

# Exploring the potential of language learning through video making

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# Context of the study

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- Literature study on exploring how different digital video devices and current approaches to video production can serve as tools for language learning.
- European project, DIVIS (Digital Video Streaming and multilingualism; 141759-LLP-1-2008\_1-DE-COMENIUS-CMP).

Project's website: <http://divisproject.eu/>

# Objectives

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- Our paper has a double-folded goal:
  - Present current literature on language learning through video making.
  - Analyse and categorise examples of video productions produced by language learners.
  - Discuss what kind of video projects and tasks are more likely to enhance the development of students' linguistic and digital communicative competences.

# Challenges

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- We need to redefine what being literate means (“New Literacies”, “Multiple Literacies”).
- Communicative skills acquire a new dimension as children are ‘digital natives’ [Prensky, 2001] who feel at ease if they are confronted with multimodal texts which cannot be processed sequentially.
- Schools should offer students new learning opportunities to help them to develop ‘twenty-first-century skills’ : critical thinking, information and media literacy, creativity, communication skills, collaboration, and contextual learning.

# Challenges

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- Multimedia technologies should be carefully and regularly used in the classroom setting.
- Some teachers still see technology as a set of “mechanistic, exterior, and concrete devices that accomplish tasks and create products” [Bruce & Hogan] rather than as tools to enhance meaningful learning.
- Teachers’ new challenge is to meet the needs of the new generation of learners by “teaching new skills, not simply teaching old skills better” [Dede, 2000].

# (video) technology and (language) learning

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Socioconstructivist approach to learning:

- learning = knowledge construction  $\neq$  knowledge transmission.
  - instruction = scaffolding knowledge construction  $\neq$  transmitting knowledge.
- ↓
- Learning is situated [Lave & Wenger, 1991].
  - Learning tasks should be contextualised and purposeful for the learner.


# (video) technology and (language) learning

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- The integration of online video tasks into a broader virtual learning environment goes beyond mere contextualisation of language tasks.
- Meaningful and contextualised learning is more than a 'realistic excuse' to use the target language.  
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- If "learning is rooted in the learner's participation in social practice" [ Mondada & Pekarek, 2004], language education or digital education *per se* is pointless.

# (video) technology and (language) learning

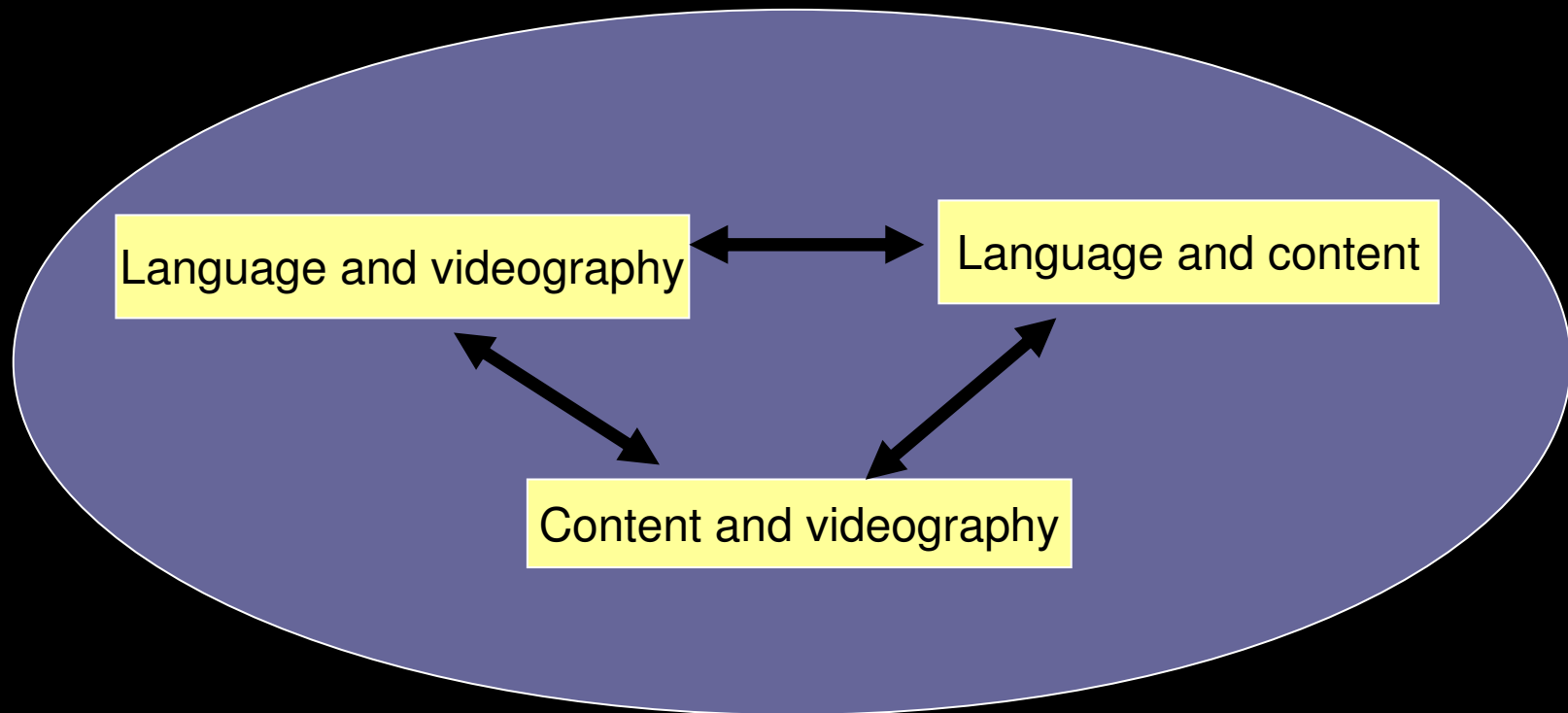
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- We learn when we need to use language and technology in an integrative manner to carry out some sort of social action to attain a personal or shared goal ('learning as doing').  

