Erasmus+

## "Serious Games for Fostering Multilingualism in Early Childhood Education"
### Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership

## Can we do language teaching through serious games?

Perceptions on multilingualism in early childhood education are shifting. In the past the exposure of a child to two languages at the same time was considered a potential disadvantage in fear of the child not being able to differentiate language structures. Emerging pedagogical theories, however, argue that multilingualism positively affects a child's cognitive development as a whole, resulting in children becoming more intellectually perceptive and flexible (Goethe Institut). Researchers further argue (Yip and Mathews, 2007) that multilingual skill development before the age of 6 may be related to more effective use of brain capacity for multiple language production by early bilinguals.

On a practical level, today's children are exposed to languages other than their mother tongue in a natural way through sounds and images that are part of everyday life and their everyday environment.

The project takes current practices for language skill building a step further by exploiting emerging state-of-the-art serious games-enhanced learning frameworks adapted to the cognitive development level of young learners. The proposed active learning approach will immerse young learners in activities that take inspiration from real-life and familiar school practices offering benefits that include immediate feedback for scaffolding knowledge by better understanding mistakes, motivational factors in the form of game rewards, collaboration opportunities, and the development of problem-solving skills through puzzles.

**Refference number:**
2015-1-RO01-KA201-015212

NEWSLETTER No 1

LANGUAGE GAMES

---

## Partners involved:

☺ Inspectoratul Scolar al Municipiului Bucuresti, Romania (the coordinator)

☺ Agrupamento de Escolas de Silves, Portugal

☺ edEUcation ltd, Uk

☺ Ethniko Kentro Erevnas Kai Technologikis Anaptyxis, Greece

☺ Panepistimio Thessalias, Greece

# Inspectoratul Scolar al Municipiului Bucuresti

The School Inspectorate of Bucharest is a public institution which carries out activities of guidance, control and coordinating the education and professional training institutions in Bucharest at the highest professional standards in order to contribute to the growth of the quality of educational services, improvement and increasing permanently the efficiency of educational system, national/ in Bucharest, and making it compatible with the European system.

**The structure of Bucharest's School Inspectorate** was approved by the Ministry of Education and Research through O.M.E.C.

(Order issued by the Minister) nr. 3870/27.05.2002. According to its structure, the management functions are performed by General School Inspector and three deputy general school inspectors.

**The vision of the institution** is: ensuring the educational needs of local community, promoting the educational partnerships, ensuring a quality management which is the main condition of evolution and development, promoting the European values.

**Its mission** is to ensure the implementation of the national curriculum, the national educational policies and guidelines through supervision, counseling, monitoring and evaluation of the educational institutions under its jurisdiction, organizing and guiding the permanent training of teachers and school managers, promoting a wide range of training courses for initial and further training, according to the national education policy.

**Its role** is to monitor the implementation of the National Law of Education are fulfil within municipality's schools.

## European role of the ISMB

• **In the present project the ISMB is the applicant and it has the coordinator's role**

### Previous projects:

• **Erasmus+ KA1, 2014-1-RO01-KA102-001031,** "Innovative models for optimizing the pedagogical and methodical counseling, given to the beginner teachers in the pre-university level from Bucharest, to increase the quality of education provided to the students"

• **LLP Leonardo da Vinci VETPRO (VET Professionals), LLP-LdV/ VETPRO/2013/RO        250,** "Dezvoltarea competențelor cadrelor didactice în utilizarea metodelor alternative de învățare în procesul educațional, pentru a contribui la reducerea abandonului școlar"

• **LLP Partenership Grundtvig,** 2013-GRU-13-C-LP-319-B-RO

• **LLP- Comenius Regio, 2012 COM-12PR-17-B-RO,** "Art&Culture – School Event"

• **Leonardo da Vinci Partnership LLP Leonardo da Vinci VETPRO (VET Professionals), LLP-LdV/ PAR/2012/RO 068,** "Enrich vocational training through unconventional methods in the EU Countries"

• **LLP/EACEA Transversal Programme/Key Activity 3 ICT, 19195-LLP-1-2011-BG-KA3-KA3MP,** „Learning Augmented Reality Global Environment-LARGE"
• **LLP/EACEA Comenius/ Accompanying Measures/ RO-COMENIUS-CAM, 2010,** "Positive Thinking Training" (Potrain)

# edEUcation ltd

edEUcation is a consultancy with expertise in working with schools, youth groups and training organisations on international projects in the UK and the EU. The consultancy is led by an experienced former secondary headteacher, whose school held the International Schools Award for its activities. He is assisted by six Associate consultants, with expertise in training, youth work and improving standards of teaching and learning. They have good links with HEIs, schools, youth and training organisations and national and local authorities. The edEUcation staff involved has experience of Erasmus+ and the former LLPs of Comenius, LdV, Erasmus and transversal projects. The Director and other staff have a background in Language teaching and the Director was a Governor of CILT, the UK National Centre for Languages.

