

Meeting Cultures through swimming events

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Languages Meet Sport International Conference

The first European Conference on Languages
and Intercultural Dialogue through Sport

‘Sport is an instantaneous translator which
makes youth from different languages and
cultural background communicate easily’.

(Elio De Anna)

The „Swim the Language Challenge” project

October 2006 – September 2008

International Socrates project

- supported by the EU’s Socrates Programme for Language and Culture
- under the direction of LEN, Ligue Européenne de Natation, the governing body of European Swimming Federations

The Main Objectives of the Project

- To promote lesser known European cultures and languages through international swimming events and the development of a language e-learning contest
- To support and emphasize the value of language and cultural diversity in Europe
- To promote the dialogue between different languages and cultures through sports

The project coordinator and the partners

The coordinator and main LEN partner:
Leader-Comunicare Interculture

- University of Primorska, Faculty of Humanities, Slovenia
- Budapest Business School, College of International Management and Business
- Transdemica, Finnish web specialist firm

Sports and Culture

The Fourth Leg - A Unique Content and Form

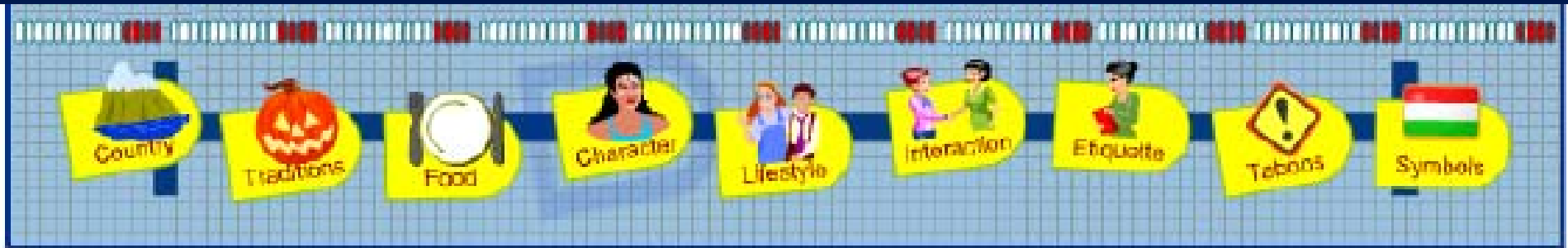
The screenshot shows a web application interface for a language challenge. At the top left, there are logos for 'LEN' and the European Union, with the text 'Inspiring people to learn languages through swimming'. To the right, there is a blue header with a white wave graphic and the text 'SWIM THE LANGUAGE CHALLENGE'. Below this, an orange navigation bar contains the Hungarian flag, the text 'Hungarian pool', a 'SCORES' section showing '0/0', and a 'CONTACT' button with a user icon. The main content area is titled 'TRAINING POOL: click a lane' and features a blue grid background with four horizontal lanes. Each lane is labeled with a cultural activity: 'Visiting and hosting', 'Socialising', 'Swimming', and 'Meeting cultures'. At the bottom of the page, there is a copyright notice: '© Socrates Lingua Project 2007-8'.

The fourth pillar of the Swim the Language Project

The importance and the objectives of Meeting Cultures

- 1. Participants learn about**
 - a. the culture hosting European Championships
 - b. understanding mentalities
 - c. feel comfortable in new cultures
- 2. Motivating participants to acquire basic knowledge about the given foreign cultures**
- 3. Double-purpose input**
 - a. linguistic
 - b. didactic - content

Cultural aspects to be studied



1. **careful selection of topics**
concentrating on
 - a. artifacts, buildings, symbols etc.
 - b. norms, behaviour, attitudes etc.

2. **restrictive requirements**
 - a. using basic level of the target language
 - b. limited time framework

Requirements of a special content

- a special form different from that in the earlier modules
- descriptive nature of the input – more factual information
- a narrative type of input
- complexity of the information conveyed

