

2 What Kind of LSP Does LanGuide Propose?

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This chapter aims at describing the peculiarities of the ESP practiced by LanGuide referring to, on the one hand, the linguistic technicalities involved for developing a mobile application for foreign language learning and assessing, and, on the other hand, the aspect of culture imbued in the exercises prepared. Thus, in what the former aspect is concerned, four different specialized fields (academic, mobility, administrative, and IT), six different languages (English, Romanian, Slovenian, Italian, Croatian, and Spanish), three different language levels (beginner, intermediate and advanced) and three different learning personae (student, teacher and administrative staff member) were targeted, while, in regard to the latter aspect, a very special approach was used for integrating the cultural element in the tasks designed for this mobile application. Consequently, in perfect accordance with the literature review on Computer/Mobile-Assisted Language Learning, LanGuide distinguishes itself from other language learning mobile applications by not only harmonizing ESP to CALL/MALL, but also by combining the communicative approach to teaching a foreign language with that of the digital era.

Keywords: digital era, mobile applications, ESP, CALL, MALL, language learning, computer science, cultural element, cultural literacy, cultural competence, language skills, LanGuide

Introduction

The present chapter of the monograph is focused on describing the characteristic features of the ESP (English for Specific Purposes) practiced by LanGuide, including both the linguistic aspects and particularities that the technical design and development of a mobile application for acquiring and testing a foreign language entangle and the cultural element is infused in the exercises prepared. Thus, the first attempt that the chapter makes is to integrate the special fields considered by the project and its mobile that ap-

plication into the greater field of ESP. The second attempt that the chapter makes is to consider the place the cultural element has among the already classicised language skills, especially in the field of ESP, but more prominently, within the particular case of the exercises created for the LanGuide mobile application. The third attempt that the current chapter makes is towards CALL, and its sub-branch MALL, and its connection to ESP. Last, but not least, what this chapter aims at is to bring all of the three above mentioned approaches together and to offer a complete and complex profile of the specificities encountered and required by the LanGuide mobile application production and design.

Delivering specialized content to pupils, students and candidates to learning new content alike, in various fields, is always supported by a methodology that specifies and ensures its professional implementation framework. Teaching foreign languages is a unique case in point because, in accordance with the procedures, strategies, tasks, tools, and equipment used, issues that may arise and possible solutions provided, goals pursued, and interactions between and among actors, the approach has always been a critical factor. As reviewed in the following section, language skills began with little relevance, evolved to be more important, and eventually became the key focus in the communicative era, alongside culture, a projected prospective 5th skill that must be properly placed among the language knowledge a learner should be equipped with when acquiring a new foreign language.

Regardless of the language under consideration, all modern techniques nowadays agree that the cultural element must be present alongside the two receptive and the other two productive skills as a basic part in the practice of attaining fluency in that respective language. But, as it will be seen below, the very nature of the culture to be included in the discourse can be a subject of controversy.

Literature Review

Profiling ESP

Being well-established as a particular sub-branch of English as a Second Language (ESL) or of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), English for Specific Purposes (ESP) had been developing on its own, putting forth many different other sub-branches, such as English for Academic Purposes (EAP), or English for Occupational Purposes (EOP), thus establishing itself as an important limb of the main body of EF/SL, catering for special needs in the professional areas of work, but also in teaching.

As the famous tree of English Language Teaching (ELT), drawn by Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p. 17) shows, ESP can take three different roads, dealing either with English for Science and Technology (EST), or with English for Business and Economics (EBE), or, finally, with English for Social Sciences (ESS). EST, in its turn, can have two possible sub-ramifications: English for Academic Purposes (EAP), dedicated to the Medical Studies, and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP), focused on English for Technicians, while EBE is further sub-divided into EAP, catering for the needs of English for Economics, and EOP, speaking the language of English for Secretaries. Last but not least, ESS has its own sub-branched approach with EAP, associated to the English for Psychology, and EOP reserved for English for Teaching. The EAP component, for all three possible sub-types of ESP, in Hutchinson and Waters' opinion, retains a study-skills component, while EOP, also known as English for Vocational Purposes (EVP), obviously emphasises more the practical terminology of the fields it belongs to.

According to David Carter (1983), the division of ESP would be three-fold, as follows: English as a Restricted Language, only used for specific contexts, such as that of a waiter, or pilot, or flight attendant, or cabin crew, etc, thus restricted to a well-defined community and not catering for the needs of communication outside these specific contexts, English for Academic and Occupational Purposes, addressing the specialised terminology imbued in fields such as medical studies, the academia, engineering and technical studies and English with Specific Topics, uniquely concerned with anticipated future English needs, e.g. scientists requiring English for postgraduate studies or attending conferences.

However, what really highlights the specifics of defining ESP in its characteristic features are: the profile of the target audience, the focus of the content, the skills considered, users' motivation and users' professional background. Lorenzo Fiorito¹ first dealt with all these 5 items in 2006 and kept revising their specificities until 2022 on UsingEnglish.com, in his article *Teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP)* (2005). Thus, he is of the opinion that (emphasis added)

ESP students are usually *adults who already have some acquaintance with English and are learning the language in order to communicate a set*

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of professional skills and to perform particular job-related functions. An ESP program is therefore built on an assessment of purposes and needs and the functions for which English is required.

In regard to content focus, Fiorito (2005, emphasis added) says:

ESP concentrates more on language in context than on teaching grammar and language structures. It covers subjects varying from accounting or computer science to tourism and business management. The ESP focal point is that English is not taught as a subject separated from the students' real world (or wishes); instead, it is integrated into a subject matter area important to the learners.

