



International Conference on MOOCs, language learning and mobility 13 – 14 October 2017, Naples; Italy

Conference abstracts in alphabetical order by surname

Nota bene: The presentation of the abstracts with double title (in EN and IT in red) will be carried out orally in Italian language while the Power Point presentation will be in English.

1. Using ICT within Transnational Cooperation among CLIL Teachers. Results of an Erasmus + KA2 strategic partnership project

Utilizzo delle TIC in un progetto di cooperazione internazionale fra insegnanti Europei di discipline non linguistiche in metodologia CLIL: risultati di un partenariato strategico Erasmus+ KA2

Emma Abbate

Liceo Statale Manzoni di Caserta, Italia

Abstract

In the last two decades, European teaching systems have, even if in different degrees, adopted ICTs into all levels of education. "Blended" and "online" learning, together with "mobile education" application, have commonly become well established teaching approaches, also used for obtaining University Certificates in various branches around the world. In this context, ICT are often used to develop both students' and teachers' skills in order to foster implementation of lifelong education model. But are teachers and students prepared for a profitable and aware use of ICTs? Should ICTs be increasingly employed in the learning-teaching process in order to help pupils and / or teachers to improve their competences? Or might their use lead to the loss of "human touch" which is an indispensable element of any effective educational process? How can teachers manage and promote implementation of ICTs in education?

This contribution aims at mapping and describing ICT tools used within the framework of an ERASMUS+ KA2 project coordinated by Bratislava and Nitra Universities (Slovakia) focusing on the exchange of good CLIL practices among primary and secondary school teachers from different European countries. The project output, completed in May 2017, was a MOOC modular training course for development of CLIL teachers' skills. The course offers also a "CLIL Bank" of resources: a rich lesson plans' repository. This paper describes the experience of designing, building and developing the project e-learning platform (www.educilil.eu) by utilizing cloud environment for partners' co-operation. It also reflects on the "side effects" of an ICT learning environment. Finally, some suggestions and ideas are proposed on how to use ICTs in a learning-teaching environment on different levels of education.

2. Skype in the ELE classroom: effectiveness of online teaching in coaching students for the DELE exam

Lorena Aguado Sánchez, Laura Ordóñez Rodríguez
SpanishviaSkype Spain

Abstract

This paper examines the potential and the effectiveness of Skype®, a free software for communication over the Internet, which includes voice, video, and instant message capabilities, in the ELE (Spanish as a Foreign Language) classroom in order to prepare students to pass the DELE® exam (Diploma in Spanish as a Foreign Language). This report builds upon previous work done over five years (2012-2017) on using one-on-one Spanish lessons on Skype® to prepare foreign students from all around the world to pass this test (levels A2, B1, B2 and C1). We will examine Skype's advanced features that make it useful for preparing the DELE ® (conference calls, chat box that we use as a whiteboard, file transfer and screen sharing).

We will also analyze the methodology for these classes on Skype®, based on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach, in order to provide intensive training in each of the four tasks of the exam (written task, conversation, listening and reading comprehension); and the class materials used in class (online interactive material such as audio recordings, videos or quizzes, self-evaluation tests, written tasks corrected by tutor and mock tests). Students take these classes from their home, office or any place they choose, at their own pace, with a tailor-made program. They get their tutor's customized feedback and explanations (via Skype® and email). Video calling services have been improving over the past decade and the rise of mobile devices and 3G/4G internet connectivity has made them more accessible. Skype® makes learning more interesting, interactive, meaningful and stimulating for the students. This tool is powerful as it's capable of bringing a change and reform traditional forms of learning.

3. CULTNET MOOC: a tool to build capacities on culture for inclusion

Silvia Anastasia, Cristina Demartis Anna Schena,
AICCREVE, Glocal Factory, Italy

Abstract

The ERASMUS + funded project Cultnet intends to address some specific issues:

- Need of specific training to use art&culture as a driver for inclusion and active citizenship, especially in suburban/peripheral areas;
- Low level of skills on the side of youth operators to deal with inclusion and diversity;
- Need for learning, transfer of expertise from diverse regions of the world.

Project partners are AICCREVE and Glocal Factory (Italy), CZ ART (Poland), and Sirabà (Burkina Faso) and aim to raise the capacities of youth workers, to integrate inclusion and diversity measures in their work using culture as informal language and to foster youth participation.

To achieve its purposes, the project plans to test and launch a "package" of multilingual online training resources for the professionalization of trainers. The package includes an innovative MOOC focused on youth participation and inclusion based on good practices in 3 different countries. MOOC is structured around 4 modules:

- a) Social engagement of young people: How to make young people participate in a community?
- b) Inclusion in education: How educators work daily with young at risk of social exclusion?

- c) Enhancing young participation through culture: How culture and informal activities (theater, music, cinema, art, dance, etc.) can recreate the community?
- d) Sustainable management of cultural initiatives: Which kind of skill and expertise are needed to make your project suitable?

MOOC's users are entitled to receive a certificate of attendance, recognizing the competences acquired during the learning experience. The MOOC established with CultNet integrates the most advanced functionalities such as filmed lectures and talks, reading materials as well as inquiry-oriented formats, tasks to be completed and problems to be solved. The training resources will be released in English, French, Polish and Italian. They are conceived to be "usable" by EU and non-EU learners, having different cultural backgrounds, learning needs and educational level as well as teachers, trainers and educators working in risk exclusion situations.

The online tools produced in beta version will be tested on youth workers from the 3 countries and the testing phase will result an important capacity building investment to foster analytical, linguistic

4. Challenges in teaching computer-assisted translation. Coping with low budgets reality

Silvia-Adriana Apostol
University of Pitesti, Romania

Abstract

When teaching Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT), the technological component is the core element on which depends the concept of the entire course, as such courses are by definition practical courses. Thus, the success of a CAT training greatly rests upon the availability of translation tools. In the context of educational budgets lowering every year (at least, this is the case of the Romanian educational system), offering translation technology courses can be a problem in terms of costs. This involves important economic efforts related to acquiring software licenses, maintenance costs, hardware infrastructure. Fortunately, cloud-based translation technology offers a great alternative (a much cheaper one) to the now 'traditional' translation software that students have access to only in the laboratory. Free cloud-based translation tools can be successfully used for educational purposes and the fact that they are compatible with inexpensive smartphones or tablets is somehow synonymous of an act of liberation from PC laboratory class and low investment in translation technology environment.

We do not undervalue the performance of translation systems existing on the current market, what we want to focus on in the present article is the use of cloud-based translation memory, Machine Translation Systems, terminology management systems in CAT courses as a cheaper yet viable alternative, aiming at offering students an insight into the functioning of a translation technology environment and at developing students' technological skills. Free CAT tools such as Wordfast Anywhere, Google Translate Toolkit, Google Translate, Translator online can be used in CAT training for a wide range of exercises and assignments: text alignment, creation of a translation memory, glossary creation, editing, machine translation post-editing, review.

5. C^x MOOLCs and the Flipped Classroom approach: redefining 'social autonomy' in language learning

C^x MOOLC e la metodologia 'Flipped Classroom': 'autonomia sociale' e apprendimento linguistico

Giuseppe Balirano

Università degli Studi di Napoli L'Orientale, Italy

Margaret Rasulo

Università della Campania Luigi Vanvitelli, Italy

Abstract

One of the weaknesses of MOOLCs (massive open online language courses), whether designed as 'c' or 'x' formats, is a high drop-out rate due to learner isolation. Students involved in university implemented MOOLCs are generally allowed alternative routes through a selection of materials as well as automated feedback. However, it seems that such models do not fully provide students with a nurturing community environment, an essential ingredient in language learning (Bates, 2012). To mitigate this issue, given the essential building-blocks that scaffold the process of language learning/teaching, we posit that the implementation of an integrated method, one which blends selected elements from both 'c' and 'x' models (therefore C^x), may possibly provide the necessary F-2-F like interaction missing from most available models (see Jansen and Schuwer, 2015). As a brief reminder of the features characterizing the two models, the connectivist MOOC (cMOOC) is a structure with a strong focus on social and networked activity geared towards significant learner autonomy. The xMOOC, characterized by cognitive-behaviourist pedagogy, is more structured as it relies on conventional directed instruction and is therefore less open to learner autonomy. This paper intends to address how a fundamental community component can be integrated in a MOOLC environment in order to generate learning dynamics among language learners, thus safeguarding the affordances of the openness guaranteed by the cMOOC model.

Sustainable online learning in terms of time duration and content intake can only occur through consistent learner engagement and social presence, both as an individual and community expression. This can be accomplished by fostering continuous online intervention in the form of discussion, encouragement, and an understanding of individual needs (Bates, 2012), typical features supported by learning management systems. This research advocates the use of LMS environments such as MOODLE to host, deliver and manage MOOLCs within a nurturing, collaborative, and participatory environment, in which learners are supported in co-constructing their knowledge in a variety of ways and tools that allow students to participate in a comprehensive course experience. Against this backdrop, we will be looking at practical instantiations of what we define as C^x-MOOLC environments based on the flipped-classroom approach. Reinforcing learner engagement and autonomy through this approach may represent a viable solution to the necessary interaction which should always take place in language teaching.

6. Teacher training to the use of CLIL methodology in problem based activities

Formazione dei docenti sull'utilizzo della metodologia CLIL nelle attività di problem solving

Alice Barana, Marina Marchisio

Department of Mathematics, University of Torino, Italy

Abstract

The Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is a learning methodology, which aims to develop not only disciplinary and linguistic competences, but also to prepare students to join a more international society, which would offer them better job opportunities. In order to fulfil these purposes, group activities of real-world problem solving conducted in a vehicular language, with the technological support of Virtual Learning Environments, could be successfully included in a CLIL program. The implementation of similar activities requires that the teachers are suitably prepared and supported.

