

# OER IN AND AS MOOCS: IMPACT ON EDUCATORS' PRACTICES IN AFRICAN-DEVELOPED HIGHER EDUCATION COURSES

Walji, S.;

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# OER IN AND AS MOOCS: IMPACT ON EDUCATORS' PRACTICES IN AFRICAN-DEVELOPED HIGHER EDUCATION COURSES

**Sukaina Walji**

Laura Czerniewicz and the UCT MOOC Team

Centre for Innovation in Learning & Teaching, University of Cape Town

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@sukainaw

Sukaina.walji@uct.ac.za



# BROAD CONTEXT





Open Education Initiatives (OER and MOOCs)

<http://poerup.referata.com/wiki/Maps>



Centre for  
Innovation in  
Learning and  
Teaching

# ABOUT THE UCT MOOCS PROJECT



Medicine and the Arts:  
Humanising Healthcare



What is a Mind?

- First major MOOC initiative in Africa
- 12 MOOCS+ over 3 years
- Multi-platform approach
- Intention for OER outputs
- Creative commons licensed material

# RATIONALE FOR THIS IMPACT STUDY

Grantee of Research on Open Educational Resources for Development (ROER4D) **Impact Studies** call (sub-project 10.3)

Q: In what ways, and under what circumstances can **OER adoption** impact upon the increasing demand for accessible, relevant, high-quality, and affordable education in the Global South?

"The most obvious dimension of openness in a MOOC is the sharing of OER, but it is important to recognise that the facilitators, by participating in this network of interactions, open their instruction as well" (Stephen Downes)

Downes, S (2013) The Role of Open Educational Resources in Personal Learning in McGreal, R; Kinuthia, W and Marshall, S (Eds) *Open Educational Resources: Innovation, Research and Practice* Commonwealth of Learning and Athabasca University, Vancouver



# ROER4D RESEARCH: OER ADOPTION & IMPACT

## Research on Open Educational Resources for Development in the Global South

### GENERAL OBJECTIVE:

IMPROVE EDUCATIONAL POLICY, PRACTICE and RESEARCH in developing countries by better understanding the use and impact of OER

August 2013 - February 2017

### PROJECT CLUSTERS

- OER Desktop Review
- OER Survey
- Academics' adoption of OER
- Teacher educators' adoption of OER
- OER adoption in one country
- OER impact studies
- Baseline educational expenditure



[roer4d.org](http://roer4d.org)

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**ROER4D**

Research on Open Educational Resources for Development  
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développement international



# WHY IS THIS RESEARCH USEFUL?

- Add to **body of evidence about impact** on educators of adopting OER
- Opportunity to examine what the 'open' in MOOCs means – **contested space**
- What does the **MOOC as a format** add to adoption and creation of OER?
- Inform institutions **thinking of offering MOOCs esp. in Global South**



# OUR QUESTION/HYPOTHESIS

## **Main research question:**

How does the adoption (or not) of OER, incorporating both creation and use, in African-developed MOOCs impact on educators' (primarily creators, but may also include re-users) open educational practices?

**Hypothesis:** OER adoption in a MOOC format contributes to the spread of open educational practices or a transformation in educators' teaching and learning practices

# WHICH EDUCATORS

Primary:  
Academic conveners

Secondary: other educators in  
institution

Secondary: educators enrolled in  
MOOC

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY & EVIDENCE

Track educators' attitudes and self-reported practices before, during MOOC production, after running of MOOC and later

(interviews, focus group and observations)

