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Applications of transmedia practices and open educational resources in higher education

Carmen Herrero

c.herrero@mmu.ac.uk

Manchester Metropolitan University

Abstract

This chapter presents the preliminary results of the research project *Transmedia Practices: Open Educational Resources for Students by Students* carried out at Manchester Metropolitan University. The aim of this study was twofold. First, this project set out to analyse language student preferences and uses of social media networks, digital tools and video games, as well as their knowledge of transmedia and open educational resources. The main instrument use for data gathering was a questionnaire that also helped to identify the students' training needs. The second aim was to test if the creation of Open Education Resources (OER) by students could reduce the digital dissonance between informal and formal digital learning. During the project a set of digital artefacts were created by transmedia experts, PhD students, language tutors and the researcher to support the training needs of the students. In the second part of this intervention language learners were encouraged to create digital artefacts based on their assignments and shared them publicly under a

Creative Commons CC-BY license. The finding suggests that OER are a very effective tool for developing learners' digital and transmedia skills and are particularly useful for supporting peer-learning.

Keywords: Digital and transmedia skills. Higher Education. Open Educational Resources (OER). Open pedagogy. Student-created OER.

1. Introduction

The undeniable rise of multimodal and audio-visual texts is one of the most significant trends in today's communication landscape. Digital technologies have transformed the way in which media content is produced, distributed, and consumed. Therefore, it is no longer possible to ignore the social impact of this shift in all areas, particularly in education arena. In this context, the increase of video consumption as ubiquitous practice and the creation and/or sharing of videos on social media are some of the most relevant media practices among millennials and post-millennial learners.

Understandably, the effect of the ever-changing needs in communication is particularly relevant in second language (L2) teaching and learning (Dudeney *et al.*, 2013). Thus, media and visual literacies constitute key skills to develop in the language classroom (Chan and Herrero, 2010; Donaghy, 2015; Herrero, 2018; Herrero, 2019a; Herrero and Vanderschelden, 2019; FILTA, online). As media practices are no longer passive processes, integrating "user-generated" content practices in language learning and teaching is a logical consequence derived from the students' active involvement in social media and videogaming platforms. Mobile learning, peer collaboration projects and video assessments are examples of these

interactive learning experiences linked to the integration of new media skills in the L2 classroom (Herrero, 2019b).

As Jenkins *et al.* (2006: 8) has argued, the emergence of “participatory culture” echoes and “responds to the explosion of new media technologies that make it possible for average consumers to archive, annotate, appropriate, and recirculate media content in powerful new ways”. The essence of this culture recognises as valuable a “contribution that matters” and constitute an example of “civil engagement” (Jenkins *et al.*, 2006: 7). Therefore, it is imperative to develop and implement teaching and learning strategies that respond to the challenges and opportunities of this era. Consequently, the role of educators is to foster the new skills and knowledge require to fully function in this age.

In the context of higher education, this chapter outlines an example of “OER-enabled pedagogy” carried out at Manchester Metropolitan University that aims to reduce the digital dissonance between informal and formal digital learning. More specifically this intervention seeks to assess if the creation of Open Education Resources (OER) by students could diminish this gap by enhancing students’ media and transmedia skills and promoting their digital citizenship while, at the same time , exploring different transmedia communicative practices. The first part presents a brief review of the literature on multiliteracies, open educational pedagogy and transmedia. The second section presents the stages of this exploratory research project. First, it analyses the data collected through a questionnaire aimed at understanding student preferences and uses of social media networks, digital tools and video games. The results allow to determine students’ knowledge and understanding of the key concepts involved in this project: transmedia, creative commons and open educational resources. Second, it examines the outputs of the project, the different types of OER created by educators and students. These artefacts sustain the project and encourage the creation new OER which nurture informal peer-learning in formal contexts. This chapter include

recommendations for the adaptation of this model in different educational settings.

