August 2014

Outline for SpeakApps Workshops

WP2 Deliverable D2.1 | August 2014

Introduction

A range of workshops have been designed and delivered as part of the SpeakApps project. This document outlines the project's preferred workshop format for an offline workshop which is usually followed by an online training session. The document includes a range of possible task types and illustrates the use of SpeakApps Langblog, Tandem and VideoChat tools for oral production and interaction. The navigational links in this document lead to tasks, which can be found in the SpeakApps Open Educational Resources. An important issue for all workshops is to ensure good connectivity to the Internet and that participant devices can connect with ease. Furthermore, it is essential that participants log in to a LMS e.g. Moodle or a similar LMS which has the SpeakApps tools installed. Otherwise, participants can access the tools via a demo class on the SpeakApps platform. A demo classroom can be created by the workshop leader by contacting speakapps@uoc.edu and should be requested well in advance of the workshop. It is important to send or hand out the instructions to participants before the start of the workshop. The information in the following screenshot can be useful for these purposes.

Screen image of the PDF that was sent for the EUROCALL workshop

Workshop outline

Activity	Duration Minutes	Description
1	20	Introduction
2	20	Guided discussion in pairs on practicing speaking
3	30	The learners' point of view
4	10	A task database
5	20	Different tasks for different purposes
6*	60	Task familiarisation exercises with CEFR and ALTE
	30	CEFR Spoken production and interaction
	30	ALTE Content Analysis Checklist Project for speaking
7	60	Task design for the OER
8	30	Presentation of selected tasks followed by a short discussion
9*	5	Participant survey (optional)

The duration of the complete workshop is approximately circa 4 hours (255 minutes).

*However, the task familiarisation exercises (point 6) with the CEFR and ALTE and (point 9) are optional. Most language teachers are familiar with the CEFR and task-based language teaching.

Introduction to SpeakApps and to Workshop Participants

The workshop leader should provide a brief introduction to SpeakApps covering the project, the platform, the OER and the different SpeakApps tools. A number of resources exist to facilitate this demonstration and they are available on YouTube, for further information and resources please access the SpeakApps website.

The workshop leader should invite participants to introduce themselves and he/she should ask them to provide a brief summary of their motivation(s) for attending the workshop. The workshop leader should take note of these responses. During the course of the workshop the workshop leader can then use these responses to associate the motivations of the participants with the activities and outcomes of the workshop (as applicable).

How to practice speaking?

Following the introduction, the workshop leader should engage with participants in a discussion to establish how they are currently facilitating speaking practice and speaking improvement within their own language classes. This discussion can be initially completed in pairs or in small groups. The

workshop leader can then move from group to group and after a period of 15 minutes either the workshop leader or a nominated participant from each group can provide a summary feedback of the discussion. The workshop leader might find the following areas as useful prompts in promoting discussion for the smaller groups and/or as question which might be posed as part of a broader plenary approach:

- Practice speaking: How do you practice speaking? [Please note: Participants should be encouraged to give examples of their teaching practice. It is important that a distinction is made between oral production and interaction.]
- Time constraint: How much time is spent on speaking in the classroom? [Please note: In a two-hour session with 15 students there is usually limited time for individual student speaking time. An individual student's opportunity to practice his/her speaking skill in formal contexts can be restricted. To further the discussion participants might consider differentiating between (small) group work, pair work, plenary feedback.]
- Kind of tasks: What types of tasks are used for speaking interaction? [Please note: In point 5 a number of task typologies are mentioned. To encourage the discussion the workshop leader could mention a few typologies here.]
- Purposes of these tasks: What are the purposes of these speaking tasks? [Please note: Here one could think of the different qualitative aspects of spoken language use like range, accuracy, fluency, interaction, coherence. Furthermore, it is possible to concentrate on practicing and improving participating in formal and/or informal discussions, goal-oriented co-operation (e.g. repairing a car, discussing a document, organising an event), addressing audiences, et cetera.]
- Feedback: What feedback is given? How is feedback given? [Please note: It is possible to refer to the qualitative aspects mentioned earlier when listening to a presentation, but the workshop leader might emphasise particular aspects of interaction such as turn-taking, cooperating, asking for clarification, planning etc.]
- Monitor pair work / small group work: How is pair work/ small groups monitored and feedback provided?
- Homework: What kinds of homework activities are given to students to practice their speaking skills? [Please note: Engage participants to think of repeating exercises (e.g. listening to the dialogue and repeating). Another activity to consider is in engaging students to create an audio or a video recording with their mobile devices to practice their presentations.]

