



I-BLU Innovative Blended Language Upskilling

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Methodological Framework for Learners Catalogue

Partners and translations in national languages:



Croatian, Romanian, Serbian, Slovenian and Spanish translations of the Methodological Framework can be found at the project website:

www.iblu-project.eu

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Version history

Version	Document	Date	Author	
1.1.	Methodological Framework	8 th May 2023	Ljubomir V.	First draft of Methodological Framework
1.2	Methodological Framework	30 th June 2023	Ljubomir V.	Updated with approval, following evaluation by Quality Panel
1.3	Methodological Framework	30 th November 2024	Ljubomir V.	Final version for E+ Results platform

INTRODUCTION

The Methodological Framework for the Learners Catalogue represents the key link between the state of the art needs analysis performed in the five partner countries in the stages leading up to finalization of PR1 The Learners Catalogue and the subsequent project outputs, including the core instrument, the Blended Panoply.

In particular, the Methodological Framework is developed by the partners in order to define:

- Basic orientation for the target user (teachers) and the end users (learners) in using the Learners Catalogue and the Blended Panoply training course
- The main elements of the overall structure of the Learners Catalogue and the Blended Panoply training course
- The criteria for determining and the list of the main categories of learner types, as well as the dominant types and subtypes within these categories of adult learners of English, including the criteria for the Learners Catalogue content development (Taxonomy of Learners)
- The criteria for the development and input of learning and teaching content into the Blended Panoply, including the criteria for determining and structuring of main learning pathways within the Blended Panoply, the training modules and training pills
- The criteria for the classification of CEFR B1 functional contexts and
- The preliminary type and scope of methodological input for teachers, the ‘Train the Teacher’ component of the Blended Panoply

INDUCTION TO BLENDED LEARNING

Considering the novel approach in the learning and teaching methodology, there are two aspects in particular to be taken into account in order to maximise the induction of learners and teachers to the I-BLU course: the Targeted Customisation and the Blended Learning.

Targeted customization:

Information gathered from needs assessments and interviews with learners shows that language needs are highly varied from the outset, depending upon the roles that learners assume at the beginning of their learning paths and the roles that they aspire to assume. Moreover, the language needs of different learners can lie in completely different domains. The needs of learners also vary according to the pace and circumstances in which they wish to reach their goals.

We are of the opinion that to make the learning instruction more effective, the initial phases of the learning paths should be revised to meet the following objectives:

- The necessity and relevance of entering a post-beginners' course should be made clearer by making it possible for individuals to find instruction that relates directly to their needs within the courses on offer.
- Learners should be stimulated immediately and supported in defining their own profile and relating the learning content to their role in the outside world.
- It is crucial that the learning experience in the initial phase is positive so that learners develop competencies that will encourage them to continue the learning process, both within and outside the context of lessons.

Blended learning:

In order to ensure the successful uptake of the two main project results – the Learners Catalogue and the Blended Panoply training course – both these results must incorporate relevant elements for proper induction of the learners and teachers.

For the learner, these elements should be in the form of appropriate learners' support structure integrated within the Learners Catalogue and the Blended Panoply.

For the teachers, optimum support should be provided in the Learners Catalogue and the Blended Panoply, including tutorials, methodology inputs and ready-to-use teachers' materials.

MAIN ELEMENTS OF LEARNERS CATALOGUE

Designed from in-depth analysis of a comprehensive range of adult learners, the catalogue represents a novel tool for language teaching professionals, with potential to channel and modify the teaching process towards improved efficiency and a significantly larger scope. It also provides a base for the pedagogical framework, including interaction types, content and user experience in order to facilitate the easy implementation into blended learning courses for A2-B1 adult learners.

The Learners Catalogue is uniquely transferable and should provide a valuable asset in planning and delivering language training to adults in different settings.

The main categories of learners in the Learners Catalogue should incorporate the following social roles:

- 1 employee
- 2 job seeker
- 4 tourist or traveller
- 3 student
- 6 participant in social activities
- 5 consumer of news
- 7 participant in social media
- 8 leisure time allocator
- 9 parent
- 10 care giver
- 11 neighbour

These main categories have been defined following the thorough state-of-the-art needs assessment in the opening phase of the project, based on the extensive field research. It has been decided that they will form the basis for the development of the learning and teaching approach in Work Package 3, the Blended Panoply.

In addition, to aid to the much needed understanding of the different profiles of learners, the Learners Catalogue should also capture the main impact factors:

- 1 Level of motivation
- 2 Age
- 3 Previous experience in learning English 4 Flexibility regarding time dedicated to learning
- 5 Learning style
- 6 Communication style
- 7 Level of education
- 8 Level of digital skills
- 9 Employment status
- 10 Level of support from peers/family
- 11 Place of living

Other elements of the Learners Catalogue ought to include a list of functional domains and/or contexts associated with the role, in which a learner might participate, typical learning habits of distinctive learners types, as well as challenges related to autonomous learning and using digital resources for language learning.

For the users, the Learners Catalogue will enable to:

- define types of adult learners progressing towards B1 - independent ESL user
- identify commonalities in support needs both across categories and across nations;
- assess the current gap between needs and provisions;
- reach a consensus around the circumstantial constraints and opportunities, - achieve necessary level of clarity in these areas.

