



Supported by the European Commission and carried out by European Cultural Interactions, LINGO is a study that analyses successful methods that have motivated European citizens to learn languages. The experts working on the LINGO study contacted over 600 organisations in more than 20 European countries, and have presented **50 methods as “good practices” in a multilingual brochure (see <http://www.euointeractions.com/projectlingo.htm>)**.

These good practices are projects, methods or events that have **encouraged people** either **to learn a new language** or to make practical **use of their existing linguistic skills**.

The examples are drawn from **across Europe**, ranging in size from small local initiatives to large-scale programmes at regional, national or European level. Between them, they cover dozens of different languages and cater to all age groups, social strata and levels of ability.

Ten of the 50 good practices are detailed below. They have been selected for their originality and because they are capable of being transferred to other countries or contexts. They are also among the most representative of the many excellent and innovative initiatives to promote language learning.

All these projects show that language learning can be enjoyable thanks to imaginative and entertaining courses.

Selected examples of best practices LINGO multilingualism projects:

- **Case Study 1: Voluntaris per la Llengua**
Illustrates how you can learn the language of your host country with the help of your hosts
- **Case study 2: ALLEGRO**
Illustrates how disadvantaged people raise their self-esteem through language learning
- **Case study 3: INLET**
Illustrates how with a simple language guide you can already express yourself
- **Case study 4: Morning Train**
Illustrates how language learning can take place anywhere
- **Case study 5: English for Art Lovers**
Illustrates how language learners can be stimulated through culture
- **Case study 6: Souvenir Calendar**
Illustrates how the richness of a “difficult” language can be promoted
- **Case Study 7: JoyFLL**
Illustrates how grandparents can (re)learn a language
- **Case study 8: Poetry Competition**
Illustrates how children express their feelings through poetry in another language
- **Case study 9: Soccer Lingua**
Illustrates how football stars can be role models and encourage children to learn languages
- **Case study 10: Steps to the World**
Illustrates how disadvantaged pupils raise their self-esteem through language learning

<p>VOLUNTARIS PER LA LLENGUA</p> <p><i>Helping newcomers to learn Catalan</i></p>	<p>SPAIN</p>
	<p>Organisation Consorci per a la Normalització Lingüística Tel +34 93 2723100 mromagosa@cpnl.org http://www.cpnl.org/immigracio/index.htm</p>

Voluntaris per la Llengua is a regional initiative that helps foreigners to learn and practise the **Catalan language** in a non-formal environment. With financial backing from local government and communities, it succeeds both in promoting the **use of Catalan and in improving community integration and intercultural awareness**.

Two groups of persons are involved in the scheme: volunteers who speak Catalan and are willing to spend one hour a week (over 10 weeks) to speak in Catalan, and learners who want to learn and/or improve their use of the Catalan language.

Volunteers and learners fill in a form stating their interests and time preferences (either on paper or via a website). The organisers then identify suitable couples who can meet at an information session. Afterwards, the volunteer and the learner spend 10 hours speaking Catalan together. The couple receive a list of possible activities and locations for their language practice, along with a set of linguistic materials, but it is left up to them to decide what to do with their time.

The scheme has benefits for volunteers and learners alike: volunteers have the opportunity to find out more about the culture and country of origin of the learner and to contribute to community life, while learners are made to feel welcome, gain self-confidence in practising the language and increase their integration into Catalan society.

The effectiveness of this approach is demonstrated by the increasing rate of participation: in 2002, there were 19 linguistic couples; in 2003, more than 1,500 (in 34 towns across Catalonia); and in 2004, more than 5,000 couples in 58 towns.