- Integration of linguistic and digital competences
- CLIL (content and language integrated learning) [Dalton-Puffer, 2007]
- TPCK (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge; [Koehler & Mishra, 2005])

# (video) technology and (language) learning

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## ■ PROJECT-BASED LEARNING



# (video) technology and (language) learning

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- Project-based learning (PBL) connects content and target language(s) to student's own lives through tasks that are intellectually and emotionally challenging.
- ↓
- Research has proved PBL offers teachers and learners the opportunity of creating situated learning contexts that make “the simultaneous acquisition of language, content, and skills” [Beckett & Slater, 2005].

# Video and language learning: PAST

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- Efforts made to integrate videos in language teaching practices (Allan, 1985; Cooper et al., 1991).

BUT

- Video never had a prominent role, if used, it was regarded as a tool to design “filling” activities.
- Video watching or video making were not exploited as a stimulus to generate genuine communication in the classroom.

# Video and language learning: PRESENT

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Digital technology provides a new framework:

- It is accessible and affordable,
- It simplifies the production process
- It helps students find an audience for their video productions, especially if they are delivered on the Internet (Buckingham et al., 1999).
- The creation of multimodal texts becomes easier.
- Video data is controllable.
- There's a broad selection of available tools that allow teachers plan new types of tasks.