This paper presents and discusses a model of teacher training to the use of CLIL methodology in problem based activities involving different subjects. The model has been developed by the Department of Mathematics of the University of Turin and it was experimented during two CLIL training courses with secondary school teachers. The training model includes: the design of the training program by University researchers, the proper training phase, monitoring teachers' activities and the collection of materials, and an evaluation of the course. In particular, the training phase involves problem solving, problem posing and the use of a Virtual Learning Environment both as a student and as a teacher.

Key features of the model are: the use of a blended environment, both in presence and online, which allows to produce interactive materials and to create a community of practice; the collaboration between teachers of different subjects, which enables the preparation of meaningful real-world problems and the sharing of experiences; the active role of teachers during the training lessons, who take the role of students in problem solving activities, and that of teachers in the creation of learning materials.

The discussion of the model is conducted on the base of the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the results of the surveys and of the materials produced, which highlight the strengths and difficulties in the realization of problem-based CLIL activities.

7. Mobile Assisted Open Social Language Learning

Elena Bárcena & Timothy Read

Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED), Spain

Abstract

The emergence of MOOCs was as an important step forward in providing open education, including foreign languages, to the large number of people who, for diverse reasons, are not able to attend conventional taught classes or participate in closed online courses. However, given the current diversity of Language MOOCs (LMOOCs), the authors argue that it is more appropriate to be thinking in terms of open social language learning in general, since there are many different ways to harness existing technology to facilitate second language learning (2LL) which includes but goes beyond the standard MOOC formats, and that the boundaries between what is a course and what is not, are not always so clear or relevant. Previous experience with different types of LMOOCs have let us identify their potential problems. However, 2LL can be seen to be eminently practical and dynamic, and as such, falls in the middle of the scale of 'intrinsic MOOC suitability', since it is both skill-based and knowledge-based. This requires a network of capabilities (competences, skills and data) to be finely intertwined as learning progresses. Such learning requires both cognitive involvement (using high-order mental skills) and social interaction (with more or less

competent speakers of the target language). This research focusses on the exploration of the conceptual space of MALL and open social 2LL and how the affordances of mobile technology can empower their combination for large student numbers. It is argued here that 2LL is most effective when a scaffolded spiral approach is used, moving people from teacher-led to self-directed learning, and back again; combining an individual learning stage with subsequent social-constructivist ones. In the case of LMOOCs, teachers are not typically present once the course starts to adapt the activities to the progress of the learner. Therefore, the proposal presented here is intended to be applied to explore the possible learning paths of individual open social language learning courses and provide adequate and relevant scaffolding.

8. Intercultural education in the virtual class: the case of the IEREST project

Ana Beaven, Claudia Borghetti

University Language Centre, University of Bologna, Italy

Department of Modern Languages, Literature, and Cultures, University of Bologna, Italy

Abstract

While students' possibilities for intercultural development during their stay abroad are receiving increasing attention (e.g., Borghetti & Beaven, 2016; Dervin & Layne, 2013; Jackson, 2008), initiatives in higher education aimed at supporting mobile students from an intercultural point of view are still relatively rare.

This pedagogical paper introduces the European IEREST project (Intercultural Education Resources for Erasmus Students and their Teachers, <http://ierest-project.eu/>) and discusses one of its teaching activities.

IEREST was an Erasmus multilateral project co-funded by the European Commission (LLP 2012-2015) and coordinated by the University of Bologna (UNIBO). It developed a set of teaching resources to be provided to Erasmus students before, during and after their experience abroad in order to enable students to benefit as much as possible from their international experience in terms of intercultural development. The IEREST resources are now published under the Creative Commons BY-NC-SA 4.0 licence on the project website (see also IEREST, 2015). One central aspect of the project and its sustainability has been the exploration of ways to adapt the resources to different contexts and modalities. In this respect, the virtual classroom is a natural environment for the IEREST activities, in particular the module designed to support students while abroad.

In order to showcase one possible use of the resources, the second part of the paper will describe and discuss two different pilotings of the IEREST activity "24h Erasmus Life", which aims at making students reflect on four interrelated areas of their sojourn: the emotional impact of living abroad, the understanding of how communication works within a different academic community, the broader social dimension of the experiences, and the identity-related language issues. The first piloting took place in Autumn 2014, when the activity was tested with 23 UNIBO students who were doing their study abroad in a variety of European countries; the second piloting was conducted in March 2017 with 8 students who were studying abroad in both EU and non-EU higher education institutions. The paper traces the main instructional phases of "24h Erasmus Life", and comments on the students' learning experiences by reporting extracts from class blogs and forums.

References:

- Borghetti, C. & Beaven, A. (Eds) (2016), Special issue "Perspectives and discourses on student mobility and interculturality". *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 16(3).

- Dervin, F., & Layne, H. (2013) A guide to interculturality for international and exchange students: an example of Hostipitality? Journal of Multicultural Discourses, 8(1), 1-19.
- IEREST (2015), Intercultural education resources for Erasmus students and their teachers. Koper: Annales University Press. Available at <http://ierest-project.eu/>.
- Jackson, J. (2008). Language, identity and study abroad: Sociocultural perspectives. London: Equinox.

9. The Tool of Tools: Using Padagogy Wheel to become and independent student.

Lo strumento degli strumenti- la Ruota Pad-agogica per diventare uno studente autonomo

Maria Cristina Bevilacqua

Istituto di Istruzione Superiore, Ceccano (FR), Italy

Abstract

Mobile technologies can be valuable, engaging and captivating tools for helping students in the transition from being a dependent student to an independent learner, being able to choose, from a wide range of suggestions, the apps that fit their needs, in a more aware way of learning.

Using the App Selection Criteria (Remembering, Understanding, Applying, Analyzing, Evaluating), interconnected with the SAMR (Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, Redefinition) Model and the different Gears (Attributes, Motivation, Blooms, Technology, SAMR Cycle) helps teachers in enhancing student's creativity, critical thinking, initiative.

In this work (whose Author is the Italian translator) the Padagogy wheel (it's not a mistake: Pad stands for iPad) will be introduced as the Tool of tool, summarising all the properties and potentials of Apps, but even as a "work in progress", to be integrated and improved by the teachers/students, who can take the advantage of all the different translations done and can give their suggestions for Apps to be added or deleted.

10. Virtual reality, augmented reality and mixed reality trends in pedagogy

Irina-Alexandra Bîrsănescu, Călin Răzvan-Alexandru

University of Craiova, Romania

Abstract

Being surrounded by technology nowadays makes us wonder what the possibilities are, since there is a constant change in all the existent fields of work. When talking about education, the possibilities of operating with technology, teachers and students are truly unlimited, so we shall adventure deeper into the secrets of apparatus and innovation. Virtual reality lately became a trend that everyone loves, desires and tries to understand, reason for the spontaneous interest towards the subject. Using virtual reality, along with several branches of it, may seem unusual or unstable at first, but once you assimilate the mere information needed, their serviceability starts to sound promising. This study aims to bring together the benefits of virtual, augmented and mixed reality in the classroom, especially in terms of teacher training. Having as a starting point an investigative demarche based on J. C. Flanagan's Critical Incident technique, combined with P.C. Smith's and L.M. Kendall's Development of Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scales we can target the malleability of competences such as the communicative, informational, teleological, instrumental, conclusive, appreciative one or the actual use of technology, regarding the formation of a pedagogue. This will give us the opportunity to alter the level of professional grounding and culture in a digital native era. The virtual classroom involves instructive-formative activities

that can capture the essence of long-term training into something more efficient than we've been used to. After skimming through a few studies, one should be able to tell what the benefits and disadvantages of the virtual environment are and understand how they need to be used to emphasize what we already master or what we aspire to gain.

11. An Exploration of French Pronunciation Learning Strategies of Distance Learners

Daniel Bosmans

University Campus Oldham, United Kingdom

Abstract

The introduction of online courses on the Internet and their growing presence have altered the way people learn, including in foreign language learning. The present study explores the learning of pronunciation, a sub-skill of speaking, when learning in a distance setting (in solo mode via Computer-assisted Language Learning (CALL) and in group learning via Computer-mediated Communication (CMC)). A few studies have recently explored pronunciation learning (Dlaska and Krekeler, 2013; Thomson, 2012; Trofimovich, 2011; Gatbonton, E., Trofimovich, P. and Segalowitz, N., 2011) but the present paper builds on this body of work by exploring learning strategies used by learners in a dichotomous context, through a mixed-method research design.

The present paper explores learning strategies through three methods: a questionnaire, think-aloud protocols (TAPs) and semi-structured interviews, all of which contributed to the building of an accurate picture of strategies used by learners when practising the pronunciation of French in a distance setting (n = 590). This topic needs exploring, not only because successful pronunciation learning may be due to the skilful use of strategies, but also because these might be different in a new learning environment. The study found that quite different learning strategies were used when learners were either in solo mode or in an online session, with clear implications for practitioners and course designers in terms of deciding what learning strategies need including in their materials or can be taught as part of the session, as well as their sequencing.

12. Mathematical modelling, observing measuring, and modelling in science: two self-paced MOOCs for training teachers and learning in CLIL methodology

La modellizzazione in Matematica; l'osservazione, la misura e la modellizzazione in Scienze: due MOOC utili per la formazione degli insegnanti e per l'apprendimento in metodologia CLIL degli studenti.

