

## Typology of lexical exercises in terms of

### COM-IN-EUROPE (Communication in the Intercultural New Europe<sup>1</sup>) project

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COM-I-N-EUROPE is an international (Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Ireland, Poland, Slovakia, Spain, UK) multilingual project of the research projects LEOMEPE and LEOMEPE-MULTI (or Plurilingua<sup>2</sup>). Contractor and administrative international coordinator is Prof. Dr. G. Swiatowy, Akademia Ekonomiczna Oscar Lange, Wroclaw (Poland) and scientific international coordinator is Prof. Martine Verjans, Limburgs Universitair Centrum – CTTL, Diepenbeek (Belgium):



Onderwijs en cultuur

**Leonardo da Vinci**  
Talenkennis

Czechia and Slovakia are brand new partners having worked with other partners for about two years. Simultaneously the cultural differences as well as the linguistic interferences and similarities between **11 different cultures** – language pairs are described:

- German – Polish
- Spanish – Polish
- Spanish – English (Irish, American)
- Dutch – Polish
- Dutch – English (Irish, American)
- French (France, Quebec) – Polish
- French (France, Quebec) – English (Irish, American)
- **Slovak – English (Irish, American)**
- Polish – English (Irish, American)
- Czech – English (Irish, American)
- Czech – German

The research findings will result in the development of 11 multimedial CD-ROMs<sup>3</sup> for semi-autonomous learning. The didactic and technical concept of these modules for browser environment is based on the 18 CD-ROMs ([www.plurilingua.com](http://www.plurilingua.com)) made during the LEOMEPE-MULTI project. All learning modules correspond to the B2 – C1 levels of the Common European Framework of Reference (advanced). The study time is estimated at 100 hours.

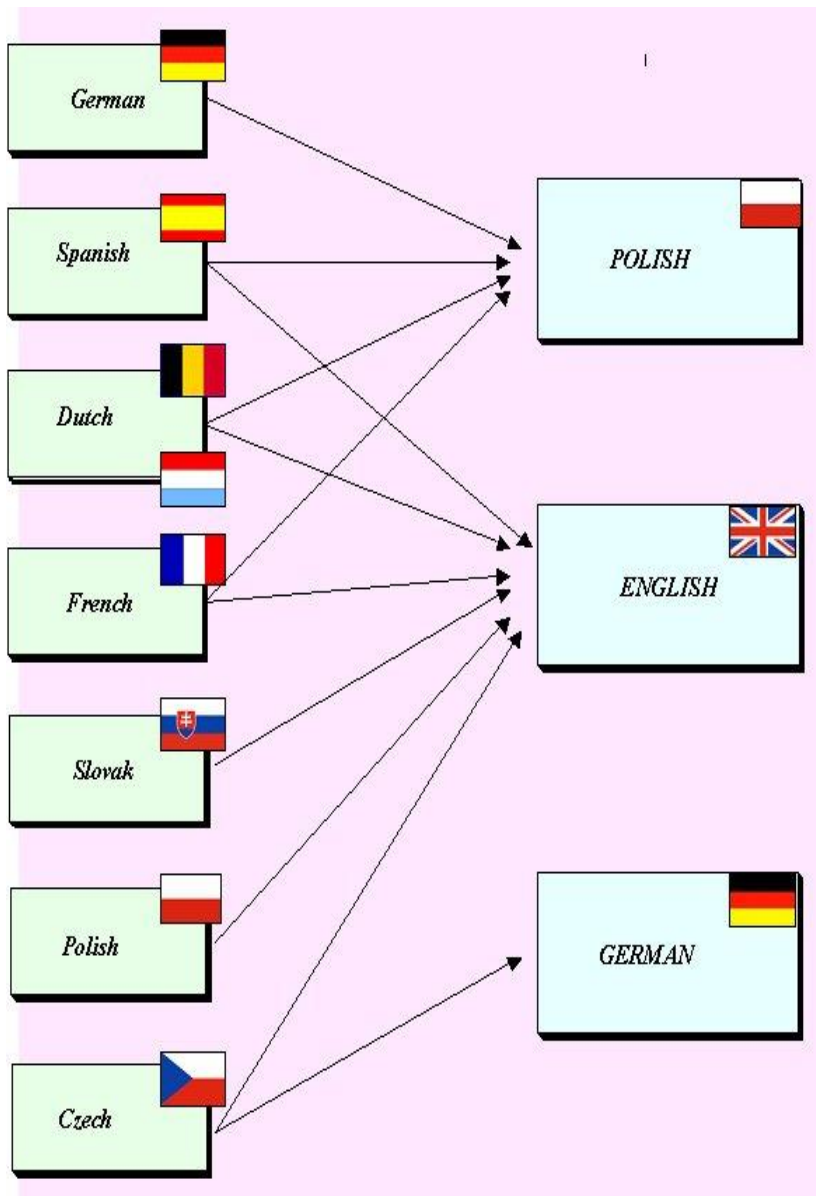
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<sup>1</sup> New Europe can be viewed in two ways: 1) former socialist countries of central Europe, 2) all countries situated in Europe regardless of history or political regimes.

