Language Massive Open Online Courses

Report on LangMOOCs pilot courses

Erasmus + Programme,

Key Action 2 – Strategic Partnerships in the field of adult education

October 2016

AUTHORS

Tord Mjøsund Talmo – Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)

CO-AUTHORS

Bogdan Voaidas– Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)

George Adrian Stoica– Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)

Francesca Vacanti - CESIE

Maria Perifanou - Active Citizens Partnership

Emil Arnaudov - Iberika Education Group gGmbH

Anna Tetereva - Iberika Education Group gGmbH

Jessica Borniger - Iberika Education Group gGmbH

Allison May - Community Action Dacorum
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Background

LangMOOC is a project co-funded by the European Union under the Erasmus+ – KA2: Strategic partnership programme. The aim of the project is to research the potential of MOOCS in Language Learning, to explore the pedagogical framework of Language MOOCs, to develop a toolkit for the creation and management of Language MOOCs and Open Educational Resources (OERs) and to test the use of OERs in language MOOCs in a pilot course.

During the period 20th June – 5th August 2016, LangMOOC provided five language courses as pilots in Italian, Greek, English, Norwegian and German. The intention was to pilot Open Educational Resources (OERs) in order to improve the LangMOOC toolkit, developed for instructing small non-academic providers on how to set up MOOCs for languages at their own institutions.

The courses were based on authentic materials, created under the Creative Commons License and delivered for free on a Moodle platform. The courses will remain open and supported for at least three years, and the partners are free to edit and improve the courses throughout the whole period.

The courses, both instructions, tasks curriculum and assessments, were delivered in the mother tongue of the languages provided. At the same time it was added possibilities for translation in all languages requested by the consortium, in order to attract as many users as possible. This applied only for instructions; the OERs remained in the mother tongue.

This report will summarize the main findings from all courses. All five partner institutions have reported on their own deliveries, these are attached as appendices to this report.

About the choice and setup of platform.

The choice of platform was decided on reasoning from previous research done by the LangMOOC consortium. More than fifty different providers of MOOC platforms were investigated to figure out which suited our needs the best. Additionally, 7 platforms were chosen for further research, due to their built-in resources for language training. At the end the consortium ended up with Moodle, mainly because of two factors: Economy and the amount of technical expertise needed to sustain an open source platform.

The courses are therefore available on a Moodle platform, accessible through a web browser and Moodle Mobile App.

Moodle was originally designed for traditional online classrooms. According to research done by the LangMOOC consortium there are an overall of 67 MOOC platforms available worldwide today. 29 of these have provided language courses during their time. Still there are no platform offering all the functionality needed to provide a full language course. This means that you need add-ons and additional resources for offering language courses.

If you want a full-featured, customizable learning management system (LMS), then the Moodle platform offers more than any customized MOOC platforms in terms of add-ons, educational tools, analytics and SCORM-compliance, as well as integration with other external tools.

Moodle is an established and well-equipped LMS, offering a huge amount of instructional videos and tips. Compared to other platforms that are made easy to navigate and customize, Moodle offers a community and opportunities to learn that exceeds the customized platforms. Moodle benefits of great community support and in various languages. It is easier to install than other MOOC platforms,
and there are hosted or one-click install options available. It is free to use (Open Source) and can be set up with Open Source components (OS, database server, web server).

This makes Moodle an easy and good choice for smaller institutions without the resources or capabilities of bigger institutions, like a University.

**About add-ons and apps chosen by the consortium.**

Some complexity was added using additional plugins (activities, question types, certificates, registration and authentication) to Moodle:

- Registration was handled by Moodle’s registration module.
- Authentication was set up for Moodle and some external tools by using Facebook, Google and LinkedIn authentication services.
- A Wildcard SSL certificate was acquired to enable secured communications.

Other external tools were set up, ready to be used:

- Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/langmoocs).
- Twitter (https://twitter.com/hashtag/langmooc).
- YouTube channel (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJvTupYlMNk1B1E_w8MCKg).

**About security**

Security is an important aspect of online services. It is important to protect the MOOC site and its users as much as possible from potential eavesdropping from malicious third parties.

The site access used in the pilots is secured using an up to date SSL certificate using a Secure Hash Algorithm – 256 bit (SHA-256) signature. The SHA-256 is the industry-standard for Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) certificates. This new algorithm replaced the old recommended Secure Hash Algorithm-1 (SHA-1) and offers a higher level of security. In addition to that it is now supported by all modern browsers.

The server hosting the MOOC has disabled vulnerable SSL protocols allowing only protocols that are currently deemed safe by the security community such as Transport Layer Security (TLS).

Some important forms, such is the registration are protected with Completely Automatic Public Turing Test to Tell Computers and Humans Apart (usually by means of an image with letters and numbers that are not easily recognizable by a machine) (CAPTCHA) fields. There is also a password policy in place that disallows weak passwords: the password must have at least 8 characters, at least 1 digit(s), at least 1 lower case letter(s), at least 1 upper case letter(s).

The servers hosting the MOOC service are placed behind firewall and proxy servers which add another layer of protection against attacks.
Registration forms
In the registering form attendants were asked about the following:

- username and password
- email address
- first name and surname
- city/town and country (optional fields)
- age and gender
- main language
- highest level of education (optional field)

The users can also register using their Google, Facebook or LinkedIn accounts. The registering form was optional, but the consortium asked as many as possible to add the information requested in an attempt to collect data for further research.

