Investigation into reuse of OER for online language teaching

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Problem statement

- OER research focus on creation, use, reuse and sharing of OER
- Lack of evidence of how OER reuse and adaptation impact on teaching practices
- Large-scale quantitative research methods on attitudes, beliefs and perceptions about OER
Aims of research

To explore activities that are taking place during reuse of materials created by others with the view to establish whether reuse has an impact on teaching practices in online language teaching

RQ1: what activities do teachers engage with when they search for and adapt the OER they choose to use?

RQ2: what do teachers learn about their own teaching beliefs and practices when they adapt OER?

RQ3: does adaptation of resources lead to change in teaching practices?
Methodology – data collection

- Grounded theory approach to data collection and analysis – inductive inquiry (Charmaz, 2014)
  - Online questionnaire to all Open University language teachers (N=182) – to collect demographic data and evidence of reuse and to identify volunteers for interviews
  - 17 in-depth (1hr) semi-structured interviews online, with examples as supporting evidence
Methodology – data analysis

- Transcriptions of all interviews verbatim
- Initial coding line by line using gerunds
- Focused coding to create categories (in-vivo codes)
- Memo-writing and theoretical sampling
- Constant comparative method
- Triangulation (data to data)
Methodological choices

Step 1: Deciding on the participants
- LORO users worldwide
- Open University users only
- Questionnaires to all OU language AIs

Step 2: Deciding on the methods for data collection
- Yes, to select participants for interviews, to collect data about participants and to inform interview questions
- Yes, to collect participants’ experience of reuse of OER
- No, as the need is to investigate individuals’ experiences and reflections on reuse of OER
- No, questionnaire not for methods triangulation
- No, no content analysis of how respondents recount experiences

Step 3: Deciding on the method for data analysis
- Discourse analysis
- Grounded theory – constant comparative method
- Yes, following Charmaz’s (2014) guidelines
Methodological choices

Step 4: Describing the process for data analysis

- Initial coding
- Focused coding
- Constant comparative method
- Text analysis (linguistics features)
- Use of software TROPES (lexical checks)

- Master list of codes
- Classified codes by RQs
- Clusters of codes
- Categories
- For triangulation/For interpretation

Step 5: Deciding on the presentation of data

- Vignettes/Case-studies
- Findings per participant/discussion per theme
- Findings and discussion at the same time per category including examples from participants for each category (see James, 2013 and McCarthy, 2015)
Initial coding using gerunds

Well, I’m looking for a different approach I am looking for a step-by-step procedure that will work, that will make sense that I have never used before. You know, I really miss playing games and last year for the day school we played games to prepare students for their EMA and I adapted these games from actually the online workshop, an online workshop that XXX and XXX had delivered and they also put their resources online, so I was adapting for a face-to-face day school what I had seen online and I had, you know, unfortunately online you only have one hour tutorials, so it is very difficult to insert a game, especially a game that would revise, you know most of the course materials for the EMA it would take too long or it would have to take half the tutorial. That’s the kind of things that I am still doing, looking for something a bit more exciting, one I would come up with.

Interviewer – Now, moving on to your examples, can you show me resources you have taken and adapted and show the changes

Looking for new ideas
Looking for something suitable
Adapting for a different context
Reflecting on online teaching constraints
Looking for something that suits teaching style
Focused coding
Constant comparative method

Continuum between data collection and data analysis (based on Hennebo, 2009)

1. Interviews initial study → Analysis → Ideas A and B → Interview 1 main study
2. Researcher questions about ideas A and B → Analysis → Idea B evolves, Idea C emerges
3. Interview 2 → Idea B continues to evolve, Idea C evolves, Ideas D and E emerge
4. Interview 3 → confirms Idea B, Idea C continues to evolve, Ideas F emerges
5. Researcher submits Ideas A, C, D to Interview 4 → Interview 4 confirms Idea D → etc.
Initial findings: Getting inspiration

- Searching for new ideas
  - Searching for new images
  - Searching for new visuals
  - Searching for new approaches
  - Searching to refresh own teaching materials
  - Searching to fill a gap in own materials
  - Searching for something to complement own materials

- Looking for purposeful resources
  - Looking for good quality images
  - Looking for materials for assessment
  - Learning for materials to teach weaker students
  - Looking for adaptable/suitable resources
  - Looking for trusted resources

- Browsing to see what others do
  - Doing peer observation through the resources
  - Looking for materials as you would in a staff room
  - Lacking confidence in own materials
  - Checking curriculum against others’ resources
  - Reusing as standardising teaching
Initial findings: Reflecting

