International Institute for Educational Planning
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF INTEREST
OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES OPEN CONTENT FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Report of the discussions on developing a research agenda for Open Educational Resources

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APPENDIX 4: Conversations map

The conversations map represents the discussions outlined in Appendix 3 (see main report document, p.18) in schematic form, allowing users to see the links between different threads. The map page headings correspond to the section headings in Appendix 3.

The conversations map may also be viewed as a mindmap[1] using Freemind[2].

INDEX TO THE MAP PAGES

1 Available on request from Kim Tucker (ktucker@csir.co.za).
2 http://freemind.sourceforge.net

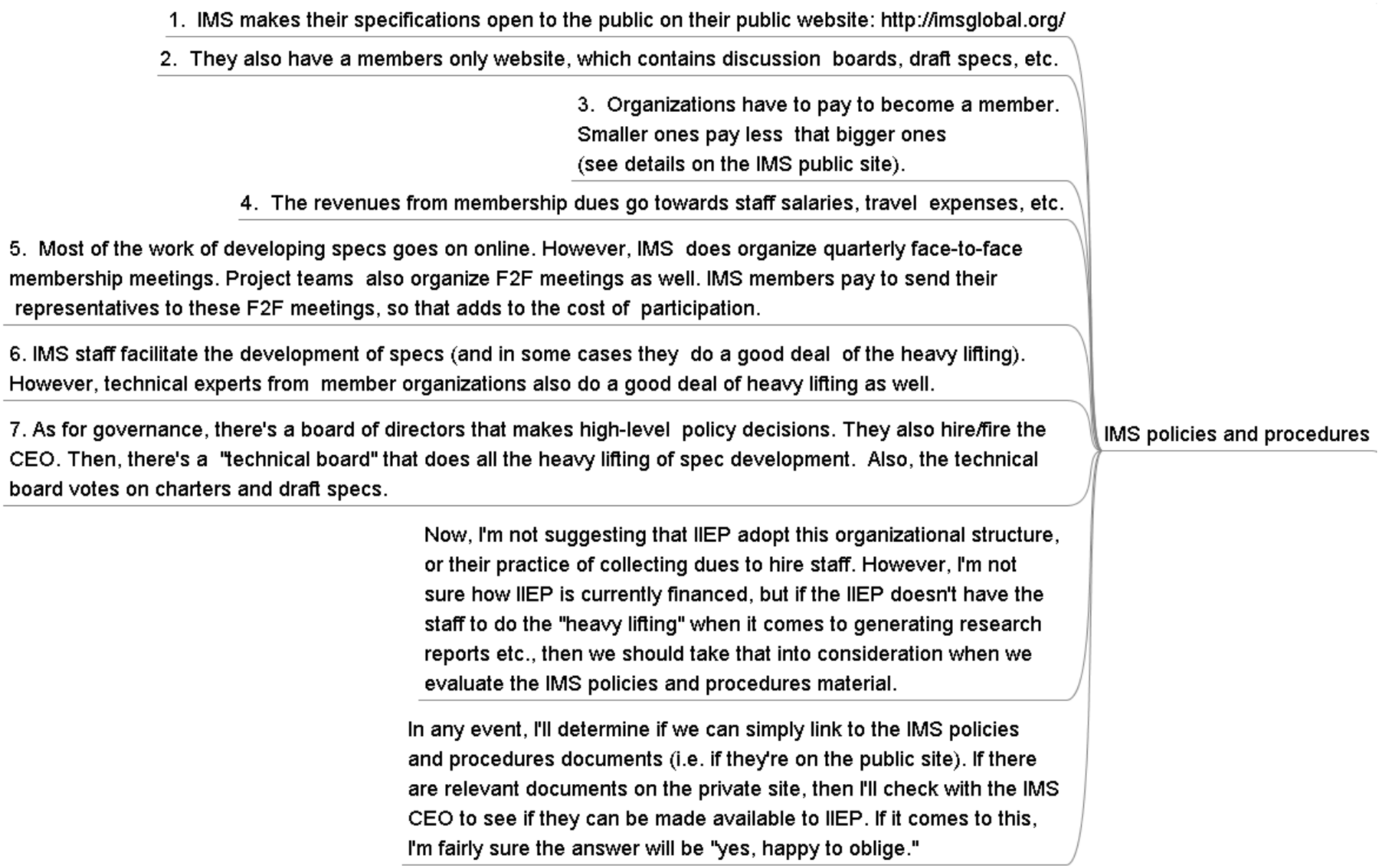
1. ALTERNATIVE PROCESSES

1.1 Finding and prioritising research questions

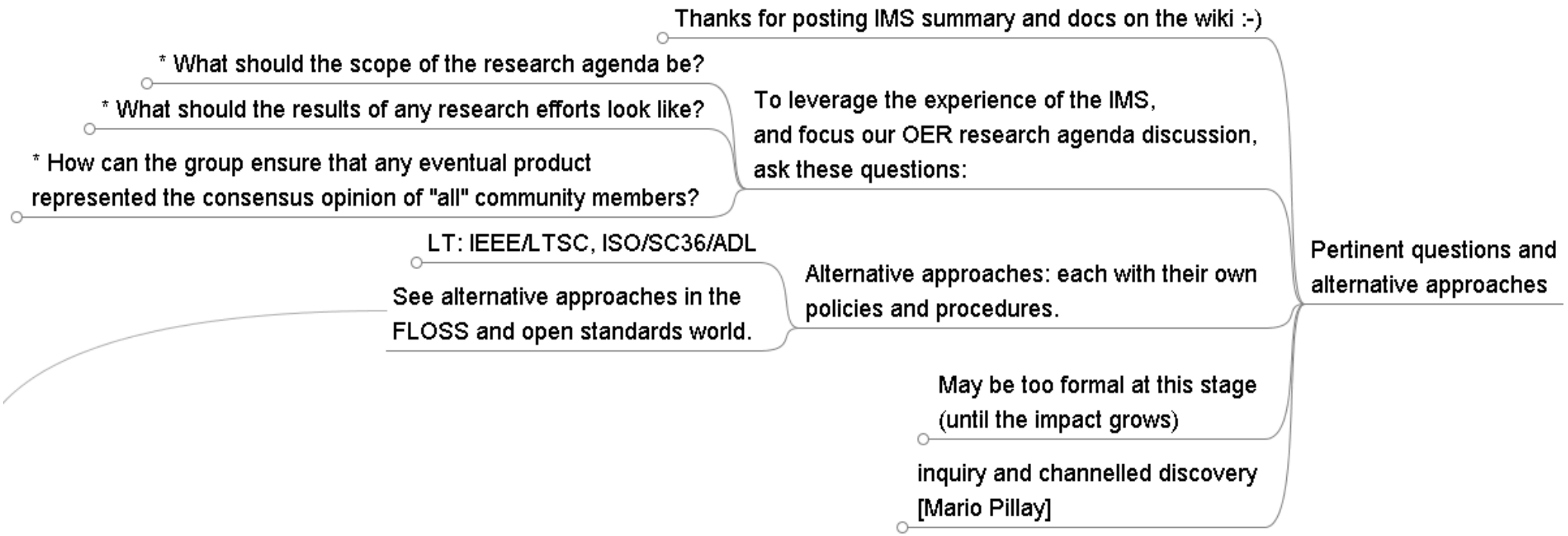
1.2 The IMS experience: standards development processes

Fred Beshears et al

IMS policies and procedures



Pertinent questions re IMS and alternatives



For general processes, covering OER development, 'managing' this community, research agenda development, etc. we might gain by looking at some other perspectives - learning from various FLOSS development and open standards processes (some links below for anyone interested).

Personally, I prefer the approach alluded to in some of the postings: on an on-going basis make it easy for OER researchers to share results and insights, and for practitioners to share experiences and gain access to relevant knowledge - e.g via social software, search, the DIY OER portal, etc..

Facilitate and catalyse community self-organisation around a shared vision: (e.g.) enhancing OER practice around the world via sharing ... and encourage participants to go forth and collaboratively address the priorities while applying the learning in situ and embracing innovations as they become accessible. Trust the community's ability to manage quality and direction.

But there is room for multiple approaches :-).

intro

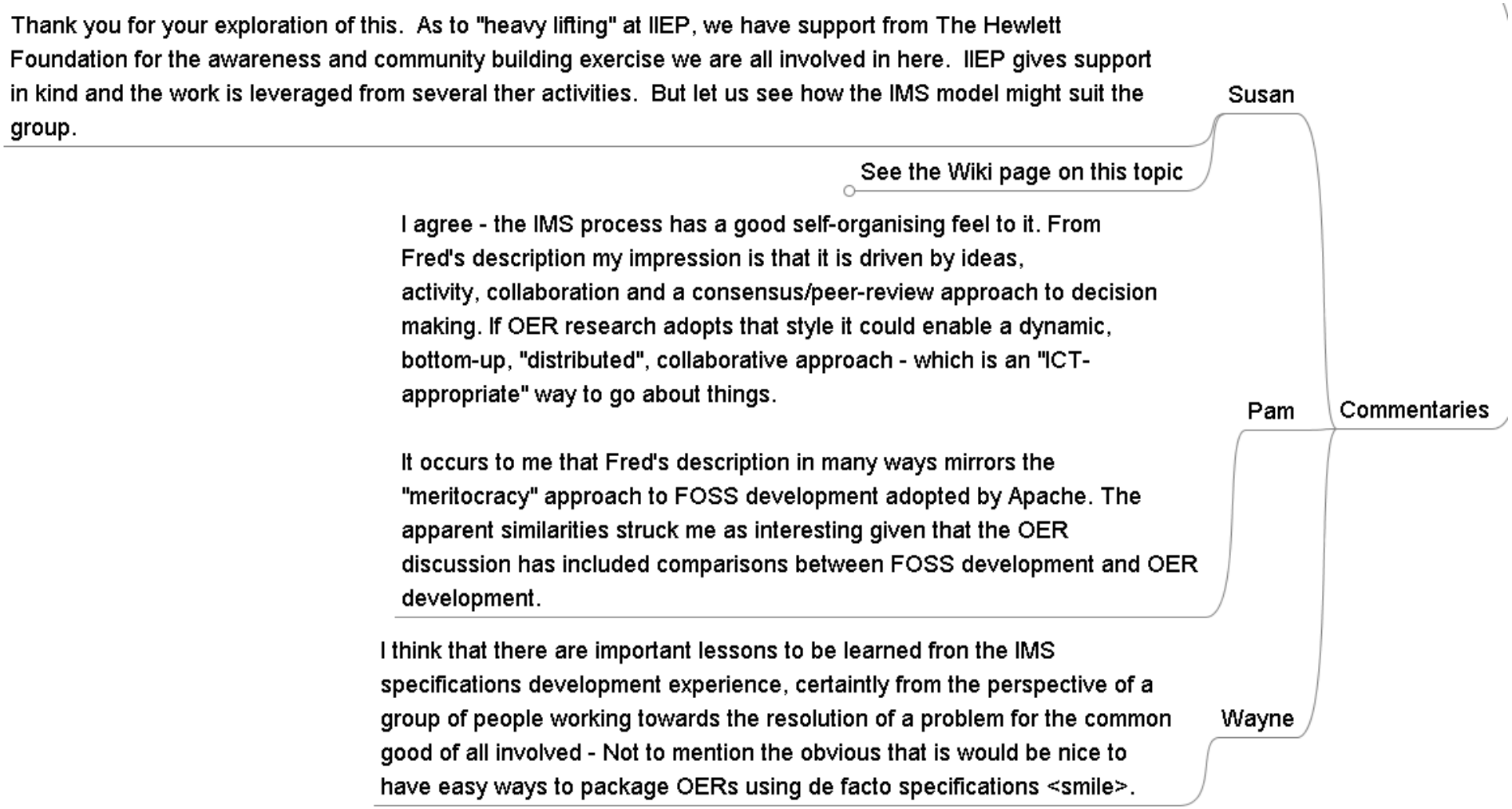
Alternatively, look at processes in FLOSS and open standards development. [Kim]

FLOSS Development Community Processes and examples: [Apache and Mozilla]

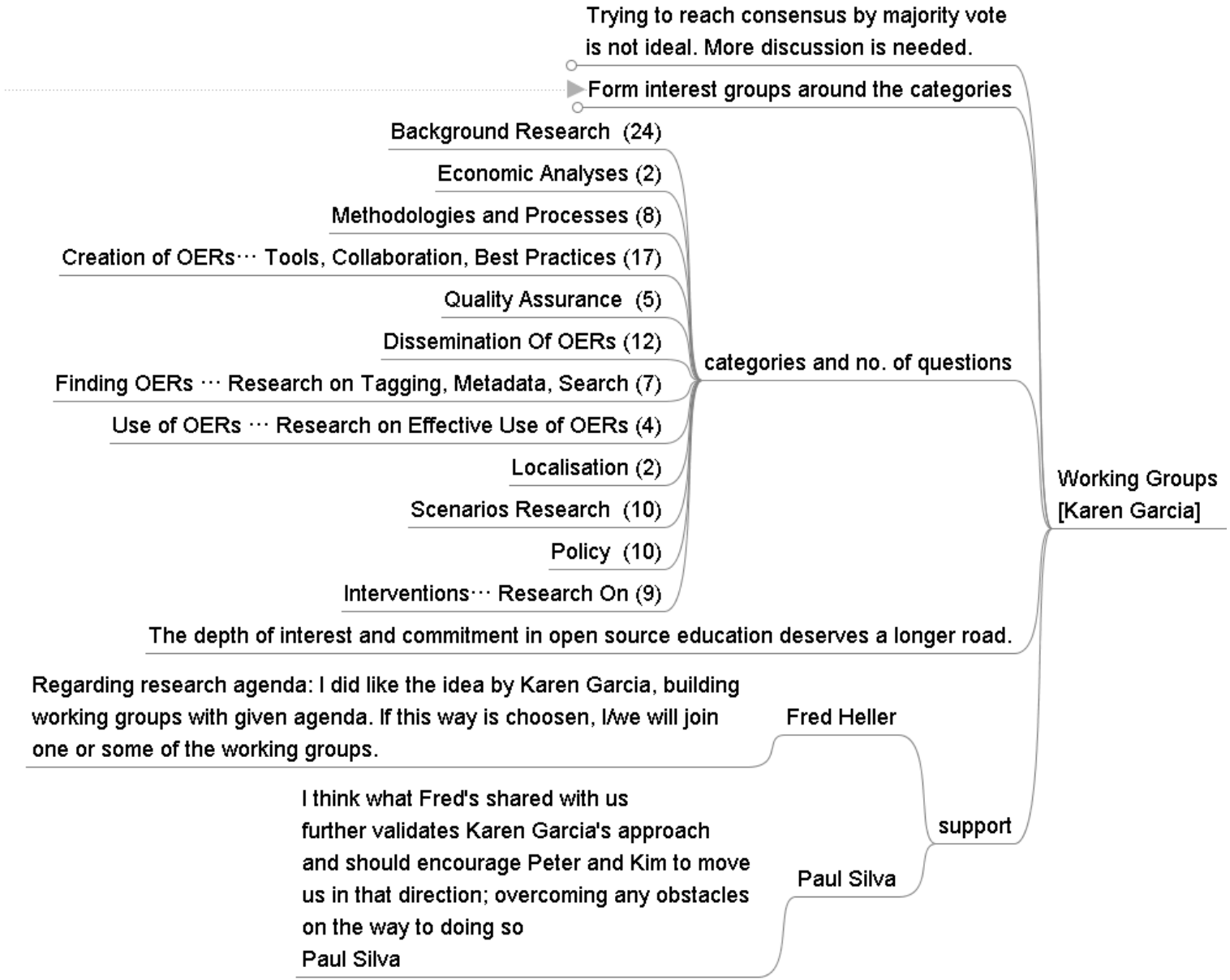
Open Standards Processes - though the IMS approach seems preferable in this context) [OASIS-OPEN, WWWC, OpenGeoSpatial, etc.

Possibly more "agile" thinking
- not standards-orientated
- "just do it" as a community.

and maybe this will interest some people - (order on the edge of chaos): http://www.chaordic.org/

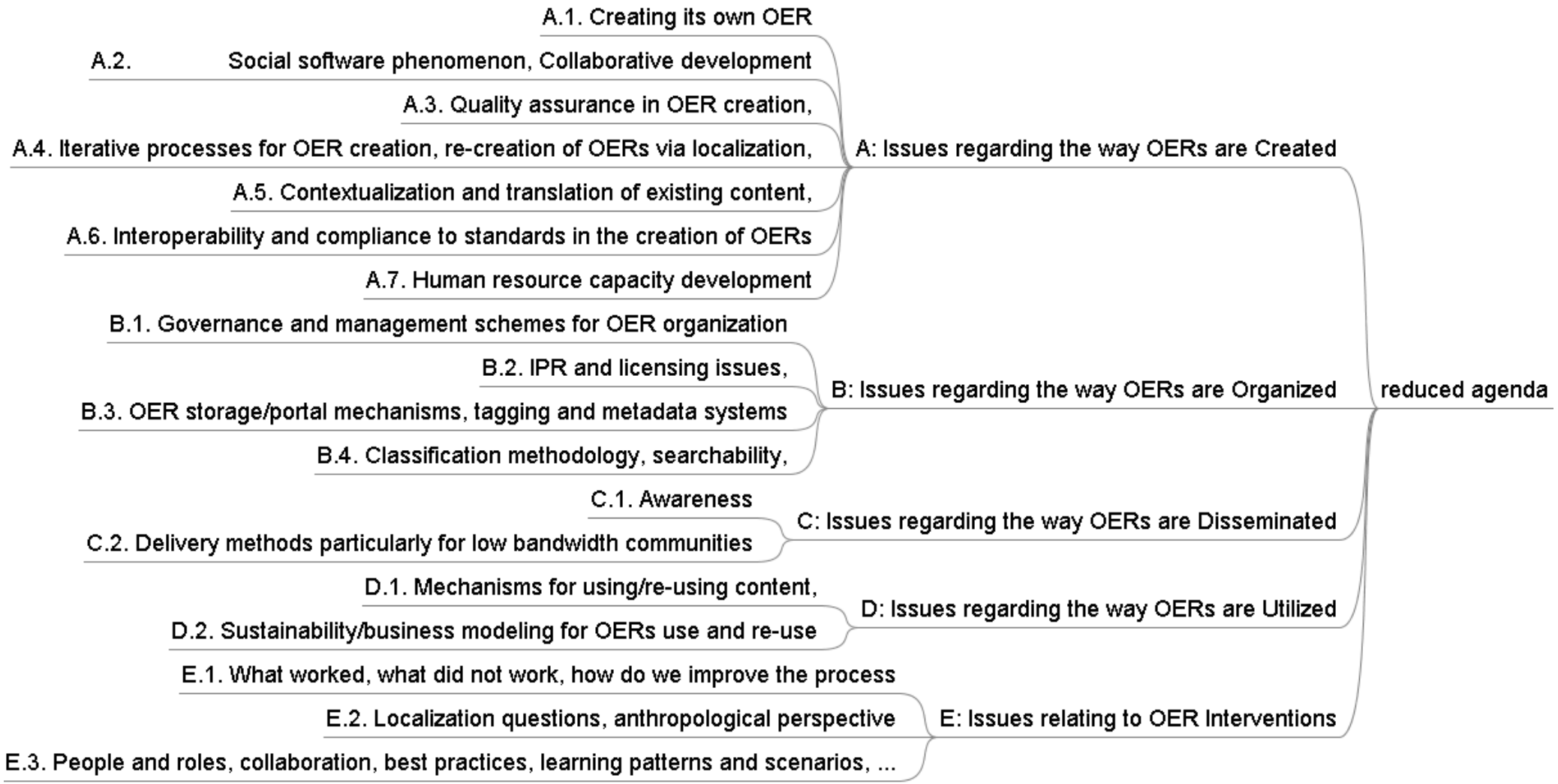

Commentaries
Susan
Thank you for your exploration of this. As to "heavy lifting" at IIEP, we have support from The Hewlett Foundation for the awareness and community building exercise we are all involved in here. IIEP gives support in kind and the work is leveraged from several ther activities. But let us see how the IMS model might suit the group.
See the Wiki page on this topic
Pam
I agree - the IMS process has a good self-organising feel to it. From Fred's description my impression is that it is driven by ideas, activity, collaboration and a consensus/peer-review approach to decision making. If OER research adopts that style it could enable a dynamic, bottom-up, "distributed", collaborative approach - which is an "ICT-appropriate" way to go about things.
It occurs to me that Fred's description in many ways mirrors the "meritocracy" approach to FOSS development adopted by Apache. The apparent similarities struck me as interesting given that the OER discussion has included comparisons between FOSS development and OER development.
Wayne
I think that there are important lessons to be learned fron the IMS specifications development experience, certaintly from the perspective of a group of people working towards the resolution of a problem for the common good of all involved - Not to mention the obvious that is would be nice to have easy ways to package OERs using de facto specifications <smile>.