This not only clearly places English in the context it addresses, but also opens the discussion regarding other possible interpretations of context, which represent the special case of the LanGuide project, as a facilitator of a multi-cultural approach to English for Specific Purposes (ESP), Romanian for Specific Purposes (RSP), Slovene/Slovenian for Specific Purpose (SlSP), Italian for Specific Purposes (ISP), Croatian for Specific Purposes (CSP) and Spanish for Specific Purposes (SpSP).

Referring to the skills taught under ESP, Fiorito (2005, emphasis added) is of the opinion that:

As a general rule, while in ESL all four language skills, listening, reading, speaking, and writing, are stressed equally, in ESP it is a needs analysis that determines which language skills are most needed by the students, and the syllabus is designed accordingly. An ESP program, might, for example, emphasize the development of reading skills in students who are preparing for graduate work in business administration; or it might promote the development of spoken skills in students who are studying English in order to become tourist guides.

That is exactly why, in the LanGuide project and application, only certain skills are predominantly addressed, based on the fields aimed at and the target users considered, in this way their direct needs being primordially catered for.

Considering users' motivation, Fiorito (2005, emphasis added) places ESP under Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), as:

ESP combines subject matter and English language teaching. Such

a combination is highly motivating because *students are able to apply what they learn in their English classes to their main field of study, whether it be accounting, business management, economics, computer science or tourism. Being able to use the vocabulary and structures that they learn in a meaningful context reinforces what is taught and increases their motivation.*

As a direct consequence of this particular consideration, the LanGuide mobile application aims at providing the users not only with a practical means of testing their relative language level of knowledge, but also with a resourceful instrument for further language improvement and learning. Motivation is boosted once scores, feedback and explanations appear on the screen, while resources are offered as additional links to certain exercises.

As for students' professional background, Fiorito (2005, emphasis added) considers that:

The students' abilities in their subject-matter fields, in turn, improve their ability to acquire English. Subject-matter knowledge gives them the context they need to understand the English of the classroom. In the ESP class, students are shown how the subject-matter content is expressed in English. *The teacher can make the most of the students' knowledge of the subject matter, thus helping them learn English faster.*

That is why, the LanGuide mobile application tried to accommodate the targeted users and their needs to the fields they are accustomed to, interested in, good at or un/familiar with in terms of Erasmus+ exchanges, classes taught, travelling experiences, computer aspects and cultural differences in order to start from what is known and add new elements.

Summing up, still in Fiorito's (2005, emphasis added) words:

The term 'specific' in ESP refers to the specific purpose for learning English. *Students approach the study of English through a field that is already known and relevant to them. This means that they are able to use what they learn in the ESP classroom right away in their work and studies.* The ESP approach enhances the relevance of what the students are learning and enables them to use the English they know to learn even more English, since their interest in their field will motivate them to interact with speakers and texts. ESP assesses needs and integrates motivation, subject matter and content for the teaching of relevant

skills. And to a great extent this is what the whole LanGuide project consisted of, but including minor cultures in its objectives, as well as languages which otherwise would not have been in the interest of such an intricate combination of ESP and MALL.

Outlining ‘Culturacy’

Fundamental concerns like: How can culture be identified and categorised?; Is there a relationship between a people’s culture and the language they speak?; Which culture, that of the candidates learning the language or that of the language itself, should be taught during the process of teaching a foreign language?; What exactly can be defined as the ‘cultural component’?; How can culture be incorporated into the teaching process: as the subject-matter of a distinct class or melted into the workout paste? and Is it possible to escape clichés or are they unavoidable? identify the research questions that the writers of this chapter, as producers of tasks for the LanGuide phone application asked themselves, a mobile application which, in its first phase, included activities for the English language, according to the scope of the project. Furthermore, an issue such as the one Kramersch posed about the cultural element’s fundamental nature: ‘how can we develop in the learners an *intercultural competence* that would short-change neither their own culture nor the target culture, but would make them into cultural mediators in a globalized world?’ (Kramersch, 2013, p. 57, emphasis added) was also an essential study premise for the difficulty of producing English language assignments that target users of different cultural origins while also addressing various host-countries in whose communities they may integrate themselves for a length of time.

The link between a social context and its cultural background was envisioned by T. S. Eliot (1973) as an *incarnation*, a superimposed fresco on which bristles from both wings paint with mutual and harmonious strikes, culture and society nurturing each other as a living and fully constructed entity. As a result, while seeking to describe culture on a syntagmatic axis, the paradigm of identifying qualities is founded in essential concepts such as spirituality, past, literature, language, arts, morality, sports, geography, entertainment, customs, and governance. And even though all this can be reduced to preconceptions or platitudes that are frequently mistakenly or hastily connected with a particular culture, they must be part of any foreign language teaching syllabus and thoroughly learned once they are included in the teaching spectrum. Borca (2019) attempted to consider and to include this in her collection of textbooks focused on teaching Roma-

nian as a foreign language, adjusting the cultural aspect according to the intrinsic principle of mutual interdependence between language and culture. Furthermore, in her article with Nechifor and Borca (2020), they stated that while conveying linguistic knowledge to students, the cultural factors that must be considered are those of the language taught, and not necessarily those of the students' origin. However, the special case provided by the LanGuide project context may address both at the same time, as it will be described in the next pages.

