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Electronics and Computer Science (Web and Internet Science)

MOOCs and Competencies for Higher Education Transformation: An Activity Theory Analysis.

by

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ABSTRACT

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Massive Open Online courses (MOOCs) have often been described as catalysts for digital transformation in Higher Education. In practice, however, MOOCs have not radically changed the educational arena in quite the way some predicted; neither have they faded away as just another educational fad. By 2019, MOOCs had secured their space in Higher Education Institutions around the globe, and promise to play a continuing role in Higher Education transformation.

Achieving digital transformation in Higher Education demands that academics develop a set of additional and complex competencies, the acquisition of which requires, in turn, both formal instruction and authentic experience. With the current competing pressures for academic productivity, it can be difficult in practice to acquire these competencies. There are, however, opportunities for professional development when engaging in innovative projects, such as MOOCs.

Under the lens of Activity Theory, this thesis aims to determine whether, and how, MOOCs contribute to professional development in HEIs. It investigates and analyses the skills and competencies acquired by academics with varying levels of expertise who undertake different roles and responsibilities in the development and deployment of MOOCs. A set of interviews were conducted, both one-to-one and in focus groups..

Participants shared their experiences as to how MOOCs have influenced their practice, and how their skills and sets of competencies set have changed as a result of their involvement in the production and deployment of MOOCs.

These skills were mapped against two popular competency frameworks in the UK: The UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF), and the JISC Digital Capabilities for academic staff in Higher Education.

The findings suggest that MOOC-related professional activity has a positive influence not only on the development of digital capabilities, but also on the engagement in transformative practices. It was also found that MOOCs contribute to the diffusion of digital and transformative cultures within institutions, by engaging the academic community, as well as professional services, in joint activities related to the provision of online learning. Certain challenges have also been reported, such as the accommodation of MOOC-related activities within the duties and responsibilities of staff, and occasional disillusionment in view of some unfulfilled promises, such as the democratisation of Higher Education.

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Declaration of authorship

I, Manuel León-Urrutia..... declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

[title of thesis]**MOOCs and Competencies for Higher Education**

Transformation: An Activity Theory Analysis.....

I confirm that:

1. This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
2. Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
4. Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
5. I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
6. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
7. [Delete as appropriate] None of this work has been published before submission [or]
Parts of this work have been published as: [please list references below]:

Signed:

Date:

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1. Introduction

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are an indicator that Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are experiencing a transformative process, both digital and educational. MOOCs have often been portrayed as disruptive learning technologies within Higher Education, generating intense debates as to the extent to which they are game changers (BIS, 2013; Bulfin, Pangrazio & Selwin, 2014).

The term 'digital transformation' has been widely used during the last decade (Zhu, Dong & Kraemer, 2006; Andal-Ancion, Cartwright & Yip, 2003). This concept is often used to describe the application of digital technologies across all the activities of organisations, as an important factor for their success. Consultancy reports such as (PWC, 2015; Eggers & Bellman, 2015) identify universities as important actors in the digital transformation of British organisations. For example, a report by Deloitte identifies universities as relatively strong digital performers in the public sector, (Eggers & Bellman, 2015), especially when compared with other types of organisations. These consultancy reports also agree that employees' digital competencies are critical to successful digital strategies. Efforts should therefore be devoted to ensuring that organisations aiming at achieving digital maturity possess a digitally competent workforce, and universities are a representative example.

HEIs are also experiencing a transformation process in their business models towards more entrepreneurial approaches (Clark, 1998) that necessarily involve transformation in the way educational provision is delivered. Although it is often suggested that digital technologies have not transformed pedagogy in Higher Education (Moodie, 2016), transformational practices can be carried out if due attention is placed on the use of these technologies in scholarly contexts (Weller, 2011).

Online learning has a fundamental role in the above-mentioned educational and digital transformation in universities (Picciano, Seaman & Allen, 2010). MOOCs are perhaps the most prominent form of online learning that have emerged in the last few years, and hence they represent the scope of this thesis, as described in detail in the following subsection.

1.1. Research scope

This thesis aims to analyse the effects of MOOCs in universities from a specific perspective. That is, that when MOOCs are adopted in a university, opportunities arise for authentic experiences of online learning provision. These experiences can result in professional development for the staff involved. This professional development can be analysed, broken down into the acquisition of a set of competencies, which in turn can be divided into digital competencies and educational competencies.

The following extract, from a strategic document of Imperial College, a leading Russell Group university, provides a comprehensive description of the use of MOOCs as testing grounds for digital and educational transformation:

“For our strategy to be successful, Imperial needs to offer a broad range of online courses. Large, open courses are an important part of this portfolio, because they can be test cases for high quality educational offering. Potentially the whole world will be watching and learning from our innovation, so these courses need to be technically superb, within research topics for which Imperial is globally renowned. It needs to be pedagogically sound, evidence-based and preferably taught by top researchers in the field. The knowledge that flows from producing these courses will spill over to innovation in on-campus learning, both in terms of novel pedagogy, in ways of assessing and testing, in learning analytics and new ways of rigorously testing novel pedagogies, in building and supervising the online learning community and in many other ways. Top researchers who have produced successful MOOCs will be more interested in teaching than they have ever been before, and the fringe benefits of that increased enthusiasm are significant. Producing top-level courses for the world will change on-campus teaching in profound ways.”
(Imperial College, n.d, p.36)

The above extract sets the scope of this thesis: MOOCs as test cases for high quality educational offerings, to change on-campus teaching. For this change to happen, digital maturity in the institution is needed, and for this staff need to possess the competencies required for educational change. The aim of the thesis is to provide a detailed and structured analysis of how staff enhance these competencies, benchmarking them against established competency frameworks. This aim has led to the formulation of an overarching research question:

“How does producing and delivering MOOCs enhance HE academics’ competencies in digital and online environments?”

The question was broken down in sets of questions and sub-questions, in line with the different elements of Activity Theory and the competencies frameworks against which the questions were benchmarked. For more detail, see chapter 3.2 ‘Research questions’.

This analysis has been conducted from an internal perspective, by a core team member of the MOOC production team of a university, with a strong personal motivation that will be described in the following subsection.

1.2. Rationale: a personal motivation

In this subsection, I am taking the liberty to use the first person to explain what led me to choose the topic I have been studying for over five years as a PhD student. The process that has led to this thesis is a personal and professional journey, as I have been dedicated to the production of MOOCs ever since I started my PhD studies, back in 2013. For this reason, I will be using a rhetorical style in which first person will be present in many passages of this thesis.

Early in 2013, a few Russell Group universities decided to dedicate resources to the production of MOOCs, in partnership with FutureLearn. Just prior to this, other British universities had pioneered the creation of MOOCs, partnering with American providers, such as the partnership between the University of Edinburgh and Coursera.

Back then, FutureLearn was a newly created start-up, funded by the Open University, aiming to become a major online learning provider in the British Higher Education market. MOOCs were already a buzzword in Europe, since the year before in 2012, when US universities such as the MIT and Stanford delivered open courses to hundreds of thousands of people.

Different universities embarked on the MOOC venture for different motivations, such as experimentation, marketing, outreach, innovation, or simply so as not to fall behind the bandwagon of a movement that was generating significant attention. All of them had something in common, however: there was a generalised awareness that the direction MOOCs could take was unknown. There was a great deal of speculation, but all universities who adopted MOOC knew that the aims were not concrete. The University of Southampton was one of these early adopters in the UK.

Against this backdrop of novelty, effervescence and uncertainty, while I was undertaking a Masters Degree in Web Science, I decided to choose MOOCs as my research topic. This MSc was part of an integrated PhD programme in Web Science, the aim of which was to study the impact of the Web in society from a multidisciplinary perspective. I come from an education background, and I had to choose a topic for my MSc dissertation, and the subsequent PhD. The MOOC phenomenon ticked all the boxes. It had both a strong Web Science component and an education component.

