



TOETOE International: FLAX Weaving with Oxford Open Educational Resources

UKOER International Case Study
Alannah Fitzgerald, University of Oxford

Mar 2013

Contents (Hyperlinked to Case Study Sections)

Outline of the case study	3
Introduction	4
OER international narratives	5
Confucian Dynamism in English language education in China	5
Promotion of resource re-use	5
Do-It-Yourself open language collections in FLAX	6
The British Council in Beijing	6
Meeting with English language education publishers in China	<u>6</u>
The English language skyline in South Korea	7
English for Academic Purposes at Korea University	8
iTunesU at Korea University	8
Investigation into the sharing and reuse of open resources	8
Funding as a motivation for using OER	9
Private English language expenditure	9
Love is a stranger in an open car to tempt you in and drive you far away... toward Open Educational Practice	10
Design-based research	11
Open educational practices in English for Academic Purposes	11
Oh, what a BAWE! – the British Academic Written English corpus	12
The re-use of Oxford OpenSpines content	12
Vietnam’s Open University rising dragon	13
Emancipatory English in India	14
Delhi University OER par excellence	14
E-learning emancipatory English	15
Braving OER battles in Brazil	16
TOETOE International: feedback and feedforward	18
References	19
Licence and citation	22

Outline of the case study

This case study has been assembled into an ethnographic account (LeCompte & Schensul 1999:17; Clifford 1990:51-52) to stop the clock as it were and to reorder the recent past that has been observed and jotted down; to systematize, contextualize and assemble the activity of the TOETOE International project (tɔɪtɔɪ: Technology for Open English – Toying with Open E-resources) with the University of Oxford across seven different countries over a period of four months. It is part narrative and part design dialectic, drawing on stories and evaluations made by international stakeholders concerning the re-use of Oxford content: Oxford-managed corpora (large text and audio-visual resource collections) and Oxford-created open educational resources (OER). Moreover, these evaluation narratives continue to inform the design of open-source digital library software for developing flexible open English language learning and teaching collections with the FLAX project (Flexible Language Acquisition flax.nzdl.org) at the University of Waikato in New Zealand.

Thick descriptions (Geertz, 1973) are presented from networked meetings, workshops, conference presentations and interviews with OER and English Language Teaching (ELT) professionals for arriving at better understandings of the social acts and symbols connected with the international open education movement. As part of the reflexive writing process for this case study, and as both researcher and project manager, I have re-storied the stories of participating individuals and institutions, placing them in chronological sequence and providing causal links among ideas. Themes arising from the stories in this project are introduced here as section headers, containing new metaphors for linking unfamiliar phenomena in each country represented with familiar concepts for understanding OER in the international context. Topics introduced by this case study include: emancipatory English, Do-It-Yourself (DIY) open English language collections building, working OER into traditional ELT publications, and long-range planning for embedding OER and open educational practices (OEP) within a sustainable English language education ecology.

The primary goal of the TOETOE International project has been to demonstrate and to promote how Oxford research and teaching content has been effectively mined using approaches from corpus linguistics for the development of powerful yet simple open data-driven language teaching and learning resources for uses in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). Alongside open approaches for translating and promoting the findability of metadata that can potentially link English-medium OER at Oxford with international audiences, as has been evidenced in a further Oxford OER International case study in this UK OER International series, TOETOE International is alternatively focused on those international stakeholders who wish to teach and learn English through the Oxford content presented in this case study. Open data from Wikipedia that have been linked to the British Academic Written English (BAWE) corpus, which is managed by the Oxford Text Archive, will be demonstrated as open language collections in FLAX with accompanying training videos. Likewise, open-source software (OSS) from the FLAX project for creating open language collections that reuse OER will be shared through this case study, once again demonstrating through training videos how Oxford lectures and talks from the OpenSpires project can be re-purposed for English language education.

The research methodology presented in this case study is centred on design-based research following on from earlier TOETOE project work for developing OER for EAP with Durham University during my SCORE Fellowship project with the Open University's Support Centre for Open Resources in Education (SCORE). The focus of this research with international stakeholders has involved resource demonstrations and focus-group discussions with English language teachers and publishers on their perceptions of the efficacy of the Oxford-based resources within the FLAX system. In the context of this TOETOE International project, observations and reflections will also be presented from meetings held at the University of Waikato's Department of Computer Science on web-based language resource planning, design, development and evaluation. In particular, the section on open educational practices in this case study will highlight issues for the re-use of Oxford content and the development of derivative resources with the FLAX OSS. This section will also emphasise concerns related to ELT practitioner competencies for employing technology in their teaching and in developing teaching and learning resources.

Benefits for the Higher Education sector identified by this case study include the flexible OSS from the FLAX project for linguistically enhancing English-medium OER for English language education. In particular, this project has demonstrated the efficacy of the FLAX OSS for building language collections by reusing, remixing and re-distributing Oxford University content. A further advantage bestowed by this project is the window that has been opened onto the global open education network for sharing best practice for engaging with international stakeholders.

A broader definition for OER will also be presented in this case study, one which is inclusive of the OSS developed by the FLAX project for prising open research corpora managed by the Oxford Text Archive. Project outputs will be studied throughout this case study in the form of workshop and conference presentation slides, audio-visual recordings and photographs taken on site in overseas contexts. Training videos on how to use the FLAX OSS with Oxford content will also guide readers through the functions of new teacher and learner interfaces for building interactive DIY language collections with re-purposed Oxford Creative Commons podcast content.

Most of the section themes covered in this case study also appear on the TOETOE project blog (alannahfitzgerald.org) for open commentary with further details and data, which have been hyperlinked herein to section headings. Further insights from this ongoing

project were disseminated at the OER13 conference in Nottingham in March 2013.

[Return to Contents](#)

Introduction

TOETOE International began in Oxford in October 2012 with the planning for this OER International project with the Higher Education Academy (HEA) and the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC). This collaboration between the University of Oxford IT Services and the TOETOE and FLAX projects had begun quite some time ago, however, with the development of open-source software and open educational resources for the re-use of Oxford managed corpora in English language learning and teaching.

FLAX provides a flexible digital infrastructure for linking and mining open and proprietary language resources. For example, user-friendly interfaces have been developed by the FLAX team to open up the British National Corpus (BNC) and the British Academic Written English (BAWE) corpus, both managed by the Oxford Text Archive, for uses in English language education.

For a more in-depth discussion on what corpora are and why they are relevant to language education, the first case study of three in this HEA/JISC series for the TOETOE project, *Openness in English for Academic Purposes* (Fitzgerald, 2013), provides the necessary background information on corpora and Data-Driven Learning (DDL) in language education. The second case study in this series, *Open Educational Resources and Language Teaching and Learning*, written with Anna Comas-Quinn from the Open University, provides further insights into open language project resources and the open practices that have developed around them (Comas-Quinn, A. & Fitzgerald, A. 2013).

In parallel, TOETOE has been working at the training interface with language teaching practitioners and their students in an effort to promote web-based open text analysis tools and language collections. This has been achieved through developing and sharing corpus-based text analysis tools, especially useful in EAP teaching and learning. This work is prefaced by my doctoral work at Concordia University in Canada in collaboration with the FLAX project for recommending new educational and promotional channels for cutting tracks through perceived barriers for the increased adoption of DDL in language education. This is with direct reference to the design, development, evaluation and dissemination of open corpus-based resources and practices intended specifically for uptake by non-expert corpus users, namely language teachers and learners.

Now TOETOE has come to Oxford for this OER International case study project and the emphasis has broadened to include work with the [OpenSpires](#) JISC-funded OER project, which includes lecture content created at the University of Oxford and licensed under Creative Commons. A further shift in focus with this TOETOE International project at Oxford is the increased and direct interaction with international stakeholders working in EAP and English as a Second or Foreign Language (ESL/EFL). Interactions have been devised to gauge perceptions of the Oxford managed and created content for localized use and reuse across global educational contexts for EAP and ESL/EFL.

Through the international open education network seven countries in total were involved in the TOETOE International project as part of the University of Oxford's and the Higher Education Academy's OER International programme. At the time of writing this case study, I had been on international OER engagements with stakeholders working in the areas of ELT and materials research, development and publishing in six countries from the Asia-Pacific region; starting in western Canada with the Open Education 2012 Conference in Vancouver and then spending time on location in China, Korea, New Zealand, Vietnam and India before returning to the UK in early 2013 for the eLearning Symposium at the Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies (LLAS) at the University of Southampton before heading on to my last destination, Brazil.