Proceeding with a more in-depth examination of the relationship generated between a society and its culture, the next unavoidable stop is where an even more delicate interface can be detected, namely, the relationship formed between a society's culture and its language. Without expelling two opposing ideas that either view culture through the lenses of language, as noted by Hantrais (1989, p. 17): 'culture is the beliefs and practices governing the life of a society for which a particular language is the vehicle of expression,' or, in a reversed manner, see language as the major creator element of culture, we are more intrigued by the inclusive framework promoted by Kramsch (1998, p. 8), who observed the connection between language and culture from two concurrent viewpoints, diachronic and synchronic, both echoing a historical and a sociological component, while claiming that: 'Language is intimately linked not only to the culture that is and the culture that was, but also to the culture of the imagination that governs people's decisions and actions far more than we may think.' Therefore, 'people do not only express experience but they also create experience through language' (p. 66), and consequently, 'language embodies cultural reality' (p. 14), the term 'embodies' representing a very good choice to express a comprehensive and inclusive way of looking at this phenomenon.

Subsequently, as foreign language teachers, we must recognize the importance of teaching not only structures, frameworks, lexicon items, and language abilities, but also indispensable pragmatic elements of the textual lives of the people whose language the students are yet to learn, because their appropriate, powerful, and multifaceted perspective can only be comprehensive if and when they perceive the real situation through the cultural perspective of that society, regardless of the context in which they are learning. As a result, we had to contemplate the idea of including elements of Romanian culture and civilization in the activities and tasks designed for the LanGuide mobile application for the English language, as they are directed, in perfect accordance with the project's main objec-

tive, at users from foreign countries who may visit Romania as expats, exchange students, teachers, or members of the administrative staff engaged in Erasmus+ mobilities. But in this way, as a very particular case, we also addressed the other perspective described above, the one according to which native speakers of Romanian, who are familiar with their native cultural background, can easily recognize within the tasks, icons belonging to their own culture, enjoying, at the same time, the opportunity to polish their English before going abroad.

However, the foreign users are offered the opportunity to learn, via the same application, the basic words, in the same specialised fields, in Romanian, but before they do this, they can cater for their desire to feel included, or accepted, and they can address beforehand their sense of belonging to the community they are supposed to be part of even for only a couple of months beforehand, by dealing with the cultural element imbued within the exercises designed for the English language as a pre-emptive move towards the Romanian language:

To identify themselves as members of a community, people have to define themselves jointly as insiders against others, whom they thereby define as outsiders. Culture, as a process that both includes and excludes, always entails the exercise of power and control (Ibid., p. 8).

The same opinion was shared by Allwright et al. (1991) who made the connection between acquiring a new language and processing the acquisition of a new culture, as well as by Byram (1989), who even argued that teachers of a foreign language are also tutors and instructors of that culture, taking on abilities from sociology, geography, and history mentors to convey this complex of information. Additionally, according to Leveridge (2008), a language teacher's job is to raise awareness of cultural differences and to teach about it:

the cultural background of language usage, choose culturally appropriate teaching styles, and explore culturally based linguistic differences to promote understanding instead of misconceptions or prejudices. Language policy must be used to create awareness and understandings of cultural differences, and written to incorporate the cultural values of those being taught.

Starting from the argument that 'when academic knowledge and skills

are situated within the lived experiences and frames of reference of students, they are more personally meaningful, have higher interest appeal, and are learned more easily and thoroughly' (Gay, 2002, p. 106), still the focus should be on the target language culture, if not out of methodological reasons, then at least out of pragmatic ones, even under very atypical circumstances as the ones provided by the LanGuide project, again, as explained above.

In Tomalin and Stempleski's (1998, p. 5) opinion, to be culturally aware encompasses 'sensitivity to the impact of culturally-induced behaviour on language use and communication' and integrates the aspect of consideration to the other's culture in communication, thus inferring that without it, the speaker may be deprived of what Stern (1992, p. 217) referred to as 'the native speaker's perspective.' In this way, what could be built is the unwanted profile of the 'fluent fool,' according to Barnlund's concept (1982, p. 6), i.e. the perfectly fluent and proficient user of a language in laboratory terms, who lacks any trace of contextualised social and cultural input. Thus, 'learning the cultural roots of a language is essential for meaningful fluency' (Seelye, 1993, p. 275), which can be attained only if the second step is taken, activating the concept of cultural competence. According to Nechifor and Borca (2020, p. 297), cultural competency occurs when

on the one hand, as a student in a multicultural class, one can not only be aware of differences and complexities, but can already know how to deal with them, handle them, and respond to their specificity. On the other hand, as an instructor, after becoming aware of the difficulty of teaching to a multicultural class exactly due to the same differences and complexities, one can manage the entire process in a professional way, having correct reactions, politically correct answers, a lot of bibliography to cover from this point of view.

Starting from *The New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy* of 2002 which attempts at profiling the American culture: 'people, places, ideas, history, politics, American literature, wireless technology, gene therapy, science and technology, and events that shape the American cultural conversation' (Hirsch et al., 2002, p. viii), the most important concept is practically defined, that of cultural literacy. This one actually represents the last milestone on the road leading to the establishment of 'culturacy,' a term coined by Nechifor and Borca (2020, p. 298) referring to:

cultural icons, mythology and folklore, proverbs, idioms, philosophy and religion, literature, writing and speaking conventions, fine arts, anthropology, psychology and sociology, business and economics, physical sciences and mathematics, and even medicine and health practices.

After exploring the above-mentioned stages and conceptual frameworks, culturacy is also the notion that was fully taken into account when creating the exercises for the LanGuide mobile application, as it is the essential component that can make the process of learning a foreign language comprehensive, from sounds, pronunciation and spelling to applied linguistics, passing through vocabulary, morphological and syntactic characteristics, as well as meaning, without making the subject of separately distinct tasks or exercises focused on teaching culture predominately.

