Deliverable 38ab: Presentation at IALIC Conference in Barcelona, Spain

25-27 November 2016
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1. **Summary of the event**

IALIC (International Association for Languages and Intercultural Communication) is a very well-known organisation of global reach which promotes an interdisciplinary perspective on the interplay between languages and intercultural factors. The current conference was the 16th edition. It took place at Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona in Bellaterra university campus near Barcelona, Spain on 25th – 27th November 2016. The event attracted as many as over 130 researchers, educators and practitioners interested in interculturalism and multilingualism.

The leading theme of the conference was: Bridging across Languages and Cultures in Everyday Lives: New Roles for Changing Scenarios. The main aims of the conference were the following:

- to promote critical engagement with the notion of mediating between cultures and languages;
- to explore the role of technology in bridging between diverse languages and cultures;
- to explore the role of ‘broker’ in cross-cultural situations, including growing instances of ‘child language brokers’;
- to promote understanding of how language brokering is perceived by researchers and practitioners from cross-cultural situations;
- to provide a forum for a critique of existing analytical models of culture and language mediating practices that integrate current theories of language and intercultural communication;
- to provide a forum on ways in which research into language and culture mediation can inform teachers’ praxis.

This broad spectrum enabled the penetration of various aspects of multilingualism and interculturalism.

The conference website: [http://ialic2016bcn.com](http://ialic2016bcn.com)

The title of the presentation delivered by Malgorzata Kurek (JDU) was “Managing cultural diversity in the context of open education – lessons learnt. The presentation was based on the
outcomes of the teacher training package designed and offered within the project to teachers from 6 different cultures operating with less-used-languages. The presentation delivered by Malgorzata Kurek drew on the outcomes of the teacher training courses designed with the purpose of equipping teachers working in less-used languages with skills needed to locate, repurpose and create their own resources. The pilot course in English was piloted and then re-purposed by project partners to address the needs of their local teachers from Greece, Poland, Sweden, the Netherlands, Latvia and Lithuania.

The presentation focused on the stage of adapting and appropriating original instructional design to the unique characteristics and constraints of local educational cultures of Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden and Frysia. The research presented was based on the analysis of strategies used by facilitators to accommodate the training content to the profile of their local educational cultures. The main points made by the author were the following:

- Instructional designers involved in designing open content need to consider the inevitable prospect of the materials being re-purposed and adapted to other educational contexts.
- The quality of open content is not its inherent feature but it emerges in the process of adaptation.
- Successful appropriation to local contexts is not free from cultural meanings and, thus, cannot be approached as an automatic procedure.
- Educational cultures should be accounted for in task appropriation and instruction delivery so that recipients feel assisted in their gradual adaptation of new practices.
- Facilitators play an active role in the process of adapting resources – they should be autonomous in their judgments and decisions about which modifications respond best to their local contexts.

2. Target audience and impact

The presentation attracted about 20 conference delegates representing various institutions and cultural backgrounds. The people in the audience were mainly practitioners and educators representing, among others, the Open University (UK), Universitat de Barcelona (Spain), University of Groningen (NL), University of Bologna (IT), University of Padova (IT), The University of Leeds (UK), Universoty of Luxemberg and the University of Antwerp. The 20-min presentation evoked a discussion on the pressing need to cater for educational diversity of learners and teachers from LUL contexts. The participants also reflected on designer’s responsibility for providing space for future educational adaptations of instructional design, especially in the context of open education.

The audience were invited to join the LangOER Facebook group and reuse the resources created within the teacher training workpackage, namely the handbook and the online course.
3. Outcomes

The conference was a valuable opportunity to present an overview of the project activities and to initiate a discussion on the role of instructional designers in assuring the flexibility of content if it is to be repurposed and appropriated educationally different contexts. As it was stated in the discussion, the potential for modification lies at the very heart of any open content. The presentation was a great opportunity to establish new contacts with other researchers and instructional designers involved in the openness movement in less-used and minority languages.