[Return to Contents](#)

OER international narratives

In an overview of narrative research in education, Clandinin and Connelly (1990) identified trends with increased emphasis on teacher reflection and teacher knowledge with the purpose of bringing teachers' voices to the forefront of educational research. The narratives



Figure 1 eLearning Symposium with the Centre for Languages, Linguistics, and Area Studies (LLAS) at Southampton.. <https://www.slideshare.net/AlannahOpenEd/southampton-fla-xweavingoxfordoer>

in this case study have been triangulated from data collected in observations, interviews and meetings with teachers, publishers, researchers and resource developers to arrive at shared stories which ensure that the voices of participants are present. These narratives are presented in text boxes that have been embedded into the themed case study sections. The sections can be read sequentially in the real-time order in which they took place over the course of this project, or they can be navigated at random depending on different audience interests for a hypertext reading experience by clicking on the Return to Contents links at the end of each section. Themed headings within this case study have also been hyperlinked to the TOETOE project blog to encourage reader commentary on insights surfaced from the project engagements in different international contexts where the project was carried out.

Confucian Dynamism in English language education in China

“High ranking in Long-Term Orientation indicates that the country prescribes to the values of long-term commitments and respect for tradition.” (Hofstede, 2010)

Geert Hofstede’s original IBM study on organizational cultures ranked countries according to a four-dimensional culture model. Participating countries in parts of Asia demonstrated distinct attitudes toward long-range planning, however, resulting in the identification of a fifth cultural dimension, Long Term Orientation (LTO). Interestingly, China clocks the highest count for LTO internationally. This dimension is also referred to by Hofstede as ‘Confucian Dynamism’, something which is “closely related to the teachings of Confucius and can be interpreted as ...[having] a pragmatic future-oriented perspective rather than a conventional historical short-term point of view” (Hofstede, 2010).

In 2010, the Ministry of Education for the People’s Republic of China released an ‘Outline of China’s National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development 2010-2020’. Reference is made to the rejuvenation of China through educational reforms, including flexible and open lifelong learning and “the popularization and public sharing of quality education resources”, whilst observing that this outline plan “... is the first of its kind for the nation in the 21st century, and encompasses a broad range of endeavours over a long period of time. Its mission is weighty, and its requirements are demanding. It should be implemented in real earnest through close-knit arrangements and meticulous organization, so as to ensure that all the listed tasks are carried out in a down-to-earth way”. (The Ministry of Education for the People’s Republic of China, 2010, p.41 & p.50).

Flying into Beijing we descended through thick brown cloud. Straight into a taxi to the third ring road of the city and directly to the Global Local Computer Assisted Language Learning (GLoCALL) Conference at Beijing Foreign Studies University. A few days later it rained all day long, clearing the next two days for a canopy of blue skies before the atmosphere marked by one of the world’s busiest and most vibrant cities started closing in again. It felt exciting to be back in Beijing after seven years.

I had only been at the Open Education 2012 Conference in Vancouver for the first day, presenting [The Great Beyond in English language resources](#) before flying out to China to catch GLoCALL. In preparation for these conferences, I had been working on a detailed TOETOE project blog post, [Radio Ga Ga: Corpus-based resources, you’ve yet to have your finest hour](#), which outlined the beginning of this OER International project with Oxford for the development and promotion of open corpus-based resources and practices in ELT. Later in this case study, in the section on open educational practices, I will make reference to the myth surrounding OER quality, which was raised at my session on Languages and Libraries at the OpenEd conference.

Promotion of resource re-use

I was met by Dr. Shaoqun Wu, the main researcher with the FLAX project from the University of Waikato in New Zealand. She had been at the national headquarters of the Open University of China the day before, promoting the open language tools and collections in FLAX, which re-uses Oxford-managed corpora and other open data and content including resources from Wikimedia, for possible uses in their online English language programmes. Before that she had spent several weeks in her hometown province of Yunnan with Professor Ian Witten (FLAX project lead) and Dr. Margaret Franken, also from the FLAX project, developing the [Happy English Learning](#) collection in FLAX for the Shalang rural primary school. The collection reuses content from the British Council’s China YouTube channel. A further collection was built in collaboration with Shalang students based on digital stories they had written with recorded voice-overs. In a later meeting with Liang Junhong, the English project manager at the British Council in Beijing, I would ask her what she thought about the re-use of the British Council’s web resources in the FLAX project; she indicated that she thought it was an effective means of linking interactive resources in both English and Chinese for young learners in rural China.

Do-It-Yourself open language collections in FLAX

Shaoqun and I presented back-to-back on the following morning of the conference and I assisted with her workshop in the afternoon. With no Twitter, Facebook, Slideshare, YouTube or LinkedIn this made for a different conference experience from what I had become accustomed to at OER events in the UK. Chinese versions of equivalent social networking media, which are widely used across China,

for example the YouKu video platform, were not exploited at this conference and instead we were invited to upload our conference slides onto a password protected Moodle conference site.

What became evident was the high regard for the efficacy of the FLAX system and the value placed on Oxford-based resources. Shaoqun had lugged thirty-odd printed copies of the [Book of FLAX](#) over from NZ. Easily downloadable as an open e-book from the FLAX website, it demonstrates how the language resource collections were made and how teachers can also create their own language collections in FLAX. This point about collections building was key at this conference and would inform our development work once back in New Zealand in November and December 2012.

The books were snapped up much to Shaoqun's delight and relief at not having to drag them all the way back to NZ. And, the resounding message from the Chinese teachers present at the workshops was that in addition to the resource collections already available on the FLAX website, they wanted language collections that reflected their curricula, their required teaching texts, their students' language needs and so on. But how do you take teachers, whose materials development practices rely on copyrighted teaching resources, through the stages of collections building to become open corpus developers? We know we cannot anticipate every language learning need by building specific collections for everyone but we can develop simple-to-use open tools to help teachers and learners do it for themselves. Crowdsourcing open language collections would become my renewed focus over the course of this project.

With teachers at Luoyang Normal University in Henan China we made plans to build a general College English corpus-based collection in FLAX, specifically for the Chinese higher education context where students will be preparing for the CET4 (College English Test 4) and CET6 (College English Test 6); two widely deployed English language tests in Chinese universities.

Publishers from the Foreign Language Teaching & Research Press (FLTRP), China's equivalent to Oxford University Press (OUP) in terms of ELT resources publishing output, were in the audience. They were keen to set up meetings to discuss the re-use of Oxford creative commons podcasts and corpus-derived language samples from the FLAX resource collections for the development of ELT publications. We arranged to get together after my meeting at the British Council.

The British Council in Beijing

Monday morning traffic the following week, dodging pedestrians, cyclists and drivers in all manner of vehicles, made for a long taxi ride to the British Council. After a demonstration of OER from Oxford and the FLAX project, English project manager Liang Junhong, updated me on the Council's current policies for ELT in China. There had been a noticeable shift in government educational policy whereby higher education institutes had been encouraged to become more independent, with projected growth in student completion rates almost doubling to include twenty percent of the working-age population from 2009 to 2020 (MoE China, 2010). In response to this, the British Council has moved support funding for ELT away from the HE sector to the primary and secondary sectors with English language teacher and trainer training in these two sectors being newly designated areas for ELT support. Work would still be carried out with Beijing Normal University in its capacity for ELT teacher education and training. Based on this discussion, we agreed that training video resources for how to use and build the FLAX collections using Oxford resources would be most valuable for the ELT work that the Council is currently supporting in China. It was also suggested that translating these training video resources into Chinese would be useful. Liang Li of the FLAX project at Waikato University has developed a series of FLAX training videos in Chinese which can be accessed via the [FLAX Youku video channel](#).



Figure 2 Saturday morning ELT resource shopping at the Foreign Language Teaching & Research Press (FLTRP) university bookstore, Beijing Foreign Studies University

Meeting with English language education publishers in China

My last two Chinese engagements were with ELT publishers, FLTRP in Beijing and the Dalian University of Technology Press in Dalian. The first part of my meeting with three FLTRP managers working in Higher English Education Publishing was carried out at their favourite 1950s swing rock n roll themed coffee shop near Beijing Foreign Studies University. They had all studied English language and linguistics at the university before working with the affiliated press. The connection between what they were trying to do in the ELT publishing world and their experience of the English language learning and teaching world was evident. One of their colleagues had celebrated their wedding at the coffee shop, and on our walk back to the press for the second part of our meeting old student dormitories were pointed out to me, so closely were they affiliated to their alma mater. They were impressed with what I told them about the OpenSpires project at Oxford, hoping that more Chinese universities would follow suit with the OER and OpenCourseware movements. Although they had not heard of UK OER before they were familiar with other open podcast resource projects such as

Open Yale and TED Talks, pointing out that American English was the preferred type of English taught in China, as it is in Korea.

It is important to note that English language education resources from Chinese publishers are nowhere near as expensive as those from well-known ELT publishers in the west. Some of the computer scientists back at Waikato in NZ showed me Chinese versions of their research that had been published as academic monographs for the Chinese market. In addition to being translated and therefore more accessible linguistically they were also available for a fraction of the cost to readers in China. In terms of business models, it is possible to work with Chinese English language education publishers to create and distribute teaching and learning resources at a minimal cost to learners and teachers. Perhaps it is because of this apparent customer satisfaction with the cost of educational resources in China that makes open educational resources and practices seem less urgent in this context.