Anna Brancaccio & Massimo Esposito

MIUR - Direzione generale per gli ordinamenti scolastici e la valutazione del sistema nazionale di istruzione, Italy

Marina Marchisio

Dipartimento di Matematica "Giuseppe Peano" – Università degli Studi di Torino, Italy

Carlo Meneghini

Dipartimento di Scienze – Università degli Studi Roma Tre, Italy

Claudio Pardini

ISS Carlo Anti, Italy

Abstract

In teaching and learning, in particular of scientific subjects, it is very important to develop problem-solving competences as capacity to engage in cognitive processing to understand and solve problem situations where a method of solution is not immediately obvious. The two MOOCs Mathematical Modelling and Observing Measuring and Modelling in Science

were designed and realized inside the Erasmus+ Project SMART – Science and Mathematics Advanced Research in good Teaching, Strategic Partnership Key Two action, for European teachers of Mathematics, Physics and Science who want to adapt their methods of teaching in order to develop this kind of competences. All partners, Universities, schools, public and private Institutions were involved for their realization in different tasks. All the materials of the MOOCs were tested at different levels before being inserted in the modules. The two MOOCs, already available on a Moodle platform (<http://opensmart.miurprogettopps.unito.it/>), are open and self-paced in the sense that allow teachers to train themselves according to their needs and times. Progress bar and certificates automatically generated at the end of each module help them to control their advancement; all didactic materials can be downloaded and used by teachers in their classes. The two MOOCs represent also an opportunity for Italian teachers who want to adopt the CLIL methodology in their teaching. In the paper structure, new technologies adopted and examples of interactive materials of the MOOCs are presented. Also the feedbacks of the first users obtained through different questionnaires are discussed.

13. Archaeoschool for the future: teaching modern languages on ancient roots

Insegnare lingue moderne su radici antiche (e su piattaforma MOOC)

Caterina Carpinato & Eugenia Liosatou
Università Ca' Foscari, Italy

Abstract

Our proposal is on our MOOC activities (registred on June/July 2017) in the frame of the European project “Archaeoschool for the future” (Erasmus Plus 2015-2018) (www.archaeoschool.eu).

The principal arguments are:

- For generations a classical education was considered a privilege for the few, not the many, but now its revival in schools must be under way. Classical subjects equip pupils with grammar, critical thinking and language skills. Our project try to combine Archaeological and Linguistic Heritage with a correct impact of the new generation in front of the past, the present of every day life and the future.
- Analysis of spoken languages (italian, catalan/spanish, modern greek)
- Understanding of language structures of our language analysis of different linguistic levels, environmental impact assessment, examination of the internal elements of the languages, specific lexicology: archaeological context
- Evaluation of the use, evolution and transformation
- Proposals for the conscious use and conservation in the context of forced Anglicisation
- Understanding the present: archaeological and linguistic terminology
- Understanding the past: why and how the past is ideological connected with the present
- Building our future on the stones and on the words
- We prepared a specific handbook for the students of our Project and language lesson MOOC.
- We think that basic knowledge of languages (even ancient greek and latin) is important:
 - To understand our language and our history
 - To re-think the importance of studies of the evolutions of the national languages
 - To understand other languages and the “others”

- To understand why and when “ancient Greek” and “Latin” had the same function of English in our days life
- To read and understand ancient and modern documents in our country and in the countries of the Partners
- To know why the ancient Greeks and the Romans seem just like us, but they were also very different.
- This help students to reflect about themselves and the lives of others: this is an important quality in our multicultural society.

14. Investigating the potential of a MOOC on technologies for CLIL in teacher training **Le potenzialità di un MOOC sulle tecnologie per il CLIL nella formazione dei docenti**

Letizia Cinganotto

INDIRE, Italy

Daniela Cuccurullo

ITT Giordani Striano Naples, Italy

Abstract

The presentation will describe the main features of a five-week free international MOOC on CLIL and technologies, “Techno-CLIL”, (EVO, Electronic Village Online), planned, implemented and moderated by the authors in 2016 and 2017 which was attended by 5000 participants in both the editions.

Starting from the pedagogic and didactic framework on the potential of ICT for CLIL, the presentation will focus on the development of the syllabus, the webtools and social media used, highlighting the positive feedback provided by the participants.

The MOOC adopted a “hands on” approach, guiding the teachers to discover and experiment new tools for CLIL and to share comments on their experimentations with their peers. Each week was inspired to a particular topic relevant to CLIL and ICT and some certain tasks were assigned, according to Task-Based Learning. Examples of products realized by the teachers during the initiatives will be shown as evidence of the huge potential technologies can have on teachers’ professional growth.

The peer learning perspective was a highlight of the session, as the participants were asked to assess their colleagues’ lesson plans and products according to some guidelines and grids provided by the moderators: self-reflection, assessment and peer assessment were some of the goals reached during the training initiative.

As a follow-up of “Techno-CLIL”, a huge community of practice made up of almost 6400 members in the Facebook Group is still active and is still engaged in interesting discussions on CLIL and technologies, regularly interacting to share ideas, events, initiatives, while waiting for the next edition of “Techno-CLIL”. This aspect will be also depicted, highlighting the importance of learning communities for CLIL, as stated by the most renown CLIL experts, such as Do Coyle. In order to show the development of this CLIL community of practice, the other social media used during the course will be briefly highlighted, in particular Twitter, Telegram, YouTube: social networks and media played a key role during the training in order to interconnect formal and informal learning experiences. Finally, some data collected from the questionnaires of both the editions will be shared.

15. Autonomous enhancement of communication skills in foreign languages – a blended learning approach

Irina David

The Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Romania

Abstract

Effective enhancement of communication skills in foreign languages requires significant involvement from the language learners, who have been perceived as active participants in the process for several decades now, even since the late 1970s-early 1980s, when Henri Holec designed a theoretical framework which defined learner autonomy and its characteristics. While the learners' role in language teaching/ learning is recognized and taken into consideration by language trainers, adapting teaching methods to this need for autonomy can be a tricky endeavor, especially in the setting of classroom, face-to-face interaction between the language trainer and the learner. Fortunately, technology has facilitated the task of giving learners more responsibility and helping them take control of their own learning, as e-learning and blended learning have started to be integrated more and more in language acquisition and development of communication skills in foreign languages. This article aims to bring forth the benefits of a blended learning approach in the field of foreign language teaching/ learning, with special focus on learners' autonomy. The theoretical data collected from studies written with respect to autonomous learning will be discussed in relation to strategies and tools used in the framework of the Oportunidance – Dance Your Way to Other Cultures ERASMUS+ project. The project aims to help adult learners improve their verbal and non-verbal communication skills and thus feel more confident in themselves, as well as increase their chances to integrate and perform effectively in nowadays' multilingual, multicultural world. There are three main tools through which learners are encouraged to develop these skills: a Moodle platform with language lessons in five languages (Romanian, English, French, Catalan and Portuguese) in four areas of expertise (general, professional, intercultural and dance-related language), a Facebook page with dance tutorials with instructions in the five languages mentioned above and events where participants from various national and cultural backgrounds can attend language and dance workshops, have fun and communicate with each other. The article highlights how the blended learning approach to language teaching/ learning used in the framework of Oportunidance encourages learners' autonomy and increases their motivation.

16. Innovation in language teaching and learning: What do we need to make a MOOC course genuinely innovative? Sharing work in progress experiences as a MOOC course developer at NTNU, Trondheim, Norway.

Veruska De Caro-Barek

Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, Norway

Abstract

This talk will focus on sharing experiences from the work process of making a MOOC in Norwegian as a second Language at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, NTNU.

Specifically, I want to readdress the topic of innovation in language teaching and learning that proponents of MOOC-based courses and providers of MOOC platforms predicate.

As already highlighted during the 2016 MOVEE conference in the UK by Knox and Bahadur Singh, the journey to real innovation in MOOC's developmental technology is just at its beginning.

Despite the claims of innovation, disrupting learning technology methods and revolution in learning approaches, the general teaching set ups in most MOOCs for language learning in

Norway seem to rely on a classic behavioristic paradigm in language grammar teaching, with pre-produced and teacher supervised study paths and fairly linear learning sequences. Knowledge is passed on a mostly passive audience through video presentations or streaming from classroom's practices. This seems to happen both in teacher supervised learning environments, as in most xMOOCs, and in self teaching or autonomous learning environments oriented to a more connectivist approach, as in cMOOCs, the connectivist side being the student's fora available on the MOOC- platform.

Working as an assistant professor and MOOC course developer at NTNU, I've often stumbled upon doubts and questions about my practice and how I can ameliorate and make my courses more interactive and innovative.

I experienced that the very technology used by the current MOOC platforms we use at NTNU, Future Learn and EdX, can set limits on how a developer can construct a MOOC language course, defining and somehow constricting the teaching approach in a more traditional manner.

The connectivist underlying pedagogy, which we wish to enhance in the form of supported collaborative learning tasks among student participants, seems also to be limited by the technology options available on the platforms and bound to forums and cohorts.

The paper aims to raise awareness about these issues and address the need for improved technology solutions with a critical look at how course developer can build more innovative and interactive language courses, especially in the case of self-directed learning.