<p style="text-align: center;">ALLEGRO</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Reaching out to disadvantaged learners</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">DENMARK-FRANCE-SLOVENIA SPAIN-UK</p> <p>Organisation Association for Language Learning Tel +44 1788 546443 lindap@all-languages.org.uk http://www.allegro-lingua.net</p>
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The **ALLEGRO** project (**Access to Language Learning by Extending to Groups Outside**) is bringing language learning to groups in the community who do not usually regard themselves as language learners or who have only limited opportunities to learn a new language. This can be for reasons of social or economic disadvantage, geographical isolation, or physical or learning disabilities. So far, 30 small but innovative projects have been set up in Denmark, France, Slovenia, Spain and the UK, many of them in outreach community venues. For example, the partners have worked with people recovering from addiction (UK), the long-term unemployed (France), groups of children with Down's Syndrome and autism (Spain), people with severe learning disabilities in residential care (Germany), prisoners (Slovenia, UK), senior citizens with disabilities (Denmark, Slovenia) and those with long-term mental health problems (France).

New types of learners means more flexible approaches and ALLEGRO has been trying out different ways of teaching languages to these sometimes challenging groups, including drama and role play, songs, learning a new language in self-help groups (study circles), cross-skills work (teaching a language in cookery classes, for example) and ICT. In some cases, the partners have needed to devise ways of introducing their groups to the idea that learning languages could be for them. This often means providing the opportunity to have short and enjoyable language learning experiences rather than long courses. Each individual project has required the organisers to work with agencies outside education (social and community workers, charities, health care) both to set up the language learning opportunities and to work in collaboration with them to develop appropriate techniques. This adds value to the project as the benefits of language learning are promoted not only to the learners but also to professionals working in other fields.

The overwhelming response has been that language learning raises self-esteem and aspirations. From children to older learners, the feedback has been almost unanimously positive. By and large, agencies and services have been keen to take part and have recognised the powerful impact that the language learning experience has had on their client groups. Another spin-off of the project has been its impact on the teachers and educationalists themselves who have learnt that there are many barriers to be broken when it comes to language learning: teacher as well as learner attitudes, prejudice, assumptions about methodology and received ideas about who can learn languages successfully.

INLET <i>An Olympic guide to Greek</i>	GERMANY-GREECE-NETHERLANDS-SLOVENIA-UK Organisation Ellinogermaniki Agogi Tel +30 210 6032550 maliou@ea.gr http://www3.ellinogermaniki.gr/ep/inlet/
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What is the Greek word for “athletics”? Or “synchronised swimming”? How do you find your way to your hotel or order a meal in a Greek restaurant?

The answers to these questions can be found in a multilingual mini-guide produced for visitors to the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens as part of the **INLET (Introducing Language Enhancement Techniques)** project. The 2004 Olympics was the perfect occasion to introduce people to the Greek language, not only because they were held in Athens but also because of the Games’ Ancient Greek roots and the Greek derivation of the names of many Olympic sports.

INLET aimed to introduce techniques that would motivate a mass audience to learn foreign languages, showing individuals how they could benefit by learning a relatively small number of key phrases without having to commit themselves to becoming fluent in any particular language. The project’s month-long promotional campaign was targeted at two tourist “hot spots”, Athens International Airport and the Ancient Theatre of Epidaurus, which between them received an estimated 14 million visitors in 2004.

The INLET material was distributed via a dispenser at Athens Airport and an info-kiosk at Epidaurus. It was also available at hotels and restaurants in Athens and on the islands of Milos and Sifnos. The campaign was backed up by a series of TV slots, broadcast in several European countries, posters and an SMS service. Visitors were able to register for a series of short Greek language lessons, in the form of sample dialogues that were sent by SMS to their mobile phone at regular intervals each day. These were accompanied by an electronic Greek mini-dictionary. As a follow-up, the project website provides information about more formal Greek language courses and learning resources.

INLET demonstrated the effectiveness of using a high-profile event with a “captive” audience to promote language learning. By providing visitors with information that was relevant to their needs during their stay, the project sought to show the usefulness of knowing a few phrases in a foreign language. Such was the interest aroused by this novel approach that similar initiatives are underway to promote languages at the 2006 Football World Cup in Germany and the 2007 America’s Cup in Valencia.

