

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

**Open Resources, Practices and Communication:
The Role of the Language Centre**

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Abstract

In this paper, I will discuss the principles of Open Resources, Practices and Communication in relation to the Language Centre of the University of Cambridge and its role within:

- The wider Institution
- The local community
- The national (UK) and international community

I will conclude by suggesting a number of initiatives that the language teaching (and learning) community at large could benefit from.

The Language Centre of the University of Cambridge (LC) was established as a university service in 1990. Initially it assumed the role of as a self-access centre and depository of learning resources offering independent-learning support.

Today, the LC offers digital resources and services that are accessible online, a range of taught foreign language courses delivered in a blended-learning mode as well as English for academic purposes pre- and in-sessional support.

Furthermore, over the past 15 years the LC has established its own technical section as well as procedures for the design and development of multimedia didactic materials in a range of languages. These materials are accessible online and the latest generation have been made freely available as open courseware under the Common Creative Licence (<http://www.langcen.cam.ac.uk/opencourseware/index.html>).

The mission of the LC is to increase multilingualism amongst students and staff of the University; promoting, encouraging and supporting the learning of languages for personal, academic and professional purposes. To do so, the LC runs a University-wide language programme as well as a range of bespoke courses for Schools and Faculties. All of these share the LC multimedia didactic materials as well as other resources, the teaching staff as well as established practices.

To actively promote and support language learning in the local community the LC

established in 2004 Junior CULP. Through this Programme a number of local schools had access to the LC multimedia online materials, the Independent Learning Centre in Cambridge as well as the teaching expertise. The Project was recipient of the 2006 European Award for Languages and had involved so far some 50 schools in Cambridgeshire.

The LC aims at sharing expertise with other language---learning providers nationally and internationally. To fulfill this aim the LC have made a range of multimedia materials available as open courseware. This courseware can be freely used in any educational context and the LC is eager to discuss its implementation with the potential users as well as to explore other forms of collaboration.