17. Multilingualism and Language Learning in Romanian Higher Education Area. Quality Assurance in Higher Education Language Policy

Camelia Sanda Dragomir, PhD

Dipartimento di Studi Letterari, Linguistici e Comparati Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale", Italy & Romanian Language Institute, Bucharest, Romania

Elmira Chengiali, PhD

Institut français de Bulgarie

Abstract

Language learning is one of the main challenges of the multilingual European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Education policies and language learning are inter-related and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), with their essential role in creating new knowledge, transferring it to students and fostering innovation, play a key role for language policies. HEIs, which are determined to play an active part in EHEA, should commit to a sustainable language learning process and they need to adopt, implement and promote their own language policy that translates their regional and national goals. Setting up a Higher Education Language Policy (HELP) in a specific country can encounter a variety of difficulties, starting with the attitudes of various actors from HEIs towards the role of languages and ending with the lack of understanding of what a language policy is, how it can be developed, and how it can be implemented in practice.

The research axis of our case study aims to give an overview of the current status of HELP in Romanian HEIs and to identify the common parameters for an integrated model of HELP. Our intention is to question the influence and significance of language policy and language ideology in higher education settings. The main question to be answered in our study concerns the current generalized practice of adopting and implementing a limited number languages in the language learning programs within Romanian HEIs. We also strongly believe that the multiplicity of aspects that HELP covers shows that a language policy is also a matter of governance and reform at institutional level since it implies institutional

(re)organization through the creation of specialized structures and departments, financial costs, strategic decisions and management issues. These aspects will be further analyzed in our paper.

18. Online library

Raffaella Fiorini

Université Paul-Valéry, France

Abstract

This presentation aims at providing a pragmatic perspective on e-learning solutions for the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language. It is based on a project carried out in the year 2013 with second year students attending Liceo Classico Chris Cappell College in Anzio (Roma). It was part of a European project promoted by European Schoolnet (Brussels) and Indire (Florence) on the use of technologies in the classroom to enhance language learning. Students were asked to create booktrailers on the books they had read in class with the objective to create a digital tool which could stimulate students' reading and writing skills. In order to develop students' language and collaborative skills, the project was carried out with the use of blogs where students could exchange materials and ideas. The students' blogs were embedded in the teacher's blog so that their work could be monitored by the teacher throughout the project. All exchanges were in English this way students had the opportunity to use the target language in a more informal environment. Finally, an online library was created as a digital resource where students could store their products.

The presentation will focus on the various steps of the projects by showing students' achievements for each phase.

19. Benefits of gamification in language learning

Benefici della gamification nell'apprendimento della grammatica in lingua straniera

Ivana Fratter

University of Padua, Italy

Abstract

Grammar lessons can be boring but gamification can make grammar and generally learning more fun and engaging, indeed according to the most recent research, students in the language classroom can be motivated by receiving a reward or a prize (Huang, Soman 2013; Sandusky 2014).

In this paper, we want to present a gaming experience with a group of university students in Italian classes. In particular, in the academic year 2016-2017 we used game elements on top of traditional learning environments. In an Italian course of level A1 we regularly used online games with whiteboard in order to review grammatical aspects and some communicative functions. Among the benefits, we noted that the use of the online game through the whiteboard can engage the learner in the communication and discussion. Furthermore especially in the game review phase, the game stimulates the students to collaboration and mutual support.

In this paper, we analyze the results of the experience of "grammar-gamification".

References:

- Huang W H-Y, Soman D. 2013. A Practitioner's Guide To Gamification of Education. University of Toronto. Rotman School of Management.

- Sandusky, S. 2014. Gamification in Education. University of Arizona. UA Campus Open Repository Publications.

20. Social and cognitive collaboration in a MOOC

Christelle Hoppe

University of Nantes, France

Abstract

LMOOCs offer opportunities for participants to develop language competencies and intercultural skills as they “open up” for the study of language use in context. We believe that LMOOCs can be considered as a mediation artifact and a way to increase the rate of exposure to the language by drawing upon an array of specialized and distributed resources. They also provide opportunities for dialogue and asynchronous electronic exchanges resulting in the co-construction of knowledge. To promote the development of language abilities, a variety of tasks have been incorporated into the pedagogical design of an existing experimental French language MOOC. Although on line discussions have certain disadvantages because they do not provide participants with immediate feedback, they can also be used as a pedagogical advantage. LMOOCs’ on line discussions encourage the participants to compose clear, succinct messages to convey meaning by using many written forms of expression, making a record of one’s thinking. Even social context cues such as smiling or nodding may lead to greater participation and contribute to the social network of the learning community. Reading others’ comment, ideas and experiences also exposes participants to multiple perspectives in regards to collaborative learning and scaffolding. As a result, it may help participants to broaden language knowledge. The purpose of this paper is to add to the growing body of research on ways to examining discussion boards in a LMOOC and their potential to promote social interaction and cognitive growth among participants.

21. Database of diminutives and augmentatives as a tool for Russian language learners

Svetlana Klimenko, Anastasia Melnik, Polina Sonina

High school of Economics, Russian Federation

Abstract

The research part of our study is based on classification of lexemes which have diminutive or augmentative (d&a) semantics. The practical part consists of creating an online resource which would contain the results of the research part (its actual version can be found on <http://linghub.ru/adcorpus/>).

The relevance of teaching d&a can be explained by their relative complexity for non-Russian speakers on the one hand and their frequency in Russian language on the other hand (see [Bratus 1969]). While the Slavic and also Romance languages have a rich system of productive d&a morphology, the Germanic languages, such as English or Dutch don’t have it excepted of proper names (see [Dressler, Merlini Barbaresi 1994] for typology of diminutives and intensifiers).

Russian dictionaries may contain some d&a forms, but they can’t reflect the modern Russian language situation exactly so we try to take into account texts from different time periods to allow students study modern Russian Language as well.

Our product makes the process of learning Russian language easier. It contains of three parts: rules of formation of d&a, lexical drills based on these rules and a database compiled from data from Russian National Corpus and provided with the search, where user can enter

diminutive or augmentative form and get lexeme with the specified diminutive or augmentative suffix, meaning and additional comments (e.g. for Russian d'en'ok 'a day to which a speaker gives any judgements' the tool will point out a lexeme d'en' 'a day', diminutive suffix -jok and judgement meaning).

The database is also provided with advanced search, where user can for example enter the lexeme and find all d&a forms this lexeme may have with the specified suffix (es).

To sum up, we hope that this tool will help students to deal with their writing tasks and extend their speech with diminutive and augmentative forms. We are also going to add other languages data into our project soon.

References:

1. Bratus B. V. The Formation and Expressive use of Diminutives, Cambridge, 1969.
2. Dressler Wolfgang U., Merlini Barbaresi L. Morphopragmatics: diminutives and intensifiers in Italian, German, and other languages, New York.1994.

22. Features of standardized instruments in qualitative educational assessment

Lazar Emil

Teacher Training Department, University of Craiova, Romania

Abstract

Among the operations of educational assessment, the decision is based on measurement and appreciation. The discussions about the measurement strategies of educational results, focus on relevant dimensions, how they are being offered by the respondent (separately or globally), and what methods should be used, how situational variables could be controlled so that the measurement should be accurate and confident/ precise.

The hypothesis of this study comes from the interrogation related to the desire of measuring so accurately. A simple, but a fair answer, would be that measurement should ensure data reproducibility, namely the certainty or confidence that what is submissive to the measurement would give the same results whether it would be accomplished by different evaluators, but with the same measuring instrument or at short periods of time.

Therefore, this study is about the features/ properties (values) of qualitative educational assessment and about the methods they provide.

23. XARXAMOOC, the first L-MOOC for students of Xarxa Vives. A model proposal for futures MOOCs for Languages for Specific Purposes.

Natasha Leal-Rivas

Università degli Studi di Napoli "Federico II", Italy

José Rovira-Collado & Robert Escolano-López

Universidad de Alicante, Spain

Abstract

MOOC (Massive Open Online Courses), a term coined in 2008, have meant in less than ten years a new area for developing e-learning activities, as an extension of the Open Course Ware concept and as an area for connectivist learning practices. Among the many possibilities of digital learning, language teaching has benefited from the developments achieved in network that allow us to access content in any language at any time. In this paper, two models of open language learning are presented through two different approaches for action. On the one hand, the XarxaMOOC course: "Introducció al llenguatge d'especialitat en les universitats de llengua catalana" is a project of Xarxa Vives d'Universitats, which is coordinated by the University of Alacant. On the other hand, and

taking the previous model as our reference, we present a proposal for an effective digital itinerary for the creation of L-MOOC's (Linguistic MOOC) for LSP (Languages for Specific Purposes) based on the customisation and adaptation of contents for foreign language learning, thanks to previous experimentation in open access platforms and blended learning mode.

24. Teaching French literature at university. The case of the enlightenment literature. Challenges and results

Diana-Adriana Lefter

University of Pitesti, Romania

Abstract

In our opinion, teaching a foreign language cannot be dissociated from teaching its literature and culture, because each language reflects and evolves together with the mentalities, cultural practices and habits of a population. It means that studying literature can help in acquiring a foreign language, by putting the words in socio-cultural context, by observing the evolution of their meaning, by rendering the connexion between cultural practices/references and ways of speech.

The actual challenge in Romanian universities is teaching literature, especially those epochs of the literary history that seem to be forgotten and/or distant from our student's points of interest. This challenge is even tougher if the subject is French literature, in a context where, Romanian students tend not to consider any longer French language as a valid language for every day communication.