<p style="text-align: center;">MORNING TRAIN</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Language learning on the rails</i></p>	<p>FINLAND</p>
	<p>Organisation Riihimäen kansalaisopisto Tel +358 40 7582158 riihimaen.kansalaisopisto@riihimaki.fi http://www.riihimaki.fi/kansalaisopisto</p>

For **commuters**, the daily trip to work is often a waste of time, unless they are fortunate enough to be on the 6.20 morning train from Riihimäki to Helsinki. There, a carriage has been set aside which provides an inspiring setting for a language lesson.

This innovative scheme was the brainchild of the **Adult Education Centre of Riihimäki**. The Centre offers evening classes for adults in a range of subjects: languages, painting, art history, literature, etc. However, Riihimäki citizens who commute daily to Helsinki are less motivated to take evening classes because of their long working hours and their daily journey to and from the capital. So, since 2002 in co-operation with Finnish Railways, the Centre has offered them the possibility to brush up their foreign language skills on their way to work.

Language courses are provided by professional teachers and several courses are available: English for beginners, intermediate English, German, Russian literature, Russian vocabulary and Swedish. The two-month courses take place three times a week and last approximately 40 minutes, the time of the journey itself. Teaching materials are carefully selected by teachers, with the emphasis on oral skills.

Feedback from learners has been enthusiastic: a survey in 2004 produced very positive reactions in relation to teachers and methodology. Local newspapers, radio stations and the national and foreign press have all supported and promoted the idea. Every semester, the Adult Education Centre and Finnish Railways jointly distribute colourful brochures describing the updated range of courses, schedules, teaching materials, fees, etc.

Learning languages on the morning train was awarded the 2003 European Language Label. The initiative was initially supported by the Finnish National Board of Education. Now participants pay a relatively low fee of 60 euros with the rest of the costs being covered by the Adult Education Centre, which itself is supported by the Municipality of Riihimäki and the Finnish Government.

Perhaps the Adult Education Centre of Riihimäki has found the key to language motivation: adaptability to the needs and schedule of learners, plus guaranteed quality in teaching in an original setting!

<p>ENGLISH FOR ART LOVERS</p> <p><i>Stimulating language learners through culture</i></p>	<p>GERMANY</p>
	<p>Organisation Hamburger Volkshochschule Tel +49 40 428412763 H.Staschen@vhs-hamburg.de http://www.vhs-hamburg.de</p>

Evening courses normally take place in classrooms but **English for Art Lovers** aims to stimulate learners' linguistic and cultural senses at the same time. The course, for intermediate to advanced learners of English, enables participants to pursue their historical, cultural and artistic interests while using and learning another language.

As the course is about art, the participants meet at museums, art galleries and even in artists' studios. This change of environment helps to support the learning process: pictures have to be described and the participants' own impressions and feelings put into words (in the foreign language). Before each of these visits, the participants research the background of the relevant artist in class, as homework or on the Internet. They then prepare a presentation in English on selected works by that artist and tell the other participants about a certain painting or about certain details in a painting.

Every year, the VHS-Hamburg (the institution that developed English for Art Lovers) identifies suitable exhibitions, museums and art galleries in or near Hamburg and announces the programme for the course. Its success has been such that the concept has been extended to English theatre as well.

The idea began 15 years ago with a teacher, Ms. Sara Sello, who ran a course in the Hamburger Kunsthalle. This was a success and so she offered a course to the VHS-Hamburg in German, and when that also proved popular she began teaching the course in English. English for Art Lovers has been going on for over 10 years and the constantly changing material ensures that the interest of the participants is maintained. It reaches members of the public who would not otherwise attend a language course, appealing to their natural interests and doing away with the inhibitions often experienced by adult language learners.

SOUVENIR CALENDAR <i>Welcome to Lithuanian!</i>	LITHUANIA
	Organisation Vytautas Magnus University Tel +370 37 327807 i.savickiene@pmdi.vdu.lt http://www.vdu.lt/LTcourses

“I speak Spanish to God, Italian to women, French to men and German to my horse.”
(Charles V)

Whereas Lithuanian can be used to talk to anyone!

