Outline

- **What is Digilanguages and how everything started: an overview.**

- **The underpinning concept of sustainability**

- **Design and development**

- **Teacher motivation and crowdsourcing**

- **Validation, sustainability, implementation.**

- **Q&A**

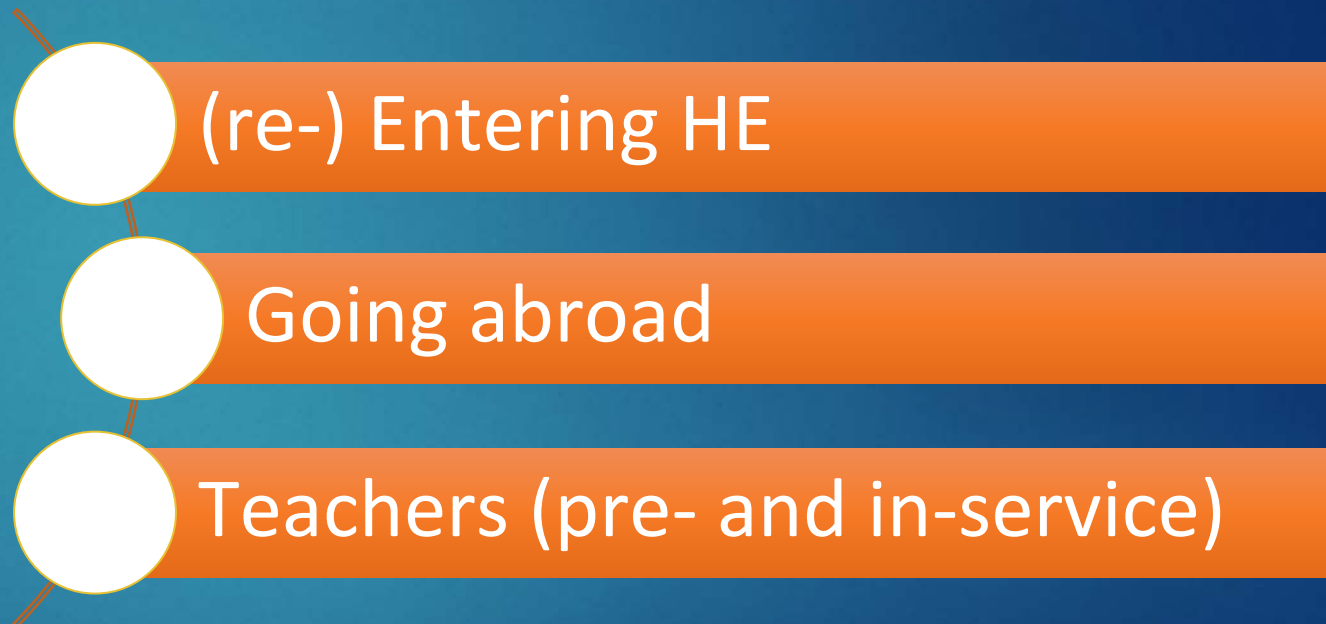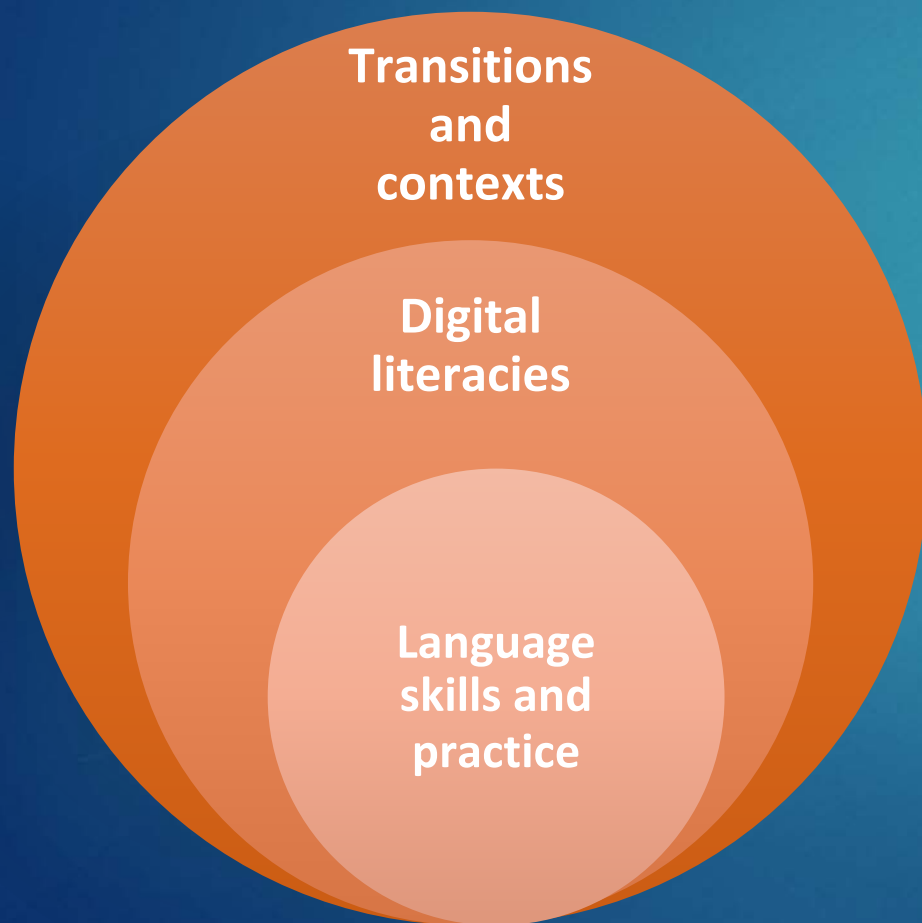# Digilanguages.ie: an overview