After taking the overnight train to Dalian to meet with Ms. Ti of the Dalian University of Technology Press, similar views were shared on possible re-uses for the Oxford managed and created content I was demonstrating. Like FTLRP they could see the benefit of helping teachers who wanted to use creative commons podcasts in their teaching by offering linguistic support based on the language

present in the lectures and talks. Drawing on corpus-based evidence from resources such as the FLAX collocations database and the BAWE corpus in an effort to meet the new ELT market demand for resources in teaching English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP), it was agreed by all the publishers that these were viable materials development and publishing options that would ensure the re-use of high quality, flexible and authentic English language resources.



After a guided tour of Dalian's three beautiful coastlines and the sampling of some amazing seafood, I boarded a slow boat from China to Korea, eavesdropping on the linguistic code switching between fellow Chinese-Korean and Korean-Chinese passengers. Several hours would be spent standing on the deck watching trucks go back and forth between depots loading container after container of goods from one of China's busiest seaports.

Figure 3 Beijing to Dalian by overnight train - on board the Chinese ELT publishing express!

(Corresponding project blog post: <https://alannahfitzgerald.org/2013/02/23/confucian-dynamism-in-the-chinese-elt-context/>)

[Return to Contents](#)

The English language skyline in South Korea

The hopes and aspirations of English language education in South Korea reach sky high. This is manifest in the multitude of skyscrapers occupied by private English language institutes or 'hagwons', coupled with the soaring ambition of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology's latest roadmap for English language education assessment. Part of the national curriculum goals for English include the launch of the National English Ability Test (NEAT) where speaking proficiency will be one of the areas for evaluation. This will raise the stakes for test takers and their families who will have to find the resources to finance hagwon tuition to make up for a deficit in state school provisions for English language speaking support.



Figure 4 Seoul 2004 - marker on newsprint by Girlieprig. (CC some rights reserved).

When I arrived into Incheon in 1995 to take up my first English language teaching post, I soon realized that ELT was a successful money making industry, perhaps more than it was an educational field. My ELT experience in Korea would become my finishing school, setting me up with the questions that would furnish my future career as an open English language practitioner and researcher. This is the place where I learned to use the Internet, where digitized billboards and neon lights running up multi-stories were the simulacra that covered the urban Korean landscape. When I left Seoul in 2005 I had not yet heard of the open source software movement, which I would encounter early on in my graduate study research in 2007, and I wouldn't come across the term OER until 2009. As I was exiting Korea in 2005, high-speed Internet was available on public buses and the [Opencourseware Consortium \(OCWC\)](#) would be arriving at Korea University in 2007.

English for Academic Purposes at Korea University

Twenty-three Korean universities are currently members of the Korean OCWC. 2012 brought me back to Seoul to deliver an [Open Educational Resources for English Language Teaching Workshop at Korea University](#) with Professor Hikyoung Lee whom I had met at the joint [OCWC and OER Cambridge 2012 Conference](#) and with a former teaching colleague from my Yonsei University teaching days in the early 2000s, Christine Aitken. Similar issues were raised by the participants in this workshop about the need to be able to build specific EAP collections that had the same functionality of those in the BAWE collections in FLAX, which I had demonstrated to them. Academic Word Lists were discussed as potentially useful resources to add to the FLAX system for analysing texts for EAP. I noted this feedback down for development plans for when I would be working with the FLAX team in New Zealand directly after my time in Korea.

iTunesU at Korea University

Korea University was getting ready to launch Creative Commons content onto [iTunesU](#) so Hikyoung was keen to introduce this news to the English language teachers and students present at the workshop. I introduced [training resources from Oxford's OpenSpines project](#) that had been used with academics at Oxford to explain key concepts about OER and Creative Commons licensing before putting their teaching resources onto [Oxford's iTunesU channel](#). Within a few days of Korea University's entry onto iTunesU on March 1st 2013 their content, some of which is licensed as Creative Commons CC-BY-NC-ND, had already received more than 40,000 hits. Discussions around the re-use of educational resources seemed only fitting in light of this move onto iTunesU, so I introduced the teachers to [Chris' Reusable Card Game](#) from the [ORIOLE project](#), which at the time was fielding survey responses from users based outside of the UK. It turns out that I would be reusing Chris Pegler's card game, which can be seen in figure 5 below for download, in workshops in Korea, New Zealand and Vietnam as part of this project. The following two sections include excerpts from the workshop with teachers at Korea University using the OER game.

Investigation into the sharing and reuse of open resources

[Re-use card being read aloud by **Teacher A**]: "Is it necessary to have links to relevant research or even proper referencing? Do resources used need to evidence scholarship?"

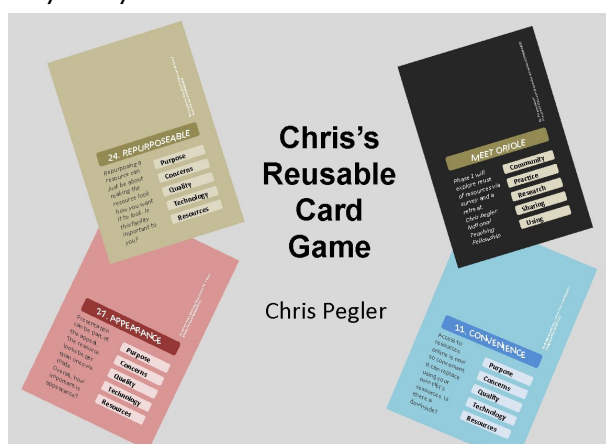
Teacher B: Well, you know, we have a problem with plagiarism and part of the problem is that students have a hard time understanding what they can and can't take out of texts.

Hikyoung: Right

Teacher B: And, what they need to paraphrase and what they don't need to paraphrase, that's a very big can of worms.

Alannah: I have heard from OER colleagues at Oxford that when they began recording the podcasts for OpenSpires, especially the ones recording video, that the cameraman had to turn the camera away from the screen because the lecturers hadn't cited stuff or they hadn't gotten clearance for lots of images; they hadn't gotten permission to use them. So, I think as teachers we're actually quite guilty of this, you know, just mocking up a slideshow here or a hand-out there and we're not actually trained, we're not trained in it, are we? We don't know about copyright...I definitely didn't get trained in it. I've learned about it through OER really.

Teacher A: But as you said earlier once it's within the closed classroom or the online learning environment, no one's going to take it away to anywhere else.



Alannah: Right, but that's what the issue was because once you go to put it on iTunesU then it does become an issue so that's something you will need to think about as well as you go onto iTunesU.

Teacher A: I'm quite reticent about this whole iTunesU thing...

Hikyoung: Why?!

Teacher A:...because I might end up behind bars [group laughter]

Hikyoung: We have people at our office who will check with you to go over what is Creative Commons and what is OK to use and reuse and what is not, so no problem.

Teacher B: They'll bring you food every day behind the bars [laughter continues]

Hikyoung: Yeah, yeah, that's what we'll do, ha! [laughter continues]

Teacher B: You won't lose your freedom; you'll just lose your reputation. [laughter continues]

Alannah: Yeah, you can do podcasts from behind bars – that could be a real viral hit on the Web, eh? [laughter continues]

Figure SEQ Figure 5 Chris' Reusable Card Game.

<https://www.slideshare.net/orioleproject/chris-pegler-reusable-card-game>

Funding as a motivation for using OER

Hikyoung: ...pick a colour or anything.

[Re-use card being read aloud by **Teacher B**]: "OK, if funding is available to get involved in using, making or sharing resources then perhaps that is reason enough to get involved?"

Hikyoung: Yeah, money moves people. [group laughter]

Teacher B: Yes and no though, right? Overall, yes, but I do think that, you know, you do need to have passion or desire...

Teacher A: But this is all very non-profit oriented and the concept of sharing resources is that you get a lot of satisfaction from doing it and you also know that there's a lot of people like you out there doing it, producing something that you could also use. It seems like a sort of give and take scenario really.

Private English language expenditure

At lunch with Hikyoung and Christine we discussed where OER was most needed in the Korean ELT context and how the Korean OCWC was focused primarily on higher education. The biggest challenge lay ahead for under-privileged families who would need to support their children's English proficiency with the new higher level English speaking requirements as set out by the Ministry of Education, Technology and Science with the new National English Ability Test. This is likely to create a burden for those families who cannot afford to pay brokers, namely private language institutes or hagwons, with preparing their children for this new test where the testing of spoken English is one of the key focus areas.

Recent OECD reports for the percentage of GDP spent on education in the Republic of Korea have been consistently higher than other OECD member countries, the bulk of which (an average of 40% annually) is made up of money paid by parents on private tuition to hagwons and tutors for their children. English is the number one academic subject in the private tuition sector, raking in 41% of the total amount spent in this area.