<sup>2</sup> Information in this article has been drawn from plurilingua web site - more on [www.plurilingua.com](http://www.plurilingua.com)

<sup>3</sup> More items of information on <http://www.luc.ac.be/ctl/images/COMIN-talen-eng.jpg>

Here are the language versions of 11 CD-ROMs:



Software needed for this project is Lingu@Tor (provided by Belgian company Brainlane) because this one has proved to be the most suitable for the set tasks. Lingu@Tor includes tools with which you can create and show multimedia language exercises. Lingu@Tor has been created for people who want to easily (with a 'point-and-click' method) develop **professional, multimedia and interactive** language exercises within a highly user-friendly environment. The language exercises created can be offered to users in an on-line (Internet/Intranet) as well as off-line (CD-ROM/hard drive/soft drive) browser environment. The user only needs the **Lingu@Tor plugin** to have access to the exercises.



Some important features of Lingu@Tor software:

- programming knowledge is not required
- recognizable windows-user interface

- quick "preview" possibilities
- consistent interface for the different types of exercises
- open character
- conversion to industrial standards is possible (AICC, SCORM, IMS ...)
- pack function for the collaborative content generation so that various authors can exchange information in a simple, and if necessary, protected way
- possibility to pass on and reuse the existing types of exercises of different authors
- simple exchange of tables of contents in different languages
- multilingual user interface
- possibility to offer the results off-line (CD-ROM, hard disk, ...) as well as on-line (intra- and internet)
- WYSIWYG-interface<sup>4</sup>

Research of Belgian University of Limburg has shown that **(technical) managerial staff** often have to face linguistic and cultural challenges when in contact with foreign clients. A good command of foreign languages is no longer enough. Businessmen must **understand how to speak foreign languages and have a solid grounding in and understanding of foreign cultures**. In fulfilment of these requirements, 11 dedicated intercultural communication modules are being devised at the moment. The modules have been developed in conjunction with technical managerial staff from seven European countries and based on **autonomous and self-directed learning** principles. They are entitled "Intercultural Communication for (Technical) Managerial Staff". The modules will allow for an integrated approach in learning the language and culture of the target country and focus on negotiation skills as well as on technical and business aspects. Each module links one source language with one target language in order to play on the differences and/or similarities between the two. The approach is very practical. The modules were devised in close collaboration with internationally based technical managerial staff (often engineers). The result will be 11 modules which offer concrete to the multinational linguistic needs which (technical) managerial staff may experience in the course of their work. Besides focussing on a number of important linguistic aspects, attention has also been placed on the intercultural differences which influence negotiation and on other types of conversations in technical or business-related subjects. The starting point of the modules was the development of self-directed learning packets which allow easy use of the language and culture as **true communication tools**. The modules can be used in **training centres** (for basic or life-long learning) or in business contexts by **(technical) managerial staff** (or engineers) in **all technically orientated sectors**. As devised, the modules can be used for autonomous or self-directed language learning and are suitable for different types of requirements (mastering the language, understanding intercultural differences, reviewing technical content, etc.) or as reference guides (grammar, lexical themes, cultural information, etc.). They also allow for the comprehensive study of the many phases of business transactions. Each module is based on approximately **100 hours** of study which means that it consists of more than **500 different multimedial exercises**, over **30 authentic dialogues** using different regional dialects and/or rhythm of speech, **links** to current functioning web pages, and last but not least the specialized **electronic dictionary**. Each of the 11 self-directed interactive multimedia modules (with integrated texts, audio recordings, images, references to internet sites or to discussion forums...) was especially designed for (technical) managerial staff who – by virtue of their job – deal with multi-lingual communication needs – for example, **negotiating, helping foreign**

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<sup>4</sup> Information has been taken from webpages of plurilingua

clients, presenting the company, writing or telephoning for technical or business matters, etc.