Main components and content
The structure of the courses is organised in six thematic units which cover all the four basic competencies of language learning; 1) reading, 2) writing, 3) speaking and 4) listening, while addressing different topics. Each lecture is supposed to take approximately 45 minutes, but since it is a MOOC extra resources are provided, as well as social forums where students can elaborate on their learning. This enables the students to customize their learning.

The lectures are also designed in way that does not require doing the whole lecture at once. You can choose to do one and one task/content block, and using the Moodle app for smartphones you are flexible and can work with the course anywhere and at any time.

The pilot courses also includes an introductory part, as well as a closing section. In the closing section it is added a final test to check students’ competences after finishing the course, and a link to an evaluation questionnaire.

Introduction

![Image]

Figure 1: Introductory lecture from the Norwegian course
Course structure

Even though the pilots differed some, the main components and objects of the course were the same. The partners agreed on a structure as showed underneath:

1. Family and professions
2. Surroundings, geography and transport
3. Foods and culture
4. Shopping, money and prices
5. Human body
6. Free choice from each partner

The five first lectures were chosen by the consortium to be included in all pilot courses, whilst the sixth is chosen based on each of the partner institutions own interest and profession. This indicates that the basis for the courses when it comes to cultural stuff, knowledge and levels are the same and recognizable for students taking more than one course, as well as offering variety and opportunities for the consortium to test different approaches.

Each lecture includes various tasks related to all the four basic skills.

In Figure 2 the lectures are exemplified. Each lecture has a short introductory text, explaining the content and learning objective. The introductory text is written directly into Moodle.

The pilots had some variety in order to test out all options. This means that the following components were included in total in the five courses (all internal Moodle tools):

1. Cloze-answers
2. Drag- and- drop on picture
3. Drag- and- drop on text
4. Multiple choice questions
5. Short answers
6. Pick missing words
7. Free text
The answers are added to each student’s grade book, making it easy to monitor the progress.

Figure 3: An example of monitoring the students’ performance

A vocabulary resource was added to each lecture. The vocabulary is related to the content. This was done mainly in two ways, 1) using Moodle’s internal glossary tool or 2) adding PDFs with glossary. The benefit from using Moodle’s own tool is that the vocabulary is directly linked to the content in the course.

There were also additional tools and add-ons being used, to increase the effects and the dynamics in the courses. The External add-ons used in LangMOOC pilot courses are listed underneath:

1. Easy image map
2. PowToon
3. RocketChat
4. Thinglink documents

Videos and audio files were added inside each lecture, either through links or directly integrated in the exercise at hand. LangMOOC created their own channel on YouTube in order to have easy access.

Each lecture contained a discussion forum with an initial question, to get the students started. The forum is a Moodle platform activity module, and are easy to operate, both for students and lecturers.

Type of assessment

The pilots included a pre-assessment and a final assessment. The test were made using tools from the Moodle platform. The aim of the pre-test was to measure the students knowledge before attending the course, and the pre-test aimed at an level between A1 and A2 on the CEFL scale. The post assessment aimed at an A2-level, to measure progress after attending the course.

Throughout the lectures, different ways of assessment were piloted, as shown in the list of Types of assessment provided in LangMOOC pilot courses below:

1. Automated assessment
2. Peer to peer assessment
3. Tutor to peer assessment
4. Partial graded assessments

There are integral tools in Moodle for assessing students throughout the course, and some modules are also to be found that allows the teacher to set minimum limits of achievement in order to progress in the course.
The result from the final test qualified students for a certificate of attendance. Using the certificate add-on module, we published a Certificate of Attendance for the courses. For each student the certificate details were autocompleted at the requested moment.

Figure 4: Certificate for completion of course
Notes on course delivery

In total there were 171 students enrolled in the courses. Some of these users attended several courses in order to give better feedback on the course delivery.

- Italy: 54
- England: 38
- Norway: 21
- Germany: 51
- Greece: 7

Of the 171 students 13 completed the course by taking the final exam and requesting the certificate.

In order to get better feedback from the students enrolled, the consortium asked the students to deliver evaluation questionnaires. 8 students finished the evaluation questionnaire. Some of the results are shown below, the whole survey can be found in the appendix.
Conclusions and recommendations

Based on the delivery of the pilots following conclusions may be done.

- Moodle worked well as a platform. There has been no feedback on technical difficulties from the students, and the instructors have after some initial difficulties been able to upload content and manage the courses in a good way. The only difficulty has been to gain access to the evaluation questionnaires. This was due to different user accounts, probably because the partnership added different ways of logging in to the course (Facebook, Google and Moodle).
- There were some working days spent on adding Google and Facebook log-in, but it is recommended to do it, since it makes easier access for students.
- The consortium should have used more add-ons in order to test different solutions. The add-ons used, PowToon, RocketChat, Poodle and wikis, are easy to install and manage, and worked well in the piloting.
- Based on the feedback from instructors, students and the reports delivered on the pilots, following conclusions can be done when it comes to the technical delivery of the pilot courses.
- The peer to peer support could have been improved. There are few students that have attended the social forums, this is probably due to lack of teacher support. None have reported difficulties with using the forums.
- The information and instructions (at least) could have provided in English as a lingua franca.
- Some courses have introductory and instructional videos, this should have been implemented in all.
- In some of the courses audio files are automatically downloaded by Windows and Mac and often not supported. From a technical point of view, it would be better to directly embed them within the course structure, like its done in others.
- Based on the pilots following recommendations for improvement could be included in the toolkit:
- The time spent on dissemination, and the choices made have been insufficient to reach the amount of users we wanted. The consortium has disseminated through social media, emails and at conferences, without reaching the target. It was made teaser videos for all languages, and these have created traffic on Facebook, without having the wanted impact.
- The level of lecturer involvement should be increased. Looking into technical solutions like a lecture room (BigBlueButton) and regular lectures could have increased the interaction between students.
Appendices

1: Report on delivery, Great Britain

Report on English Language MOOC piloting

The course was developed by Dacorum Council Voluntary services for the LangMOOC (Language Massive open online courses). The project is aimed at providing users a tool to further develop their linguistic knowledge to an **A2 level** in terms of **listening, writing, speaking and reading** competences, and by increasing both the language skills and the cultural awareness as to the English language.