The aim of our paper is to present our teaching experience, experiments and results in teaching the French Enlightenment Literature to Romanian students, at university, by using new technologies and multimedia tools, together with or as complements of traditional texts. The main challenges that we have encountered are, first, the poor knowledge of French language for a large part of our students, making thus difficult the access and the comprehension of original texts; then, the almost lack of information about the Enlightenment epoch; finally the preconceived idea that literature is boring, in no connexion with their actual interests and having no importance in the study of a foreign language.

Our goal has been to have those students study and understand the original texts by using alternative ways of putting them in connexion: on line movies based on books of that period, audio books used together with the printed text, on line courses and/or discussion, on line exercises, etc. We have experienced all those practices, with our students, during the last year and we have observed that the results in increasing their interest for this part of the literature as well as for the French language is increasing compared to the classical approach of the literary text.

25. Chemical language, a language that you need to know if you want to learn Chemistry

M^a Mar López Guerrero

Department of Analytical Chemistry, Faculty of Science, University of Málaga, Spain

Gema López Guerrero

Department of Didactic and School Organization, Faculty of Education, University of Málaga, Spain

Abstract

There is a little bit analogy between chemistry and foreign languages. One reason why people find Chemistry as a language is because of the orthography, the systematic way it is written. In order to learn a second language, one needs to know the new symbols, In chemical language, it is necessary to learn 103 symbols, the chemical alphabet, this is the periodic table. After knowing the alphabet, the students are ready to begin the formation of chemical words. In this case, learning the compounds names are easier when only two elements are involved, but when there are more than two, the chemical language is more complex. As a language, students can build a huge amount of chemical formulas and reactions from finite components. After a few classes of chemistry, the students are ready to attempt intelligent conversation by combining the chemical alphabet words into sentences, the reactions. They can translate between Spanish and Chemistry. Actually, every chemist in every language refer to the same concept using the same word. It is true that in a subject as Chemistry, the language is laden with a specific vocabulary.

As a foreign language, chemistry demand hard work in the form of many hours of repetitions examples and problems, but why not easy the burden by beginning. Chemical education researches have recognized that students often have difficulty learning chemistry concepts, language and so on. Researchers have proposed several suggestions as to the reasons for this difficulty, including frequent overloading of student working memory [1-3]. One of the major goals in teaching chemical language with a contextual approach is that students will develop the ability to understand a make decision about issued they may face in their everyday lives outside of the classroom [4,5]. In this work, we report a study that employed computer simulations.

The proposal of this study is intended to design and implement a teaching strategy for teaching and learning the chemical language, first of all the chemical alphabet, the Periodic Table and then, the language which it is built the chemistry. For this proposal we will use some multimedia application (Information and Communication Technologies (TIC)), which consists in a interactive periodic table. Student will be able to push one element and they will be able to see the properties of this element and which other element will be able to combine with it, and furthermore, if this element will be able to combine with itself. Whenn they know properly the simple language, they will be able to continue studying more complex words, in this case, the reactions. With this multimedia application, the students will be able to watch how the atoms will change, one atom changes to a new atom during a whole reaction. And finally, they will be able to watch how these new atoms have new properties, and they combine each one.

[1] Carlson, R., Chandler, P., Sweller, J., J. Educ. Psych., 95, (2003) p. 629.

[2]. Johnstone, A. H., Chem. Educ. Res. Pract., 7, (2006) pp 49.

[3]. Johnstone, A. H., J. Chem. Educ., 87, (2010) pp 22.

[4] King, D. 2007. Teacher beliefs and constraints in implementing a context-based approach in chemistry. Teaching Science- the Journal of the Australian Science teacher association, 53 (1), 14.

26. English for Academic Purposes: a “strategic” MOOC for the MOVE-ME PROJECT on the FutureLearn Platform. Some considerations after the first “pilot”.

Francesca Magnoni

National University of Ireland, Galway, Ireland

Alessia Plutino

The Open University, United Kingdom

Abstract

The paper will present the English for Academic Purpose Move-Me MOOC part of the Move-Me project, financed by the European Commission under the Erasmus+ programme. The project aims to facilitate the integration of Erasmus and international university students who undertake mobility programmes in Europe and to enhance their ability to function in academic and specialized contexts as well as develop their ability of ‘learning to learn’.

The theoretical approach used as the main pedagogical framework for the Move-Me EAP MOOC will be discussed as well as its implementation. The paper will then move to illustrate the CALLA approach – and more recent research on second language learning strategies – with references to some of the course activities and resources created for the EAP Move-Me MOOC.

A comparison between the different types of MOOCs (in particular xMOOC and cMOOC) will also be offered to highlight the rationale behind the choice of activities design and resources, with a particular focus on the collaborative learning dynamics encouraged by our online course.

The paper will then introduce the FutureLearn platform learning design principles: “Inspire the best learning experiences by telling stories, provoking conversations and celebrating progress’ before moving to present some considerations about the provisional results of the first pilot of the EAP MOOC which took place in June 2017.

27. User strategies in a language teacher training MOOC

Mangenot François

Université Grenoble Alpes, France

Phoungsub Montiya

Chiang Mai University, Thailand

Abstract

xMOOCs can be defined as “classes that are taught online to large numbers of students, with minimal involvement by professors” (The Chronicle of Higher Education, 2012). As a counterpart of this scarcity of human support, these eLearning environments strongly guide users, as well at the chronological level (weekly rhythm, course running over a bounded period of time), as at the assignment / activity level (Hollands & Thirtaly, 2014). In this regard, xMOOCs may seem less flexible than Open Educational Resources or online teacher communities (e.g. edweb.net). Their rigidity is sometimes subject to criticism, while others (e.g. Mangenot, 2017) feel this feature as one of the reasons for their success.

Taking a 6-week language teacher training MOOC (Enseigner et Former Avec le Numérique en Langues, FUN-MOOC.fr, May-June 2017, 3375 enrolled) as a case study, this paper will study the margin of freedom users seem to have, between prescribed and achieved activities. How do language teachers (or future teachers) deal with this kind of environment? In spite of the MOOC rigidity, do they find spaces of freedom and adopt different strategies, according to their expectations?

We will try to answer following questions:

- Does a user typology emerge from examining the participation in the diverse activities (quizzes, forum activities, final task with peer assessment)?
- Forum participation was not mandatory for obtaining the certificate of attendance, but was encouraged by 1 to 3 open tasks / week. What are the motivations for the fairly high participation (180 users posted more than 600 messages)? Are the messages responding to each other? May we consider the MOOC as an emergent community of practice (of language teachers)?
- Lessons for the future: can a MOOC be seen as a good tool for training teachers online? Under which conditions?

The methodology will consist in triangulating different data: quiz completion and grading, forum messages, final task completion rate, post MOOC questionnaire.

[314 words]

References

Hollands, F.M. & Tirthali, D. (2014), MOOCs: Expectations and Reality. Full Report, Center for Benefit-Cost Studies of Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, NY.

Mangenot, F. (2017), Formation en ligne et MOOC : apprendre et se former en langue avec le numérique, Paris, Hachette Collection F.

28. CrimeQuest, a CLIL approach of "Learning on Gaming" to improve Science Education and Language Learning

CrimeQuest, un approccio CLIL del "Learning on Gaming" per potenziare l'apprendimento delle scienze e della lingua straniera

Sabina Maraffi & Immacolata Ercolino

School of Advanced Studies, University of Camerino, Italy

Francesco M. Sacerdoti

e-voluzione srl, Italy

Abstract

This work focuses on Science teaching at high school using the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach. Students need to be educated as science – active citizens to be able to close the skills gap. In fact it is important to combat misconceptions in order to face challenges that daily involve society and request skills and knowledge in science and economy. Teachers need new insights to foster youngsters learning and to enhance digital literacy and competences and update them continuously.

The authors have realised a role playing computer game called CrimeQuest with a specific Role Playing Engine, which involves all students into the adventure through their personal mobiles or tablets, with a complete interaction of the whole class with the game.

The students interact with the system using their own smartphones and tablets with a new technology which collects the individual answers. At the same time the system calculates the overall response according to the criterion of majority voting. The game works without internet and is realised with a specific software engine which interprets a text file as the adventure plot, with text-to- speech multi-language voices.

Learning on gaming through our Computer Class Role Playing Game is a way to realise "authentic learning": it lets students to feel themselves on a Crime Scene, involving them in their own learning. Foreign language becomes a vehicular tool to discover new topics and their specific glossary. It is a CLIL approach, in which the not language subject is not taught in a foreign language, but with and through a foreign language.

29. Language learning on the fringes: Juggling mobile learning, massive open online courses and formal education

Elena Martín-Monje, María Dolores Castrillo & Timothy Read
Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED), Spain

Abstract

The appearance of MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) at the beginning of the decade has critically transformed the provision of formal and non-formal Higher Education. Despite some initial scepticism and unfavourable comments (e.g. Jackson, 2013), MOOCs have experienced a staggering growth in the past few years. Their success in numbers, in terms of registered users and courses on offer is indisputable, and academics have timidly started to experiment with the integration of these new educational models into formal education syllabi (see for example, Carvalho Neto, 2017 or Pérez-Sanagustín et al. 2017). Other innovative trends such as mobile learning have also been put forward, in parallel with technological advances that attempt to democratise Education making it accessible for (almost) everyone, everywhere (Kukulska-Hulme, 2016). These initiatives are leading towards the emergence of hybrid educational proposals that combine both formal and informal education and try out the potential enabled by mobile devices.

In line with these developments, The Innovative Didactic Group for Languages in Open and Blended Environments (GLOBE) at the Spanish Distance Learning University UNED has implemented the Language MOOC (LMOOC) “Professional English” as part of the undergraduate degree course “English for Professional Purposes”. Also, as an optional activity within the LMOOC, students have been given the possibility of downloading the free mobile app “ANT” (Audio News Trainer) for Android devices, to enhance their listening skills in English as a foreign language.

