Open Education as a threshold concept in Teacher Education: a theoretical framework for further research

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Open Education as a Threshold Concept in Teacher Education: a theoretical framework for further research

#oer18thresholds
This session grew from an original session proposal by:

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Following an open call for participation the group expanded to:

Leo Havemann, Birkbeck, University of London/The Open University
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J. Dawn Marsh, University of Waikato
Fabio Nascimbeni, Universidad Internacional de La Rioja
Helen Crump, The Open University
Nick Baker, University of Windsor
Mari Cruz García Vallejo, Independent
Part 1
A Video Introduction
(Gemma and Victoria)

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1jwYwQ9GnYQ0QEjU927fyTAViCWXk_lRt
Part 2:
Open as Troublesome and Discussion

(Slides by Dawn and Leo, Presented by Leo and Helen)
The original criteria

**transformative:** occasioning a significant shift in the perception of a subject, the construction of subjectivity and personal identity

**irreversible:** unlikely to be forgotten, or only able to be unlearned with difficulty

**integrative:** making connections between ideas within a subject and resulting in an understanding of the relationships between ideas and practices in a field

**bounded:** constituting a demarcation between disciplinary areas, which serves to delineate members of one academic community from another

**troublesome:** appearing counter-intuitive, intellectually absurd or ‘alien’ when first encountered

(Meyer & Land, 2006b; Perkins, 1999, 2006)
Subsequent criteria

**reconstitutive:** involving a shift in learner subjectivity and a transfiguration of self;

**discursive:** incorporating an extended use of natural, symbolic and artificial language characteristic of particular disciplinary discourses and thinking processes; and

**liminal:** likening the internalisation of a threshold concept to a journey or rite of passage (Baillie et al., 2013; Barradell, 2013; Meyer, 2012; Quinlan et al., 2013).
Rites de Passage

The genesis of threshold concept theory is in van Gennep (1960) and Turner’s (1969, 1970) anthropological research on initiation rites and life transitions.

- Adolescent >>> Adult
- Student >>> Professional
- PhD candidate >>> Academic researcher
- Traditional educator >>> Open educator

How does the initiation from *thinking like* an open educator, to *thinking as* an open educator take place?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Threshold Concepts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accountancy</td>
<td>cash, depreciation, profit, reconciliation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art therapy</td>
<td>professional identity, reflexivity, taboo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>complexity, conceptual change, dynamics, energy, equilibrium, evolution, homeostasis, hypothesis creation, osmosis, process and abstraction, probability, proportional reasoning, randomness and scales, variation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business and commerce</td>
<td>politics as power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate change</td>
<td>uncertainty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computing</td>
<td>code reuse, complexity, data abstraction, design patterns memory/pointers, modularity, object-oriented programming, state, recursion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>discretionary fiscal policy, economic modelling, efficiency, elasticity, equilibrium, incentives, interaction between markets, margin, opportunity cost, welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical engineering</td>
<td>dynamic resistance, feedback, holistic current flow, Thévenin’s theorem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>Bode plots, logical thinking, map sense, professionalism, response, social justice, transient critical flow, transmission lines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography and geoscience</td>
<td>data modelling, geologic/deep time, interoperability, map scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>subjective interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information literacy</td>
<td>authority, commodification of information, disciplinarily, format as process, metadata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>moral courage, risk, service, shared leadership, structural leadership, ‘creating leaders’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linguistics</td>
<td>rank scale</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Troublesome knowledge

The notion of troublesome knowledge is informed by Perkins’ (1999, 2006) pragmatic constructivism.

- **Inert**: seldom applied, e.g. passive vocabulary
- **Ritual**: routinely (but often uncritically) executed to achieve a result
- **Conceptually difficult**: conflicting with intuitive understandings
- **Foreign**: challenging existing beliefs and worldviews.
- **Tacit**: reflecting unconscious beliefs or peripheral awareness
Discussion!

Threshold concepts are said to be ‘troublesome knowledge’ - in what sense might teachers experience open education as troublesome?

Any other thoughts arising from the idea of open education as a threshold concept?

Please discuss and tweet your responses with the hashtag!
References


