LEARNING THROUGH SHARING :
OPEN RESOURCES, OPEN PRACTICES, OPEN COMMUNICATION

Giving away the recipes: Exploring attitudes to open education through narratives

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Abstract

This is part of ongoing work to introduce a stronger disciplinary perspective to a set of Open Educational Resources (OERs) about teaching and learning in higher education. The work is rooted in two UK OER projects, CPD4HE and Sustainable Texts & Disciplinary Conversations. The broader area of interest is the embedding of open education practices in universities and the impact on teachers of developing and releasing resources.

The CPD4HE project suggested a significant impact on teachers who developed their materials as OERs. Thus, the follow-up project, Sustainable Texts, seeks to involve teaching staff across the disciplines in creating an e-book of academics' narratives, telling their stories about learning and teaching their subjects. It also aims to encourage conversations about OER practices. We focus here on the languages and linguistics 'disciplinary perspective' and conversations.

This is practice-based research progressing in iterative cycles. Interviews with teachers from the first project were used, together with previous research, to inform work with language teachers in the second project: a preliminary survey; interview and focus group; reflections on the process of contributing to the e-book; thoughts about how their attitudes towards OER have developed and potential implications for their teaching practice.

The first set of interviews revealed that creating OERs can have a transformative impact on both academics' sense of themselves as producers of materials and on their attitudes towards sharing and open licensing of their resources. Survey findings about OER experiences and attitudes were consistent with earlier research findings. The survey also served to engage the interest of a group of language teachers and we will report more fully on work with this group at the conference.