

Academic Entrepreneurship in CALL: A Significant Subject in the Era of Knowledge Economy

Filipo Gao Lubua, University of Pittsburgh, USA*

Greg Kessler, Ohio University, USA

ABSTRACT

This concept paper aims to introduce academic entrepreneurship as a subject of particular significance in the CALL field in the knowledge economy era. The article describes why the primary CALL practitioners—faculty and students—should invest their time, skills, and resources to pursue, identify, and exploit entrepreneurial opportunities and create far-reaching technological products and services for language instruction and research. The paper advocates for creating a particular research area in which CALL researchers and academic entrepreneurs will showcase their practical uniqueness and experience in CALL academic entrepreneurship to motivate and inspire one another. The paper also advocates for the inclusion of entrepreneurship education into the CALL preparation curriculum to produce graduates with the entrepreneurial skillset that will enable them to be active participants in identifying and exploiting CALL-related entrepreneurial opportunities.

KEYWORDS

Academic Entrepreneurship, CALL Academic Entrepreneurship, CALL Entrepreneurship Education, CALL Preparation

INTRODUCTION

Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) draws its primary propositions and applications from many sister fields. However, for several decades CALL has grown and established itself as a vigorous independent field. Historically, two significant factors have transformed CALL within and through different stages. These factors include trends in L2 pedagogy theories and advancements in information and communication technology (ICT) (Davies et al., 2013). While technological advancement has taken a sort of linear and structured transformational path, the trends in language pedagogy theories have taken a more disorganized approach characterized by contentious arguments and varied perspectives among scholars (Davies et al., 2013). As a result, CALL's evolution and advancement as a field of inquiry and practice have also involved a complex chronological account characterized by rapid and frequent changes. While pedagogical theories remain very significant in language learning, CALL practice has mainly focused on the teachers' ability to manipulate the ever-changing technology to support their teaching needs while ensuring the attainment of the learning goals (Kessler & Hubbard, 2017; Beaty, 2013; Levy, 1997). Hence, to date, CALL scholars have spent extensive time studying the role of technology in different aspects of language learning (Hubbard, 2019; Beaty, 2013; Levy, 1997). They have always tried to identify additional areas of interest and conduct a detailed analysis of CALL practices around those areas.

DOI: 10.4018/IJCALLT.291104

*Corresponding Author

This conceptual paper aims to introduce academic entrepreneurship as yet another area that demands special consideration in the CALL field. The article provides an overview of CALL and how its current situation provides potential entrepreneurial opportunities that can be identified and harnessed. The paper also describes how integrating entrepreneurship education in CALL preparation will accelerate the development of CALL entrepreneurship as a subfield of CALL practice. In this study, CALL academic entrepreneurship refers to any entrepreneurial activity by university faculty, staff, or students that involves the creation of a product or service that utilizes digital technologies to facilitate language learning and teaching.

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

From time immemorial, humankind has faced many glaring social and environmental transformations that forced them to change and adapt to new ways of living. In addition to social and environmental changes, innovation and discovery also revealed new possibilities and avenues for an improved way of life. Likewise, today, the world is trekking through an era that has experienced historic critical economic adversities associated with large-scale global change pressures. For instance, rapid population growth, increase in the unemployment rate, extreme climatic changes, globalization, political instabilities, terrorism, pandemics, rise in general health concerns, and growing immigration concerns have kindled fear and uncertainty in the life of today's world inhabitants (Kabir, 2019; Hadad, 2017; Steinmueller, 2002).

These challenges have enormously affected the current production cycle. Productivity has fallen remarkably, while the cost of production has been rapidly increasing (Hadad, 2017). As a result, the world market equilibrium (i.e., the ratio between quantity demanded and quantity supplied) has been tainted, leading to changes in labor-management policies (Steinmueller, 2002). Because of all this, the world can no longer operate in the same way, and the global economy and production can no longer depend solely on the direct exploitation of natural resources (Kabir, 2019; Hadad, 2017; Steinmueller, 2002).

Hence, since improving productivity is the main objective for the sustenance of modern economic growth, the world is being forced to employ new tactics that will "increase the productive capacity of capital goods, labor, and natural resource inputs" (Steinmueller, 2002, p. 141). This phenomenon describes why global economies have evolved from traditional economies to knowledge and technology-based economies. The main disparity between the two types of economies is that, while the traditional economy is dependent on physical inputs of financial capital, human labor, and natural resources, the knowledge-based economy depends on intellectual capital, innovation, and technology to create value and to increase productivity (Kabir, 2019; Hadad, 2017; Steinmueller, 2002). Generally, entrepreneurship is the backbone of the knowledge economy (Kabir, 2019), and its significance should not be overlooked in any sector.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Since the aforementioned critical changes and transformations affect the structure and operation of all the social-economic sectors of the industrialized economies, the educational industry does not remain unaffected, and therefore, universities also need to be equally innovative and entrepreneurial (Bejinaru, 2016; Rose & Patterson, 2016; Link & Scott, 2015; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Drucker, 1985). In fact, universities need to be even more innovative and entrepreneurial because, as Drucker (1985) asserted over three decades ago, "the rapid changes in today's society, technology, and economy are simultaneously an even greater threat to them (universities) and an even greater opportunity" (p. 177). For decades, inadequate funding for most academic operations has caused the administrative nature of most universities to change rapidly (Shane, 2004), and "the increasing rhythm of change represents a real issue for universities and implies a set of difficulties in the adaptation process" (Bejinaru, 2016, p. 592).

14 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/article/academic-entrepreneurship-in-call/291104

Related Content

A Qualitative Study on CALL Knowledge and Materials Design: Insights From Pre-Service EFL Teachers

Olcay Sertand Li Li (2017). *International Journal of Computer-Assisted Language Learning and Teaching* (pp. 73-87).

www.irma-international.org/article/a-qualitative-study-on-call-knowledge-and-materials-design/190914

Reading Online and Offline: Language Teachers' Perspectives

Jeong-Bae Son (2013). *International Journal of Computer-Assisted Language Learning and Teaching* (pp. 25-32).

www.irma-international.org/article/reading-online-and-offline/100370

Online Interaction Between On-Campus and Distance Students: Learners' Perspectives

Nobue Miwaand Yuping Wang (2013). *Explorations of Language Teaching and Learning with Computational Assistance* (pp. 132-148).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/online-interaction-between-campus-distance/67466

Computer-Mediated Communication: Emerging Media and Themes

Adams B. Bodo (2010). *Computer-Mediated Communication for Linguistics and Literacy: Technology and Natural Language Education* (pp. 314-370).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/computer-mediated-communication/36012

Investigating Interaction in an EFL Online Environment

Vera Lucia Menezes de Oliveira e Paivaand Adail Sebastiao Rodrigues-Junior (2009). *Handbook of Research on E-Learning Methodologies for Language Acquisition* (pp. 53-68).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/investigating-interaction-efl-online-environment/20021