1.3 Working interest groups

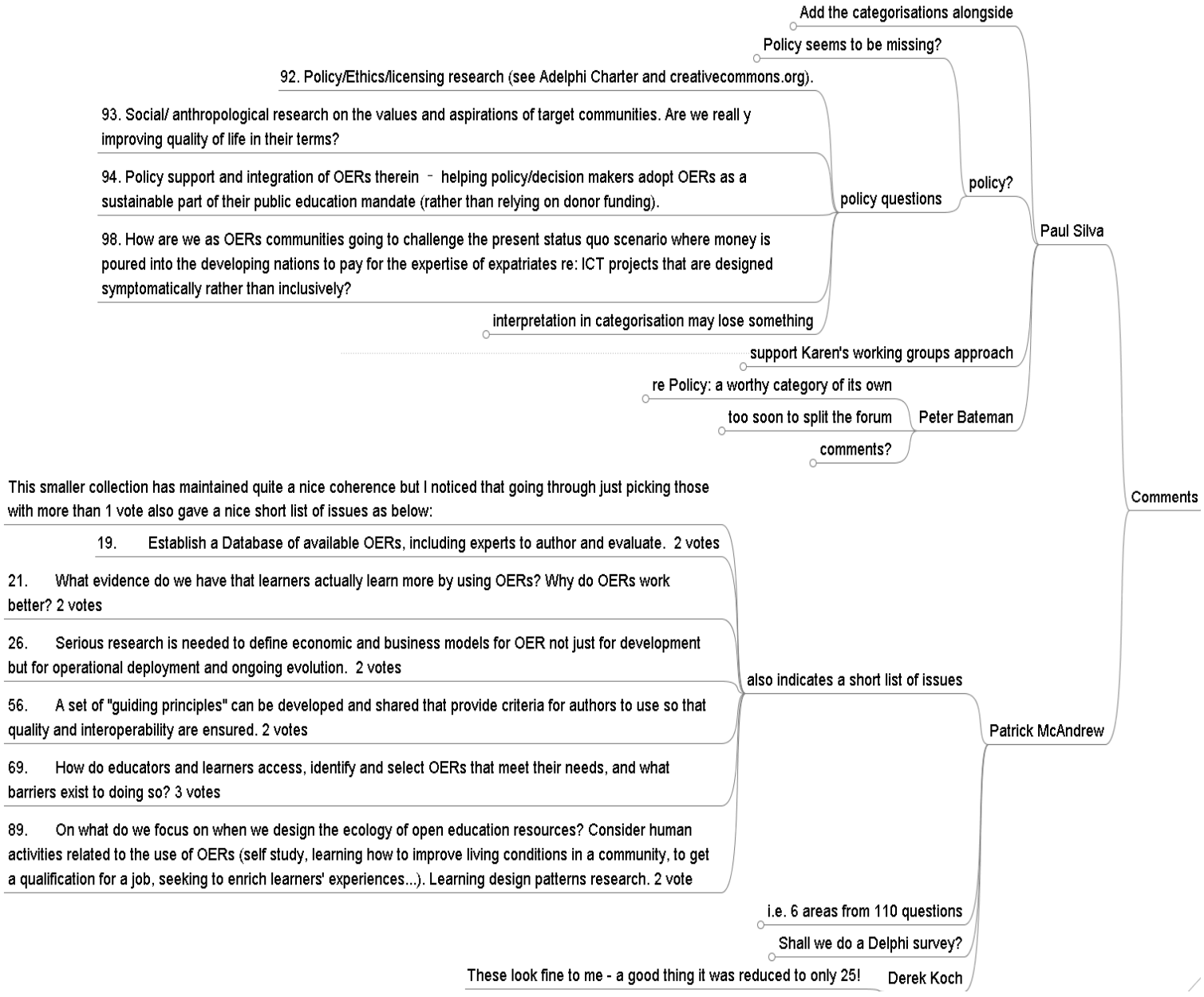


1.4 Reduced agenda

Nabil Sabry



Comments on the reduced agenda



1.5 Voting and the wiki

We have now compiled a list of the research questions that were identified as priority. We have maintained the original numbering so that it is clear where the gaps are from the original list of 110 questions.

Not many of you responded, only about x per cent. And not surprisingly, given the large number of questions that were put forward over the course of the discussion in the first weeks, there was little consensus. Most questions were put forward by one person. For those questions that were identified by more than one person, we have noted the frequency in bold after the question.

Please look over what has been selected···and what has been lost. And consider what might be added – or deleted given the discussion of the last week.

voting

Just as the number of research questions you identified during the discussion over the last weeks made it difficult to come to a consensus on priority questions, the breadth of the discussion makes it a challenge to summarize. The facilitators of the session, Kim and Peter are working hard on this at the moment, and as soon as the report is ready, we will circulate it to all of you and post it on the web site as well.

Susan

In the meantime, it is interesting to note that the wiki page http://oerwiki.iiep-unesco.org has been consulted but little has been added to it. ➔

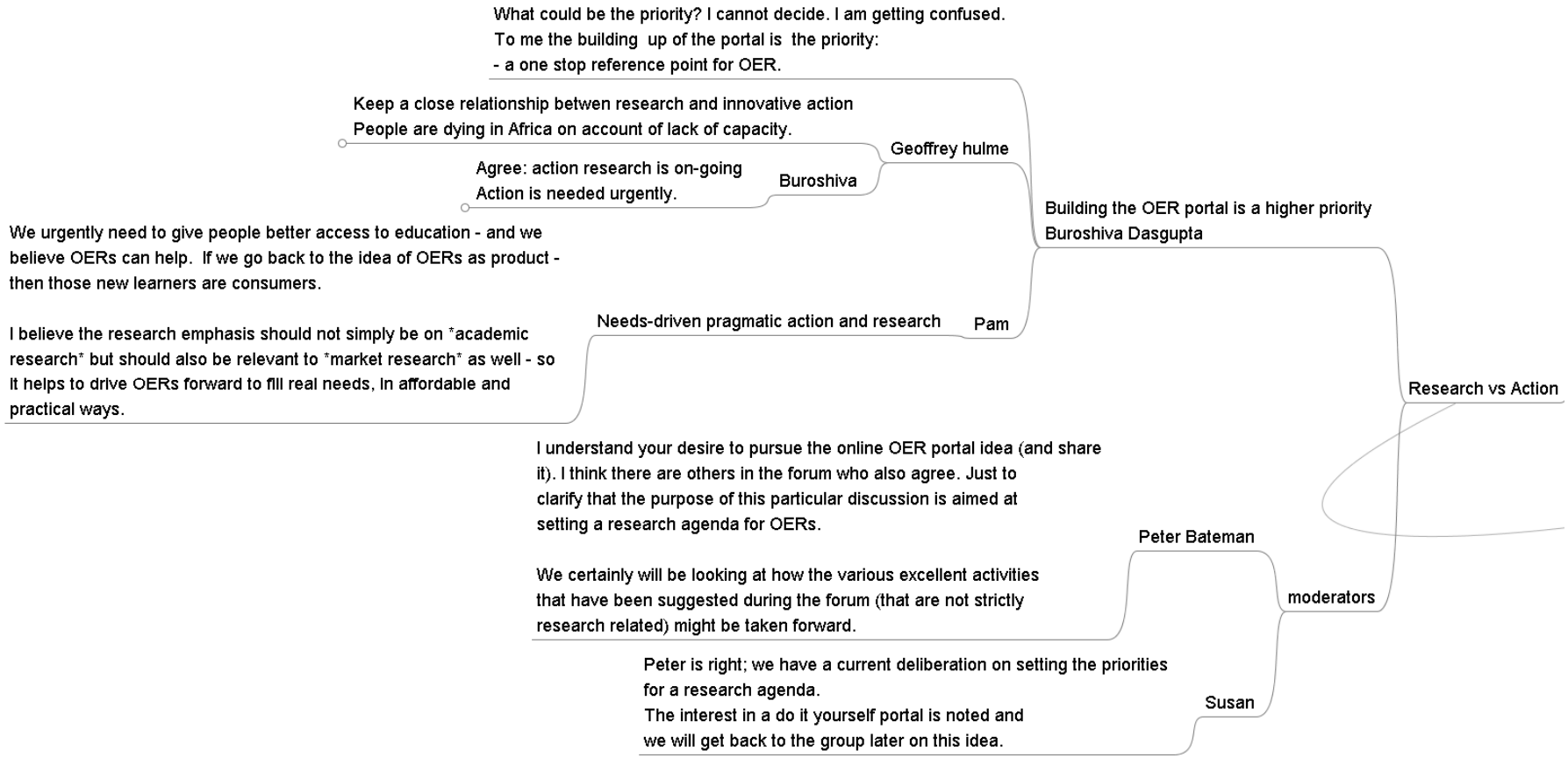
wiki

The addition of the community member list at http://oerwiki.iiep-unesco.org/index.php?title=Community_member_list was an excellent addition and a number of you have put information on it. Let me encourage the rest of you to do so. Since our group was so large, we did not propose a period of introductions at the beginning of our work together. The wiki allows us to do so now. ➔

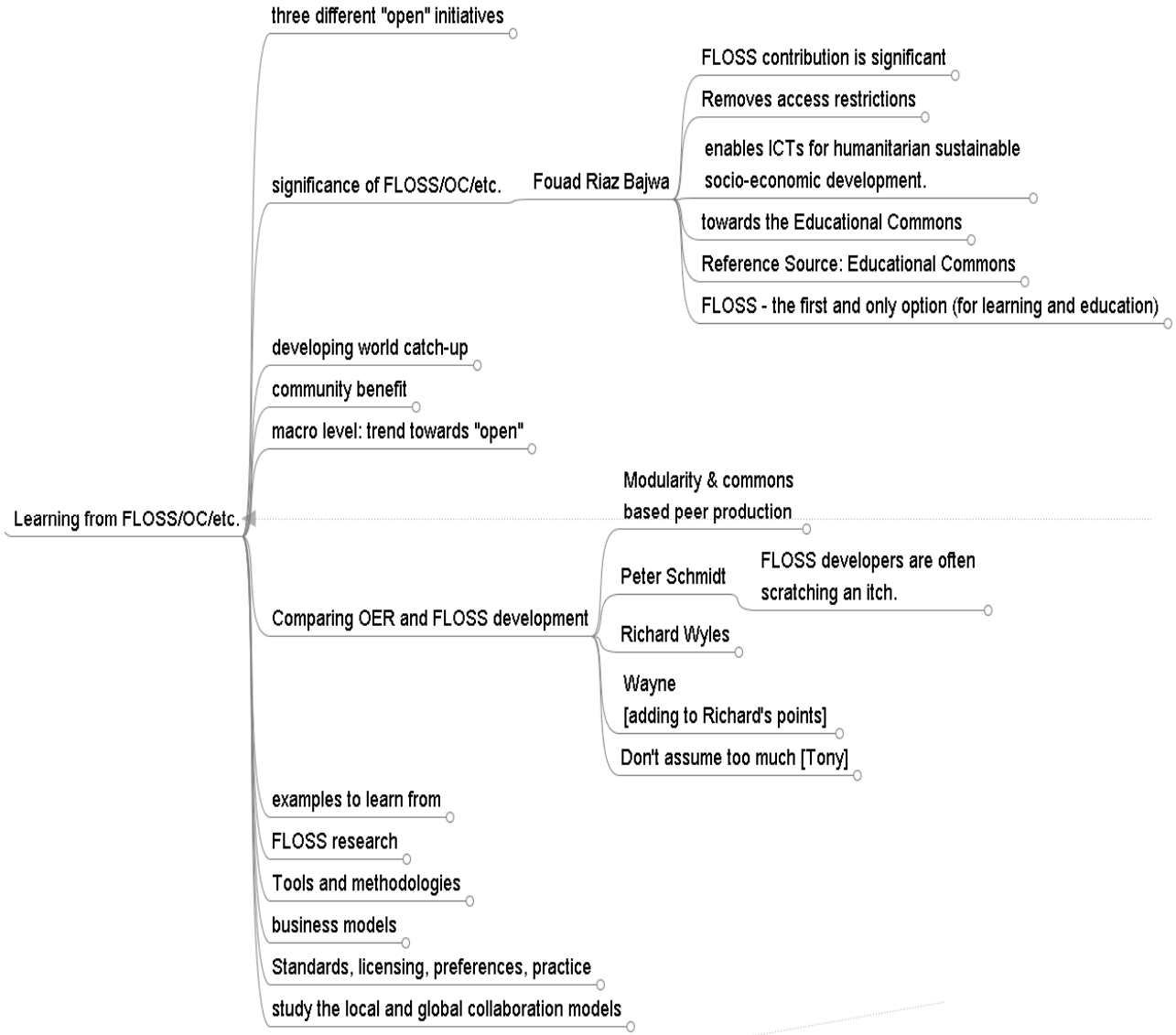
1.6 Research vs. action

Buroshiva, Geoff, Pam et al

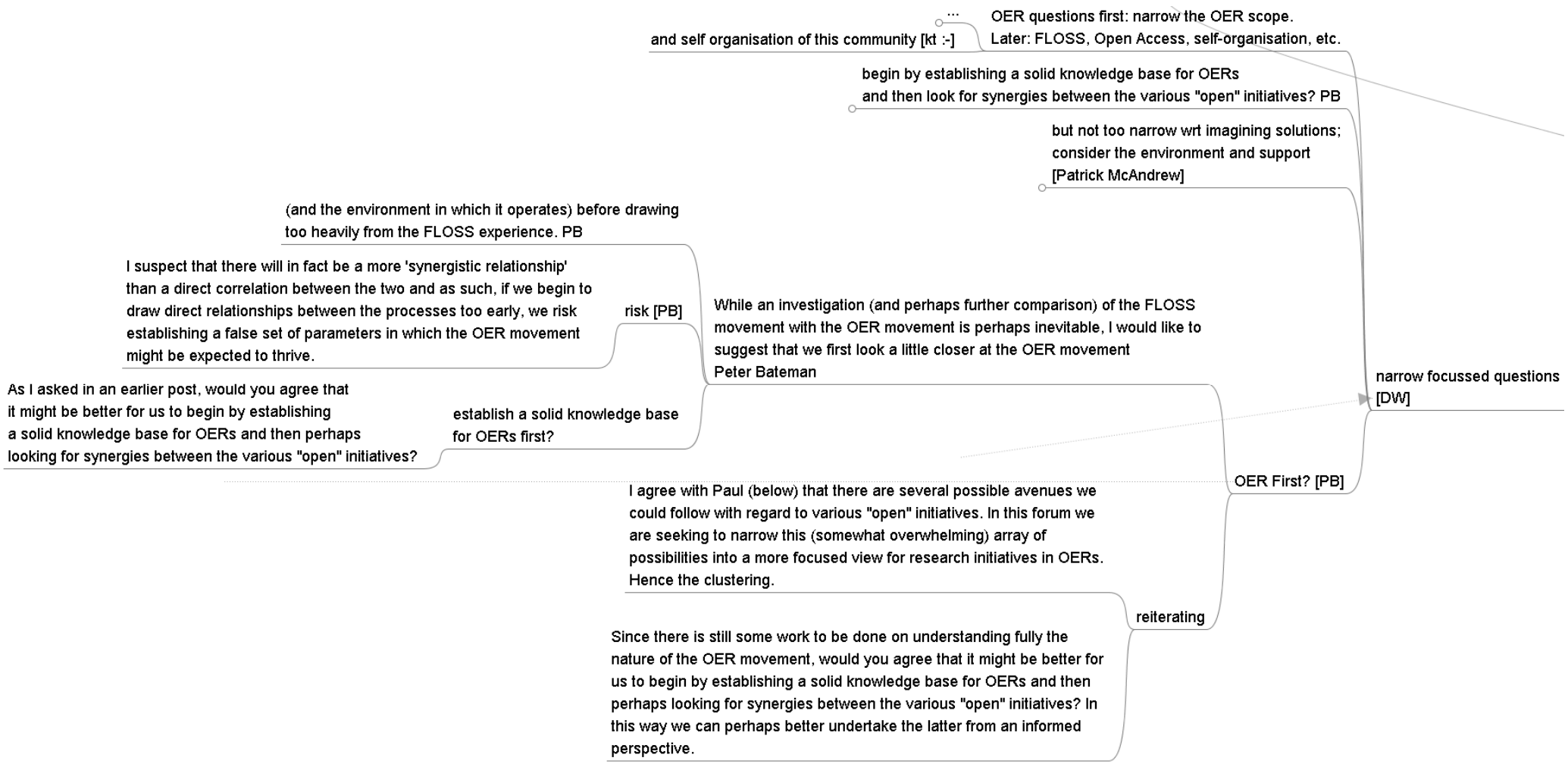
This led to the DIY Portal idea and discussion which is covered later.



