Behind OEF: UNIR iTED

Research Institute of Innovation & Technology in Education at Universidad Internacional de la Rioja (UNIR), established in 2016 (http://ited.unir.net)

Linked to UNESCO, ICDE, EDEN, OEC.

Working on: Adaptive and Collaborative Learning, Learning analytics, Digital multimedia and interactive contents, educational games, Multiplatform and multi-device learning resources and methods, eLearning standards, social learning and learning networks, ubiquitous learning, visual environments for user model authoring, use implementation and evaluation of ICTs in the classroom.

Open Education is at the core of the UNIR strategy (probably, the first private open university with an Open Education policy).
Rationale: why this research

The victory of Open Education (Weller 2014)
  • Policy: EC, ICDE, UNESCO all agree that OE is the way to go
  • Institutions: open initiatives in more and more universities
  • >350 institutions offering MOOCs

vs

The power of the Status Quo
  • Frontal teaching is often still the norm
  • OER are in an eternal “experimentation phase”
  • The MOOCs hype is settling down
Why change is so slow? What do we need?
We need a peaceful army of Open Educators.

Educators (professors, tutors, lecturers) are not driving the change towards Openness.

They must transform from agents of resistance into agents of change.

This means re-imagining their role from the owners of knowledge to critical friends, co-travellers, mediators, facilitators.
The OEF research

1. Explore concept of “Open Educator” along all its components, and propose a new definition

2. Design, build and test a tool that can contribute to transform HE teachers into Open Educators, from agents of resistance into agents of change
Research activities

1. Literature review
2. Experts interviews
3. Platform building
4. Pilot
5. Analysis
Main results

1. Definition of Open Educator

2. Framework for Open Educators’ capacity development

3. OEF Platform (EN, FR, ES, IT, PT)

4. Paper in IRRODL, two more paper under evaluation, 6 presentations in conferences, blogposts etc.
First, the Open Educator definition

An Open Educator choses to use open approaches, when possible and appropriate, with the aim to remove all unnecessary barriers to learning.

He/she works through an open online identity and relies on online social networking to enrich and implement her work, understanding that collaboration bears a responsibility towards the work of others.
Second, the OEF framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Teaching</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open designer</td>
<td>OER specialist</td>
<td>Open teacher</td>
<td>Open evaluator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative designer</td>
<td>OER user</td>
<td>Engaging teacher</td>
<td>Innovative evaluator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual designer</td>
<td>New to OER</td>
<td>Traditional teacher</td>
<td>Traditional evaluator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Third, the OEF platform
The platform for teachers (1)

By filling a short questionnaire…
The OEF platform for teachers (2)

…the teacher is “positioned” in the different columns…
The OEF platform for teachers (3)

...receives tailored guidelines...
The OEF platform for teachers (4) …and can go back to check his/her progresses.
The OEF platform for HE leaders

Provides an overview of openness across faculty
Pilot results

• Pilot held at Politecnico di Torino, Italy

• 200+ replies to the questionnaire

• Caveat: this is a technical university
A picture of openness capacity in the university

In the following table you can see how the staff of your institution positions with respect to Open Education in different areas: Open Learning Design, Open Content, Open Teaching and Open Assessment. The higher in each column, the more "open" an educator is. This allows you to understand who are the "best performers" in terms of openness and who need to develop basic or advanced competences in the field.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>A. Open Learning Design</th>
<th>B. Open Content</th>
<th>C. Open teaching</th>
<th>D. Open Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Politecnico di Torino</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**A. Open Learning Design**
- A3. Open designer
  - Total: 7
  - [Profile icons]

**B. Open Content**
- B3. OER expert
  - Total: 22
  - [Profile icons]

**C. Open teaching**
- C3. Open teacher
  - Total: 8
  - [Profile icons]

**D. Open Assessment**
- D3. Open evaluator
  - Total: 13
  - [Profile icons]
First findings

Do you encourage students to search for additional resources on the web and to produce their own knowledge?

Yes 31%
No 69%
First findings

Do you encourage students to search for additional resources on the web and to produce their own knowledge?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No social</th>
<th>For teaching</th>
<th>Use social media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No</strong></td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
General findings

1. Openness has many “entry points”
2. Added value for both educators and managers
3. Importance of leadership recognition for peer learning
4. The relation between Openness and Collaboration is clear
So cool. But:

1. Each teacher is different
2. Institutional context matters
3. Terminology is important
4. Teachers might tend to “over-rate” their openness
Future of the project…

1. Foster the use the OEF platform: the more data we get, the more useful the tool will be for the community

2. Translate the platform into other languages (RU, CH)

3. Next research phase on relation between Openness and Collaboration, investigating the impact of Open Culture (sharing) on teaching practices: “If you cannot convince teachers to be open, teach them how to network!”
This is an open research project

http://wikieducator.org/Research/open_educators_factory
http://rd.unir.net/pub/oef