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Adapting OER for the Professional Development of English Language Teachers

Student Dissertation

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MON Adapting OER for the Professional Development of English Language Teachers (Gospel Ikpeme)

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[Gospel Ikpeme](#)
10 January 2019

Multimedia Poster

For an introduction to the project presentation please see the >multimedia poster . I have also created an >accessible version of my poster for people with sight challenges.

Abstract

Social exclusion has continued to be an enormous issue despite the increase in technologically rich learning platforms on the internet. A lot of those who use mobile technology have access to the internet but are unaware of the existence or use of OER (Online Educational Resources) and so they are being left behind.

My project is focus on the adaptation of OER for English language teachers. The essence of the project is to provide help to ensure the provision of learning materials to the marginalised teachers in the developing world, especially those in sub-Saharan African countries such as Nigeria.

The project will sensitise the teachers and help them acquire information and knowledge on OER. The English language teachers on the project will discover alternative ways of demonstrating what they know, and this will lead to a change in their classrooms as they begin to challenge their learners in more productive ways using materials from the OER sites.

Most teachers in Nigeria use mobile technologies and are on social media app networks such as Facebook, WhatsApp and Telegram. This project will empower the teachers and improve their access to professional development and education available via OER sites (See O'Connor, 2000). OER offers a plethora of choices.

My presentation will consider how systems can be created for teachers to have access to OER repositories. In recent times, there has been an increase in internet-based network of freely available online resources for learning and teaching. These open educational resources include highly interactive and innovative curricula, visualizations, simulations and lesson plans.

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There are features that support the use of real-world resources (see McArthur & Zia 2008; Zia, 2001; Borgman et al., 2008). These increasingly available online resources are infrastructure available for teachers to use, access, and share, connect, create and adapt resources in ways that can change their practice (Borgman et al. 2008).

In the presentation, I will demonstrate that the use of social media technologies has an essential place in teacher professional development because teachers learn voluntarily. Teachers use forums to reflect on own practices and exchange ideas with colleagues (see Marcia & Garcia, 2016). So, instant messaging software have helped teachers to adapt information, to re-conceptualize and to make information much more functional for their contexts (Cranefield & Yoong, 2009). In very recent years, mobile learning devices have offered a variety of learning opportunities (see Macia & Garcia, 2016; Rambe & Bere, 2013; Cakir & Arslan, 2013; Hwang, Huang & Wu, 2011).

Given that WhatsApp, Telegram and Facebook stand out in many studies as effective tools and applications used by many people and available in mobile devices. It is easy to create online community of practice using WhatsApp, Telegram or Facebook (see Baran & Cagiltay, 2010; Wesley, 2013) and many teachers all over the world use WhatsApp, Telegram and Facebook for social and learning purposes.

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Rambe, P., & Bere, A. (2013). Using mobile instant messaging to leverage learner participation and transform pedagogy at a South African University of Technology. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 44(4), 544-561. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.12057> (Last accessed 4 January 2019)

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[Linda Nevin-Drummond](#)

2:40pm 28 January 2019 [Permalink](#)

Dear Gospel,

You have chosen an interesting and useful project. I am a teacher myself and will find it interesting to look at what you have shown about the open resources available especially those that can be adapted.

The notion of the teacher in the community of practice is a powerful one. I think you are saying that one of the strengths of the use of social media for teachers' professional development is its voluntary nature and presumably the strong motivation. Do you think the take up of the social media use is linked to the availability of the technology or are there other factors? Is there some resistance among teachers to engaging in these communities? Some of the studies in your list e.g. Rambe and Bere talk about adults' 'resentment' in blurring academic and social life in out of hours messaging. I am wondering if I am finding this with my project (which is the opposite of yours as it looks at the students rather than the teachers) However, is the balance more towards the positive regarding the use of social media for learning for us all?

Thanks again for sharing.

Linda



[patrick shearer](#)

10:43pm 3 February 2019 [Permalink](#)

Hi Gospel,

Fascinating topic - especially in your context. My students are only interested in gaining qualifications - and not developing themselves. Therefore they do very little in their spare time. Everything they do is geared toward achieving credits - not developing their skills through open resources etc. This requires the teachers to try and change the mindsets of the students - especially in the area of language development - something that my students are very weak at. Bringing collections of resources for them to use is one of our key jobs. Encouraging them to do extra using open resources is developing them outside the classroom.



[Dr Simon Ball](#)

11:10am 19 February 2019 [Permalink](#)

Hi Gospel

Well done on a great presentation! Here is a summary of the comments and questions you received following your presentation (including those you may have addressed verbally). Please respond in whatever way you choose - I suspect you may wish to deal with the first few in one response!

Best wishes

Simon

- ▶ Which [website] has the most adaptable resources in your experience? and what make a good adaptable resource?
- ▶ Is there any use of TED Ed lessons?
- ▶ Do you find that the OER created by the British Council or the BBC require a lot of adaptation to ensure relevance to your context?
- ▶ Can you explain more about the 'fixed lesson plan format' that teachers have to work with?
- ▶ can you set up closed groups on the oERs so that people can interact with those who are in similar situations to themselves?
- ▶ are there any issues about teachers in some areas accessing technology ?
- ▶ do students have smart phones?



[Gospel Ikpeme](#)

11:53pm 4 March 2019 [Permalink](#)

Thank you so much for sending this, Simon..

In my experience, the British Council site called Teaching English has the most adaptable resources. Adaptable resources are materials that are easy to use. Usually, this has a lot to do with the format. For instance, Word documents are easier to use than PDF whereas PDF are easier to print out than Word.

TED Ed lessons are not popular in Nigeria.

Yes, British Council and BBC materials requires some adaptation to suit the context. But in the teaching of English language other than cultural specific content, this is usually not a huge problem.



[Gospel Ikpeme](#)

11:53pm 4 March 2019 (Edited 11:54pm 4 March 2019) [Permalink](#)

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Yes, we have considered closed groups for discussions on similar issues.



[Gospel Ikpeme](#)

11:57pm 4 March 2019 [Permalink](#)

Accessing technology is an issue for some teachers in Nigeria, especially those in the rural areas without internet access.

Students expensive elite schools in large cities have smart phones. Use of smart phones by students within the school premises is generally not encouraged in Nigeria.



[Gospel Ikpeme](#)

11:57pm 4 March 2019 [Permalink](#)

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[Gospel Ikpeme](#)

12:45am 5 March 2019 [Permalink](#)

Thank you for your comments,

Teachers in Nigeria do not always have access to trainings for many reasons. Sometimes when trainings happen, they can be too expensive for the teachers or there might be no time. Offering these workshop trainings for teachers free and giving them a chance to access free OER resources is a huge motivation for the teachers.



[Gospel Ikpeme](#)

12:45am 5 March 2019 [Permalink](#)

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[Gospel Ikpeme](#)

12:47am 5 March 2019 [Permalink](#)

Hi Patrick,

Thank you for your comments on the need to encourage more people to use open resources.

Teachers on my workshop were very enthusiastic.

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