**Pedagogy**
- Resources are a means to an end
- Resources are just a catalyst
- Resources act as mediating artefacts
- Having strong teaching beliefs
- Having clear teaching objectives
- Teaching through the resource
- Making sure resource is clear
- Thinking about cultural aspects
- Considering different contexts

**Peers’ ideas**
- Engaging in a dialogue with peers
- Bouncing ideas through the resource
- Finding teaching guidelines useful to look at
- Doing peer observation via the resource
- Working with colleagues

**Students’ needs**
- Considering group size
- Taking students’ diverse levels on board
- Thinking about students’ learning styles
- Thinking about various learning disabilities
- Wanting to develop students’ autonomy
- Giving additional information on slides
- Encouraging speaking
- Consolidating learning
- Making materials relevant to adult learning
- Considering various cultural backgrounds
- Tailoring resources to specific groups
- Supporting students with study skills
- Adding more interactivity to resources
- Making resources clearer/more approachable
- Taking tutorials’ non-attendees into account
Initial findings: Re-appropriating

Adapting and recreating
- Examples

Looking for something that makes sense
- Understanding the resource
- Looking for something adaptable
- Providing guidelines to a resource is necessary
- Finding some slides confusing
- Looking for something suitable
- Looking for resources matching teaching beliefs
- Being confused about what a resource is
- Looking for something relevant
- Feeling apprehensive about changing original intent of a resource

Needing to own materials
- Making the materials your own
- Finding guidelines useful but not using them
- Wanting to teach through own voice
- Having strong teaching beliefs
- Having clear teaching objectives
- Teaching through the resource
- Having to consider the clarity of the resource
Initial findings: Re-appropriating

Example of an adapted resource for a German beginners tutorial

Original resource resource  Adapted

Was essen Sie gern?

Ich esse

gern

nicht gern

überhaupt nicht gern

Fisch
Käse
Brot
Backerei
Wohnraum
Spaziergang
Kino
Initial findings: Retaining

- Lacking confidence/skills
  - Having poor IT skills
  - Feeling insecure about own materials
  - Thinking resources would not be of use to peers
  - Having concerns about copyrights laws
  - Thinking own resources are not good enough

- Being against sharing in an open space
  - Time consuming to make resources sharable
  - Lack of reciprocity
  - Lack of feedback provided
  - Thinking resources are a personal thing
  - Finding it ‘rude’ to re-upload reworked resources
  - Finding it ‘disrespectful’ to the author of original resource
  - Not wanting to contribute own resources for free

- Willing to share with certain groups
  - Sharing with students
  - Sharing with teachers on the same course
  - Sharing with close/known colleagues
  - Sharing via the course tutor forum
  - Sharing as part of a collaborative project
Initial findings: Learning and experimenting

Learning and experimenting

- Trial and error
  - Questioning own teaching
  - Reflecting on own teaching
  - Recognising areas of difficulties for students
  - Building on knowledge gained from tutorials
  - Understanding that materials can be adapted
  - Reflecting on different modules' needs
  - Relying on experience
  - Learning by doing
  - Being critical about own resources
  - Taking stock of own progress

- Students' feedback
  - Building resources from students' response in tutorials
  - Learning as a language student
  - Using students' content

- Changing practices
  - Understanding online teaching better
  - Moving from creating static to interactive slides
  - Creating better quality resources
  - Realising need for quality OER for online teaching
  - Recognising differences between f2f and online
  - Breaking down activities more
  - Finding different ways of doing things
  - Realising complexities of beginners learning
  - Giving more time to wrap-up/summarise
  - Creating more student-centred materials
  - Pitching level of materials better
  - Making tutorials more engaging
Initial findings: Learning and experimenting

Example of adaptation that demonstrates a possible change in teaching approach

Original resource

Adapted

Pour le déjeuner, je voudrais...... Et toi?
Moi, je voudrais....

Dans mon frigo, il y a...

..... jus d'orange
..... moutarde
..... lait
..... confiture
..... eau
..... vin
..... bière
..... œufs
..... citrons
..... poivrons
..... chou-fleur
..... yaourts
..... ail
..... tomates
Initial findings: Grounded Theory Analysis (WIP)
OER – transforming education?

• Language teachers adapt OER but do not redistribute their adapted resources (similar findings to previous studies, for example, Beaven, 2014)
• Language teachers reflect on their teaching practices while adapting resources and experimenting with students (Weller, et al., 2016)
• Language teachers OER advocates and confident with the technology may change their teaching practices and beliefs about online language teaching
Further questions

• Does it matter for their transformation that teachers do not redistribute revised OER into repositories?
• How can the transformative success stories be better used and shared?

• Improve materials
• Let the teachers be craftsmen
• Offline openness
References


Thank you for your attention

Any questions?

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