CALLing the MALL

Nowadays, when several aspects of our daily lives are becoming increasingly digitalized, Computer-Assisted Language Learning (henceforth CALL) is more and more widespread. In recent years, CALL has become available to more and more language learners in various countries, making it possible for students with different cultural backgrounds to connect and engage in common learning experiences. At the same time, technology-based language learning has also evolved in terms of its applicability for the different parts of the curriculum in general and any given language lesson in particular (Chapelle, 2010, p. 66).

From personal computers, to pocket-sized devices such as: mobile phones, MP3 and MP4 players, tablets and personal digital assistants, the range of connectivity to linguistic information has grown considerably in recent years, as, together with portability and accessibility, these gadgets enable, ease and facilitate the access to not only sources of general knowledge, but, especially to language frameworks of learning, reducing the time and place barriers in language learning (Mosavi Miangah & Nezarat, 2012). Consequently, it is not only that in today's foreign language classroom practice, instead of asking pupils and students to put their mobile phones away or to turn them off, teachers can very diligently ask them to put them to good use, but also, they can rely on the mobility this approach has brought and surpass the physical limits of a room, assigning good practice on the go.

However, even if technology is important for CALL, still the focus is on

the human beings involved in the language learning process. The main objective of CALL is, in fact, to satisfy the needs of language learners and teachers by means of computerized learning activities (Kohn, 1995, p. 5). All the variables that define learners and teachers add yet another facet to CALL as a theoretical and practical construct. For example, a good CALL tool is tailored to the specific characteristics of individual learners: their needs, their difficulties, or their learning style. When it comes to teachers, they need CALL applications clearly to define what they have to do in the classroom (Chapelle, 2008, pp. 588–589). Apart from the individuals that are involved in language learning in a hands-on way, CALL is also shaped by policy makers or institutions (Schulze, 2017, p. 302).

This focus on individuals or institutions brings another important factor into the CALL equation: culture. Since the CALL tool under consideration in this chapter is aimed at people who are to take part in a mobility programme and hence to be exposed to a new culture, it was worth looking at the concept of culture in more detail. Every person is born into a specific linguistic and cultural context, whose nature shapes the person in all his or her actions involving the action of learning a new language. Actually, ‘language and consequently communication are essential elements of culture’ (Parmaxi & Zaphiris, 2016, p. 169).

For this reason, when learning a new language, one has to discover the cultural specificities behind that language. As already confirmed by the literature review focused on this aspect, in order for a learner to be considered proficient in a language, being familiar with the culture of the community which speaks that language is just as important as the four skills of reading, listening, writing and speaking. This is why it is important that language learning experiences, the case of CALL being particularly considered, should contain tasks, drills and exercises that include cultural and socio-linguistic-pragmatic features of the contextual reality of the native speakers of that language. Moreover, cultural aspects are relevant not only for the content of learning activities, but also for the design of CALL interfaces (Parmaxi & Zaphiris, 2016, p. 169).

The importance of incorporating cultural elements into language teaching materials is sometimes explicitly mentioned in state documents. For instance, in the USA, creators of such materials are provided with a guideline that emphasises the inclusion of information about the speakers of the target language and the contexts in which they speak that language. This allows learners to become aware of linguistic and cultural aspects that might be different from their own reality (Chapelle, 2010, pp. 71–72). In

other words, CALL materials need to take into consideration the concept of cultural literacy, as introduced above.

CALL and Culturacy

CALL specialists became increasingly interested in how learners interact with one another and how they negotiate meaning. This was the time when the importance of cultural elements was acknowledged. Interactions sometimes took place between learners with different cultural backgrounds, and for this reason issues like identity construction and intercultural competence had to be taken into consideration. In other words, interactionist and sociocultural approaches became the main theoretical foundations of CALL (Chun, 2011, pp. 669–674). This development slowly led to the emergence of the so-called integrative CALL, which revolves around collaborative learning based on interactions between learners who produce authentic discourse (Gruba, 2004, p. 629).

This theoretical evolution is reflected in the increasing complexity and variety of CALL tools, ranging from simpler software like grammar drills, pronunciation exercises, dictation (Garrett, 2009, p. 722) or digital flashcards (Obermeier, 2020, p. 26) to applications that make computer-mediated communication possible: learners can interact with their peers, as well as with teachers or even native speakers of their target language (Schulze, 2017, p. 303). Parmaxi and Zaphiris (2016, p. 175) explain that this kind of online communication involves a number of specific issues if the participants are people with different cultural backgrounds. Besides participants' learning strategies and their linguistic competence, cultural differences also need to be taken into account in such cases. These challenges can be overcome if intercultural engagement is encouraged. CALL tools that address the needs of learners from different cultures and integrate the specificities of those cultures can improve intercultural understanding.

When it comes to cultural aspects involved in CALL, Buendgens-Kosten (2020, p. 307) highlights a phenomenon that she calls 'the monolingual bias': the majority of CALL tools treat their users as if they were monolinguals, ignoring the fact that people who want to learn a new language might already speak several other languages, which may prove to be valuable resources in the new learning process. There are, however, CALL materials that try to overcome the monolingual barrier. These are usually non-commercial applications funded by organizations like the European Union (p. 317). LanGuide is a case in point: it is created by specialists from various countries for learners with different cultural backgrounds, and it can

be used for learning several languages, promoting interculturality (Kompara Lukančič & Fabijanić, 2020, p. 44).