edEUcation provides a range of services to organisations in the North of England aimed at school improvement, including upskilling of language teachers, teacher and youth worker training, coaching and mentoring with continuing professional development in several EU countries, modelling teaching, including creative methodologies, and supporting organisations in developing international links. The range of edEUcation's work including that of its Associates means that it has an extensive network which provides access to schools, training providers and agencies both in the UK and across Europe. The philosophy of the company is to demonstrate effective improvement through practical activity.

## edEUcation ltd's role in this Project

edEUcation's staff brings into the project its expertise in language teaching, project management and its EU-wide network of stakeholders. The UK partner is mainly responsible for the development of the language games' scenarios in English and for the drafting of the activity plans, user guides and tutorials. edEUcation is equally involved in the multiplier events and dissemination of the project outcomes and in the project management for its part.

# Agrupamento de Escolas de Silves

The Secondary School of Silves has been over the years an important milestone in the training of youth and adults. It is specialized in Professional Courses and has provided the business community as well as the higher education system with very highly developed and recognized skilled young adults in their various career paths.

The Secondary School of Silves (ESS) is part of the territory of the municipality of Silves whose size ranks it as the second largest in the Algarve, with a total area of 679 km2, covering the three units of landscape - mountains, low lands and coastal area.

The municipality of Silves is composed of 8 parishes (S. Marcos da Serra, São Bartolomeu de Messines, Silves, Tunes, Alcantarilha, Pêra and Armação de Pêra), with a resident population of 33,830 people (2001 Census) with more 60% of its population concentrated in the city of Silves and São Bartolomeu de Messines. The total num-

ber of public schools of different teaching levels belongs to what is called Agrupamento de Escolas de Silves (Silves Group of secondary schools).

The geography of the municipality is characterized by its interiority and some remoteness from the coast although it has some beach areas with all that this entails in terms of lifestyles, housing, em-ployment, education, access to knowledge and culture, leisure activities, etc.

The impact and importance of tourism in the region is generating internal migration and invasion of domestic and foreign tourists, especially during high season-at the seaside, which is associated in recent times as the immigration phenomenon, and has brought to the Algarve (Silves) the issue of multiculturalism - the mix of cultures and ways of life and new issues of the forum of social and community integration, loss of identity roots, to which the school, of course, is not indifferent.

The current building of the Secondary School of Silves dates back to the 1959-1960 academic year. It is a solid and imposing structure, consisting of a central body that currently has been under renovation and addition of new buildings but the school as educational institution itself has been active since 1920.

The average number of students in the last years has remained fairly stable at around 2400 students The entire group of schools comprises 274 teachers and 124 auxiliary staff.

## ESS's role in the Project

The Secondary School of Silves is responsible for creating and updating the project pages on facebook and linkedin.
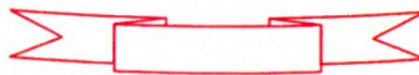We will do the application of Serious Games in the classroom context.
We will make the disclosure and dissemination of the project through:
- Web page
-Internal disclosure in the Grouping

-External disclosure in the Algarve school clusters and will be published in the regional press.

# Tallinn Univevirsity

Tallinn University is the third largest university in Estonia consisting of 6 institutes and 2 colleges. It has more than 8500 students as well as almost 500 faculty members and research fellows, and is the fastest growing university in Estonia. Its main strengths lie in the fields of humanities and social sciences, but it also has a strong and constantly growing component of natural and exact sciences, as well as a notable tradition of teacher training and educational research. The amount of applied research as well as cooperation with enterprises is rapidly growing in the field of fine arts, educational technology, health and social sciences.

Centre for Educational Technology (CET), established in 1998 is an interdisciplinary R&D unit within the Institute of Informatics.

CET staff (18 in total) consists of 7 full-time researchers, 6 software developers, 2 project managers, 1 post-doc, some part-time employees and a group of postgraduate students.

Scientific and technological qualifications of CET staff intertwine deep knowledge in educational re-

search, open-source software engineering, and experiences of empirical research in authentic educational and work settings in the field of technology-enhanced learning, competency management, interactive media art, interaction design and Semantic Web technologies. The main ongoing research projects in CET are related with developing the next-generation distributed learning environments involving interoperable social software tools (ePortfolio, Learning Path Creator, Learning Object Repository and QTI test authoring/delivery tools) and Web-

(intelleo.eu, WP leader) and S-Team, eContent-Plus project iCoper (www.icoper.org <http://www.icoper.org/>), and several others.