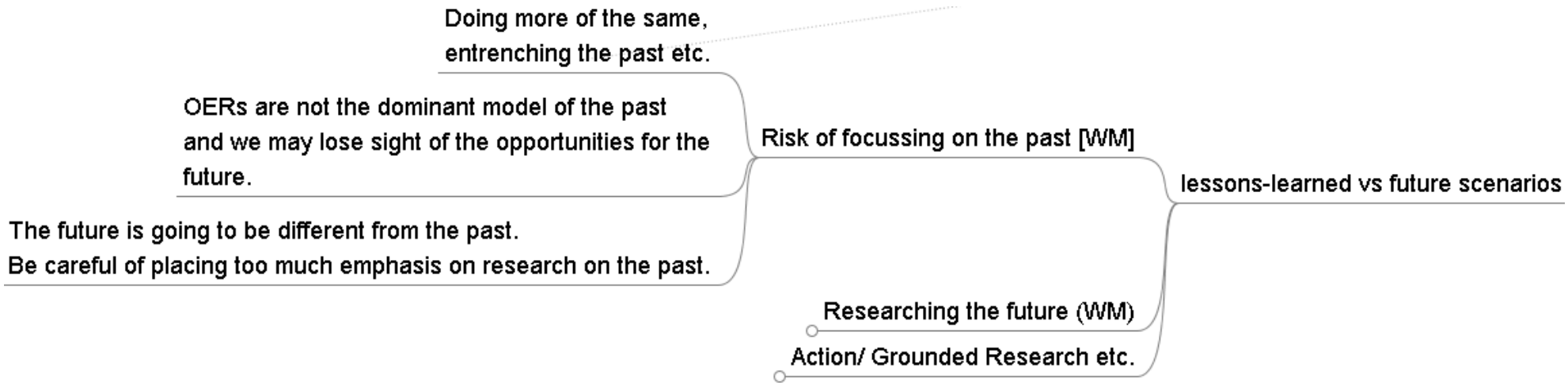
2. WHERE DO WE FOCUS?
2.1 Learning from Open Initiatives



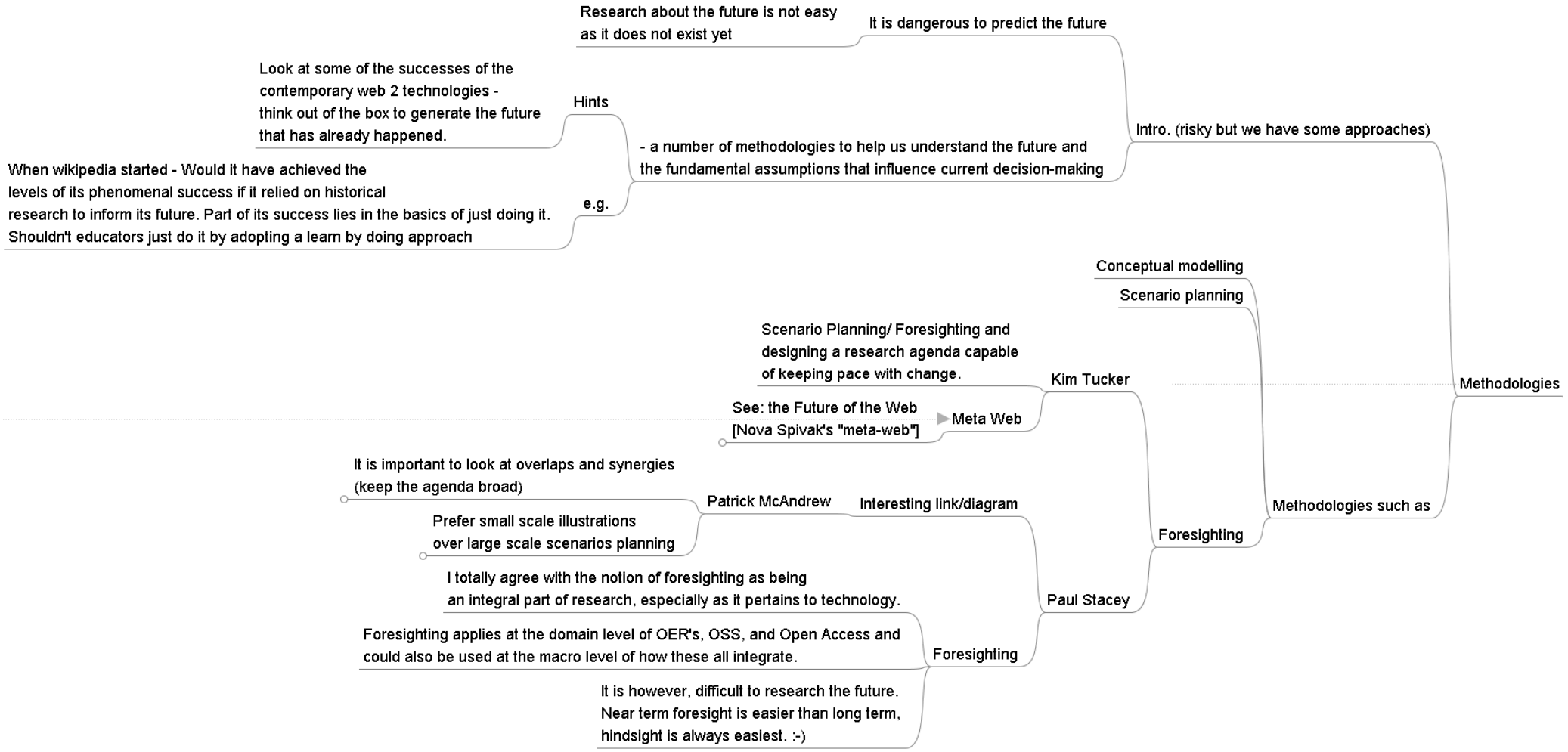
2.2 Narrow focused questions

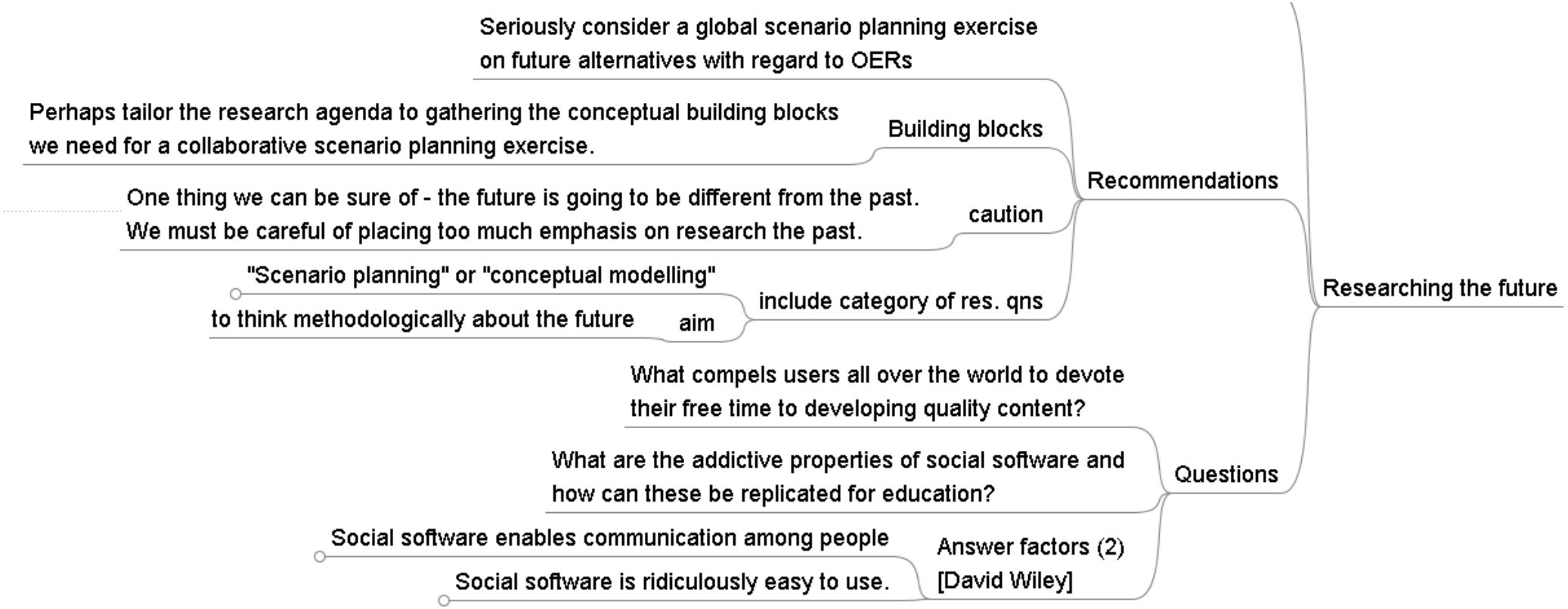


2.3 Lessons learned vs. future scenarios: the risk of focusing on the past

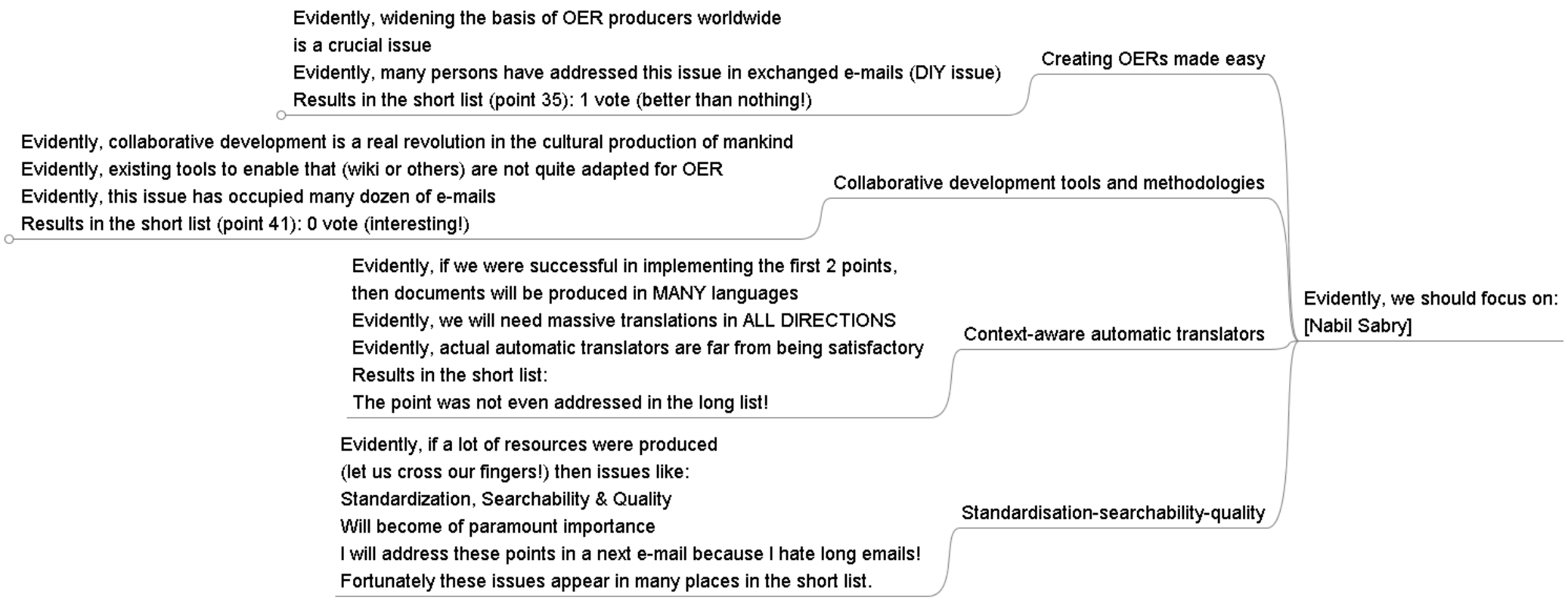


Researching the future: methodologies

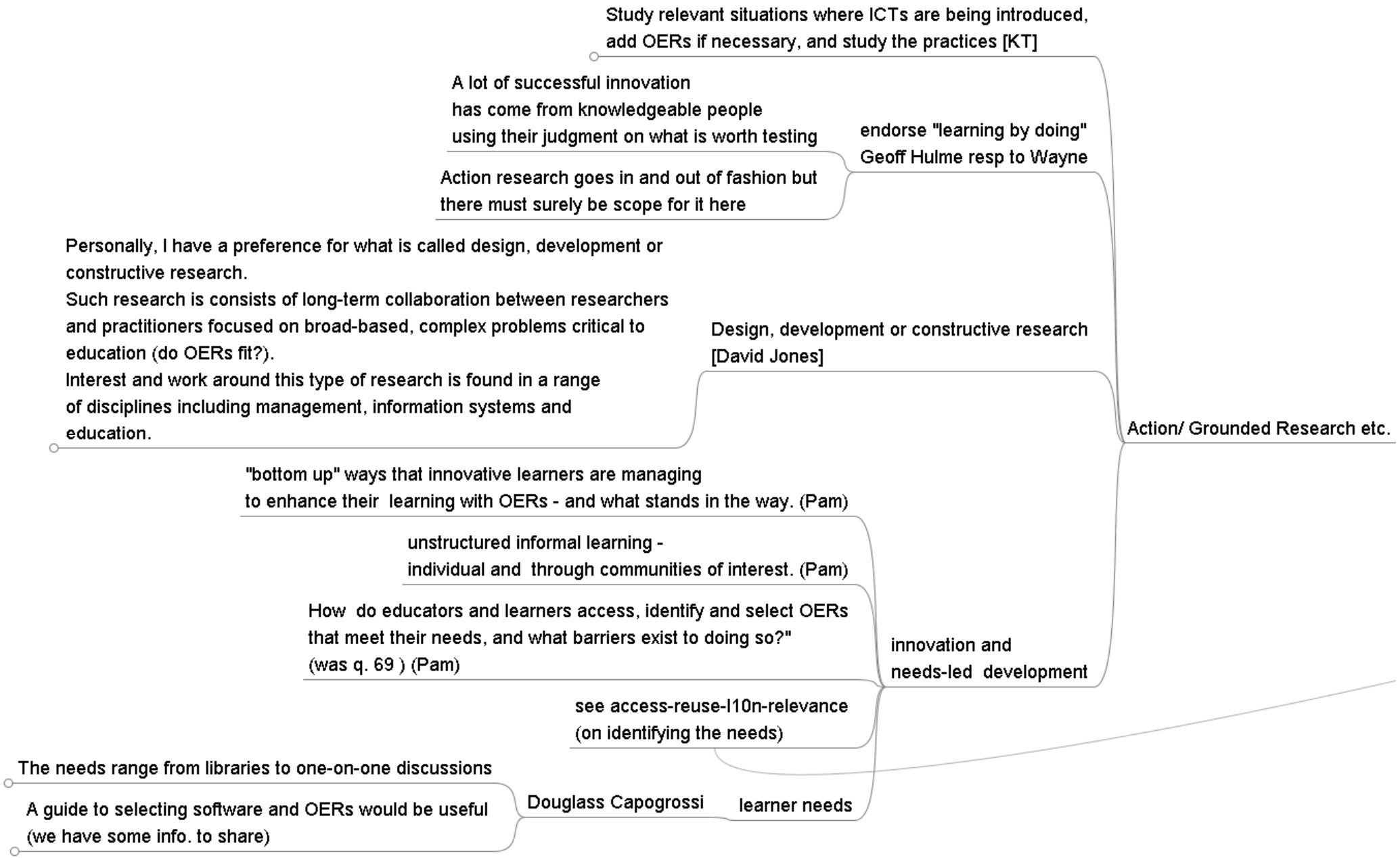



Researching the future
Recommendations
Seriously consider a global scenario planning exercise on future alternatives with regard to OERs
Building blocks
Perhaps tailor the research agenda to gathering the conceptual building blocks we need for a collaborative scenario planning exercise.
caution
One thing we can be sure of - the future is going to be different from the past. We must be careful of placing too much emphasis on research the past.
include category of res. qns
aim
"Scenario planning" or "conceptual modelling" to think methodologically about the future
Questions
What compels users all over the world to devote their free time to developing quality content?
What are the addictive properties of social software and how can these be replicated for education?
Answer factors (2) [David Wiley]
Social software enables communication among people
Social software is ridiculously easy to use.

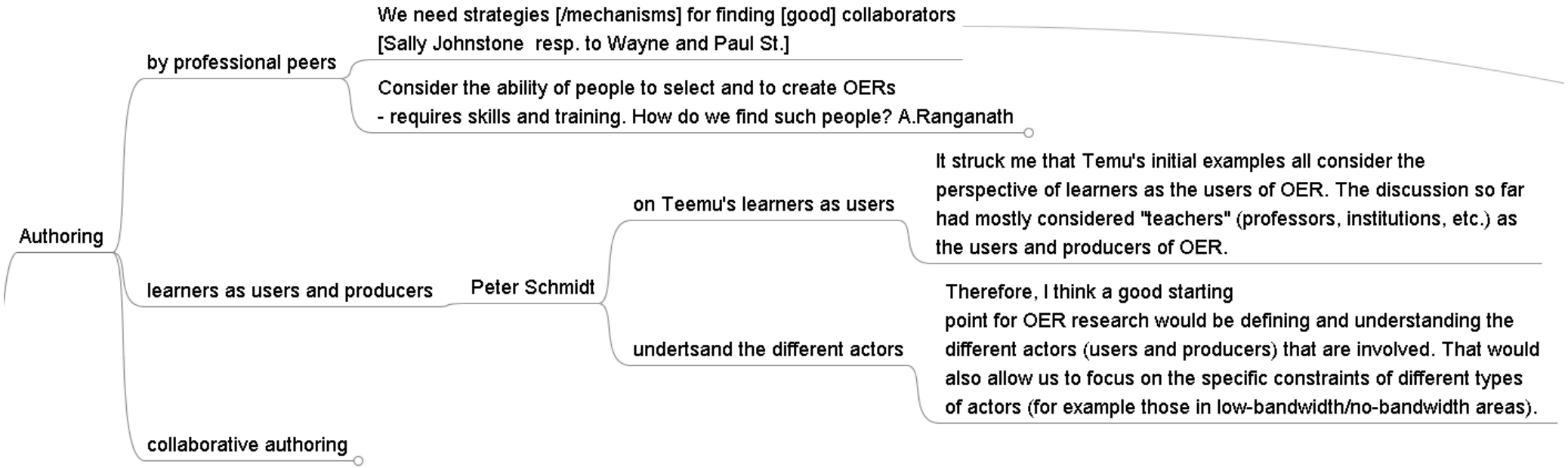
2.4 Evidently we should focus on...