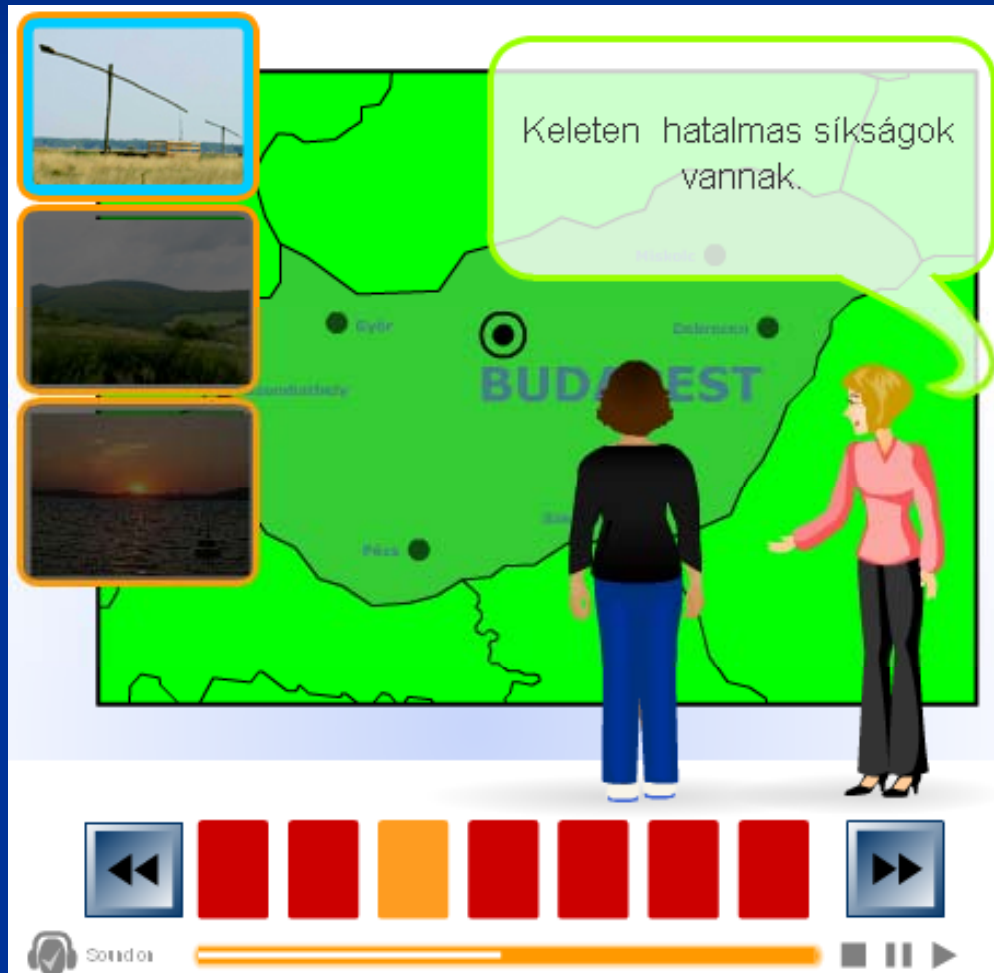


**using short texts
instead of
dialogues
the target language
was replaced by
English**

Web design / Visual devices

Matching special content and form

1. colourful photos illustrating sights, symbols, national events



2. photos providing a succinct insight into the sociological spheres of the cultures



Examples of information conveyed

Italians

- **family and friends are important**
- **like socializing (around the dinner table)**
- **do not like talking about money**

Hungarians

- **family roots are important**
- **sometimes pessimistic but like humour**
- **hospitable**

Finns

- **shy and quiet**
- **don't like to ask for help**
- **do not like arguments**

Slovenians

- **very impatient in traffic**
- **love nature very much**
- **sometimes envious of their neighbours**

Practice / Activities

1. Based on spoken communication
2. Types of activities:
 - a. multiple choice

LEA Inspiring people to learn languages through swimming

Hungarian pool Meeting the culture: Interaction SCORES 0/6 CONTACT

You want to know what Hungarians think of silence.

Exercise 6/6

Choose the right answer.

Mit gondolnak a magyarok a csendről?

Hallgatni arany.

Hallgatni ezüst.

Kerülik a csendet.

Nem szeretik a csendet.

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b. pair-match


LEN Inspiring people to learn languages through swimming

SWIM THE LANGUAGE CHALLENGE

Hungarian pool Meeting the culture: Symbols SCORES 0/6 CONTACT

You want to know what the symbol in the picture is.

Kit / Mit látsz a képen?



Choose the right picture.

Magyar Parlament

Szent Korona

Liszt Ferenc, a nagy magyar zeneszerző

egy üveg Tokaji Aszú

Exercise 4/6

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User Evaluation

- Survey not representative: more than 500 language swimmers / about 20% sending feedback
- Main reason for registering:
- making new acquaintances in new cultures –
- “I am interested in languages” had no predominance !
- Preferences:
- Meeting Cultures – the second most frequently ticked option as favourite (first: Swimming)

- Expectations of Module 4 fulfilled:
- a/ becoming more confident in new cultures + understanding more about cultures
- b/ strong motivation force to learn languages

- Majority rated the design of Module 4 “very good”

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