**Main Components and contents**

The course was developed on a Moodle platform, and was available for download on mobile devices through the Moodle Mobile app. The course was available through a direct link [https://study.langmooc.com](https://study.langmooc.com) and the LangMOOC Community Action Dacorum webpage [http://www.communityactiondacorum.org/moocs](http://www.communityactiondacorum.org/moocs). It was also available through the projects’ social media links such as Facebook ([https://www.facebook.com/langmoocs](https://www.facebook.com/langmoocs)), Twitter ([https://twitter.com/hashtag/langmooc](https://twitter.com/hashtag/langmooc)) and YouTube ([https://youtu.be/nreZ_4gksVc](https://youtu.be/nreZ_4gksVc) & [https://youtu.be/ERVtjXOEwAQ](https://youtu.be/ERVtjXOEwAQ)).

The structure of the course was organised in 7 lessons which cover both the vocabulary and the grammatical aspects while addressing different topics, and depending on the starting level and the computer skills of each student, the expected study time per module is 6 hours for the whole course.

**Course Structure**

The course structure was 7 lessons with pre-assessment and final assessment to cover a range of topics:

- **Pre-assessment**: Numbers & Alphabet, check pronouncing letters & letter sounds
- **Lesson 1**: Name, greeting & talking about yourself
- **Lesson 2**: Telling the time & date
- **Lesson 3**: Work, job & family
- **Lesson 4**: Feelings, expressing your opinions & talking about the weather
- **Lesson 5**: Shopping, pricing, currency, food & menus
- **Lesson 6**: Giving directions, transportation, how to get around? & how to read a timetable
- **Lesson 7**: Body parts, illness & how to ask for help when ill

**Final Assessment**: Check what has been learnt

*Figure 6: Lesson structure*
Each lesson consisted of:

- **Introduction video:** This was a “Powtoon” video, which gave the students the learning objectives in engaging way. It allowed the students to practice their reading skills. The file was a MP4 file, which could be downloaded.

- **Vocabulary sheet:** This was a PDF documents, which listed the main words the lesson covered and was downloadable, so the student could take it away.

- **Grammar support:** The grammar support was in Powerpoint presentation and could be downloaded as PDF, this meant the students could take it away and read offline.

- **Discussion forums:** The moodle forum format was used and it provided an area where peers could provide each other feedback and support. It allowed the students to practice their writing skills.

- **Support forums:** The moodle forum format was used and it was an area where students could ask for help from peers or the tutor. Again gave the students a chance to practice their writing skills.

- **Additional/extension exercises:** These were mainly PDF documents the students could download and do as extra work.

The rest of the lessons consisted of various activities for listening, writing, speaking and reading skills from a range of the below:

- **Videos:** YouTube Creative Commons videos. The subtitles could be brought up on these videos to help the students. It gave them a chance to see how words are pronounced.

- **Podcasts:** Recorded files (.WAV files which were recorded through Soundcloud). These helped the students understand the vocabulary and test topic comprehension.

- **Audio tapes:** Recorded files (.WMA files) to provide information on the topics and comprehension exercises for students to work through.

- **Comprehension exercises:** Audio files (.WAV & .WMA) and text file exercises (PDFs) again for the students to check their listening skills.

- **Moodle quizzes:** Fill in the blanks, true/false and multiple choice exercises for the students to check their understanding and knowledge of the topic. This mainly checking their reading skills. (These could be taken at any time to test students’ knowledge)

- **Collaboration document exercises:** “Thinglink” documents were used, where students could add their thoughts to. Gave students a chance to practice their writing skills and get peer to peer support. Thinglink is an easy way for all students adding their comments.
Type of assessment
The English LangMOOC course was designed in a way that students can track their own progresses and learning through regular graded activities. The course started with the pre-assessment test which was to be taken immediately after the enrolment, and the course ended with the final assessment and evaluation. The certificate of attendance was issued on a result of partial grading of activities.

Notes on the course delivery
As of August 12th 2016, set as the closing date of the piloting phase, 38 students enrolled in the English A2 LangMOOC course, with one of them taking the final assessment test. The course was targeted at a wide range of learners through all of our contacts.

During the monitoring of the students taking part in the pilot course by Dacorum Council Voluntary Services staff, the following feedback was concluded:

- The course was designed for a A2 level, but some of the exercises were seen to be at lower level, but it was seen that these exercises were needed as they lead onto more in depth exercises further on in the course.
- The activities about cultural aspects of the language was of particular interest to most students.
- Peer to peer support could have been improved, the platform did have forums and discussions groups but this was not accessed much by the learners. So maybe links to other informal social media groups like Facebook could be used. Also other ways in which students could contact each could be provided (e-mail contact database).

Comments from one student
“The course was good, but I wanted to be it more structured.

And the other thing- sometimes it was hard to understand exercises where I should answer true or false. Because it was more like a question and not the statement, so I didn't understand which answer to choose.