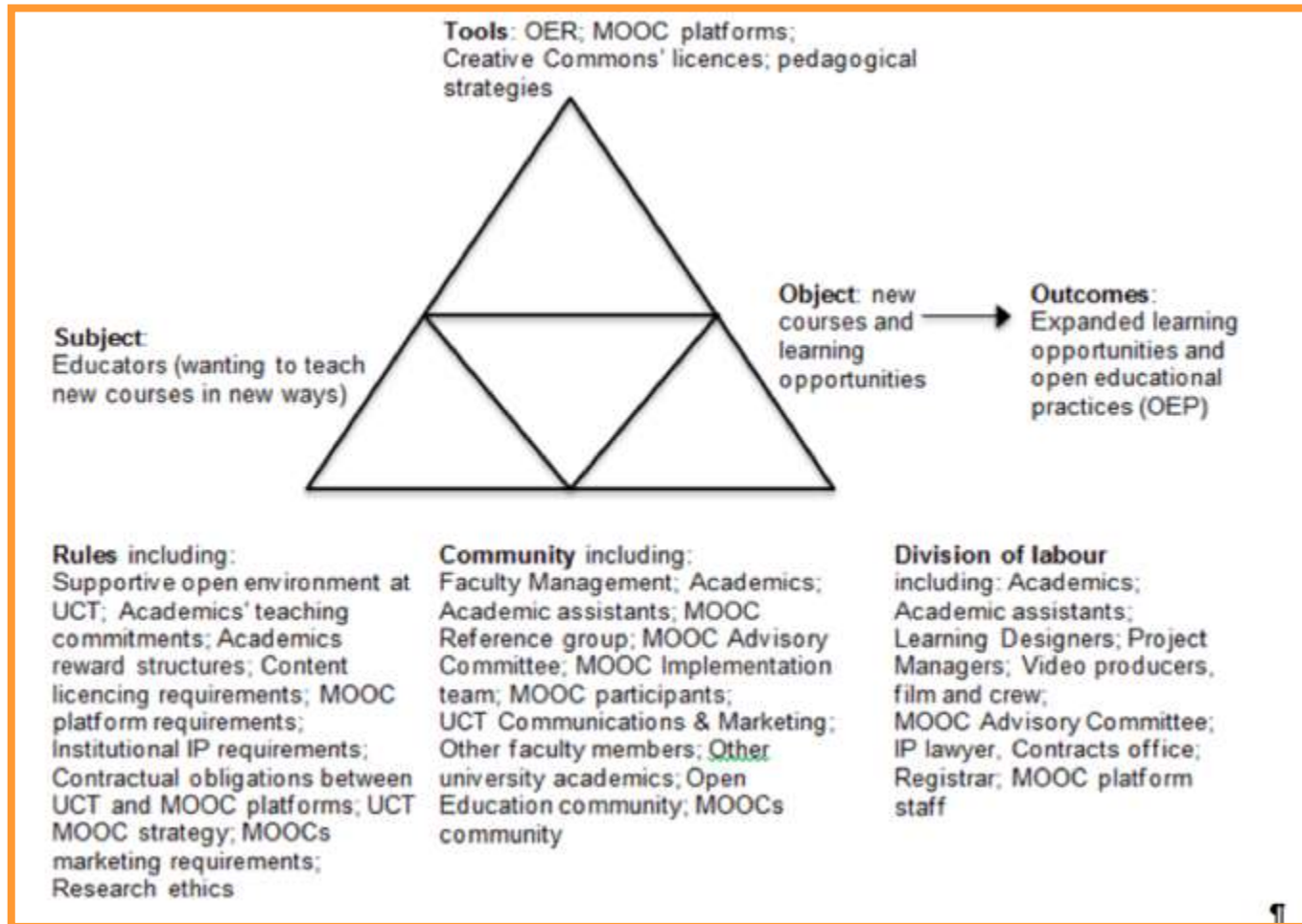
Develop Activity Systems for each MOOC site in disciplinary and institutional contexts for rich understanding

Examine artefacts produced (policy documents, materials, MOOC discussions, MOOC proposals, course material, responses to learning analytics)