2. Literature review

2.1. Multiliteracies and Digital Practices

In this digital age, the term “multiliteracies” refers to the ability to read and write multimodal texts, as well as being able to interpret, create, remix and share different types of digital media. The study introduced in this chapter draws on literacy theories that take as a starting point the emergence of new literacy practices that stemmed from the explosion of digital technologies (New London Group, 1996; Gee, 1996; Rowsell and Pahl, 2015; Mills, 2015; Kalantzis *et al.*, 2016). The disruptive effects of technology have had a direct impact on the (re)conceptualization of literacy as a multimodal practice (Kress, 2003 and 2009; Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001; Bezemer and Kress, 2008). In addition, researchers have pointed out the complex role that popular culture plays in learners’ literacy practices and how new media consumption and making processes connect in and out of schools’ contexts. Jenkins *et al.* (2006: 9) have argued that “the informal learning within popular culture is often experimental” and, as a result, it is a useful tool when applied to formal education environments. Since the development of the Internet and the fast-growing use of ubiquitous ICTs (mobile devices and social networking services), communication practices have been changing dramatically. However, in the field of education this shift has been slower and has failed to follow the path of social change and expectations, especially among young learners (Jenkins *et al.*, 2006; Castells, 2007; Jenkins *et al.*, 2015; Scolari, 2018).

New media practices are still mostly used outside of formal education training, sometimes because educators have a hard time catching up with the accelerated technologies and cultural forms associated with these media practices.

Therefore, in a period of technological disruption, it is important to find new ways of rethinking students' participation in the learning processes and to reach students who engage and communicate mainly on social media platforms. Black *et al.* (2015) have noted the gap ("digital dissonance") between the clever ways in which current students use media in everyday life and their rigidly controlled use in classrooms. Students are continuously motivated to be content creators and prosumers in their digital networks and online spaces but expected to have a more passive role in their own formal education. Furthermore, the fourth industrial revolution that is driving fast changes in higher education has highlighted the tension between on-campus and online informal modes of learning. Thus, there is an urgent call for higher education institutions to transform the students' learning experience to equip them for a fast-evolving job market. In addition, the impact of Covid-19 has accelerated this process of digitization and ubiquitous learning. Languages, like many other disciplines in higher education which include the development of competences through practices, must find the best way of using technologies and resources to better serve the needs of learners with a hybrid approach (a combination of the best practices from face-to-face and online teaching).

The rise of participatory culture in the 21st century has also shifted the focus of literacy from individual expression to community involvement and enhanced the value of new multiliteracy skills in the digital media environment. These processes involve social skills developed through collaboration and networking (Jenkins *et al.*, 2015). Gee (2004) has argued that this type of culture based on peer-to-peer learning constitutes an ideal informal learning environment. Similarly, the concept *potlatch*, which has also been applied to online sharing and collaborative activities by several scholars, stresses how this learning mode highly motivates students to acquire new knowledge and improve their skills through the expertise of others (Ortega and Rodríguez, 201).

The development of skills, attitudes, and attributes relevant to living and working in a more sustainable and inclusive society is more relevant than ever (Herrero *et al.*, 2020). Moreover, graduates require another set of strategies and communication skills to participate fully in an increasingly networked world in which many diverse cultures exist. Hence, it comes as no surprise that the acquisition of a foreign language, in conjunction with cultural knowledge and intercultural competence is at the heart of skills that students will apply to life after university: “Language learning needs [...] to be seen as an intrinsic part of the development of cultural literacy – the understanding of the interaction of the cultural processes that surround us and which create the environments in which we live and work” (Burdett *et al.*, 2018: online). Additionally, although most language educators are increasingly using multimodal resources, there is still a tendency to rely mostly on monomodal coursework and assessments (e.g. written essays, listening comprehensions, oral presentations, etc.)¹. In this context, innovative approaches to language education may lead to a stronger students’ emotional involvement in their learning process, particularly as affective factors, motivation and autonomy play a key role in second /foreign language learning (Arnold, 1999; Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2013; Dörnyei *et al.*, 2014). Thus, the interaction between popular culture and digital practices is particularly relevant in second and foreign language teaching and learning (Benson and Chik, 2014; Chick, 2015; Herrero, 2018; Herrero, 2019b; Herrero and Vanderschelden, 2019).

2.2. OER-enabled Pedagogy

¹ Multimodality is the combination of different kinds of modes (visual, written, oral, spatial, etc.).

Open Educational Resources (OER) are teaching, learning and research materials in any format that can be used and shared freely because they are in the public domain, or the author/s or creator/s allows their use, adaptation, and redistribution under an open licence (Creative Commons: online). The use of OER is part of the “Open Pedagogy”, a concept associated with student-centred approaches and learning with and from participatory digital technologies (Atkins *et al.*, 2007; Hodgkinson-Williams and Gray, 2009; Weller, 2013; Hegarty, 2015; Wiley and Hilton, 2018). This area has gained increased attention in recent years as OER have garnered large-scale support from some higher education institutions reaching millions of learners worldwide. However, there is still an insufficient uptake of OER by practitioners or at least it is difficult to track its use.