This paper focuses on this integration of formal and informal language learning: the formal element is provided by the degree course “English for Professional Purposes” (a compulsory subject for students in their first year of the Tourism degree at UNED, with 6 ECTS [European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System] credits), and the informal learning provided by the LMOOC “Professional English” (25 hours of estimated work, 1 ECTS) and the mobile app ANT. Results reflect positive reception of such a hybrid form of learning, but it seems early days to draw any conclusion about a mainstream integration, since only 4% of the university students completed the LMOOC successfully and even less (1%) used the app.

References

- Carvalho Neto, S. (2017) Combining Distance and Traditional Learning: A Study of the Use of Virtual Learning Environment Objects and Massive Online Open Courses in Statistics Class. *International Journal of Information and Education Technology*, 7(1), 1-5. doi: 10.18178/ijiet.2017.7.1.831
- Jackson, N.B. (2013) On MOOCs and some possible futures for higher education <https://noelbjackson.wordpress.com/2013/06/01/on-moocs-and-some-possible-futures-for-higher-ed/> (last accessed 2 June 2017).
- Kukulska-Hulme, A. (2016). *Personalization of language learning through mobile technologies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pérez-Sanagustín, M. et al. (2017). H-MOOC framework: reusing MOOCs for hybrid education. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education*, 29(1), 47–64. doi:10.1007/s12528-017-9133-529: 47.

30. The educational challenge of MOOCs

La sfida educativa dei MOOC

Laura Menichetti

Università degli Studi di Firenze Italy

Abstract

The benefits of MOOCs are evident if we consider the academic programs according to a strategic- organizational perspective. Due to the technological improvements in network architectures and to new business models, the different e-learning types identified by the term MOOC have the ability to reach learners in mobility or in nomadic situations, they guarantee inclusiveness within economically and geographically disadvantaged contexts, and are appropriate in lifelong learning.

Are the MOOCs, however, equally valid also from the educational perspective that Higher Education Institutions have to take care of? Do they ensure effectiveness for students, sustainability for teachers, and quality of created resources? Or do they surrogate the on-campus courses and find their main/unique strength in managing time and geographical distance?

This contribution describes an experimental research lasting for three years with students who are going to become professional trainers or teachers at school. The adopted strategy is based on workshops: students, within a Learning Management System, build new knowledge (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 2014) in the form of open educational resources.

The path involves the use of high Effect Size teaching strategies (according to Evidence Based Education). The classroom improvement is obtained with a sequence of experiential learning cycles (Kolb, 1984) that students perform by working in small groups and at a class level, driven by a shared evaluation rubric.

E-learning amplifies co-operation; with peers' and teachers' feedback the students have the possibility of reflecting on their own work and colleagues' work, which become an input to self-evaluation and restructuring (peer tutoring ES = 0.5, feedback ES = 0.7, Hattie, 2009). Since a few years the "massive" term of the MOOC acronym has been related not only to the high number of participants but also to the amount of knowledge exchanged and to a new participatory paradigm (Stewart, 2013).

The model shown here generates an open educational practice in which the concept of "openness" has to be intended in the epistemological sense, as restructuring of one's knowledge, sometimes offering the possibility of going beyond the teacher's knowledge and the opportunities offered by on-campus teaching.

31. Assessing and recovering students' initial preparation at university through online testing and MOOCs

Marco Mezzadri*

Università di Parma, Italy

Flora Sisti

Università Carlo Bo di Urbino, Italy

Simone Torsani

Università di Genova, Italy

Giovanna Carloni

Università Carlo Bo di Urbino, Italy

Abstract

Italian universities are required to assess their first year student's initial preparation in all the courses which do not have admission tests.

This was made compulsory by law in 2004 and since then there has been a variety of interpretations on how to assess students' initial preparation and how to follow up with remedial work aimed to fulfill the requirements set by each course of study.

A group of researchers in language teaching methodology from three Italian universities (Genova, Parma and Urbino) is conducting a study intended to create a cross-curricular assessment programme for language competences and communication skills, in particular reading and listening comprehension addressed to first year students.

The framework adopted is based on language education principles and aims to highlight the strategic and cross-curricular role of students' language competences and communication skills when entering university.

The study can rely on the researchers' decade-long experience in the fields of teaching, learning and assessing of Italian for academic purposes, CLIL methodology, and teaching and learning through ICT.

In the academic year 2016-17, a piloting version of a test was created, which first year students from different courses in Parma and Urbino were required to take either online or on paper, after practicing the test format through an online mock test.

The project also includes a MOOC which is now being created and whose format will be presented at the conference.

The aims are to let students whose language competence level and communication skills are not sufficient after the test do specific remedial work online.

The MOOC can be the basis for self-access work or provide a framework and learning material for blended courses.

During the presentation, some results of the 2016-17 piloting edition of the test will be illustrated.

32.Voice Recognition Technology and EFL Students: A Virtual Environment Experiment

Anna Mongibello and Jacqueline Aiello
University of Naples "L'Orientale", Italy

Abstract

Voice recognition (or speech recognition) technologies are being increasingly used as language learning tools to provide learners with opportunities to practice their target language autonomously. This paper reports on a pilot project on a virtual environment that included voice recognition software targeting English pronunciation on the eLearning platform Moodle. The project, designed for 150 third year undergraduate students at the University of Naples "L'Orientale" who were pursuing an English major, was funded by the Italian Ministry of Education, University, and Research (MIUR) as part of the blended learning project for non-online universities. The project aimed to provide students with an opportunity to improve their oral English communication skills in a low-anxiety, virtual environment in which they could practice English and receive automatic and prompt feedback. The goals of this paper are twofold: to explore the challenges that the participating language learners faced, particularly with respect to English pronunciation, and to delve into the effectiveness of this pilot project. To this end, this paper draws on data collected by the speech recognition software, which provided syllable- and phoneme-level feedback to students' recorded audio samples. Moreover, it draws on data gathered in pre- and post-program questionnaires to examine the impact of participation in the online project on foreign language anxiety and self-perceived pronunciation proficiency, and to unveil participants' opinions and experiences in the virtual environment. Our findings indicate an increase in students' self-assessments of pronunciation skills and positive attitudes towards the project. Our experience implementing the project and our findings shed light on the great potential

of speech recognition software to support the oral language development of English as a foreign language students at university, particularly in learning environments characterized by large class sizes.

33. Informal online peer collaborations in language learning and practice

Telecollaborazioni informali tra pari per l'apprendimento e la pratica delle lingue

Anna Motzo

The Open University United Kingdom

Abstract

In this paper the author will share initial findings of a study on the nature of naturally formed informal online peer collaborations to practise or learn languages.

The study explores what users of italki, an online language-learning dedicated site, do while on this site; in particular, how they work together to practise languages and nurture their individual learning. It has also generated insights into the ways by which these self-directed adult learners plan and construct their own learning experience beyond the site itself within their own personalized online learning environment. Finally, the roles played by these multi-faceted learners will be discussed.

The study is a qualitative inquiry and it relies on netnography (Kozinets et al., 2014), an online ethnographic approach, which combines semi-structured in depth online interviews with observations as well as the researcher's participation to explore the nature of these informal online collaborative practices. Data were collected over a period of six months and analysed using thematic analysis techniques to identify patterns across the dataset in relation to the research questions (Braun and Clarke, 2014).

This study might feed into reflections on curriculum development in second language teaching and the challenge of motivation for language learning in the UK.

34. How to develop listening abilities with Minuti Contati. An experimental study with international mobility students in Turin

Sviluppare le abilità di comprensione del parlato con Minuti Contati. Uno studio sperimentale relativo agli studenti in mobilità internazionale a Torino

Paolo Nitti & Micaela Grosso

Università degli Studi dell'Insubria, Centro Interculturale di Torino, Italy

Abstract

Oral input represents the first encounter a child has with his/her own mother tongue, but often, it is also the first contact which a student may have with a second language.

Listening, in this sense, constitutes the first linguistic ability and the essential presupposition for language learning.

In an ISL (Italian as Second Language) context, the input to which the learner is exposed plays a decisive role. However the possibility of access to the sounds of the target language is often precluded, because of the exposure to different educational approaches, lack of time and other factors.

The Minuti Contati project originates from the evidence of the scarce availability of materials specifically aimed at listening, and, on the other hand, the need for a compendium created for the development of oral comprehension.

The project deals with two minute dialogues, and can be accessed on any device, smartphone or tablet, with Internet connection and, if necessary, using earphones.

Minuti Contati has been conceived for use as complementary material to authentic textual materials, produced by the ISL class teacher for adults and students in international mobility, as well as for self-learning.

The aim is to focus on the lexical structures and the words useful to facilitate learning in the various lexical fields. The path is structured in units, each related to a lexical field dealing with a specific communicative context.

These materials have been used for the courses of ISL and of ILSP (Italian Language for Specific Purposes), patronized by the Università degli Studi di Torino, addressed to adults and university students in international mobility, and held at the Centro Interculturale di Torino, in the years 2015-2017.

The project was nominated for the award "Un Libro per L'italiano", Università Ca' Foscari Venezia. Targeting adults and young people of A2-B1 levels, Minuti Contati aspires to respond to the immediate needs of generations - not just the new ones - who are perpetually connected. The expression "micro-moments", borrowed from the digital marketing lexicon, is ideal for the purpose of defining the concrete user-learning needs, and accurately conveys the underlying concept of the fruition of digital materials.

