

# Praise or flow? Two pedagogies for open-ended learning

## — Invited Speaker's Abstract —

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### Abstract

MOOCs have recently flourished as a new way to bring education to large numbers of people at affordable cost. However most MOOCs so far rely on rigid structured instruction based on prior lesson plans. Can we also develop MOOCs that follow the paradigm of open-ended, student-centered learning? This requires (i) a challenging environment and tools in which students can learn how to solve problems without a rigid prior lesson plan, (ii) ways in which to orchestrate peer-to-peer social feedback between students, and (iii) mechanisms fostering motivation. This talk focuses on the latter. I discuss two pedagogies at opposite ends of a spectrum: one based on praise, which means encouragement or possibly punishment, the other based on flow, which means that students can regulate their own problem challenge in relation to their skill level and thus become self-motivated.

### About the invited speaker



**Luc Steels** studied linguistics at the University of Antwerp (Belgium) and computer science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (USA). His main research field is Artificial Intelligence covering a wide range of intelligent abilities, including vision, robotic behavior, conceptual representations and language. In 1983 he became a professor of computer science at the University of Brussels (VUB) and in 1996 he founded Sony Computer Science Laboratory in Paris and became its first director. Currently he is an ICREA Research Professor at the Institute for Evolutionary Biology (CSIC, UPF). He has been the PI of a dozen large-scale European projects and more than 30 PhD theses have been granted under his direction. He has produced over 200 articles and edited 15 books related to his research.