But in general course was good, because there were exercises where I used new vocabulary, some videos, audios etc. “
Report on Norwegian Language MOOC piloting

The course developed by NTNU for the LangMOOC (Language Massive open online courses) project is aimed at providing users a tool to further develop their linguistic goals to an A2 level in terms of writing, listening, speaking and reading competences, and therefore increase both the language skills and the cultural awareness as to the Norwegian language.

Registering forms

Other links to the project social network pages such as Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/langmoocs), Twitter (https://twitter.com/hashtag/langmooc) and YouTube (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-JvTupYiMNk1B1E_w8MCKg) also allow to follow the pages, show your progresses and interact with other users.

Main components and content

The structure of the course is organised in six units which cover all the four basic competencies of language learning; reading, writing, speaking and listening, while addressing different topics. Each lecture is supposed to take approximately 45 minutes, but since it is a MOOC extra resources are provided, as well as social forums were students can elaborate on their learning.

The pilot course also includes an introductory part, as well as a closing section.

In the introductory section the students find an introductory video, explaining about the course, they find instructions for accessing and using RocketChat as a social forum, they can find their level of Norwegian through the Common European Framework of reference for Languages as well as a pre-test to assess their level of competence before starting the course.

The instructional video was recorded in Norwegian, and it was also added English subtitles in order to invite more students.

The introductory part includes two different forums; one for general questions about the Norwegian course and a message board for the teacher to post information.

In the closing section it is added a final test to check students’ competences after finishing the course, and a link to an evaluation questionnaire.
Course structure

1. Family
2. Surroundings
3. Foods and culture
4. Shopping and conversations
5. Feelings and sickness

The five first lectures were chosen by the consortium to be included in all pilot courses, whilst the sixth is chosen based on each of the partner institutions own interest and profession.

Each lecture includes various tasks related to all the four basic skills.

Figure 8: Overview of lecture structure

In Figure 8 the lectures are exemplified. Each lecture has a short introductory text, explaining the content and learning objective. The introductory text is written directly into Moodle.

The grammatical topic for each lecture is explained through a recorded PowerPoint-presentation (PP). The students can easily access these files, and also download to their own computer. This makes PP an accessible and easy to use tool for lectures.

Connected to each lecture there are one or more task to be completed. The tasks vary, depending on the aim for the session. You have several different options inside Moodle, and the Norwegian pilot course tested the following options:

1. Cloze-answers
2. Drag- and- drop on picture
3. Drag- and- drop on text
4. Multiple choice questions
5. Short answers
6. Pick missing words
7. Free text
The answers are added to each student’s character book, making it easy to monitor the progress.

A vocabulary resource was added to each lecture. The vocabulary are related to the content. This had to be done manually, adding both the Norwegian glossary, synonyms and an English translation. This is a lot of work, and other options should be considered, like importing glossary from external resources. The benefit from using Moodle’s own tool is that the vocabulary is directly linked to the content in the course.

The Norwegian pilot tested different options for including sound in the course. One method that was used to include sound was via image maps, that. An image map allows to have regions of an image that respond to user interaction such as mouse clicks or taps. For example, a new page could be displayed or in our case a sound could be played. The image maps allow defining regions of different shape: rectangular, circular and polygonal.

Audacity was mainly used to record the sound used in the course material. Audacity is a free, open source, multiplatform tool that allows audio recording and editing. Moodle allows creation of pages where the user can enter HTML markup and JavaScript source code. This allows the course creators to include new types of resources that can be customized to a great extent. This made possible the creation of the aforementioned image maps.

The sounds and image were added in a folder inside the lecture, that was hidden for the students (see Figure two, relatives_files). This way the files can be easily uploaded and made available using standard Moodle functionality. The added web page contained the markup to display the image and the code of the image map and the script to handle the playback of the audio files with the help of an <audio> HTML tag.

To create image maps one can use several tools such as a free online generator (e.g. Easy ImageMap Generator or other web editing software. The benefit of using such resources is that it allows to easily combine visual, textual and audio information allowing for more efficient retention of the new material.

Figure 9 shows how it looked for the students:

![Figure 9: Three different ways of displaying sound files](image)

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1 Audacity software is available at [http://www.audacityteam.org/](http://www.audacityteam.org/)
2 Easy ImageMap Generator available at [http://imagemap-generator.dariodomi.de/](http://imagemap-generator.dariodomi.de/)
The students can either click on the images to get the sound, or as shown in the example on different occupations in Norway (“Forskjellige yrkesgrupper...”) just use the play button. There were also included audio files in some tasks, as shown in Figure 4.

**Figure 10: Audio file connected to task**

The Norwegian pilot included extra materials in all lectures, to provide the students with opportunities to explore more. In most lectures these materials consisted of video files recorded and edited at NTNU. We used an ordinary consumer DV Camera (Canon Full HD) with a wide angle lens. Recorded material was transferred via USB to a Mac with Final Cut video software. It is not necessary to use such high tech equipment, a less expensive option is to use iMovie for editing. The final videos were then exported to YouTube and added into Moodle as embedded files.

Each lecture contained a discussion forum with an initial question, to get the students started. The forum is a Moodle platform activity module, and are easy to operate, both for students and lecturers.

In four of the lectures (2-5) it was included tasks to be done together with peers in RocketChat. In RocketChat you can easily add text, images and audio files to peers. You create a user to log in, and you connect to a chat room designed by your course provider.

In our pilot we made instructional videos for using the chat room, as well as links to instructions and explanatory videos from RocketChat.