4. Slides

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Managing cultural diversity in the context of open education – lessons learnt

Małgorzata Kurek
Jan Długosz University, Częstochowa, Poland

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European funded network (2014-2016), 9 partners:
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- Web2Learn, Greece
- European Schoolnet, Belgium
- University of Gothenburg, Sweden
- Jan Dlugosz University, Poland
- Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania
- International Council for Open and Distance Education, Norway
- Linnaeus University, Sweden
- Rezekne Higher Education Institution, Latvia

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Going open with LangOER

- The platform: https://www.openlearning.com/courses/goingopenwithlangoer/Schedule
- Participants: 32 active participants (12 counties)
- Timeline: 4 modules / 6 weeks
- Diverse materials
- Content:
  - Module 1: Introduction to openness
  - Module 2: Revise and Reuse
  - Module 3: Redistribution. Towards Open practices
  - Module 4: Remixing
Key concepts: Open Educational Resources

- The principle of re-use, repurposing and adaptation lies at the very heart of openness.

- Quality of OER emerges in the relation between a particular type of material and the way in which it is appropriated and integrated in a given educational context (Corole & Ethers, 2010; Bateman, Lane & Moon, 2012; King, 2013).

- OER are regarded to be fully shared if they are integrated into local contexts. If not congruent with end-users’ teaching/learning beliefs, values and the local educational culture, the new content may remain alien (Parrish & Linder-VanBerschot, 2010; Rivers Monpean & Guichon, 2013).

- Mere openness of educational content does not guarantee its smooth replication in other, culturally distinct contexts.
Major challenges to instructional design

- There may exist cultural preferences for how educational content should be organized, modified or delivered.

- Various pedagogical dimensions can be **interpreted and realised differently** in culturally different communities (e.g. assessment, teacher-learner roles, epistemological beliefs, task design) – Reeves & Reeves, 1997

- Culturally sensitive adaptation should embrace not only the cultural flavour of local settings, but also to the pedagogical realities, practices and priorities of end-users.

Pedagogical appropriation:

- **Modification of educational content** (materials, tasks, & technologies) so that they meet initial learning objectives in a linguistically, culturally or pedagogically different context.
Research questions:

- In what way did the instructor’s perception of his/her local educational culture influence his/her appropriation strategies?

- What appropriation strategies did the instructors use to address the strengths and limitations of their local contexts?

Participants:
6 experienced instructors –teacher trainers representing 6 LUL contexts: Greek, Latvian/Latgalian, Frysian, Lithuanian, Swedish, Polish.

Method:
- questionnaires;
- semi-structured interviews
- direct observation (access to online content)

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- “Our educational system is in transition from teacher-centred to learner-oriented approaches” (Facilitator F).
- “English is truly a foreign language here. Very few teachers know it well.” (Facilitators F)
- “Adaptation is definitely not common practice, nor is redistribution. Teachers tend to keep materials for themselves or, perhaps, share them with friends” (Facilitator A)
- „Most of the teachers [in my country] are overwhelmed with course offers which they can join for free (...) and they get the financial compensation for the hours they could spend on their jobs. (...) while with this project, the only tool we had was to trigger their enthusiasm and curiosity” (Facilitator B)
- “We had to step back from a (traditional) teacher role and become more of a moderator in the session. This worked better as participants worked more collaboratively and from their own intrinsic motivation” (Facilitator B).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture</th>
<th>Differentiating instruction to address participants’ varying technical competence.</th>
<th>Content redesign—adding tasks to accommodate teachers’ preferences for quizzes and low-tech activities.</th>
<th>Hands-on computer work. Group discussions. Slide presentations. Print handouts.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Culture F</td>
<td>Addressing non-English speaking audience and the need for linguistic content customisation; Technical issues (registration procedures)</td>
<td>Rebalancing/replacing content in favour of digital training; Prototype tasks used as inspiration for local ones.</td>
<td>Hands-on computer work. Video watching and pair/group work; Group discussions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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The Community

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Lessons learnt:

- Appropriation to local contexts is not free from cultural meanings and, thus, cannot be approached as an automatic procedure.

- Educational cultures should be accounted for in task appropriation and instruction delivery so that recipients feel assisted in their gradual adaptation of new practices.

- Facilitators play an active role in the process of adapting resources – they should be autonomous in their judgments and decisions about which modifications respond best to their local contexts.

- Instructional designers designing for open contexts should provide space for
Instructional design - providing space for culturally sensitive appropriation:

- provide a broad choice of pedagogically varied activities, technologies and formats;
- content modularization;
- limiting the use of highly contextual materials;
- identifying culture-sensitive elements of instruction

References

5. **Other materials**

Pictures of the presenter taken during the conference: