Reflecting Open Practices on Digital Infrastructures

In academia, science is always interwoven with education. Thus, open education has to be an important component of open science. While earlier concepts of open practices emphasized the use and creation of open educational resources (OER), current models of open educational practices (OEP) aim to frame concepts of openness in learning and teaching. Researchers have been investigating the meaning of openness and its diverse interpretations with respect to aspects of open pedagogy (Wiley & Hilton III, 2018), empowerment, inclusion, and social justice (Koseoglu et al., 2020). In Germany a newer media didactical discourse proposes to enrich the debate of OER infrastructure with concepts of OEP (Bellinger & Mayrberger, 2019).

Open infrastructures, services and tools are not only part of open science initiatives but as digital objects they influence the knowledge and practices of their users. Thus, they shape the way we are able to practice openness. Our research therefore draws upon current functionalities of higher education services that provide open learning and teaching resources. We asked: How might open educational practices be shaped by current functions in digital services for learning and teaching resources? To answer this question, we investigated 38 German, Austrian and Swiss higher education services providing open learning and teaching material (e.g., OER repositories, learning management systems, video platforms, publication servers). We examined the functions of those services with regard to conceptual ideas discussed on OER and OEP (Santos-Hermosa et al., 2017; Zervas et al., 2014). We identified diverse core functions of current services that we will discuss regarding the needs of users who want to adapt OEP. Infrastructures do not only allow the reuse and sharing of OER, but also convey the model of open educational resources in their media performance. It is striking that current services concentrate on the searching and finding of open educational resources, but lack the idea of open collaboration and communication between teachers and learners.

Our poster contributes to how infrastructures can better support OEP and lead to a better use and acceptance of OER among scientific communities. It provides useful insights for the open science community into how to develop infrastructures that foster open educational practices.

References

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