

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

Center for Open Educational Resources  
and Language Learning

# Newsletter



## Communities For an Open World Spring 2013

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# COERLL Newsletter

Spring 2013:

Communities for an Open World

This newsletter is a biannual publication of the Center for Open Educational Resources and Language Learning (COERLL) at the University of Texas at Austin.

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## Mission

The Center for Open Educational Resources & Language Learning (COERLL) is one of 15 national foreign language resource centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education (Title VI of the 1990 Higher Education Act). COERLL's mission is to produce Open Educational Resources (OERs) for the Internet public. In addition, COERLL aims to reframe foreign language education in terms of bilingualism and/or multilingualism.

## From the Director

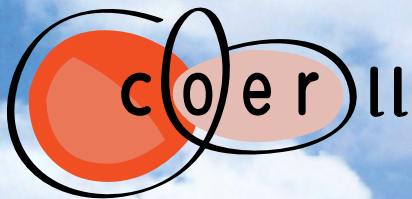
When COERLL began in August 2010, we thought we knew what our mission was all about: to promote foreign language learning through open educational resources (OER). But the biggest lesson we've learned since opening our doors is that OERs result from a community of educators. Just as Wikipedia is the result of a community of writers, OERs result from educators who collaborate for the greater good. So, we have shifted our emphasis to the creation and curation of a community of open educators. This newsletter features several stories about COERLL's efforts to promote our rapidly expanding community.

COERLL is launching *eComma*, a web application that allows groups of users to annotate the same text together. (See page 10.) In keeping with COERLL's new focus to promote communities of practice, we decided to reprogram *eComma* in Drupal, an open source content management system. This means that the COERLL version of *eComma* will not only be free to use, but will also be open to adapt. By sharing *eComma*'s source code with the public, we hope to lower development costs and increase collaboration with interested parties. The ultimate goal is to create an open source community of practice around *eComma* that brings together teachers, learners, researchers and developers. We are convinced that there are many innovative uses for *eComma* we have yet to envision. And so, we entrust its future to the community of users whose collaborative efforts will guarantee its increased reliability and efficacy.

Scan the code to the right with a scanner (bar-code reader) application to explore COERLL.



To find a scanner application, Google "QR Reader" and the model of your phone or the operating system of your computer.



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**COERLL's *Corpus-to-Classroom Project*** aims to create a self-sustaining community of linguists, technologists and Spanish language educators who have begun collaborating on a video-based website for the teaching of Spanish. (See page 4.) To date, the project has had three primary results:

1. an online corpus of video clips taken from sociolinguistic interviews of speakers of Spanish in Texas — each of the over 300 video clips is accompanied by a transcript as well as synchronized closed captions;
2. a methodology for creating materials using video from the corpus; and
3. a model of best practices for other foreign language educators who may be interested in creating and adapting their own video corpora for language learning.

**Dialogue is the key to developing a successful community of practice.** To that end, COERLL has taken multiple steps to foster dialogue with those interested in learning more about the benefits of open education for language learning:

- We have added Facebook sites to several of our OERs such as *Français interactif*, *Deutsch im Blick*, and *Brazilpod*.
- We have begun a blog titled *Open Up* that allows us to speak directly with language teachers and learners. (See page 6.) The blog features news, opinions, and pedagogical resources, as well as the expertise of leaders in Open Foreign Language Education.
- And finally, COERLL has just finished co-hosting the annual meeting of the International Association of Dialogue Studies. (See page 14.) The focus of the conference was ... you guessed it! ... the role of dialogue in the creation of communities of practice.



Dr. Carl Blyth, Director of COERLL

### Join the Effort

Scan the code to the right to donate now to COERLL.



For an open world,  
*Carl Blyth, Director of COERLL*

# Open Spanish Corpus Project

## Multiple Communities of Practice

One of the wonderful things about open resources is that diverse communities are able to adapt a single resource for many purposes. With funding provided by a “Longhorn Innovation Fund for Technology” grant, the SpinTX Corpus-to-Classroom project has now launched a new resource aimed at adapting the Spanish in Texas Corpus materials for use by educators and learners.

The SpinTX website is a searchable online video archive stocked with video clips and annotated transcripts from the Corpus and is one of COERLL’s newest open educational resources. From its inception, COERLL’s Spanish in Texas Corpus project was envisioned as becoming a resource that could benefit and engage multiple communities — including educators, researchers, and the general public — and now that vision is becoming a reality.