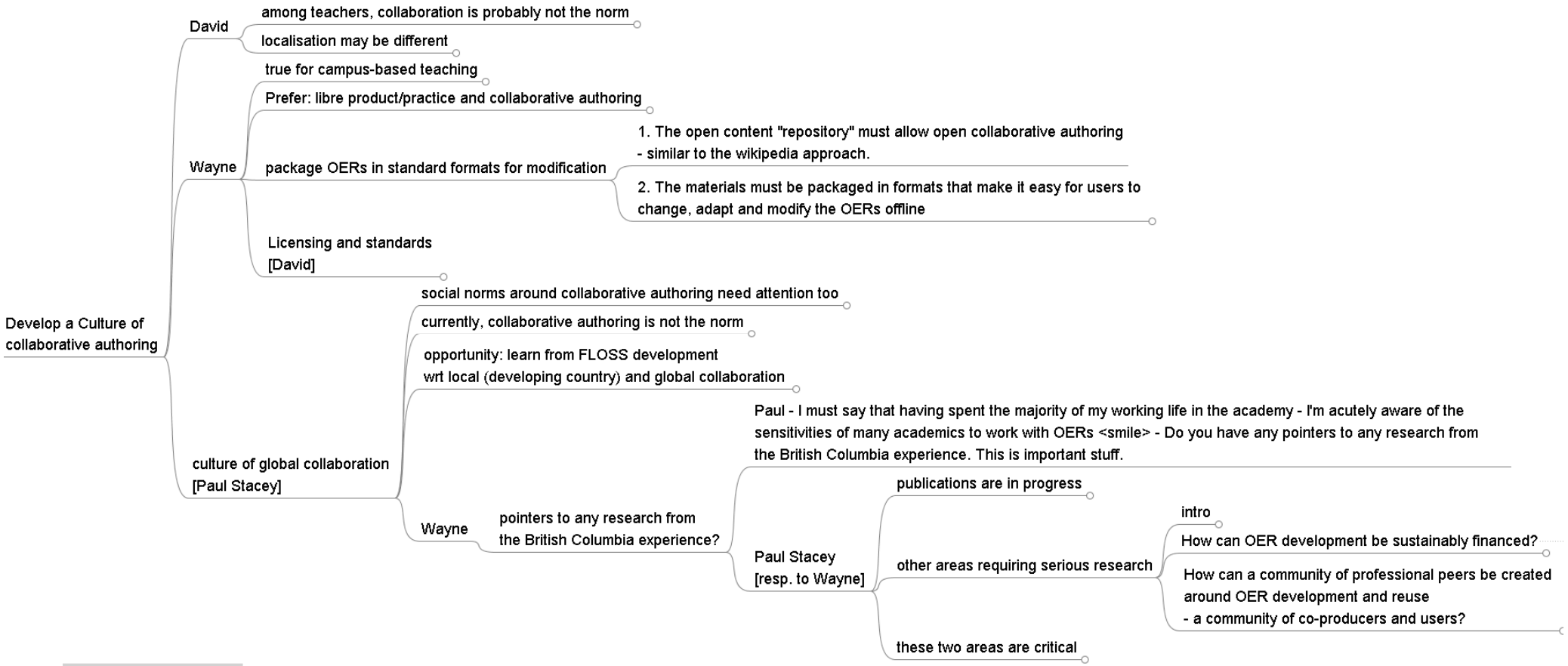
2.5 Action Research etc.



3. CREATION
3.1 Creation by professional peers

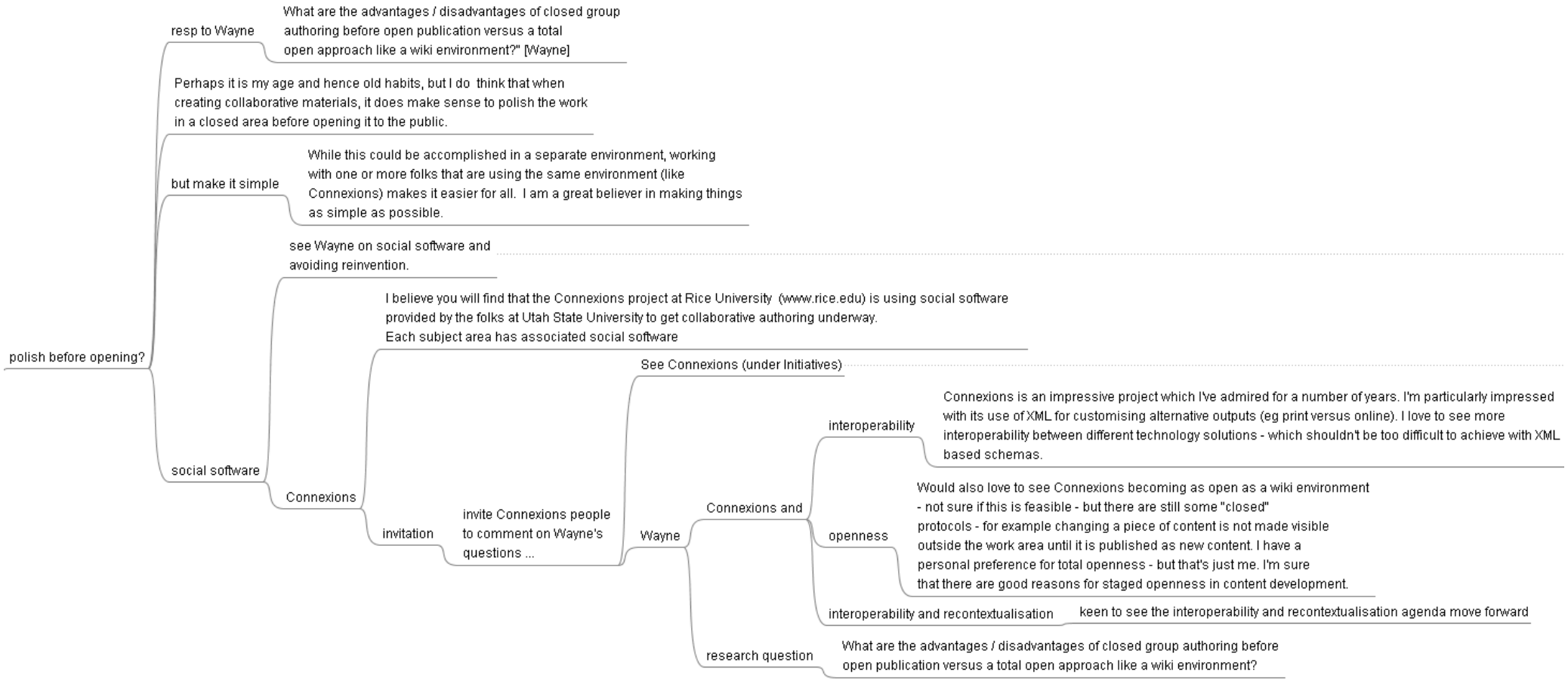


3.2 Towards a culture of collaborative OER creation



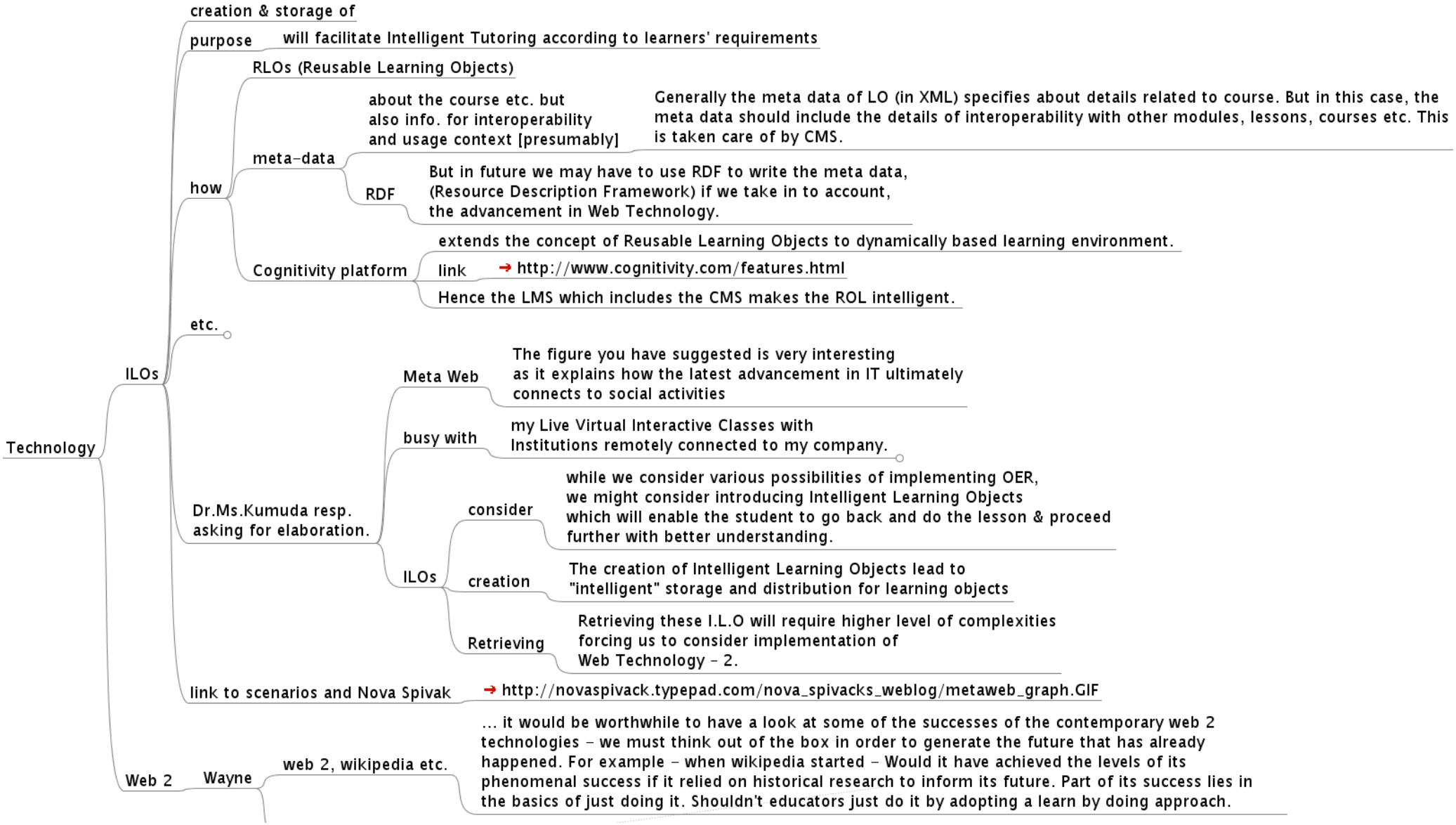
Licensing, formats, standards

Polish before releasing for co-creation?

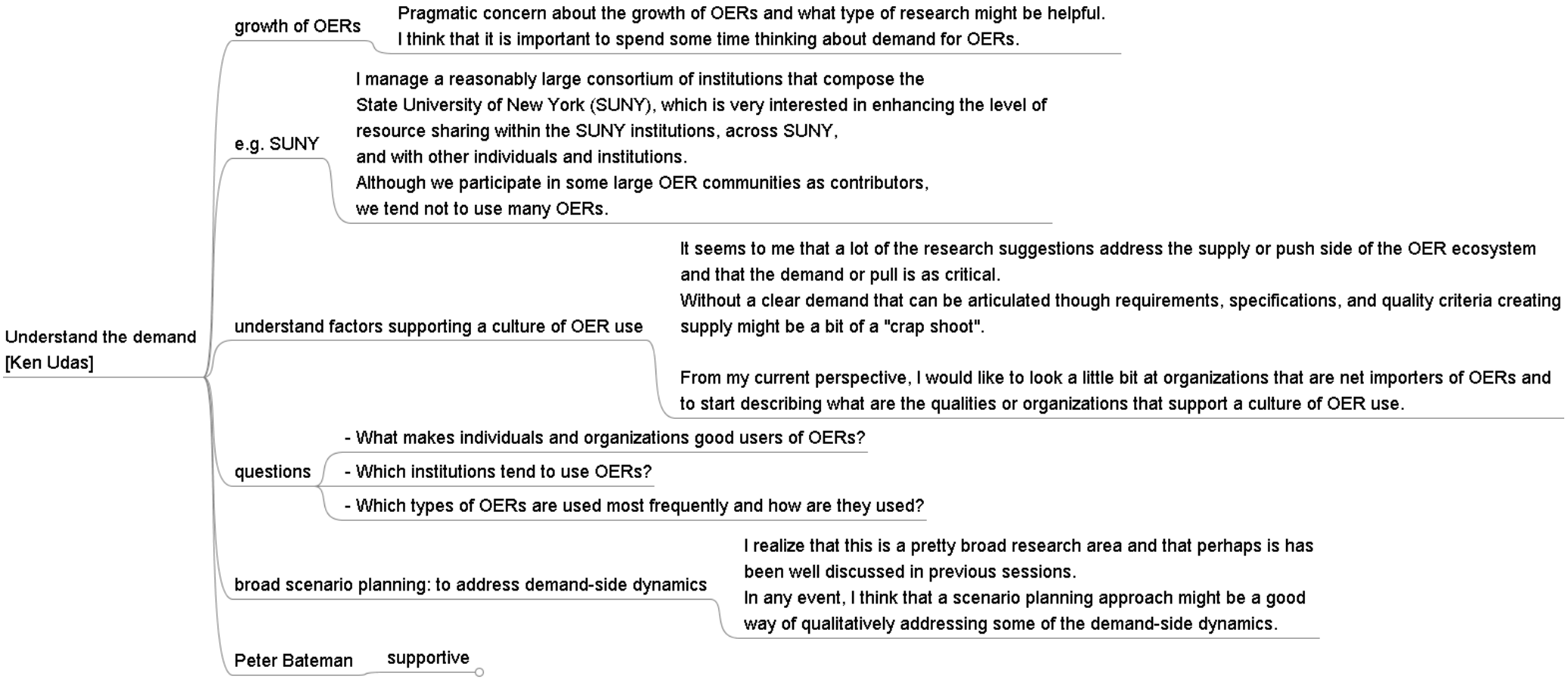


See also Wayne's comments later on understanding the social QA processes behind (for example) Wikipedia (a powerful phenomenon).

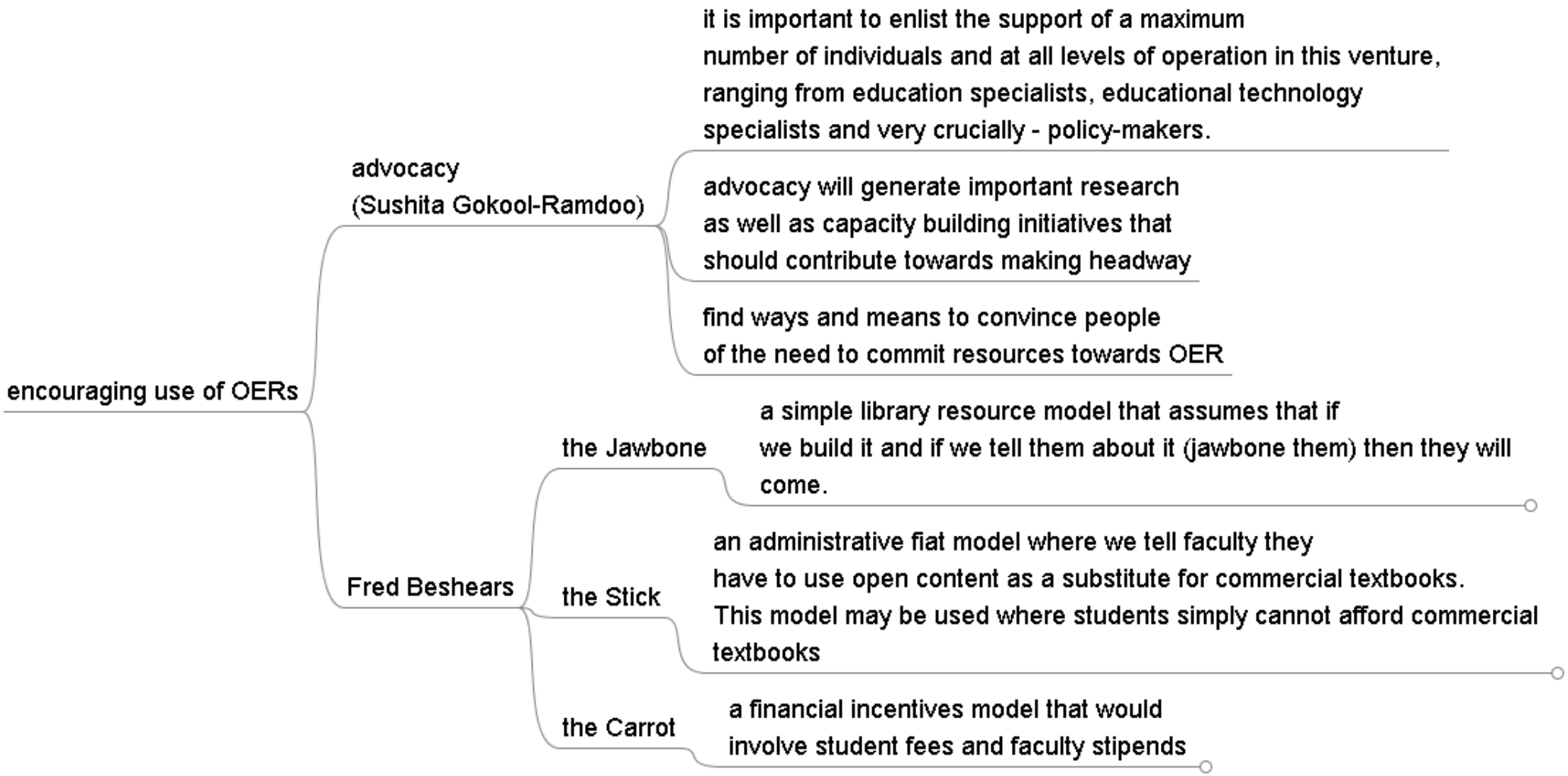
3.3 Technology for OER creation



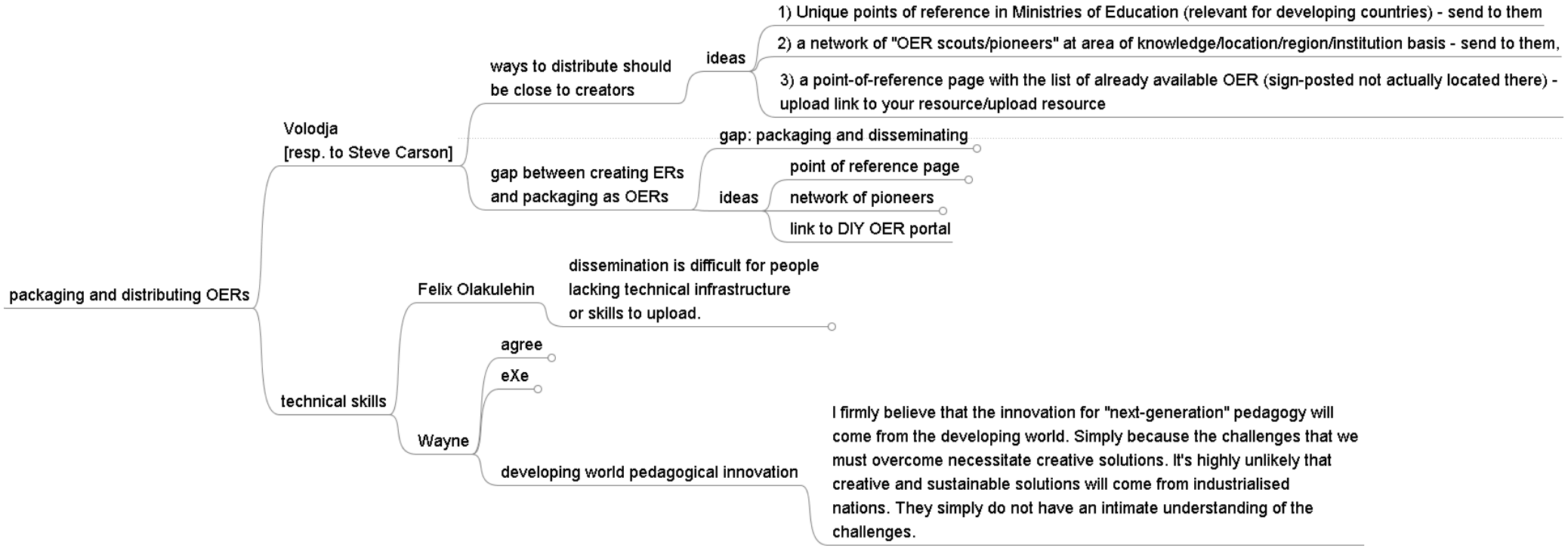
4. DISSEMINATION
4.1 Understanding the demand