Open Educational Practices (OEP) are “practices which support the (re)use and production of OER through institutional policies, promote innovative pedagogical models, and respect and empower learners as co-producers on their lifelong learning paths” (Ehlers, 2011: 4).² According to Pegler, understanding this context is key for achieving the full potential of OER (2013: 145-46). Considering the importance of networked participation and critical pedagogy, Cronin offers a comprehensive definition of OEP: “collaborative practices that include the creation, use, and reuse of OER, as well as pedagogical practices, employing participatory technologies and social networks for interaction, peer-learning, knowledge creation, and empowerment of learners” (Cronin, 2017: 4).

In this context, Wiley and Hilton (2018: 135) have proposed the term *OER-enabled* pedagogy that they defined as “the set of teaching and learning practices that are only possible or practical in the context of the 5R permissions which are characteristic of OER”. The 5 Rs permission are the following (Wiley and Hilton, 2018: 134-5):

² See also Cronin (2018), Cronin and MacLaren (2018), and Koseoglu and Bozkurt (2018).

- Retain: the right to make, own and control copies of the content (e.g., download, duplicate, store, and manage).
- Reuse: the right to use the content in a wide range of ways (e.g., in class, in a study group, on a website, in a video).
- Revise: the right to adapt, adjust, modify, or later the content itself (e.g., translate the content into another language).
- Remix: the right to combine the original or revised content with other material to create something new (e.g., incorporate the content into a mashup).
- Redistribute: the right to share copies of the original content, your revisions, or your remixes with others (e.g., give a copy of the content to a friend).

Expanding on Papert's idea of the joyful learning that takes place when one is "engaged in constructing a public entity" (1991: 2), Wiley (2013) has put forward the notion of "renewable assignments" that support the learning of the individual students as well as the community of learners. From the different categories of assignments that Wiley and Hilton (2018) have outlined (disposable, authentic, constructionist, and renewable), renewable assignments are authentic artefacts that are licenced as OER for the benefit of other students. They may be fully developed by the students, or they can be the result of remixing or adapting other OER. Wiley and Hilton (2018: 137) have proposed a four-part test to determine if renewable assignments qualified as OER-enable pedagogy:

1. Are students asked to create a new artefact (essay, poems, videos, songs, etc.) or revise/ remix existing OER?
2. Does the new artefact have value beyond supporting the learning of its author?
3. Are students invited to publicly share their new artifacts or revised/remixed OER?
4. Are students invited to openly licence their new artifacts or revised/remixed OER?

The intervention presented in this chapter draws on constructivism notions of teaching and learning, as collaborative dynamic and interactive processes in which knowledge is constructed by the learner. This project is also based on connectivism, a learning theory that suggests that knowledge is distributed across a network of connections of people and information. Finally, it relies on the principles of “digital critical pedagogy”, which focuses not only on the connections between knowledge and power, but also investigates the use of technology for learner empowerment and agency and how critical pedagogy operates in open and networked spaces (Young, 2019).

2.3. Transmedia Literacies

Some researchers such as Henry Jenkins (2006) have unlocked the discussion on the convergence of mainstream type of media (books, cinema, comics, radio, television, etc.) and new media channels and formats across different platforms. According to this scholar (Jenkins, 2010 and 2011), transmedia storytelling involves expressing messages and stories across the media spectrum (films and television series, social media, books, video games...) and making use of the affordances that each media channel have. Transmedia storytelling presents creative opportunities in four areas: backstory, mapping the world, displaying other character’s perspectives on the action, and expanding audience engagement. In this context, the rise of “participatory culture” captures new practices of media-making and sharing digital media, as well as affective connections and identities of a highly mediated and networked society. Building on Pierre Lévy’s notion of “collective intelligence”, Jenkins *et al.* (2006) have explored how digital media is transforming young people’s lives. As mentioned previously, participatory culture is characterized by “relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, strong support for creating and sharing one’s creations, and some type of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed to novices’ (Jenkins *et al.*, 2006: 3). It is

also “one in which members believe their contributions matter, and feel some degree of social connection with one another (at least they care about what other people think about what they have created)” (Jenkins *et al.*, 2006: 3). In this context, the research project supported by the McArthur Foundation worked on identifying the new practices and skills. “Transmedia navigation”, defined as “the ability to deal with the flow of stories and information across multiple modalities”, is among the most relevant 21st century skills for the world of education is (Jenkins *et al.*, 2006: 46). In a similar vein, funded by the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, the *Transmedia Literacy* Research Project’s aimed at creating “a map of transmedia skills and informal learning strategies used by teenage boys and girls to identify how these can be ‘exploited’ in the formal educational system” (Scolari, 2018: 9).