**Figure 11: Instructional video for using RocketChat**
Type of assessment
As mentioned the Norwegian pilot included a pre assessment and a final assessment. The test were made using tools from the Moodle platform. The final test consisted of ten differentiated questions.

The result from the final test qualified students for a certificate of attendance. Using the certificate add-on module, we published a Certificate of Attendance for the Norwegian language course.

For each student the certificate details were autocompleted at the requested moment.

Notes on course delivery
- 21 users
- 0 completed
- 2 evaluations done

Conclusions and recommendations
It is obvious there has been two main problems for the delivery of the Norwegian pilot. Firstly, the dissemination has not reached the correct groups, and there are very few students from the participating countries in the course. Probably Norwegian is also considered difficult, strange and as a minority language, making it difficult to attract A2-students.

Secondly the timing was off for the delivery of the course. Norwegians have vacation during July, which was the main period for the pilot.

There has been very little communication in the social forums in the course, this should have been addressed earlier. We were investigating the possibility for including live lectures in BigBlueButton, and we recommend doing something similar to increase interaction.

Mainly we are satisfied, both with delivery, technical set up and the feedback we have received.
3: Report on delivery, Italy

Report on the piloting of the Italian language MOOC (IOS)

About the setup of the course.

The course developed by CESIE for the LangMOOC (Language Massive Open Online Courses) project is aimed at providing A2 proficient users a tool to further develop their linguistic goals in terms of writing, listening and reading competences and therefore increase both the language skills and the cultural awareness as to the chosen language. Following the structure of the LangMOOC guidelines, the present report offers an overview of various aspects concerning the design of the course and the delivery of the piloting.

Main components, content and pedagogy

Educational resources

The structure of the course is organized in six units which cover both the vocabulary and the grammatical aspects underlying various topics and daily scenarios. The overall course duration was supposed to be 6 hours (1h per module). However, depending on the initial language level and computer skills of each user, the actual study time per module ranges between two and four hours.

An introductory unit includes general information about the course, a video to learn the Italian alphabet and a 500-essential-word glossary as resources for general linguistic support. Moreover, a personal diary to record each own learning path and a discussion forum are available in the main menu.

The units are structured as follows:

1. Family and Professions
2. Money, prices, food and purchases
3. Human body and its parts
4. Transports and information
5. Feelings, Opinions and Free time
6. At the bank, post office and tourist information

In particular, each unit is composed of different parts identified by the corresponding icons:

- a specific glossary
- grammar notions
- various graded activities for listening, writing and reading skills (mostly fill in the blanks and multiple choice exercises), that can be taken at any time if the students wish to re-test their knowledge about a specific topic or simply improve their grades
- homework
- discussion forum.
Interactive tools and promotion of cultural awareness

Acknowledged the specific pedagogical methods based on dynamic learning (interaction and active involvement of the students) that characterize MOOCs distinguishing them from traditional online courses, for the final version of the Italian A2 LangMOOC course the existing interactive tools such as the discussion forum and the online interactions with the tutors shall be enhanced.

With this view, an introductory tutorial will be integrated in version 2 of the Italian language MOOC (developed using powtoon.com). Furthermore, additional tools could be added (e.g. flash cards, quizzes, tactile exercises, videos) in case a longer version of the course is to be made available. Overall, a better balance between static and interactive learning resources is advisable in order to meet a wider range of learning styles and needs.

With reference to the promotion of cultural awareness, which represents another important element of success of any language course, besides the regular linguistic exercises some activities about idioms and cultural aspects of the language (e.g. recipes) were introduced in the various modules to encourage an understanding of the language and its use in real word situations and induce students into the Italian culture. Also in this case it could be useful to add some activities introducing or clarifying aspects linked, for instance, to Italian dialects, non-verbal communication, history and lifestyle. Considered the elementary level of the proposed course it is not possible nor necessary to provide additional sections with specialised vocabulary (e.g. politics and business).
Technical infrastructure

The LangMOOC project courses were designed on a moodle platform from where it is also possible to access the Apple Store and Google play to download the Mobile app. Other links to social networks like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube also allow to follow the project pages, show and share progress and interact with other users.

The Italian course was first developed using a word processor, and later on the contents were adapted to the Moodle platform features and the activities were therefore rebuilt on the Moodle platform in order to ensure a good level of interactivity.

The features of the technical infrastructure of the LangMOOC platform/website concerning security, reliability and credibility were managed by NTNU, and in this regard, on the basis of what reported by the users or what registered by platform, the main issues arisen concern the way grades are shown and the submission of the final evaluation form, which in four cases could not be successfully submitted causing a loss of data.

As for the grades, the distinction between grades in absolute number, in percentage, weighted to the total exercises of the unit and to the overall course, in most cases was perceived by users as a difficult element for self-assessment.

![Figure 13: Screenshot of test grades](image)

With reference to the certificate of attendance, in the case of students who enrolled using usernames that do not correspond to their real name, it was not possible for CESIE to edit the certificate because files are protected by a password. In version 2 of the course it would be advisable for all administrators of each language course to be able to directly edit the certificate.

In addition to that, some users remarked that they would have appreciated if the final certificate also displayed the final grade achieved.

Assessment

The Italian A2 LangMOOCs course was designed with the idea of continuously tracking users’ progress through regular graded activities whose partial results are combined and weighted for the final grade (as already mentioned, such variety of ways to display the partial grades sometimes represented an obstacle for a clear self-assessment by the students).