4.2 Encouraging use of OER



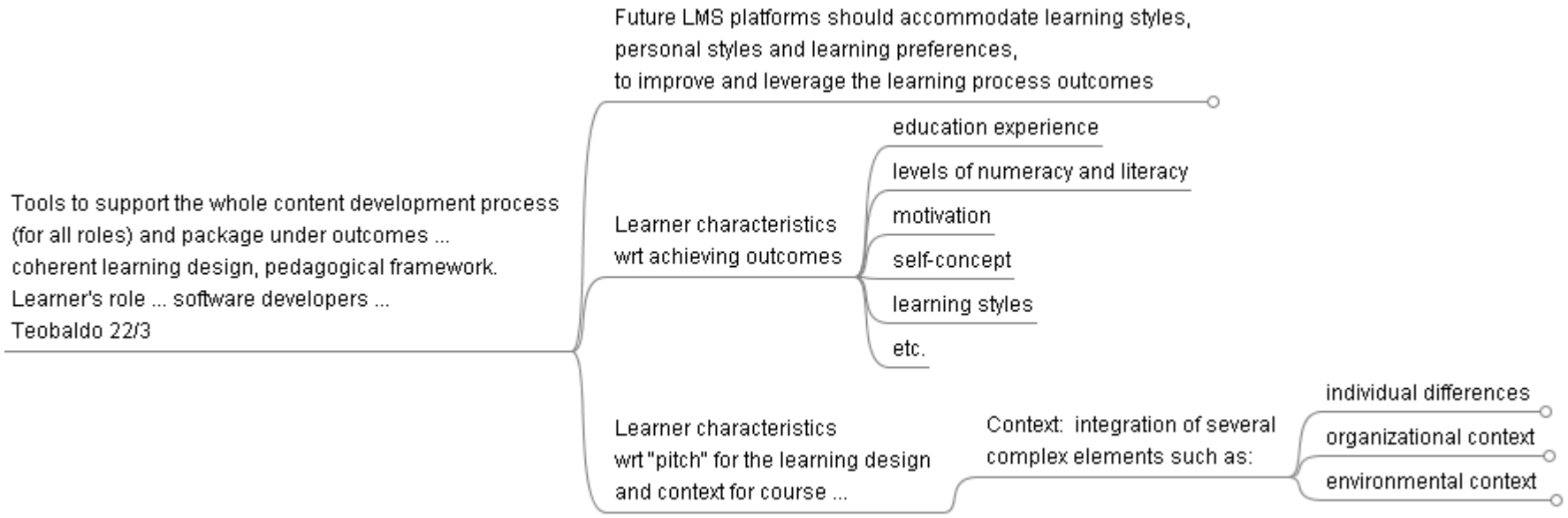
4.3 Packaging and distribution



4.4 Learner support

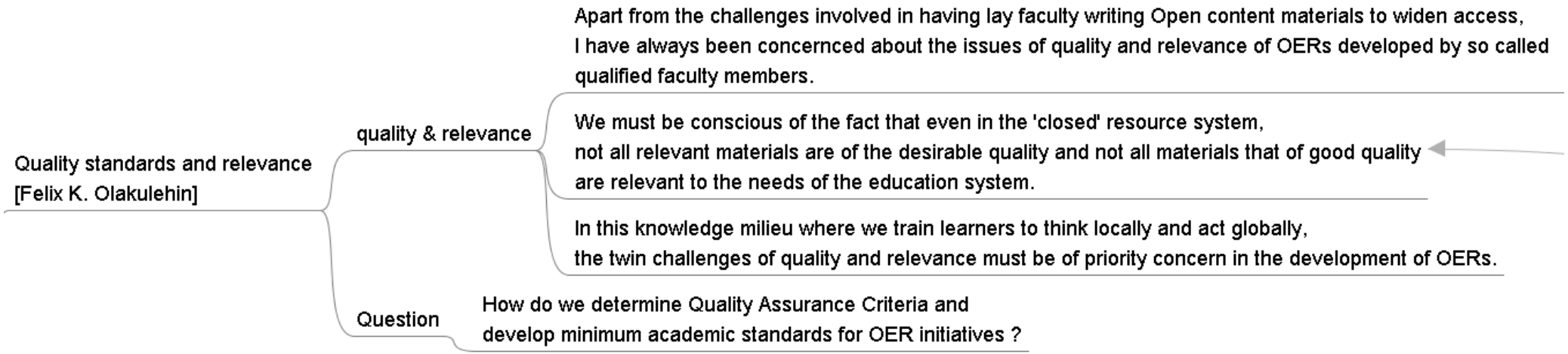
The most important question is to strengthen the Learner Support Systems in Open and Distance Learning (ODL). We must address this issue more seriously and OER user support be they educators or learners (Dhaneswar). This issue is discussed further elsewhere.

5. QUALITY
5.1 Tools to support a quality OER development process

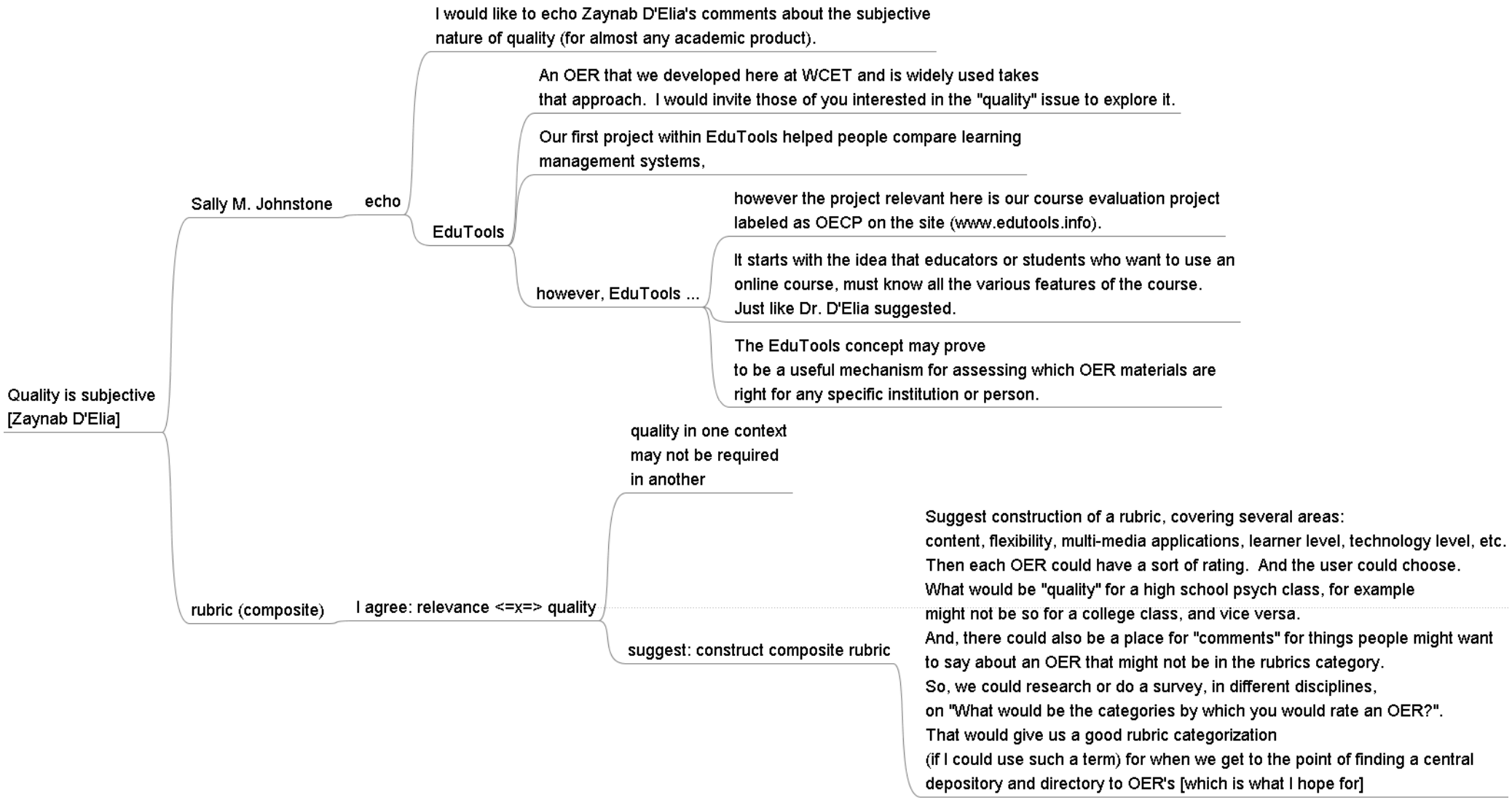


On a technical level, it was suggested we consider the relevance of tools like CVS (code versioning system), and the type of “edit-review-publish” workflow found in content management systems to manage quality.

