



**Center for Open Educational Resources  
and Language Learning**

# The Power of Openness: Improving Language Instruction With Open Educational Resources (OER)

Carl S. Blyth  
University of Texas at Austin

*Interagency Language Roundtable  
April 19, 2013*



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# Coral



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# Curl



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# Corelle



Corelle\_Snowflake Garland Cream & Sugar with Salt & Paper (1974) by catface3  
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# Corral



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# About COERLL

- Newest of the 15 National Foreign Language Resource Centers (2010 – 2014), grant from US Department of Education
- Located at The University of Texas at Austin
- Only US DOE Title VI Center (NRCs & LRCs) focused on Open Education and Open Educational Resources (OER)





# Mission

**LRC Mission:** to improve the teaching and learning of foreign languages by producing resources (materials and best practices) that can be profitably employed in K-12 and higher education settings.

**COERLL's Mission:** to produce and disseminate **Open Educational Resources (OERs)** (e.g., online language courses, reference grammars, assessment tools, corpora, etc.).





# Defining Open Education

“A collective term that refers to forms of education in which knowledge, ideas or important aspects of teaching methodology or infrastructure are shared freely over the Internet.”

(Wikipedia)





# Open Education Movement

“The open education (OE) movement is based on a set of intuitions shared by a remarkably wide range of academics: that knowledge should be free and open to use and re-use; that collaboration should be easier, not harder; that people should receive credit and kudos for contributing to education and research; and that concepts and ideas are linked in unusual and surprising ways and not the simple linear forms that today’s textbook present.”

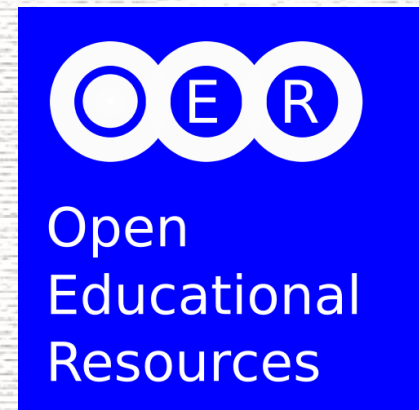
(Baraniuk 2007: 229)





# What we mean by OER

Coined in 2002 during a UNESCO meeting, the term OER refers to any educational material offered **freely for anyone to use**, typically involving some **permission to re-mix, improve, and redistribute.**





# Types of OER

- **Open Textbooks** (e.g., digital / print-on-demand)
- **Open Courseware** (e.g., Power point slides, audio/video lectures, syllabi)
- **Classroom Activities, Lesson Plans, Quizzes**
- **Homework and Practice Exercises**
- **Authentic L2 Content** (e.g., texts, video, audio, images, realia)





# What we mean by **OPEN**

1. Free Access (online, no passwords, no fees)
2. Enable the “4 R’s”

- **Reuse** - copy verbatim
- **Redistribute** - share with others
- **Revise** - adapt and edit
- **Remix** - combine with others





# OER Enablers

## Open Licenses

*Permission to  
share OERs*

## Technology

*Tools for  
creating &  
sharing OER*



## Open Standards

*How to design  
OERs for sharing*

## Communities of practice

*Sharing ideas &  
best practices  
through dialogue*



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# “Gratis” vs. “Libre”



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# Creative Commons: Open Licenses



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# Benefits of Open Licenses

You are allowed to:

- ☐ Copy and distribute without having to ask permission from the copyright holder.
- ☐ Legally download and publish the material in a stable location so you don't have to rely on just linking.
- ☐ (In some cases) adapt and customize the materials for your learners.





# CC Search

<http://search.creativecommons.org>



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Find content you can share, use and remix

Enter your search query

I want something that I can...



use for commercial purposes;



modify, adapt, or build upon.

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**4 million openly-licensed videos** (CC BY)



WIKIMEDIA  
COMMONS

**13 million free media files** (photos, videos, sounds)

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**40,000 public domain books** (65 languages)

<http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/>



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# More Places to Find OER for Language Learning



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# Degrees of Open: Materials

**CLOSED**

**OPEN**

**Traditional  
Material**

All rights reserved



**OERs**

Reuse / Redistribute /  
Revise / Remix





# Degrees of Open: Classrooms



**CLOSED**

**OPEN**

## Traditional

- Physical classroom
- Enrolled student

## Online

- Virtual classroom
- Formal (enrolled) “student”
- Informal “learner”
- MOOC (massively open online course, e.g., Coursera)



# Degrees of Open: Research

**CLOSED**

**OPEN**

## Traditional research

- Methods/data known to few
- Traditional print journals
- *Modern Language Journal*
- Subscribed readers

## Open research

- Known to group
- Online journals
- *LL&T*
- Internet public



# Degrees of Open: CC Licenses

**CLOSED**

**OPEN**

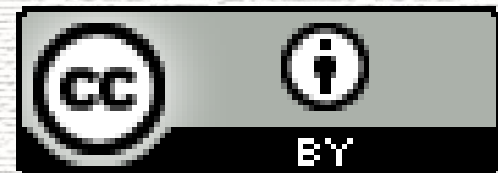


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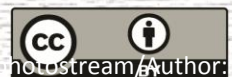