35.INTERMOVE: Combining Intercomprehension of language and Intercultural training to improve the quality of International mobility

INTERMOVE – Intercomprensione e Interculturalità

Davide Orlandini

IFOA (Italy);

Elisabeth Silva

Cap Ulysse (France)

Filomena Capucho

Universidade Catolica Portuguesa (Portugal)

Kristin Brogan;

ITT Tralee (Ireland)

Juan Guerrero

INCOMA (Spain)

Abstract

Learning mobility, is one of the fundamental ways through which individuals, particularly young people, can strengthen their future employability as well as their personal development (European Commission, EC, 2009). INTERMOVE (www.inter-move.eu) is a project funded by the EC that takes center stage of this point, helping participants to easily meet their objectives of increasing employability, completion of their studies and/or knowledge of different cultures, by tackling two of the main barriers related to International Mobility such as cross-cultural differences and communication with foreign people. The main innovation of INTERMOVE lies in combining the intercultural training with the use of language intercomprehension tools to prepare participants on mobility projects.

Intercomprehension is a form of communicating in which a person uses his/her own language to understand the language used by the other person(s). The concept is linked to interculture (interaction between one or more cultures) by respecting diversity, empathy and non-oral communication skills: understand a language, understand a culture. This approach gives special importance to the comprehension (reading, listening) rather than the production (writing, speaking).

INTERMOVE seeks the intercomprehension of Latin Languages (French, Portuguese, Italian and Spanish) and English, contributing to the social cohesion in all European Union. The INTERMOVE training is performed by blending the intercultural preparation and the use of language intercomprehension together.

INTERMOVE aims to favour International Mobility for Training and Education purposes by creating an open and collaborative pathway addressed to mentors dealing with the pre-departure and upon-arrival preparation of trainees and students, providing them with resources for b-learning, e-learning and face to face training sessions.

To know more about INTERMOVE: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fb37jTyPNfE>

36. Informal peer feedback in an Italian language MOOC: the Open University's Italian for Beginners programme.

Anna Proudfoot

The Open University, United Kingdom

Abstract

This paper is based on observations from the programme of six Italian for Beginners' courses delivered by the Open University on the FutureLearn platform. It aims to evaluate the role of informal peer feedback in the participants' learning experience.

In a distance learning context, achieving sufficient speaking and writing practice can be a challenge for language learners. This challenge becomes even more acute in a massive open online course (MOOC), where no formal tutorial support is available. Instead feedback is given by educators and fellow learners on the discussion forums which follow most activities. Through the discussions, the online community becomes an informal learning network, offering support and peer feedback. In this context, participation in the learning community becomes a fundamental part of the learning process.

The FutureLearn discussion forums are of two main types: firstly, those which invite reflections on cultural content and comparisons with the student's home culture and are mainly written in English; secondly, those which encourage learners to consolidate language points by producing a piece of written Italian which they then post in the discussion area. Learners can also post spoken contributions, using any available recording tool, saving the audio file and posting it to the Discussion page. Learners benefit from receiving feedback from fellow participants including - but not limited to - native speakers of Italian. In this presentation, we show some examples of peer feedback and also look at learners' perceptions of its usefulness.

37. Spanish in a day NANOMOOC, a social media practice fostering social inclusion, mobility and multilingualism

Antonio Ramos & Beatriz Sedano

Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED), Spain

Abstract

Spanish in a day NanoMOOC is a 10-hour-long MOOC intended for Spanish language students who participated in the 2nd edition of Spanish in a day (SID), an online video contest for Spanish students worldwide, held from 17th March to 15th June 2017 (www.spanishinaday.com).

In the 1st edition of SID (2016), participants showed an inconsistent degree of compliance with the contest rules, particularly in terms of the communicative content and the production strategies. In an attempt to provide students with a more harmonized pedagogical preparation to produce their videos for the 2nd edition, we designed a NanoMOOC to meet their needs both as SID contestants and as prosumers in social media interactions.

The instructional design of SID NanoMOOC was structured in 7 modules divided into 2-3 topics: introduction (1), development of linguistic and communicative competencies (2), oral interaction and expression strategies (3), creativity and originality (4), intercultural and collaborative strategies (5 & 6), and a final assessment task (7).

The course content was based on video samples taken from SID 1st ed., on infographics and activities developed with LearnDash and PlayPosit. In order to better monitor the students' performance, we combined a self-paced course modality with the support of an online tutor. The course completion rates of SID NanoMOOC (42%) proved to be well above the average of other MOOC's. Furthermore, we succeeded in engaging not only participants in the contest, but also teachers who wanted to prepare their own students. It is worth mentioning that most of the SID 2nd ed. finalists took the course, especially so refugees living in Spain.

These are the results of SID 2nd edition: 150 participants from 30 countries, 50 of which will avail of a language scholarship in Spanish universities. On the one hand, our project certainly fostered mobility of students coming from overseas. On the other hand, it also enabled mobility of refugees traveling within the European borders to avail of their prizes, while others gained more visibility through their video testimonials. And last but not least, the 16 video finalists posted on Facebook boosted social media interaction (over 70,000 interactions in 30 languages).

38. E-learning in Italian L2 teaching: presentation of the "Italiano in un click!" project

Marialuisa Sepe

University of Basilicata, Italy

Abstract

The University of Basilicata has shown great interest in the dissemination of Italian language and culture in the world on several occasions, promoting the launch of important initiatives that have had a tremendous resonance on a global scale, as well as receiving numerous requests for collaboration from the countries involved in such cultural initiatives. The purpose of this paper is to illustrate the results obtained from the realization of a project carried out at the University of Basilicata, which dealt with the theme of multimedia supporting Italian L2 teaching.

This research activity was carried out thanks to an agreement signed between the Department of Scienze Umane and ICAM Srl Company located in Potenza. Specifically, Professor Patrizia Del Puente was the Scientific Director of the project "Italiano in un click!" and the writer was involved in the project as a researcher and responsible for the agreement between ICAM Srl and the Department of Scienze Umane. The results focused on the methodological area regarding the teaching of the Italian language to foreigners in e-learning mode.

The research focused on the specific experience and results achieved in the classroom during the teaching activities of Italian L2, conducted by Doctor Marialuisa Sepe and the teaching team, coordinated by Professor Patrizia Del Puente. The teaching activity, above all, has privileged a communicative approach that aims at actively engaging the learner. Frontal lessons were held alongside a number of laboratory activities with the purpose of developing learners' specific skills. Starting from the awareness that language teaching, especially Italian L2, is in continuous contact with the problems raised by new multicultural and multilingual societies, we have tried to put together the above mentioned results with an efficient glottodidactic technology to meet the needs in the teaching area.

39. Spanish language and culture MOOC: learning through world tales

Ana Sevilla-Pavón

Universitat de València, Spain

Abstract

IDEAS: Importance of languages learning (with cultural learning) and intercultural communication as a 21st century skills

TALIS project and core values: Education for Sustainable Development, Declaration of the Rights of the Child

This presentation revolves around the design process of a MOOC of Spanish Language and Culture through Tales around the World. It stems from the TALIS project, which aims at fostering language learning through the use of Intercultural Literature as a communication tool to promote solidarity and mutual understanding. The course proposes an innovative way to learn Spanish through a Content and Language Integrated Language Learning methodology, which is enriched by the contributions of Education for Sustainable Development, Literary Education and Intercultural Communication. The linguistic varieties and cultural aspects of the Spanish-speaking world dealt with are approached through their tales which in turn are the result of writing workshops previously carried out in Latin America and Spain.

The departure points for the design are, on the one hand, the Article 17 of the UNICEF's Convention on The Rights Of The Child, which establishes that producing and disseminating high-quality learning materials for intercultural learning a diversity should be a priority; and, on the other hand, the UN's Global Sustainable Development Goals, which include the eradication of poverty, the achievement of universal education and the promotion of gender equality, among others. With these ideas in mind, the TALIS team set out to design the course in different steps: 1) Holding creative writing workshops in different locations worldwide 2) Selecting and producing the tales, videos and additional teaching and assessment materials to be included in the course 3) Distributing the course contents along 6 modules (plus an additional introductory module) which correspond to 6 different countries: Peru, Spain, Chile, Venezuela, Argentina and Mexico 4) Piloting and assessing the materials prior to launching the course. This MOOC is the result of a collective effort through which both the developers and their institution are trying to find new ways of fostering meaningful learning through the use of Internet-based tools. In our current context of globalisation and migratory movements across the globe, it is hoped that this course will contribute towards enhancing intercultural awareness thanks to the use of Intercultural Literature as a communication tool among cultures, encouraging participants to take steps towards solidarity and mutual understanding.