The creation of the exercises dedicated to both the English language and the Romanian language which were included in the LanGuide app was driven by the concept of cultural literacy, aiming at developing learners' multicultural understanding (Kompara Lukančič & Fabijanić, 2020, p. 44). But in what the exercises for the English language were concerned, the cultural aspects integrated in this language learning app required a novel approach from their creators, as elements of their respective cultures had to be conveyed by means of the English language, which is the language of the exercises. For example, the Romanian team introduced elements of their local culture by using authentic institution names, proper names, toponyms, or the real names of university classrooms at Transilvania University, their home university in Braşov. Furthermore, the exercises contain Romanian phone prefixes, and even names of local companies. Additionally, the team tried to go beyond such elements and introduced quite pragmatic, down-to-earth aspects of Romanian culture, e.g. problems related to bureaucracy. This can help the users of the application prepare for their mobility in Romania (Nechifor & Dimulescu, 2021, pp. 96–97).

The example of the LanGuide application illustrates one of the challenges that CALL specialists are faced with: conveying language as a defining feature of the community which speaks it, and thus enabling learners to use language as an instrument for intercultural communication. But this is not the only issue that is inherent to CALL. In what follows, the chapter will focus on some other types of challenges that CALL must deal with.

The Evolution of CALL to MALL

M-learning is undergoing fast progress and expansion. Early approaches did not quite address, in correct terms, the needs of the users while also employing incipient know-hows that were not too widely accessible or too well understood (Kukulska-Hulme et al., 2007). But these days, according to Kukulska-Hulme and Shield (2008), hand-held gadgets such as mobile phones and tablets with or without internet connection, e-dictionaries, MP3/4 players with or without internet access have transformed into learning devices, everywhere and at any instance, the most-handly seeming to be the mobile phones (Kondo et al., 2012). And even though, according to an experiment conducted by Stockwell (2007), which was meant to identify the preferability of students in acquiring new vocabulary by means of using a computer versus using a mobile phone, the inclination of the subjects

was in favour of the computer, as they complained about the small size of the phone screens, about the necessity to overcharge the batteries, as well as about the impracticality of switching from private use of the phone as a phone to that of a learning device, in time, with the advancement of the technological improvements brought to the mobile phone industry, not only did the phone screens become bigger, the batteries start to last longer and the switch among different functionalities become more practical, but the entire learning experience on such a device became fun and easy to handle, letting alone the cost of such devices which has also greatly contributed to the preference shift. And this happens to be an opinion also shared by Kolb (2012) who considers that mobile phones can help students learn more efficiently with pleasure and delight. She actually was the one who stated, in 2008, that mobile phones are the modern toys that can be converted into learning tools (Kolb, 2008).

The UK, the USA, as well as Japanese universities were among the first practitioners to have tuned into a MALL teaching approach considering the fact that a good proportion of their students were equipped with such devices (Kondo et al., 2012). Therefore, professors can use this to their advantage in order to initiate a curriculum and syllabus adjustment so that a digital era be introduced alongside the communicative one at an institutional and systemic level. But as mobile phones have become omnipresent, students turned into universal learners prepared, exposed to and, consequently, ready to use special applications for language learning with noticeable results anywhere around the globe, not only inside educational establishments. (Baleghizadeh and Oladrostam, 2010).

Moreover, MALL helps students be more autonomous. All four language skills, as well as grammar and vocabulary are catered for within such mobile applications, a variety of types of CALL-based vocabulary learning strategies having already been provided to the users to the benefit of their vocabulary improvement: multimedia package with vocabulary, written text with electronic glosses, and dedicated vocabulary programs (Stockwell, 2007; Tai & Ting, 2011), pronunciation integrated software (Tai & Ting, 2011), listening dedicated tasks (Tai & Ting, 2011), writing proficiency drills (Tai & Ting, 2011), reading comprehension exercises (Tai & Ting, 2011).

The LanGuide app is an example that illustrates the application of MALL for instruction centred on language for specific purposes. The fact that it addresses different categories of learners i.e., university students, teachers and administrative staff, as well as different fields i.e., administrative,

mobility, academic and IT, languages i.e., Romanian, Italian, Slovenian, Croatian and Spanish, and language levels i.e., beginner, intermediate and advanced, makes it a valuable tool for acquiring language for specific purposes (Kompapa Lukančič & Fabijanić, 2020, p. 42).

In terms of personal benefits that CALL users can enjoy, one must mention increased learner autonomy and agency. The instant feedback that applications provide helps learners become aware of their own performance and adjust their learning accordingly (Chapelle, 2008, p. 586). Furthermore, CALL materials usually react to learners' answers and adapt the learning input to their specific needs and difficulties (Bush, 2008, p. 465), levelling the tasks up or down in order to make sure that every learner can benefit from the tasks, irrespective of their current language level.

A well-designed CALL material, which acknowledges the importance of cultural elements and incorporates them into the lessons, can also improve learners' 'intercultural competence through communication with members of the target culture' (Chapelle, 2010, p. 70). Teaching cultural literacy makes learners more tolerant and empathetic, it contributes to their cognitive and emotional development, it provides learning motivation, and it also prepares students for tackling the various contexts that they may encounter in the country where their target language is spoken (Nechifor & Dimulescu, 2021, p. 98). The LanGuide application can be considered a good example in this respect, since its multilingual, multicultural design makes it possible for users to improve their intercultural understanding (Kompapa Lukančič & Fabijanić, 2020, p. 44).

Speaking about online CALL materials, Parmaxi and Zaphiris (2016, p. 176) make a statement that can be applied to CALL in general, and summarizes the essential prerequisite for such applications to reach their full potential: 'a synergy between technology, culture, and learning is needed and is expected to inform the design of online environments.' This is the principle that underpins the learning activities in the LanGuide application, which aims at balancing language instruction for specific purposes, the conveyance of cultural elements, and the opportunities and challenges inherent to technology.