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# Big vs. Little OER

| Big OER  | Little OER  |
|--|---|
| Typically generated by <b>institutions</b> .   | Typically generated and shared by <b>individuals</b> .  |
| Advantages = high reputation, good teaching quality, little reversioning required, easily located. | Advantages = cheap, web-native, easily remixed and reused.  |
| Disadvantages = expensive, often not web native, reuse limited                                     | Disadvantages = lower production quality, reputation can be more difficult to ascertain, more difficult to locate |
| Examples: MIT Courseware, UK's OpenLearn   | Examples: Blog posts, podcasts, etc.  |

Source: Martin Weller [http://nogoodreason.typepad.co.uk/no\\_good\\_reason/2009/12/the-politics-of-oer.html](http://nogoodreason.typepad.co.uk/no_good_reason/2009/12/the-politics-of-oer.html)





# COERLL's Strategies for Openness



## ■ Design for Sharing & Collaboration

- Modular content
- Shareable media (YouTube)
- Editable formats (Google Docs)
- Multiple access formats (print-on-demand, mobile, Web, etc.)

## ■ Building Communities

- Teachers + Learners + Administrators + Developers



# Open Textbooks





# Open Courseware & Learning Communities



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# Open Source Tools

eComma collaborative annotation tool





# Open Corpora

## Spanish in Texas Corpus





# The Open Book Project (Dept of State)



The screenshot shows the U.S. Department of State website. At the top left is the Department of State seal and the text "U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE DIPLOMACY IN ACTION". To the right is a search bar with the text "Enter keyword here" and a "Search" button. Below the header is a navigation menu with links: SECRETARY KERRY, MEDIA CENTER, BLOG, TRAVEL, CAREERS, BUSINESS, YOUTH & EDUCATION, and MyStateDepartment. A secondary navigation bar includes links for ABOUT STATE, POLICY ISSUES, COUNTRIES & REGIONS, ECONOMICS, ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT, ARMS CONTROL & INTERNATIONAL SECURITY, CIVILIAN SECURITY & DEMOCRACY, PUBLIC DIPLOMACY & PUBLIC AFFAIRS, and ASSISTANCE & DEVELOPMENT. The main content area has a breadcrumb trail: Home » Under Secretary for Political Affairs » Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs » The Open Book Project. The title "The Open Book Project" is displayed in red. Below it is a quote: "Talent is universal, but opportunity is not. It's incumbent upon all of us to keep opening doors of opportunity, because walking through it may be a young man or young woman who becomes a medical researcher and discovers a cure for a terrible disease, becomes an entrepreneur, or becomes a professor who then creates the next generation of those who contribute." attributed to Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. A paragraph follows, describing the initiative's goal to expand access to free, high-quality education materials in Arabic. The section "The initiative will:" is followed by a bulleted list of four points: support the creation of Arabic-language Open Educational Resources (OERs), disseminate the resources free of charge, offer training and support to governments, educators, and students, and raise awareness of the potential of open educational resources. On the right side of the page, there is a "Stay Connected with State.gov" section with social media icons for Blog, Twitter, Facebook, RSS, YouTube, and Google+. Below this are icons for Video, Contact, Mobile, and Subscribe. A "Highlights" section features the "Open Book Project" announcement, dated Monday, January 28th, mentioning Secretary Clinton's role and providing links for "Full Text", "More", and "Fact Sheet". At the bottom right is a "Country Profiles" section with a dropdown menu labeled "Select a Country or Other Area".

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
DIPLOMACY IN ACTION

Browse by:  
Topic | Speaker | Publication | Country | Date

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## The Open Book Project

*"Talent is universal, but opportunity is not. It's incumbent upon all of us to keep opening doors of opportunity, because walking through it may be a young man or young woman who becomes a medical researcher and discovers a cure for a terrible disease, becomes an entrepreneur, or becomes a professor who then creates the next generation of those who contribute."*

-- Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton

An initiative of the U.S. Department of State, the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization and leading education innovators to expand access to free, high-quality education materials in Arabic, with a focus on science and technology. These resources will be released under open licenses that allow free use, sharing, and adaptation to local context. Promoting and expanding access to these resources will help to create educational opportunity, further scientific learning, and foster economic growth.

The initiative will:

- **Support the creation of Arabic-language Open Educational Resources (OERs)** and the translation of existing OERs into Arabic.
- **Disseminate the resources** free of charge through our partners and their platforms.
- **Offer training and support** to governments, educators, and students to put existing resources to use and develop their own.
- **Raise Awareness** of the potential of open educational resources and promote uptake of online learning materials.

