

SIMULAB, Collaborative Tasks for Language Learning in the Web

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Abstract. With the support of the European Union through two of its programmes (Socrates Adult Education and Telematics in Education and Training) a consortium consisting of language teachers, researchers and programmers from six European countries have developed SIMULAB, a product that includes both a validated pedagogical concept and a customized Web-based platform (TELSI) especially created to meet the needs of collaborative learning. The main objective of this type of simulation is to develop the communicative language skills of the students. Teachers see themselves as moderators of the interaction that takes place among the students in their own group. SIMULAB is a concept for Internet-based communication between language students across national and cultural borders. A simulation is a problem solving activity, a role-play where students must communicate within the frame of a fictive but realistic script. SIMULAB is based on such recognised pedagogical principles as student autonomy and collaborative learning. Individual creativity is just as important as the capacity to communicate both within the local group and with representatives of other cultures.