## Educator Communities

The new SpinTX website will enable educators to easily create and share video-based language learning materials.

Launching this spring, the SpinTX website includes a searchable collection of 300 video clips of interviews of native and heritage speakers of Spanish living in Texas. Each of the videos is accompanied by a complete transcript that has been annotated with thematic and metalinguistic information as well as synchronized closed captions. In addition, the website offers innovative tools for educators to easily create activity sets based on the videos, and to share their customized materials as Open Educational Resources (OER). All materials available on the site can be freely used under a Creative Commons license.

Using the website, educators can:

- search or browse for a video clip that contains target themes, grammar and/or vocabulary,
- interact with an annotated transcript to highlight parts of the text that include target grammar and/or vocabulary,
- automatically generate customized cloze activities from the video transcripts,
- save sets of videos to personalized playlists,
- access lesson plans and activities shared by the community, and
- learn how to create and share their own materials as OER.

Educator workshops focused on material development are taking place in Spring and Summer 2013. For more information, visit <http://spanishintexas.org>.



**Use, create, and share  
Open Educational  
Resources (OER)**



## Researcher/Developer Communities

**The SpinTX Corpus-to-Classroom project is contributing open source tools and methodologies for use by a community of language researchers and educators.**

Another aim of the Corpus-to-Classroom project is to provide a model for researchers and educators interested in creating and adapting their own linguistically-annotated video corpora. We envision a multi-level annotated video corpus that is suitable for pedagogical applications. In the spirit of the movement toward facilitating teaching and learning through OER, we seek to publicly provide research protocols, tagged and parsed data, authoring tools, python scripts, and search capabilities that will allow for the use of the current archive and for its replication in other contexts. All of the custom tools and innovative processes developed for the project are freely shared through a development blog (<http://sites.la.utexas.edu/corpus-to-classroom>) and code repository (<https://github.com/coerll>).

## Local Public Communities

**The Spanish in Texas project provides a social space for exploration of language variation.**

Interest in the Spanish in Texas project is growing, partly thanks to a social media campaign designed to engage our community in exploring the rich culture and unique features of Spanish in Texas. The new Spanish in Texas Facebook page is a place where all are invited to join the conversation and contribute thoughts and personal anecdotes about Spanish in the Lone Star State. The Facebook page will feature a street video campaign showcasing the stories, sounds, and slang of real Spanish speakers in Texas.

**If you would like to know more about the Spanish in Texas project or to join the effort by contributing interviews or piloting the video resources in your classroom, please visit <http://sites.la.utexas.edu/spanishtx/>.**

**Visit <http://spanishintexas.org> to learn more about the project and access all of our free resources.**

The project is being presented at a number of conferences in Spring and Summer of

- Spanish in the U.S. & In Contact 2013, McAllen, Texas, March 6-9, 2013
- South Central Association of Language Learning Technology (SOCALLT) 2013, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas, April 11-13, 2013
- 43rd annual Linguistic Symposium on Romance Languages (LSRL), New York, New York, April 17-19, 2013
- International Conference on Code-switching: within and across the clause, Bergische Universität Wuppertal (North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany, April 18-20, 2013
- Computer Assisted Language Instruction Consortium (CALICO) 2013 Conference, Honolulu, Hawaii, May 22-25, 2013
- 95th Annual Conference of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP), San Antonio, Texas, July 8-11, 2013



# *a* Community of Practice *around* OER

We all know what a community is: a group of people who have something in common. How do we transform a community into a *community of practice* that affects positive change and progress? Educational theorist and practitioner Etienne Wenger describes communities of practice as “groups of people who share a concern or passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. ([www.ewenger.com](http://www.ewenger.com))” Communities of practice, Wenger continues, develop a shared body of resources (experiences, stories, tools, solutions to recurring problems).

With the belief that coming together in communities of practice is essential to furthering the open education movement in language learning, COERLL recently launched *Open Up*, a blog for and by the language learning community. Here open educational resource (OER) users and advocates can share experiences, stories, tools, and solutions to roadblocks toward creating a body of copyright-free and remixable language learning materials online.

