Introduction to Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)

Seb Schmoller
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Contact details – seb@schmoller.net
Picture by geologist adrian@adrianlorente.com who worked on the tunnel reconstruction
.... overview of the MOOC world from the point of view of a someone who has been active in the world of online learning since the early 1990s, just before the Web was invented
Bayes Rule

\( e^{i\pi} + 1 = 0 \)

\( \pi \approx 3.14159265... \)
.... create over the next two years, a free and open online maths MOOC suitable for some of the several million adults in England without intermediate level maths

http://citizensmaths.com
1. Backdrop to MOOCs

1. Some MOOC specifics

1. MOOC learners and their learning

1. Open questions

1. Resources
1. Backdrop to MOOCs
Backdrop - Comparing some terms
Backdrop - Comparing some terms
Backdrop – large scale online services that relate to learning

1. Google search

1. Wikipedia

1. Google translate

1. Duolingo – language learning system
Inglés gratis para el mundo

Registrarse con Facebook
Registrarse con correo electrónico

Es gratis, en serio
Sin cargos extras, suscripciones o anuncios publicitarios.
Mira cómo lo hacemos.

Ve, escucha y habla
Sumerge tus sentidos: con imágenes, reconocimiento de voz y ejercicios de audio puedes aprender mejor.

Aprende jugando
Pierde corazones por tus respuestas incorrectas, practica contra el reloj y aumenta tu nivel. Duolingo es adictivo.

También para móviles
Haz que tus viajes y tiempo libre sean más productivos con la aplicación móvil de Duolingo. Bájala aquí.
reCAPTCHA IS A FREE ANTI-BOT SERVICE THAT HELPS DIGITIZE BOOKS.

WHAT IS reCAPTCHA
GET reCAPTCHA
PROTECT YOUR EMAIL
MY ACCOUNT
RESOURCES: DOCS & PLUGINS

LEARN HOW reCAPTCHA WORKS

USE reCAPTCHA ON YOUR SITE

STRONG SECURITY
ACCESSIBLE TO BLIND USERS
30+ MILLION SERVED DAILY

NEW See how accurate reCAPTCHA is at digitizing content!
Backdrop – characteristics of these large scale services

1. A long time in development

1. Often making extensive use of “Artificial Intelligence” (AI)

1. Typically driven by entrepreneurs from outside traditional education

1. Sometimes dependent on user-generated content or user-effort
2. Some MOOC specifics
a MOOC is an online course that has (or is designed to have) a large or very large number of learners, whose learning is not supported individually by paid teachers or other paid learning support workers
MOOC specifics 2 - characteristics

content is pre-built and interaction pre-designed or pre-programmed (possibly in a way that is responsive to individual learners’ actions)

and/or

some or most content and interaction is created by participants “on the fly”
MOOC specifics 3 – throughput and completion rates

http://www.katyjordan.com/MOOCproject.html
3. MOOC learners and their learning
Learners and learning 1 - fundamentals

Herb Simon

“Learning results from what the student does and thinks and only from what the student does and thinks. The teacher can advance learning only by influencing what the student does to learn.”

Dylan Wiliam (at the 2007 ALT conference)

“….. teachers do not create learning, and yet most teachers behave as if they do. Learners create learning. Teachers create the conditions under which learning can take place.”
Learners and learning 2 – the key questions

Can a really brilliantly designed and implemented MOOC:

• (Dylan Wiliam) “create the conditions under which learning can take place”?

• (Herb Simon) “advance learning .. by influencing what the student does to learn”?

And if yes, can it do it as or more effectively (and/or, by implication more cheaply) than can conventional course?
“My four main points are:

1. mastery learning with 1-1 tutoring is best;

2. there is a path to individualized online instruction that achieves that, but we aren’t there (or close) yet;

3. motivation, not information is the key;

4. Simon’s quote that learning is what students do, not teachers.

I would say that a MOOC is less effective at motivation than a good teacher, but a good MOOC is much better than a book, a bad teacher, or nothing.”

(Source: comment 77 in http://tinyurl.com/b5jdbm2)
1. Satisfaction......
   ..... is not evidence of learning
2. “Healthy worker” effect
3. Effort matters
4. There is are big problems with generalisation
4. Five questions
Will there tend gradually to be only one or very few MOOC providers? If yes, does it matter?
Are MOOCs only good for the small (?) proportion who’ve “learned how to learn”?
What if any place might MOOCs or MOOCish courses have in trade union education?
If MOOCs threaten teachers from an employment and conditions point of view, should that put them “off limits” for Trade Union Education?
MOOCs, to be effective, need careful and skilled production. Where will trade unions organise the knowhow for this?
MOOC Factory

All you need to know about EPFL MOOCs

What is a MOOC?

The simplest answer is to watch online MOOCs from Udacity, Coursera or EdX. The common format is a course of 7 weeks. A standard 2 hours lecture becomes in the online format a set of 5 to 10 videos of 10-12 minutes each. Students initially see the teacher introduce the topic, but soon thereafter the focus shifts on what the teacher writes. Instead of blackboards tablet computers are used, on which the professor writes on an empty or pre-filled screen, while speaking. Manual annotation of contents avoids the drowsy effect of Powerpoint. Some videos feature embedded quizzes: the video stops, students reply and the video continues.

- MOOCs-Communication-KIT.pdf
- More information

How to submit a MOOC?

The application procedure is simple. Download the application kit (contains the files listed below) and submit your MOOC proposal to Pierre.Dillenbourg@epfl.ch by April 15th 2013.

The Editorial committee then selects MOOCs from the proposals in terms of contents and platforms. It meets 4 times per year or more often if necessary. It is made of representatives of the educational corps representing each school (one of them as chair), as well as the project management 'bureau'.

EMOOCs 2014

The Second MOOC European Stakeholders Summit, will be held on February 10-12, 2014 in Lausanne (Switzerland).
5. Resources
There is a large number of links to material at least loosely related to his presentation on my website here:

http://perma.cc/N9XW-QKM7
Questions & discussion