The Languide Project: The Melting Pot of ESP, CALL and MALL and Cultural Awareness

Good Practices of CALL and MALL

The LanGuide project started as a multicultural Erasmus+ project, gathering two teams from two different fields: linguistic and IT, each of them

multinational. The linguists' team was composed of teachers with experience in L2 teaching, teaching L1 as a foreign language and teaching L2 for specific purposes from Romania (Transilvania University of Braşov), Slovenia (University of Primorska), Spain (University of Castilla-La Mancha) and Croatia (University of Zadar), while the IT team consisted of specialists in software development from Croatia (University of Rijeka) and Sweden (Mälardalen University).

The project results were approached according to a Gantt diagram planning, but were left open for completion, after each started, until the end of the project, to make room improvement anytime on the way. Considering the specificity of the project, they counted on a good relationship between the two teams, as they were mainly intended to take place in joint meetings. After each common workroom, the two teams would produce their specifically discussed and agreed upon output, and on the occasion of the next meeting they would harmonize, once again, the linguistic content-production with the perspective brought by the computer science engineers.

For this, a three-step approach was considered in the making of the exercise's continuum: firstly, linguists designed a general linguistic framework of tasks production for the English language, for all the fields mentioned above, which was subjected to review by peers. Then, the linguistic team was in charge with the creation of the exercises per-se, both for English and for their own languages, starting from the framework agreed upon, in order to comply with the rule of internal consistency.

Secondly, the IT team created the digital framework or the Content Management Platform, which represented the background matrix for the future mobile application where the entire data basis of the exercises already created by the linguistic team was uploaded, according to the instructions received from the colleagues from the IT team, to observe the same rule of internal symmetry for the sake order, logical categorization and coherence. Afterwards, the linguists uploaded the tasks created in the Content Manager (CM) and in the depository accompanying it, where they consigned any image and/or video/audio file that would accompany a certain exercise. At the same time, the template of the exercises was tailored to fit frames devised for the mobile application: drag and drop, multiple choice, and fill-in, the first two under the form of drop-down menus.

Thirdly, the IT specialists created the mobile application envisioned, starting from the format in which the linguists molded into shape their exercises, after extracting them from the CM. Mention needs to be made

that all this was mapped out on Miro's canvas, which served as the backbone of the mobile application, which was designed online with the help of everyone engaged in the project, allowing the final product to benefit from both linguists' and software professionals' viewpoints on: registration, interaction, user options in terms of language targeted for practice, language level, field of interest and personae, exercise display and traceability.

In the final stages before release, the application was subjected to internal and external trials, testing, and stakeholder feedback, which was officially collected in the form of anonymous answers to an online Google form questionnaire that aimed at collecting information on both the quality of the linguists' exercises and the quality and user friendliness of the application designed by the IT specialists.

In this way, the LanGuide experts took into account Schulze's (2017) aspects regarding the inter-dependence of the actors involved in CALL, as well as the roles of interpersonal relationships and learner-environment interactions. These are mirrored not only in the way the teams collaborated, as explained above, abiding by both current educational procedures and their universities' regulations, but also, and perhaps more importantly, in the way the linguists constructed the exercises: appropriately placing the users of the application, by means of each task instruction, in meaningful situations, such as those of the academic field, of a mobility exchange, of a clerical or institutional position.

In view of all of the above, the LanGuide methodology to foreign language improvement fruitfully eliminates the aspect of disconnected, abstract variables, which was stated earlier as one of the primary issues with CALL, while the sociolinguistic element is beautifully accommodated at the same time satisfying the scholarly prerequisites of drilling and perfecting for language development and quality enhancement.

The Curious Case of 'Culturacy' in the LanGuide English Exercises

Besides the characteristic of CALL on which the entire project approach was based, another aspect was accounted for by LanGuide, i.e., the cultural element. For the natives of the host-countries, who are offered the opportunity to polish their specialised vocabulary in English, in the specialised fields that the LanGuide application contains, Gay's approach to the cultural element is addressed, as mentioned in the literature review section, as they will be able to identify traces of their native countries' cultural representations and simply focus, in a familiar context, on the cognitive aim of the exercises they drill.

You are a student at the Faculty of Letters, “Transilvania” University of Brasov who has applied for an Erasmus+ study mobility in Greece. The secretary of the Erasmus+ department has informed you about the possibility of being disqualified from the competition, unless you bring the original papers needed for the application file, but you seem to have problems submitting them in due time. You are in the secretary’s office now and you have to defend your case. Prepare an oral account regarding this situation, explaining why you cannot hand in the required papers before the deadline, asking for an extension of the deadline and offering alternative solutions to the problem meanwhile. Consider using an appropriate register, a wide variety of vocabulary items and grammatical structures, a well-organised and coherent discourse. Provide personal arguments and examples. Talk for approximately 3 minutes.

Figure 2.1 Student/Advanced/Secretarial/Evaluating & Creating/Speaking/Tick and Cross

But, as already mentioned before, the methodology for designing the exercises for the English language was atypical, as the language of the exercises was English, but the cultural elements covered the field-reality of Romania, Slovenia, Croatia, Spain and Sweden, Italy. Thus, a creative, yet puzzling tandem of language and culture materialised, as cultural elements of the minor languages targeted were inserted in the English language exercises, an approach which hasn’t been used before and which constitutes, from a linguistic perspective, a distinctive perspectivisation of culturacy. So, practically, real-life interactions in administrative settings, real examples of practices with institutional offices and personnel, aspects of red-tape, as well as teaching practices of the host-countries were scattered throughout the English tasks, in order for the beneficiaries of the application (students, teachers or administrative staff) to immerse themselves in these contexts via English, the language which within the application addressed all levels and fields, for enabling familiarisation with the countries where an Erasmus+ mobility may take place for them, according to the interinstitutional agreements signed by their universities.