**Here are some of *Open Up*'s community practitioners who are contributing to the shared body of ideas and resources for open language learning.**

“

*I find TED Talks extremely useful to provide authentic listening.*



**Ana Beaven**

International EFL instructor at University of Bologna

“

*Do student teachers have updated and effective language materials and tools?*



**Joshua Thoms**

Spanish instructor at Utah State University

“

*This collaborative is an opportunity for those who feel like the current structure of 'clearly articulated curricula' and the accompanying grades we assign students are false proxies for language learning.*



**Tom**

Founding member of Innovates and education



**Fernando Rubio**

Spanish instructor at University of Utah,  
co-director of L2TRec

“

*I'm in my fourth week of teaching a Spanish MOOC for the first time. Let's think about the role of MOOCs and the intersection between teaching and certification.*



**Todd Bryant**

Language liaison/technologist  
at Dickinson College,  
Creator of The Mixxer

“

*What if language learning MOOCs offered ways to foster online learning networks?*



**Georges Detiveaux**

French instructor at Lone  
Star College-CyFair,  
SOCALLT President

“

*I have come to the decision to share just about everything I make for my own class with my colleagues.*



**Welch**

Member of ACTFL  
and open language  
advocate



**Laura Franklin**

French instructor,  
co-editor of MERLOT  
World Languages

“

*I want to share my top 10 MERLOT tools for studying Languages*



**OPEN UP**

*Conversations on Open Education  
for Language Learning.*

Find us at [blog.coerll.utexas.edu](http://blog.coerll.utexas.edu).

We welcome guest bloggers and commenters  
who want to get in on the conversation!

# Why I Love and Hate My Spanish MOOC

By Fernando Rubio

## An excerpt from an Open Up blog post from February 12, 2013:

The first steps of innovation are always messy. We need to get over the hype that this first wave of MOOCs is generating and also refrain from making apocalyptic predictions about the impact on higher education. Until we work out the kinks and clunkiness of the first MOOCs, we should all pause and ponder how MOOCs can help the education enterprise. (See *The Wall Street Journal* Feb. 4, 2013 article, [Crash Sinks Course on Online Teaching](#).)

<http://goo.gl/fGIPIK>



I'm teaching a [Spanish MOOC](#) for the first time, and here are some insights I've gleaned from my experience so far:

<https://www.canvas.net/courses/improving-your-spanish-pronunciation>



1. Never in my wildest dreams could I have expected to have such a large and diverse audience in this course.
2. Because of the size and format the MOOC, I can rely more on course analytics to see how my students interact with the course — how they learn.
3. My students don't have the motivation of a grade or a degree, or the sense of urgency that comes from having paid for a course. This makes it very difficult to design and run a course (particularly a language course). We are used to dealing with teaching that results in learning and certification; a MOOC is a form of teaching that only results in learning (at least for now).

Let's think about the role of MOOCs and the intersection between teaching and certification.



**Fernando Rubio** is Co-director of the University of Utah's Second Language Teaching and Research Center (L2TReC) and Associate Professor of Spanish Linguistics.





Carl Blyth  
February 12, 2013 at 6:13 pm

Do your students get college credit? Does your course combine regular students who get credit along with “outsiders” who might receive a certificate but no college credit? If so, how do these groups interact? Does the heterogeneity lead to better discussion or just chaos?

Frubio  
February 13, 2013 at 2:46 am

Nobody gets credit or certificates in my MOOC. The only difference among the students is in their level of intrinsic motivation. I would be interested to hear from anyone who has experience with MOOCs that assign credits or certificates of completion. As you know, one of the big issues under discussion is how to “monetize” MOOCs (just hearing the verb “monetize” makes me cringe), and assigning some kind of tangible outcome seems to be the main option being considered.

Carl Blyth  
February 12, 2013 at 6:13 pm

Here is an update about awarding credit for MOOCs reported today by EdSurge, a weekly newsletter for educators interesting in technology :

“

Coursera says the American Council on Education (ACE) has agreed to award credit equivalency for five Coursera courses, which means that taking those classes could count toward earning a degree. Last month, Udacity said it is working on credit-worthy courses with San Jose State. A couple of schools (U of Washington and U of Helsinki) have unilaterally said they're exploring offering credit for Coursera courses, too...

And here is a recent Gigaom.com article on MOOCs for college credit:

AnaBeaven  
February 12, 2013 at 6:55 pm

Could you tell us how you get students to practice their productive skills? Who corrects what they write? And how do they practice oral skills? Is there a process of self- as well as peer-assessment?

jthoms  
February 13, 2013 at 5:38 am

Do you think you could pull this off next time around without the help of assistants?