The aim of the modules is to enable technical managerial staff to master **as quickly as possible** the language and culture of foreign business partners. Each module allows for integrated language learning (not only lexical and grammatical aspects but also speech rhythms, nuances, various accents, etc.) and cultural learning (business approaches, cultures habits, etc.).

*Here are the samples of some exercises:*

TASK 1: Drag the sentence which appears under the corresponding English translation.

Uisťujeme Vás, že informácie dostanete ešte dnes.

We inform you that as of today you will be able to find all our prices on our web site.

...

We have pleasure in sending you the documents you requested.

S potešením Vám posielame dokumenty, o ktoré ste žiadali.

Could you please let us have your latest illustrated catalogue?

...

Thank you very much for sending me the requested information.

Veľmi pekne ďakujem za zaslanie požadovaných informácií.

We hereby confirm that the prices you were given are valid until the end of this month.

...

We assure you that you will receive the information today.

...

We are most sorry not to be able to meet your request/We deeply regret not being able to satisfy your request.

...

Explanation of TASK 1: the point is to understand English sentence and being able to match it with its corresponding Slovak counterpart. A Slovak sentence appears at the top. A learner drags it and drops it under the suitable English equivalent. After this a new English sentence appears and this goes on till the end. The learners can check and correct their answers after finishing the task and the software will inform them about their score (given in percentage).

TASK 2 Complete the dialogue with the help of words from the list.

<#A> Digitex, good morning.

<#B> Good morning, Chris Dempsey ..... .

<#A> How **may** I help you?

<#B> I ..... to ..... Mr Babický, **please**.

<#A> **Hold the line**, please, I will ..... him.

<#B> Thank you.

<#A> **I am sorry**, Sir, the **line** is ..... Would you like to wait a moment or would you **prefer to call back** in a few minutes?

<#B> I will call back later. Thank you very much, Madam. Goodbye.

<#A> You are ....., Sir. Goodbye.

..... would like ..... engaged ..... talk to .....  
 welcome ..... speaking ..... put you through to

Explanation of TASK 2: Learners can see incomplete but coherent dialogue. Missing expressions are below the exercise. A learner's task is to drag an expression and drop it to the most suitable place in a dialogue. Learners can check and correct their answers and see their score.

### TASK 3 Translate missing words using phrases provided in the source language

*Prepojím vás k nemu.*

- "I will **put** you **through** **to** him."

Learner will see this: "I will ..... (**prepojím**) you ..... (**k**) him".

*Je mi ľúto, pane, pán Babický tu momentálne nie je.*

- "I am **sorry**, **Sir**, **Mr** Babický is not in **at** the moment."

Learner will see this: "I am ..... (**ľúto**), ..... (**pane**), ..... (**pán**) Babický is not in ..... (**momentálne**) the moment."

*Môžem (mu) nechať odkaz?*

- "Could I **leave** a message?" Learner will see this: "Could I ..... (**nechať**) a message?"

*Mohli by ste mu odovzdať odkaz?*

- "Could you **pass** him a message?" Learner will see this: "Could you ..... (**odovzdať**) a message?"

Explanation of TASK 3: Learners are supposed to fulfil the gaps but Slovak translations are given in the brackets this time. This exercise is not focusing on vocabulary only but forces learners practice their grammar a well.

### TASK 4 Drag and drop

English	Translation	List of expressions
the receiver	<b>volaný</b>	<b>stláčať tlačidlá</b>
to leave a message		<b>volaný</b>
extension		<b>prepojiť</b>
to put through		<b>nechať odkaz</b>
to push the buttons		<b>byť prerušený</b>
to be cut off		<b>klapka/číslo klapky</b>

Explanation of TASK 4: Learners focus on vocabulary connected with telephone and leaving messages. They will take (drag) an expression from the right column and drop it into the column marked *translation*. If their answer is not correct the following symbol appears ☹. If it is without mistakes, a learner can see ☺ and the expression is accepted and placed in the space.