In the summer of 2013, I wrote the MSc dissertation. In this dissertation, I studied MOOC discourses in academic literature and Higher Education specialised journalistic media. Using Content Analysis, I discussed the tensions between sceptic and enthusiast accounts of the effects of MOOCs in universities. The findings of this dissertation were published in (White et al., 2014)

As soon as I had completed the MSc dissertation, I joined the team that would develop the first MOOC delivered by the University of Southampton. The MOOC was about Web Science, the area of study of my MSc, and my subsequent PhD.

I was charged with a challenging task: organising the teams of facilitators that would support the massive learning communities taking the MOOCs of the universities. I had taught online before, and I had received some training in teaching online. The format in which these new MOOCs were delivered was completely new, however, and I had never taught to large and unknown audiences.

There was a reasonably extensive body of literature about the delivery of elearning and online learning, especially from the research fields of computer-mediated communication, and computer-assisted language learning. There was a significant research gap, however, into how online learning at scale could be delivered, mainly due to its novelty.

As a result, I decided to research on my own practice as a MOOC facilitation coordinator. I started by publishing my approach of 'mentors as connectors' (León et al., 2015) and started exploring what skills MOOC mentors should hold (León, Yousef & White, 2015).

I then began to research the experiences of human participants directly, starting with the teams of facilitators and focusing on the challenges that they came across when undertaking the daunting task of supporting thousands of learners in a course. These were early career academics, and did not have a great deal of teaching experience. They reported that the challenges they encountered led them to develop both digital skills and teaching skills. The findings were published in León, Fielding & White (2016). The findings of this work consisted of the challenges that MOOC facilitators would come across when supporting big learning communities, and the skills that they recognised having developed as a result.

Those were the early days of my PhD project, I was working and researching simultaneously, and the research questions were starting to take shape: I knew I wanted to study how those who teach through MOOCs develop digital and teaching skills, something I considered worthy of study in contexts where digital technologies were transforming practices.

By the time I finished the first study with early career academics, the university had been delivering MOOCs for more than two years. In parallel, the general discourse on MOOCs had been evolving worldwide, and this evolution was captured in a parallel study that I carried out as a follow-up to my MSc dissertation (León, White & White, 2015). The main conclusions of this parallel study were that the purposes for which universities invested in MOOCs were more defined than in the early years of MOOCs. Generally, MOOCs had come to be seen as experimentation tools for developing more formal online learning opportunities such as online masters, online certified courses, etc. Another important purpose was integrating MOOCs into the classroom, by leveraging not only the quality of their learning materials, but also the networked learning opportunities that MOOCs could offer.

My involvement in the digital learning department increased gradually, and my responsibilities progressed from coordinating the facilitation of MOOCs to contributing to learning design. When focussed on the facilitation, my main liaisons had been early career academics. When focussed on the design, however, my main liaisons were the experienced academics who led the content production of those MOOCs. I worked with these experienced academics nearly on a daily basis, producing MOOCs. Over frequent conversations with them, I noticed that MOOCs were becoming influential to their broader teaching practices, despite their extensive prior experience. For example, I heard many accounts of professors who rethought their way of lecturing certain topics thanks to having had to write it in a different format, having had to narrate it in front of a camera, or after reading the comments of learners who were not students at the university. I therefore decided to capture these accounts methodically, and embark on the next phase of my PhD project, by researching the experiences of these more established academics. I ran a one-day event in our university, to which I invited a wide range of academics and professionals. Informed by the findings in the first study with early career academics (León, Fielding & White, 2016), I inquired how MOOCs had transformed the practices of the more experienced academics who attended the event. I also went to a Spanish university for a research visit, and interviewed eleven academics who had been involved in MOOCs, asking them a very similar set of questions to that posed in the one-day event. The findings were varied, with a wide range of opinions and perspectives on how MOOCs had transformed their practices. These were published in León et al., (2018).

Once I had completed, and published three studies, namely the desk study, the study with facilitators, and the study with experienced academics, I kept narrowing down the research questions of the overarching PhD project, by using established competency frameworks to determine *which* competencies were developed by academics in MOOC production. For this, I chose the UK Professional Standards Framework for teachers in Higher Education, and the

JISC framework of digital capabilities. At that time I studied Higher Education teaching competencies in depth, which resulted in an article published in (Ordóñez & León, 2017).

I also decided to complete the PhD project cycle with a third group of interviewees, all experts in online education. I interviewed high profile participants: some of whom had led education innovation departments, some others who had developed competency frameworks, and others who had written influential books on digital and online learning. Their input was valuable, especially to cross-validate the findings of the previous studies. The findings have not yet been published.

In short, these five years have been an intense journey around MOOCs in universities which have equipped me with the background knowledge that I consider is required to identify the need for a study of academics' competencies in respect to MOOCs, and also to make a contribution to this field. This thesis is the result of that process, and its outline is described in the following section.

1.3. Thesis outline

This thesis has been divided into six chapters, each of which contains an introduction with its own detailed outline. The chapters are as follow:

The present chapter (chapter one) is the introduction, which has introduced the scope of the thesis, its motivation and its research problem.

Chapter two contains a detailed overview of the MOOCs state-of-the-art, an overview and literature review about competencies and professional development in Higher Education, and a description of the theoretical framework within which research for this thesis has been carried out.

Chapter three describes the methodology that has been used to conduct the research conducted for this thesis. In this chapter, the research questions are introduced, as well as a description of the data collection and analysis procedures used in all the projects that form this thesis. The chapter also contains the template against which the thematic analysis was conducted

Chapter four presents the findings, following the structure of the template set out in chapter three. That is, it contains three main sections: two longer sections about digital competencies and teaching competencies, and a shorter section about values and attitudes.

Chapter five discusses these findings, from the angle of the Activity Theory theoretical framework, in relation to the background literature presented in chapter two.

Chapter six concludes the thesis by briefly summarising it. This chapter provides concrete answers to the research questions, as well as a set of recommendations. The limitations of this research project are also outlined in this conclusion, together with a description of future work plans to overcome these limitations.

2. Background and literature review

This chapter delimits the context of this thesis by discussing related research works. The chapter also describes the theoretical framework under which the thesis has been developed. The chapter is structured as follows:

- Firstly, it provides a detailed exploration of the concept of competencies within professional settings in the Higher Education industry.
- Secondly, it explores the state of the art of MOOCs.
- Thirdly, it briefly discusses the concept of transformation in Higher Education, and the role of MOOCs and digital technologies in such transformation.
- Finally, it describes the Activity Theory theoretical framework, and explains how this has been interpreted to guide the research conducted in this thesis.

2.1. Competencies

As discussed in the research scope section of this thesis' introduction, competencies are an essential element of this thesis. It is thus important to specify what is meant by competencies in settings where the subjects teach using digital technologies. This section, therefore, starts by exploring and contextualising the concept of competencies and skills. The subsequent subsections will cover specific contexts: within educational transformation in Higher Education, online learning, and digital technologies in education.

At this stage, it would be worth restating that the subjects of this thesis are academics in HEIs with teaching responsibilities. The main question here is whether these academics develop their digital and teaching competencies when involved in the production of MOOCs. The subjects were interviewed with two competencies frameworks in mind: the UK Professional Standards framework (UKPSF) (HEA, 2011) and the Jisc digital capabilities framework for staff in Higher Education (Jisc, 2018). The themes used for the analysis of their responses were also based on these frameworks. Further subsections in this section will describe these frameworks in detail, together with related frameworks and related work about teaching with the support of digital technologies. These descriptions include details of how the frameworks were used for the interview questions and subsequent analysis.

2.1.1. Competencies, skills, capabilities and literacies

Competencies, skills, capabilities and literacies are terms with many commonalities in their meanings, but also subtle differences subject to interpretation and negotiation. For example,

Jisc defines digital literacies as “those capabilities which fit an individual for living, learning and working in a digital society.” (Jisc, 2014). Literacies, therefore, are understood as an ensemble of capabilities. Skills and capabilities also have subtle differences, with skills tending to be inherent to a task and subject to specification and measurement, and capabilities tending to be inherent to the individuals holding them (Heckman, 2016). Competencies are also often defined as multidimensional sets of skills, usually used in professional and educational domains. The term competency, therefore (discussed in more detail in the following subsection), will be used across this thesis to a much greater extent than capabilities and literacies.

