



PROVENCE PROMOTION

eLycée

What eLycée is ...

From Charlemagne to the present!

Teaching written French is already very complex... and it has become a teaching and technological challenge for young people all over the world! Christine Frin, journalist and teacher, specialised in the design of innovative training programs, has decided to take up this challenge. She has just come back from the United States as a beneficiary of Provence Promotion's "Start in Provence" program – with a “eLycée” project in her suitcases, and has decided to put French back into the place that it deserves! Even if she has to revolutionalise the methods first used by the Great Charles ...

> Writing in French: not so simple!

Christine Frin: eLycée is developing a remote education proposal for expatriate French speaking children and teenagers that are going to school in the educational system in their new country. These children often have a basic knowledge of spoken French, but they are often much less comfortable with written French.

Our approach towards teaching written French within this context is a pedagogic challenge based on technology. Although all interactive was standard practice at the beginning of e-learning, this is no longer true today. It can be seen that there is a need to make contact with the teacher and that construction of the virtual community can be a useful foundation. Therefore, creating virtual classes was an obvious next step. In our system, all pupils will hear their courses at the same time in the form of video-conferences, so that they can swap ideas and hold discussions with each other. Thus, this encourages cooperation, without preventing individual tutoring. The first training module will start in September 2006 and is aimed particularly at the American market.

> From San Francisco to the Belle de Mai!

Our research began on the United States West coast, where we had a very strong demand from the French community. Our idea was also supported by Goery Delacôte, the manager of the San Francisco Exploratorium which is the equivalent of the Cité des Sciences de La Villette in Paris.

As a result of a combination of circumstances, we presented our project to Provence Promotion that immediately adopted it. I was immediately captivated by the Belle de Mai Multimedia Cluster: it has exactly what I couldn't find on the American market; a very aesthetic, very easy to use multimedia approach with very flexible technical possibilities. A key element in our project intended for children and teenagers, in which ease of use must be very important ...

> The double Provence Promotion effect...

Two facts immediately confirmed my decision to set up in Marseille:

- be immersed in a cluster bringing together multimedia companies capable of satisfying our technological needs;

- be in contact with other entrepreneurs in the creation phase of our company so as to benefit from this public-private association specific to France.

Provence Promotion presented itself as both relay and accelerator for both of these two points. During the three weeks that I spent in France during summer 2005, I met 70 persons including financial partners, institutions, professionals, teachers, universities, etc. This was the beginning of a pragmatic cooperation, entirely in line with the quality required by our project. My integration within the multimedia cluster was immediate.



Christine Frin

Learn French by controlling constraints

Our approach towards teaching is the result of a twofold ambition: to maintain the language but also to instill French culture. We want to restore the will to write and to be familiar with literature, by learning differently. To achieve this, the objective of the prestigious recruited team is to publish modern contents, with innovative teaching methods. Our aim is to introduce a new teaching approach inspired by the Oulipo literary theory (“Ouvroir de Littérature Potentielle” –a primer of Potential Literature), the association founded by Raymond Queneau, and we believe that men like its President Paul Fournel, Manager of eLycée, can help make this happen. Write with constraints, use a playful approach for teaching ... this is our ambition for a content with a broad cultural content that will be attractive for the young ...

Research workers like Bernard Cornu, teacher at the Grenoble Academy IUFM (University Teacher Training Institute), director of the Villa Media (European Educational Multimedia Residence), Alain Mille, Computer Science Lecturer at the Claude Bernard Lyon 1 University, are working on the link between teaching and technology to create the most appropriate form. The entire team is dispersed in different parts of France and in other countries, and is therefore itself the first user of this new paradigm of research and teaching, and is a virtual community brought together by a common interest.

If you want to know more:

- <http://www.elycee.com>
The eLycée site
- <http://www.paulfournel.com/>
The Paul Fournel site
- <http://www.ouliipo.net/oulipiens/O>
The site of the Oulipo (A primer of Potential Literature) association founded by Raymond Queneau,



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> A question of “style” also!

The welcome was another encouraging factor: coming to an unknown town and being looked after personally helped me to become operational faster. Since although the creation system is working well in France, there is still a sticking point, which is obtaining funds fast enough to achieve a satisfactory cash flow during the first few months! The lack of financial reactivity is not specific to France; unlike what people believe, start up funds in the United States are just as difficult to find during the early stages of creation... and yet this is a key factor of success!

> View from France: broader horizons

Moreover, these meetings with different persons involved in national education, universities and the ORME, are the source of the perception of a need and a much wider interest in innovative remote education. This new interest has brought out a new concept of the relation between students and the teacher, to promote interactivity that forces people into a metacognitive process. There is an enormous loss of concentration during formal courses, so what can be expected from a course on the Net! Our project faces this problem directly. The learner has to be active. The design of a friendly and efficient teaching platform is one of our objectives. It could then be used in anyway, and not only for French as is planned in our first business plan... that was extended as soon as we reached France!