In addition to that, a pre-evaluation test to be taken immediately after enrollment provides the students with an overview of their learning needs in relation to the topics covered in the course, while the final test represents a chance to test all the knowledge acquired throughout the entire course. In the case of the piloting implemented for the Italian course, peer-to-peer assessment/feedback and student-teacher interaction shall be enhanced.
Lastly, students are asked to provide feedback on the course through a feedback form, accessible just after the end of the modules (on the same page), and a final evaluation questionnaire (technical comments in paragraph 2) accessible from the home-page of the platform: the final evaluation questionnaire shall be made accessible from each course page in order to make it more visible and ensure that participants do not forget to complete it.

Community
As remarked in the project toolkit, community represents one of the most distinctive features of a MOOC and one of the biggest differences from an ordinary online course. The collaborative dimension of the Italian MOOC shall be enhanced, although it is not easy to ensure an active involvement of participants in the community features of the course.

However, even if the platform forums and open discussions have not been fully exploited by the students to discuss about the course content with other users and teachers/tutors, it is worth noticing that there was a strong communication with the students, and feedback and support were anyway given through other tools at an informal level (e.g. Facebook or Whatsapp groups of some users who were less autonomous and needed greater support).

The main suggestions developed with reference to the community part of a language MOOC are:

1. Besides the peer-to-peer interactions of the students enrolled in a course, encouraging the exchange amongst students of various languages might give users the chance to also get feedback from native speakers (e.g. Busuu language community);
2. The LangMOOC course could also be seen as an opportunity for Italian language teachers who want to practice their teaching skills. From this perspective, the creation of a pool of voluntary tutors would be helpful to increase the chances of having real time interactions between students and teachers, as recommended in the toolkit;
3. A structured use of teleconferencing with the course instructors/tutors may be useful to help the users with the greatest learning vulnerabilities.

Lastly, a greater use of the sections of the platform for sharing and commenting additional contents directly added by the users (e.g. online games, YouTube channels and media websites) could be more encouraged through a short tutorial or a task that can guide users through it.

Satisfaction about the course delivery
As of August 5th 2016, 54 students enrolled in the Italian A2 LangMOOC course.
After the piloting phase, 10 of them took the final test and got the certificate, and 6 submitted the final evaluation questionnaire (a possible bug described in section two of the present report).

Students profiles greatly vary not only in terms of starting language level or computer skill, but also as of personal backgrounds, ranging from young volunteers, to asylum seekers or professionals.

On the basis of the evaluation questionnaires and the elements collected by CESIE’s project staff during the monitoring of the students taking part in the piloting, some considerations can be drawn concerning the course delivery.

The Italian course was designed for A2 users, and besides the regular linguistic exercises, the activities about idioms and cultural aspects of the language were particularly appreciated by most of the students.

With reference to the devices from where it is possible to access the course, all the users who submitted the evaluation questionnaire used a computer, and although some of them struggled to orientate themselves inside the course, none of them have reported special difficulties related to use of their device.

A positive evaluation was provided about the extent to which the various assessment activities reflected the material taught in the lectures, whereas some suggestions were given about some interactive materials which may be enriched.

Other elements concerning the feedback about the delivery of the pilot course were discussed throughout the present report (e.g. the community and interaction parts) and overall, the results collected show that the students were satisfied with the learning experience of the Italian A2 LangMOOC course (average grade 3 out of 5).

Conclusions and recommendations

Based on the information collated in the present report as well as on the feedback given by the instructor and the students, the following recommendations were elaborated in order to ensure that version 2 of the course is more effective:

- The Information about the course and the introduction section to the course are just in Italian, but they could be translated into English. This was a precise decision discussed and agreed upon by all partners, however the piloting of the Italian language MOOC highlighted some problems met by users in understanding the general information about the course. For this reason, as of version 2 of the Italian language MOOC, some parts have been provided in English too.
- Some adjustments about the level are advisable, as sometimes the terminology ws perceived as too difficult.
- All the units shall be simplified in terms of both grammar structures and vocabulary. In the various units the proposed monolingual dictionaries provided were sometimes perceived as too difficult. For this reason, version two of the course will be simplified both in terms of contents and duration.
- An introductory tutorial is advisable and is being added in version 2 of the Italian course so as to give an overview of the course and its various features (e.g. forum, guided conversation and the other interactive tools).
• Audio files are automatically downloaded by Windows and Mac and often not supported. From a technical point of view, it would be better to directly embed them within the course structure.

• For a beginner, the real time needed to self-administer a unit (without the support of a tutor) is beyond the duration calculated before the piloting phase. For this reason, version 2 of the e-course will be simplified.

• A vocabulary section to be completed before the listening activities could help students to learn more easily the meaning of some words and acquire new terminology.

• Besides peer-to-peer feedback within the group of students of the Italian course, interactions between students of the different courses could be encouraged, so that native speakers can also give feedback. (e.g. Busuu language community). However it has been observed that such interactions are strongly affected by the cultural background, personal attitudes (especially attitude towards the participation in online communities, forums, blogs etc.) and digital skills of the participants.

• Creation of a pool of voluntary tutors to ensure real time interactions students-teacher, as described in the pedagogy chapter of the toolkit.
About the setup of the course

The Greek language MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) developed by Active Citizens Partnership (ACP) for the LangMOOC (Language MOOC) project is aimed at providing to A2 proficient users a tool to further develop their basic language skills (writing, listening, reading and speaking) and to foster their cultural awareness as to Greek language.

In the following sections, this short report aims to offer a brief overview of various aspects concerning the design and the delivery of the Greek MOOC piloting presenting as well the main conclusions.

