The role of OER localisation in building a knowledge partnership for development: The TESSA and TESS-India teacher education projects

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Alison Buckler
Leigh-Anne Perryman
Tim Seal
(Open University, UK)
Shankar Musafir
(TESS-India, India)
‘What is the future of open education? Where is it going? I think there is only one answer: localisation’

(David Wiley)

‘Localization must involve locals; a community of practice bolsters localization; localization must be done in appropriate formats; and effective localization is directly proportional to understanding local contexts’  (Tiffany Ivins)
Nigeria
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Photo: Alison Buckler CC-BY
Nigeria

Photo: Alison Buckler CC-BY
South Africa

Photo: Alison Buckler CC-BY
Research Questions

● How have two Open University (UK) based projects designed and facilitated the localisation of OER?
● How can communities best be supported to localise OERs?
● What challenges still need to be addressed?
● How can we conceptualise a new paradigm of open education for development?
Quantity

India: needs 1.33 million teachers

Bihar: 75% of teacher ed. colleges did no training between 2007-2010

Sub-Saharan Africa: needs 5 million more teachers by 2030 (UNESCO, 2013)
Quality

• India - Bihar: 45% of teachers don’t have minimum qualification.

• India: some states, only 1% pass Teacher Eligibility Test

• Sub-Saharan Africa: >50% of primary school children “learning so little that they had no value added to their education” (Brookings, 2012).

• India – ASER: “A ritual exercise bringing the same disturbing but worsening news” (Deccan Herald, 2013)
TESSA - Teacher Education in Sub Saharan Africa

Original member countries:
Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, Sudan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda Zambia

Subject areas:
Literacy, Numeracy, Science, Social Science, Life skills/Arts

Format:
• Text based units structured around:
  – activities, case studies and resources
• Conceptualised as:
  – ‘professional learning and strategy toolkit’
• Available online and in print
Focus States:
Assam, Bihar, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal

Subject areas:
English, Math Science, Leadership, Language & Literacy

Format:
- Text (inc video) based units structured around:
  - activities, case studies and resources
- Stand alone, self directed study units
- Available online in multiple formats, including for print

Photo: TESS-India CC-BY-SA
Methods

**TESS-India**
- Participant observation at localisation workshops in three states (Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh)
- Analysis of workshop reports
- Interviews with localisation stakeholders (two facilitators and three practitioners)

**TESSA**
- Retrospective analysis of adaptation documents
- Retrospective analysis of interview transcripts with adaptation stakeholders (two facilitators and eight participants from Ghana, Kenya and Sudan)
Localisation - TESSA

Teacher Learning outcomes

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Word count: Versioned

One page each

Taken from OER Adaptation and Reuse across cultural contexts in Sub Saharan Africa: Lessons from TESSA (Teacher Education in Sub Saharan Africa)
http://jime.open.ac.uk/article/2012-03/html
Localisation - TESS-India

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Theme 1: Technology and Time

“I’d give people much more time to familiarise themselves with the underlying philosophy of TESSA, all of it really, the teaching and learning, interaction, distance learning, OERs…” (TESSA Curriculum Director, 2010)

The localisers “were working with hard copies, scribbling on them. Printing and typing took a lot of time. Reading handwriting was difficult. This is a logistical problem”.

(TESS-India localisation facilitator, 2014)
“Most of the teachers are clueless about how to teach… Frankly speaking…there are two types of teachers. First are the ones who have got no interest in teaching and just teach for the sake of it. There will be no impact on those. The other type are the willing types. These teachers will use the TDUs most and will adapt them as well” (TESS-India SLE, 2014)
“The issue of scale-able ways of assuring quality in a context where all (in principle) can contribute has not been resolved, and the question of whether quality transfers unambiguously from one context to another is seldom surfaced.”

(Falconer, et al, 2013: 4)
“What TESSA was trying to do was to have a template that gave a structure and a form so when people used it they knew there was a case study, they knew there was an activity, but that activity is related to them in their context… But, underneath all of that there was an approach to teaching and learning that is consistent.” (TESSA Curriculum Director, 2010)

“The objectives have been decided beforehand. So I was trying always to keep these objectives, not to distract from these objectives.” (TESSA Versioner, Sudan, 2010)
"I would like to see more from the State people... like if they want to see more assessment done in the classroom or if they want more attention paid to low achievers that sort of thing... Really, I’d like more radical localisation rather than safe localisation but there’s a reluctance, a deference that gets in the way."

(TESS-India Academic Manager, 2014)
Conclusion: Responsibilities for user engagement in multicultural OER projects

The OER Engagement Ladder © 2012 Joanna Wild, CC-BY
Conclusion: Creating a knowledge partnership

- Respect for individual perceptions & experience
- Institutional (quality) control & guidance
- Sensitivity to context (e.g. status of knowledge ownership)

Knowledge partnership

Openness & ‘embedded’ engagement with OER
Thank you

www.tess-india.edu.in
www.oerresearchhub.org
www.tessafrica.net

alison.buckler@open.ac.uk (@GoldenSyrupGirl)
leigh.a.perryman@open.ac.uk (@laperryman)
tim.seal@open.ac.uk (@tim10101)