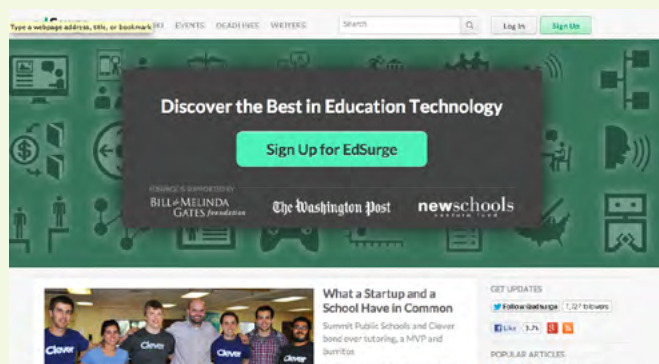
Frubio  
February 12, 2013 at 7:01 pm

There is minimal writing. There is, however, a lot of practice speaking. We use Audacity. Students have some practice activities in which they have to self-assess, some that are peer reviewed and some in which I (with a couple of assistants) actually listen to them and provide feedback.

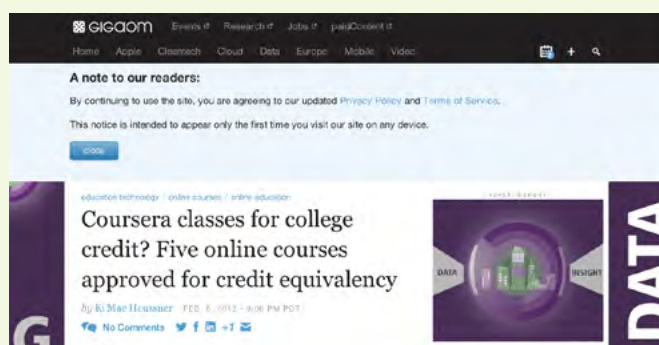
Frubio  
February 14, 2013 at 5:25 pm

If I didn't have any other courses to teach, I could probably pull it off by myself without assistants. Will universities be willing to free up professors to do that? Someone posted a response to Tom Friedman's NYT column on MOOCs the other day saying that professors who spend time teaching free MOOCs are not dedicating their time and attention to on-campus “paying” students.

<https://www.edsurge.com/>



<http://goo.gl/fNhYX>



Need more information  
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Visit <http://coerll.utexas.edu>  
or contact us at  
[info@coerll.utexas.edu](mailto:info@coerll.utexas.edu).

# COERLL Project News

## New OERs NOW AVAILABLE

### eComma: A Space for Social Reading

#### Project Website / Open Source Web Application (Multilingual)

This website compares different collaborative tagging and commenting tools for web based texts and shares news and research about social reading. The eComma Commentary machine is one of the tools featured on this site. In its current iteration it is a free software module that plugs into Drupal 6, a popular open source content management system. Collaborators at two universities are testing eComma in their language classes. The code for the module is now available through the Drupal eComma projects page: <http://drupal.org/sandbox/coerll/1782670>.

OER link: <http://ecomma.coerll.utexas.edu/>

Project Directors: Carl Blyth (Department of French and Italian), Sam Baker (Department of English )



### Chinese Dialogues Podcast

#### Audio Collection with Transcripts and Translations (Chinese)

The “Gateway to Chinese” project announces a new podcast series consisting of simple dialogue exchanges. The listening materials help beginners take the first step toward becoming proficient listeners and are based on beginning level Chinese curriculum. They are creative yet realistic scenarios on topics that listeners can relate to, such as the social, family, and school aspects of one’s life. Full transcripts in both traditional and simplified characters as well as English translations are provided as downloadable PDF documents. The podcast format enables a generation of increasingly “mobile” learners to study the material “on-the-go.”

Subscribe at: <http://podcasts.coerll.utexas.edu/collection/chinese-dialogues/>

Project Director: Wen-Hua Teng (Department of Asian Studies)






### Hindi in America

#### Open Access Website / Video Collection (Hindi)

This collection of video interviews with Hindi speakers provides learners with unscripted examples of the contemporary colloquial language. The collection of videos and links to full transcripts are available as a YouTube playlist.

OER link: <http://www.youtube.com/hindiamerica>

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 1 |  | When did you come to the U.S.?<br>by hindiamerica 53 views<br>0:41 |
| 2 |  | Where are you from?<br>by hindiamerica 13 views<br>1:01            |
| 3 |  | Why did you come to the U.S.?<br>by hindiamerica 10 views<br>3:32  |

## SPinTX Corpus-to-Classroom Project

### Blog (Spanish/English)

A searchable archive of more than 300 authentic language videos from the Spanish in Texas Corpus is now available. The development of this innovative resource for educators is chronicled on the Corpus-to-Classroom blog at <http://sites.la.utexas.edu/corpus-to-classroom>. Read more about this project in the feature article on page 4.