2.1.2. The term ‘competency’

Competence and competency are synonyms, as reflected in most English dictionaries. Either both can be used to convey the same meaning, although the latter predominates in professional jargon. In this thesis, the term ‘competency’ will be used by default, although in some instances ‘competence’ will be used, when referring to others’ work.

Although the terms ‘competence’ and ‘competency’ are widely used in the education domain, they have become problematic due to the different meanings that they have come to acquire over time. Westera (2001) identified a growing interest in this concept in the late 1990s, in areas such as education, training and professional development. Westera argued that “unfortunately, the concept of competence is used in many different ways and it seems that its current meaning is based on common sense and ordinary language use rather than agreed definition—and this all too easily creates confusion of thought.”(p.75). He acknowledges, however, a growing common understanding of the division of competencies into three dimensions: knowledge, attitudes and skills. This three-dimensional conceptualisation is in fact what will be used in this thesis.

The problematic nature of the term has also been noted by Angulo (2008), who identified the extensive use of terms such as ‘competence’ and ‘competent authorities’ in European Higher Education governance documents following the Bologna declaration, such as the Prague Communiqué of the Bologna Process (EHEA, 2001), and the subsequent Bergen Communiqué (2005).

Given the diversity of definitions around competencies, a key definition has been selected for this thesis. This definition is to be found in the DeSeCo project undertaken by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which provided conceptual support to the widely known Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA):

Competency is the ability to appropriately respond to demands and undertake tasks. It emerges from the combination of practical skills, knowledge, motivations, ethical values, emotions, and other social and behavioural components that mobilise together to achieve an effective action (OECD, 2006).

2.1.3. The role of competencies in the digital transformation of education

The digital transformation of universities has generated the need for academics involved in teaching to be digitally competent. The main aspect of this digital transformation is the irruption of the Web in the classroom, whereby barriers of access to information have dramatically decreased (Windschitl, 1998).

New forms of interaction and communication have also emerged, leading to the renegotiation of the concept of *classroom*, beyond the walls of a physical space where students and teachers gather for education to take place, to a much wider one in which students access learning activities through a wider set of virtual spaces, in a wider range of times in the day (Greenhow, Robelia & Hughes, 2009).

The ability of students, especially HE students, to access information from and interact in social networks has raised the need to rethink the pedagogical approaches through which education is provided (Beetham & Sharpe, 2007), recognising the fundamental role that digital technologies now play.

This need to rethink pedagogy as technology transforms academic practice has generated the concept of the digital scholar (Weller, 2011). Weller's idea of the transformation of academic practice is defined by the confluence of the *open, digital and networked* practices, as shown in figure 2.1 'Digital Practice Transformation':

- *Open practices* consist of creating, using, and repurposing open educational resources (Cronin, 2017). An example would be a teacher sharing and editable version their slides in an open repository for everyone to use, and viceversa: a teacher using another teachers' slides, adapting the resource to their own purposes. Meaningful learning experiences can be designed with the use of open resources (Conole, 2012).
- *Networked practices* consist of creating learning experiences in which digital tools are used to promote connections between all members of a community involved in the learning process, as well as resources and devices (Dirckinck-Holmfeld, Jones and Lindström, B., 2009).

- Digital practices consist of incorporating the use of digital technologies to scholarly practices.

In this intersection of transformative practices, teaching requires a relatively new set of literacies, skills and competencies. The development of these competencies is a key theme to this thesis.

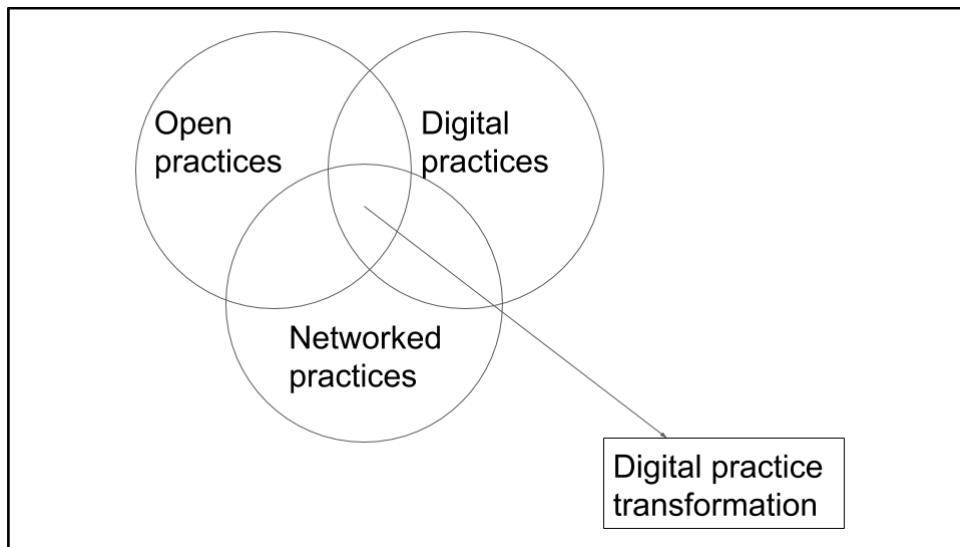


Figure 2.1: Digital Practice Transformation (After Weller, 2011).

Weller's three-dimensional categorisation of digital practice transformation provides a useful mapping that eases the study of transformational competencies. As such, it has been highly influential in the design of the templates of this thesis. I considered this model highly appropriate, although somewhat problematic. Its main weakness lies in the positioning of digital practices in the same plane as open and networked practices, because the latter are inherent to the former. That is, by engaging in open practices or networked practices, a practitioner is inherently engaging in digital practices, but not vice versa; i.e. by engaging in digital practices, a practitioner is not necessarily engaging in open practices or networked practices.

2.1.4. Teaching competencies

The following table, published in Ordóñez & León (2017) is a synthetisation of Zabalza's (2003) and Perrenaud's (2004) models for teaching competencies in Higher Education.

Table 2.1: Teaching competencies in Higher Education (in Ordóñez & León, 2017)

TEACHING COMPETENCY	DESCRIPTION
Planning of the teaching and learning process	Encompassing the management of the different learning processes from a problem solution perspective, given the different discipline-specific pedagogies and the different stages of intellectual development.
Content preparation	Applying awareness of the classroom diversity and knowing how to use a differentiated pedagogy. An emphasis is put on values education in all disciplines.
Organisation and justification	Organising one's own continuous professional development is a new aspect of pedagogical innovation and development. It is the ability to choose the most appropriate training among the different options in the institutional offer.
Use of new technologies	It is important to adapt the school context to the current society of information and knowledge. Both teachers and students must be competent in the use of technologies, and adapt these to their teaching and learning processes.
Teaching methodology design	Being aware of the needed and available resources to organise spaces, and selecting the most appropriate method, depending on the teaching activities proposed, and thence developing instructional tasks.
Communication and interaction with students	In addition to the traditional competency of communicating, the need has emerged to stimulate and maintain the motivation for learning, as well as unlearning. The pedagogical skill of building the meanings of knowledge, and communicating it, is needed for interacting not only with students, but with all the educational community.
Tutoring and counseling	Offering appropriate support and orientation, not only on the academic discipline, but also professionally once the student has graduated.
Assessment	It is important to keep in mind that assessing is not controlling or grading, but providing support for improvement.
Reflection and research about teaching	This competency suggests a relationship between the duties and dilemmas of the teaching profession, both in public and in private education, where there are a set of values for social change, involving ethical issues such as the prevention of prevent violence, prejudice and discrimination. This also includes fostering critical thinking, solidarity and justice.