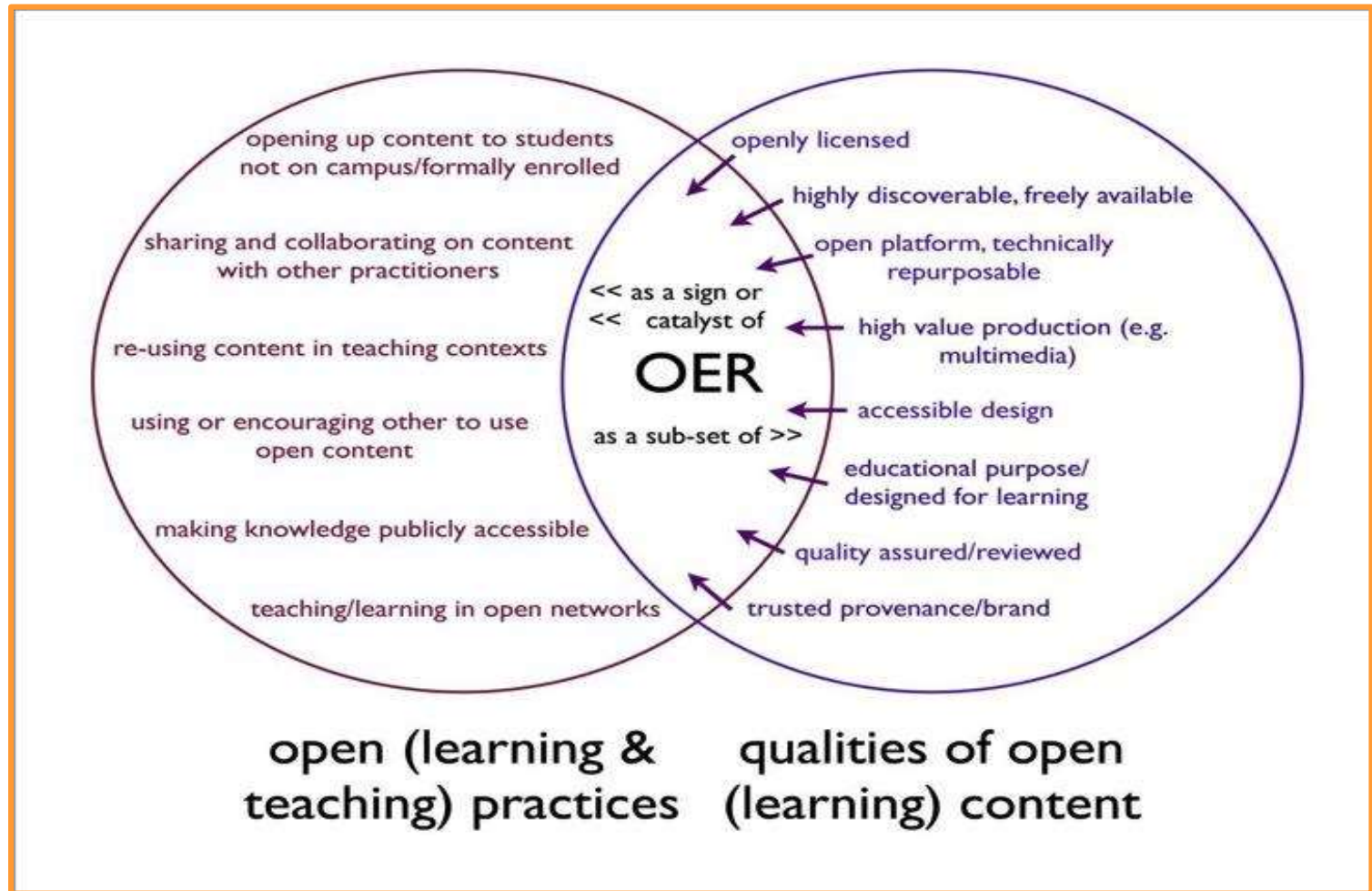
Track examples of transformed and open practices later and across sites

(observation and interviews)

# FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS



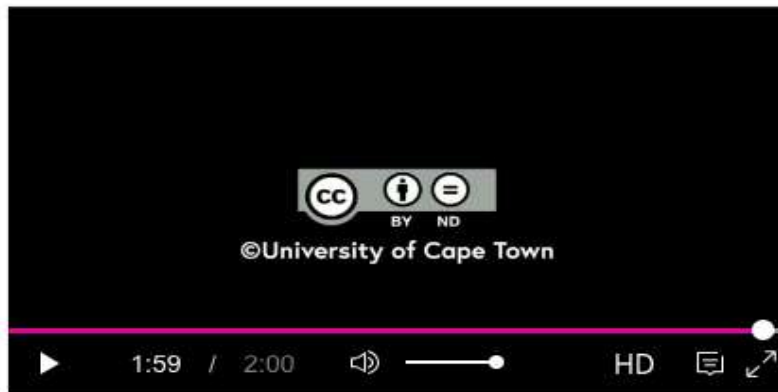
# FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS



# PRELIMINARY FINDING #1

MOOCs are forcing academics and learning design team to confront issues about open access & OER

- Nascent understanding of OER, open licencing
- Find CC licenced images and source readings & alternative texts
- Put own work into open repository to enable use in MOOC
- Viral effect of understanding openness



Download video: [standard](#) or [HD](#)



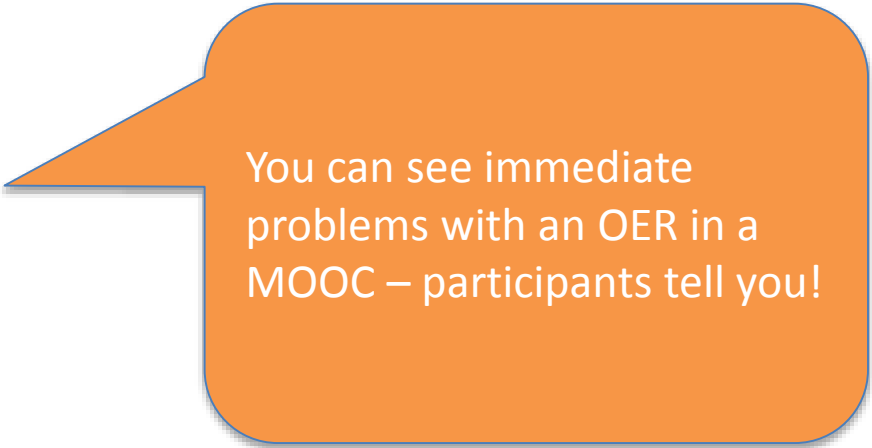
Rock art in Twyfelfontein, Namibia

© Thomas Schoch CC-BY-SA

# PRELIMINARY FINDING #2

Reusing OER “as is” can be problematic

- e.g. OER from Wellcome Trust format unreadable even though taken “as is” due to fixed PDF format. Technical openness may be a challenge

An orange speech bubble with a blue outline, pointing towards the text 'Technical openness may be a challenge'.

You can see immediate problems with an OER in a MOOC – participants tell you!

Legal openness may not be enough and recontextualisation is required.

- e.g. Open Content sometimes ambiguous as to provenance



# PRELIMINARY FINDING #3

Releasing materials as OER is legally possible in the MOOC platforms we work with:

- It is **up to institution, not platform to specify the licence**
- But it can be technically complicated – how do we release quizzes or assignments from MOOC platform. Should we?
- How do we mix licences?
- Should we store MOOC materials in an Open repository?

Further readings can be found in this **list of resources** or below under the heading 'see also'.

UCT is committed to encouraging open access with regard to scholarly communication and education. Where possible we have released our course content under a **Creative Commons licence**.

Clear commitment  
to open licensing in  
UCT MOOCs

# PRELIMINARY FINDING #4

- Signs of transformation of attitudes to open and online education
  - Marked change in educators' attitude to open courses and teaching online and open
  - Early re-use of MOOC materials in face to face course

I am also so impressed with the work you are all doing in providing reading material. I would like to say a special thank you to Misha Murphy for reminding me about the ethnography, 'The Private Worlds of Dying Children' by medical anthropologist Myra Bluebond-Langner. I quote her, "It was written in 1978 in the United States and is about children dying from leukemia. The stories she provides are very similar to the ones mentioned by Kate. It really shows that children understand a lot more about their illness than adults think they do." This is an absolute classic that I will add to our reading list in our future courses in 2016.

(Extract from weekly email from Lead Educator)

# CONCLUSION

While there is evidently some immediate impact on educators' practices as a result of making a MOOC, the test will be in ascertaining contribution of OER to longer term attitudes and practices.

Watch this space

- <http://moocs.blog.uct.ac.za/>
- Subproject 10.3 page on ROER4D website:  
[www.roer4d.org](http://www.roer4d.org)

# CONTACT

Questions?

Contact: [Sukaina.walji@uct.ac.za](mailto:Sukaina.walji@uct.ac.za)

Twitter: @sukainaw