# From video watching to video making

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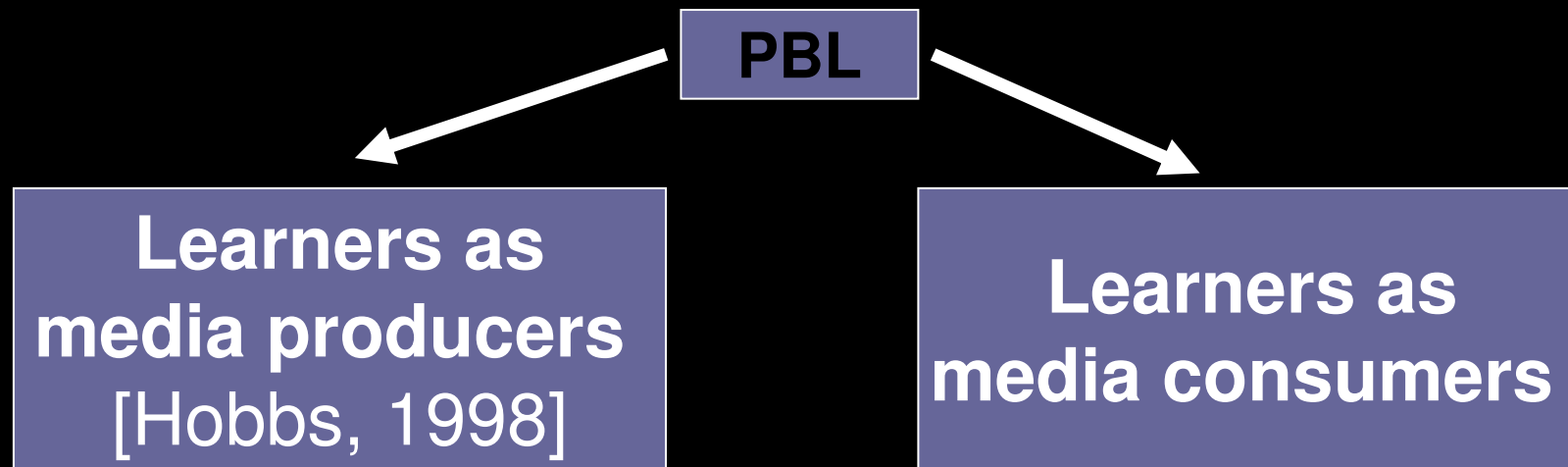
## Video watching:

- A tool for analysing learners' errors.
- A substitute to audio or written texts.
- Video making projects replace video watching activities in the language classrooms, particularly if teachers choose to adopt a constructivist approach to language teaching.

# From video watching to video making

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- Viewing a video can be integrated in a video production project.



# From video watching to video making

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- Viewing a video can be integrated in a video production project.

Students 'learn with technology' [Reeves, 1998] in a context in which the construction of content, media and language knowledge becomes meaningful.

# Video making: a language learning tool?

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- Research on content-based digital video production is almost inexistent as researchers are mainly concerned with:
  - a) the study of group dynamics in the processes of shooting and editing videos.
  - b) the description of why video production is an excellent tool for catering for multiple intelligences in the classroom setting.

# Video making: a language learning tool?

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- Exception: Goulah's study (2007), adolescent learners of Japanese created "uncommercials" in the target language.
- Language learning was evident because
  - (b) learners simultaneously developed digital skills (producing the actual videos) and sociolinguistic skills (being able to act –using similar gestures as Japanese people).

# The interaction of literacy, digital literacy and content knowledge construction

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It should occur at the three stages of a video production project:

- At the planning stage.
- At the filming stage.
- At the editing stage.

# The interaction of literacy, digital literacy and content knowledge construction

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At the planning stage:

- Creation of their storyboards and scripts.



not necessarily planned simultaneously and in a linear way.

Literacy?

- Children today need to read, comprehend and create both linear and non-linear texts  
→ 'cineliteracy' (Parker, 2002 ).

# The interaction of literacy, digital literacy and content knowledge construction

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At the filming stage:

- Learning how to operate the technical equipment and guide the human resources.
- Reproducing behaviours, discourse procedures and norms of language use associated with the communicative event to be video recorded.
- Monitoring discourse and, as a consequence, metalinguistic reflection in the form of other-, peer- or self-correction is at play;
- Reflecting upon content.

# The interaction of literacy, digital literacy and content knowledge construction

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At the filming stage:

- Identify and allocate the technical and human resources

Again, shooting is not about sequencing,  
not about creating linear texts.

- Peer- or self-correction
- Reflecting upon content.

# The interaction of literacy, digital literacy and content knowledge construction

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## At the editing stage

- If students have more shots than needed and these were not recorded in order, they will be forced to develop critical thinking and negotiating skills to select and order the ones they need.
- The process of taking or negotiating decisions at the editing stage further develops knowledge about narrative structures (Hooper, 2002; Fitchett, 2002).