Main components, content and pedagogy

The course structure was organised into six modules and each one covered a different topic and offered a variety of activities which aimed to foster the basic language skills such as reading, writing, speaking and listening. Each module could be completed within 45 minutes to 1 hour but of course this could differ depending on the learners’ language competencies. In total, all modules were normally designed to be completed within 6 to 7 hours.

More concretely, the Greek LangMOOC course included an introductory part which provided a forum for discussion about the course, useful information about the course and additional resources such as a video with the most common Greek words used in English, the Common European Framework of reference for Languages, as well as a self assessment grid and a pre-assessment test, as shown in Figure 15.

![Image 1](https://example.com/image1.png)

**Figure 15: Self assessment grid and a pre-assessment test**
The six modules were presented in the main menu shown below and were structured as follows:

1. Me and the others: Introducing myself
2. Transportation
3. Foods and culture
4. My job
5. Going to the bank and to other state services
6. Health

In particular, each module consisted of different parts identified by the corresponding icons (Fig. 3):

- Communication goals
- Grammar goals
- a specific glossary
- grammar notions
- Introductory test or video
- Guided chat (Sharing ideas and thoughts about a specific topic using the chat space).
- Class wiki (Collaborative writing)
- Discussion Forum (each participant was invited to start a new discussion)
- A variety of graded activities such as Moodle quizzes (Fill in the blanks, true/false and multiple choice exercises), comprehension exercises supported by audio, video or reading material that aim to practice and develop all basic language skills (listening, writing, reading and speaking skills).

In general, the course designers have used authentic content, copyright free educational materials, copyright-free images for the dictionary and YouTube Creative Commons videos. The sound files with dialogues have been recorded by the ACP team.

For more information, please refer to the corresponding icons in the main menu.

Figure 16: Greek LangMOOC - Module sample
In the end of the course all participants were invited to take a final test in order to check their knowledge. Upon completion of the course all participants could request for a certificate for their participation.

Technical infrastructure
Moodle was the platform that has been selected by the LangMOOC consortium in order to deliver all courses including the Greek MOOC after a thorough research which included the mapping of all MOOC platforms worldwide and the evaluation of six representative ones. The NTNU team was responsible for setting up and maintaining the Moodle platform. The ACP team has created authentic and multimedia content using the Moodle tools but has also used free educational material and images which has uploaded to the Moodle platform. ACP has also asked by the NTNU team to add a number of tools (i.e. chat services etc.) in order to facilitate the language learning process of all participants.

The course has been also accessible through mobile phones by downloading for free the Moodle mobile app from the Apple Online Store and Google play.

Participants could also follow the LangMOOC project’s official social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube and join in this way the LangMOOC wider community.

Assessment
The ACP team has adopted a multi-level type of assessment. The overall aim was to test different types of assessment through the course and to check what is working best and what not in this kind of courses. More specifically, the ACP team has included pre-assessment and post-assessment tests in order to measure participants’ improvement. The main goal of the pre-assessment test was also to explore participants’ level in Greek language because A2 was the required level in order to participate in the course. The Greek LangMOOC’s pilot course has also used Moodle’s assessment functionalities in order to test step by step the learners’ performance during all activities of the course such as automatic assessment (quizzes etc.) and peer to peer/ tutor to peer assessment (comments/feedback).

In the end of the Greek LangMOOC course all participants were asked to provide feedback on the course through a feedback form that could be found on the right side of the course’s homepage.

Community
It is not possible for anyone to develop efficiently his/her language skills without practicing the language. This is why the ACP team has included a number of networking and community features in the Greek LangMOOC pilot course. More concretely, all participants could communicate with each other and of course with the tutor via forums and chats but also via the official LangMOOC project’s networking channels i.e. Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

Notes on course delivery
- 7 users
- 0 completed
- 1 evaluation done
Conclusions and recommendations

Based on the information collected in this report as well as on the feedback given by the instructor and the learners, the ACP team came to the following conclusions:

- The A1 as entry level for the course did not work efficiently for the Greek language because the number of participants who had already the A1 language was really limited. Due to this fact, the Greek Lang MOOC pilot course failed to reach the desirable number of participants.
- Even though the community tools (discussion forum, chat) were available to all users during the Greek LangMOOC pilot course, they didn’t choose to use them.
- The Moodle’s “grader report” as well the “single user’s report” were really helpful in order to have a clear view of each language learner’s performance and improvement. Furthermore the “outcomes’ report” provides useful and detailed information regarding the performance of all the participants that is also really helpful for the online instructors.
- Multimedia materials (videos, audio) can attract more the learners interest.

Based on the above conclusions and findings, the following recommendations aim to ensure a more efficient second version of the course.

- As it was mentioned above, even though the networking tools were available to all users during the Greek LangMOOC pilot course, they didn’t choose to use them. Maybe the type of exercises should be more “guided” and the tutors’ role should be more active in order to provide them with ongoing support making sure that most of them will participate in one way or another.
- In order to build a stronger language learning community the gamification of the learning via badges for students’ achievements or FB likes would be really motivating for all MOOC participants.
- Organising live chats/ conferences via free online services like Google hangouts would be also really useful for every language learner who wish to practice his/her oral language skills and meet with other peers.
- Participating, in parallel with the course, in other communities in which language learners could meet and discuss with native speakers such as Mixxer would be also an added value for every language learner who participates in a language MOOC.
- Tutors’ role should be more active and supportive.
- Inviting learners to create and share with their peers multimedia authentic material would be really motivating for their learning process.
5: Report on MOOC delivery, Germany

The course developed by iberika education group gGmbH for the LangMOOCs project (Language Massive Open Online Courses) is aimed at providing users with a tool to further develop their linguistic knowledge to an A2 level in terms of writing, listening, reading and speaking skills, and thus improve both the language skills and the cultural awareness as to the German language.