5.2 Standards and relevance

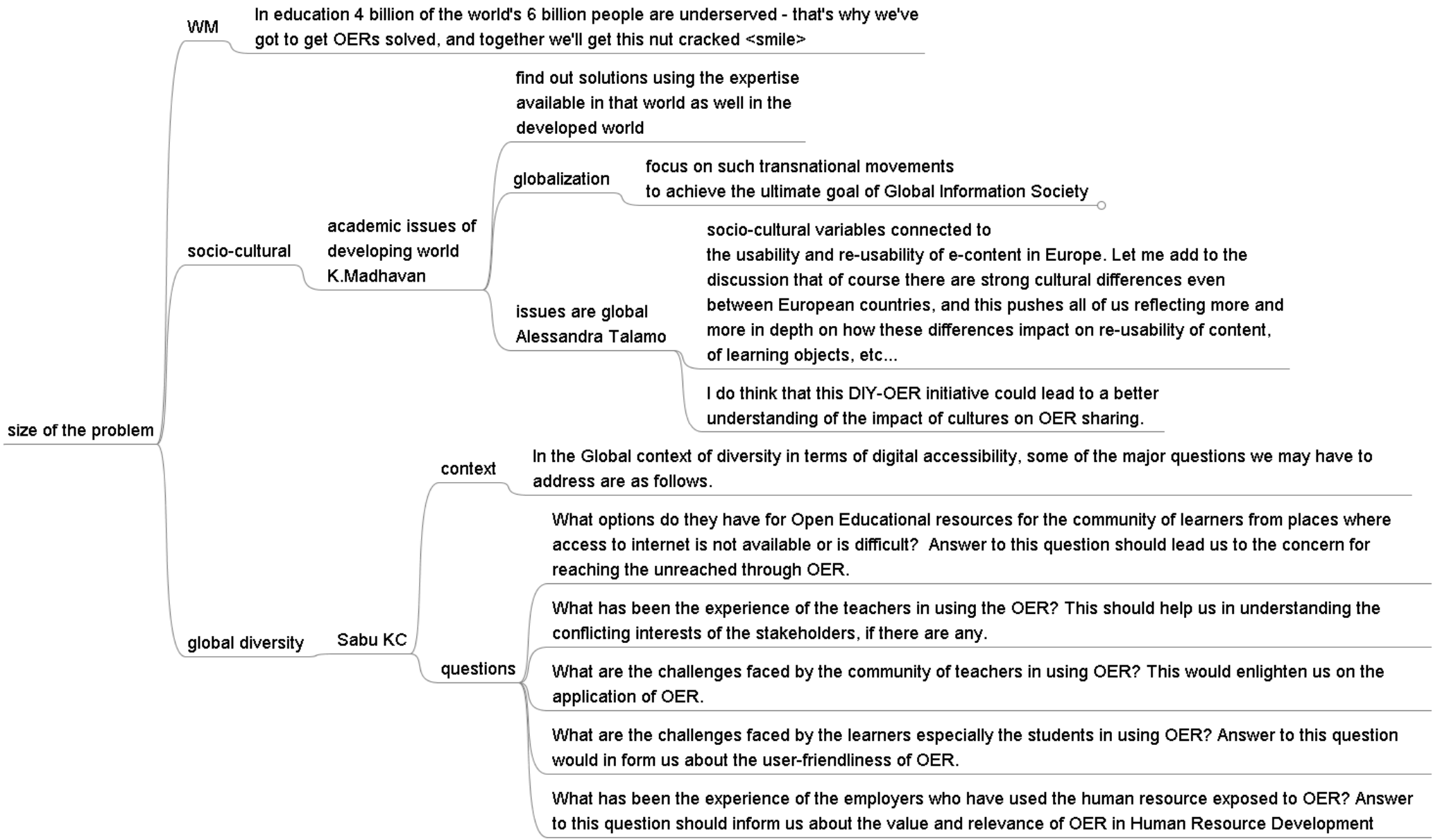


5.3 Quality is subjective

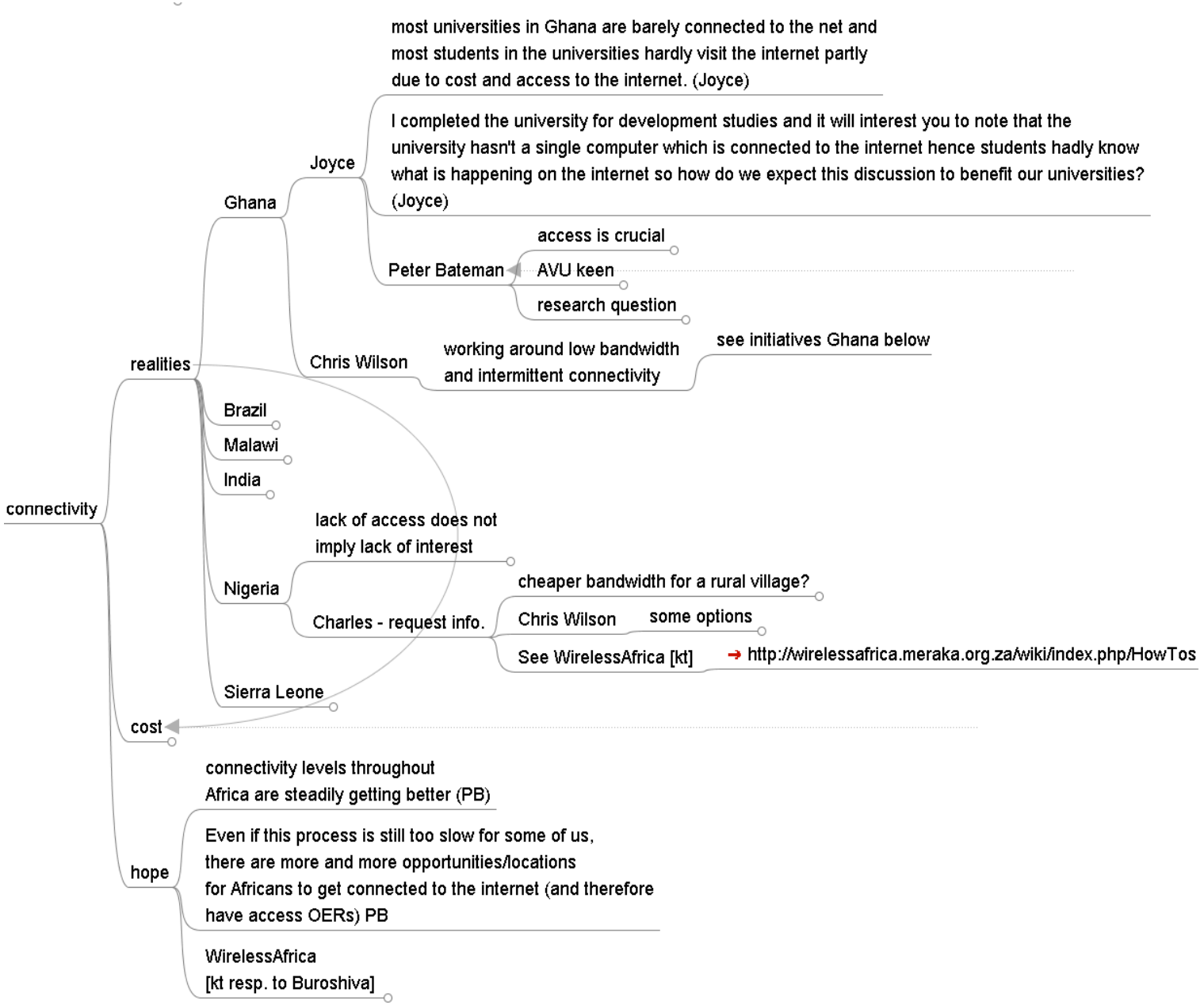


6. ACCESS

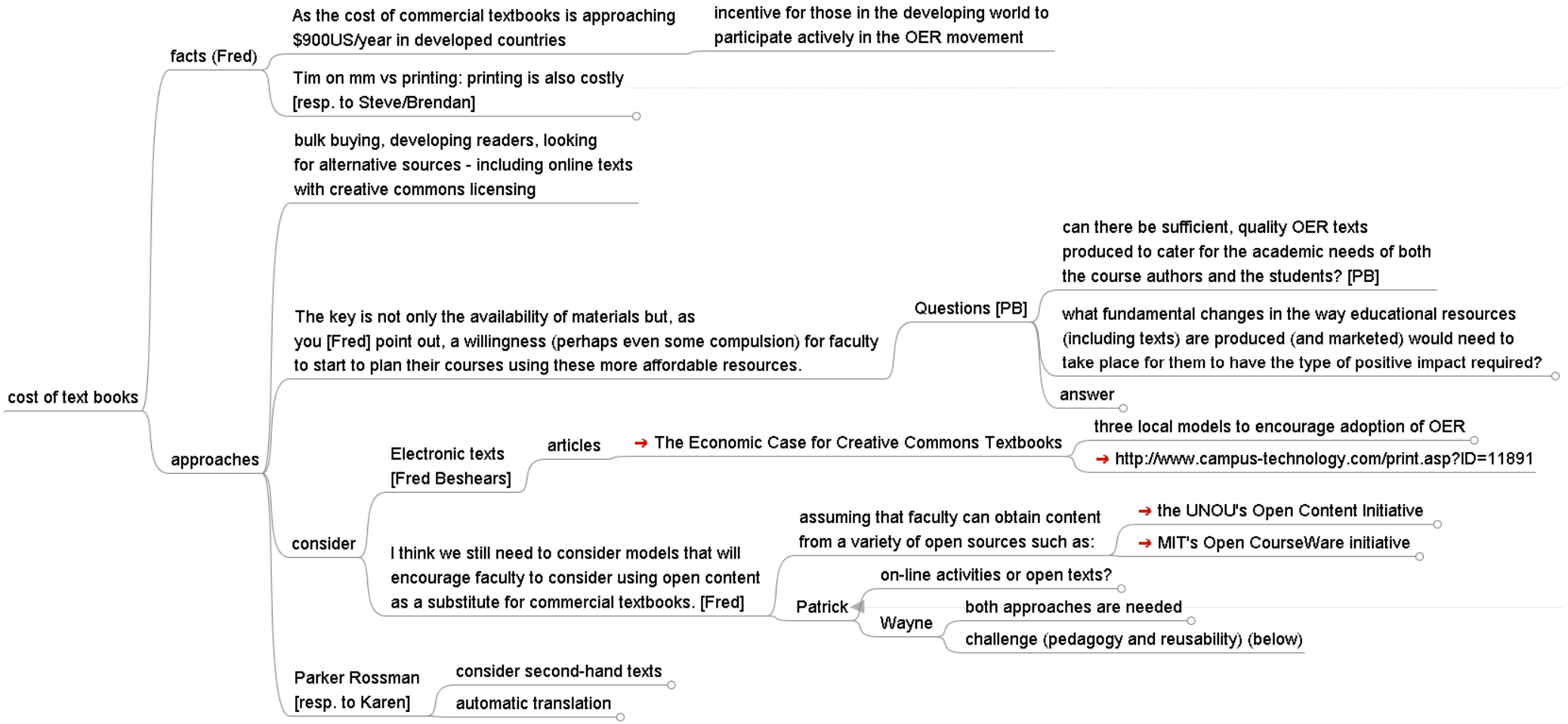
Scale of the problem



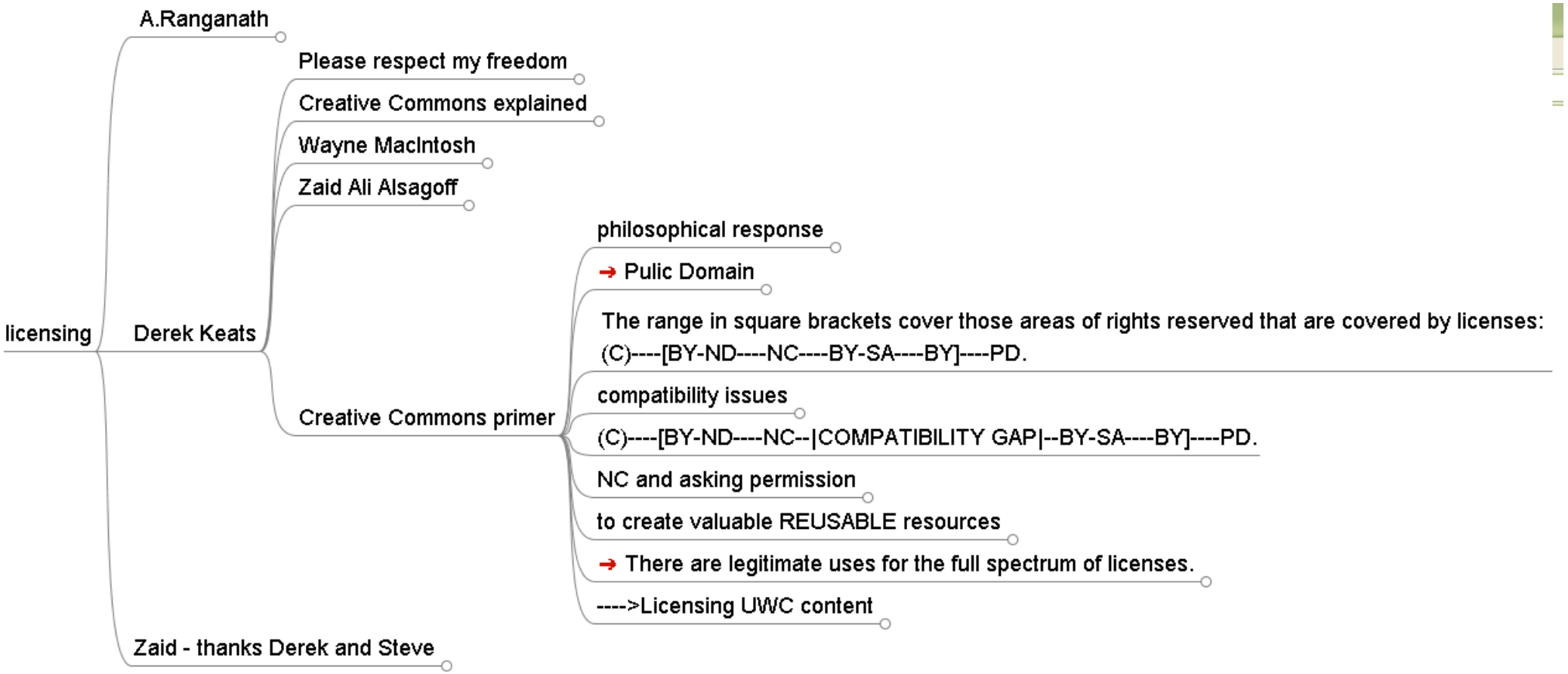
6.1 Connectivity



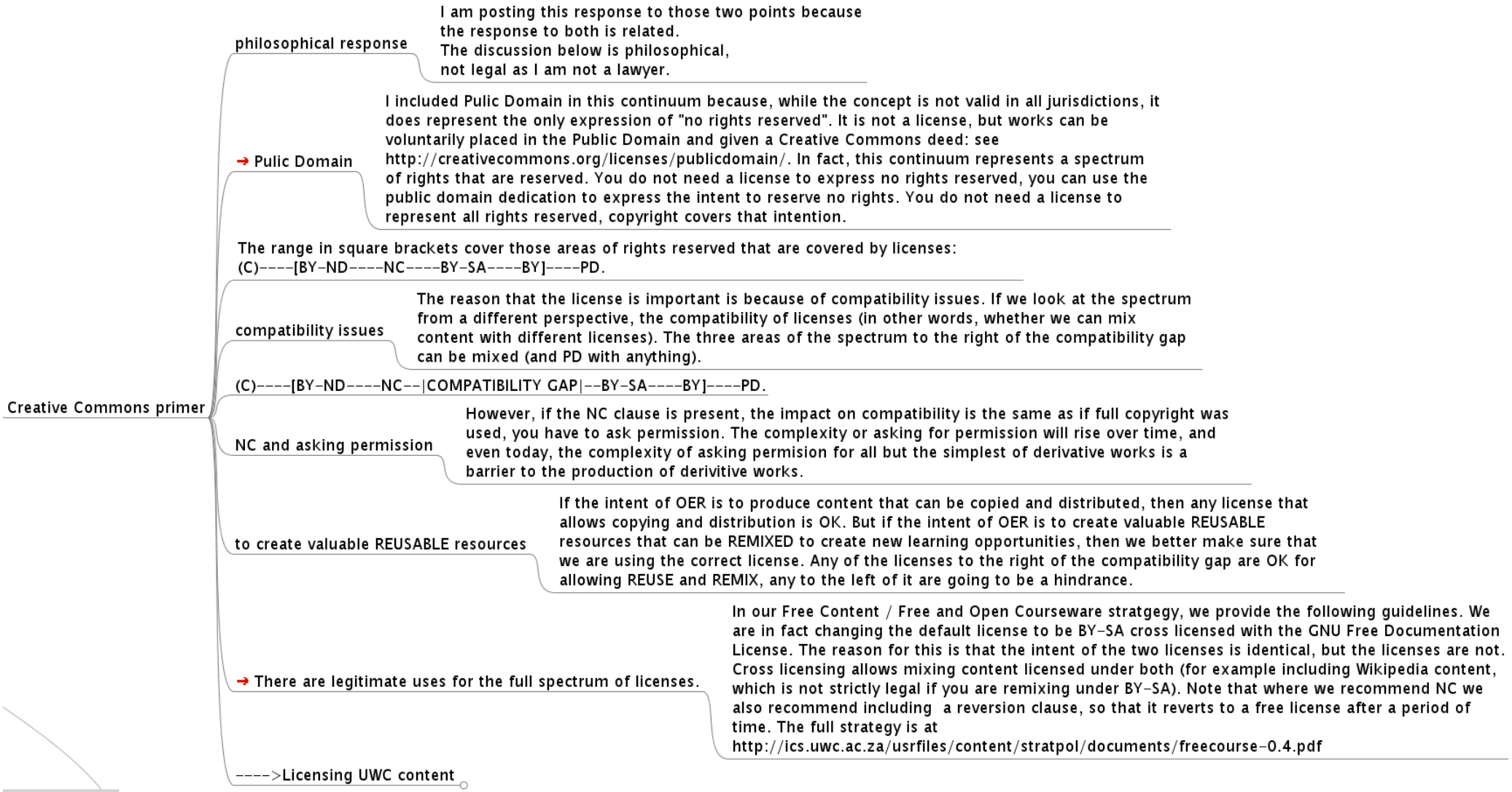
6.2 Cost of text books



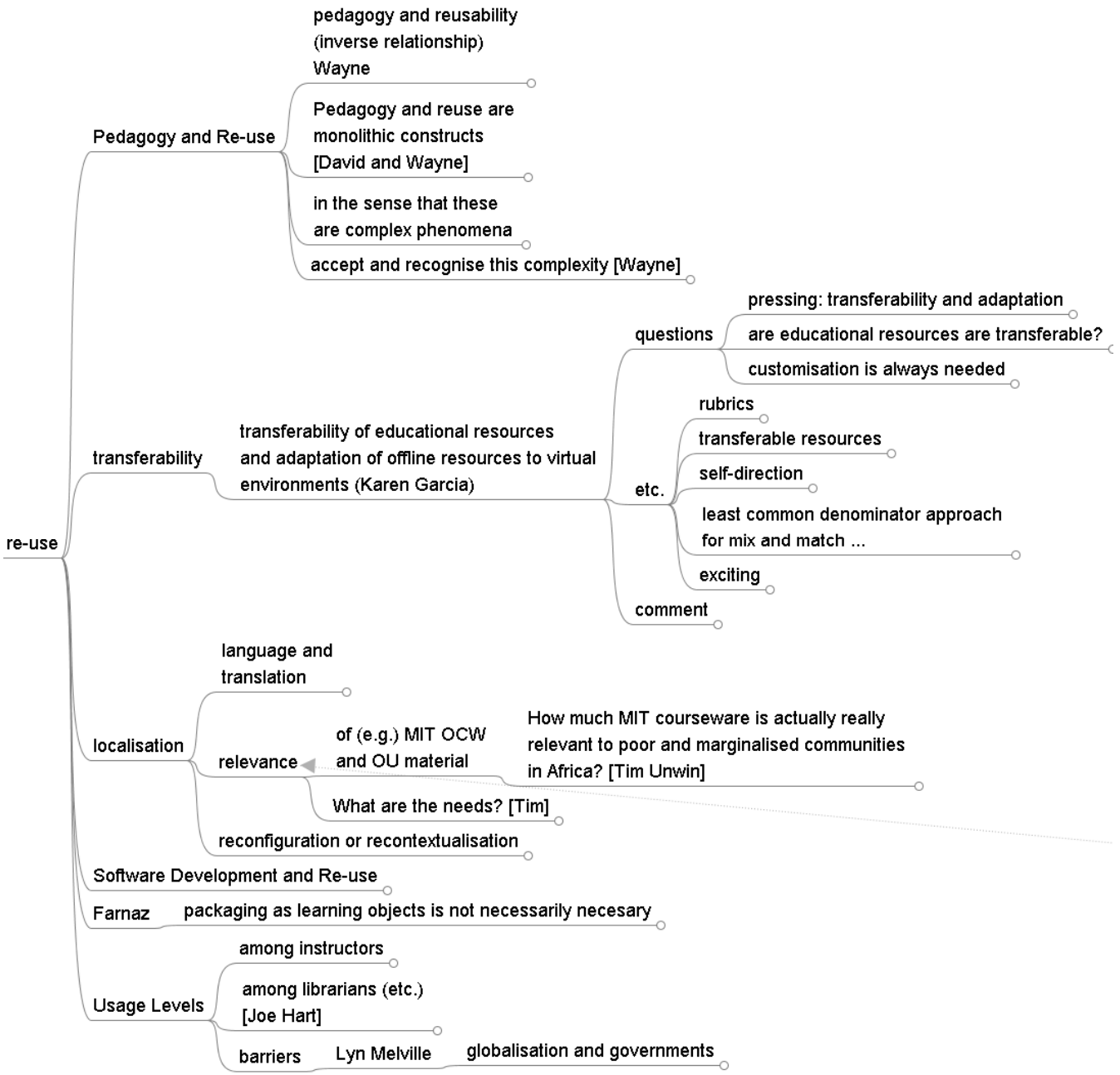
6.2 Licensing



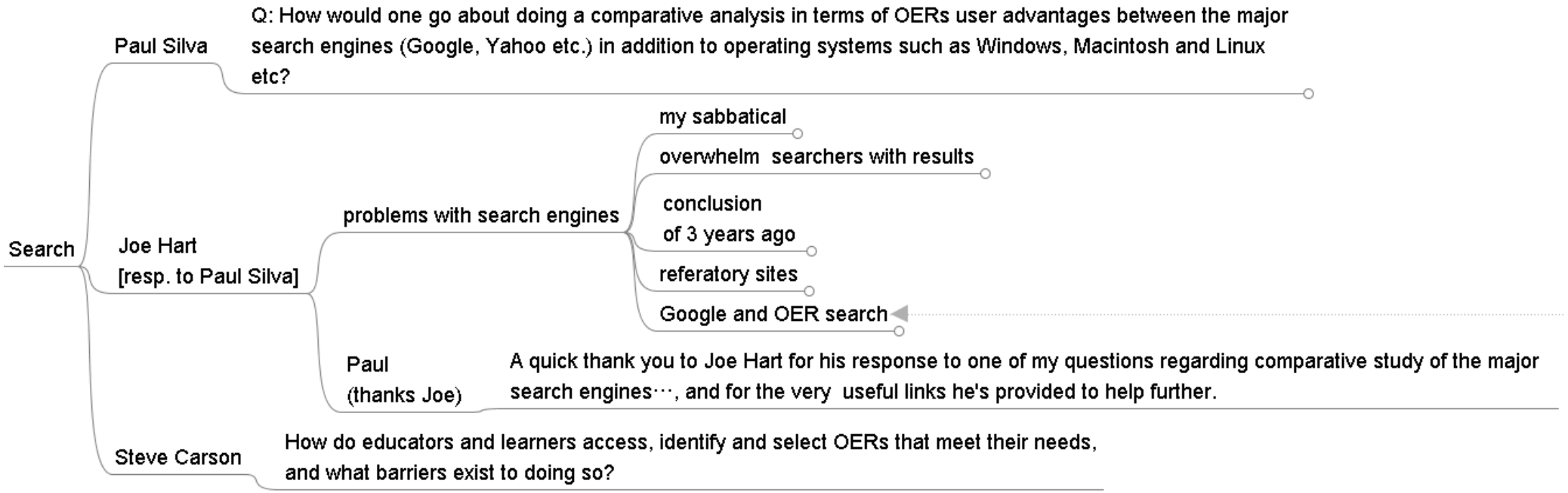
Creative Commons spectrum of licenses



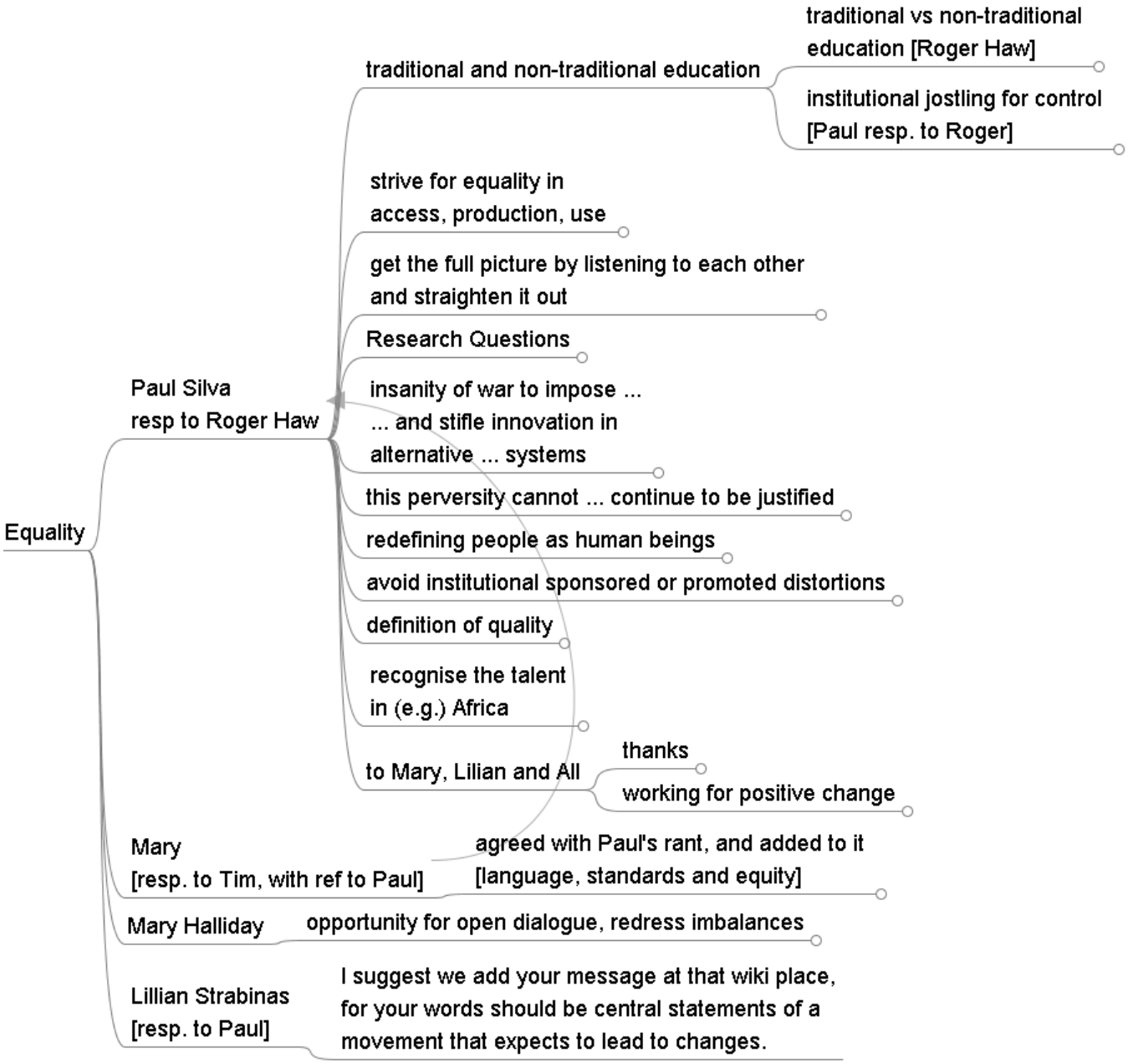
6.4 Re-use


re-use
Pedagogy and Re-use
pedagogy and reusability (inverse relationship) Wayne
Pedagogy and reuse are monolithic constructs [David and Wayne]
in the sense that these are complex phenomena
accept and recognise this complexity [Wayne]
transferability
transferability of educational resources and adaptation of offline resources to virtual environments (Karen Garcia)
questions
pressing: transferability and adaptation
are educational resources are transferable?
customisation is always needed
etc.
rubrics
transferable resources
self-direction
least common denominator approach for mix and match ...
exciting
comment
localisation
language and translation
relevance
of (e.g.) MIT OCW and OU material
How much MIT courseware is actually really relevant to poor and marginalised communities in Africa? [Tim Unwin]
What are the needs? [Tim]
reconfiguration or recontextualisation
Software Development and Re-use
Farnaz
packaging as learning objects is not necessarily necesary
Usage Levels
among instructors
among librarians (etc.) [Joe Hart]
barriers
Lyn Melville
globalisation and governments