OER link: <http://coerll.utexas.edu/spintx>

Project Director: Barbara E. Bullock (Department of French and Italian), Almeida Jacqueline Toribio (Department of Spanish and Portuguese)



## Updated OERs

### Pitch Perfect Pinyin

#### Open Access Website (Mandarin Chinese)

The “practice” section of this two-part interactive website for sharpening pronunciation of Mandarin Chinese with the help of pinyin has recently launched. Five different types of interactive exercises are now available, include identifying tones, matching pinyin to sound, pinyin spelling, identifying tone differences, and matching

sound to pinyin. Each contains 100 multiple-choice items and requires learners to focus on one specific task. Since the interactive nature of these exercises allows learners to receive immediate feedback, the time and locations of Pinyin practice can be shifted from the classroom and become a flexible and individualized learning process.



For more information about our projects in development contact us at [info@coerll.utexas.edu](mailto:info@coerll.utexas.edu).



**Need more information  
about our projects?**

Visit <http://coerll.utexas.edu>  
or contact us at  
[info@coerll.utexas.edu](mailto:info@coerll.utexas.edu).

# COERLL Project News

## Spanish Proficiency Training & Learner Corpus (SPT)

### Open Access Website (Spanish, Teaching Methods)

*Actividades de práctica con aprendices del español* has been updated and now offers approximately 20 activities based on videos from the SPT Learner Corpus.

OER link: <http://sites.la.utexas.edu/actividades-spt/>

Project Director: Dale Koike (Department of Spanish and Portuguese)



## OERs in Development

## Le Littéraire dans le quotidien

### Open Access Exercises (French)














Joanna Luks of Cornell University is developing “The literary in the every day,” resources for a transdisciplinary approach to reading/writing at the first and second year levels of college French. These will serve as foreign language templates in the form of an OER to bridge the well-known divide between lower level language courses and upper level literature “content” courses. Language teachers, with the help of these templates, can develop their own reading and writing activities to highlight the metaphorical

nature of language. One of the many aims of this project is to advocate for the understanding that the content of a foreign language course is, simply, language. In our continued commitment toward making our resources more open and remixable, we will be publishing this resource in a publicly accessible Google Drive.

Project Director: Joanna Luks (Cornell University)



### Le Littéraire dans le quotidien (BETA)

-  Lecture 01 Bonjour
-  Lecture 02 L'identité
-  Lecture 03 Voyager
-  Lecture 04 Les gens
-  Lecture 05 La cuisine
-  Lecture 06 La ville
-  Lecture 07 ... es et souvenirs
-  Lecture 08 La maison
-  Lecture 09 La technologie
-  Lecture 10 Bien-être
-  Lecture 11 Les études
-  Lecture 12 ... professionnelle
-  Lecture 13 L'amour

## Tadriis: Arabic Teaching Methods

### Open Access Website (Arabic)

Tadriis is an open source training resource for Arabic teachers in the U.S. and abroad. Tadriis will initially include training modules covering a wide range of issues related to the learning and teaching of Arabic at the K-16 levels, such as creating a learner-centered classroom, developing learning strategies, defining learning outcomes, teaching various learning skills, and incorporating task-based and project-based instruction in Arabic curriculum. The open



source nature of Tadriis will allow all content to be downloaded and repurposed by users to create their own modules and add to the corpus of resources, ensuring a sustainable future for the project. The site will be delivered entirely in Arabic so that it can be used by teachers of Arabic everywhere. Tadriis.org is currently being developed by COERLL at the University of Texas-Austin and will be available in the Fall of 2013.

Project Director: Mahmoud Al-Batal  
(Department of Middle Eastern Studies, Arabic  
Flagship Program)



## Spanish Proficiency Training (SPT) Workbook

### Open Access Workbook (Spanish, Teaching Methods)

The SPT website user's workbook, designed by Dr. Judith Liskin-Gasparro of the University of Iowa, will be completed in Summer 2013. It serves to introduce language proficiency and the concept of levels and includes a useful guide and activities on proficiency evaluation, suggestions on how to maximize use of the website, and ideas for future work on the basis of the website.