40. Diversity of learning resources and their impact on the learner experience: design and evaluation of a Czech language MOOC

Ivan Šmilauer & Patrice Pognan

PLIDAM, Inalco, France

Magdalena Vigent

Inalco, France

Abstract

Mobility within the EU also naturally concerns those countries whose languages fall into the category of less widely used and/or less taught. In a context where there is an objectively existing demand but for various reasons, more classic types of instruction are difficult to access, MOOCs have a great potential to provide an efficient entry point into such languages and afferent cultures. This is actually the situation of Czech; a Slavic language, used by

eleven million speakers, which benefits a growing but still relatively modest offer in e-learning. In our paper, we suggest an insight into the design and evaluation of a MOOC proposing an introduction to Czech that was developed at Inalco (Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales) in Paris and published with success during the spring of 2017 on the platform France Université Numérique; collecting almost 3000 inscriptions. First, several groups of learners will be distinguished in order to show the wide variety of their profiles and motivations. Then we will present the learning resources organized in a progressive pedagogic scenario and discuss their reception by the students. We will especially focus on four different types of instructional videos: (1) sketches with short dialogues, (2) animated screencasts with basic grammar and culture presentation, (3) videos with self-evaluated activities for oral production and comprehension and (4) complementary linguistic and cultural seminars replacing the content of the basic course in a wider Czech and Slavic context. We would like to argue for the pertinence of such an organization on the background of needs arising principally from two sources. On the one hand, the use of a large spectrum of pedagogical means, ranging from practical communicative approach to the explanation of the broader linguistic system, is truly required by the intrinsic complexity of Czech as foreign language. On the other hand, the diversity of approaches is justified by the effective heterogeneity of the audience and our desire to satisfy as many learners as possible.

41. ICT as the ‘miracle med’ for Civic Integration in the Netherlands: an ethnographic insight

Massimiliano Spotti

Babylon - Centre for the Study of Superdiversity, Tilburg University, The Netherlands

Abstract

Policy provision for integration has taken a severe twist of hand from 2007 onwards. In that year, the Civic Integration policy of the Dutch government has moved from a foreigner-friendly policy, which supported migrants in building a new life in the Netherlands, to a more restrictive gate-keeping measure. This, in fact, required (non-western) migrants to pass Dutch language exams and build knowledge of Dutch society even before getting access to the Netherlands, and once entered to acquire Dutch further for permanent residence and citizenship. This rigid policing is very telling. It illustrates that, as in other European countries, proficiency in the national language has become a cornerstone of national integration policy elected as a symbol of loyalty from the guest toward the host country. According to the latest amendments to language-related legislation, in order to access the Netherlands, applicants not only must have acquired some spoken Dutch and knowledge of Dutch society, but also some reading ability in Dutch. It is clear therefore that for either unschooled or low-educated migrants, this measure means that proving their linguistic competence depends on literacy skills, literacy skills that they neither have nor can easily learn. In this contribution, taken from a project financed by the EU Joint Research Centre IPTS, we explore how the ICT sector has responded to this demand and has moved to construct learning supports that should have readily helped newly arrived migrants in their move along a continuum that goes from being a foreigner to becoming an integrated, self-supported citizen. In so doing, we highlight the drives and barriers that ICT applications have encountered in integration classes critically reflecting upon the importance that computers, mobile phones, connectivity and e-literacy has been given in the integration classroom.

42. Evaluation software in assessment of L2 academic writing

Svetlana Strinyuk & Viacheslav Lanin

National Research University Higher School of Economics, Russian Federation

Abstract

Tertiary education oriented on the English language places L2 students between Scilla and Charibdis of high assessment standards and the lack of writing practice in Academic English. The task of giving students a tool to learn English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and providing their teachers with a tool to assess students' papers efficiently made a group of researchers from Higher School of Economics (HSE) develop an application which fulfils twofold task: it analyses subject-determined written academic discourse of competent writers against a set of formalized criteria (academic style markers) and compares the results with those of research papers written by students.

We assume that evaluating students' written papers in terms of style can be automated by using a special software tagging style markers in the text. Evaluation of statistical bounds of style markers occurrence requires implementing methods and tools of corpus linguistic. To annotate texts GATE Developer [1] software is used, which provides a wide range of capabilities for text processing

Implementing Evaluation Software and a corpus-based approach to teaching EAP gave evidence to the level of confidence students demonstrated completing their writing assessment tasks. Statistics show that some aspects of EAP need more serious training (excessive use of logic connectors and verbs of broad semantics), while frequency of some patterns is close to the level demonstrated by competent L1 writers: use of nouns, postpositional and prepositional attributes; percentage of words with abstract suffixes, etc.). Accordingly, the results of this pilot research in "data driven learning" (Johns, 1984) gave basis for further improvements of the Evaluation Software and facilitated methodology development for learning through a corpus-based approach.

The results of the research can be used in academic writing analysis to identify most significant features of domain academic discourse and will allow to evaluate the quality of papers written by students against a number of standardized formal criteria.

43. "Linguistics, procedure and technique" as a method for CALL education in a blended CLIL training course.

"Linguistica, procedura e tecnica" come metodo per la preparazione alle tecnologie in un corso blended sul CLIL

Simone Torsani

Università di Genova, Dipartimento di Lingue e Culture Moderne, Italy

Abstract

Although the importance of technologies for language education seems nowadays to be quite a commonplace in both educational research and practice, CALL training is often perceived to be ineffective because it "does not prepare teachers to successfully integrate CALL into their teaching practices" (Arnold & Ducate, 2015:2). The key notion, here, is integration, which means that technologies constitute a contributing element in everyday language teaching: it is not surprising, therefore, that technology integration is considered by many to be the final goal of CALL education (Hong, 2010).

The presentation will report on a stage of a long-term research project aiming to define an optimal environment for CALL education in which training for technology is integrated with training for language teaching (Hubbard, 2008). Specifically, a blended CLIL training course will be presented in which trainee teachers have learned how to use production tools for the design of real language learning activities.

The instructional method adopted for this course was based on a framework specifically designed for CALL training (Torsani, 2015) which distinguishes different areas: a procedural one (i.e. knowing how to operate a given technology), a linguistic one (i.e. knowing what linguistic goals can be and/or have been achieved through a specific technology) and a technical one (i.e. knowing how to use a technology to achieve a specific goal). Consistent with this framework, instruction in technology consisted of three parts, each corresponding to an area of the framework. For instance, visual elements play an important role in CLIL activities (Bentley, 2010); in the course instruction on this subject consisted in: a) learning the basics of vectorial drawing through simple and short tutorials; b) learning the role of visual elements within CLIL instruction and finally c) designing real CLIL activities supported by visual elements.

The presentation will show how, through the adoption of such method, teachers have managed to integrate technology and language education. Samples of works produced by some trainee teachers will be illustrated in which technology plays a major role in the design of effective and pedagogically consistent CLIL activities.

44. Informal Learning of English and Dutch: The Perceptions of Higher Education Students in Brussels

Apprendimento informale dell'inglese e dell'olandese: percezioni degli studenti a Bruxelles

Anne Van Marsenille

Institut des Hautes Etudes des Communications Sociales, Belgium

Abstract

This presentation is based on a study on the informal learning of English and Dutch perceived by Higher Education students in Brussels. The informal learning of English was investigated for a Doctorate in Education. The informal learning of Dutch was studied and compared to the informal learning of English until 2017. The aim was to consider how students use informal learning activities to improve their language knowledge.

At the same time, their motivation is examined and compared. The outcomes of this study highlight the importance of raising students' awareness of their informal learning and of raising teachers' awareness of what students do to enhance their language learning informally. Teachers may then encourage informal learning by suggesting appropriate materials and methods.

The learning of both English and Dutch is important in Belgium but the situation of each language is very different. English is learnt as an international language, whereas Dutch is learnt as a national language. There is much more material available for learning English as it is broadly studied all over the world, but there are more opportunities to find people speaking Dutch as their native language in Brussels. Therefore, resources, informal learning opportunities and motivation are different for English and for Dutch.

In this presentation, mobile learning will be considered as an important tool to learn English and Dutch. More resources are available for English but it is possible to find material, such as online newspapers or radio and television, for Dutch as well.

Different activities and material for learning English and Dutch informally, as they are perceived by Higher Education students are analysed in the presentation. It could be useful for language students as well as language teachers.

45. ESP Teaching and Learning in the Modern Digital World

Dana Carmen Zechia & Alina Balagiu

'Mircea cel Batran' Naval Academy, Romania

Abstract

For a long period of time, ESP teaching process has been only dealing with teaching specialized and professional terminology and understanding texts whereas nowadays the digital age has transformed the resources and the sources of information into an accessible tool opening new perspectives. However, today's globalized professional environment asks for its members to also master important communicative skills that strengthen their specialist knowledge if they are to fulfill their tasks productively and secure their way to success. In spite of the probable need for competent communication proficiency, there seems to be deficient available research producing an exact understanding of the methods of teaching professional communication to college students as part of the ESP curriculum. The paper takes into consideration the essential skills supporting rewarding professional communication and tries to discuss a functional combined professional communication example to be used in academic environment, highlighting the use of English in an engineering setting.

46. Learner engagement with automated writing evaluation (AWE) feedback on academic writing

Zhe (Victor) Zhang

The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong SAR, China

Abstract

The construct of learner engagement with automated writing evaluation (AWE) feedback on academic writing is an under-researched area in second language (L2) writing literature. It is worth noting that AWE feedback does not automatically lead to improvement in L2 learner writing unless learners actively engage with it to unlock its learning potentials. This study looks at two Chinese students' engagement with AWE feedback on their English writing over a 16-week semester in a Chinese university. Differing from previous research that examined AWE programs originally designed for native speakers of English, an AWE system tailor-made for Chinese EFL students was investigated in this study. The construct of learner engagement was conceptualized in three interrelated dimensions: behavioural, affective, and cognitive in this study. Drawing on the students' writing assignments, AWE feedback, and students' interviews, this study shows that the two students had different perceptions of the role and value of AWE feedback on their writing, which might be attributed to a multitude of individual and contextual factors. It was found that the two students demonstrated affective, behavioural and cognitive engagement with AWE feedback on their writing, and the extent to which they benefited from AWE feedback depended on how they effectively engaged with it.