Digilanguages.ie

Background and aims

1. Aimed to develop a digital literacies framework and accompanying on-line interactive resources for language learners and teachers in Irish higher education (HE), to be fully integrated into third level language programmes in Ireland, including language teacher education programmes for secondary, primary and private sectors.

2. To curate and create a wide range of OERs accessible via an online portal to facilitate its implementation.

Background and aims

- Transitions and contexts
- Digital literacies
- Language skills and practice

- (re-) Entering HE
- Going abroad
- Teachers (pre- and in-service)

Sustainable CALL development

- **Sustainable e-learning**
  - 'e-learning that has become normative practice and which 'has the capacity to meet the needs of the present and the future' (Robertson, 2008: 819)

- **CALL normalisation and sustainability**
  - Focus on 'the diffusion and adoption of CALL initiatives or innovations by the wider community and on change and development' (Blin, Jalkanen & Taalas, 2016; see also Bax, 2018)

- **Sustainable CALL**
  - 'CALL initiatives or innovations that have been, or are in the process of being normalised - and thus will be maintained and prolonged - and which have the capacity to meet the needs of present and future language teachers and learners' (Blin, Jalkanen & Taalas, 2016)
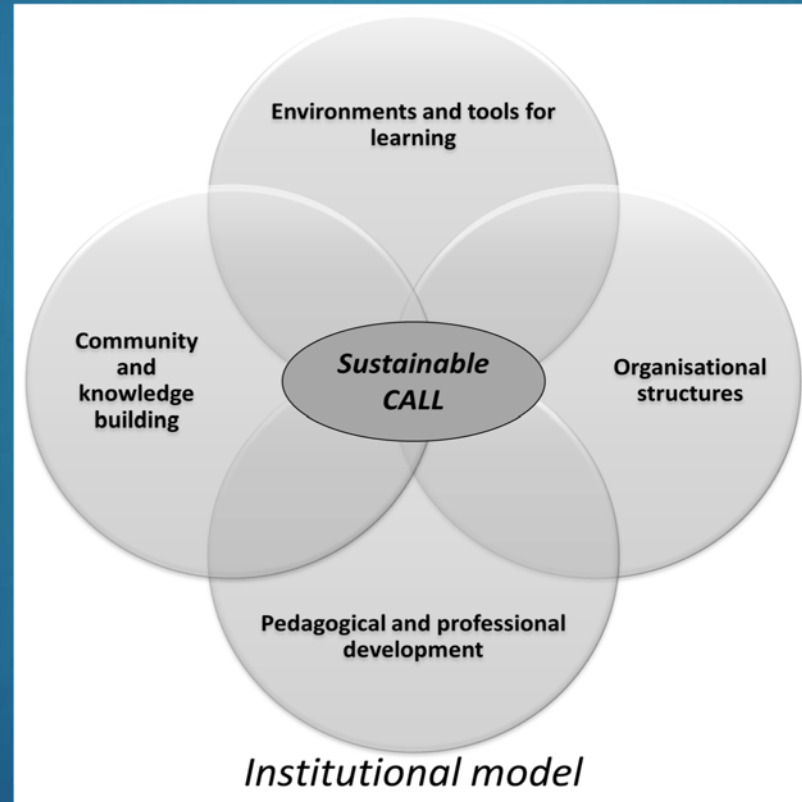
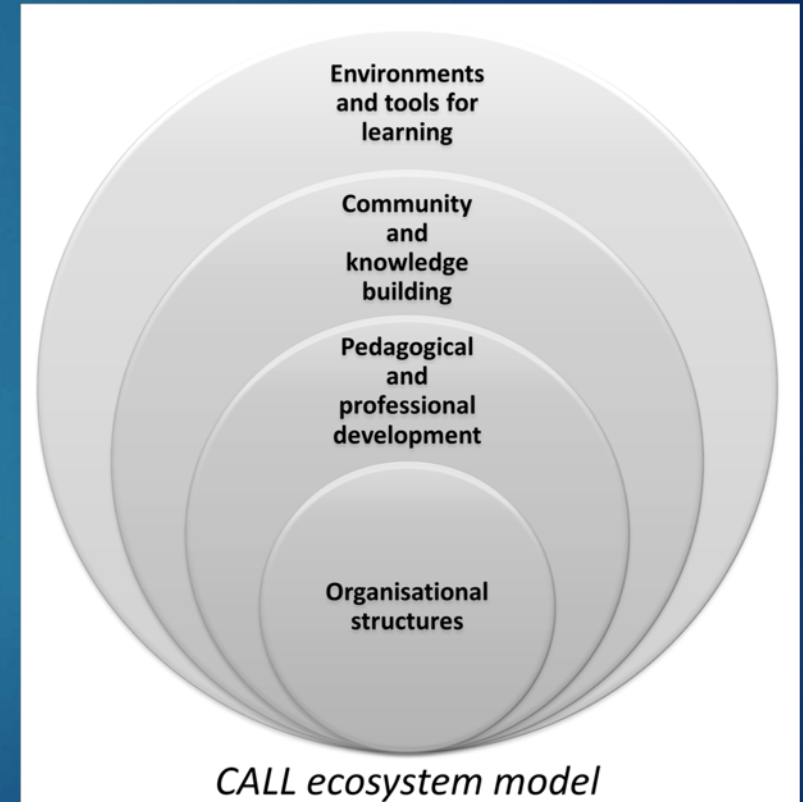# The four pillars of sustainable CALL development (Blin, Jalkanen & Taalas, 2016)
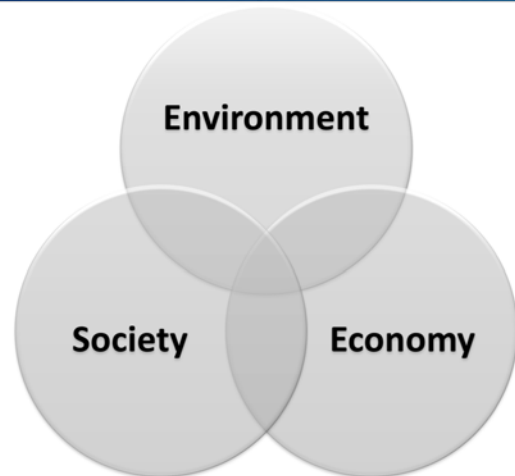
The institutional model