2.1.4.1. Higher Education Teaching Competencies in the UK

The framework presented in the previous section was used to conceptualise teaching competencies, with a focus in Higher Education. In this section, another framework will be presented, which has largely influenced the theoretical and methodological models of this thesis. This framework is the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF). The main reason the UKPSF will be used is that the research projects carried out for this thesis are particularly relevant to the UK Higher Education context. Not all the participants of the studies that compose this thesis were teaching in UK HEIs, and a small number of them

were not familiar with the UKPSF. As a recently recognised HEA fellow, however, I was highly familiar with it, and considered that the target audience of this thesis would be too. In the cases where an interviewee was not familiar with the UKPSF, additional time was used in the interview for contextualisation. In all those cases, participants could easily relate UKPSF concepts with equivalent frameworks with which they were familiar.

2.1.4.1.1. The UKPSF and the HEA

The UKPSF is the main assessment instrument of the Higher Education Academy (HEA, 2011). The HEA is a not-for-profit organisation, now part of the newly created Advance HE consortium. Based in the UK, and operating both in the UK and abroad, the HEA advises on and certifies Higher Education teaching excellence.

Since the 1980s UK HEIs have been demanding the development of teaching staff, and the HEA is a venture responding to that (Prosser et al. 2006). In those years, professional development programmes for Higher Education teachers started to proliferate in the UK (DfES, 2003), in line with an international trend aiming to enhance the pedagogical quality of the HE teaching provision (Boyer, 1990).

By the end of the nineties, an influential report commissioned by the UK government, known as the Dearing Report (Dearing, 1997) contributed substantially to the recognition of the need for professional accreditation programmes in the UK HE system. The main forum for this accreditation at that time was the Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA). This was superseded by the Institute for Learning and Teaching Education (ILTHE), which was absorbed by the HEA in the early 2000s. Those years witnessed a significant growth of accredited programmes, reaching 140 across the UK in 2006.

The UKPSF was introduced in the same year as a competency measuring instrument to support the accreditation processes delivered by the HEA. The framework was revised in 2011, into the current version. The main changes consisted of the inclusion of advanced categories of HEA membership, namely Senior Fellow and Principal Fellow. The framework was also split into dimensions of practice and descriptors (Law, 2011), as will be described in more detail in the 'UKPSF Description' subsection later on.

2.1.4.1.2. The UKPSF: Impact and debate

As mentioned in the previous subsection, the UKPSF has had a significant impact in the UK HE system in the last decade, and has generated debate as a result.

An impact study carried out by Turner et al. (2013) reports a sustained growing trend in the number of practitioners who have been awarded formal recognition through the UKPSF. The

numbers doubled from around 15k to 35K in the period of the study, from 2004 to 2012. This study found that most institutional representatives surveyed felt that the UKPSF had had a high level of impact, which involved a change of practice in the majority of cases. This change of practice mainly consisted of new approaches to “design of curricula for materials for accredited courses and/or workshops” (p.15).

A number of case studies have portrayed the impact of the UKPSF as positive. For example, van Der Sluis, Burden & Huet (2017) recognise that schemes such as the UKPSF make a significant contribution to the professional development of HE teaching staff, by stimulating engagement and collaboration with other peers towards the improvement of the teaching provision. In that case study, it was reported that those who worked towards the HEA fellowship made changes to their teaching practice as a result.

Other studies, however, have pointed out the limitations of such a framework. The main reported drawback seems to be the retrospective nature of the recognition scheme, rather than the framework itself. In this sense, the HEA recognition scheme has been deemed as a weak driver for change, as its attainment is based on the previous experience of the candidate, rather than the awareness or willingness to change in the future (Hibbert & Semler, 2015; Macfarlane & Gourlay, 2009).

Another argument held to criticise the UKPSF is that it is an instrument for yet another of those accreditation programmes that make too small a contribution to the improvement of teaching quality and enhancement of the student experience, becoming just a box-ticking means for institutions to enhance their reputation (Onsman, 2009). At their best, Onsman argues, these programmes improve the confidence of teaching staff in the effectiveness of their own practice. Onsman proposes alternatives such as the delivery of short courses produced within the institution, and with therefore a more specific context that can have a more meaningful impact on the teaching competencies of the staff in the institution. Peat (2014) shares certain reservations in a similar direction, suggesting that that “the UKPSF runs the very real risk of becoming a tokenistic exercise, engaged in purely as a result of institutional pressure and league table priorities” (p.18). Another important concern raised by Peat (ibid.) is the risk of the UKPSF becoming a reinforcer of hierarchies within the institution, which have little to do with the teaching competencies of their holders, especially in the higher categories of the fellowships. This concern is in line with those raised by the University and College Union (UCU) when the framework was reviewed in 2011. In a public note, the UCU expressed their concerns about the risk of the new UKPSF “moving into areas which are essentially matters for employer-union negotiations. As a trade union and professional association, we believe that the main function of the UKPSF should be as ‘an

enabling mechanism to support the professional development of staff engaged in supporting learning', particularly in relation to accrediting institutional programmes for new staff." (UCU, 2011, p.1)

Despite the debate that the UKPSF has generated, it is widely recognised as a valid method for measuring teaching competencies. Furthermore, the details and distributions of its descriptors respond to a careful design, as will be described in the following subsection.

2.1.4.1.3. The UKPSF and teaching competencies

One of the main reasons why the UKPSF was used as an important piece of the inquiry instrumentation in this thesis is its three-dimensional division of competencies. As discussed in section 2.1.2 above, the division of competencies into cognitive, practical and behavioural dimensions is common to many competency frameworks, especially in the education domain (Westera, 2001). The UKPSF is not an exception, as represented in figure 2.2. In the figure, each of the dimensions of the UKPSF (within the circles) are mapped against the dimensions of other competency frameworks reported in Westera (ibid) (within the rectangles).

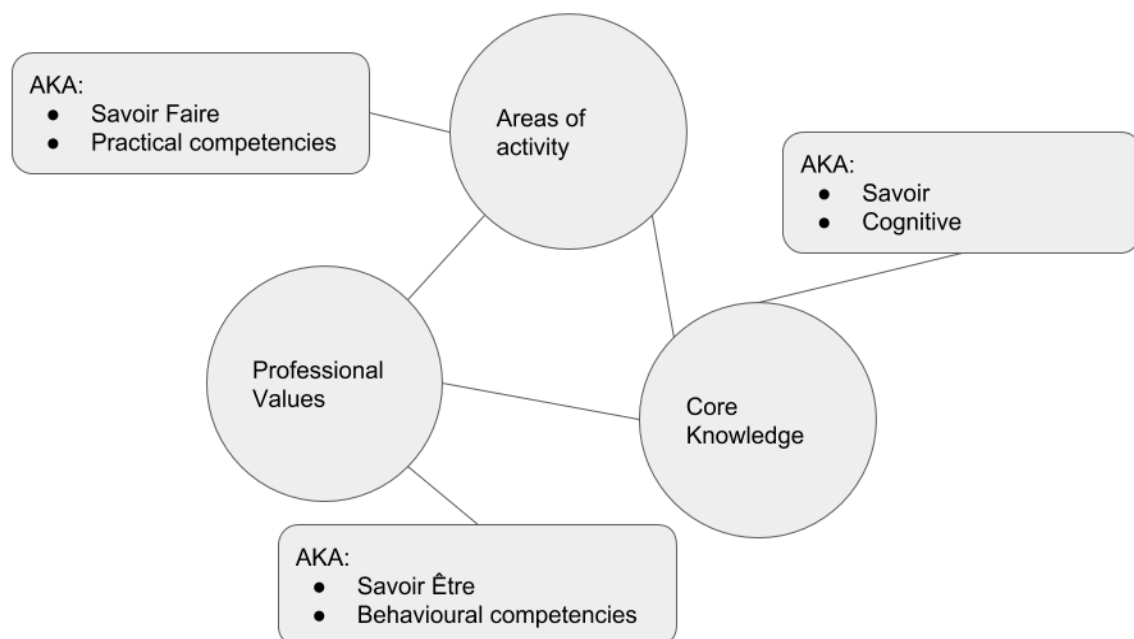


Figure 2.2: The dimensions of the UKPSF (after HEA, 2011)

As represented in figure 2.2, the UKPSF has three dimensions, with each of these having a set of components, as represented in table 2.2, totalling fifteen. These components are statements that provide additional detail as to what is meant in each of the dimensions. In order for staff to obtain their fellowship recognition, the HEA encourages the use of five components in the area of activity dimension as a structure to create a reflective account of professional practice. The remaining components in the two other dimensions should also be reflected and evidenced in that reflective account.