Representative examples, extracted from the Romanian data base, portray the inclusion of the cultural element either in the task environment of the exercises (Figures 2.1–2.3), or within the body of the exercises (Figures 2.4–2.8). Representative examples of cultural element inclusion within the body of the exercises themselves can be traced in Figures 2.4–2.8.

Transilvania University of Braşov, the Faculty of Letters, the Centre for Learning Modern Languages, the Department of Continuous Education, the Faculty of Business and Administration, the Erasmus+ Department, as institutions included in the real context of the examples can provide a true-to-life field representation of the institutional map of academic establishments for any guest in an Erasmus+ mobility visiting our city.

You are student Silvana Enescu, you are in your second year of studies, first semester, at the Faculty of Letters. Create the correct form of an application letter for an exchange Erasmus+ programme at Granada Faculty of Letters, in Spain. You should consider:

- describing your profile and your interests
- inquiring about possible syllabus matches between your BA undergraduate programme and the one of the targeted faculty
- asking to be selected for an interview

You will address the letter to the Erasmus+ department with your university, Mrs. Davidescu Lorena.

In order for you to achieve this task, please select the appropriate answer for each entry on this letter from the dropdown menus available.

Figure 2.2 Student/Advanced/Secretarial/Creating/Writing/Multiple Choice (drop-down)

As a student in the Erasmus+ programme, imagine you have to write to the Dean of the Faculty of Letters to let him know about the problems you have regarding attending the second semester in Braşov, Romania, according to the agreement. Put the parts of this formal letter in the correct order:

Figure 2.3 Student/Beginner/Secretarial/Applying/Writing/Ordering

Date: 11.05.2020 A.D.

TRANSILVANIA UNIV. OF BRAŞOV'S AD.

POSN.: Recep. / Sec. / OA - c. 25000 Ron p.a.

Famous university in RO, located in the heart of the country, is looking for a bright, hard-working, dedicated, and ambitious Sec./OA for their busy Recep. area. Your day will be very varied, as well as the duties and tasks that you will perform, i.e.: admin. support to a lively and famous teaching staff. You must have a min. of 50 wpm, a knowledge of wp software (esp. Office Word, PP, .pdf), and min 2 yrs exp. in reception.

For app., email Simona Columbeanu (sc@unitbv.ro), from HR, ASAP, quote ref. no. 96/G41 and encl. a CV, but only after you read the T&C.

The date for the exam: TBA

FYI: For this position, an NDA is N/A

Tel: 004 789 300 202

P.S.: Even if OJT is offered, you still need at least one outstanding L/recomm.

Figure 2.4 Administrative Staff/Advanced/Secretarial/Analysing/Vocabulary/Fill-in

Silvana Enescu, Lorena Davidescu, Carolina Davidescu, Simona Columbeanu, Mr. Lăzărescu, Doru Muntenescu, Cristiana Demetrescu, Cornelia Dragu all stand as examples of genuine Romanian proper names, created

1. I have made an appointment for you to see your Erasmus+ coordinator 2 o'clock Friday the 16th.
2. The person in charge with the incoming students is in China the moment so I'm unable to make any arrangements for you to see her she returns. She is away two weeks, but this time her duties are attributed to Ms. Carolina Davidescu, the Erasmus+ department manager. She works Thursdays. Would you like me to book a meeting for you her this week?
3. The Vice-Rector is due back in the office a few minutes if the meeting ends time.
4. Please don't forget to bring all your papers for the Erasmus+ file the next few days, the end of the week.
5. I'll confirm if your application file for the Erasmus+ study exchange programme for Germany is complete Tuesday morning the latest.

Figure 2.5 Administrative Staff/Beginner/Secretarial/Grammar/Understanding/Fill-in

1. Where's the department photocopy machine?	a. It's Mr. Lăzărescu, assistant professor, Ph.D.
2. What is the Dean's telephone number?	b. At her office, on Colina, room II29.
3. When is the Department meeting regarding the situation of the transferable credits?	c. My appointment with the Faculty Erasmus coordinator is at 9:30 am.
4. Who is the Dean of the Faculty?	d. The Erasmus+ coordinator, under whose supervision you've been from the beginning of the exchange.
5. When is your appointment with the Faculty Erasmus coordinator?	e. I'm sorry, we're not allowed to provide it, but if you want, you can make an appointment with him.
6. Where can I find the coordinator of the Erasmus+ programme of this Department?	f. It is on July 4 th .
7. Who will be in charge with checking my student supplement before I return to my home university?	g. It is upstairs, in room TI8.