The bioeconomy model

Institutional model

CALL ecosystem model

Developing a *sustainable* national framework

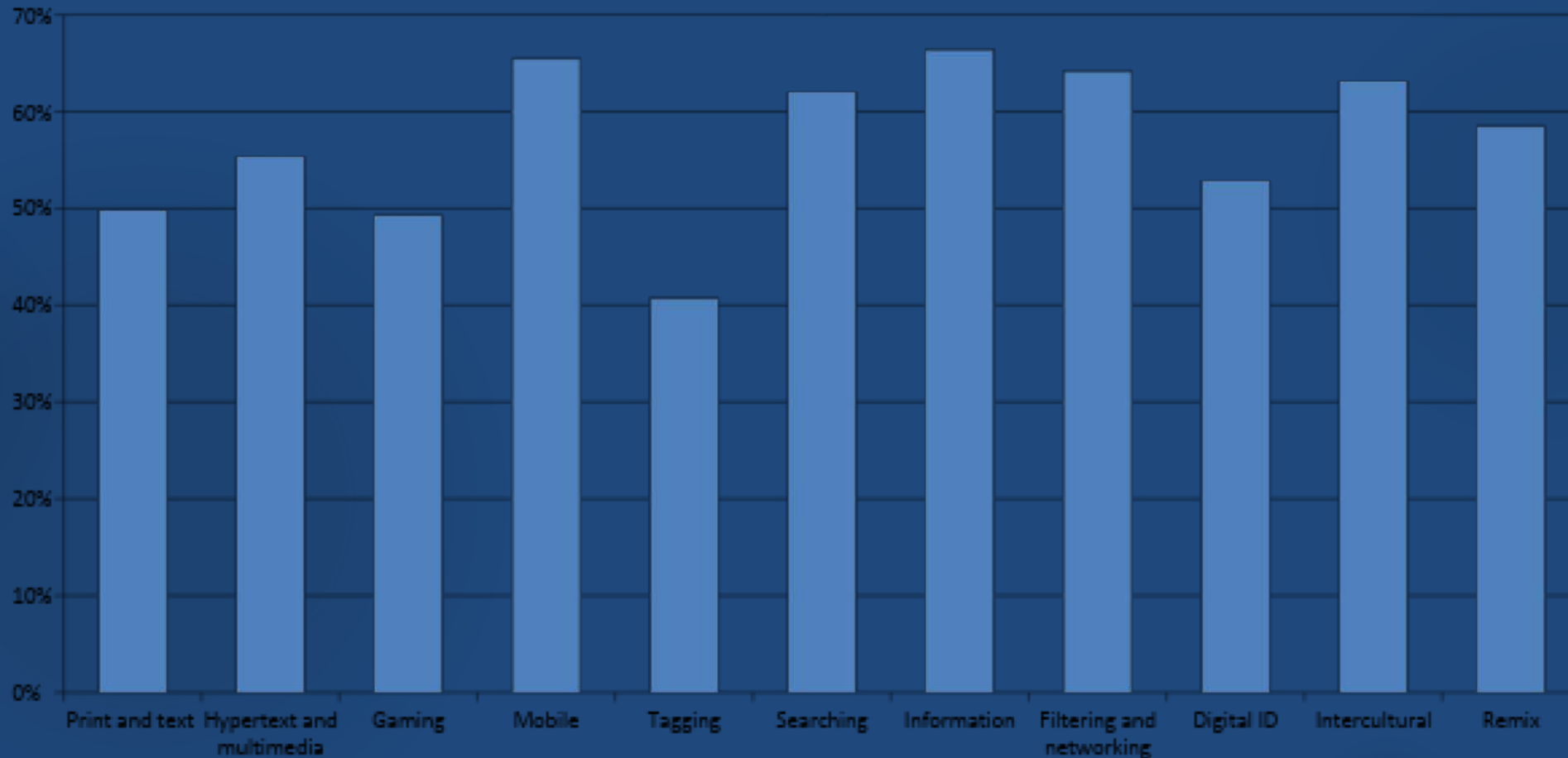| Environments and tools for learning	• DigiLanguages portal • Social networks
Community and knowledge building	• Local communities • Language specific communities
Pedagogical and professional development	• Co-construction of resources and tasks • Workshops • CPD resources
Organisational structures	• Top down and bottom up approach • Curricular reform • National and local support

Preliminary primary pilot research

Research questions:

1. What are the main practical issues that students have when making the transition from secondary to third level language study?

1. To what extent are digital literacies part of the curriculum at third level and what gaps do students and lecturers identify in this provision?