Use the SpeakApps tools as a language learner

The discussion so far provides some of the backdrop to both the difficulties and the challenges faced by language learners and teachers in trying to develop oral language competency. After the issues with the practicing of speaking in class have been uncovered, analysed and discussed by the group, it is now opportune to demonstrate the SpeakApps solution by describing how the SpeakApps platform and the SpeakApps tools can alleviate some of these issues for both teachers and language learners. Furthermore, the workshop leader might also refer to some of the institutional issues that the SpeakApps platform addresses such as providing a LMS solution for teachers from smaller institutions or the size of storing video files. Participants will now engage with the SpeakApps tools from the perspective of a language learning student. Participants should now start using the tools.

YouTube channel
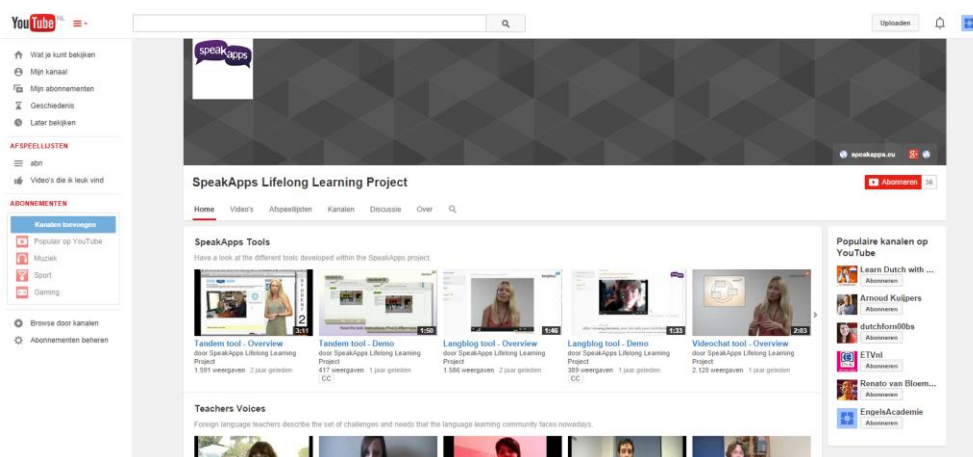
Screen image of the SpeakApps videos on YouTube

The YouTube videos on Langblog, Tandem and Videochat provide a clear demonstration and an overview of the functionality of the tools. These can be accessed directly from the SpeakApps website or directly from YouTube at the following address:

http://www.youtube.com/user/SpeakApps
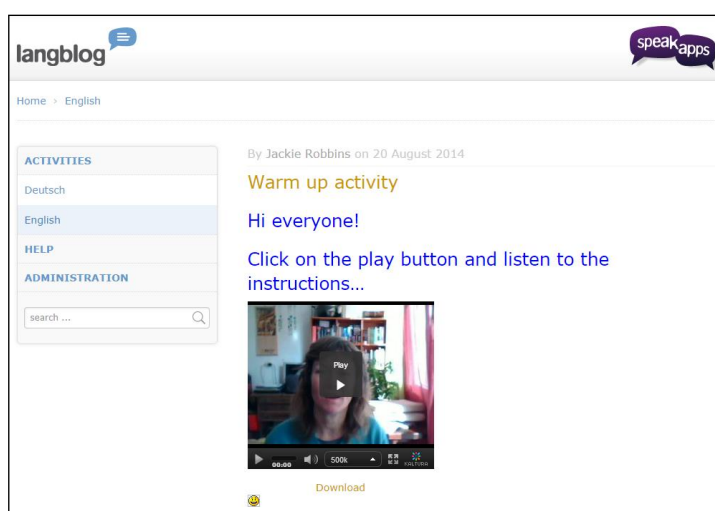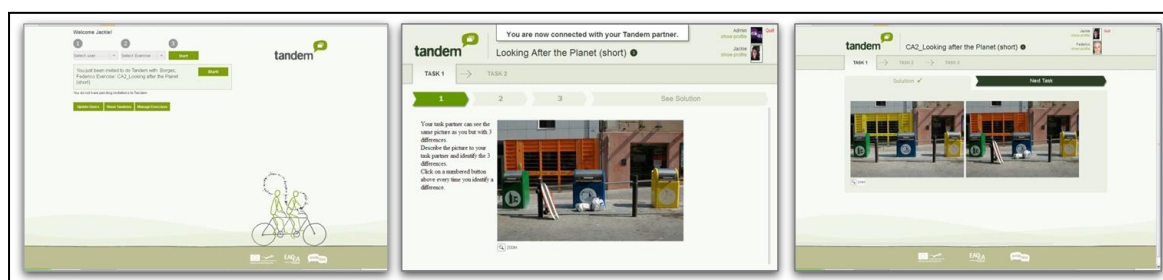
Langblog