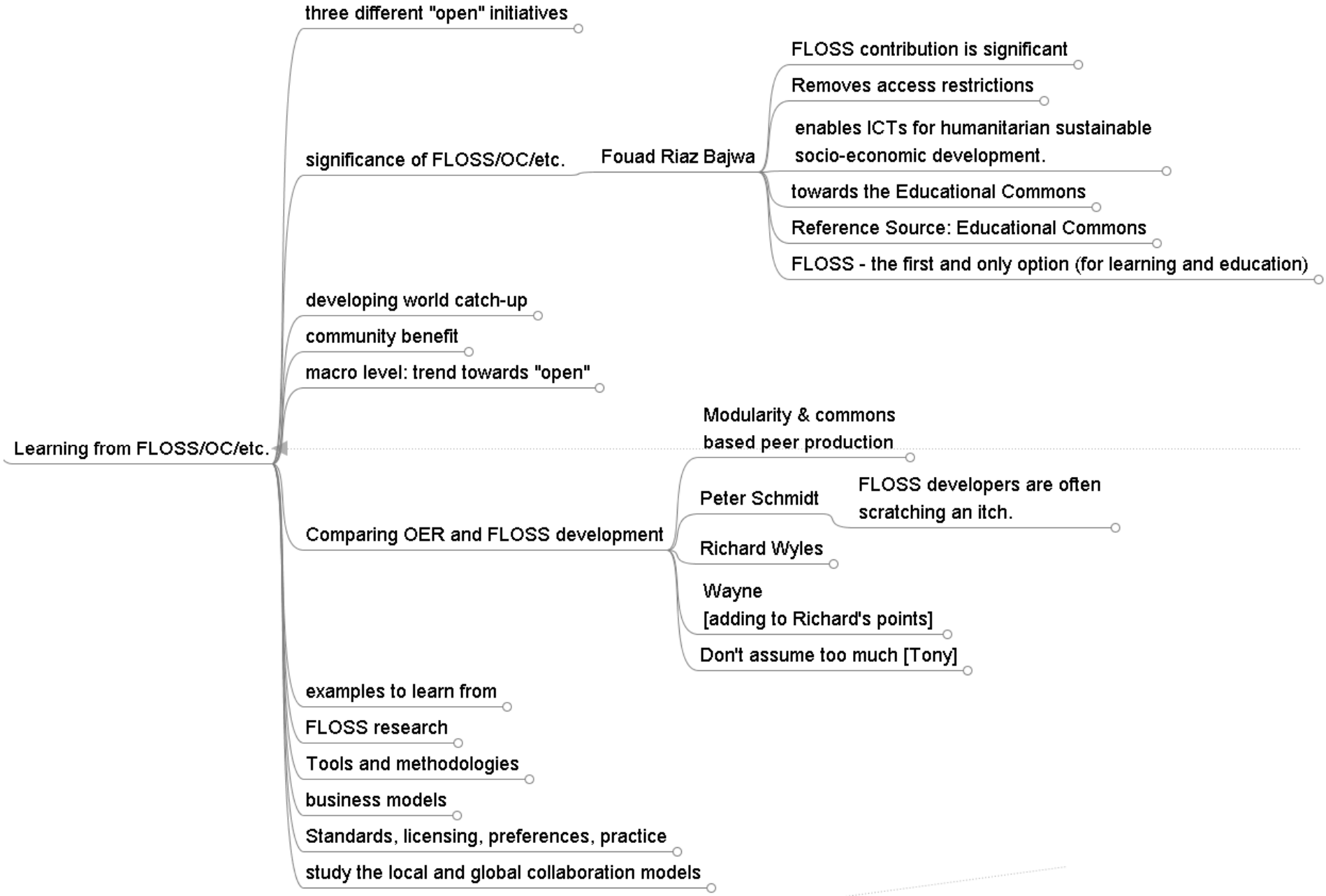
6.5 Searching



6.6 Equality

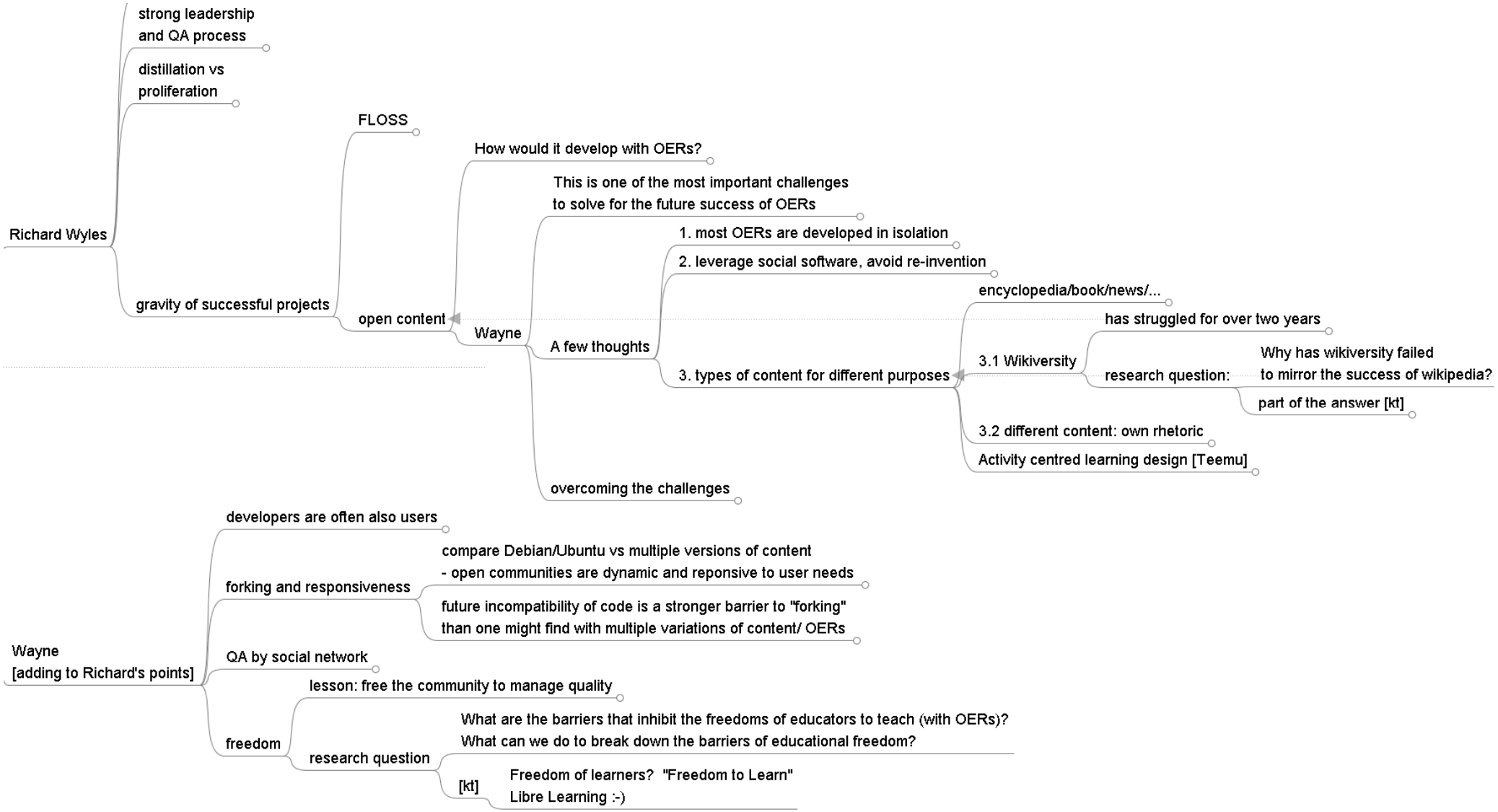

Equality
Paul Silva
resp to Roger Haw
traditional and non-traditional education
traditional vs non-traditional education [Roger Haw]
institutional jostling for control [Paul resp. to Roger]
strive for equality in access, production, use
get the full picture by listening to each other and straighten it out
Research Questions
insanity of war to impose ... ... and stifle innovation in alternative ... systems
this perversity cannot ... continue to be justified
redefining people as human beings
avoid institutional sponsored or promoted distortions
definition of quality
recognise the talent in (e.g.) Africa
to Mary, Lilian and All
thanks
working for positive change
Mary
[resp. to Tim, with ref to Paul]
agreed with Paul's rant, and added to it [language, standards and equity]
Mary Halliday
opportunity for open dialogue, redress imbalances
Lillian Strabinas
[resp. to Paul]
I suggest we add your message at that wiki place, for your words should be central statements of a movement that expects to lead to changes.

7. LEARNING FROM FLOSS/OPEN CONTENT

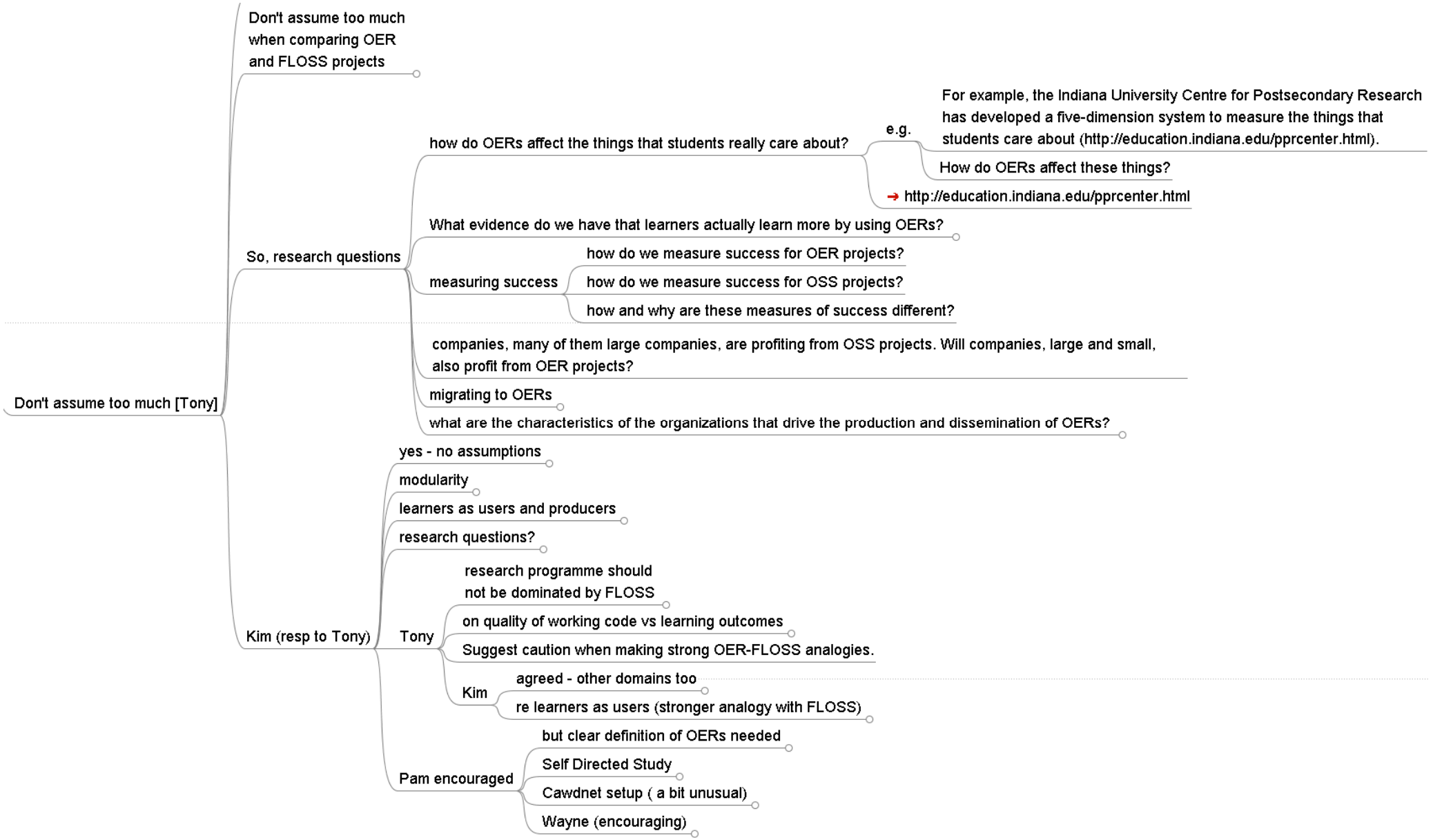


7.1 Open Initiatives: background and significance

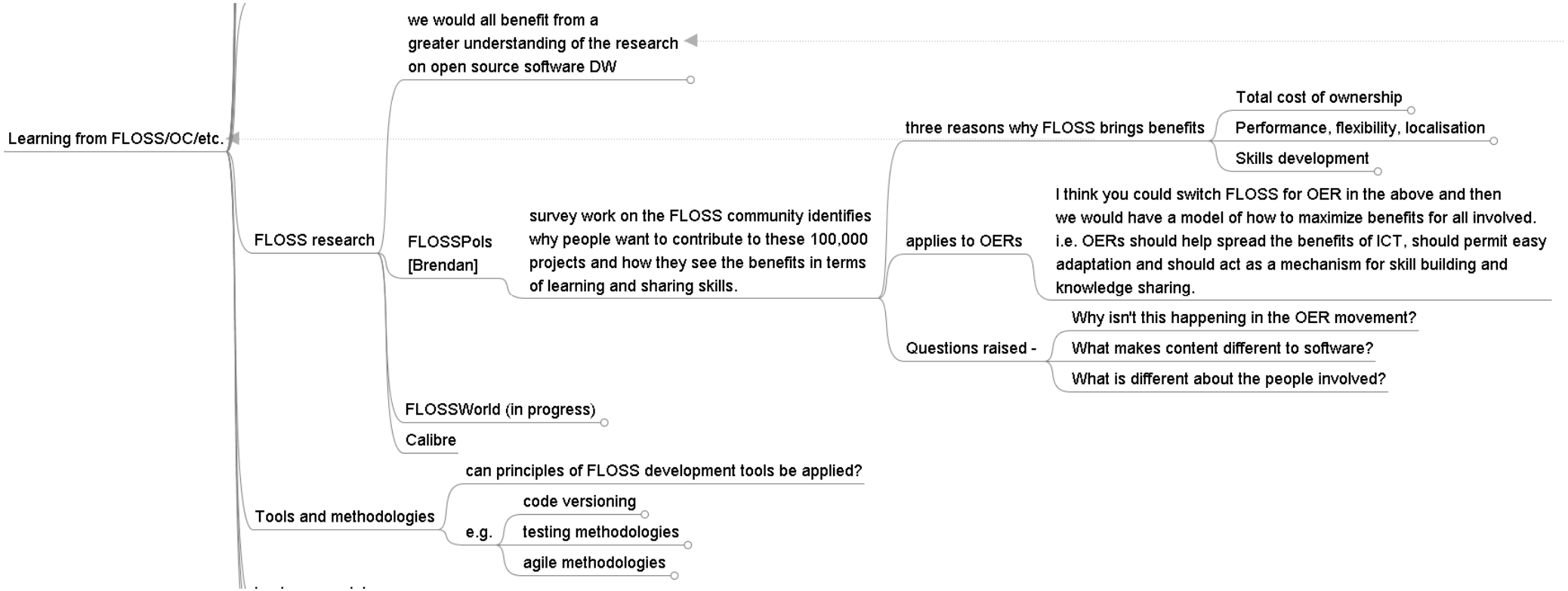
7.2 Comparing FLOSS, Open Content, OER



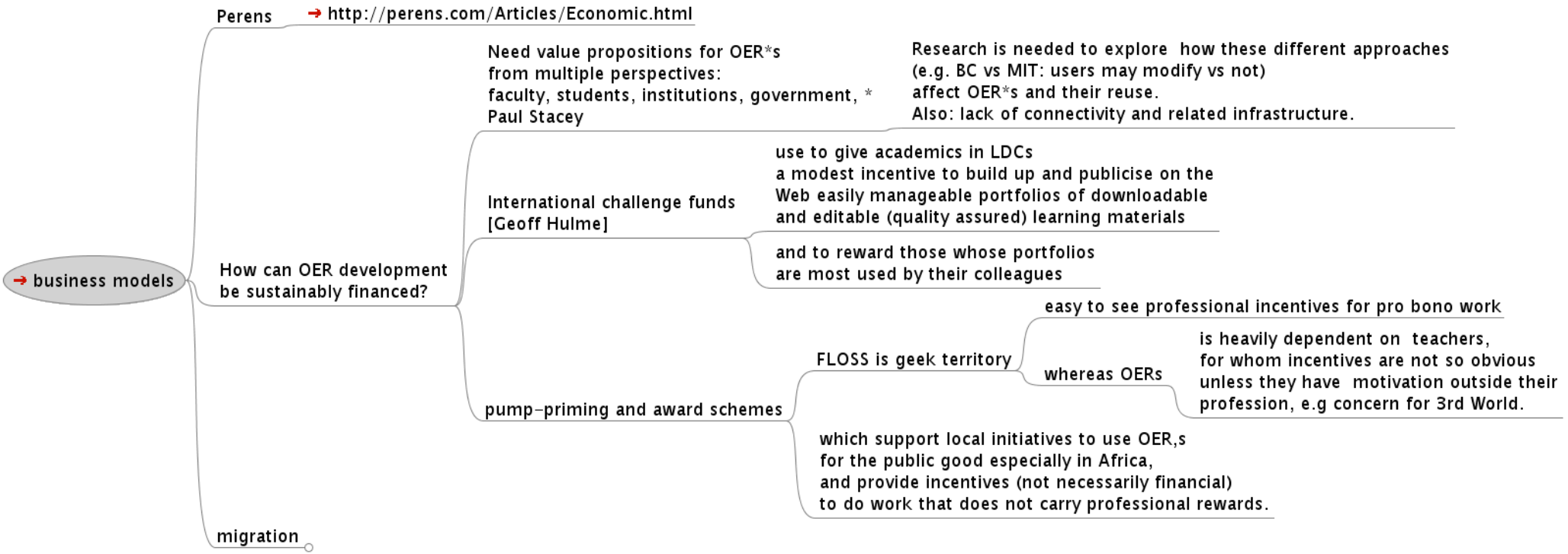
Don't assume too much



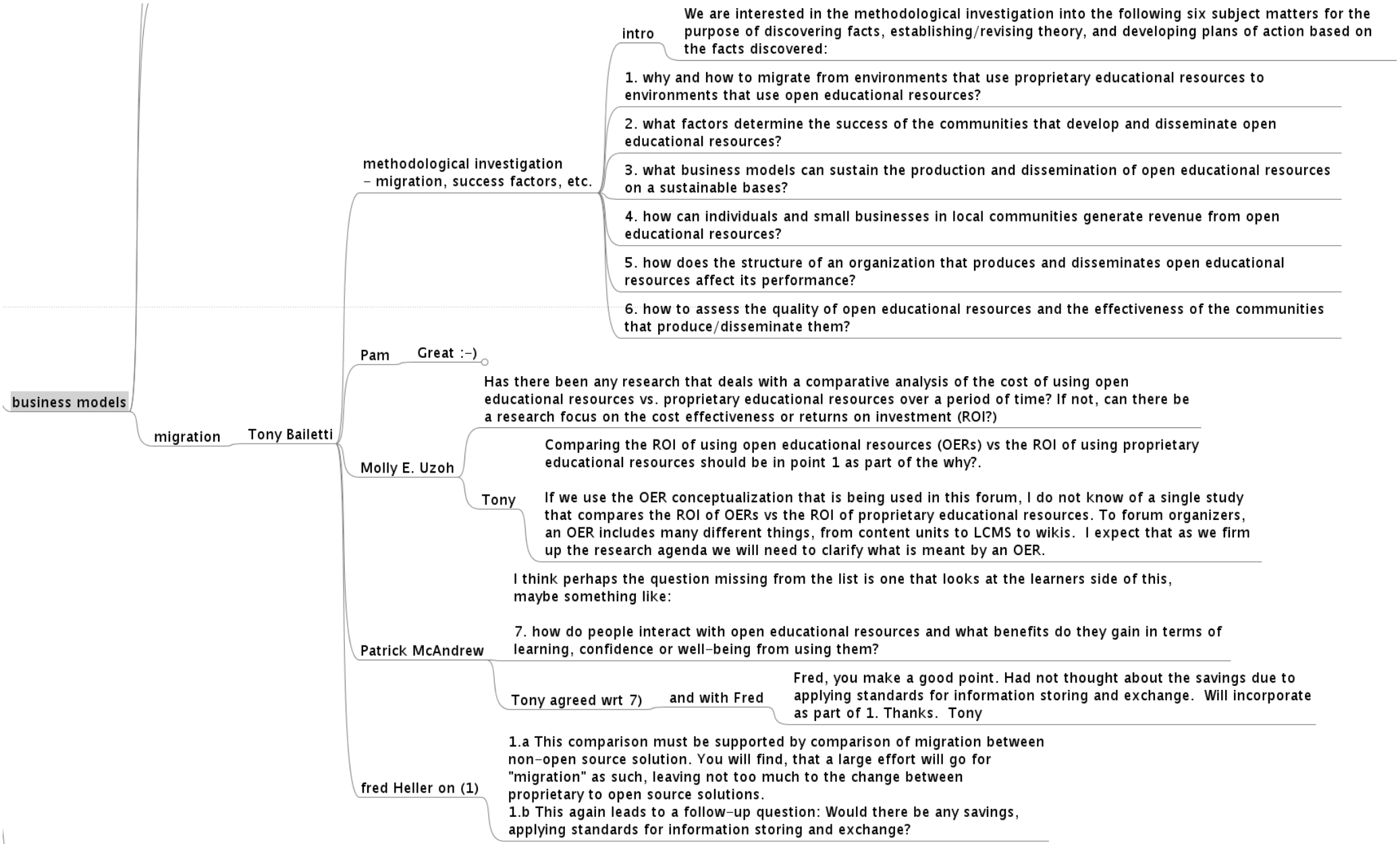
7.3 FLOSS research, tools and methodologies