"Korea currently has nearly 100,000 hagwons, which must receive a permit from the local education government to operate. The concentration of around 6000 hagwons in the Gangnam district of Seoul is thought to be an important factor in the high housing prices in that area, which has become a major social issue. The hagwons have more teachers than the public school system and attract the best ones with higher salaries. Admission to prestigious hagwons is challenging and depends on entrance exams." (OECD Economic Surveys: Korea 2012, p.131)

Private income expenditure on education has been an on-going concern for the South Korean government and perhaps a lesson for other countries on the effects of unparalleled privatization in the education sector. It is clear that investment in sustainable public English language education is needed to reduce private income expenditure on education in an effort to close the gap on growing levels of income inequality and poverty. Beyond the provisions of the English Broadcasting Station channel which offers free but not open English language learning resources for young learners, there is a greater need for flexible English language teaching and learning resources that meet the needs of a diverse society.

The South Korean government recognizes the lack of faith in the public education system and is trying to introduce interventions that will remedy the situation via the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST). However, if the public education sector were to adopt open educational policies for the development of resources and practices then this would create an open promotional channel back to publically funded English language initiatives. Local expert English teachers could also benefit from sharing their expertise through the development and dissemination of well-received OER to raise their individual as well as their institutional profiles. The MEST releases annual plans for educational policy change across curriculum, resources and attitudes to education. In response to problems surrounding private tuition, such plans include: government-funded afterschool programmes; a reduction in study time loads to provide tailored learning; new university admissions processes for ensuring equal access opportunities and; reporting mechanisms for those hagwons that are over-charging with tuition fees (MEST, 2009, 2010 & 2011). To enact these plans, a concerted investment in open educational resources and practices could provide the necessary promotional and pedagogical tools to draw attention to successful applications of these well-founded plans from the MEST.

(Corresponding project blog post: <http://www.alannahfitzgerald.org/the-english-language-skyline-in-south-korea/>)

[Return to Contents](#)

Love is a stranger in an open car to tempt you in and drive you far away... toward Open Educational Practice

This section will present the design-based research methodology I engaged with while working onsite in New Zealand with the FLAX team for TOETOE International. This will draw on issues related to current practices within EAP resources development and the overall lack of expertise with technology across the EAP practitioner body.

Too often teachers and academics are offered limited resources and incentives for sustained participation in design-based research for the development and use of educational media. What is more, some leaders in higher education are slow to realise that it is technology that is leading educational innovation and not pedagogy alone (Laurillard, 2001). At the 2012 International Association of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL) exhibition and conference in Glasgow, Laurillard was one of the keynote speakers, where she made reference to her new book, *Teaching as a Design Science* (2012), emphasising the increasing need amid a new climate of ever-diminishing funding sources in education for teaching practitioners from all fields to work from the ground up for solutions with technology in learning and teaching. She cited the many failures of big Government and institution-led learning technology projects that have not managed to sustain themselves and encouraged teachers working at the ground level to share their learning designs for successful teaching across open platforms.

“...it became clear to me that every technology is based upon what I call the orchestration of phenomena, natural effects working together. If you look at any new technology as a whole symphony orchestra of working phenomena, it becomes a huge wonder. I have a sense of wonder far, far greater than I had before. As human beings, we’re using these things unthinkingly every day—it’s like having magic carpets at our disposal, and we have no idea how they fly.” (Interview with W. Brian Arthur, author of *The Nature of Technology*, interviewed by Greg Ross of American Scientist)

Unless you know what is at your disposal technologically speaking, and unless you know how to bring resources together, mindful of their affordances and their limitations, then to the untrained eye technological innovation can seem like pure genius. But it is probably more the case of working through problem solving scenarios step by step, pulling together an ever increasing swag bag of tech goodies to create solutions for the moment until the next thing comes along. And, so the cycle continues. This can feel very overwhelming to the individual teacher who would like to be better at using technology and this is why Russell Stannard’s *Teacher Training Videos* (TTV) is such a big hit among language teachers.

In response to the title of this section, I am interested in what drives an open educational practitioner. The reasons will be numerous but the one that stands out from working on this project is the capacity to work across the international open education network. My time spent at the Greenstone digital library lab at the University of Waikato working with the FLAX project team offers a view into this relatively new world of open educational practice. Working across disciplinary, technological and geographical boundaries, my current practice seems very far from the practice I was trained in and have worked in as an English language teacher. Nonetheless, everything that I do now in my new open educational practice with open corpus-based resources is very much informed by my past

teaching practice in EFL and EAP.

Every week at the Greenstone digital library lab at Waikato, I would participate in developer meetings with the computer scientists and Liang Li, formerly with the Chinese Open University and now working on the FLAX project. Well-versed in natural language processing, the computer scientists behind the interface designs of collections and activities were adept at envisioning useful ways for exploiting OER as available linguistic resources for the development of simple-to-use language learning collections and text analysis tools. I soon picked up what the limitations of the different technologies were. The focus of these meetings was the rapid prototyping of resources and envisioning how they would work across different language learning scenarios. Through this design and development process, I was able to observe much iteration of the resources currently under development. For a demonstration of the collocations learning activities that were being built during this period, please watch the [FLAX Learning Collocations Play video](#).

Design-based research

This methodology for the development of OSS for reusing OER enabled me and the other language teacher present at the meetings to engage from the standpoint of potential end-users, namely language teachers and students, of the proposed resources. We identified possible teaching and learning scenarios for the development of new tools and resources, focusing on how to make the resources more interactive for teachers and learners and discussing what considerations for user interfaces would need to be designed into the development plans. Any questions raised about usability were documented for future interactions with teachers we would be engaging with for the dissemination, evaluation and uptake of the project resources. The other primary activity stemming from these meetings involved the sketching out of prototypes for new tools and resource features, talking each other through the functionality of proposed resources and debating what would be the best development methods to employ. Rapid prototypes were prepared by the OSS developers to be presented for further trial and evaluation at subsequent meetings. This is how the meetings progressed for the duration of my time at Waikato while working on this OER International project.

In the field of educational technology we refer to the approach for resources design, development, evaluation and implementation as design-based research, which Terry Anderson, professor and Canada research chair in distance education, has referred to as action research on steroids (2007). Anderson's analogy is a useful one as most language teachers are familiar with action research, which shares many of the same principles as design-based research. Pragmatism is central to both approaches, often employing mixed methods of inquiry to arrive at tangible solutions to educational problems. Normally within action research cycles it is individual teaching practitioners who carry out classroom teaching interventions to observe, record and reflect on the impact of these interventions over time with the aim of informing and improving teaching practice (Reason & Bradbury, 2007). However, within design-based research cycles, emphasis is more commonly placed on educational practitioners working in collaboration with research and design teams (Anderson & Shuttuck, 2012).

Open educational practices in English for Academic Purposes

I also had a chance to present my work at the Tertiary Writers Network Colloquium, which was hosted by the Department of Education at Waikato. This was a great opportunity to share open practices in EAP with a non UK-based audience working mainly in Australasia and in the US. I highlighted some of the OEP going on with the EAP community online using social networking technologies such as Twitter, blogs, Slideshare, YouTube and so on for reflection on the different types of networks we are and are not plugging into. EFL/ESL has been employing these technologies for longer for sharing ideas and resources in general ELT but there is more that could be done with connecting teachers to resources development projects, either through the OSS and OER communities or through working with traditional ELT publishers for creating more effective resource evaluation channels that would help teachers learn more about technology.



Figure 6 Networking Open Tertiary Writing Resources workshop at the Tertiary Writers Network Colloquium, Waikato University.
<https://www.slideshare.net/AlannahOpenEd/networking-open-tertiary-writing-resources>

(Corresponding project blog post: <http://www.alannahfitzgerald.org/love-is-a-stranger-in-an-open-car-who-tempts-you-in-and-drives-you-far-away/>)

[Return to Contents](#)

Oh, what a BAWE! – the British Academic Written English corpus

“Unsurprisingly, the utility of the corpus is increased when it has been annotated, making it no longer a body of text where linguistic information is implicitly present, but one which may be considered a repository of linguistic information.” (ICT4ELT, McEnery T. and Wilson A., 2012)

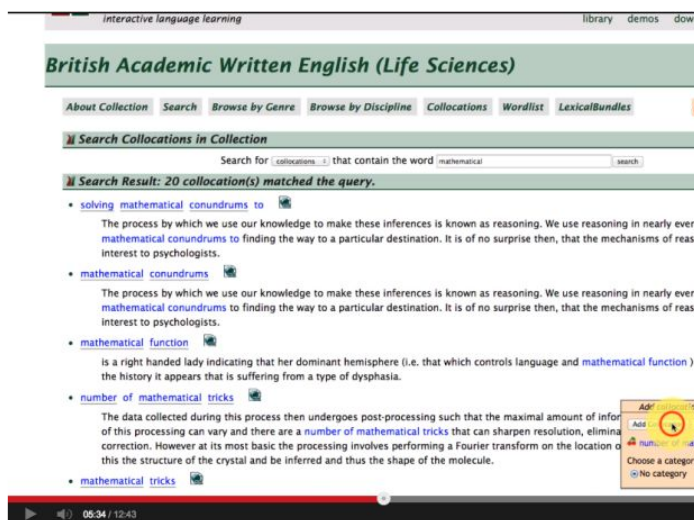


Figure 7 FLAX BAWE Collections training video on YouTube. Click on the image to view the video.