Given the rapid of technological advances and the shift to new modes of teaching and learning, understanding the learner’s skills, needs and preferences plays a pivotal role. In this context, Pratten argues that “transmedia in education” means refocusing on the students: “building a learning environment around the learner” (“a training audience”); considering the profile of the learner, “trying to fit in with their existing behaviour” (which devices they use, what they do in the spare time, what they do when they commute...); and delivering a learning experience across the learner’s lifestyle. In other words, it is imperative to make learning a participatory and engaging experience that should be “relevant”, contextual and with a goal. The ramifications of this pedagogical approach go beyond the university as it means starting “a longer journey of problem-solving” (Pratten, 2019: online).

The review of literature in transmedia literacy reveals that there are very few studies in the field of language education (González Martínez *et al.*, 2019). More recently Andrade Velásquez and Fonseca Mora (2021) have compiled a qualitative synthesis of the few studies published from 2010 to 2020 related to transmedia applied to the learning and teaching of a foreign language. Most of the studies reported applications in

secondary education (57.15%), followed by those studies on the use of transmedia as an innovative strategy at higher education (28.57%). This literature review identifies the competencies developed in these interventions: 71.43 % show an increase in the students' language skills (communicative, writing and reading), while 28.57 % identify an increase in the digital and media skills.

Supported by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council's Open World Research Initiative (OWRI), the *New Approaches to Transmedia and Language Pedagogy* project aims to bridge this gap focusing on both secondary and higher education. The main objectives are: to explore the digital, media and visual skills of the Millennial and Generation Z and their cultures; to examine how transmedia projects can provide opportunities to supplement or complement traditional modes of L2 learning, teaching and assessment; to test new learning scenarios that support the development of innovative student-centred educational practices, and the implementation of collaborative strategies that ultimately meet the 21st century students' needs and future job skills and profiles (Herrero, 2019a). Framed within the wider research project describe above, the next section presents a study that seeks to a) integrate transmedia practices considering the skills and tools used by undergraduate language students in different learning environments (formal and informal) to enhance and foster their language, digital and media skills; b) demonstrate how the creation of OER as digital project facilitates the acquisition of a wide range of competences, including transmedia skills.

3. Study method

Carried out at the Manchester Metropolitan University, the study *Transmedia Practices (Open Educational Resources for Students by Students)* has the following goals: to investigate the use of social media and digital tools by undergraduate language students; to explore their knowledge of key concepts that could enhance their profile as "prosumers", such as transmedia, OER and Creative Commons; to identify if there is a

“digital dissonance” in the current use of ICTs by students (e.g. their use of social media and content creations in these spaces, such as Instagram, Twitch, etc.) as well as their digital and media training needs.³ Based on the notion of reusable assignments, one of the objectives was to test the initial hypothesis: the skill-sets used by students in the creation of OER could bridge formal and informal learning strategies and foster students’ emotional involvement in their learning processes.

The study questions which guided the exploratory project presented in this chapter were: 1) What is students’ understanding of open educational resources and transmedia mean? 2) Which are the digital and media skills that students would like to improve? 3) Do students use the same or different social media networks and digital tools for personal and professional/academic purposes? 4) Can the creation of OER by students improve their engagement and academic performance?

3.1. Procedures

This project has used a combination of research methods: a) teacher action research (as a cyclical process that help to improve teaching and learning); b) ethnography applied to the digital world (Pink et al, 2015), which includes a questionnaire, online workshops (video-tutorials), and media or material artefacts produced by the participants. Two distinct parts of the research can be established. The first part was based on a need analysis to assess the following: students’ knowledge on transmedia, Creative Commons and OER, level of digital skills and practices with online tools, software and services. Their preferences and experience in these areas provided information on their training needs to become active prosumers of transmedia /OER products. A questionnaire was used to carried out the need analysis. The second part focuses on the creation of the OER, genres, content and uses.

³ This research project was supported by the Manchester Metropolitan University SOTL research grants in Manchester Metropolitan University. It is also part of the Transmedia and Language project supported the AHRC research project “Open World Research Initiative Cross-Language Dynamics: Reshaping Community”.