TLU School of Digital Technologies has established partnerships with leading Estonian software companies (Skype Estonia, Webmedia, Eomap, Playtech, NetGroup), and also with the main open-source based learning technology providers in the Baltic sea region (JukuLab OÜ in Estonia, MediaMaisteri OY in Finland).

Erasmus+

providing a unique opportunity to use almost whole higher education sector on the national level as a test-bed for TEL tools and methods. CET software development team has good experience in development and integration of new modules/plugins for Elgg, Wordpress and Moodle.

CET has applied technology towards



services (OntoSpace Explorer, Competency Directory, Competency Mapper, SCORM package delivery service). CET has been actively participating in FP6 IST projects Calibrate (calibrate.eun.org) and iCamp (icamp.eu), FP7 projects IntelLEO

CET is also one of the key contributors to the technology-enhanced learning infrastructure of Estonian E-university (the consortium of all major Estonian universities), thus

the enhancement of learning experiences among children with learning disabilities through the development of software applications towards this end.

# The Centre for Research and Technology-Hellas

CERTH, founded in 2000, is one of the leading research centres in Greece and listed among the TOP-25 EU institutions with the highest participation in competitive research grants. It is a legal entity governed by private law with non-

profit status, supervised by the General Secretariat for Research and Technology (GSRT) of the Greek Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs. CERTH has important scientific and technological achievements in many areas including: Energy, Environment, In-

dustry, Mechatronics, Information & Communication, Transportation & Sustainable Mobility, Health, Agro-biotechnology, Smart farming, Safety & Security, as well as several cross-disciplinary scientific areas.
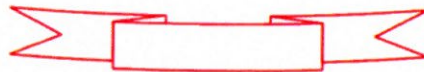
# CERTH's role in the Project

CERTH is the main technical provider in the Language Games project, leading the Serious Games software design and implementation. CERTH, along with UTH will hold in Greece an event aiming at promoting the outcomes of the project with the purpose of facilitating uptake by the target stakeholder sector of primary education.

# University of Thessaly



UTH is the only higher education institution in central Greece. The University has 17 departments which are located at the four main towns of Thessaly. The University has 17 departments. Specifically, the University has an Engineering School with 11 Departments, a Pedagogies School with 3 Departments, a Medical School with 2 Departments, and a Physical Education School with 1 Department. The University enrolls over 10.000 undergraduate and graduate students and has staff of 1.000 which includes teaching, technical, and administrative employees. This makes the University a significant employer in the area of Thessaly.

UTH acts as a consulting organization to the municipalities and authorities in Thessaly in subjects including educational strategies, economic development strategies, and

technology transfer and has close ties with the educational community, the industry, professional organizations, and administrative authorities, including educational authorities, in the area of Thessaly. Examples of past consulting activities include the introduction of Internet services to all schools in the area of Thessaly, the development of an optical fiber network in Thessaly, and more. In addition, the organization has working relationships with the primary and secondary educational administrative authorities in the areas of Magnesia, Trikala, and Karditsa, all of which are located in the wider area of Thessaly as well as with numerous schools in the context of R&D validation activities.

The Electrical and Computer Engineering Department adopts user a user centred R&D approach and has extensive experience technology enhanced learning developed through R&D, integration of research and teaching at the higher education level, and collaboration with educational authorities in the area of Thessaly, nationally, and internationally. The Department offers expertise in knowledge and information management, educational services design, serious games in non-leisure contexts such as learning, social networking for education, Internet and distributed applications targeting wide target and economic sectors ranging from lifelong learning to science and culture.

## UTH's role in the Project

UTH had a crucial contribution in the creation of a successful application for this project. The institution lead methodological design and works closely with CERTH-IRETETH on the design and implementation of the Language Games serious game. It contributes to the development of educational scenarios for game-based language learning. It disseminates actively through a variety of channels including conference publications, media, contacts with educational policy makers, and more. It further works with a number of schools in the context of evaluation bringing the Language Games methodologies and tools in classrooms for the benefit of learners and educators.
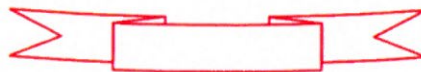
## INTELLECTUAL OUTPUTS OF THE PROJECT:

⇒ Development of Methodological Learning Frameworks for Fostering Multilingualism in Early Childhood Education taking into account Learning Requirements (O2)

⇒ Serious Game Design and Implementation on Fostering Multilingualism in Early Childhood Education (O3)

⇒ Instructor Support Material (O4)

We are on web:
http://www.ismb.ro/
languagegames



Erasmus+

"Serious Games for Fostering Multilingualism in Early Childhood Education"