The British Academic Written English (BAWE) collections in FLAX have been divided into four corresponding sub-corpora, representing university student writing from the physical sciences, the life sciences, the social sciences and the arts and humanities. The BAWE corpus, which is managed by the [Oxford Text Archive](#), is arguably one of the most valuable resources in EAP due to the extensive work carried out by the developers of this student-generated corpus (Nesi et al, 2007). Twelve different genres in university student writing were identified by the BAWE corpus researchers (Nesi and Gardner, 2012) with texts collected from three UK universities: Warwick, Reading and Oxford Brookes.

FLAX opens windows onto the full texts within the BAWE, revealing how the corpus has been organised according to genre and discipline. New automated features for the BAWE collections in FLAX include: word list analyses; word keyness indicators; lexical bundles and collocations derived from the corpus; part of speech parsing for phrases in the corpus texts with links to the FLAX learning collocations database as well as the live Web; and glossary features using Wikipedia to enable teachers and students to manage unfamiliar language that is specific to academic English from across the disciplines. The training video in figure 7 above takes you through the different features of the open BAWE collections in FLAX.

(Corresponding project blog post: <http://www.alannahfitzgerald.org/oh-what-a-bawe/>)

[Return to Contents](#)

The re-use of Oxford OpenSpires content

This section will briefly introduce new OSS tools and interfaces from FLAX, which includes YouTube links to two training videos for building do-it-yourself (DIY) podcast corpora as seen in figure 8 below. The videos demonstrate how to develop interactive open language collections based on creative commons resources from the Oxford [OpenSpires](#) project and a [TED Talk](#) given by Oxford academic, Ian Goldin. Stable OSS has been designed to enable non-corpus specialists to build their own language collections consisting of text and audio-visual content augmented with the powerful text analysis tools and resources in FLAX. These collections can be hosted directly on the FLAX website under the registered users section or the OSS can be hosted on your preferred website or content management system. A Moodle version of the FLAX tools has also been developed and new tools and interactive game applications for Android devices are currently in the beta development stage for stable release via [FLAX on GooglePlay](#) later in 2013.

It is anticipated that these open tools and resources will provide simple and replicable pathways for other UK higher education institutions to develop language support collections around their own OER podcasts for wider uptake and accessibility with international audiences. The training videos in figure 8 demonstrate how a variety of activities have also been built into the FLAX OSS for enabling teachers to manipulate texts within the collections to create language-learning interaction with open podcasts. For further

background research on the development of the FLAX language collections and tools, please see Wu, Franken & Witten, 2009 & 2010; Wu, Witten & Franken, 2010.

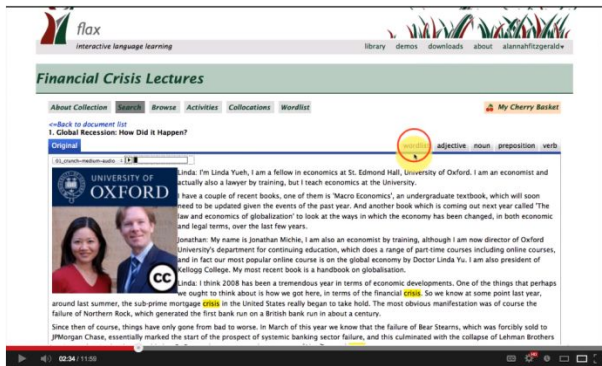
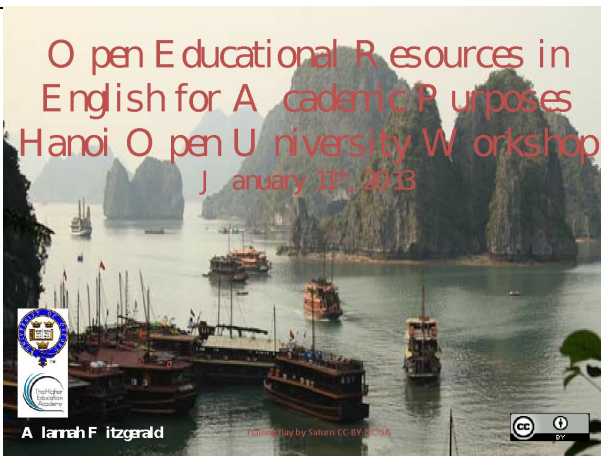


Figure 8 FLAX Do-It-Yourself Podcast Corpora 1&2 training videos with OpenSpires OER on YouTube. Click on the images to view the videos.

(Corresponding project blog post: <https://alannahfitzgerald.org/2013/03/26/re-using-oxford-openspires-content/>)

[Return to Contents](#)

Vietnam’s Open University rising dragon



Hanoi is fondly known as the city of the rising dragon. The best outcome you could hope for when giving any workshop is that what you are sharing is both timely and needed. Through the OCWC and the Open Universities network I made contact with the Vice Dean of the Faculty of English and Modern Languages, Dr. Ho Ngo Trung, with a bit of help from Google Translate for deciphering Hanoi Open University’s web pages. Dr. Trung was able to set up two meetings and a workshop with twenty-one English faculty teachers and academics literally at the drop of a hat. My time in Vietnam was short but we managed to pack in a lot in response to new digitization guidelines issued by the Vietnamese Ministry of Education (MoE) for upgrading their current EAP resources. Fortunately, I had located a rising dragon for building open EAP resources for sharing best open educational practices across the Vietnamese context, using a combination of their own and Oxford’s resources.

Figure 9 Workshop in Open Educational Resources in English for Academic Purposes at Hanoi Open University. <https://www.slideshare.net/AlannahOpenEd/open-educational-resources-in-eap-at-hanoi-open-university>

Dr. Trung picked me up from my hotel and drove me across the city through a sea of scooters to his Faculty of English and Foreign Languages to discuss current trends in Vietnamese higher education with a particular slant on language education. It turns out we were in a higher education zone where networking between universities and with the MoE (located just around the corner from the Hanoi OU) was both easy and encouraged. Cars are obviously not the norm in Hanoi as we entered the building past the staff motorcycle parking area. He informed me that the OCWC status had just been conferred by the MoE on Hanoi and Ho Chi Min Open Universities to lead in the area of OCW and OER. Open Universities in Vietnam like many around the world pride themselves on offering flexible types of education to learners of different abilities and socio-economic situations. They even offered short programmes to full-time workers referred to as in-service learners in this context.



Figure 10 Future Faculty of English and Modern Languages graduates at Hanoi Open University

Dr. Trung informed me that a bold National Foreign Language project would soon be launched with the MoE for developing foreign language proficiencies amongst Vietnamese youths. English would be the

first target language to pilot the project. Language teachers would also have to show their linguistic competencies by taking internationally awarded language tests. The stakes for multilingualism in modern Vietnam were getting higher.

The final meeting of the day was a fifteen-minute drive away to the main Hanoi Open University headquarters where I met the Vice President and Dean of the Information Technology Faculty, Dr Truong Tien Tung. This meeting was carried out with the help of Dr. Trung's excellent translation skills. Vice President Tung was eager to tell me that OER and OCW were the lifelong learning mission they had been edging toward for the past fifteen years, putting aside faculty and university savings to be able to show their commitment to the MoE once the opportunity to wear the OCW/OER mantel arose. There was no government funding in this area, only government policies and guidelines. He expressed his keenness for the Faculty of English and Modern Languages to lead the way with the development of OER for EAP/ESL and invited me to come and stay in Vietnam to work with the Hanoi OU on their digitization project. We discussed ways forward for working with each other at a distance and for translating any OER developed so that they can be used to showcase OER in Vietnam.

