LEARNING THROUGH SHARING : OPEN RESOURCES, OPEN PRACTICES, OPEN COMMUNICATION

Open Educational Resources for Language Teachers: a goal-oriented approach

Jozef COLPAERT, Universiteit Antwerpen

In this presentation we will discuss Open Language Teaching as a possible initiative which at first sight seems to respond to certain needs, but at the same time we will explain why it will probably not break through. Content development for language learning, especially for technology-embedded content (e.g. language courseware), is far too labour-intensive. Language learners, teachers, CALL practitioners and researchers will agree that content should be more generic, reusable, authorable, exchangeable, portable, sustainable and … open. Educational software development has seen the emergence of Open-Source systems such as Moodle, Big Blue Button, OpenSis and ExeLearning, which have gained momentum but have not completely broken through yet. In the same vein, recent content-related phenomena such as Open-Source Learning, Open Educational Resources, the Open Data movement and the Open Knowledge Foundation might offer more advantages than expected for the CALL community.

We will explain why in our view, an Open Language Teaching Initiative should - but at the same time will probably not - break through. The psychological dimension might be the real issue (see [author]. 2010. Elicitation of language learners' personal goals as design concepts. Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching.).

We will present the results of a discussion in a LinkedIn group (Computer Assisted Language Learning), and of surveys with CALLers and language teachers. These surveys show to what extent language teachers and CALLers use materials developed by others on a non-commercial basis, to what extent they are willing to share their own content (texts, songs, interactive exercises, …) with others, and what they expect from publishers and from the government. It is the author's intention to open up the gathered data as Open Data, so that other researchers can benefit from this endeavour.

This presentation will conclude with a discussion on the extent to which Open Language Teaching might affect teacher education, and the language learning community in general.