

## **Open Kitchen: A Learning Objects Repository for Educators by Educators**

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Present educational paradigm and advances in Internet technology necessitate changes in the traditional role of educators as knowledge bearers and require them to act more like instructional designers and instructional technologists. Also with these advances, definition and meaning of instructional materials development and educational software development has changed.

As the new environment for housing and distributing learning resources, digital repositories offer a chance for both educators and students alike to serve as both producers and consumers of learning materials at the same time. In fact both educators and students end up becoming their own instructional designers themselves.

These modular resources now referred to as Learning Objects are raw materials and they are shared, reusable and interoperable. Learning Object Repositories that are being created house the learning objects providing seamless access to a vast store of learning resources. Internationally accepted specifications and standards allow them to be interoperable and reusable by different applications and in diverse learning environments. The metadata that describe them facilitate searching and render them accessible.

However, learning objects do not have a common vocabulary and the standards to define and classify them in data bases are proprietary. There are no common standards to help educators in searching, locating, situating and using them. Even when a learning object is easily found, what usually exists as metadata are the

content descriptors and the technical features. There is no agreed upon pedagogy/andragogy related metadata categorization that may be useful for educators in deciding which resources to choose.

There is a necessity to devise learning object metadata that are non proprietary and standard. Learning objects should be more easily searchable and used and reused. In addition to traditional metadata tags for content, technical features and learner level, also pedagogy tags and user feedback should be included among the searchable characteristics of learning objects.

**Open Kitchen** (Açık Mutfak), being proposed to be presented in INET-tr-08, is a learning objects repository created for educators by educators in Hisar Schools Kemerköy. In this R&D project examining the relationship between learning object characteristics and teachers' use and reuse, objects are classified using teacher-relevant metadata such as learning process intended, use environment, etc., by teachers in addition to their authoritative metadata. Software allows teachers to provide reuse feedback and upload their own learning objects into the repository.

The Open Kitchen repository exemplifies the producing-consuming role of the user and the 'community-in-practice' philosophy in education and information science. This project aims to show that meaningful democratic use of technology is possible through producing with it.