Main components and content

The course is available on a Moodle platform, https://study.langmooc.com/, and could be also downloaded on mobile devices through the Moodle Mobile app. The link to the platform as well as other useful information about the course and the project could be found on Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/langmoocs), Twitter (https://twitter.com/hashtag/langmooc) and YouTube (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-JvTupYlMNk1B1E_w8MCKg). Those pages also encourage the users to enrol into the course, show their progress and communicate with other learners.

The course consists of seven units, an initial test to check learners’ skills prior to the course and a final test to check learners’ progress after the completion of all units. Depending on the starting level and the computer skills of each user, the expected study time per module is 6 hours.

Course structure

1. Preliminary test: How good do you know German language?
2. Getting to know each other
3. Time and date
4. Work and family
5. My feelings, my thoughts
6. Shopping
7. In town: description of the way, public transportation
8. Parts of the body
9. What have I learned?

Apart from the above the course offers a forum where learners could discuss with each other their learning progress and a final evaluation questionnaire aimed at gathering participants’ feedback on the usefulness of the course. Moreover, the learners are enabled to download a certificate for taking part in the pilot after the completion of each unit or at the end of the whole course.

The units include:

- Interactive video materials where learners can practise their listening skills. The videos are from authentic materials and describe everyday situations which often occur in the learner’s daily life.
- Exercises for reading comprehension which contain also images and encourage the learners to answer questions related to the text (“True or False”, “Select the correct statement from A, B, C”, etc)
- Vocabulary exercises (for example, one should drag a certain image to the following category). The so called “Drag and drop” exercises are very beneficial for improving the learners’ visual memory.
- Grammar exercises (“Multiple choice”, “Fill in the blanks”, “Conjugation of verbs”, etc)
• Writing exercises in which the learners should watch a video and afterwards express their opinion about the topic in writing
• Speaking exercises in which the learners can practice their skills in leading conversations on one of the seven topics

Figure 17: Sample topic

Type of assessment
The German LangMOOC course was developed with the idea of continuously tracking users’ progress through regular graded activities, which start with the initial test to be taken immediately after the enrolment, and end with the final evaluation test. The certificate of attendance is issued on a result of partial grading of learners’ activities. An idea for further development of the course might be to set a minimum score which learners have to achieve in order to receive a certificate. That would motivate the participants to take all of the modules in the course and also decrease the drop-out rate among them.

Notes on the course delivery
As of August 5th 2016 which is the closing date of the piloting phase, 51 students enrolled in the German A2 LangMOOC course. Two of them have completed the final evaluation test and filled out the feedback questionnaire. However, at this stage we could already draw some conclusions for the delivery of the course and the satisfaction of learners.

Looking at the “Reports” and the “Grades” section of the Moodle platform we could say that the language skills of the learners who took the course were diverse. That is due to the fact that we disseminated the German pilot course to a wide target audience mostly through our online channels but also through face-to-face meetings with learners at our language schools in Berlin.

The overall feedback which we received about the course was very positive. The technical development of the course and the learning content were highly evaluated. Especially highly assessed were the videos for listening comprehension which provide also interesting information about the German culture and traditions. The vocabulary exercises (in some cases the so called “Drag and Drop” tasks) were also regarded in a positive sense since they include a lot of images and the visual effect always contribute to the efficiency of the learning process.

However, the course could be further developed through the installation of additional interactive tools such as online discussion groups and more opportunities for peer-to-peer collaboration. Another issue that should be taken in mind during the future adjustment of the course is that the pilot was developed for an A2 level but actually some of the topics correspond more to the A1 level.
## Evaluation questionnaire LangMOOC pilot course (table summary)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Average score</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Which course have you attended?</td>
<td>Italian 6, German 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At what level did you consider your self to be in the choosen language before attending the LangMOOC course?</td>
<td>A2: 3 A1: 2 B1 and higher: 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To which extent was the LangMOOC course of your choice intuitiv to get started with?</td>
<td>Easy: 2 Medium: 5 Challenging: 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What kind of device(s) did you use to take the course?</td>
<td>All computer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you experience any difficulties related to the device(s) of your choice when taking the course?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How easy was it to orientate inside the course and find the elements you were looking for?</td>
<td>Easy: 2 Medium: 5 Challenging: 1</td>
<td>The platform looks not so easy to navigate sometimes. But the learning content is of great quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were you satisfied with the support you received when experiencing difficulties?</td>
<td>4 yes 4 no answer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To what extent did the assessments reflect the material taught in the lectures?</td>
<td>Medium: 4 Very good: 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How satisfied were you with the interactive materials providede in the course (videos, audio, lectures, discussionforums)?</td>
<td>1: 1 2: 0 3: 2 4: 2 5: 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| How satisfied were you with the tasks provided in the course | 1: 0  
2: 0  
3: 2  
4: 2  
5: 3 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| How satisfied were you with the opportunities for peer to peer learning provided in the course? | 1: 1  
2: 1  
3: 1  
4: 0  
5: 3 |
| Overall, how satisfied were you with the learning experience of the LangMOOC course? | 1: 0  
2: 1  
3: 2  
4: 1  
5: 3 |

A graphical representation of the survey results can be found in Figure 18 below.
Figure 18: Graphical representation of survey results