creators offer students the opportunity to publish their own content on the 'Actividad social blog'. These posts will either be commented on by other students, or corrected by tutors.

Freer discussions take place within the "Hola, ¿que tal?" Facebook community.

The Italian publisher Capturator has gone even further with some of its online courses. Exclusively aimed at language learning for businesses, groups or universities, it has spent almost 10 years developing individually tailored content and learning activities.

Following forum discussions led by a tutor during an English course designed for the IT department of Rome's Town Hall, Capturator suggested using a Wiki to collectively compile an IT glossary for beginners.

Teachers as moderators

The German publisher Digital Publishing, which specializes in learning via online tutors, regards the Internet as a tool for building content: each user is offered tailor-made information to fit his or her own individual needs. The Head of Digital Publishing, Armin Hopp, does not hesitate to mention marketing developed exploiting the connection between publisher and client, where publishers are even "learning from their users". In Hopp's eyes, this implies a fundamental change in teaching methods.

Educators must accept the idea that they are no longer teachers but moderators who facilitate the language learning process. Accordingly, tutors' salaries are linked, in part, to their ability to get their students actively participating on the website.

Multidisciplinary approach

In contrast with traditional teams of educational authors, the new teams are now multidisciplinary: they include teachers, video story-boarders, programmers, graphic designers and even media partners such as radio or TV.

Nevertheless, Angel Perea of Grupo SM says that the editorial supervision provided by the publisher remains vital.

Added value

According to Angel Perea, these new skills have yet to be properly recognized. Publishers are in competition with IT experts whose technical skills enable them to dress up mediocre content in attractive packaging. Publishers must not underestimate the added-value they are able to bring to a project.

Marco Loche of *Capturador* also deplores the fact that more importance is often placed on technical gimmicks rather than content. For him, Web 2.0 offers innovative opportunities in language teaching, but does not necessarily represent a business model in itself.

On the other hand, his projects involve a less representative community than is usually the case with Web 2.0, since they are primarily accessible to his clients only.

Capturador



Capturador - Italy, 1999
Develops 'à la carte' online language course for business and institutions. Gradually moving to include individuals.
<http://www.capturador.com/>

Hola, ¿Que tal ? - Spain, 2010
Spanish as a foreign language, Grupo SM in partnership with RTVE, Instituto Cervantes, Gobierno de la Rioja and Gruppo BBVA.
Teach-yourself site for learners of Spanish as a foreign language, based on the partners' existing resources and integrating activities using the Social Web. www.holaquetal.com

Digital Publishing - Germany, 1999
Corporate Language Training (CLT) in English, German, Spanish, Italian and French. Tailor-made online courses, email and telephone tuition, face-to-face teaching and virtual classrooms.
<http://www.digitalpublishing.de/>

Expert opinion

Is the use of certain Social Web tools, such as blogs and wikis, enough to justify the claim of being Web 2.0? Probably not if the user-generated content is not available to a community wider than the users who are already registered in a fee paying language course.

This means that many e-learning language companies are not even attempting to facilitate collective learning experiences, since this would entail regular monitoring by specially trained tutors.

Consequently, it is important to make sure that online learners do not become isolated which is counter-productive to language learning.

« Today the complete open-access offered by Web 2.0 is not a viable business model because 95% of our business comes from private companies. We have, however, integrated Web 2.0 as a tool for developing innovative courses which best respond to business demands »

(Marco Loche)

« Editors have to realize that the medium is here to stay. It's not a question of "I can or I can't", but rather of "I have to, I have no choice »

(Angel Perea)



1.3 Forget it's a lesson: the 'hidden didactic'

Appraising learners' work

Writing to be read

The [Babelweb](#) site does its best not to look like a language learning website. This EU project is accessible to everyone. There are no commercial interests at play and the site is published in the form of blogs, wikis or forums for learners of Spanish, French, Italian and Portuguese. The site aims to attract a wide user-base: teenagers, students and adults. It gives the impression that the main purpose is to write and be read and encourage comments.

Exercises are nowhere to be found, and language learning seems almost like an afterthought. The project's creator, Christian Ollivier, calls this 'the hidden didactic'. So much so that [Babelweb](#) is also used by people with no intention of learning a language, such as native speakers (30%). The choice of topics also contributes to the illusion that the discussions are "spontaneous" and free from educational agenda.

Home improvements

Traditional topics (free verse, travel anecdotes, favourite recipes) are joined by topics such as 'Home Improvements', directly inspired by successful TV shows and online forums. "You want to decorate or do up a room in your house? Then post your question here, and see what our DIY crazy contributors think. You can even post a photo or a video if you like." Other topics explore other means of expression, such as drawing ("draw me your life") or video ("A special person") with the creation of a mini report. Always, the hidden aim is to make learners forget that they are learning.

A look behind the scenes

In reality, however, [Babelweb's](#) blogs are all carefully moderated and remove confusing off-the-point or offensive texts. Students are usually helped by teachers with more scholarly work, since no linguistic aid is provided on the site itself. Behind the scenes, the 'teachers' site' monitors the effectiveness of language learning.

The website has its own separate address. Each topic has a corresponding area with linked-in files and exercises.