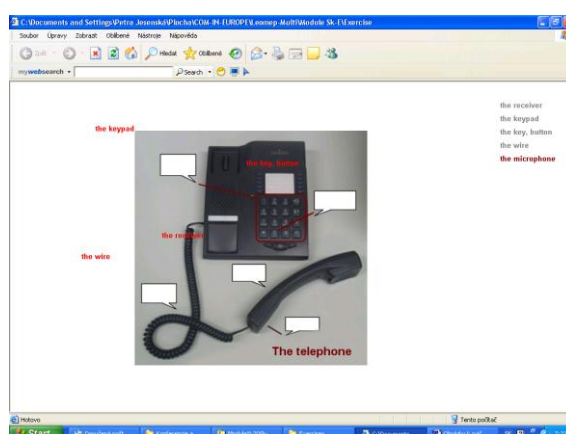
Images and pictures are the integral part of the module, as for example the following maps of British Isles and Northern Ireland with the marked regions.

**TASK 5** Learner can see a blank map and his task is to match the regions to the appropriate space: Greater London, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, etc.

The same can be done with the next map – map of regions in Northern Ireland.



TASK 6 Drag and drop: *the key button, microphone, receiver.*



Explanation of TASK 6: A learner can see a picture on the left (a telephone in this case) and the list of expressions on the right. Their task is to match the words to the marked objects.

TASK 7 Drag and drop

English	Translation	List of expressions
in no way	<b>v žiadnom prípade</b>	<b>pripúšťam, že</b>
as for		<b>presne tak</b>
in spite of	<b>napriek</b>	<b>nie nevyhnutne</b>
not necessarily		<b>napriek</b>
I admit that		<b>v žiadnom prípade</b>
that's it		<b>pokiaľ ide o / čo sa týka</b>

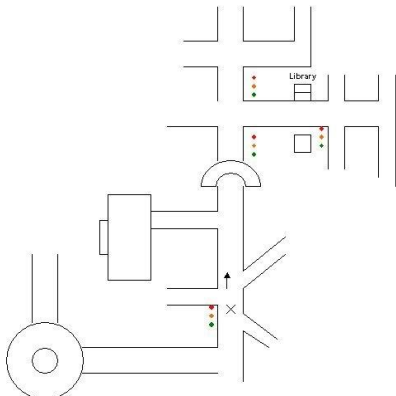
Explanation of TASK 7: Learners focus on vocabulary connected with spoken language and business talk. They will take (drag) an expression from the right column and drop it into the column marked *translation*. If their answer is not correct the following symbol appears ☹. If it is without mistakes, a learner can see a smiling face ☺ and the expression is accepted and placed in the space.

**TASK 8** Translate marked expressions in the following dialogue into Slovak.

- What price can you offer for such a large order? Let me just say we have received another quotation with a lower base price.
- Could you give me some more details of the quotation you received?
- The base price is 35p a kilo.
- **I see, as you know**, our base price for sheets of the type S120 is 37p, exclusive of VAT. In our quotation of 21 April last, we granted you a bulk discount of 5% for orders over 400 units...  
**Let's say** I can give you 7% for the 500 sheets... The coils of the type RF44 are more difficult. For these, we are already quoting a very competitive price. **I'm afraid I cannot possibly** agree to a lower price. However, may I remind you that you will receive a 2% discount when ordering a minimum of 100.
- **I understand**. As to the credit terms in your quotation, are they fixed?
- **In principle**, we ask our customers to respect a credit period of 30 days net.
- **Yes, I see**...
- **But if you want to**, payment can be made by bill of exchange. In this way, we can grant you a credit of 60 days. In that case, we will discount the bill, with freight charges and interests at our expense. **If, on the other hand**, you prefer a cash settlement, you will receive a 1% discount.
- **I see**. Do you deliver carriage paid as well in that case?
- **Indeed we do**, Sir, the price also includes the packing of the sheets in packs of 20 units, which cannot be recycled, as it said in the quotation. **But** the transportation risks are the buyer's.
- **Indeed. So**, the goods will be transported by road and delivered to our head office?
- **That's right**, Sir.
- **Right**, I will study your quotation once more but I will probably place an order in the course of next week. **Thank you for** the information.
- **You're welcome**, Sir. We look forward to welcoming you as a new customer.
- Goodbye, Mr Smith.
- Goodbye, Mr Patráš.