(Corresponding project blog post: <http://www.alannahfitzgerald.org/vietnams-open-university-rising-dragon>)

[Return to Contents](#)

Emancipatory English in India

"The West has today opened its door.
There are treasures for us to take.
We will take and we will also give,
From the open shores of India's immense humanity."
(Extract from the poem Gitanjali or Offerings by Rabindranath Tagore, 1910)



Figure 11 Professor Vinod Kumar, Alannah Fitzgerald and Sirawon Chahongnaw at Delhi University Central Institute of Education, OER International Programme January 2013

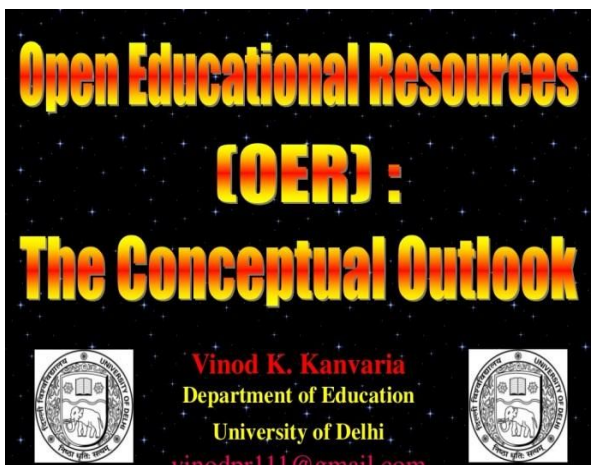


Figure 12 OER: The Conceptual Outlook by Vinod Kanvaria. <https://www.slideshare.net/vinodpr111/oer-conceptual-outlook>

Delhi University OER par excellence

Through an open online discussion group for the OER University network, I came into contact with Professor Vinod Kumar Kanvaria, faculty and educational technologist of the Department of Education at the University of Delhi. Fifty students from two different programs, Educational Technology and Pedagogy of English, had taken active roles in preparing the day's events at what was formerly known as the Central Institute for Education (CIE). India's first Education Minister, Maulana Azad with then Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, had helped to establish CIE in 1947, envisioning an institution to do more than just "turn out teachers who would be 'model teachers', but to evolve into a research centre for solving new educational problems for the country".

From having engaged with Professor Kanvaria's students for a full day and having observed the high levels of awareness around OER and OEP, I quickly came to the conclusion that these future educationalists are passionate about making a difference in Indian education through technology and openness. They are cognizant of the fact that eLearning is not yet a reality in most Indian schools and are taking their own mobile electronic devices equipped with portable speakers into classrooms where they are doing their section training. They realize the potential for eLearning is immense and more importantly, it is what the students are motivated by and would like to see more of in school.

Over a delicious traditional Indian lunch prepared by Delhi University staff, Professor Kanvaria showed me a range of high-quality paper-based OER course packs that he and his colleagues had put together for training teacher educators with OER (Kanvaria 2013a; Kanvaria 2013b). The students who dined with us said the open educational resources used in their courses were very well received by the students and said they would be keen to transfer this open educational practice to their own development of teaching and training resources in future workplaces. Needless to say, it was most impressive to see a new

generation of educationalists and learning technologists being taught by OER specialists.

In feedback to the presentation and workshop, students said they realized the deeper importance of sharing to develop not only themselves as open educational practitioners but their respective fields also. One student made the observation that a lot of the ELT lesson plan sharing sites that were once free are now asking for some form of payment and that it was difficult to find truly open educational resources in ELT. She was happy to have discovered Russell Stannard's [Teacher Training Videos](#) through the workshop as a useful starting point for web-based language resources. Professor Kanvaria made a very good point about the blurred line between open and free resources in relation to uploading OER to proprietary platforms such as iTunesU and closed university websites. His point being that opportunities for user feedback are being missed when institutions such as Oxford do not create open interactive spaces and platforms, even on their university website, that encourage the re-uploading of re-mixed and re-purposed OER to show what people are doing with their OER. However, individual Oxford academics have received plenty of positive feedback on their OpenSpires podcasts from audiences, including the following:

"I have recently enrolled in the [.....] University with the plan to complete a BA in Philosophy, but the first unit I have had to complete is a Study Skills unit which has been so boring and mundane I have been questioning whether to continue or not. Your enthusiasm for philosophy is infectious and put me back on course to continue my studies. Thanks again."

"Can I just say how utterly engrossing they are - and how completely stimulating. I completed my undergraduate studies a great number of years ago, but listening to you lecture makes me yearn for study." (Highton, Fresen and Wild, 2011 p.35)

E-learning emancipatory English

I had met Dr. L.P. Mahawar of the Rajasthan Ministry of Education at the EuroCALL Conference on OER in Bologna in 2012. Just before arriving in India he had posted an upcoming conference in the EuroCALL forum to be held at Jaipur National University, E-learning Emancipatory English: Fast Forwarding the Future, in collaboration with SAADA (Society for Analysis, Dialogue, Application and Action) of which he is also a member. Covering topics such as: English as a symbol of status and a tool for emancipation; different Englishes evolving in the contemporary world; different pedagogical approaches to English Language Teaching; the role of the mother tongue in ESL/EFL; and English for Specific and Academic Purposes - naturally, I wanted to be part of this although my dates for India and the conference didn't quite work out. So, I emailed him and said I'd like to contribute a presentation by distance and he replied positively, suggesting that we also meet while I was in Delhi. I was interested in finding out more about OER and emancipatory English in the Indian context.

In my interview with Dr. L.P. Mahawar, he pointed to other overriding social issues currently impacting the Dalit's and other low socio-economic groups from succeeding in education and beyond, identifying: high truancy among teachers and students; high dropout rates among students; skewed educational goals in favour of cram examinations; and a lack of e-connectivity at schools and in homes. Many of the problems identified in my interview with Dr. Mahawar are reflected in the upcoming TESS India project with the UK Open University.

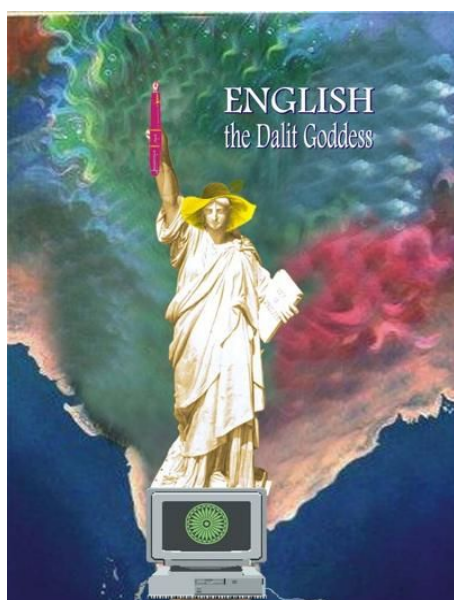


Figure 13 English, the Dalit Goddess by Shant Kala Niketan

English-medium education in India is still primarily the domain of the higher castes. One of India's most well-known 20th century freedom movement advocates and pro English language campaigners, Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, was a leading figure in drafting India's new constitution. He was also a Dalit or 'untouchable'. Among the Dalit there is the belief that English is the emancipatory tool to escape the cycle of poverty and stake a claim in India's growing economy. So, the Dalit have decided to build a temple to a new Deity, the Goddess of English. As can be seen in figure 13 she is depicted for her work in helping the Dalit with their 21st century English language communication aspirations, standing on a computer pedestal and holding a pen up high in one hand and the Indian constitution in the other. In an article with the Guardian Weekly online newspaper in 2011, [India's outcasts put faith in English](#), Amarchand Jauhar, an English teacher who was supervising the temple's construction in Banka village in northern Uttar Pradesh, was interviewed as saying, "Without English, nothing is possible for us Dalits" (Rahman, 2011).

Naturally, English language education is a politically loaded subject in India as it is in most parts of the world. Indeed, both the ELT industry and the open education movement have been accused of spreading linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992; Pennycook 1995 & 1998). Added to this, the prevalence and dominance of the ELT industry internationally along with the promotion of English-medium OER from well-funded initiatives make it difficult for those working in under-resourced contexts to compete for the uptake of non-English OER on an international scale.

Nationalist interests for not promulgating what many have seen as the enslaving tool of the British Raj is one argument against

English-medium education. For pro Kannada-medium educationalists and activists in the state of Kanataka where the local government was proposing English education for the Dalit and other low caste peoples, the preservation and promotion of local languages in state-run education is another argument. The government proposal has since been scrapped, leading Dalit activists and scholars to question whether there is a hidden political agenda to isolate Dalit and other low caste peoples from accessing English (Gopalkrishna, 2012).

To provide further perspective on English in India in a 2005 lecture at Oxford University, India's still current prime minister, Manmohan Singh, upon receiving an honorary degree from his alma mater, reflected upon the great legacy British education and the English language had left for India in the current age of globalisation:

“It used to be said that the sun never sets on the British Empire. I am afraid we were partly responsible for sending that adage out of fashion! But, if there is one phenomenon on which the sun cannot set, it is the world of the English-speaking people, in which the people of Indian origin are the single largest component. Of all the legacies of the Raj, none is more important than the English language and the modern school system... In indigenising English, as so many people have done in so many nations across the world, we have made the language our own. Our choice of prepositions may not always be the Queen's English; we might occasionally split the infinitive; and we may drop an article here and add an extra one there. I am sure everyone will agree, nevertheless, that English has been enriched by Indian creativity and we have given you back R.K. Narayan and Salman Rushdie. Today, English in India is seen as just another Indian language.” (Singh, 2005)

Indeed, the continuation of English's position as the international lingua franca in research, higher education and business is wholly dependent on it being owned by non-native English speakers (Graddol, 2006). With the escalating pressure to be able to function in English in order to get ahead in life, can a balance be struck by making high-quality and flexible English language resources open to those individuals and communities that would otherwise be unable to afford English-medium and English language education? After all, if English is to remain the international lingua franca, then surely it stands to reason that we view English simply for what it is. One of many linguistic communication tools for accessing and building knowledge on a global scale and one that should be accessible to all in the same way that access to the Internet should be a given for all.