This division into two distinct websites - one for exchanges among students (and other users), the other for teachers, is at the heart of the hidden didactic. "We have realised that once students see that a site is created by a teacher, they always feel as though they are talking to someone who is going to judge and assess them. That's why we sort of pretend that our project is not educational", explains project creator Christian Ollivier.

"We do recommend that teachers work with students on their posts, but we don't recommend that they mark them. Teachers often ask us why we don't do marking. But in a normal forum, you realise that even native speakers make mistakes and there is no one to correct them."

Swedish educational broadcaster

Another, more classical example of an attempt to appraise the work of students is *Anaconda*, a concept developed by the Swedish public service broadcaster, UR. Specializing in television documentaries in German, English and French and radio plays in English, Spanish and French, this organisation encourages Web 2.0-format postings on *Anaconda*, but, in contrast to *Babelweb*, it does not host them itself.

Here too, the approach is not directly educational... something which, according to project leader Gabriella Thinsz, represents something of a revolution.



Babelweb - 2008/2009 Europe
Online learning in Spanish, French and Italian
<http://edu.babel-web.eu>
Co-financed by the European Commission
through the Life Long Learning programme.

Anaconda - Sweden, 2009
UR, Sweden's public service broadcaster.
An educational portal for learning French,
German and Spanish based on TV
documentaries about youth culture.
<http://www.ur.se/anacondaenfrancais/>;
<http://www.ur.se/anacondaen espanol/>;
<http://www.ur.se/anaconda auf deutsch/>

« With Web 2.0, we have the
chance to make the learner
become a language user, even
while he is learning.

In other words, he'll communicate
for real, act for real, integrate with
other users who might possibly be
native speakers. »

(Christian Ollivier)

Expert opinion

The advantages of Babelweb:

Whether writing for an audience outside the classroom, interacting between non and native speakers, the idea of the 'invisible didactic' means teacher does not control but rather supports their students.

The limitations:

The educational didactic might be hidden, but it is still firmly in place.

Marking and editing has to be handled before publication on Babelweb, as do the problems associated with multimedia creation.



Dossier 2 :

Harnessing virtual worlds in language learning

Introduction

There are many virtual worlds to be found on the Internet, the best known being *Second Life*. Here, the user is represented by an avatar, who moves through the virtual 3D environment and is able to interact (by writing, speaking or even through gestures) with any other avatar in the same 'place'. To get the most from these environments, users need powerful hardware and an excellent internet connection, since the interface is not always easy to manage. Three questions help us distinguish between the different ways virtual worlds can be used in language-learning.

A closed or open environment?

Are we in a closed environment, in which we meet only language learners and teachers, or are we in fact in an open environment in which we can meet native speakers in places that might, for instance, replicate a city from the country whose language we are learning? Usually the first scenario is the case, no doubt due to the unpredictable nature of the encounters that occur in open environments, and because of the difficulty in making the most of them. Choosing a closed environment almost always means paying a membership fee. It is nevertheless possible to practise languages with the people you happen to meet in *Second Life*.

Setting the scene

Do we make use of existing surroundings, or do we ad hoc develop new surroundings (perhaps with the help of a 'cyber-architect')? In the exercises analysed in this study, it never fell upon language learners to construct their own surroundings, which reveals less flexibility than existed in the earlier text-based virtual worlds of the early 1990s (the MUDs and the MOOs, multi-user dimension object oriented), in which it was technically simpler - and linguistically richer - to create new 'rooms' and 'objects' with text.

Teaching platform or total immersion?

Does the virtual world act as a platform for correspondence teaching, or does it act as a starting point for simulations and role plays that can involve language learners themselves? The following two case studies follow this latter description.

2.1 Learning and teaching on Second Life

A virtual school in a real world

Second Life may not enjoy quite the same hype it once did, but it continues to spark interest in language learning circles, since virtual worlds offer teachers a new approach to learning. The Goethe-Institut, Instituto Cervantes, Académie d'Amiens and the Danish Babel Language School have each established a presence on *Second Life* to teach foreign languages..

A virtual excursion to New Berlin and a classroom in 3D

Learning a language on *Second Life* is fun. Of course language learners have to be familiar with the *Second Life* universe before they can fully engage in this world. However, once this has been achieved, almost anything is possible. With the help of their avatars, users can, for example, teleport themselves to Goethe Island (Goethe-Institut) and meet friendly people from around the world. One Danish language school, the Babel Language School, even organizes virtual excursions to New Berlin or Cologne, or themed extra-curricular parties designed to encourage language learners to interact with native speakers.

This entirely virtual school was created three years ago as an experiment, according to founder Michael Großpietsch (who goes by Mike Meltzer on *Second Life*). Großpietsch's vision was of a school without borders and overcome one of the difficulties of education in the real world gathering enough students for certain kinds of specialized classes. In the beginning, Großpietsch was the school's only teacher. Today, the school has seven teachers, all trained in using *Second Life* as a tool to participate in face-to-face classes. The class structure is similar to the school's real world environment: technical instruction is followed by discussions, homework-checking, etc.

Three years to recreate one neighbourhood

From a concept point of view, there are some pitfalls associated with using *Second Life*.

The specialists acknowledge several technical limitations: *Second Life* requires powerful hardware and a broadband internet connection for optimal use. For the designers, the 3D modelling is difficult and expensive. According to one manager at the Académie D'Amiens, it took three years to recreate certain parts of the town in *Second Life*.