That is one of the messages of a souvenir calendar produced by Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas, Lithuania for foreign exchange students. It seeks to promote Lithuania as a country and the Lithuanian language and culture in a way that is both humorous and informative, through caricatures, proverbs and local jokes.

Intended as a tool for survival language study and communication, the calendar contains basic information about the Lithuanian language (the alphabet, phonetics, some elementary grammar, useful phrases, numbers, names, days of the week, months, food and drink, etc.) and its cultural roots. For example, foreigners are happy to find out that they can speak a little Lithuanian simply by adding a Lithuanian ending (-as or -is) to a foreign word, such as *internetas*, *kompiuteris*, *kabinetas*, *prezidentas*, *studentas* or *universitetas*.

The calendar was sent to Lithuanian embassies, partner universities, members of the Lithuanian diaspora and any other institutions around the world with an interest in Lithuanian language courses or co-operation with their Lithuanian counterparts. The reaction was overwhelmingly positive and demand from these recipients quickly outstripped supply. So much so, that a second edition of the calendars was published at the end of 2004.

One of the advantages of the calendar is that it can be easily adapted to other languages, which has led to a project (*FEEL: Funny, Easy and Effective Learning about Countries, Cultures and Languages*) to produce similar calendars for all the languages of the new Member States of the European Union (Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia).

<p style="text-align: center;">JOYFLL</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Join your grandchildren in learning a foreign language</i></p>	<p>BULGARIA-GREECE-ITALY-SPAIN</p>
	<p>Organisation Znanie Association Tel +359 2 9874950 maria.stoicheva@gmail.com http://www.joyfill.net</p>

In many European countries children are looked after by their grandparents while their parents are at work. This is certainly the case in **Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Spain**. **Grandparents** are expected to help out not only with everyday activities at home, but also increasingly with their grandchildren’s homework.

This was seen as an opportunity to motivate grandparents whose grandchildren were studying a foreign language to join in. **JoyFLL** encouraged them to take up a foreign language no matter whether they had ever studied one before or had studied one a long time ago and since given up. The project also aimed to show to language schools that it is worth catering for their pupils’ grandparents, because this can influence the way that children learn.

At the start the project partners felt rather awkward about inviting grandparents to go back to school, so naturally they looked for “non-typical” classroom activities as a way of engaging their interest. They came up with the idea of games similar to those used in teaching young children which improve memory skills. These games also added to the fun and helped to create a relaxed atmosphere in the classes.

Making mistakes is never pleasant, particularly for adults, so the emphasis was on attaining survival level competence and partial speaking skills. The grandparents enjoyed the social aspects of learning in informal “clubs” with the other grandparents, and they participated very enthusiastically in the various language competitions, pairing up in a team with their own grandchild.

JoyFLL capitalised on the close intergenerational relationship between grandparents and grandchildren, with each motivating the other to learn through shared activities. It demonstrated to reluctant learners that the process of learning a foreign language can be fun, and did much to dispel the stereotype that languages can only be learned when you are young. But the best proof of its success was the very high retention rate among learners, as well as the fact that the language clubs have continued to run after the end of the project.

<p style="text-align: center;">POETRY COMPETITION</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>A creative approach to foreign languages</i></p>	THE NETHERLANDS
	<p>Organisation Talenacademie Tel +31 43 3507400 ruud.halink@talenacademie.nl http://www.talenacademie.nl</p>

The **Talenacademie (Language Academy)** in the Netherlands runs a competition for pupils between the ages of 12 and 18 to write short poems in a foreign or second language. Teachers receive ideas and materials as a way of stimulating their pupils and helping them with this activity. A national jury then decides upon the best poems, which are rewarded with interesting prizes such as language-related trips.