(Corresponding project blog post: <http://www.alannahfitzgerald.org/emancipatory-english-in-india/>)

[Return to Contents](#)

Braving OER battles in Brazil



São Paulo is what is known as an alpha world city, an important node within the global economy. From all accounts it is also the hub of OER in Brazil. In February 2013, I gave a workshop presentation organized by the Brazilian Association of Distance Education (ABED), which was simultaneously translated from English into Portuguese.

ABED is a not-for-profit learned society that promotes the dissemination of flexible, open and distance education; founded in 1995 it currently has around 3,000 members, both individual and institutional. On their website, there is a designated 'referatory' where you will find a listing of some 30 repositories of OER in the Portuguese language, serving a wide range of educational levels, from K-12 to continuing education. “Yet, for a country as large as Brazil (population almost 200 million) and the language group Brazil belongs to (250 million), we are terribly far behind in the area of OER”. – Fredric Litto, Chairman of ABED.

“ABED fulfils its mission by contributing as a national forum for discussion and presentation of studies and research related to Brazil. Obtaining, organising and disseminating quantitative information and presenting qualitative data analyses, in reference to the direction of education and distance learning, comprises the technical interests of ABED in providing a compass that indicates where we are in the practice of this teaching modality, allowing a glimpse of some of its trends for the future. Furthermore, by making available the quantitative data gathered, other researchers and people interested in distance learning have the opportunity to provide their own analyses and inferences.” (ABED, 2012).

In a meeting with Renato Bulcao and Bruna Medeiros at the ABED headquarters, we went over the founding principles of their work for promoting and advancing open and distance education in Brazil, along with a discussion on the potential development of OER in

English and Portuguese with the TOETOE and FLAX projects:

Alannah: And, so ABED is a government-funded initiative?

Renato: No, it's a private academic association. One of the few in Brazil because we don't have this kind of association all over the place.

Bruna: Right. It's like you know, we have profit but we're not a commercial body, so you know, there's no money around. We get some money from our affiliated associate members but it doesn't come to us. We try to help. Distance education in Brazil is like, how can I say it? [Talks in Portuguese to Carlos] Yeah, like old fashioned. So, we're trying to progress everything.

Alannah: So, you're an umbrella organization trying to communicate everything related to open and distance education? Because when I looked for you, I found you with...

Bruna: The OCW (Open CourseWare Consortium), right?

Alannah: Right, the OCW. On their website, it said you were the hub of OER in Brazil and I was so glad when you wrote back.

Renato: It's true, we are the hub in Brazil. At least for the next five years.

Alannah: You must be very busy.

Bruna: Yeah, we usually have conferences three times a year. But this year we're going to have two with one on the virtual learner in June. It's really nice because we've had policy related ones before.

Renato: Tell us please about today.

Bruna: OK, about the workshop, I set up everything. We invited all the teachers, professionals, students who would be interested in learning about OER. I didn't direct this only at English teachers, so it's just like, you know, broadly appealing for everyone. I even opened it up for Italian institutions..

Alannah: Oh, good. The software is flexible but it's just that we've built collections in English. There's no reason why we can't build resource collections in other languages as well. If anyone wants to build open language collections in Portuguese that would be wonderful. It's just that English collections are the ones that we have prepared with the Oxford OER but the software is multilingual so it would be great if we could get some Brazilian OER specialists building Portuguese collections and not just collections in English.

Bruna: Oh, that's nice. We'll have simultaneous translation today from English to Portuguese and Portuguese to English, so you know it'll be fine.



Figure 15 Presentation with ABED on building and translating OER in English for the Brazilian context. <https://www.slideshare.net/AlannahOpenEd/building-and-translating-oer-in-english-for-the-brazilian-context>

event on their website. To give an indication of just how important Brazil's richest state is to OER, during my stay in Brazil it was announced that governor Geraldo Alckmin of São Paulo had vetoed in its entirety the proposed public policy OER bill (PL 989/2011) that had been passed by all committees of the São Paulo Legislative Chamber back in December 2012. The reason given for vetoing the bill was a perceived conflict of interest between the Executive and Legislative branches of government. This has been viewed as an extreme blow to OER efforts in São Paulo for the realisation of OER for democratising education in Brazil. A decree to overturn the decision is being sought by the Brazilian OER community, headed by the REA:

"We are conscious that we have lost a battle, but we are sure we have not lost the war. We will succeed in developing a more innovative and inclusionary education system, inspired by the developments of the information society. We have mobilized folks around Brazil, meetings are happening, and for now the press is on our side. In practical terms, our next steps are to partner and pressure with the Governor to enact the Bill in the form of a Decree." (Rossini, Gonsales and Sebram, 2013).

Mara Ewbank, a representative from the Brazilian Social Services for Industry (SESI - Serviço Social da Indústria in Portuguese) was in attendance at my workshop and we have stayed in contact with plans for building English and possibly Portuguese collections based on their middle and high school curricula with the FLAX OSS for developing OER collections that would serve around 18,000 students in 10 different municipalities across the São Paulo region. SESI is a private not-for-profit institution that operates throughout Brazil's 26 states including the Federal District (Distrito Federal); initially set up in July 1946 by president Eurico Gaspar Dutra with the aim of "promoting social welfare, cultural development and improving the lives of workers and their families and the communities they live in." This was in response to the introduction of new labour laws that had been established by Getúlio Vargas, who preceded Dutra and created the Consolidation of Labor Laws (CLT - Consolidação das Leis do Trabalho in Portuguese). (Wikipedia, 2013).

The Recursos Educacionais Abertos (REA, which translates to Open Educational Resources), one of the most active OER bodies in Brazil, was also in attendance at my presentation and they have [blogged about the](#)

(Corresponding project blog post: <http://www.alannahfitzgerald.org/braving-oer-battles-in-brazil/>)

[Return to Contents](#)

TOETOE International: feedback and feedforward

This section does not really provide a conclusion in the conventional sense of the word; instead it offers more in the way of a reflection on where the TOETOE International project currently is and where it is headed.

The response that this project has received so far from international stakeholders is that flexible and open resources for enhancing access to valuable English-medium research and teaching content are key for realizing the goals of internationalization in higher education. Access to quality research-driven teaching content is also highly valued and the University of Oxford's institution-wide commitment to releasing and promoting OER has been received as an inspiration for international partners involved in this project. This has been evidenced through the FLAX project's development of cutting edge derivatives for opening up the BNC and BAWE corpora, both managed by the University of Oxford's IT Services. This has been taken one step further through this project with the development of OSS for creating open Creative Commons podcast language collections for uses in EAP, as has been demonstrated with Oxford OER from the OpenSpires project.

Based on demonstrations of the FLAX project tools and collections, needs were expressed in many international locations for the further development of easy-to-use interfaces that would enable non-specialists, teachers and learners, to build their own linguistically enhanced language collections with interactive language learning activities. The next phase of TOETOE International will involve the evaluation of the collections building process in FLAX by teachers and learners, using Oxford content combined with user-generated and externally sourced open content. We hope that the findings from these evaluations for new tools and interfaces in FLAX for the re-use and re-purposing of Oxford content that has been linked to further open content will lead to the widespread uptake of open corpus-based language learning methods in higher education. In particular, an exploration of how open and flexible corpus-based resources for EAP can be developed to bridge the gap between traditional and open and distance modes of higher education will be carried out.

In conjunction with my PhD research at Concordia University in Canada and the FLAX project in New Zealand, a meta-design or crowdsourcing methodology for the development of open corpus-based language collections in EAP has been proposed and will be examined across different stakeholder groups identified in this project. This research is largely in response to corpus-based approaches having thus far failed to take root in mainstream language education. This is also in direct response to the OER movement's apparent emphasis on 'open' as signifying freely available resources for philanthropic purposes (open gratis) rather than flexible and customizable resources that can be appropriated and repurposed by multiple stakeholders for educational purposes (open libre). The open source community still has much to offer the OER community by way of the grounding open source software principle for enabling distributed communities to collaborate on software outputs. With the FLAX project's simple-to-use OSS tools and interfaces for open language collections development, it is anticipated that this research will equip non-specialist corpus users in English language education to contribute to language collections building for re-using valuable OER that has been released by higher education institutions such as Oxford.

Finally, and vital to the higher education sector where internationalisation is concerned, is our ability to share and network openly with stakeholders internationally to arrive at a greater understanding and appreciation of what our shared missions are for opening up access to education.