Figure 2.6 Student/Basic/Secretarial/Understanding/Speaking/Matching

according to the lexical criterion which makes use of particular proper noun suffixes (-escu) to form traditional Romania names. In this way, a familiar phonetic atmosphere is created which enables to be easily identified as lexemes nominating persons in Romanian. Moreover, they actually represent versions of the actual names of the personnel mentioned in the exercises, at the moment when the exercises were created by the re-

TRANSILVANIA UNIVERSITY OF BRASOV CENTRE FOR LEARNING MODERN LANGUAGES	
<u>Training for the future</u>	
Belonging to the Department of Continuous Education and offering courses taught by the academic teaching staff of the Faculty of Letters and of the Faculty of Business and Administration, CLML invites you to enrol for the following classes, stating the 15 th March 2021:	
1.	Secretarial and Business courses
2.	Bilingual courses:
✓	English/Spanish
✓	English/German
✓	English/French
✓	English/Japanese
3.	Marketing and Advertising courses
So, if you are adults between 18 and 60 years old, registration is open on a permanent basis on cilm.ro and the courses start when a group of minimum 8 persons is formed.	
You can find us for further detail at 20 Eroilor Blvd, Brasov, Romania or you can call at: 0040734202020.	

Figure 2.7 Student/Basic/Secretarial/Understanding & Applying/Reading/Fill-in

-
- 1 As a newly arrived Erasmus+ student at Transilvania University of Braşov, can you tell me whom I should contact regarding my accomodation with the university?
 - 2 Hello, I am looking for my Erasmus+ coordinator, Ms. Cristiana Demetrescu.
 - 3 That would be very kind of you. And yes, as a matter of fact I would, as I haven't eaten since my arrival in Braşov, at noon.
 - 4 What shall I take to get to my hotel, Mr. Dragu?
 - 5 Good afternoon, Ms. May. I am Cornelia Dragu. I am the secretary of the Erasmus+ department at Transilvania University of Braşov. Welcome to Braşov!
-
- A Can I take your coat, Ms. May. Would you like a biscuit?
 - B I can call a taxi for you, Ms. May. We usually recommend Martax, as a private company.
 - C Hello, can I help you?
 - D Good afternoon. My name is May, Dora May, and I am assistant lecturer at the University of Manchester. I have just arrived for my teaching mobility at your university. Is this the secretarial office of the Erasmus+ department?
 - E You'll have to speak to our vice-rector, Mr. Doru Muntanescu, who is responsible for for any student-related matters, including room distribution in our university's hostels.
-

Figure 2.8 Administrative Staff/Beginner/Secretarial/Understanding/Speaking/Match

searchers participating in the project from the Romanian team, an element which could be categorised as funnily contributing to a linguistic game for possible guests who could recognize it as such.

The problems one may have with the application file 'unless you bring the original papers' (Figure 2.1), writing to the Dean of the Faculty of Letters

for certain problems ‘regarding attending the second semester in Braşov, Romania’ (Figure 2.2), having the department to meet for analysing the ‘situation of the transferrable credits’ (Figure 2.6) all represent real situations one can encounter as a person in a mobility in Braşov. Moreover, institutionally related features, such as the institutional email and platforms account extension: @unitbv.ro (Figure 2.4), the fact that courses start at The Centre for Learning Modern Languages only when ‘a group of minimum 8 persons is formed’ (Figure 2.7), reference to the person who should be contacted for accommodation in case of newly arrived students from abroad (Figure 2.8), all reflect unique characteristics of bureaucracy exclusive to Romanian entities and are incorporated into the drills’ body so that the users be exposed to various probable circumstances of the Romanian administrative structures.

Nonetheless, toponyms such as: Braşov (correctly containing in spelling the diacritical mark, for ş), ‘located in the heart of the country,’ Colina (the place where the majority of the faculties have their classes), the address of the Rectorate building: ‘20 Eroilor Blvd,’ all reflect placenames and geographical indications that contribute to the creation of a recognizable cultural milieu that one would identify after enjoying the language offer provided by the mobile application.

Last but not least, other examples such as: classroom names: ‘T18,’ ‘I129’ – mirroring the room/laboratory reference in our university (where T stands for building, I indicates the floor, and 8 pinpoints the actual classroom), and the prefix in the telephone number which is valid for Romania: 004, and even the name of a trusted taxi company: Martax add to the practical information one might benefit from if involved in a cultural experience in Romania, Braşov.

Conclusions

CALL has a variety of universal advantages, regardless of the classroom setting in which it is used, and MALL, with its mobility instances, only adds to the versatility of usage. One of their major advantages is the ability to instantaneously adapt the learning input to the learner’s unique needs (Bush, 2008, p. 465). CALL and MALL technologies, can give users immediate feedback on their responses. As a result, every student is always informed about his or her own performance (Chapelle, 2008, p. 586), even in the case of spoken production, as self-assessment scales are provided to the learners in order for them to be able to measure their own performance against certain fix metrics or bands. This can help them monitor and

modify their learning experience, resulting in increasing their acquisition autonomy. All these aspects were well comprehended and implemented by the authors of the LanGuide mobile application, since it effectively addresses all of these problems, as detailed in the sections above.

However, in addition to mentioning the advantages of using CALL, being culturally educated from both a psychological and an affective standpoint must nowadays be incorporated into the process of designing foreign language exercises. And there is also motivation to consider, as it was one of Harmer's (1991) foci, when he stated that a different language appeals more to those who desire to be a part of its users' society, as they are 'more attracted to the culture of the target language community' (Harmer, 1991, p. 4), thus prompting what Gardner and Lambert (1972) had named 'integrative motivation.'

Summarising the main aspects tackled by the present chapter, it would be worth casting an eye over the theories regarding ESP, CALL and 'culturacy,' but most of all at the connections that the present project enabled to be created among them, by means of the LanGuide mobile application. Thus, the conclusions would focus on the researchers' authentic illustrations and pinpoint how language can adapt to the needs of a sometimes-complex reality, such as that of trainees, instructors, and members of the administrative staff who want to gain knowledge or improve their English in order to participate in various Erasmus+ mobility initiatives, while also trying to become familiar with the language of the host country.

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