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Project Title: Enhance Teaching and Learning of Less Used Languages through OER/OEP

Project Acronym: LangOER

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Project Start: January 1st, 2014

Project Duration: 36 months

Partnership:
- Fryske Academy, The Netherlands (P1, Project coordination), Web2learn, Greece (P2, Project management)
- European Schoolnet, Belgium (P3), University of Gothenburg, Sweden (P4), Jan Długosz University, Poland (P5), Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania (P6), International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE), Norway (P7)
- European Foundation for Quality in E-learning, Belgium (P8), Rezekne Higher Education Institution, Latvia (P9).

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Nature of the deliverable: E – Event

Dissemination level: PU = Public

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Contributor(s) and their institutions: 
1. **Summary of the event**

A presentation at the EUROCALL conference ([Eurocall conference 2016](http://www.eurocall-languages.org/)) 24-27 August, 2016. This year's theme was "CALL communities and culture", which was the opportunity to focus on collective action and cultural awareness in digitally enhanced language education.

The title of the presentation was “Social networking affordances for open educational language practice”.

This annual prestigious event attracts around 200 international researchers and practitioners within the language learning and technology. One of the topical areas is Open Educational Resources (OER) which was a topic embraced by several speakers in the conference. Through these presentations, it was possible for the audience to take part in the most current debates about OER.

2. **Target audience and impact**

National and international stakeholders within the area of Language Learning and Technology and Open Education attended the event. The impact was high due to social media coverage through the Twitter hashtag #eurocall2016, as well as the Live stream of the conference. The audience was also encouraged to stay in touch through social media and was invited to forthcoming events, namely the final LangOER conference, [http://langoer.eun.org/conference-2016](http://langoer.eun.org/conference-2016).

3. **Outcomes**

The presentation was an opportunity to give an overview of the current results and status of the LangOER project with the main focus on the WP6 study on OER challenges for learning and teaching languages. In addition, the results of the study take the shape of a journal paper:

From engaging in this event, we have expanded our views on OER and on pedagogical affordances in teaching and learning. In addition, we have established contact with existing as well as new persons interested in our project. We have learned about future events to spark and support open educational practices in less-used and minority languages. Some challenges regarding OER and less used languages were also identified and discussed with the audience.
4. Other material

a. Picture of the talk

b. Slides of the talk
Social networking affordances for open educational language practice

Katerina Zourou, Web2Learn, Greece
EUROCALL 2016, Cyprus, August 24.

About the LangOER project

Enhancing teaching and learning of less used languages through Open Educational Resources (OER) and Practice (OEP)
Objectives:
• Raise awareness of risk of exclusion of less used languages
• Foster sustainability through OER reuse
• Address needs of policy makers and educators

http://langoer.eun.org/
IN-DEPTH INVESTIGATION OF OER

STATE-OF-THE-ART REPORT

This report presents the results of an in-depth investigation and analysis of Open Educational Resources (OER) in 23 languages, including the target languages of the LangOER consortium: Dutch, Frisian, Greek, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish and Swedish. Target languages have also been extended to more European languages, regional and minority languages (RML). The investigation also included a more global overview by using languages such as English, French, and German for reference. The study is now also available in several languages: Dutch, Frisian, Greek, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish and Swedish.

The state-of-the-art report covers 23 languages

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25 March 2015, 14:00-14:45 (CET)
Introduction to OER and the open learning platform – Marit Bijlma, Mercator Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning / Fryske Akademy (Netherlands)

2 April 2015, 14:00-14:45 (CET)
OER and best-practice examples – Ebba Ossiannilsson, Lund University (Sweden)

15 April 2015, 14:00-14:45 (CET)
A step-by-step approach to apply OER in your own teaching context – Robert Schmer, Fontys Higher Education (Netherlands)

23 April 2015, 14:00-14:45 (CET)
OER and licensing: What you need to know – Lisette Kalshoven, Kennisland / Creative Commons (Netherlands)
Chair: Valentina Garoia, European Schoolnet (Belgium)

13 May 2015, 14:00-14:45 (CET)
How to store and share your own created material? – Elena Schulman, European Schoolnet (Belgium)
Open Educational Resources in your own language, in your way.

Available in Arabic, Dutch, Latvian, Lithuanian, Swedish, Greek, Polish, French, Norwegian, Faroese, Frisian and Russian.