[Return to Contents](#)

References

- Association for Distance Learning in Brazil (ABED). (2012). Analytic Report of Distance Learning in Brazil. Sao Paulo: Pearson.
- Anderson, T. (2007). Design-Based Research: A New Research Paradigm for Open and Distance Education. Presentation delivered at the Open University of Israel. Retrieved from: <http://www.slideshare.net/terrya/design-based-research-new-research-paradigm>
- Anderson, T. and Shattuck, J. (2012) Design-Based Research: A Decade of Progress in Education Research. Educational Researcher. 41 (1), 16-25.
- Altbach, P. G., Reisberg, L., & Rumbley, L. E. (2009). Trends in Global Higher Education: Tracking an Academic Revolution. A Report prepared for the UNESCO 2009 World Conference on Higher Education. Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001832/183219e.pdf>
- British National Corpus, version 3 (BNC XML Edition). 2007. Distributed by Oxford University Computing Services on behalf of the BNC Consortium. Retrieved from <http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk>
- Clifford, J. (1990). Notes on (field)notes. In R. Sanjek (ed.), Fieldnotes: The makings of anthropology (pp. 47–70). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Comas-Quinn, A. & Fitzgerald, A. (2013). Open Educational Resources in Language Teaching and Learning. Open Educational Resources Case Study: Pedagogical development from OER practice. Commissioned by the Higher Education Academy (HEA) and the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC), United Kingdom.
- Downes, S. (2004). Nine rules for good technology. In The learning marketplace: Meaning, metadata, and content syndication in the learning object economy (pp. 11-15). Retrieved from <http://www.downes.ca/files/book3.htm>
- Fitzgerald, A. (2013). Openness in English for Academic Purposes. Open Educational Resources Case Study: Pedagogical development from OER practice. Commissioned by the Higher Education Academy (HEA) and the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC), United Kingdom.
- FLAX. (n.d.). The “Flexible Language Acquisition Project”. <http://flax.nzdl.org/>
- Geertz, C. (1973). The interpretation of cultures: Selected essays. New York: Basic Books.
- Gopalkrishna, T. (2012). Dalit worship English Goddess. India: TkhalliGopalkrishna.
- Graddol, D. (2006). English Next – why English as a global language may mean the end of ‘English as a Foreign Language’. The British Council: The English Company.
- Highton, M., Fresen, J., & Wild, J. (2011). Making academic OER easy: Reflections on technology and openness at Oxford University. Journal of Open, Flexible and Distance Learning, 15(2): 28–40.
- Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G.J. & Minkov, M. (2010). Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind. Revised and Expanded 3rd Edition. New York: McGraw-Hill USA.
- Johns, T. (1991). From printout to handout: grammar and vocabulary teaching in the context of data-driven learning. In: T. Johns & P. King (Eds.), Classroom Concordancing. English Language Research Journal, 4: 27-45.
- Johns, T. (2002). Data-driven learning: the perpetual challenge. In: B. Kettemann & G. Marko (Eds.), Teaching and Learning by Doing Corpus Analysis. Amsterdam: Rodopi. 107-117.
- Kanvaria, V. K. (2013a). Professional development of teacher educators through OER (OER Module). In H. K. Senapati (Program co-ordinator) Open education resources for teacher educators. Bhubaneswar, India: RIE, NCERT.
- Kanvaria, V. K. (2013b). A concept note on OER (OER Module). In H. K. Senapati (Program co-ordinator) open education resources for teacher educators. Bhubaneswar, India: RIE, NCERT.

- LeCompte, M. & Schensul, J. (1999). *Analyzing and interpreting ethnographic data*. California: AltaMira Press.
- Laurillard, D. (2001). *Rethinking university teaching: a conversational framework for the effective use of learning technologies*, 2nd Edition. London: Routledge.
- Laurillard, D. (2012). *Teaching as a design science: building pedagogical patterns for learning and technology*. London: Routledge.
- McEney T. & Wilson A. (2012) *Corpus linguistics*. Module 3.4 in Davies G. (ed.) *Information and Communications Technology for Language Teachers (ICT4LT)*, Slough, Thames Valley University [Online]. Retrieved from http://www.ict4lt.org/en/en_mod3-4.htm
- McGill, L., Beetham, H., Falconer, I. & Littlejohn, A. (2010). *JISC/HE Academy OER Programme: Pilot Phase Synthesis and Evaluation Report*. <https://oersynth.pbworks.com/w/page/29688444/Pilot-Phase-Synthesis-and-Evaluation-Report>
- Ministry of Education of the Peoples' Republic of China. (2010). *Outline of China's National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development 2010-2020*. Beijing: In accordance with the 17th Communist Party of China National Congress. Retrieved from <http://www.moe.edu.cn/publicfiles/business/htmlfiles/moe/s3501/index.html>
- Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. (2009). *Major policies and plans for 2009*. Seoul. MEST Korea. Retrieved from <http://english.mest.go.kr/web/40724/en/board/enlist.do?bbsId=276>
- Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. (2010). *Major policies and plans for 2010*. Seoul. MEST Korea. Retrieved from <http://english.mest.go.kr/web/40724/en/board/enlist.do?bbsId=276>
- Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. (2011). *Major policies and plans for 2011*. Seoul. MEST Korea. Retrieved from <http://english.mest.go.kr/web/40724/en/board/enlist.do?bbsId=276>
- Misra, M. (2009). *Vishnu's crowded temple: India since the Great Rebellion*. Yale: Yale University Press.
- Nesi, H, Gardner, S., Thompson, P. & Wickens, P. (2007). *The British Academic Written English (BAWE) corpus*, developed at the Universities of Warwick, Reading and Oxford Brookes under the directorship of Hilary Nesi and Sheena Gardner (formerly of the Centre for Applied Linguistics [previously called CELTE], Warwick), Paul Thompson (Department of Applied Linguistics, Reading) and Paul Wickens (Westminster Institute of Education, Oxford Brookes), with funding from the ESRC (RES-000-23-0800)
- Nesi, H. & Gardner S. (2012). *Genres across the disciplines: student writing in Higher Education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- OECD Economic and Development Review Committee (2012). *OECD Economic Surveys: Korea 2012*. OECD Publishing
- Pennycook, A. (1995). *The Cultural Politics of English as an International Language*. London: Longman.
- Pennycook, A. (1998). *English and the Discourses of Colonialism*. New York: Routledge.
- Phillipson, R. (1992). *Linguistic Imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Raheem, M. (2011). *India's outcasts put faith in English*. *Guardian Weekly* online newspaper. Retrieved from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2011/jan/11/learning-english-india-dalits-rahman>
- Ross, G. (no date). *An Interview with W. Brian Arthur*. In *American Scientist*, On the Bookshelf. Retrieved from <http://www.americanscientist.org/bookshelf/pub/an-interview-with-w-brian-arthur>
- Rossini, C., Gonsales, P. and Sebriam, D., 2013. *São Paulo State Governor Vetoes Open Educational Resources Bill*. Infojustice.org: American University Washington College of Law. Translated by Carolina Rossini. Retrieved from <http://infojustice.org/archives/28646>
- Tagore, R. (1912). *Gitanjali*. 'Offerings' translated into English. London: India Society of London.
- Singh, M. (2005). *Address by Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh in acceptance of Honorary Degree from Oxford University*. Retrieved from <http://pmindia.gov.in/speech-details.php?nodeid=140>
- Stannard, R. (2006-2012). *Teacher Training Videos*. Retrieved from <http://www.teachertrainingvideos.com/>

Reason, P. and Bradbury, H. (2007) Handbook of Action Research. 2nd ed. London: Sage.

UNESCO (2008). Education For All. Global Monitoring Report 2008. United Nations Education Scientific Cultural Organisation. Retrieved from www.efareport.unesco.org

Uvalić-Trumbić, S & Daniel, J. (2011). Let a thousand flowers bloom! UNESCO Global Forum on Rankings and Accountability in Higher Education: Uses and Misuses. Retrieved from <http://www.col.org/resources/speeches/2011presentation/Pages/2011-05-16.aspx>

Wikipedia. (2013). Social Services for Industry. Retrieved from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SENAI#Social_Services_for_Industry

Wu, S., Franken, M. & Witten, I. H. (2009). Refining the use of the web (and web search) as a language teaching and learning resource. Computer Assisted Language Learning 22(3): 249-268.

Wu, S., Franken, M., & Witten, I. H. (2010). Supporting collocation learning with a digital library. Computer Assisted Language Learning. 23(1): 87-110.

Wu, S., Witten, I. H. & Franken, M. (2010). Utilizing lexical data from a Web-derived corpus to expand productive collocation knowledge. ReCALL, 22(1): 83–102.

Wu, S. (2010). Supporting collocation learning. Doctoral Thesis, Computer Science Department, University of Waikato, New Zealand. Retrieved from the Research Commons at the University of Waikato.

[Return to Contents](#)

Licence and citation

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution License <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>. Please cite this work as: Fitzgerald, A. (2013). FLAX Weaving with Oxford Open Educational Resources. Open Educational Resources International Case Study. Commissioned by the Higher Education Academy (HEA) and the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC), United Kingdom.