The Académie's class exchange project between the virtual towns of several regions is not yet entirely operational. From an educational point of view, *Second Life* is above all a tool geared towards real time interaction (ultimately, closer to a face-to-face class than to an online forum).

For Jörg Löschmann of the Goethe-Institut, this is one of *Second Life*'s principal limitations as a tool for language learning.

Language learning: resources and networks

Dossier 2 :

Harnessing virtual worlds in language learning

Michael Großpietsch, creator of the Babel Language School, also acknowledges that the students who log into Second Life tend to consider the exercises to be, in essence, a hobby, a leisure activity that they do not associate with real work, whereas schools tend to attract motivated learners.

It is probably for all of these reasons that the big language institutes, like the Instituto Cervantes or the Goethe-Institut, view Second Life simply as an enjoyable addition to more traditional teaching methods..



Babel Language School
Denmark, established 2007
German, English, Danish, Spanish, Italian,
French. A language school conducted
entirely within Second Life, with a team of
11 in charge of teaching seven languages.
<http://slurl.com/secondlife/Pak/75.1802/243.052>

« Some Second Life environments
are designed to encourage exchanges
and the use of specific language
elements, but above all to increase
the motivation of the students. »

(Michael Großpietsch)

Expert opinion

Using Second Life to learn a language presents three advantages: the platform's play factor, which motivates learners (especially among young people) and often removes inhibitions; the variety of the exchanges (verbal, written, or using the avatar as an intermediary) and the chance to talk to native speakers, possibly outside of any institutional framework.

There are, however, two sides to the coin. Second Life demands a period of adjustment to its technical functions and the essentially real time dimension of its exchanges, which, unlike traditional platforms, does not allow the user to learn whenever they like or to leave a record of their workings.

2.2 When learning becomes a game in a virtual world Immersion

Virtual worlds, simulation and role play

Immersion

Gary Lebowitz has taught English at the United Nations for many years. Passionate about simulation activities, he uses the platform *ActiveWorlds* and spends a quarter of his worktime teaching English learners in this virtual world.

Lebowitz himself creates the scenarios, and even the sets, when he does not have access to a cyber-architect. His classes are never short on surprises.

In one setting, a Nepalese conflict zone, where a village has been destroyed by Maoists, a UN investigator (an English learner from Nepal) must speak with a surviving villager (played by the teacher) in order to understand what has happened. There are also more traditional scenarios: an interview between a government spokesperson and a CNN reporter, in a realistic setting, with a podium and three or four avatars looking on. For Gary Lebowitz, the effectiveness of the simulation is obvious: it enables language learners both to feel that they are in the game and, crucially, to remove the psychological distance encountered in traditional e-learning sites and static video conferences.

David Kaske, the founder of LanguageLab.com, became convinced of the effectiveness of simulation and role playing after having observed, during an online game, a German who did not speak English join a group and, in the space of two weeks, make incredible progress. There was one drawback: the German only learned the English used in the context of that particular video game. The seed, however, was planted.

A soap opera scenario helps kick-start learning

LanguageLab.com came into being after several years of research and development, and now resembles a veritable virtual soap opera.

The action takes place in English City, a metropolis encompassing twenty islands open to several thousand students.

The players are teachers with whom the students must interact in order to try to influence the course of events. The teachers write scenes with linguistic goals in mind, but also with the aim of encouraging student involvement. As with *ActiveWorlds*, the majority of interactions are verbal. But users can also work on their written skills, using an affiliated blog.

The texts are corrected by teachers. When it comes to questions of grammar, more traditional teaching methods come into play and users can even study under the traditional TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) model, complete with a mock exam.

By contrast in *ActiveWorlds*, Gary Lebowitz believes it's best not to interfere with the spontaneity of discussions and prefers to confine correction of language errors to the chats that exist alongside the audio exchange, or to wait until the end of the role-playing game.

Language learning: resources and networks

Dossier 2 :

Harnessing virtual worlds in language learning

Specialized training for teachers

Along with the disadvantages already identified in the *Second Life* case study (the need for high-performance computer equipment, the cost of 3D design, and mostly real time exchanges), there is one further difficulty to note for teachers: mastering the art of role play. Not everyone takes to role playing as readily as Gary Lebowitz of *ActiveWorlds*. For many, specialized training may be required (10 weeks for the teachers on *LanguageLab.com*).

Still, simulation offers a real hook for learners who identify with their characters and therefore engage more fully with the communication situations on offer than they might in traditional class environments. The result: 68 percent of them spend an average of 20 extra hours in the *LanguageLab.com* virtual environment. Who can beat that?

LANGUAGELAB.COM

activeworlds

LanguageLab - United Kingdom,
established 2005

English as a foreign language, English teaching using an approach called 'Character Driven Learning': Students influence the events of a soap opera by interacting with the 'actors' (a team of teachers).
<http://languagelab.com>

ActiveWorlds - Las Vegas, 1997

A virtual world modelled on *Second Life*, but which may be installed on the server of the institution using it. Visit the *ActiveWorlds* education portal:
<http://www.activeworlds.com/edu/index.asp>

« The soap opera is written collaboratively by our team of teachers. It is influenced by language we want students to focus on and events we feel will keep them most engaged. »

(Shiv Rajendran)

Expert Opinion

Role playing games in the virtual world can only attract teachers and learners who are already well versed in simulation-type learning methods: scenarios, characters represented in the form of avatars, situations conceived by designers that help create a sense of immersion and encourage genuine engagement with the language being learned.