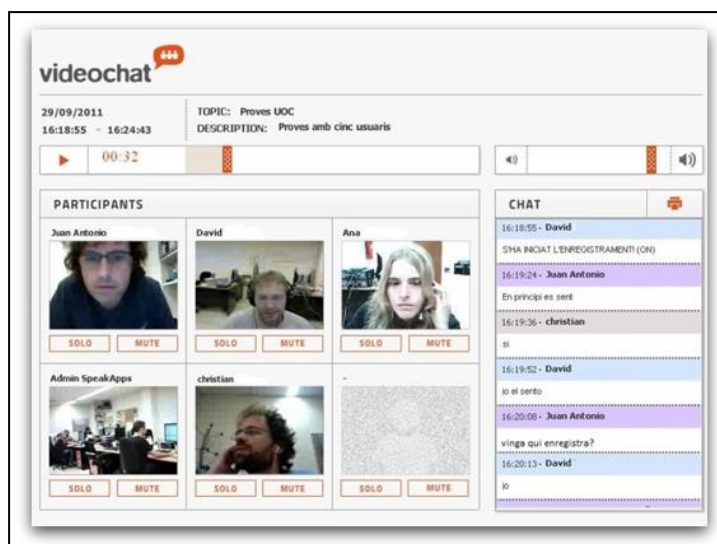
Screen image of Langblog

Tandem

Screen image of Tandem

Normally, the tools are demonstrated prior to participants experimenting with them either individually or if they are working together in pairs. Tasks and resources should be made available for participants to use with Langblog and with Tandem. It is important to note, that for the Tandem tool a participant must invite another participant to complete the Tandem task as a distinct pair. Furthermore, Tandem *invites* are time delimited i.e. they will expire after a set period of time (a timer will appear on screen) so remind participants to accept the invite sooner rather than later! To complete tasks using the Videochat tool participants can invite a maximum number of four participants. This upper level of users is set to optimise the tool's functionality with bandwidth requirements.

Videochat

Screen image of Videochat

Introduction to the OER

After participants have used a SpeakApps tool or tools, the workshop leader can now introduce them to the language resources openly available to them on the SpeakApps Open Educational Resources Repository (OER). The workshop leader can demonstrate the process of searching for and creating tasks for oral production and interaction. To supplement this demonstration the video on the homepage of the OER website (http://oer.speakapps.org/bin/view/Main/) can also provide direction for participants. This video is a short video and lasts approximately 2 minutes. Participants should be invited to contribute actively to the SpeakApps OER and to the SpeakApps community. Attention should also be drawn to the importance of increasing the number of tasks in the OER at the various levels of CEFR to ensure that each language has a representative and rich base of tasks for learners and teachers to access and to use.
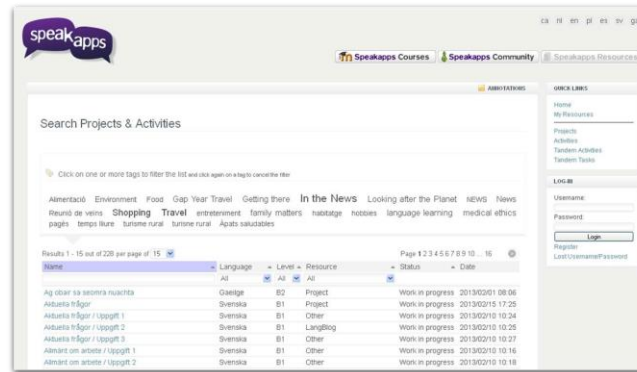
Screen image of the SpeakApps Resources