The study was carried out with a group of undergraduate students registered in the Modern Languages programme: single honours (Spanish Studies) and combined studies, i.e. Spanish with French, German, Italian, Japanese, Mandarin, or Modern Standard Arabic, or Spanish with other discipline (Business, English Literature, International Relations, Linguistics or TESOL). Participants were in their second or final year at the University.⁴ The first phase of the project took place during the academic years 2018-19 and 2019-20 and the creation of the OER between 2019 and 2021.

An ad hoc survey was designed to find out how students were using social media networks and digital tools to establish opportunities, challenges and connections between their personal use and professional or academic learning. In line with the general aims of the study, the questionnaire would help to determine students' knowledge of the key concepts (OER and Transmedia) and identify some of their training needs in this field. Additionally, the survey served to introduce the project and its objectives to the students to engage them with the following phase of the project, the use and creation of OER.⁵ The instrument was composed of 16 items, divided into: General (sex, age, studies, 3 items), digital skills and knowledge of key concepts (4 items), social media platforms for personal life and for professional/academic life and their use (3 items), productivity tools for personal life and for professional/academic life and (2 items), use of language learning apps and video games (2 items), useful online tools and software and expectations regarding the training/workshops (2 items).

The Virtual Learning Environment used by Manchester Metropolitan University, Moodle, was employed to advertise the questionnaire. The survey was distributed in two different periods across the academic year 2018-2019 (October-

⁴ Language students are required as part of the study to spend half or the whole academic year abroad (Spain or a Latin America country) studying or working.

⁵ This ethical issues for this project were addressed using Manchester Metropolitan University EthOS system. EthOS aims to ensure all research carried out by university staff and students meets the concordat to support research integrity and to ensure full privacy of every participant. Online Survey was used to collect and analyse the data (<https://www.onlinesurveys.ac.uk>).

November 2018 and May-August 2019). The questionnaire was answered by 47 students (N=47). The majority were women (73%). Most of the participant were under 21 years old (72%).

Their knowledge about transmedia (telling a single story across multiple platforms and formats, such as films, webseries, comics, games, etc.) was very low. Most of the participants considered that they did not know anything about transmedia or their knowledge was very basic (83%). The rest had an intermediate level (17%).

Most of the students that participated acknowledged having a basic or intermediate understanding of what OER are (63.8%), but almost one third confessed a total lack of knowledge on this field (34%). Only 10.6% knew about Creative Common Licences. It is important to note that at the time that this study was conducted there were no policies on strategies for OER at Manchester Metropolitan University, but there was a university strategy related to research and open access publishing.

Regarding the digital skills that students would like to improve, 53% choose video/media editing and subtitling; and creating blogs and wikis was selected by 17 %. Significantly, 30% of the participants indicated that they needed to improve all kind of digital /ICT skills

Instagram, WhatsApp, Snapchat and Facebook were the main social media platforms and services used by students by their personal life, while YouTube, Twitter and WhatsApp were the most popular networks for professional and academic use. See Figure 1 and 2.

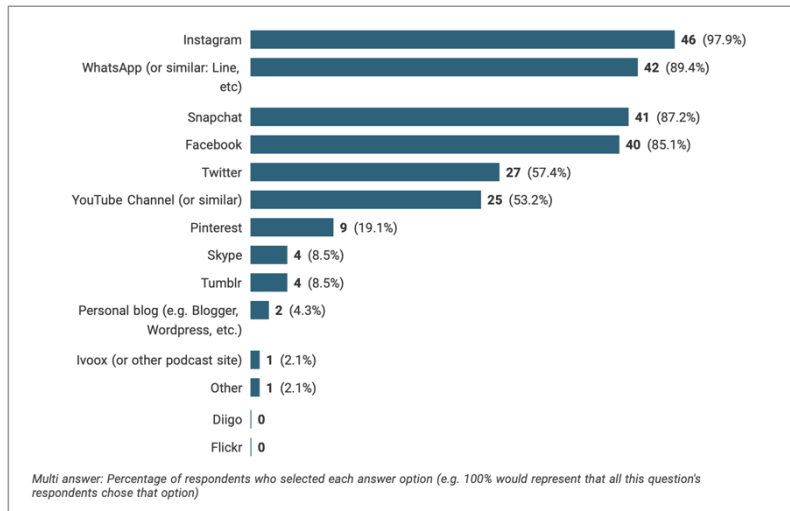


Figure 1: Social media platforms used by students in their personal life.