The competition is designed to allow youngsters to express their feelings and emotions, to be creative and to play with languages. For example, a number of the participants not only wrote a poem but also created objects like a treasure-chest in which the poem could be found on an old piece of paper. In keeping with this spirit, the jury has been instructed to focus on the content, the creativity and the attractiveness of the poem rather than any grammatical or spelling mistakes.

A poster has been produced by the **Talenacademie** that presents the winning poems. This poster can be seen in schools and libraries across the country and has helped raise awareness about the competition. Associations of language teachers, regional newspapers and radio stations have all covered the competition and the prize-giving ceremony that was held on the European Day of Languages (26 September).

To date, more than 2,800 youngsters have entered the competition and the general level of quality and creativity has been highly praised by jury members. The next competition, planned for 2006, will pay more attention to helping teachers stimulate the children's creativity and to offering activities in the classroom. Participants will also have access to advice, in the form of a "Helpdesk", regarding the methodology to be followed. As well as motivating the pupils, the competition has also attracted a number of sponsors who are willing to contribute with prizes for the winners.

<p style="text-align: center;">SOC CERLINGUA</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Football is the universal language!</i></p>	<p>CZECH REPUBLIC-GERMANY-ITALY- POLAND-SPAIN-UK</p>
	<p>Organisation European Sports Linguistics Academy Tel +44 7791 781611 info@soccerlingua.net http://www.soccerlingua.net</p>

Football is the people's game and football superstars are famous all over the world. Young football fans want to copy their heroes in everything they do: the way they play, the way they look, the clothes they wear. So why not encourage young fans to learn the languages that their favourite players speak? So many top stars now play in foreign leagues that football has become a multi-lingual environment, and the players are excellent role models for language learning. The foreign professionals who learn the language and immerse themselves in the local culture are often the most successful on the pitch.

Soccerlingua is a new approach to language promotion. It uses the theme of football to encourage language learning among children and teenage fans. *Soccerlingua* has produced promotional films and an interactive DVD quiz with which children can test their language skills and football knowledge. The project has also produced an Easy Reader book in the style of a football magazine along with a promotional website. These products give young people the opportunity to take the first few steps in a new language by watching, reading and listening to fans and players from different countries. The motto of the project is that languages are fun when learning is linked to a passion or hobby such as football.

In order to create an interesting and entertaining product, the project promoters have filmed interviews with famous players, youth players and lots of lively fans (during EURO 2004). By including exclusive interviews with female star players the project will appeal equally to girls and boys.

Top football clubs and national associations have supported the project in the creation of the products. These clubs and associations will also form the basis of a dissemination network in six countries to take the project concept into schools, football youth academies and beyond.

<p style="text-align: center;">STEPS TO THE WORLD</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Improving social integration through language learning</i></p>	ROMANIA
	<p style="text-align: center;">Organisation Fundatia Euroed Tel +40 232 252850 / +40 744 667156 acolib@euroed.ro http://www.euroed.ro</p>

Steps to the World has developed links between different institutions and educational organisations in an effort to help children from orphanages, together with children from standard families, to develop their cognitive, affective and social potential as a means of improving their integration into the community. Using English as the main tool of communication, a coherent system of assistance has been established in order to prepare institutionalised children for insertion into social, professional and adult family life.

The strategy consisted in organising extra-curricular activities and non-conventional educational classes for institutionalised children (including Roma children) in order to improve their creativity, their learning and memorisation abilities, and their general study skills through the intensive use of English.

Innovative and challenging social activities were offered to stimulate children from orphanages to communicate in English. Educational topics included: speed reading techniques, memorisation techniques, leadership and teamwork classes, activities and games, journalistic techniques, computer work. Recreational activities included: swimming classes, outings and trips and art sessions.

Nine different patented methods have been used as teaching aids for increasing reading speed and acquiring new vocabulary, practising mnemonic techniques or as relaxation techniques.

Four of the children in the target group received distinctions at national creativity and invention fairs, and *Steps to the World* was awarded the European Language Label in 2002 for its introduction of innovative techniques to language teaching.