1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the emerging digital literacies framework for language learning (as identified through piloting and evaluation) and how did these inform the final design and implementation of the 'digilanguages' platform?
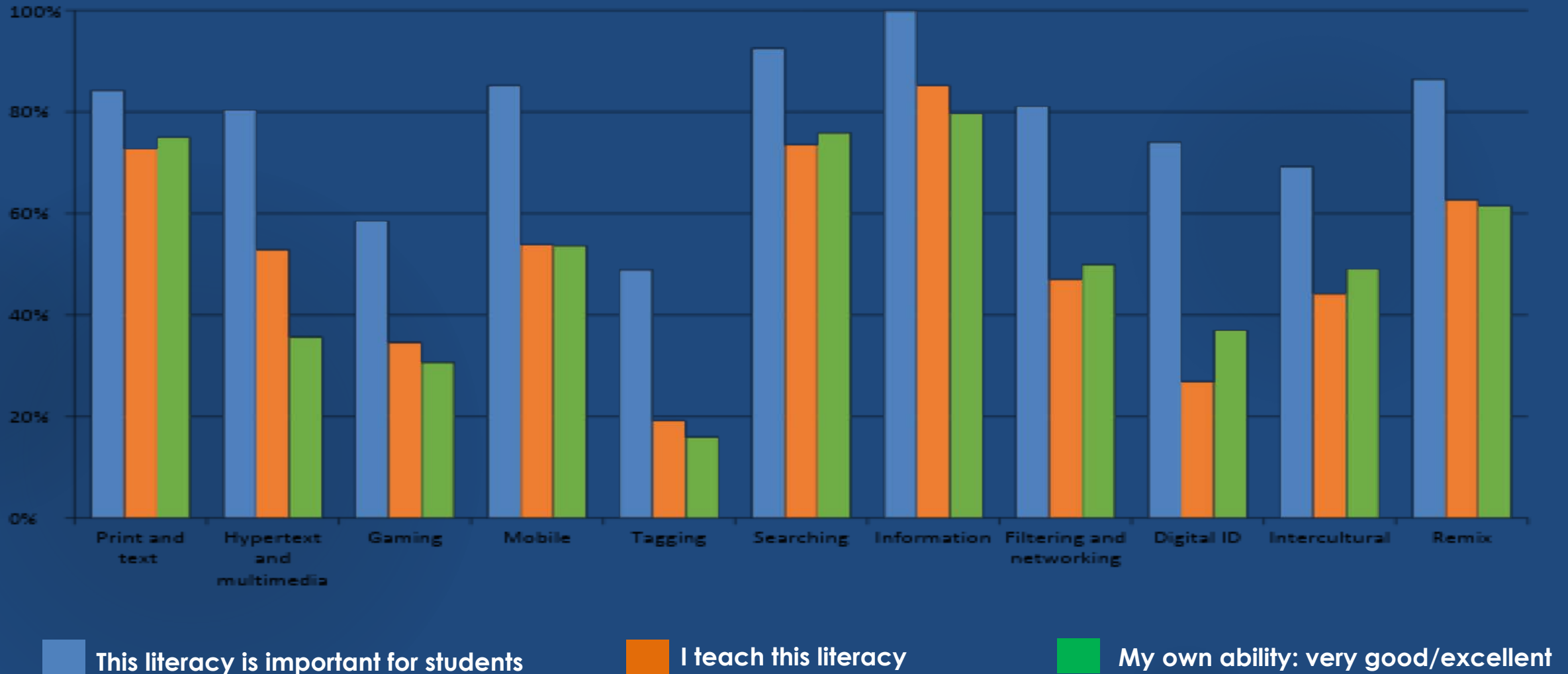
Main challenges in learning languages at third level
(n=355 students)
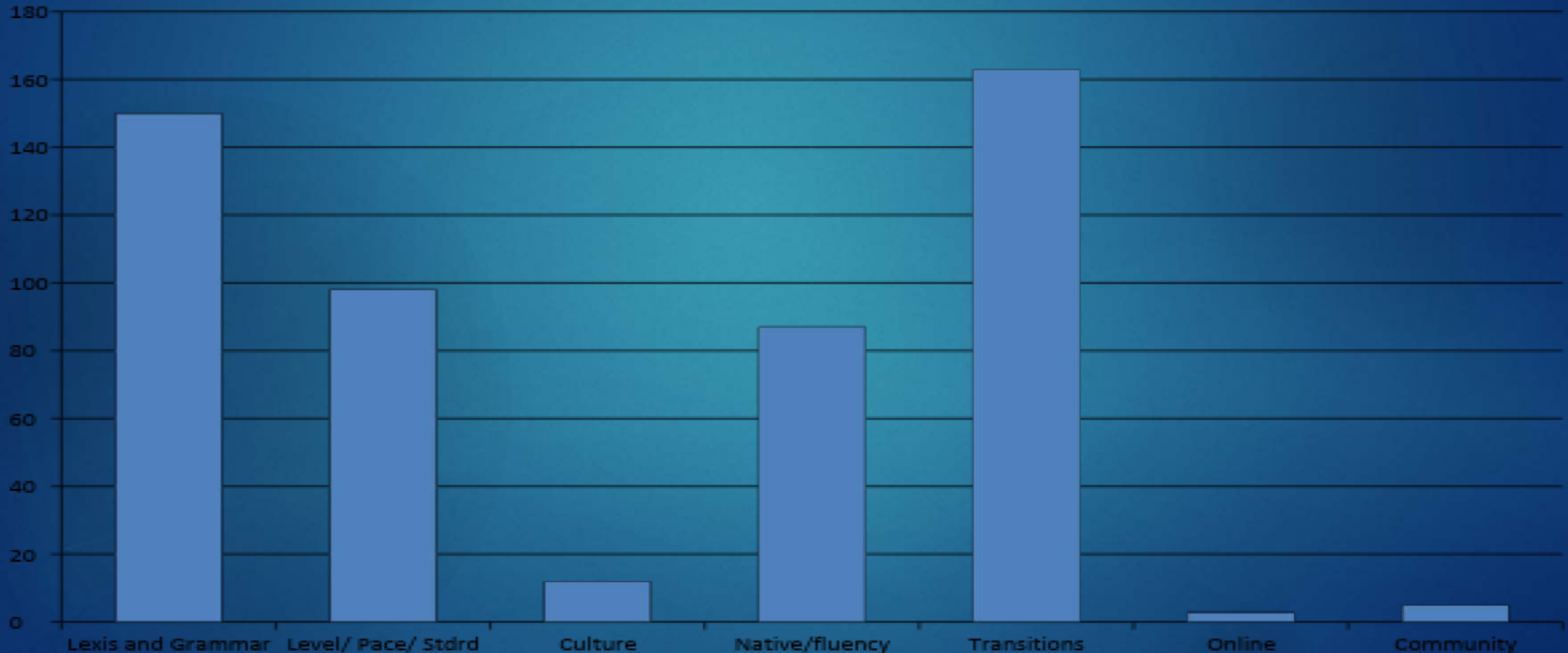
Meeting current and future needs
(n= 355 students)

