

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

Collaborative Italian - *Pedagogy 2.0* for student-led language teaching

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Abstract

Collaborative Italian – Collit – is a distance learning initiative in the School of Cultures, Language and Area Studies, University of Nottingham. Collit targets adult students with at least a B1/B2 level of Italian. It is free, open and extra-curriculum, hence non-credit bearing.

Furthermore, Collit is an open-curriculum module designed to provide the learners with an overall communicative language learning experience based on collaboration and social interaction. It promotes social constructivism (Piaget 1926, Vygotsky 1978) and embraces the principles of *Pedagogy 2.0* (McLoughlin and Lee 2008). It does so by relying on the openness of the online environment and social media. Moreover, Collit puts strong emphasis on student-controlled intended learning outcomes (Biggs 2003) and tasks, consistent with the cognitive and the experiential approaches to course design (Toohey 1999) onto which Collit is theoretically grounded.

On this basis, Collit's research questions are concerned with the affordances of *Pedagogy 2.0* for student-led learning and the impact of learner-generated content on achievement as the by-product of increased engagement, participation and involvement with the learning process.

To explore these questions Collit provides the learners with an informal learning experience which encourages:

- learners' responsibility for their own learning path and outcomes;
- personally relevant knowledge built from experience;
- social immersion, interaction and collaboration for communication and knowledge sharing;
- reflection and analytical thinking of one's own knowledge and that of others.

Most significantly, ownership of learning is emphasised with the learners taking up the role of teachers, evaluating and selecting resources and creating teaching activities to be shared within the learning community. Given these premises the role of the teacher is to assist, facilitate, elicit and provide guidance for students' construction of knowledge, consistent with Collit's theoretical frameworks.

Overall, Collit provides a research-based case study to investigate novel language learning dynamics supported by the web and social media.

Biggs, J. (2003). *Aligning teaching for constructing learning*. The Higher Education Academy.

McLoughlin, C. and M. Lee. (2008). Future learning landscapes: Transforming pedagogy through social software. *Innovate* 4, 5.

Piaget, J. (1926) *The language and thought of the child*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.

Toohey, S. (1999). Beliefs, values and ideologies in course design. In *Designing courses for higher education*. Toohey, S. (Buckingham, SRHE and OUP): pp. 44-69.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978) *Mind in society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.