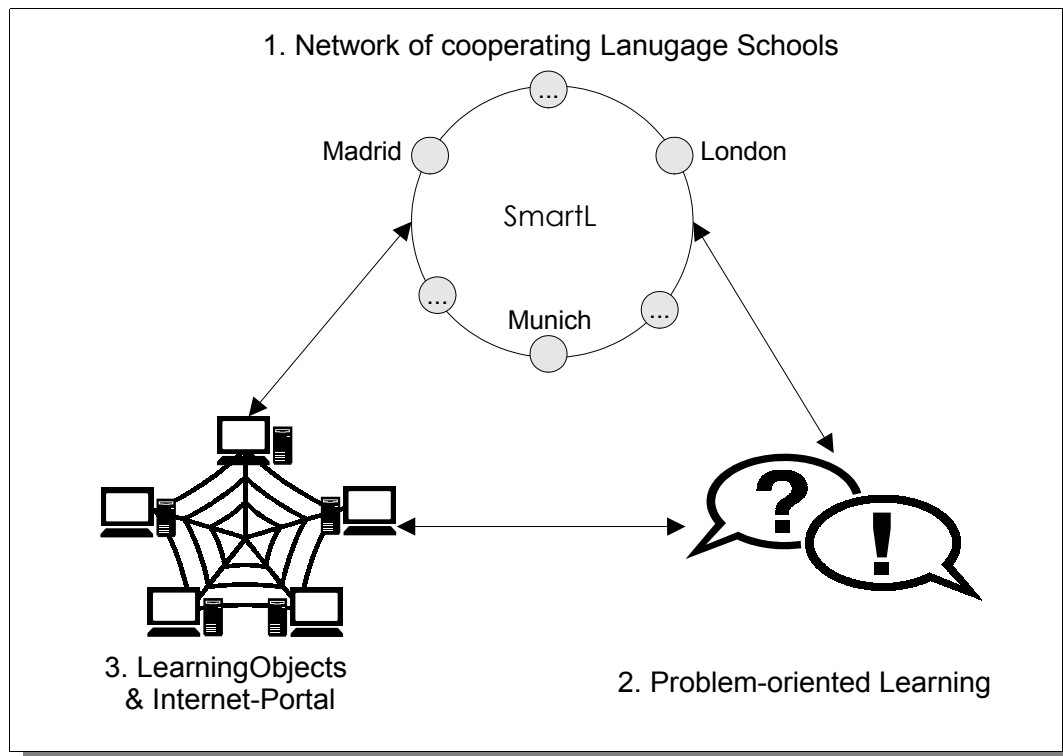


The goal of Smart Language Learning is to build global networks of cooperating language schools which integrate face-to-face teaching and internet-based learning. Smart Language Learning sees itself as the combination of three components combined to offer effective language courses for people who learn English, Spanish or German as a foreign language for professional use.



1. Network of Cooperating Language Schools

A school network consists of all language schools that use the Smart Language Learning technology to cooperate with each other. Within such a network the customer can seamlessly change schools without changing the learning system. The first schools will be in Munich, London and Madrid.

2. Problem-oriented Learning

In the current scientific debate over learning with multimedia, the concept of problem oriented learning is gaining more and more significance. It's goal is to maximize learning outcomes through the work on authen-

tic cases and the support of learner control over his own learning process. Learning in a social context and a sufficient level of instructional support are the other major elements of this theory.

At Smart Language Learning, we seek to use the principles of problem-oriented learning by combining instructional phases (e.g. a half-hour overview over the Spanish Subjuntivo given by a language teacher) with phases of construction and practice (e.g. a half-hour practical computer based Subjuntivo exercise) in a very tight fashion. We do this using authentic problems (e.g. What are the “unwritten rules” of a Spanish business dinner? How do typical business meetings in Spain take place? How are conflicts dealt with in a business context?) to enhance motivation and learner success.

3. Learning Objects and internet-portal

LearningObjects form the technical basis for this project. They are small multimedia units that each carry one distinct learning activity (e.g. a grammar exercise or an exercise in listening proficiency). LearningObjects can be combined either to standard courses (e.g. a beginners course in Spanish) or to train special language skills (e.g. a learner specific course for acquiring listening skills). They can easily be reused and edited in order to adapt them to the specific needs of the situation. LearningObjects have a maximum length of 5 minutes and can contain text, audio, video and interactive exercises.

The internet portal manages the LearningObjects. Within the portal, objects can be combined to courses. The portal will also track learning patterns and course results. In addition, actual and target skill profiles are recorded and updated. From this, the platform generates proposals for further learning actions. Finally, the portal may be accessed from all schools in the network and thus presents the technological base for a seamlessly integrated customer service

The main advantages of our approach are:

- more inexpensive courses,
- the possibility of mobile language learning,
- more individual learning contents and processes, and
- learning based on authentic situations and communication needs (e.g. with authentic videos).