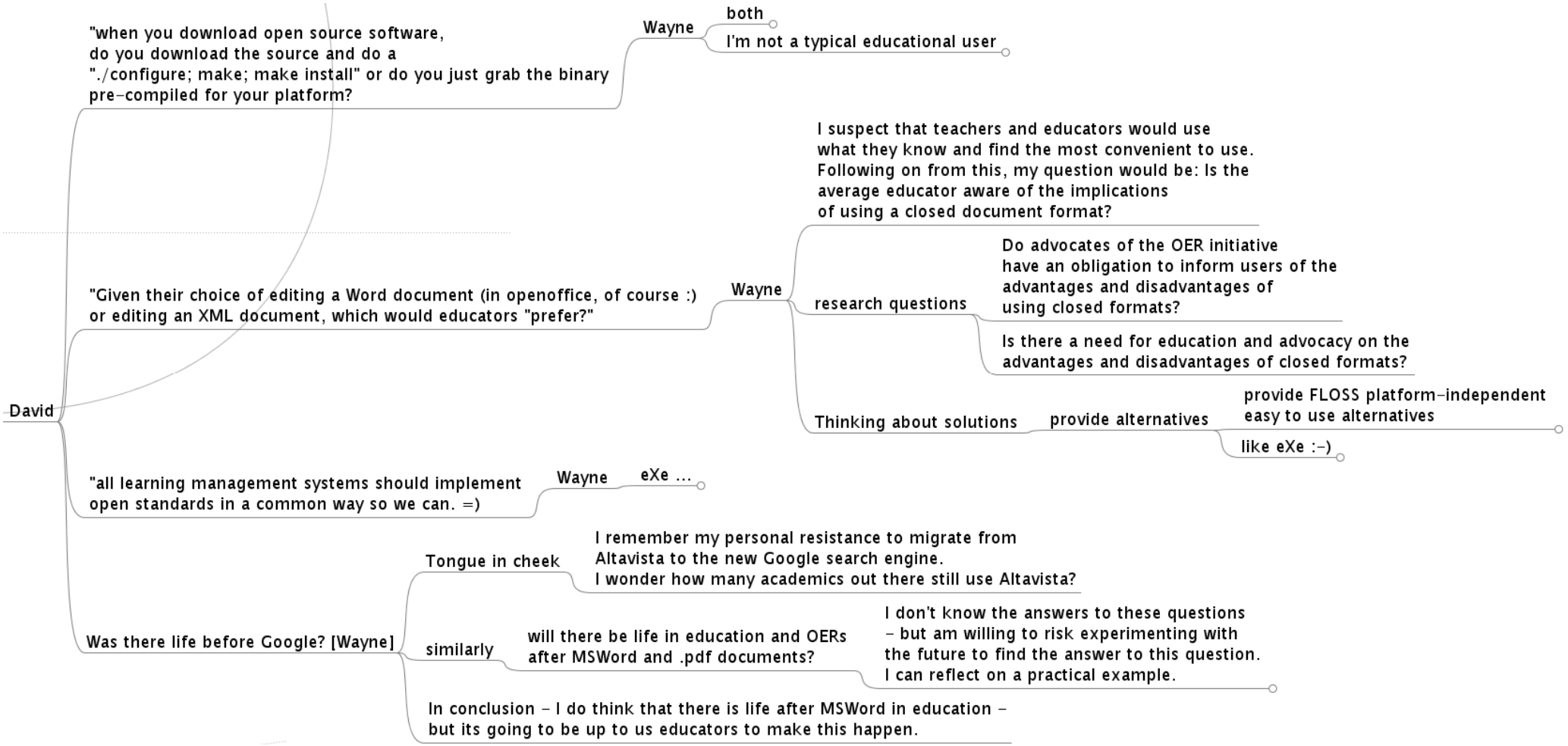
7.4 Business models



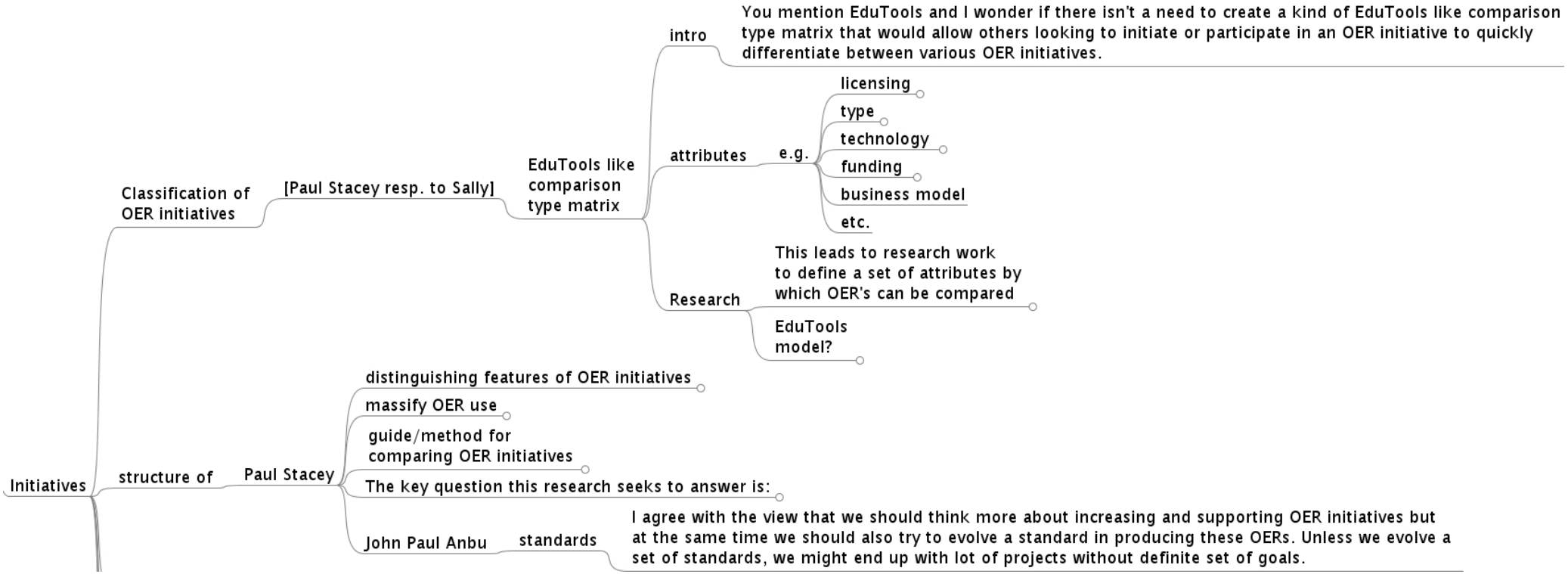
Migration


business models
migration
Tony Bailetti
methodological investigation – migration, success factors, etc.
intro
We are interested in the methodological investigation into the following six subject matters for the purpose of discovering facts, establishing/revising theory, and developing plans of action based on the facts discovered:
1. why and how to migrate from environments that use proprietary educational resources to environments that use open educational resources?
2. what factors determine the success of the communities that develop and disseminate open educational resources?
3. what business models can sustain the production and dissemination of open educational resources on a sustainable bases?
4. how can individuals and small businesses in local communities generate revenue from open educational resources?
5. how does the structure of an organization that produces and disseminates open educational resources affect its performance?
6. how to assess the quality of open educational resources and the effectiveness of the communities that produce/disseminate them?
Pam
Great :-)
Molly E. Uzoh
Has there been any research that deals with a comparative analysis of the cost of using open educational resources vs. proprietary educational resources over a period of time? If not, can there be a research focus on the cost effectiveness or returns on investment (ROI?)
Tony
Comparing the ROI of using open educational resources (OERs) vs the ROI of using proprietary educational resources should be in point 1 as part of the why?.
If we use the OER conceptualization that is being used in this forum, I do not know of a single study that compares the ROI of OERs vs the ROI of proprietary educational resources. To forum organizers, an OER includes many different things, from content units to LCMS to wikis. I expect that as we firm up the research agenda we will need to clarify what is meant by an OER.
Patrick McAndrew
I think perhaps the question missing from the list is one that looks at the learners side of this, maybe something like:
7. how do people interact with open educational resources and what benefits do they gain in terms of learning, confidence or well-being from using them?
Tony agreed wrt 7)
and with Fred
Fred, you make a good point. Had not thought about the savings due to applying standards for information storing and exchange. Will incorporate as part of 1. Thanks. Tony
fred Heller on (1)
1.a This comparison must be supported by comparison of migration between non-open source solution. You will find, that a large effort will go for "migration" as such, leaving not too much to the change between proprietary to open source solutions.
1.b This again leads to a follow-up question: Would there be any savings, applying standards for information storing and exchange?

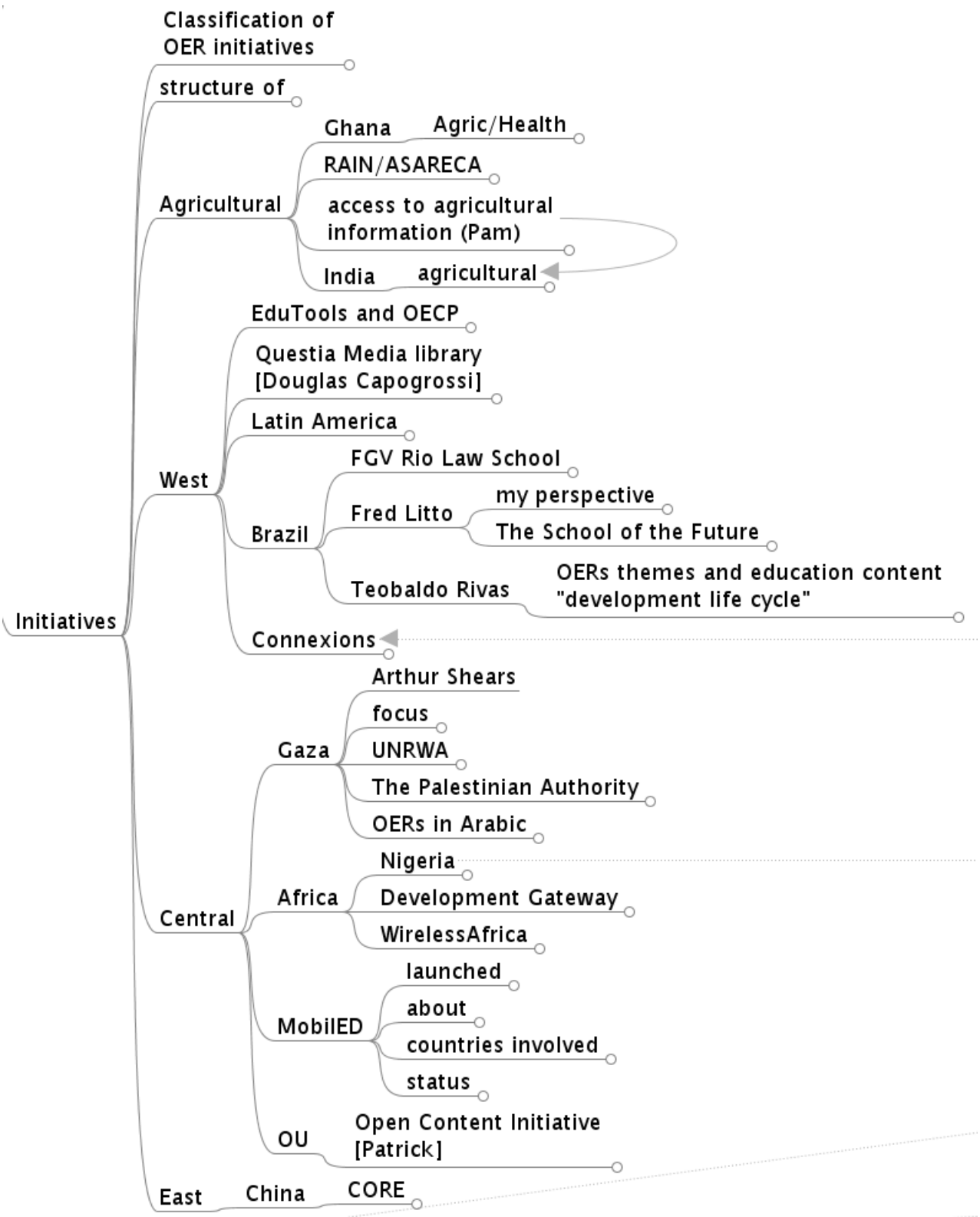
7.5 Standards, licensing, preferences and practice



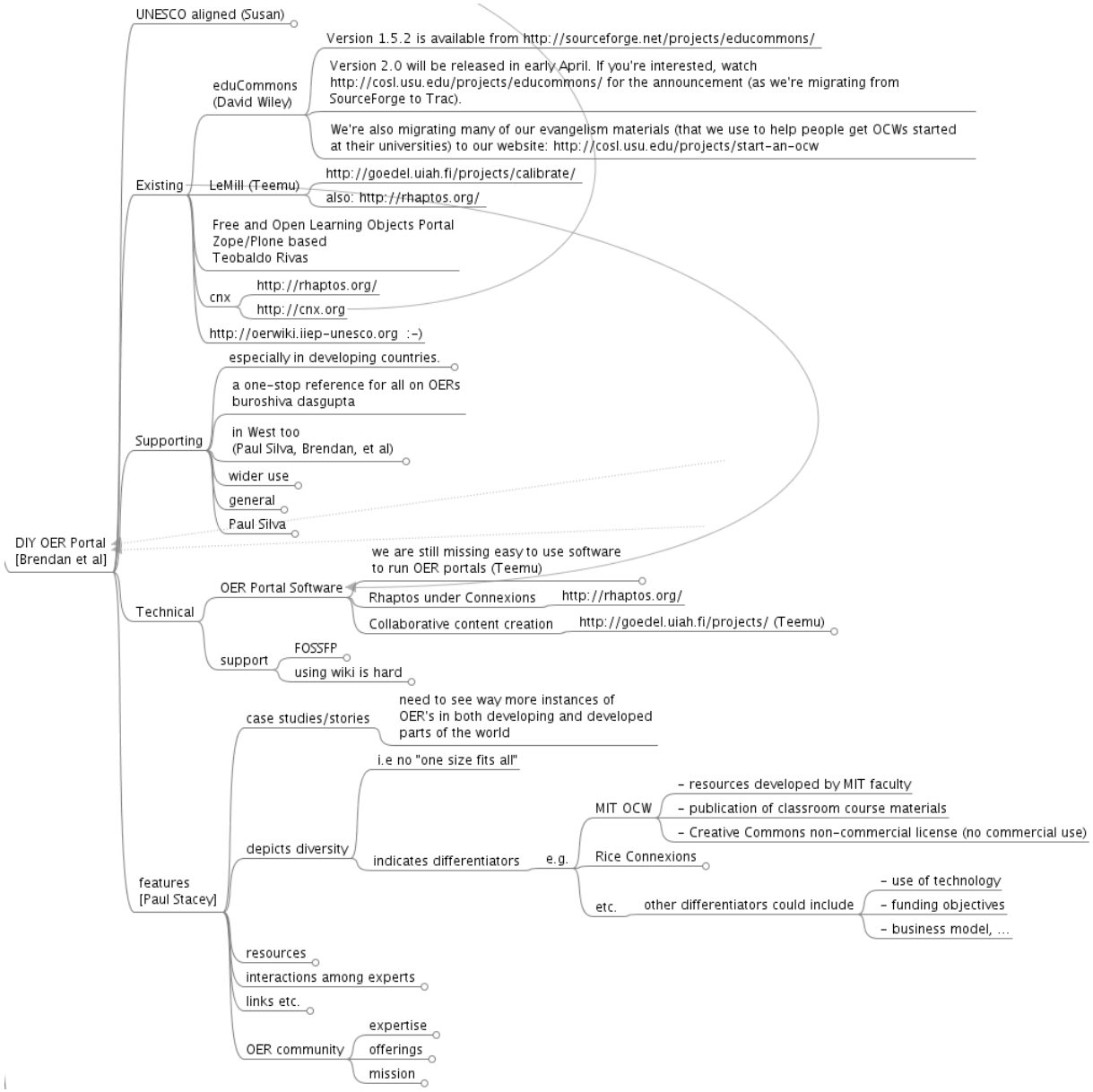
8. INITIATIVES



8.1 Initiatives mentioned



9. “DO-IT-YOURSELF” OER PORTAL



10. TOWARDS BEST PRACTICE