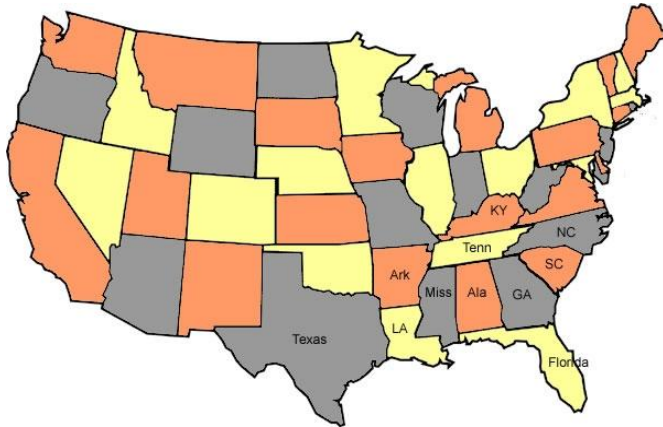
Explanation of TASK 8: The point of this exercise is to practice vocabulary learned and studied from the previous one (TASK 7) and to see these expressions in the context and become aware of the proper use.

**TASK 9** Describe the path from point A to point B (the hints are given)

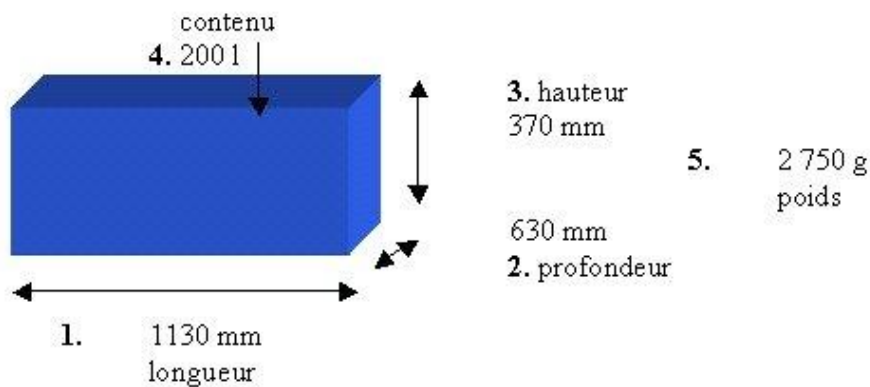


Explanation of TASK 9: There are many maps on the CD-ROM focusing on giving directions, explanations of headings and so on. The point is to be able to orientate in an unknown town or any other settlement when give directions. Learner can practice “looking for” a post office, bank, college or a business partner.

**TASK 10** Learners can see only a blank map and their task is to match the name of a state/city to the suitable space on a map.



**TASK 11** The text of the following picture is in French actually, but the point is to learn and practice vocabulary such as length, width and so on.



Special section will contain information about **culture** and English-speaking **society**, British, Irish and American included. So the learners have chance to have a look at some most attractive places or to see the most important cities of mentioned English-speaking countries. For example, learners can see nature, towns, cities, banks, premises of famous buildings, towers, inns etc.



The learners will have chance to face more or less known **personalities** of cultural and political life:





Stanley Baldwin

Sir Alec Douglas-Home

M. Thatcher

Ted Heath

### Conclusion

As one can see the exercises are of various kinds and are being based on expanding vocabulary and cultural facts and information about the UK, Ireland, and the US. They are all based interactive approach which means that a learner has to pay attention to many different aspects of English (pronunciation, rhythm of speech, grammar – prepositions, verb forms etc, vocabulary, information about culture, political life, art, housing, education, way of living, cuisine, etc.). The CD-ROM provides a learner of English with the solid knowledge of the English language and cultural background.

We focused on some of vocabulary exercises and showed some images of cultural and political life in the UK. Unfortunately, we are not able to show all lexical exercises because the *Lingu@Tor* software is necessary for many exercises to run and it is technically impossible to convert them to *Microsoft Word*. We hope, anyway, that we offered a good sort of introduction into the problematic and into the new CD-ROM that will come out very soon (September 2005). We hope that it will serve also to our students as a self-studying autonomous help during their studies of English language, geography, history and culture.

### Rezumé

Autorka článku v stručnosti predstavuje európsky projekt COM-IN-EUROPE. Zaoberá sa jednotlivými druhmi lexikálnych cvičení s ohľadom na projekt, v rámci ktorého vznikli. Zároveň prihliada na kulturologický aspekt niektorých cvičení. Vzhľadom na obmedzený priestor a limitované technické možnosti tlačenej slova nie je možné prezentovať gramatické-lexikálne a kulturologické činnosti komplexne bez použitia internetu a dataprojektora.