

Report on the "Test Pilot", produced by the Town of Mandas, for the Leonardo da Vinci project, in Sardinia, in the month of ottobre/novembre 2011.

To begin the pilot test on the English course, the town of Mandas contacted by e-mail and phone calls groups of pilgrims, managers of rural accommodation facilities, public and private present in the database, created in the initial phase of the project.

Only few have responded positively to our invitation, therefore, in accordance with tutors, we have decided to extend the invitation to a group of young people of Mandas, who are attending a tourist-oriented professional course, organized by the Sardinia Region (Corso Professionale-Ad Altiora Fiolera). Many have welcomed the proposal.

The course participants were:

Alessandro Erriu

Cinzia Argiolas

Claudia Pilia

Elisabetta Pingiori

Francesco Saba

Giulia Argiolas

Giulia Carta

Hubert Zoboli

M.Giulia Saruis

Marta Pili

Pamela Pingiori

Pamela Gessa

Roberta Gessa

Sara Contini

Vanessa Atzori

Raffaella Roffino

Maura Crabu

Maurizio Moscatelli

Gian Luca Paschina

Ada Cardia

Anna Artizzu

Bonaria Gessa.

Getting started:

Each participant was sent an e-mail with an invitation to participate in the pilot test of the English course: the mail explained, in detail, the characteristics of the project "English. The St. James Way"

and some general aspects on the course. Many of these students regularly attend the Public Library to follow the lessons of the professional course and to use the free internet connection and the PC. The tutors have therefore exploited these moments of meeting to:

- present the course, its objectives and the methodology
- explain what tools were needed to use the course
- Ask for personal information, to make registration and communicate the user ID and password to access the course.
- Show how to use the system
- Print and distribute the user's manual (some were sent by e-mail)
- Explain the tutoring service

The service and Tutorial Sessions

After the first 48 hours from the registration of participants to "pilot test", the tutor contacted each of the participants to find out if they had been able to start the course successfully and to encourage those who had not yet made the first access.

In some cases, there were some technical problems for some students who could not access the platform ,but once we sent the message to the technical assistance, everything was resolved.

After about a week the tutor has contacted the students again and proposed to each of them the "Checking questions" ,corresponding to the units that each student had completed.

Sometimes the tutor has contacted several times some students, encouraging them to start the course, but unfortunately, some of them have given up their efforts.

The intervention of the tutor, it was often necessary to provide technical support in cases where the system contained gaps: for example, the score was not always properly expressed or in the case of some translations of the instructions of the exercises, which appeared in other languages.

The same steps were repeated at the end of the second and third week .In particular, the tutor reminded the students, the importance of repeating several times, the exercises in which they had obtained a low score, using the "OPEN ACCESS": this allowed them, to be sure that they were mastering each new linguistic tool, proposed in the course.

At the end, once the latest "Checking questions" were completed, the tutor has communicated to students, the date for the delivery of the certificate of Participation or the Certificate of Completion and the link, in which to express their personal opinions..

RISULTATI DEL PILOT TEST

Alessandro Erriu	participated
Anna Cardia	participated
Anna Artizzu	participated
Bonaria Gessa	participated
Cinzia Argiolas	participated
Claudia Pilia	participated
Elena Garcia	Successfully completed
Elisabetta Pingiori	participated
Francesco Saba	participated
Gian Luca Paschina	participated
Giancarla Bianchi	participated
Giulia Carta	participated
Giulia Argilas	participated
Hubert Zoboli	participated
Maria Giulia Saruis	participated
Marta Pili	Successfully Completed
Maura Crabu	participated
Maurizio Moscatelli	participated
Pamela Gessa	participated
Pamela Pingiori	participated
Raffaella Roffino	participated
Roberta Gessa	participated
Sara Contini	Successfully completed
Vanessa Atzori	participated

The participants, who with greater commitment and enthusiasm, took part in the "pilot test", were the young students, who had previously studied English but only at a school level, inadequate for use in everyday life, as a true communication tool. There are not many schools in Italy, teaching English, as a real asset to the professional level.

The young of the Professional course, who have completed the "pilot tests" (some of them successfully, some not), are all ready to continue to use this method. In rural areas, in fact, and in areas far from major centres, it does not happen frequently, to have the opportunity to attend an English course, specific to the tourism sector.

Some, despite the initial enthusiasm, were not constant in the study: many of them have been repeatedly encouraged. In these cases, the limitation of the study online, it is self-discipline. Not everyone took the time to devote to the course. An absolute beginner, found the course too far beyond its means, and gave up almost immediately.

Technical considerations:

All our students have used the PC, so we have no evidence regarding the use of other systems.

Technical improvements:

After the "pilot test", we found the following areas for improvement:

- - Need to test the system: the instructions of the exercises do not always appear in the language of the student.
- - Improve the graphics for what concerns the images (often small and sometimes not adequate to concepts)
- Check the scores for individual exercises: often they do not correspond to the outcome of the exercise (0 appears even when the exercise was performed correctly).

Language Learning Considerations:

The course, on the whole, has been received very positively : it answers, in fact, to a deep gap in the offering training in the tourism sector and more particularly in rural areas.

All participants have stressed the usefulness of the course, in relation to the use of English for a job in the tourism and hospitality industry. For some, it was too easy, for others, as absolute beginners, too complex. Some have suggested the introduction of a section devoted to correspondence in English ; others, would have appreciated more grammar sections.

Results of the Satisfaction Questionnaire (from 7 participants)

SATISFACTION	
The system is effective:	3,28
The system is suitable for my needs:	3,00
It is easy to use:	3,28
It is flexible:	3,14
It is convenient to do the course with a Smart Phone:	3,14
It is convenient to do the course with a Tablet:	3,14
It is convenient to do the course with a PC:	3,42
The amount of time I was individualized to complete the course:	3,71
The tutorials:	4,00
The course was individualized:	3,14
The course will help improve the service I give:	3,57
Indicate how satisfied You are globally with the service:	3,14

COMMENTAIRES

Do you feel that you have learned?

- I learned new words
- I could not remember certain words
- I am a beginner , perhaps the course was a bit beyond my means. The use of computers, is a new thing for me and to learn English through the computer is a challenge
- I mismanaged my time

Would you like to continue with this training?

- to fix more new words
- to learn more and more
- Why can I devote to the course as long as necessary, and I am not ashamed of mistakes I make. I can repeat exercises as often as I need.

Positive aspects

- Excellent the listening section and the voice recording to understand errors and improves pronunciation.
- It is easy
- Good choice of topics useful to the tourism sector
- The pronunciation exercises and the possibility of using both guided and open access study
- based on useful aspects of our work
- The course is very specific, it is very helpful for my work. when I receive foreign guests, I feel helpless not being able to communicate with them as I would like
- I learned many new words, very useful

- in theory at home you can more easily find the time to study
- Useful for understanding some terms of tourism
- Good for the voice recording and the pronunciation of the words

Improvements suggested

- Some exercises performed properly, as they gave a score of 0 and so the end result was not high!
- Some exercises are in Spanish rather than in Italian
- technical errors
- It must be improved pronunciations of the words
- an integration with explanations in Italian
- The course is a little too difficult for those who didn't have studied English before, sometimes I could not understand the images of photos
- little self-discipline
- the scoring system of exercises must be improved