For the improved user-friendliness, the introduction to the Learners Catalogue should be kept simple and restricted to several main categories of generic Learner Types:

1. Work (office worker, job-seeker, employer...)
2. School (VET, higher, trainee...)
3. In the city and on the move (leisure time, traveller, tourist...)
4. Welfare and public institutions (care giver, user of administration services...)
5. Home and neighbourhood (social roles, parenthood...)
6. The Internet (consumer of news, social media and networks participant...)

Each of these categories will then branch off into respective main types and subtypes of adult language learners.

MAIN ELEMENTS OF BLENDED PANOPLY

A natural extension of the Learners Catalogue, the Blended Panoply is the adaptive multifunctional toolkit specifically designed to maximise the efficiency of the learning pathway for adults upskilling to B1 level of competence in English as a second language. As well as familiarising the teachers with the available resources, the Blended Panoply will provide the teachers with a natural pathway towards developing strategies and methodologies for successful mediation between the learning content and the language learner.

The functionalities of the Blended Panoply should include:

- A set of clear recommendations for use of the digital platform, learning design and learning pathways
- Options for independent or teacher-assisted work, individual or group work
- Flexible segments of face-to-face vs. the digital learning component to suit the learner's preferences
- Online test tool for determining the initial and the target level of competence in line with CEFR scales for work and social interaction

The content of the Blended Panoply should include:

- 6 main pathways adapted to suit the most common profiles of learners, complete with syllabi for teachers and institutions. These pathways should be best matched with the main categories from the Learners Catalogue, i.e.:
 1. Work (office worker, job-seeker, employer...)
 2. School (VET, higher, trainee...)
 3. In the city and on the move (leisure time, traveller, tourist...)
 4. Welfare and public institutions (care giver, user of administration services...)
 5. Home and neighbourhood (social roles, parenthood...)
 6. The Internet (consumer of news, social media and networks participant...)
- each pathway should be subdivided into up to 8 modules with respective outcomes, and each module should include a minimum of 5 learning pills. In this way, the Blended Panoply will incorporate a total of 40 communicative situations and at least 200 learning pills for students, each complete with a lesson plan for teacher-assisted learning.
- additional sources for learners and teachers should also be incorporated into the Blended Panoply.

LEARNER TYPES CRITERIA

The Learners Catalogue will have 20 main types of adult learners, further subdivided into at least 60 subtypes. It is recommended that the following criteria be applied in defining the types of learners within the Learners Catalogue:

- a) Social roles identified in the initial phase of state-of-the-art needs analysis. At least ten social roles have been confirmed as strong candidates for the main types of adult learners of English as a second language:

- 1 employee
- 2 job seeker
- 4 tourist or traveller
- 3 student
- 6 participant in social activities
- 5 consumer of news
- 7 participant in social media
- 8 leisure time allocator
- 9 parent
- 10 care giver
- 11 neighbour

- b) Factors with an impact on the learning process:

- 1 Level of motivation
- 2 Age
- 3 Previous experience in learning English
- 4 Flexibility regarding time dedicated to learning
- 5 Learning style
- 6 Communication style
- 7 Level of education
- 8 Level of digital skills
- 9 Employment status
- 10 Level of support from peers/family
- 11 Place of living

- c) Other elements determined by the partnership

At the time of preparation of the first draft of the Methodological Framework document (months 6-7 of the project) the above criteria mainly served the purpose of introducing the task. They were finally elaborated following the second Transnational Project Meeting in Split.

LEARNING CONTENT CRITERIA

The learning content should be guided by the following principles and criteria:

- a) Suitability of content for online and face-to-face learning and teaching
- b) Suitability for integration in the LMS
- c) Suitability according to the initial and target level of learners (A2 to B1)
- d) Adequate incorporation of communication contexts to match the learner types
- e) Adequate incorporation of respective skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking, as well as structure
- f) Suitability of content to generate interest and long term motivation
- g) Teachability and suitability for independent learning
- h) Other criteria defined by the partners

At the time of preparation of the first draft of the Methodological Framework document (months 6-7 of the project) the above criteria mainly served the purpose of laying a foundation for the later stages of the content creation. However, they were further elaborated and supplemented following the second Transnational Project Meeting in Split, where the transition to the Learning Platform was agreed in a concrete form.

CEFR B1 FUNCTIONAL CONTEXTS

For all the functional contexts defined within the respective Learning Pathways, clear linkage to descriptors within CEFR B1 level should be made. This reference will serve the purpose of setting the clear methodological outcomes for each functional context in which English is used by the prospective learners, for any of the different main learner types.

The reference will assist both learners and teachers, and will also provide a firm link to the assessment of the progress made using the I-BLU learning platform.

TRAIN THE TEACHER

The ‘Train the Teacher’ component is implicit to the I-BLU project and its two main results, the Learners Catalogue and the Blended Panoply.

The path towards defining its exact structure and scope will lead through gradual steps, starting with the production of the Methodological Takeaways by Babel in the current stage of the project and developing alongside the creation of the content for the Blended Panoply.

Similarly to the other structural elements of this IO, at the time of preparation of the first draft of the Methodological Framework document (months 6-7 of the project), sufficient data was collected for further elaboration of this segment during and following the second Transnational Project Meeting in Split.

CONCLUSION

The Methodological Framework following the needs analysis phase of the I-BLU project has been successfully created to incorporate key conclusions and recommendations before the start of the project Work Package Three.

After the review of the document in the Transnational Project Meeting in Split in June 2023 (month 8 of the project), the Quality Panel issued positive evaluation and approved the Framework in its entirety for the future development of IO1 and IO2.