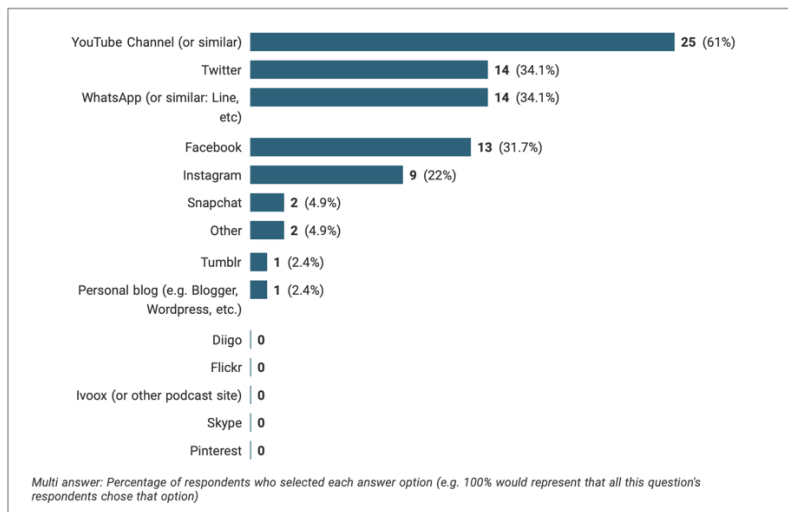


Figure 2: Social media platforms used by students in their professional and academic life.

The preferred productivity tools for personal use and academic or professional purposes were very similar: Wikipedia, Google Docs, and Learning on Screen, a service that offers UK education institutions with an ERA Licence and membership access to UK

television and radio records (See Figures 3 and 4, respectively).⁶ According to this initial questionnaire, most of the students presented a user profile that is basically that of a consumer but hardly ever produce content (prosumer).

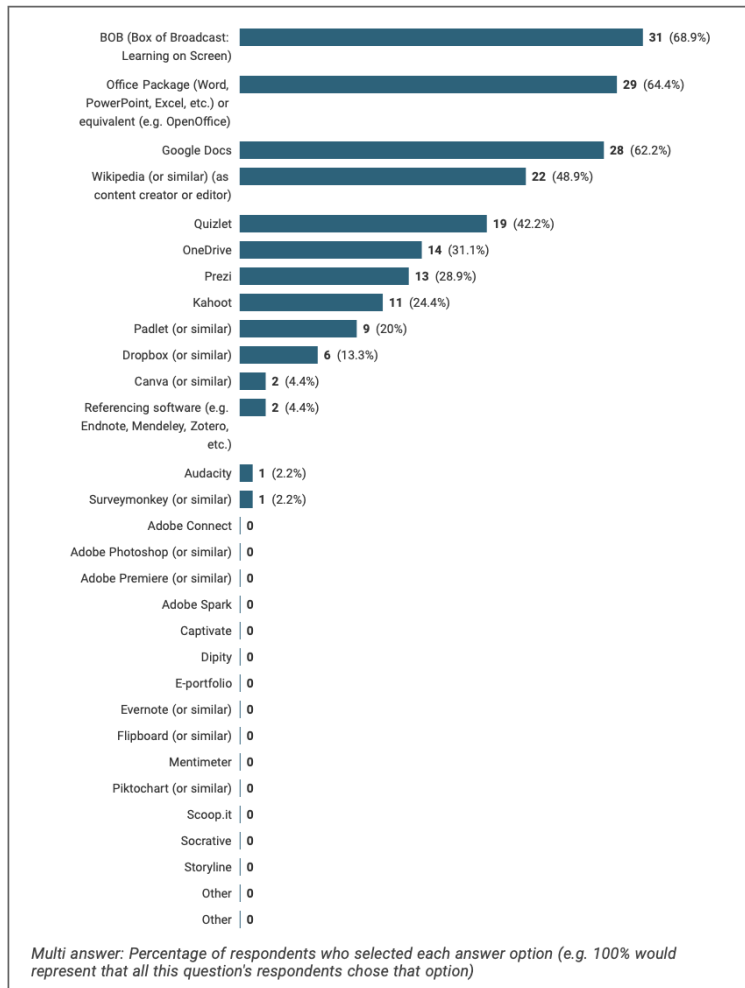


Figure 3: Productivity tools for professional and academic life

⁶ Students can access these recorded radio, TV programme and films if they are in the UK. More information can be found on the website: <https://learningonscreen.ac.uk>