Table 2.2: Descriptions of the dimensions of the UKPSF (HEA, 2011)

Dimensions of the UKPSF		
Areas of activity	Core knowledge	Professional values
“Design and plan learning activities and/or programmes of study”	“The subject material”	“Respect individual learners and diverse learning communities”
“Teach and/or support learning”	“Appropriate methods for teaching, learning and assessing in the subject area and at the level of the academic programme”	“Promote participation in higher education and equality of opportunity for learners”
“Assess and give feedback to learners”	“How students learn, both generally and within their subject/ disciplinary area(s)”	“Use evidence-informed approaches and the outcomes from research, scholarship and continuing professional development”
“Develop effective learning environments and approaches to student support and guidance”	“The use and value of appropriate learning technologies”	“Acknowledge the wider context in which higher education operates recognising the implications for professional practice”
“Engage in continuing professional development in subjects/disciplines and their pedagogy, incorporating research, scholarship and the evaluation of professional practices”	“Methods for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching”	
	“The implications of quality assurance and quality enhancement for academic and professional practice with a particular focus on teaching”	

The depth to which the component for each of the dimensions is achieved is reflected in the descriptors of the UKPSF. The UKPSF has the four descriptors shown in table 2.3. As the table shows, these descriptors are aligned with different levels of seniority and academic experience. They also provide an indication of which kind of positions would be suitable for holding the different levels of HEA fellowship, an approach that Peat (2015) has criticised for being a form of hierarchy reinforcement:

Table 2.3: Awards and descriptors of the UKPSF (HEA, 2011)

Descriptor	Fellowship level	Eligible roles/experience
“Demonstrates an understanding of aspects of effective teaching, learning support methods and student learning”	Associate Fellow	Early career researchers with teaching support roles
“Demonstrates a broad understanding of effective approaches to teaching and learning support as key contributions to high quality student learning”	Full Fellow	Academics with teaching responsibilities
“Demonstrates a thorough understanding of effective approaches to teaching and learning support as a key contribution to high quality student learning”	Senior Fellow	Experienced academics with long teaching experience, with leading and advisory roles.
“Demonstrates a sustained record of effective strategic leadership in academic practice and academic development as a key contribution to high quality student learning”	Principal Fellow	Highly experienced academics with roles at strategic levels.

As discussed in the sections above, the UKPSF is a widely recognised framework, with clear descriptions of the different types of teaching competencies. These descriptions, together with its three-dimensional division, are easily equatable with other frameworks used in different settings by a wide variety of academics with teaching responsibilities. It is for this reason that it was used in the interviews conducted in the third stage of this thesis with experienced education developers who would necessarily have used this or a similar framework at some stage of their careers.

2.1.5. The role of confidence in teaching competencies

In order to explore perceptions of staff in an organisation towards new tasks and technologies, it is advisable to determine how confident they are in their own abilities to perform such tasks. This section will outline some academic sources related to staff confidence. These sources tackle confidence from three different lenses: social cognitive theory, business and management science, and psychology.

In social cognitive theory, confidence is often also known as self-efficacy. In Bandura's work (1977), self-efficacy is described as the perceived capacity of individuals to perform specific tasks successfully. It is important that individuals believe they are able perform a task effectively, especially when such a task is new or challenging. The individuals in our study are academic staff at different levels, and the new and challenging task is teaching through MOOCs.

Confidence should also be considered from a learning in the workplace angle, since staff in organisations go through learning processes when faced with new technologies, including MOOCs. Eraut (2010) devised a model in which confidence plays an important role in the informal learning processes of individuals in organisations. This model, shown in figure 2.3, places confidence and commitment as pivotal among the factors that affect informal learning in the workplace.

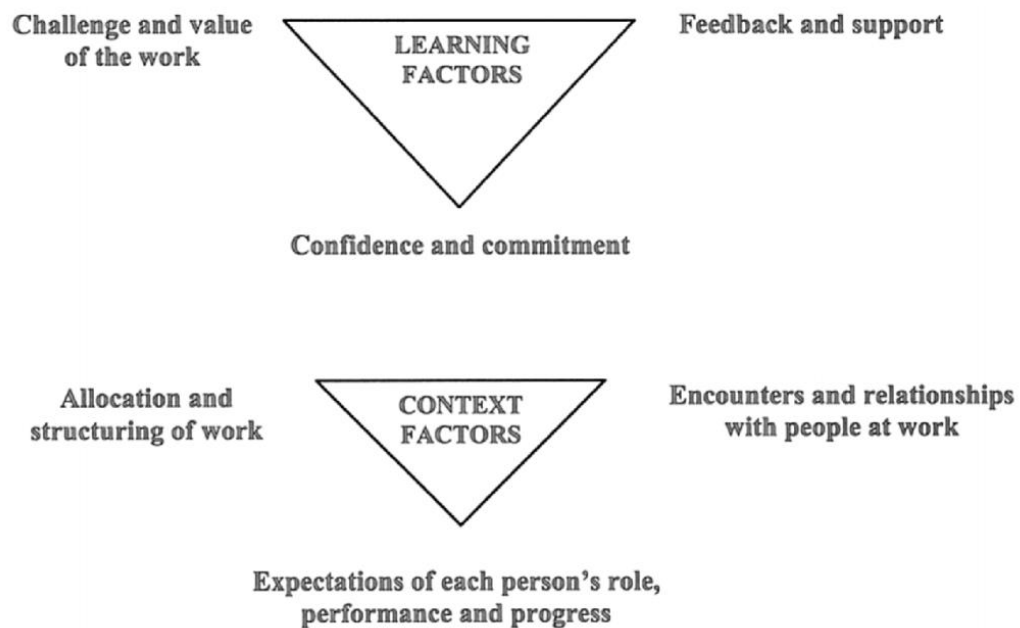


Figure 2.3: Factors affecting learning in the workplace (Eraut, 2010 p.269)

As Eraut suggests, “Much learning at work occurs through doing things and being proactive in seeking learning opportunities, and this requires confidence”. (p.269) If appropriate performance is expected from a staff member in an organisation, and assuming this performance is the result of a learning process, their confidence will play an essential role in how effectively they learn. The role of confidence in professional effectiveness has been widely explored in the field of organisational science. For example, Kanter (2006) conducted a series of interviews with leaders in different kinds of organisations (sports teams, political parties, private companies). She found that self-confidence is widely seen as a beneficial factor for individuals’ performance in those organisations.

From the perspective of psychology, it is also worth mentioning the concept of “imposter syndrome”, by which a person in a position of responsibility has a self-perception of being a fraud, often due to a perceived lack of knowledge and skills to undertake such position. Psychologists started to explore this construct at the end of the 1970s. Clance and Imes (1978) called it “imposter phenomenon” after observing it in high-achieving women who did not believe they deserved the professional positions they were holding. Research on this phenomenon then extended to other domains, as it was noted that it affected both genders in a wide variety of contexts, including faculty members (Topping, 1983). Topping noticed that imposter syndrome occurs especially, although not exclusively, with academics who have recently started their careers. In a more recent study, Brems et al. (1994) showed that

better student-teacher relationships occur where instructors do not exhibit imposter syndrome.