A handbook for teachers free to download.

http://langoer.eun.org/
Teacher training activities in blended mode carried out in 6 countries (GR, NL, LV, LT, PL, and SE) in Spring – Summer 2015

Covering: Licensing, how to find and use OER, how to create OER; how to mix resources containing different types of licensing

https://www.openlearning.com/courses/goingopenwithlangoer

Open-access journal issue:
Social dynamics in open educational language practice
https://alsic.revues.org/2871
Rationale

- Few studies on open educational practice (OEP): re-use, repurposing, etc.
- Social networks: opportunities for user engagement, participatory learning and social interaction- does this present an added value and how?

Aim

- Analyze the role of social networks in OEP, affording social engagement in meaningful learning, and bridging formal and informal learning opportunities.
- Contribute to an understanding of learning in the Open, across contexts, and facilitated by digital technologies

Open-ended survey with 18 OER & CALL experts, analysed from a content analytic perspective.

(Ehlers, 2011; Beetham et al, 2012; Conole, 2013; Mayring, 2000)

Open ended survey:
(among other topics):
– affordances of OER for language interaction and
– role of social networking in OEP in a language learning context

Video interviews:
http://langoer.eun.org/videos
Results- positive viewpoints

“I see OER serving as triggers for greater interaction in multiple learning communities: teacher communities and student communities. In other words, social networks (...) are the places where learning takes place. Students and teachers must show each other how to scaffold interaction with flexible OER”

=> More egalitarian approaches to knowledge building and sharing are possible

Networking capacity:

[What is required is to] “Shift the focus to developing digital open educational practices and the uptake of authentic resources that have been openly licensed, to enable language teachers and learners to become OER creators and remixers”.

• “Whether they are students or teachers, users need to create a community of practice to show each other how to adapt and use OER. Since OER are all about learning by doing, it only makes sense that there be a social network where OER users can talk to each other about their OER practices”.

⇒ Involvement of a range of actors (teachers and learners); engagement in OEP (OER re-use & adaptation); active learning (socio-constructive foundation).
Results - the two sides of social networks

- “[S]ocial networks can probably help with motivation, keeping people on task and on track, and highlighting resources and learning opportunities. They can also be a huge distraction. Some learners want to keep their social selves and student selves separate; this is barely possible nowadays, but a brake for some learners and teachers”

⇒ “the self-representation is mobilized by the tensions between (...) the idea of broadcasting and sharing as part of digital identity” (Alevizou, Conole, Culver, & Galley, 2010).

Results - the two sides of social networks (2)

- it is very important [to] build a community around the resources. I know [two well-known repositories of OER for language learning] but both have technical limitations and barriers: [a user] has to create an account, no social sharing, no community feel, still rather dominated by institutional presence”

=> Community engagement is a must (both as a social construct and as a bottom-up initiative) Setting up the SN is not enough to generate practice.
Regarding the act of making OER available in the public sphere:

- “I am not in favour of this, as I think there is **too much potential for users to become disengaged**. Many colleagues still feel an enormous amount of pressure or sensitivity in relation to critique of their teaching or teaching materials - anyone who is truly invested in their teaching cannot help but be emotionally invested. (...) **The two concerns I think people have about sharing educational resources are 1) fear of criticism and 2) fear of not being acknowledged**

=> cf. Goffman’s concept of “facework” in open, social networked practices

=> Impact on professional identities and working and sharing cultures/visibility of one’s practice through social networks and academic identity *(Selwyn, 1999; Alevizou, 2010; Perryman & Coughlan, 2013; Hughes & McKenna 2012)*.

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**Social networking and gaming features** are common in web 2.0 communities (i.e. OpenStax and those targeting L2 practice) and less common in OER communities. An exception: **KlasCement** *(Torresin & Zourou, 2015)*
Conclusion?

Limitation of the study: evidence= expert views.

• Social networks understood as favouring public sharing and expansion of user-generated content VS reluctance to share and institutional mind-sets preventing wider spread

Possible solutions?

⇒ if OER are seen as opportunities for collective action (co-creation, reuse, expansion) => the design of the OER platform should enhance social participation/connectivity across networks, etc. (repository VS community).

⇒ Facilitating communities of practice to emerge

⇒ Approaching OER as work in progress and not polished content off the shelf, can increase participation and user engagement, and situate OEP in a more socially sustained environment (e.g. OpenStax, Siyavula, OEPS).

(Colpaert, 2014; Thomas, 2012; Okada, 2014; Perryman & al., 2015).

Thank you!

Staying in touch

http://langoer.eun.org/

#langOER

LangOER

OER and languages

OER and languages

LangOER Teachers