To play a role other than one's own can for some learners remove inhibitions when it comes to practising a foreign language. There are, however, some language learners who do not respond well to role playing. What's more, designing engaging situations demands a great deal of professional talent, and in the case of virtual worlds, an excellent command of the technology and graphics.



LANGUAGE LEARNING AND SOCIAL MEDIA
& KEY DIALOGUES

Dossier 3 :

The media: being present on the Social Web

Introduction

A different way of communicating

Traditionally, international broadcasters have sought to promote the language and culture of their country. They have always looked for new ways to engage with their audiences: notably, through listeners' clubs or interactive programmes. Initiatives such as these have already helped to blur the one-way nature of media to listener communication. Now, however, things are evolving: Web 2.0 allows broadcasters to deepen the connection with language learners using their websites and social networks such as [Facebook](#).

Do these opportunities for new kinds of communication have implications for the role of the media in education? Their dedicated teaching services use up-to-date resources to assist language education. However, broadcasters have neither the means nor the mission to act as substitutes for language teachers or to offer long-distance language classes. Web 2.0 is in essence a tool that may be used to promote resources in exchanges with an audience of teachers, learners and language-lovers, who can use these resources to enrich their learning experience through current affairs.

The target language and the language of communication

Must one necessarily communicate in the target language, or can one also use the learner's native language, or English? Deutsche Welle, for example, has made the decision to encourage its community to interact in both German and English. It targets two kinds of audiences: 'professional' practitioners of German, and teachers or professionals who want to keep in contact with German as it is spoken in Germany.

On [Facebook](#), the community of learners and lovers of German express themselves largely in German, and seek information on vocabulary related to current affairs. The learner's level of competence in German is less important – the main thing is to communicate and to practice.

Online communities of language learners

A community like [Facebook](#) may be beyond the editorial control of media outlets, but 'community' spaces have also appeared on the websites of broadcasters. Here, communities are subject to the same editorial requirements as journalists, regardless of form. The language forums and blogs are moderated.

As a result of this 'supervised' mode of communication, an educational exchange can take place alongside a space of self expression. If the challenge of broadcasters is to adapt their mode of communication to new media, can Web 2.0 break down the borders between 'teaching' and 'news'?

3.1 When broadcasting meets learning

Communication within a supervised framework - The experience of BBC Learning English

Bringing the audience closer

Social networking technologies fascinate the media – that's nothing new. It is one of the ways the media can engage their audiences and gain a better idea of their expectations.

The services responsible for promoting the home language of a media outlet can explore different ways of reinforcing their relationship with an audience of teachers and learners. This can be done through online communities such as [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), or through blogs built around what both groups have in common: language.

An innovative « Dual blog »

Learning English through the World Service of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), encourages students and teachers to communicate via an innovative "dual blog" - a [Student Blog](#) and a [Teacher Blog](#). The Student Blog is entrusted on rotating monthly basis to a selected English student. Each new student commits to publishing posts regularly, often with images, whilst the rest of the community posts comments.

For this 'author-student', it's a little like seeing one's letter published in the Times, says Andrew Thompson, director of the Learning English department. For corrections, one need only head over to the [Teacher Blog](#), where a teacher posts advice and suggests ways that passages might be rewritten. These corrections can of course be accessed by anyone, as can entries on the Student Blog. Technical perfection is not the ultimate goal here: rather, the aim of the dual blog system is to encourage language learners to communicate in English.

The concept of a student blog coupled with a blog written by a teacher-producer with contributions open to any internet user, is an innovative editorial and pedagogical choice.

For the 25 employees strong department comprised of former English teachers turned radio, television and web producers – the shift towards interactivity has not been easy.

Their work is no longer simply broadcasted for consumption by a silent audience, rather, it is actively shared and subject to commentary.

Get your friends to describe where you live!

Convincing audiences to get involved in blogs takes incentives. So, to increase user numbers, the BBC suggests subjects like: "[Get your friends to describe where you live!](#)" or "[Share your favourite recipes](#)". Therefore, producers become teachers, and listeners become contributors – an approach that has been very successful.

"In order to control the content posted by the users", explains Andrew Thompson, "we moderate and clean up comments up to 12 hours after they've been published."



A grammatical challenge

In the same spirit, for those who have already reached a relatively high level of English, the BBC Learning English offers Grammar Challenge: an educational game featuring complex grammatical structures and questions.

Each programme is downloadable as an mp3, along with quizzes and explanatory tables. Students are able to comment, try their hand at quizzes or ask questions. The teacher-producer corrects and responds to five student postings for each edition of Grammar Challenge, and these responses are published online, where they can be viewed by anyone.

"Although the chance of seeing one's work corrected by the teacher is slim, it's a great motivation for the students", explains Andrew Thompson.

As with the Teacher Blog, everyone can benefit from these explanations. This sharing approach reinforces the specific role of a 'broadcaster' in learning English. "Learners visit our site", says Andrew Thompson, "not for a course on the present perfect, but because they can communicate with other learners in a safe and friendly environment, which is the entire point of the Social Web".

BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

BBC Learning English
BBC World Service - United Kingdom (1942)
A website containing audiovisual resources
for learning and teaching English with
a community focus.

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/
learningenglish/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/)

Expert opinion

From 'one to many' to 'two to many'
and 'many to one'?

If the blog is initially based on the interaction of an author and his or her readership ('one to many'), then the BBC Learning English idea of launching a duo of blogs – a student blog and a teacher blog – creates a kind of 'one to one to many' situation.

The student blog benefits from the professional English teacher's input, and all the language learners who visit the blogs benefit from the teacher's feedback. At the same time, they can also comment on the student blog ('many to one'). Because only one student is blogging at any one time, the professional's involvement is not too time consuming.

« Let's take what the audience likes most about the Social Web and develop it with an educational goal: we're using these technologies for what they bring to education, and not just because they happen to be new technologies. »

(Andrew Thompson)

3.2 Two broadcasters give and take Communicating or teaching?

The cases of Deutsche Welle and Radio France Internationale

Deutsche Welle and Radio France Internationale (RFI) are a reference for thousands of German and French teachers across the world. Their audiences are loyal but often isolated and located far from the language that they want to learn. In this context, the Social Web offers a new way of strengthening users' relationships with their target language. It also offers users new possibilities of interaction and broadcasters the chance to get to know the needs of their audience better.

Learning German through Facebook

Deutsche Welle's Sprachkurse team has transformed its [Facebook](#) presence: once a simple marketing tool used to promote new resources online, it is now a tool adapted for discussion.

The team has also made use of Twitter, publishing "tweets" on words or difficult grammatical points with great success. In the community section of Deutsche Welle's 'Deutsch Lernen' website, several sections allow language learners the chance to overcome their isolation.

Users can even have their pictures published on the Student of the Month page and talk about their reasons for wanting to learn German.

A French language website brings the broadcaster closer

RFI created the "Langue Française" website ten years ago and opened their Facebook page for the site in June 2010.

There is also a blog that reports from behind the scenes of the Langue Française service and offers profiles of Francophiles and Francophones.

The blog attempts to bridge the distance between the broadcaster and French language learners and teachers who use its resources.

Communication – but what kind?

These two broadcasters face a complex and recurring question over the purpose of these exchanges. Is the goal to encourage members of the community to practice French or German, or are these language websites merely a way to publicize the educational content produced by the broadcasters? Should [Facebook](#) posts be corrected? Should English comments be allowed?

On Deutsche Welle's [Facebook](#) page, comments appear in German as well as English. Here, users who have a good command of German can discuss their relationships to the German language and their experiences of learning it, and those whose level of German is less advanced and who simply wish to express their interest in the German language can talk about what they like on the broadcaster's website.

Providing information for teaching

RFI attracts mainly Francophone users to its Facebook page, as well as those who wish to perfect their French.

The community space can encourage learners and teachers to make use of the authentic sounds available to them on the Langue Française page, and to facilitate their use in educational contexts.

“We’re not a language school, rather, we make resources and tools available that allow people to stay in contact with the authentic language”, explains Lidwien van Dixhoorn. Should one perhaps go further, and take charge of a true educational mission on these community platforms?

Should an international broadcaster offer these student-teacher exchanges or set homework, knowing that education is not its primary task? One thing is certain, all of these shifts have led to the creation of a new job position: the “community manager” - someone who combines the skills of a moderator, teacher, producer, journalist and host. The community manager monitors and shapes discussions according to his or her educational and journalism background.



DEUTSCHE WELLE
DW

Langue Française Service - 1986, France
Radio France Internationale
French as a foreign language
International current affairs on radio and
the web in 12 languages, with a website
dedicated to the teaching and learning of French.
www.rfi.fr

Deutsche Welle Sprachkurse - 1956, Germany
German as a foreign language. A website dedicated
to the teaching and learning of German, with radio
and multimedia content produced by Deutsche Welle.
www.dw-world.de

Expert Opinion

Whether we like it or not, Facebook and Twitter have become unavoidable. Language services and media organizations are already creating a presencethere – but what for?

First of all, to promote the resources of their original websites. And, to create a more horizontal relationship with their audience. The motivation may be the desire to stimulate discussion about language. These objectives would just as well be catered for by a forum, but the appeal of Facebook and Twitter is that they immediately place you within a network. Much like blogs, they allow you to constantly create new entries, which in turn create the impression of constant change – just what a broadcaster seeks!

« Learning a language alone is not motivating. Now, our users can communicate with other learners. »

(André Moeller, DW)

« Our principal goal is to facilitate access to our authentic sounds for teachers and learners of French. Web 2.0 allows us to better guide their use in educational environments. »

(Lidwien van Dixhoorn, RFI)



Dossier 4 :

Mutual learning

Introduction au dossier 4

What has become of language learning in tandem with regroupings of online users facilitated by the Social Web? Mutual learning practices vary considerably. The practices listed here are being changed and transformed by two key factors: the impact of users who regroup into communities based on shared interests and start-up companies juggling user contact, business models and new technologies (most notably mobile technology).

Three points need particular attention: the existence (or not) of educational structures, the role of the user and the creation of content (by the company or by users themselves).