Several scales have been devised to test for the presence of imposter syndrome within individuals, the most well-known of which are Clance's scale and Harvey's scale (Holmes, 1993). Although it is not considered a mental illness (it is not included in any DSM), it is often subject to psychological treatment (Clance, 1985). This construct will be used in part of this thesis to support the statements of some of the participants in the first study with Early Career Academics as to how performing low responsibility tasks such as facilitating in MOOCs can help overcome the self-perceptions of not being fit to undertake academic tasks, which could have a certain relationship to the aforementioned imposter phenomenon.

2.1.6. Digital competencies

The previous subsections have delved into competencies for teaching in HE as an important element in the contextualisation of this thesis. This subsection will focus on another important domain of this thesis, namely digital competencies.

Digital competencies are an important aspect of citizen's livelihoods in the current digital society, and an important element for professional success in the current digital economy. Ferrari, one of the main authors of the DigiComp framework of the European Commission (2017), considers digital competencies to be a human right, since they are fundamental for being functional in today's society (Ferrari, 2012). In her analysis of existing digital competency frameworks, she synthesised their definitions into the following:

"Digital Competence is the set of knowledge, skills, attitudes, abilities, strategies, and awareness that are required when using ICT and digital media to perform tasks; solve problems; communicate; manage information; collaborate; create and share content; and build knowledge effectively, efficiently, appropriately, critically, creatively, autonomously, flexibly, ethically, reflectively for work, leisure, participation, learning, and socialising." (Ferrari, 2012 p. 12)

As with the numerous models and frameworks to define teaching competencies in educational and professional settings, there are a great many published and functional frameworks for digital competencies. In her preliminary study leading to *DigiComp*, Ferrari (ibid) identified twelve such frameworks. Most of these target general audiences, but some are specific to groups such as young people, adults and teachers.

Frameworks addressed at teachers are specially relevant to this thesis and, from Ferrari's selection, the UNESCO ICT Competency Framework for Teachers (2011) should be highlighted for its social mission. This mission consists of equipping teachers of all stages, from primary to HE, with tools to enable their students to become a digitally literate

workforce. The UNESCO ICT framework defines several Information and Communication (ICT) competencies to incorporate technology and pedagogy in teaching practices, defining standards and guidelines for implementing these.

2.1.6.1. Digital competencies and digital literacies

The concept of digital competencies is strongly tied to that of digital literacies. Over the last two decades, both these concepts have been problematic for defining the ability to use ICTs in communicative contexts.

Digital literacy was initially conceptualised by Paul Gilster as “the ability to both understand and use digitised information” (Gilster, 1997, p.2). This ability requires both technical and communicative skills, and has become the focus of attention of many organisations, who have broken down these literacies into different sets of elements, as, for example, with the Jisc digital literacies framework, discussed in detail in the next subsection.

Gilster defined digital literacies but did not break them down into observable elements. A few years later, a few attempts were made in that direction, such as that of Martin (2005) within a European project called DigiEuLit. Literacies were broken down into four key elements:

- The ability to perform digital actions in everyday life contexts
- The ability to adapt digital actions to different contexts and situations
- The incorporation of other literacies such as media literacy, information literacy and visual literacy
- The ability to learn in digital contexts, and to reflect upon one’s digital literacy development.

The terms ‘digital competencies’ and ‘digital literacies’ are usually used to represent similar, although not identical, concepts. For example, Bawden (2008) includes digital competencies as one more element of digital literacies, together with attitudes and skills. An opposite treatment is that of Ferrari (2012), who includes literacies as a notion within other areas of competencies. As these two examples illustrate, these two terms are not clearly differentiated across the literature: they present many overlaps, and are problematic. In a systematic concept review, Spante et al. (2018) noted that these terms are used synonymously, or to underpin each other. They noted that the differences usually reside the regional context. For example, European policies are more prone to use the term ‘competencies’ whereas UK frameworks such as Jisc are more prone to use ‘literacies’.

Despite the frequent crossovers, digital competencies can be considered to be more tied to the ability to use digital technologies in specific contexts, for specific purposes. In that sense,

the European Commission (2006) defined digital competences as “the confident and critical use of information society technologies for work, leisure and communication”.

As explained in the previous section 2.1.2, this thesis will use the term ‘competencies’ to refer to the literacies, skills, abilities and capabilities that are developed as a result of teaching through MOOCs. Competencies has been chosen over literacies because, after thorough analysis, a general distinction can be made between the two terms: Literacies tend to be referred to as the ability to get by in society, while competencies tend to be referred to as the ability to get by in professional and educational contexts. When terms such as skills, capabilities and literacies appear in this thesis, they are used when referring to the work of others, and the term competency will be predominantly used for the research carried out in the thesis.

2.1.6.2. The Jisc frameworks of digital literacies and capabilities

Jisc is a highly influential organisation in the UK Higher Education system. Its main activity consists of providing guidance about digital transformation in HEIs. As such, several frameworks have been developed under its umbrella. Two of these frameworks are especially relevant to this thesis, since they have been used as a reference point, not only in the interviews with participants, but also to address the thesis’ research questions about competencies for HE transformation.

The Jisc Digital Literacies framework is the result of years of study of digital literacies in Higher Education. The framework that can be seen in figure 2.4 started to take shape in 2010 when Beetham and Sharpe (2013) devised a series of workshops in which they envisaged a staged process through which HE students progressed, which consisted of (from the most basic to the most sophisticated):

- Access and awareness: being able to access the digital tools to facilitate technology enhanced learning
- Skills: ability to use these tools comfortably
- Practices: ability to carry out tasks successfully and interact by using these tools
- Attributes/identities: ability to behave critically and ethically, and thrive in digitally enhanced environments.

Later on, in 2011, Jisc started the ‘Development of Digital Literacies’ programme, aimed at promoting digital literacies across Higher Education, through the provision of resources, recommendations and dissemination events. Some of the main outputs were a consolidated

categorisation of different types of digital literacies (see figure 2.4) and the following definition:

“By digital literacy we mean those capabilities which fit an individual for living, learning and working in a digital society. For example, the use of digital tools to undertake academic research, writing and critical thinking; digital professionalism; the use of specialist digital tools and data sets; communicating ideas effectively in a range of media; producing, sharing and critically evaluating information; collaborating in virtual networks; using digital technologies to support reflection and PDP; managing digital reputation and showcasing achievements.” (Jisc, 2014)

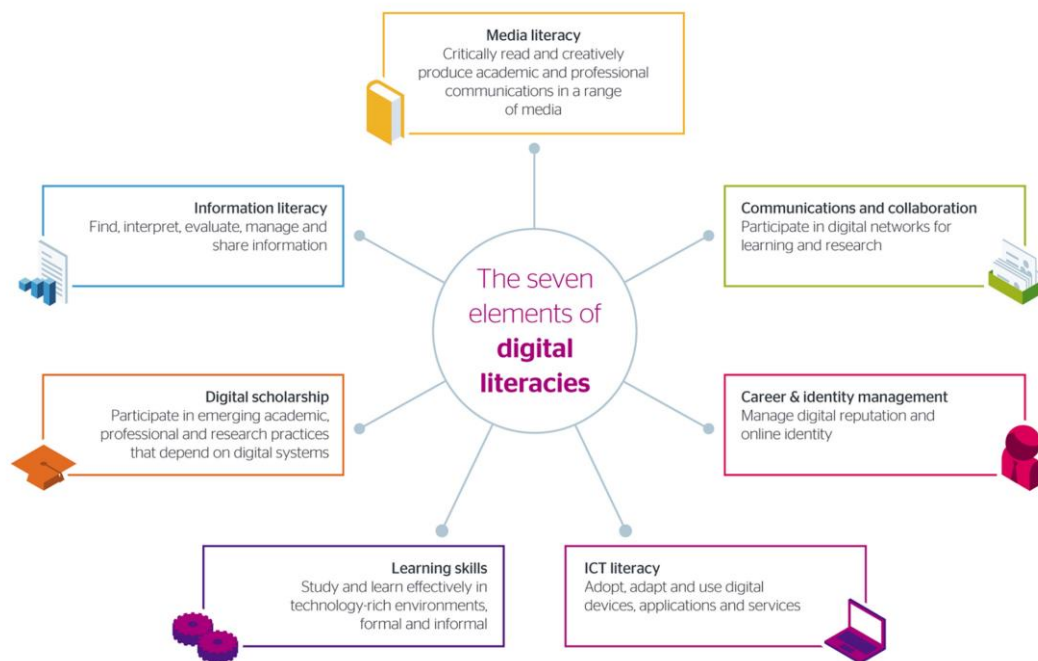


Figure 2.4: JISC framework for digital literacies

Jisc also developed a programme more addressed at HE staff, called 'Building Digital Capabilities', recently archived (Jisc, 2018). As shown in figure 2.6, the different elements of the framework revolve around the ability to use Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), and are all encompassed by the ability to hold a digital identity and maintain digital wellbeing.