Project Directors: Dale Koike (Department of Spanish and Portuguese), Judith Liskin-Gasparro (University of Iowa)

## Badges for Professional Development

### (Multilingual, Professional Development)

COERLL is collaborating with sister LRC LARC at San Diego State to develop a

badge system for professional development based upon an open platform. In addition to badges for participation at workshops and webinars, COERLL envisions badges for two of its current websites:

- **Spanish Proficiency Training.** Abigail Dings of Southwestern University in Georgetown is piloting the SPT badge curriculum in an undergraduate teacher education course in Spring 2013.
- **Foreign Language Methods.** Carl Blyth, COERLL director, is in discussion with the AAUSC, American Association of University Supervisors and Coordinators, to recruit evaluators and develop criteria for evaluation of the different modules of the course.

**Badges** = visual representations of a skill or achievement

### Examples from the world of open badges:

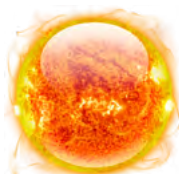
#### Art and Humanities:



#### Voices for Openness in Language Learning

Share your story at  
<http://sites.la.utexas.edu/voices/>

#### STEM:



#### Khan Academy

Sun: Achieved proficiency



#### NASA/Foursquare

Curiosity rover badge

For more information about our projects in development contact us at  
[info@coerll.utexas.edu](mailto:info@coerll.utexas.edu).

# EVENTS

## June COERLL Webinar Series

**Each webinar will offer CPE credits.**

COERLL is pleased to announce a weekly webinar series in June. Topics will include the Spanish in Texas project (SPinTX), COERLL live from the IALLT conference in Fort Lauderdale, Social Reading, and the future of MOOCs for foreign language learning.

**More information will be posted soon on our website.**

## Summer Workshop

### **A New Model for Spanish Lab Activities at UT**

**Saturday, June 15, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

**This workshop offers CPE credits.**

In this one day workshop, participants will learn about a new approach to integrating and evaluating oral production in language courses. This approach addresses pragmatic issues such as speech acts and fillers in a controlled lab setting. Participants will learn the process of creating activities, guiding students as they complete the activity, and evaluating students.

**All COERLL workshops are free of charge.**

Visit COERLL's website at <http://www.coerll.utexas.edu/coerll/> for more information.

## Event Report

### **Dialogue in Multicultural, Multimodal, and Multi-Competent Communities of Practice**

**Friday, March 22 – Sunday, March 24**

<http://sites.la.utexas.edu/dialogue2013/>

This workshop focused on questions such as: “How can the study of dialogue advance the area of language learning?” and “What can interaction studies in various contexts of multi-lingualism and multimodalities contribute to our understanding of being multi-competent?” The conference was organized by Dale Koike, Carl Blyth, Hans Boas, and Jürgen Streeck and sponsored by the International Association for Dialogue Analysis.



# Launch of the newly redesigned LRC website

<http://www.nflrc.org/>



## National Foreign Language Resource Center Portal

View redesigned LRC website:



<http://www.nflrc.org/>

## LRC categories:

- Applied linguistic research
- Teaching materials
- Language assessment
- Teacher development
- Less commonly taught languages, K-12 initiatives
- Outreach & dissemination

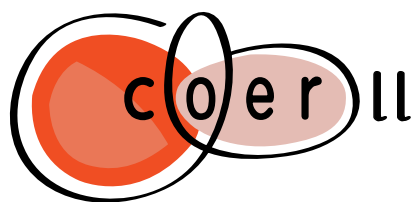
The new portal enables visitors to browse through and explore 684 free LRC resources:

<http://goo.gl/DcqYj>

The new slider on the homepage is organized according to the US Department of Education mandated LRC categories (see margin). The slider gives the readers descriptions of highlighted LRC projects and events.

The improved navigation and search functions help teachers browse dozens of events and thousand of resources faster.

Kudos to COERLL's web developer, Nathalie Steinfeld, who worked with Dave Baer of CeLCAR and Chris Brown of LARC to move the site to its new domain and make it more appealing and functional.



The University of Texas at Austin  
Center for Open Educational Resources  
and Language Learning  
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USA



## Connect to COERLL

### Facebook

<http://facebook.com/coerll>

### Twitter

<http://twitter.com/coerll>

### YouTube

<http://youtube.com/coerllut>

### Website

<http://coerll.utexas.edu/coerll>

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