# The interaction of literacy, digital literacy and content knowledge construction

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At the editing stage (contradictory findings):

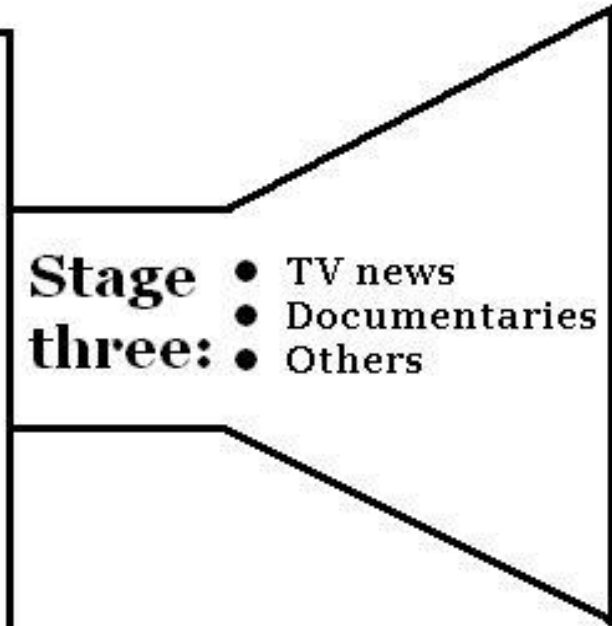
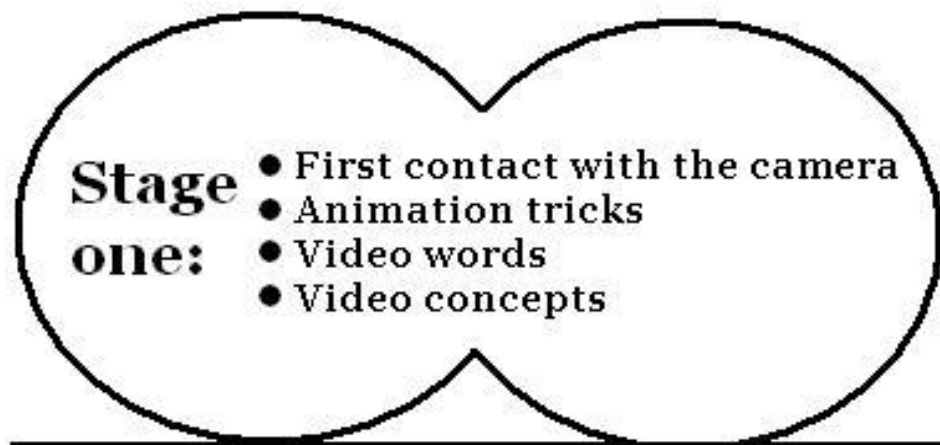
Interacting with the editing software (Avio) and with peers to take decisions trigger productive thinking (Richardson, 2002; Clayton, 2002).

Video editing –as any other creative process–, is best achieved as an individual activity (Fitchett, 2002).

# The interaction of literacy, digital literacy and content knowledge construction

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- Video making is a learning tool because it engages students in a cooperative project in which they need to take individual responsibilities to fulfil core tasks.
- In turn, assigning roles/jobs to students can be developed into a pedagogical task to develop students' negotiating skills.
- It is an excellent opportunity for integrating all students in the class project.



# Concluding remarks

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- Using digital videos *per se* does not necessarily contribute to language learning, as “the learning outcomes depend largely on the way videos are used as part of the overall learning environment, e.g. how viewing or producing videos is integrated into other learning resources and tasks” (Tschirner, 2001).

# Concluding remarks

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- The methodological proposal we have presented accounts for the situated nature of learning and the need to integrate knowledge construction of content, language and media education to create meaningful and authentic learning contexts as well as facilitating the collaborative and individual process of knowledge construction.

# Concluding remarks

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- Video production should be used as an integrative learning tool. The analysis of current practices allowed us to establish a three-stage categorisation of the kind of products which can be produced in project-based classrooms.
- There needs to be more research on the effectiveness of the interplay between content, language and media.

# Concluding remarks

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- The regular use of digital (video) technology in today's classrooms should be accompanied by the recognition of the fact that we need to “widen the ‘canon’ of texts we teach to include the new media texts our children are now so familiar with” [McMillan, 2002] and to redefine what literacy entails.

# Concluding remarks

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- The term “cineliteracy” coined at the British Film Institute evokes the image that literacy and digital literacy are competences of two languages so closely bound that they should not be learnt in isolation. We feel that the approach outlined here may be a step towards a more multidisciplinary and multiple literacy understanding of language teaching and learning in today’s world.

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## Full paper available at:

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