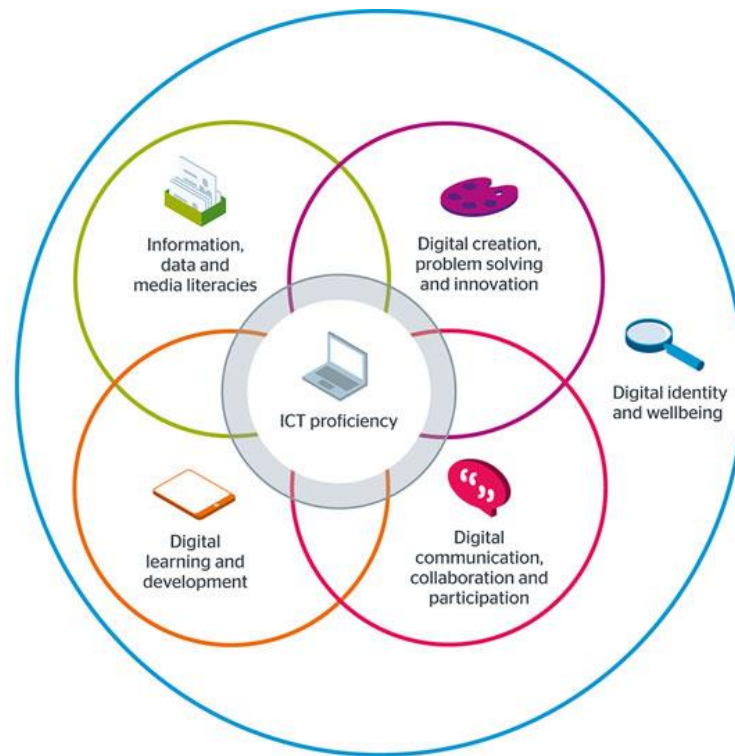


Figure 2.6: Digital Capabilities Framework (Jisc, 2018)

2.1.7. Digital teaching competencies

Jisc and the HEA joined forces to develop a measurable framework specific for teachers, in which the descriptors of both the UKPSF and the Digital Capabilities Framework were synthesised into one. The result was the Digital Lens of the UKPSF. (HEA, 2017). The resource was designed for academics with teaching responsibilities in Higher Education, but it also addresses professionals in the third space such as education developers, learning designers and learning technologists.

2.2. MOOCs and online learning

2.2.1. Literature about MOOCs

The inception of MOOCs in 2008 and its outbreak to massive audiences in 2011 has been accompanied by a significant contribution to the corpus of literature on online learning. Nearly 500 academic publications about MOOCs have been identified to date by the Southampton MOOC Observatory (<https://www.mendeley.com/groups/2754851/mooc-observatory/>). Such a high number of publications could be interpreted as a reflection of the interest awakened by the MOOC phenomenon, which peaked in 2013 according to Google trends (see chart below). Google trends cannot determine what is of interest to the academic community, but it can provide useful evidence to support what is widely claimed: MOOCs became trendy for both the general public and academia in 2012 and 2013, but this interest has been slowly decreasing since 2014.

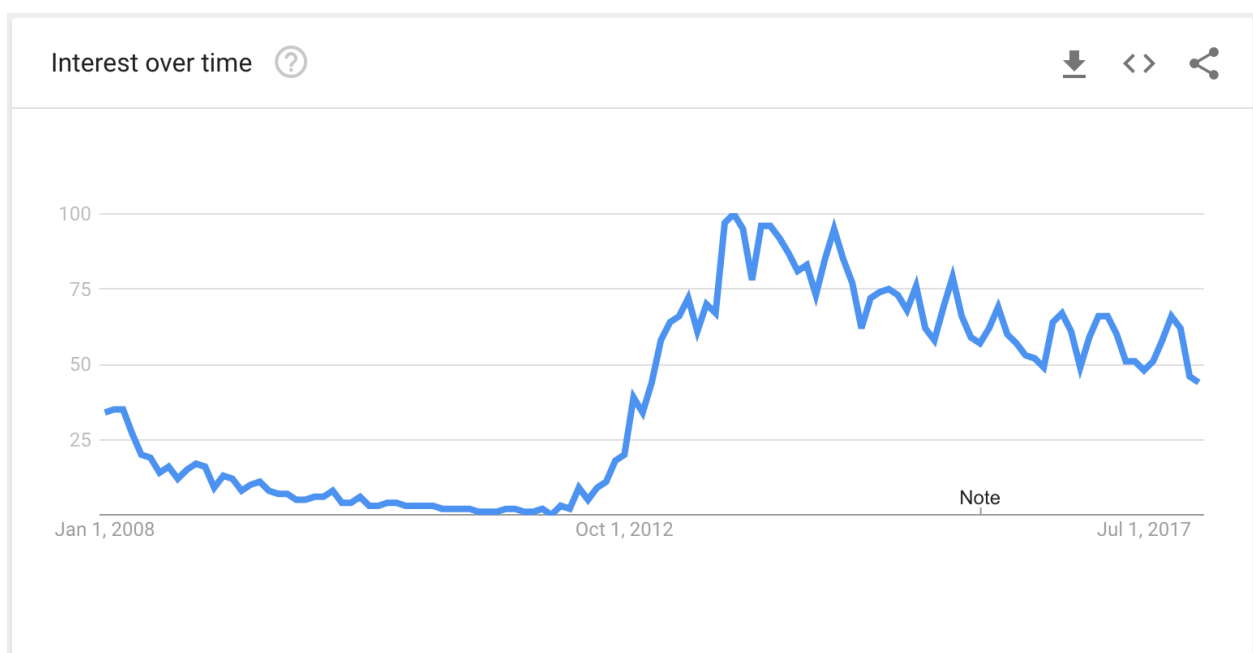


Figure 2.6. Google Trends graph about MOOCs

2.2.2. Published literature reviews on MOOCs

Identifying trends in such a large body of literature can be a challenging task (Fournier et al. 2014), although nonetheless one that can help determine the relevance of the issues around MOOCs in higher education institutions. A quick analysis of literature reviews around

MOOCs can help understand what are the most commonly addressed questions, as well as identify research gaps that need filling.

These literature reviews have a significant impact in the MOOC research community. Judging from their bibliometric figures, it could be inferred that researchers often use these literature reviews to establish the context in their publications (see table below, where the third column shows the number of citations found in Google Scholar as of January 2018).

Several attempts at comprehensive MOOC literature reviews have been conducted in order to understand what aspects of these courses draw most interest to academic and journalistic communities.

Perhaps the most influential literature review is that of Liyanagunawardena, Adams and Williams (2013), which spotted a dramatic increase of publications about MOOCs in 2012. This review identified that a majority of articles tended to address technological aspects of MOOCs, but that there is a lack of research drawing on educators' and facilitators' experiences. This gap is being addressed in this thesis.

