

OER in Language Learning: Flexible, Free, and Future Ready

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Abstract

Open Educational Resources (OER) have increasingly become an area of interest and a focal point for educational innovation, especially in higher education. OER can help provide equity for students with financial challenges and give instructors the ability to customize their courses for their students. This research study examines the use of OER for teaching and learning world languages at the higher education level. Methods include a qualitative and quantitative survey of students in the Department of World Languages and Literatures at California State University, Sacramento (n=30) as well as interviews with world language faculty members (n=10) from the university and community colleges on their experience using OER to teach world languages. Students appreciated the cost savings of using OER and often found the resources to be more engaging. Faculty members enjoyed being able to customize and tailor content of their courses for their students. Institutions need to find ways to financially compensate and reduce the burden on instructors who create or customize OER and provide necessary technical support. Higher quality OER need to be created for teaching world languages at the higher education level.

Keywords: OER, Open Educational Resources, world language instruction, higher education