Different tasks for different purposes

After participants have been introduced to the OER and have viewed some of its features. The workshop leader should select a small number of tasks to present and discuss from a pedagogical perspective, to illustrate how they can be used for oral production and interaction. Participants should also provide feedback as to the types of activities and tasks that they use within their language classrooms. The following table outlines possible tasks and associated activities that language learners can engage in. It is not, however, a definitive list. Therefore, it is important that participants are encouraged to share insights into their practice and also invited to contribute to the OER so that their knowledge can be disseminated in an open access environment with other language teachers.

Possible task types for oral interaction:

Decision making / discussion	Learners have access to different sets of information/images which they will have to share in order to make a decision following the criteria provided in the instructions.
Description of different pictures	Learners see different images. Learners will take turns in describing these images to each other in order to carry out a common task.
Giving directions	Learners see the same map, but only one learner sees a number of landmarks (shops, venues, etc.). One learner will give the other learner directions in order to locate these correctly. Once directions have been shared, the learner with a view of a landmark can click on it and make it visible to the other learner.
Making a guess	Learners have access to two of three related sets of information/images. Learners need to share their information in order to make an informed guess on what the third set contains.
Object description	Both learners see the same image. In this image there are a series of numbered objects. Learners will take turns in describing these objects

	without naming them so that their task partners can guess which object it is.
Problem-solving	Learners have access to different sets of information/images which they need to share in order to solve a problem following the criteria provided in the instructions.
Ranking task	Learners see a number of items and have to agree on a ranking order following the criteria provided in the instructions.
Role-play	Learners are given different roles with instructions on how to play their roles in a role-play conversation. Learners will be given different prompts throughout the task that will guide them on the content of the conversation.
Spot-the-difference	Learners see the same image but with a number of differences. Describe your picture to your task partner and identify the differences.

The tasks that are shown in the workshop are extremely important as they have been the subject of extensive piloting and are effective exemplars of task-based language learning and communicative activities. Furthermore, the tasks are contextualised within language courses and have also been categorised as per the CEFR. Tasks are by no means stand-alone and they can be arranged in task sequences. Furthermore, tasks can be re-used and re-oriented to become smaller units of varying language activities with differing oral language objectives. The following example illustrate how specific tasks can be used with the Langblog, the Tandem and the VideoChat tools:

Langblog to practice oral production:

Title	**Elevator Pitch**
Instructions	Imagine you are applying for a job at a marketing company. One of the requirements of the application procedure is that applicants are asked to present themselves in a short video of 60 seconds. Please create a video and present yourself. Tell how you are; what you can offer; what you can add to the team; what you want to achieve.
	Please remember not to read from a script! Talk as spontaneously and convincingly as possible.
Title	**Agony Aunt**

Instructions	There is this famous radio programme where problems are discussed by the different listeners. The teacher can come up with a problem and asks for advice. A few solutions are then given. You can then choose a solution which you think is the best and explain why you think so.
	Please remember not to talk longer than 2 minutes.

Tandem and/or Videochat to practice oral interaction:

Title	Aspects of Shopping
	Participants see different images. Participants will take turns in describing these images to each other in order to carry out a common task.
Instructions	You can each see four pictures of important aspects to consider when deciding where to shop. Describe your pictures to each other in order to identify the eight aspects shown in your pictures.
Example	http://tinyurl.com/njbb7kf (links to the SpeakApps OER)
Title	**FCE Speaking Part 3**
Typology description	Participants have access to different sets of information/images which they will have to share in order to make a decision following the criteria provided in the instructions.
Instructions	Working together, discuss each of the following pictures by answering these two questions in three minutes:
	• What is it that people enjoy about doing these activities together?
	• Which two activities allow people to most learn about each other?
Example	http://tinyurl.com/l4wyh5q (links to the SpeakApps OER)