Meeting current and future needs
(n= 75 lecturers)

Legend:
- This literacy is important for students
- I teach this literacy
- My own ability: very good/excellent
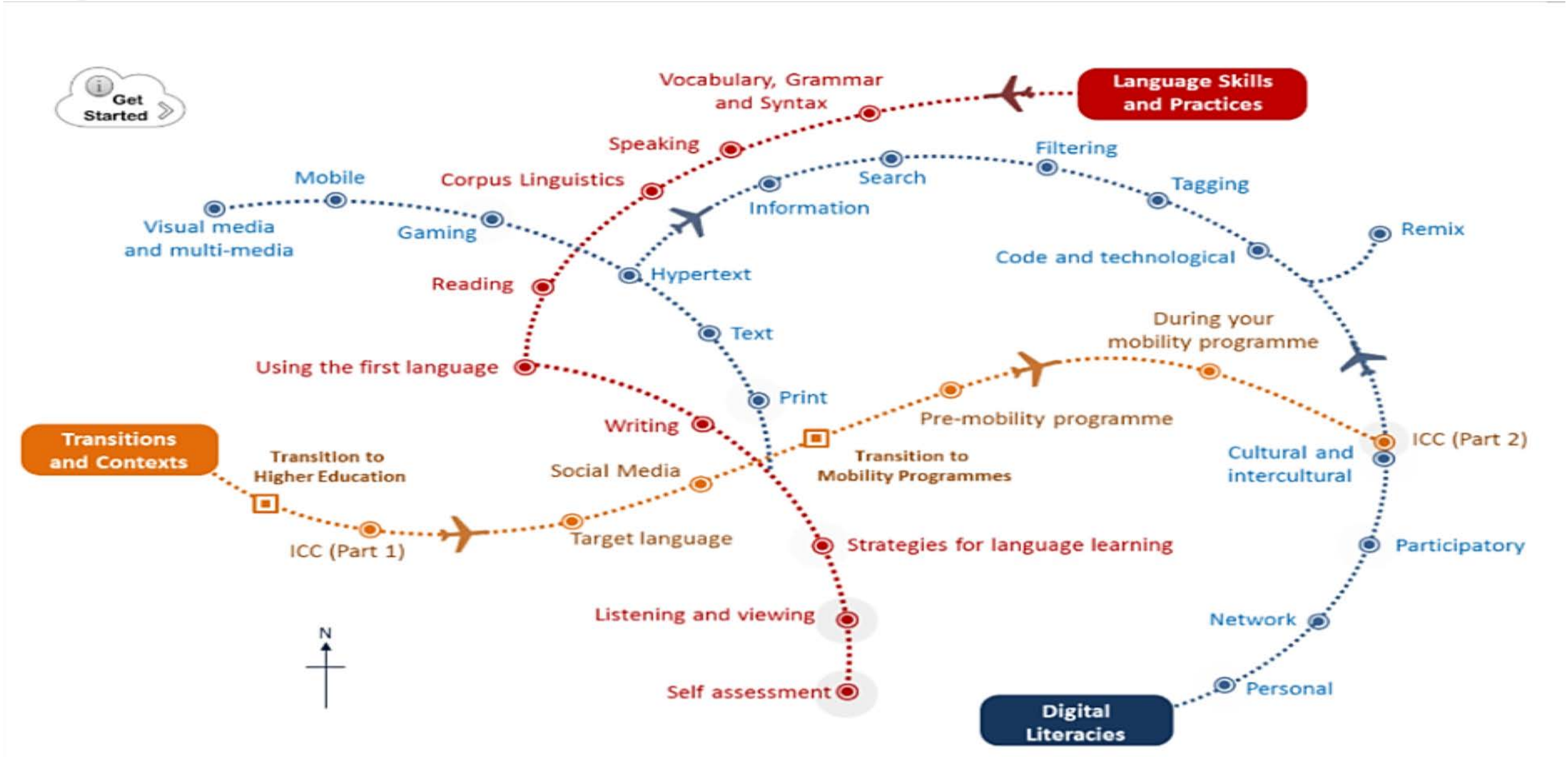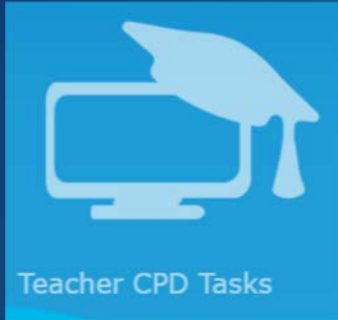
Design and development

Based on these findings and international research in the field, the aim of the project was to <u>develop online resources and activities in three broad areas</u>:

1. **Digital Literacies for Language Development**
2. **Language Learning Strategies and Practices**
3. **Transitions to Third Level Language Learning Environments**

Flight Path. Subcategory map

Design and development

Teacher CPD Tasks

Language specific content

Activities to use with students

Language specific content

Independent student activities

Language specific content

Design and development

- **Design of portal**
  - Complexity
  - Usability and user experience
  - Sustainability of platform
  - Security issues

- **Content development**
  - Interdependence between three core areas
  - Generic vs. language specific content
  - Curating vs creating materials and tasks (repurposing during curation).
  - Division of labour

Content development (the backend)

- Three work packages.

- Very important event: <u>OER fes.</u> 6 Institutions represented, invited stakeholders in all institutions. Just 36 attendees, probably because location of the meeting. Would it have been any different if we had a virtual meeting with breakout rooms?
- Identity and visibility (peer recognition?)
- Implementing Digital Language Learning in Course Design and Delivery: workshop with post-grads, training teachers.

Teacher motivation

Investment and Interest
Part of a Community of Practitioners - very NB
Self-development;
"Remuneration" of sorts - Conference fees, 20k each per Work Package to spend for each language; divided up by language.

How many is a crowd? "Two is a couple, three is a crowd"

- In our case worked best by "word-of-mouth" invitations to colleagues within and outside of our institutions;
- Not so much the quantity but the quality and invested interest of the developer crowd. If the crowd is too big??? Impact on motivation? We were very careful in dividing up the WPs and according responsibility to various colleagues.

Some ideas about validation, sustainability & implementation

Validity of the results - success = integration and actually using the activities in our classes - quality of the results

Sustainability - it's open, validated (and published on the portal) by WP leaders,

We developed it ourselves for ourselves - that's the key to crowdsourcing. Investment and implementation.

The portal is freely available, offering a range of OERs and is scalable for use in other contexts. The contents and activities afford integration into many programmes currently on offer in Irish HE.

Q&A
& Comments