The existence of educational structures

Are language learners guided through the learning process or does communication with native speakers take place outside of any educational structure? In the first case, certain mutual learning websites offer pre-established educational content in their resources section. Others offer resources, but without suggesting any particular structure or course - the learner has to be more self-sufficient. The quality and the quantity of these resources varies from site to site and even within websites, depending upon the chosen course. In any case, the services offered will never truly amount to a "course" in the traditional sense because the content is open and always under development and a variety of educational approaches means resources may differ.

The role of the users

The majority of mutual language learning websites seem to offer users the chance to both play the roles of student and teacher to differing degrees. Sometimes, the platform is even designed to encourage learners to contribute in both roles, as in order to qualify for free access to a learner's course, you first have to collect enough teaching credits. Other sites encourage users to contribute in both capacities by giving out "points". In some cases, a greater specialisation of roles is noticeable. On the one hand, there are users who pay to learn, and on the other hand, there are paid user-tutors who specialise in teaching. It will nevertheless probably be the non-specialised users who perform both roles.

Creating horizontal and vertical content

In some cases, we find language learning content (in the form of texts, videos and audio) and educational activities made or conceived by users, without intervention from moderators (horizontal conception).

In other cases, content can be produced by the website's creators in conjunction with users, but this usually takes place in the context of adding new content (translations of words or phrases, vocabulary learning activities) rather than modifying existing content. Almost all mutual language learning websites give users the chance to enrich existing content. Even sites offering structured courses allow for certain forms of co-creation. There is always a certain degree of horizontal content creation.

4.1 Teach me your language

Connecting users and exchanging skills
[Lingofriends](#), [Palabea](#), [Polyglot Club](#) and
[Recycle Your Brain](#)

Exchanging knowledge

The principle is well established. It's about making a deal: You speak English and want to learn Russian, I am Russian and want to learn English. With Web 2.0, communities grow up enabling people to make this very kind of exchange.

The idea is always the same, but the methods vary. The catchy titled website [Recycle your Brain](#), is based on "language pairing". Users can search the community member profiles (complete with location and age) to find a match for the language they are offering to teach and the language they wish to learn.

All they need to do is reach an agreement about when they want to "meet up" and how they want to communicate (email, telephone, Skype etc...).

Often, however, websites go beyond simple linguistic match-making and offer real time communication tools (audio and video-conferencing, chat etc...) or other communications tools (podcasting, internal messaging, forums etc...). That's how [Palabea](#) works. [Palabea](#) is a free mutual language learning website with 70,000 users offering material in eight languages (German, English, Chinese, Spanish, French, Italian, Japanese and Polish).

[Polyglot Club](#) offers a different approach, based on face-to-face conversation. Weekly meetings are organized - often in cafes - together with long-distance communication, and in particular, online video sharing. For Vincent Schneider, founder of [Polyglot Club](#), face-to-face communication is a fundamental part of learning a foreign language.

But what happens once a language pairing has been formed?

How does this language learning pair learn from each other? Is it simply about conversation, or should one partner correct the other's mistakes? In other words, how does language learning work when neither of the partners has had teacher training and when online communities function without educational content? It's a question that's difficult to answer, since no two methods appear to be the same.

In the [Polyglot Club](#) system, language pairings are not definitive. Learners have the right to talk to as many native speakers as they like and correction often takes a back seat, with the emphasis being placed on conversation.

[Recycle your Brain](#) and [Lingofriends](#) allow users to choose the learning method which best suits them. [Palabea](#) advises users to follow courses offered by private language schools advertised on their site. There are many different models and it is difficult to predict which model will dominate in the future.



Become an online tutor

In the case of **Lingofriends** - a private site started up two years ago in Stockholm - the principle of mutual learning is not necessarily followed. Language learners are not obliged to teach if they don't want to. Tutors can be paid for their services and rated by their students after each session. Their rating is then shared with the community. Similarly with **Polyglot Club**, it's possible to talk with a native speaker without necessarily setting up a formal language exchange.

How effective is it?

According to the founders of the Swedish site **Lingofriends**, the chief obstacles to learning a foreign language are lack of motivation, lack of time and lack of money.

Mutual language exchange websites claim to have found the solution to these problems. The results, however, still remain to be seen.

« Web 2.0 is not just about interaction, content sharing and collaboration. It's also about making money... I believe that online business will develop better thanks to Web 2.0 tools. »

(Matthias Spanic, Palabea)

Expert opinion

Two of the main well known limitations to mutual learning are the difficulties learners experience in finding subjects of conversation and their lack of teaching skills.

Curiously, the various sites examined here do not really seem to be trying to tackle these problems.

For example, methodology and linguistic advice provided on the website eTandem (<http://www.slf.ruhr-uni-bochum.de/etandem/etindex-fr.html>) would, be well suited to the model. As for professionalism, the rating of tutors by students does not in any way guarantee their competence.



4.2 When mutual learning websites offer spontaneous exchanges and teaching methods

Communities with associated methods.

The experiences of Busuu and Livemocha

Two mutual language learning websites, two start-ups with the same function - free user interaction with further resources available for a fee.

Promote a mutual language learning community in order to sell additional educational content - that's the strategy adopted by Busuu and Livemocha. Livemocha is the better known of the two "communities" and was developed in the US. It has recently begun to share content with Pearson, the major American publisher. Livemocha offers services in 37 languages and has around 6 million users. In comparison, the Spanish start-up Busuu is in its infancy. Busuu works in collaboration with the German publisher Pons, offering 6 languages and reaching 250,000 users. Busuu defines itself as a language learning community based on an online course. The social networking side of things is attractive. Users are put in contact with each other according to the languages they speak and want to learn. There's an audio chat facility, and other tools (translation, expression building, conversational frameworks etc.) plus suggestions for possible topics of conversation.

Sufficient traditional educational content?

Ideas are presented in pictures, audio or texts. Livemocha also offers a revision exercise whilst Busuu integrates a text comprehension section. A writing exercise follows, corrected by users with a sufficient grasp of the language in question. Before finishing with a re-cap exercise, Busuu suggests a chat session with a user-tutor, whilst Livemocha continues

with a pronunciation exercise (users record their voice for correction).

Is it accurate to talk about teachers?

These correction stages lead to numerous useful exchanges, but are untrained "tutors" capable of providing adequate explanations? This is one of the limits of online communities. Speaking the language is enough to make you a teacher, without any testing of your teaching ability. With Livemocha, a points system rewards tutors and the quality of their work (based on the opinion of the learners) and enables them to gain free access to resources otherwise accessible only to fee-paying students. According to Livemocha's Clint Schmidt, "The two most important factors in language learning are quality of content on the one hand, and expert advice on the other."

For Schmidt, this means either qualified teachers or native speakers who are keen to help language learners. Schmidt envisions that the best tutors will be financially remunerated for their contributions.

Livemocha



Livemocha - United States, 2007
German, English, Spanish, French,
Hindi, Mandarin. A language learning
community recognised as a world leader
in this field. Works with Pearson to
develop course aids.
<http://livemocha.com/>

Busuu - Spain, 2008
Germany, English, Spanish, French, Italian,
Portuguese One of the European pioneers
of mutual language learning. Offers
communication infrastructures and course
aids in 6 languages to over 250,000 users.
<http://www.busuu.com/>

"I honestly don't think that you can learn a language simply by chatting", admits Bernhard Niesner of Busuu. The idea of interactive communities of users is a "plus" to be added to existing content, but does not constitute a course in itself.

These reservations fit into an economic model... it's difficult to get people to pay for amateur tutors, so why not make them pay for hard content instead? This approach, however, goes against the horizontal nature of the "community".

Perhaps sites like Babbel.com, where the commercial sale of content is clearly at the centre of its operation and mutual language learning is an optional extra, are in fact less misleading

**« I honestly don't think that you
can learn a language simply
by chatting. »**

(Bernhard Niesner, Busuu.)

Expert opinion

Blurred lines: horizontal and vertical Even though certain sites enable users to enrich content, and so reinforce the horizontal dimension of a project, it's too early to identify clear strategies for involving users. Website providers seem to be looking for a viable model based on two parameters which often come into conflict with one another.

Sites are trying to make a profit, while at the same time freeing up the creative potential of the community without giving over complete control of resources and their concept. At any rate, encouraging learners to correct each other enables companies to avoid the question of professional tutoring, which is costly in terms of pay and training.

4.3 Bab.la - first step towards a language « wikipedia »

Collective content building: DIY or the answer
we've been looking for?

Community ambition

It's still in its infancy, but its tentative construction is completely in line with the spirit of the Social Web. Bab.la, which calls itself 'the language portal for language lovers', is one of those rare sites where users can suggest their own translations, vocabulary lists, quizzes and games.

In the beginning was the translation...

To begin with, the website's founders, Andreas Schroeter, Thomas Schroeter and Patrick Uecker, wanted to create translation dictionaries which each user could add to.

These dictionaries are presented as collaborative wikidictionaries, but in reality there is very little scope for co-elaboration since there are no definitions, only translations.

Therefore for each entry the amount of information provided is very limited with no record of modifications or discussion pages (in comparison to the Wiktionnaire, <http://fr.wiktionary.org>).

Today, the site offers 27 bilingual dictionaries in 16 languages. Other sections have appeared which move towards more genuine types of co-construction.

Here, users can create their own quizzes on culture and grammar and contribute ready-made templates for CV writing or simply for everyday communication.

When the community assesses quality

Thanks to a simple to use authorship system which allows users to grab and move pre-existing exercises and quizzes, they are not only able to create resources, but also to edit and evaluate existing content.

But watch out! The site itself does not do its own screening. The translations are no doubt checked at some point by those responsible for each language section, but placement in the content database depends on user votes. If the translation of a word is completely wrong, explains Andreas Schroeter who leads the French section at Bab.la, the word gets deleted by those in charge. If not, it remains and after ten positive evaluations, it automatically enters the dictionary database.

The quality of the quizzes is similarly evaluated by user comments and rankings.

In reality, genuinely co-constructed content is fairly rare, as when it comes to translation, users are limited to the addition or subtraction of words.

Bab.la also offers a forum, ostensibly designed for language learning but in fact concentrating on translation problems or phrase checking.



Future perspectives

Leaving aside the lofty aims of co-construction, quality of content is a recurring problem. The Bab.la designers all come from a marketing background and do not hide the fact that they are more concerned with networking than with education.

The website's development goals seem to focus on expanding into more languages rather than developing new educational structures and resources to facilitate better language learning or exchanges between users.

With 6 million visits per month, Andreas Schroeter recognises that the majority of users are passive and contribute no more than one or two words per week. Nevertheless, Bab.la provides us with an interesting premise for future co-construction where users create common tools in collaboration with the site.

Comprehensive user participation and better quality control are factors which still need to be addressed.

babLa
Loving Languages

Bab.la - Germany, 2007
English-French, German-French,
Spanish-French, Italian-French
and vice-versa. "A platform which enables
language lovers to meet, exchange ideas,
and feed their linguistic knowledge."
<http://bab.la/>

Expert Opinion

It is traditional practice to distinguish between collaboration and cooperation. In the first case, every new piece of content gets discussed and is only accepted once a consensus has been reached.

In the case of cooperation, content creation is shared between users, with each user addition clearly visible. Bab.la works according to a cooperative model. This may be energy effective, but it means that the results are less in depth. Moreover, the site is primarily concerned with vocabulary, which although is important, makes it far from being an efficient language learning programme.

« The users suggest translations. We leave the suggestions online for a certain amount of time in order to enable other users to vote on them. After ten positive votes, the word enters into the dictionary. »

(Andrea Thomas)



Conclusion

Through a combination of web-based research and interviews, we have been able to identify four main categories of language learning practices: the entry of the media into the Social Web, the educational use of Web 2.0 tools by language learning creators, the use of virtual worlds and mutual language learning practices. However, none of these practices corresponds entirely to the three primary characteristics of the Social Web identified by the authors: horizontal user platforms, user generated content and open access structures. As a result, three stumbling blocks or contradictions become noticeable.

The first stumbling block is the question of business model - obviously start-ups or language learning businesses have money making as their primary aim. As a result, they have to offer skills that the average user does not have on a more or less vertical basis. They need to include fee-paying sections on their sites because advertising cannot pay for everything.

The second stumbling block is professionalism - teaching is a career and online teachers require a specific type of training. Amateur tutors, such as those used in certain systems, are not necessarily capable of a dequately explaining linguistic concepts. Professional tutors have their price and it is not reasonable to expect them to provide their services for free.

The final stumbling block is related to the degree of autonomy given to language learners and to their respective starter level in their target language. Of course, an autonomous learner of a reasonable level can benefit from using mutual learning sites, or even [Second Life](#), to practice their languages. But the majority of learners need more guidance and this brings us back to the question of professionalism and its cost. So, what sort of future can language learning producers look forward to on the Social Web?

Well, Web 2.0 evolves with its users, and as far as languages are concerned, this evolution leads to hybridisation. Vertical content and user generated content intermingle and the lines between professionals and amateurs, role play and serious learning, paying models, models funded by advertising and free models become blurred. The media will no doubt continue to offer new ways of accessing their resources, but this will never be at the heart of their enterprise. Teachers will no doubt introduce more and more collective online activities, but opening these up to the world entails challenging problems in terms of organisation and moderation. The idea of paper formats leading to online productions could spread, but the question of how to structure the content remains.

As far as virtual worlds are concerned, their use within a language learning context will always require specific expertise and are likely to remain a service accessible only to paying users. Finally it's possible that certain mutual language learning websites will be enriched by methodological advice, linguistic aids, suggested exercises and communications tools.

But who, aside from new EU project, will finance the development of these meta-resources?

Language learning: resources and networks

List of participating organisations

Académie d'Amiens	Philip Simmonds	http://pedagogie.ac-amiens.fr/tice/cms/spip.php?article9
Babbel	Markus Witte	http://www.babbel.com
Babel Languageschool	Michael Grosspietsch	slurl.com/secondlife/Pak/75.1802/243.052
Babelweb	Christian Ollivier	http://edu.babel-web.eu
Bab.la	Andrea Thomas	http://bab.la/
BBC Worldservice	Andrew Thompson & Paul Scott	www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/
Buusuu	Bernard Niesner	www.buusuu.com
Capturator	Marco Loche	www.capturator.com/
Deutsche Welle	André Moeller	www.dw-world.de
Difusión	Lucille Lacan	http://www.difusion.com/
Digital Publishing	Armin Hopp	www.digitalpublishing.de
FLENET	Mario Tome	http://www3.unileon.es/dp/dfm/flenet/
Goethe Institut	Dr. Jörg Löschmann	www.goethe.de
Grupo SM	Angel Perea	www.holaquetal.com
Instituto Cervantes	German Hita	www.cervantes.es/
Language Lab	Shiv Rajendran	http://languagelab.com
LingoFriends Worldwide	Peter Gestrup	www.lingofriends.com
LiveMocha	Clint Schmidt	www.livemocha.com/
nyelvcser.hu	Mark Jekey	http://nyelvcser.hu/pages/index.php
ONU	Gary Lebowitz	www.activeworlds.com/
Open University	Marie Noelle Lamy	http://www.open.ac.uk/
Palabea net	Mathias Spanic	www.palabea.net/
Polyglot club	Vincent Scheidecker	www.polyglot-learn-language.com/
RFI	Lidwien van Dixhoorn	http://www.rfi.fr
Speak Danish	Mark Anderson	www.speakdanish.dk/
UR	Charlotte Sifvert et Gabiella Thinsz	www.ur.se/anacondaenfrancais/ ; /anacondaen espanol/ ; /anaconda auf deutsch/