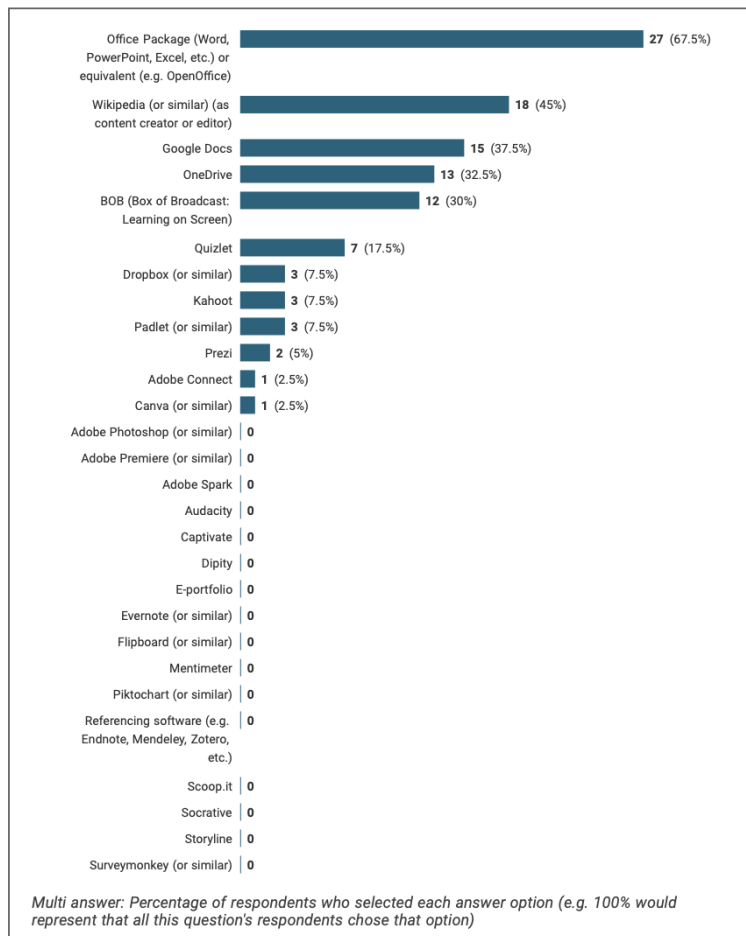


Figure 4: Productivity tools for personal use

In the last section of the survey, “expectations for the workshop and the project”, most of the students were interested in training that could help them with their studies, acquire professional skills and improve their language skills: “A fulfilling experience in combining my language skills and digital skills”.

Following the preliminary survey, informal discussion conducted with final year students helped the researcher to obtain a deeper understanding of the students’ skills and learning strategies regarding digital media and user-content productions. It is important

to stress that the tutor should be seen as a knowledgeable guide who has explored this terrain before and is now leading them on a joint journey. Therefore, as part of the project tutorials and how-to guides were created by the tutor/researcher with the collaboration of other experts in this field. The video “Transmedia in Education” offers interview with Robert Pratten, a transmedia expert, founder of Transmedia Storyteller, Ltd. and creator of Conducttr (an online service for interactive, multi-platform learning, entertainment and marketing). Other OER created by the tutors were related to key topics such as Creative Commons and copyright and film analysis. Several OER were created by PhD students related to their research expertise and connected with project: Subtitling (by Alicia Sánchez) and Transnational and Transmedia Practices (by Rebecca Wynne-Walsh).

3.2. Outputs

During the ongoing process of OER creation, students were guided by the tutor/researcher on how to produce a digital artefact related to one of their Spanish Studies units (e.g. Power and Culture in Spain in year 2, Shifting Borders in Latin American and Spain and the Independent Research Project, both final year units). The students decided on the media format for their OER: podcast, video-presentation, and video-tutorial. Some of the artefacts were based on authentic assessments (oral presentation, analysis of a film scene as a video-essay) and re-design to be share with a Creative Commons licence. Others were new products that required students to synthesize knowledge and skills learned during the course and the assessments and apply them to a real-world problem. For example, the podcast series created by Jack Lewis, “WordCount”, offer a comprehensive guide for writing a dissertation and includes interviews with students and specialists in this field.

