Building effective online resources in the age of MOOCs

Dragos Ciobanu, University of Leeds, UK

Online learning appears to have found the recipe for success: as soon as the topic is brought up, most listeners instantly think of Stanford, MIT, Open Educational Resources (OERs) and the Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) revolution. Universities and training institutions worldwide have been joining the OER and MOOC movements, publishing content and, more and more commonly in recent years, also looking for ways to monetise their effort, either through charging for course completion certificates or seeking to recruit paying students for their traditional, face-to-face degree programmes. At the end of 2015 the three biggest MOOC providers - Udacity, Coursera and edX - were reported to have over 30 million subscribers between them, a group which represents 50% more than the total number of students enrolled in tertiary education throughout the EU and which has a very attractive purchasing power.

Given this setting, why would a project such as ORCIT decide not follow the standard recipe which emphasises content production speed and scalability above all other criteria? What is it that ORCIT does which almost none of the other educational content providers do in their common goal to reach and train effectively a multilingual, multicultural audience? What are the unique features of the ORCIT e-learning design and implementation workflow and why were they chosen? More generally, what does Quality mean in an e-learning context and how can it be measured?

With examples from the ORCIT project, as well as the wider e-learning industry, this presentation will seek to dispel several myths surrounding online content design, production, delivery and use in a multilingual, multicultural context.