

The Potential of Language MOOCs for the Social Inclusion of Displaced People

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Opportunities and threats



Introduction (1): The Project

Massive Open Online courses eNhancing Linguistic and Transversal skills for social inclusion and Employability (MOONLITE)

- Erasmus + Project
- Reference: N° 2016II-2KA203
- October 2016- September 2019



Introduction (2): Project Partners

- ESCP (Germany)
- KIC (Malta)
- LNU (Sweden)
- UW (UK)
- EADTU (Netherlands)
- UNED (Spain)
- WEB2LEARN (Greece)



Introduction (2) MOONLITE Goals

- Identify opportunities/barriers for **recognizing** MOOC-based learning.
- Demonstrate institutional triple bottom line (**financial, environmental & social**).
- Exemplify **scenarios** in partner HEIs.
- Create (**cross-**)**institutional scenarios** to exploit MOOCs for credit-bearing HEI courses & future employability.
- Boost the use of **MOOCs** to:
 - Widen and improve the HEIs teaching for registered students.
 - Create new educational pathways for refugees and migrants.
 - Build entrepreneurial and language skills among those 2 groups.
- Study **cost & benefits** for exploiting informal online courses (focus MOOCs).
- Run an open online course targeting MOOC providers and RSGs on **how to design and utilize MOOCs**.
- Create a vision & recommendations for a more **viable and strategic role** of MOOCs in European HEIs.

➤ More info: <https://moonliteproject.eu>

Language skills and social inclusion

- Difficulty to acquire relevant language skills to achieve social inclusion:
 - OECD/UNHCR, N°10, *Migration Policy Debates* (September 2016)
 - <https://www.oecd.org/els/mig/migration-policy-debates-10.pdf>
 - British Council, *Language for Resilience: The role of language in enhancing the resilience of Syrian refugees and host communities* (2017)
 - <https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/language-for-resilience-report-en.pdf>
 - European Parliament, *Labor Market Integration of Refugees: Strategies and good practices* (2016)
 - [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2016/578956/IPOL_STU\(2016\)578956_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2016/578956/IPOL_STU(2016)578956_EN.pdf)

Refugees and online education

- “It is important for institutions to examine whether online programmes to date have adequately catered for the special needs of refugees” (Times Higher Education, “Online higher education ‘unappealing’ for Syrian refugees” May 24, 2017)
 - <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/online-higher-education-unappealing-syrian-refugees>

Supporting data: Questionnaires (1)

- Informants: **15 NGOs** and refugee support associations in Spain who work to help, educate, and legally advise these people.
- Profile: Syria and Africa. Male and female. 21-40. Languages: Arabic and French. Heterogeneous professional and academic profile. **Unemployed** and with an irregular situation.
- Needs and priorities: safety, stability, health care, **learn the language, legal and employment questions**, regulation of their situation, etc.
- Technological profile: **smartphones**, not reliable connection, **social networks and apps**, sometimes lack of digital literacy.
- Educational needs: practically oriented courses **on integration, professional development and languages (Spanish and English)**. Consideration of **cultural** differences (gender, religious).
- Offer education in Spain for refugees and migrants: **not enough** and **not easy to access** it.

Supporting data: Questionnaires (2)

- Online MOOCs & Training: good option for improving **employability** and **academic access** for migrants and refugees.
 - Challenges: **motivation** and psychological problems, **lack of recognition, technological factors**.
 - Opportunities: **hope, social inclusion** and **recognition**.

Language MOOCs based on **adaptability** criteria
with **tutoring** support and **official recognition**

➤ **Collaboration** between HEIs and NGOs.

Training scenarios

- A large amount of immigrants and refugees use smartphones
 - Yet with limited internet access or band breadth
- The great majority use social networks, but
 - Large amount of digitally illiterate
 - Frequent problems to get connected to the Internet
- NGO informants tend to consider that migrants and refugees would benefit from access to training via digital media
 - Yet not as a single option

Training scenarios: social networks

- MOOCS have made use of social networks
 - E.g. Facebook (Bravo Reyes, 2015)
- Whatsapp is more widely used by migrants and refugees in Spain, but
 - Telegram is faster and uses less data
- Currently under study
 - Telegram channel with links to a LMOOC platform

Bravo Reyes, Carlos (2015) Development of MOOC on Facebook. *Revista de Innovación Educativa* 7.1.
<http://www.udgvirtual.udg.mx/apertura/index.php/apertura/article/view/513/415>

Our focus

- *Relations between agents involved in:*
 - *Internationalisation*
 - *international NGOs, HEIs, local/ regional/ national education offices*
 - *Student mobility and their open educational needs within and across the European educational context.*

What we seek

- *The analysis is undertaken in terms of:*
 - *effective ways of developing relevant target language competences leading to social insertion and employability* ⇨ *such competences must lead to the 4 C's: critical capacity, creativity, communication and collaboration*
 - *a reliable and sustainable online assessment procedure and certification* ⇨ *crucial for social prestige and official recognition*

What we seek

- *Always keeping in mind that:*
 - *What current language learning theory identifies as “best practices” ([Brandt, 2011](#)) may not necessarily coincide with the priorities and realities of displaced people and what they are prepared to do in their everyday lives*

Brandt, Willy (2011) Report on Language Management Strategies and Best Practice in European SMEs: The PIMLICO Project. http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/languages/policy/strategic-framework/documents/pimlico-full-report_en.pdf

Priorities and Needs

Priorities and Needs:

1. Learn the local language (**Spanish, English, French...**)
2. Customized courses for **professional training**
3. Homologate their **diplomas** from their countries of origin
4. Find a **job**
5. **Integrate** into society

Next actions

- 2nd meeting with NGOs (*II jornada de educación inclusiva*)
 - To present the results of the initial questionnaires and form work groups to work on the MOOCS
- Webinar *Language Learning apps & MOOCs for refugees* (25 October 2017)
 - Do resources such as communication networks, online tools and free language learning apps represent an effective learning approach for refugees given their changing geographical, sociocultural and technological circumstances?

Thanks! Danke! ¡Gracias! شكرا

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