All these OER were uploaded (after ethical evaluation) to the university digital repository (mmutube). The first OER were particularly useful as peer-to-peer resources and inspiration for the creation of new OER. Currently there are over twenty OER, including videos created for the Transmedia in Education project. All these digital artifacts are also embedded in the Moodle areas of several units as part of the learning resources for current culture units (Contextualising Language Learning; Power and Culture in Spain; Shifting Borders; Transnational and Transmedia Practices in Latin

America and Spain) and the final year Independent Research Project. These OER are available to the public and the playlist that include all these artefacts can be found at <https://bit.ly/373xA0V>. Some of these resources are also used by secondary language students as part of the outreach activities carried out by the Department of Languages, Information and Communications at Manchester Metropolitan University (for example, My Spanish Film Festival). The success of these OER can be demonstrated by their popularity and the results of the internal student survey used to evaluate the success and satisfaction of students with the units taught at the university.

4. Conclusions

The main aims of the project were achieved: to get a better understanding of the knowledge, values, and literacy skills of the language students; and to explore how these skills could be developed or exploited in the classroom with the creation of OER. The preliminary findings suggest that, although a small number of students participated actively in the creation of OER, the project has led to greater confidence and higher success in students' learning processes as demonstrated by the increasing use of these artefacts.⁷ Renewable assignments can be seen as performance tasks, that is, authentic and meaningful tasks in which students apply their knowledge and skills to real problems or situations. Students who created their own OER video-tutorials or podcasts incorporated the media/transmedia skills and integrated their languages and cultural skills. They benefited from the teacher and peer-to-peer evaluation that is built in the development of the resources, as frequent formative evaluation was given to effectively modify or improve the resources and to meet the quality and conditions of an OER.

Beyond enhancing students' learning experiences with participatory media practices, OER are very effective tools for supporting peer-to-peer learning. The students' informal feedback reveals the importance of building a "community of practice" (Wenger et al. 2002) around the consumption and creation of OER based on

⁷ Similar positive results can be seen in Wiley et al. 2017.

reusable assignments. The outcomes of the project have reinforced and expanded the teaching and learning activities carried out across the curriculum and they will also support the next cohorts of learners.

This type of initiative has been a particularly useful strategy to strengthen remote teaching and learning during this academic year (2020-21), conditioned by hybrid and online delivery due to Covid-19. The pandemic has raised some major issues related to learning and encourage to experiment new approaches to assessment. The big challenge has been to rethink assignments that demonstrate mastery of content under the constraints imposed by online teaching and assessment. One of the challenges of post-pandemic era is to offer the students the chance to show that their knowledge and skills have a real-world application. OER-renewable assignments can empower students who not only demonstrate their knowledge on their subject and master generic and digital skills, but also support other learners who benefit from the creation of OER related to their studies. This type of artefact is particularly useful for learning in a flexible way.

Finally, the development of some of the OER as a set of didactic activities has provided an excellent set of skills to those students who wish to pursue a teaching career and to grow their professional portfolio. Furthermore, the competences that they have developed during the creation of OER can be applied to other contexts (business, translation, marketing and media) and constitute a valuable contribution to acquire “the skills necessary to participate fully in public, community, and economic life” (New London Group, 2000: 9).

In summary, this project has explored how the adoption of OER can bridge informal and formal learning in analogue and digital space and support individual and collective learning. The following outcomes condense the core benefits of this the project: 1) students as partners; 2) enhancing undergraduate’s global digital citizenship; 3) improving the learning environment and the student experience; and 4) curriculum enhancement using multiliteracies practices open pedagogy.

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BIONOTE

CARMEN HERRERO is Principal Lecturer in Spanish and Latin American Studies at Manchester Metropolitan University, Great Britain. Her research interests are language education, language education, audiovisual media and transmedia, and Spanish and Latin American cinema. Carmen is the co-founder and co-director of FILTA (Film in Language Teaching Association, <http://www.filta.org.uk>). She is also the Director of the Research group FLAME (Film, Languages and Media in Education, <https://www2.mmu.ac.uk/languages/flame/>) at the Manchester Metropolitan University. She collaborates actively with the Arts Centre HOME (Manchester) and the annual Spanish and VIVA! Latin American Film Festival. She has participated in the AHRC Open World Research Initiative Cross-Language Dynamics: Reshaping

Community with a project on Language Teaching Training and Transmedia Pedagogy (www.transmediaineducation.com).