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### Highlights

**Open Book Project**  
On Monday, January 28th, Secretary Clinton hosted the announcement of the Open Book Project, an initiative to expand access to free, high-quality open educational resources in Arabic. [Full Text](#) [More](#) [Fact Sheet](#)

**Country Profiles**  
Select a Country or Other Area ▼





# Summary of the Benefits to Students

- Lower costs
- Adaptable materials to meet local and personal needs
- Learner-designed materials thanks to “inreach” (involvement of students in product design)
- Improved quality of pedagogical materials thanks to crowd-sourcing (involvement of students in copy editing and fact checking)





# Summary of the Benefits to Teachers

- Greater impact; reach more learners and gain recognition
- More control over materials
- Program fees from print-on-demand help with sustainability for updating materials
- High quality materials for less commonly taught languages
- Become a member of a community of practice





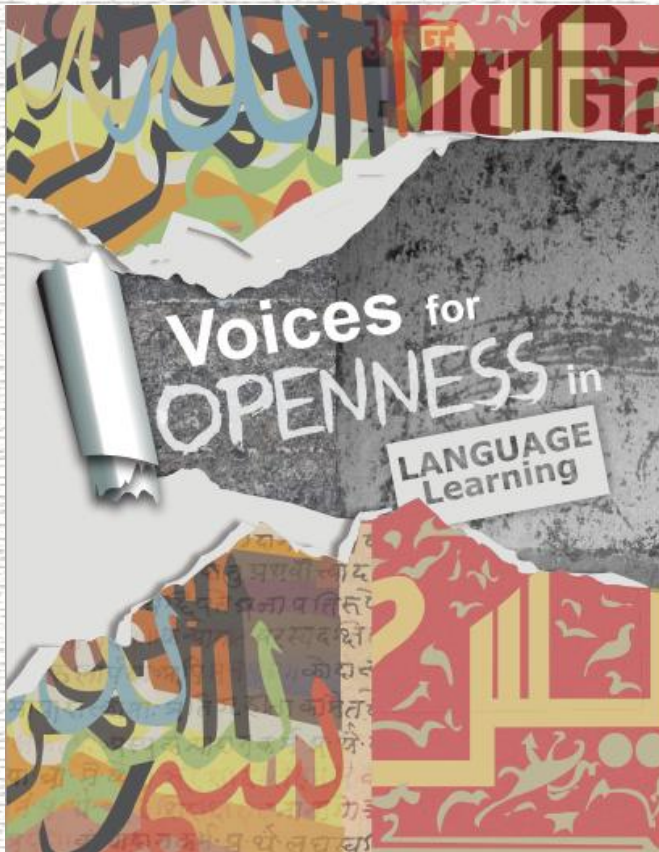
# OER Challenges

- Lack of awareness
- Training and support
- Quality control
- Sustainability





# Becoming an Open Educator: Personal Narratives and Badges







Conversations on Open Education for  
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## Introducing “Open Up”

DECEMBER 4, 2012 (EDIT)



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### From the editor

Welcome to the first conversation in **COERLL's** brand new blog, *Open Up*, devoted to sharing ideas about **open education** in language learning. Here educators can get informed and dream together about dynamic, community-driven open educational practices in language learning.



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EVENTS

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# Hillary Clinton's Legacy for Open Education

From the editor

FEBRUARY 7, 2013



Just days before ending her term as U.S. Secretary of State, Hillary Rodham Clinton announced the [Open Book Project](#), an initiative to expand access to free, high-quality open educational resources.



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### Open Up on Open Education Week

From the editor

MARCH 12, 2013



Are you new to the concept of open education? Do you need a crash course on the lingo, the collective mission, and what's available out there for educators and learners? You're in luck.



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# Demonstration of OER Exemplars



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## Arabic Materials



Aswaat <sup>ʿ</sup>Arabiyya "Arabic Voices," is a website designed for learners and teachers of Arabic seeking materials for listening comprehension. Aswaat <sup>ʿ</sup>Arabiyya...

[Read more...](#)

## Chinese Materials

[Arabic Materials](#)  
[Portuguese Materials](#)  
[Hindi Materials](#)  
[Yorùbá Textbook](#)  
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## Events

- [Dialogue in Multicultural, Multimodal, and Multi-Competent Communities of Practice](#)  
22 Mar 2013
- [June Webinar Series: SpinTX](#)  
5 Jun 2013
- [A New Model for Spanish Lab Activities at UT](#)  
15 Jun 2013 - 9:00am
- [June Webinar Series: Social Reading](#)  
19 Jun 2013
- [June Webinar Series](#)  
26 Jun 2013

[more](#)



## OPEN UP

Conversations on Open Education for Language Learning



## Language Knowmads Wanted

April 17, 2013

We found a kindred thinker in education futurologist, John Moravec at the University of Minnesota -- take a look at his vision for Society 3.0 (that's us!). Moravec describes members of Society 3.0 as agents of: change globalization innovation fueled by knowmads ("nomadic knowledge workers") Sound familiar? A key aspect of Society 3.0 involves online open access, crowd sourcing that promotes sharing, remixing, and capitalizing on new ideas. We know that much of this happens through...



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# eComma: A Space for Social Reading

And, as the Cock crew, those who stood  
The Tavern shouted—"Open then  
"You know how little while we have to

## Stanza 1

RETURN TO FIFTH EDITION | C

Wake! For the Sun, v  
The Stars before him from  
Drives Night alo  
and strikes  
The Sultán's Turret with a S





# SPinTX: Spanish Video Corpus