Task familiarisation exercises

This section of the workshop is aimed at helping participants to design design tasks for the OER and consists of a short familiarization exercise with the CEFR for spoken production and interaction. It also provides a short explanation on task design and creation with the use of (an adapted version of) the ALTE Content Analysis Checklists Project for speaking (http://www.alte.org/resources/filter). ALTE is the Association of Language Testers in Europe (http://www.alte.org). Resources and Information on the CEFR and spoken production and interaction can be found from:

- http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/cadre1_en.asp (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR))

- http://www.helsinki.fi/project/ceftrain/index.html (CEFtrain Project)

- http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/elp/elp-reg/CEFR_speaking_EN.asp#TopOfPage (European Language Portfolio)

WebCEF enables the collaborative assessment of oral language proficiency through a web-based environment. The workshop leader should outline a significant benefit of WebCEF which is that both language learners or language teachers can evaluate their own video and audio samples together with colleagues and peers across Europe. The assessment is based on the descriptors of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). The demonstration of Webcef (http://www.webcef.eu/@q=node-2F22.htm) contains video samples selected and calibrated by the WebCEF team, on their quality and according to the CEFR scales. This can be helpful for those participants who are not familiar with the CEFR and task-based language teaching. The familiarization exercise with the CEFR for spoken production and interaction takes approximately about 60 minutes. It is particularly useful when workshop participants are not fully aware of the resources available to them and the application of the CEFR.

Task creation for the OER

The practical element of the workshop and the OER can now commence. Participants as part of this section will design and develop tasks to add to the OER. Firstly, however a more in depth demonstration of the OER should take place. Participants can work individually, in pairs or in groups. Images can be either used from the SpeakApps Picasaweb album (accessible through http://www.speakapps.eu/) or from other sources. It is strongly recommended to have images readily available so that the participants don't spend too much time on choosing the preferred images. However, if participants make use of online images, they must ensure that those images are not subject to copyright. A very popular and easy way to search for copyright-free images is by using Google Images, Advanced Image Search, Usage Rights. Select the option of 'Free to use or share' (or modify). https://www.google.nl/advanced_image_search. The tasks in the OER are produced under a creative commons as well (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/). Participants should be reminded that this means that they are free to share and adapt the material that has been produced and that their contributions are also subject to this treatment.

Presentation of selected tasks

Finally, the workshop leader will ask participants to present and demonstrate the tasks that they have created. The group can then discuss how these tasks engage with the issues as previously discussed in part 2 of the workshop.

Participant Survey

Finally, the workshop leader can ask participants to engage in a brief participant survey to collate feedback on the workshop and to allow participants to provide details of how they envisage engaging with the SpeakApps platform and tools in the future. The following is an example of a participant survey:

PARTICPANT SURVEY (please select as appropriate and help us to improve the workshop and the SpeakApps Tools and platform)

1. Did this workshop meet your expectations

    - YES   NO

    (Why? Please explain……………………..)

2. Do you think that Langblog is a useful tool for practicing oral production in your teaching context?

    - YES   NO

    (Why? Please explain……………………..)

3. How would you describe the use of Langblog from the student's point of view?

    - YES   NO

    (Why? Please explain……………………..)

4. Do you think that Tandem is a useful tool for practicing oral production in your teaching context?

    - YES   NO

    (Why? Please explain……………………..)

5. How would you describe the use of Tandem from the student's point of view?

    - YES   NO

    (Why? Please explain……………………..)

6. Do you think that VideoChat is a useful tool for practicing oral production in your teaching context?

    - YES   NO

    (Why? Please explain……………………..)

7. How would you describe the use of VideoChat from the student's point of view?

    - YES   NO

    (Why? Please explain……………………..)

8. Do you think, that OER could be a good source of teaching materials for you?

    - YES   NO

(Why? Please explain…………………………)

9. Would you like to be kept up to date with the SpeakApps project?

    - YES   NO

10. Do you have any other feedback which could help us improve the workshop?

    _____

    _____

    _____

11. Do you have any other feedback which could help us improve the SpeakApps tools?

    _____

    _____

    _____