That year, Haggard et al. (2013) published an analysis of MOOC discourses through a review of 113 sources, both academic and journalistic. This review concluded that MOOCs were a hot topic back then, with a large number of voices with opinions divided between how harmful, beneficial or insignificant MOOCs were going to become in HEIs. The review identifies many sources analysing the impact of MOOCs in HEIs and in learners, but it does not explicitly mention research addressing the impact of MOOCs in educators, which again is the focus of this thesis.

One year later, Yousef et al. (2014) reported a sharp increase in the number of MOOC publications in respect of that reported by Liyanagunawardena, Adams and Williams the year before. Yousef's review identified two main needs for a positive evolution of MOOCs: a wider agreement on the conceptualisation of MOOCs, and the application of established pedagogical theories in the development of these courses.

That same year, Ebben & Murphy (2014) analysed a corpus of 25 articles to identify MOOC research trends as a sequence of two phases. In the first phase, there was a predominance of networked learning research, while the second phase focused on massiveness, learning analytics and critical discourse. A very similar trend has been identified in more recent meta-research, where it has been noted that, a) publications on xMOOCs significantly outnumber those of MOOCs, b) there has been an increase of publications critical towards the overall concept of MOOCs, and c) publications about MOOCs continue to show a growing trend.

2.3.2.0.0.1. Table 2.4: Most influential MOOC literature reviews

Publication	Sources (area and number)	Citations
Liyanagunawardena, T., Adams, A., & Williams, S. (2013). MOOCs: A systematic study of the published literature 2008-2012. <i>The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning</i> , 14(3), 202-227.	Academic (45)	702
Gašević, D., Kovanovic, V., Joksimovic, S., & Siemens, G. (2014). Where is research on massive open online courses headed? A data analysis of the MOOC Research Initiative. <i>The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning</i> , 15(5), 134-176.	Academic (266)	148
Ebben, M., & Murphy, J. S. (2014). Unpacking MOOC scholarly discourse: A review of nascent MOOC scholarship. <i>Learning, Media and Technology</i> , 39(3), 328-345.	Academic (25)	124
Haggard, S., Brown, S., Mills, R., Tait, A., Warburton, S., Lawton, W., & Angulo, T. (2013). The maturing of the MOOC: Literature review of massive open online courses and other forms of online distance learning. Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, UK Government.	Academic and journalistic (113)	104
Yousef, A. M. F., Chatti, M. A., Schroeder, U., & Harald Jakobs, M. W. (2014). A Review of the State-of-the-Art. In <i>Proceedings of CSEDU2014, 6th International Conference on Computer Supported Education</i> (pp. 9-20).	Academic and journalistic (84)	79
Veletsianos, G. & Shepherdson, P. (2016). A systematic analysis and synthesis of the empirical MOOC literature published in 2013-2015. <i>The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning</i> , 17(2), 198-221.	Academic (183)	67
Bulfin, S., Pangrazio, L., & Selwyn, N. (2014). Making MOOCs: The construction of a new digital higher education within news media discourse. <i>The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning</i> , 15(5), 291-305.	Journalistic (371)	60
Kovanović, V., Joksimović, S., Gašević, D., Siemens, G., & Hatala, M. (2015). What public media reveals about MOOCs: A systematic analysis of news reports. <i>British Journal of Educational Technology</i> , 46(3), 510-527.	Journalistic (3958)	48
Raffaghelli, J., Cucchiara, S., & Persico, D. (2015). Methodological approaches in MOOC research: Retracing the myth of Proteus. <i>British Journal of Educational Technologies</i> , 46(3), 488-509.	Academic (60)	42
Leon-Urrutia, M., White, S., & White, S. (2016). MOOCs in Higher Education Magazines: A Content Analysis of Internal Stakeholder Perspectives. In S. Zvacek, M. T. Restivo, J. Uhomobhi, & M. Helfert (Eds.), <i>Computer Supported Education: 7th International Conference, CSEDU 2015, Lisbon, Portugal, May 23-25, 2015, Revised Selected Papers</i> (pp. 395–405). Cham: Springer International Publishing. http://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-29585-5_23	Journalistic (112)	9
Sa'don, N. F., Alias, R. A., & Ohshima, N. (2014). Nascent research trends in MOOCs in higher educational institutions: A systematic literature review. In <i>Web and Open Access to Learning (ICWOAL), 2014 International Conference</i> (pp. 1-4). IEEE.	Academic (164)	8

Sangrà, A., González-Sanmamed, M., & Anderson, T. (2015). Meta-analysis of the research about MOOCs during 2013-2014. <i>Educación XX1</i> , 1-28.	Academic (228)	6
Bozkurt, A., Akgün-Özbek, E., & Zawacki-Richter, O. (2017). Trends and patterns in Massive Open Online Courses: Review and content analysis of research on MOOCs (2008-2015). <i>The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning</i> , 18(5).	Academic (45)	5

2.2.3. The Southampton MOOC Observatory Mendeley group

The Southampton MOOC Observatory is a research group, mainly composed of early career researchers in the field of MOOCs. This research group set up a Mendeley group, a social media add-on to the Mendeley reference manager. The Mendeley group¹ is open, and members from the MOOC research community have been joining since it was set up.

2.2.4. History and context of MOOCs within online education

MOOCs can be included as an important landmark in the history of distance education. Different authors have made attempts to establish historical stages, or generations from varied perspectives, both socio-technical (Moore & Kearsleigh, 2011; Taylor, 2001), and pedagogical (Anderson & Dron, 2010; Garrison, 2011). In this subsection, the history of MOOCs is explored from the following perspectives:

- Firstly, the advent of MOOCs from a socio-technical perspective of online and distance education is presented.
- Secondly, the role of MOOCs in the pedagogical evolution of online learning is provided.
- Thirdly, the current picture of the online education industry in the UK is described.

2.2.4.1. Online and distance education: a socio-technical perspective

Most of the above-mentioned authors concur that distance education had a first generation in correspondence studies. The origins can be traced back to the 18th century, when the Boston Gazette advertised correspondence courses. A century later, there was a drive within American society to encourage studies at home for adults who could not otherwise access education. That sparked the proliferation of universities that would offer correspondence courses to significant numbers of distance learners (Moore & Kearsleigh, 2011). The term “distance education” was actually coined by the University of Wisconsin-Madison at the end

¹ <https://www.mendeley.com/community/mooc-observatory/>

of the nineteenth century (ibid). This university started innovating with the use of new media, by sending recorded lectures in phonograph form.

With the introduction of broadcasting media, a commonly named “second generation” (Moore & Kearsley, 2011; Taylor, 2001; Keegan, 1993) of distance education emerged. Broadcasting technologies made it possible to reach wider audiences through faster and simpler dissemination. Also, early instances of student-tutor and student-student interaction could be observed, although with very limited options for pedagogical innovation (Anderson & Dron, 2010). Although a richer variety of formats emerged - mainly TV and radio -, which permitted innovation in the production of content and materials, this was mainly a one-way interaction from the tutor to the learner, aided only by early audio-conferencing technologies, which would allow learning in groups, with tutors being able to offer tuition in numerous locations simultaneously (Garrison, 1985).

The subsequent generation can be thought of as one in which whole systems were set up exclusively to deliver distance education (Daniel, 2006). Organisations entirely dedicated to distance learning emerged by the end of the 1960s, being the UK Open University, the first to deliver distance courses using the broadcasting technology of the previous generation. These institutions did not take long to proliferate. Only one year after, Athabasca University was created in 1970, followed by FernUniversität in Germany in 1974. These institutions leveraged technological factors such as the diversification of media, and strong support from their respective governments, to earn a reputation for delivering accessible, affordable and high quality education as an alternative to studying in a traditional university (Daniel, 2018). Daniel conceptualises these three concepts - access, affordability, quality - as the so-called ‘Higher Education triangle’ (Daniel, Kanwar & Uvalić-Trumbić, 2009). The proliferation of Open Universities extended over time, with new institutions being created later on in the nineties, such as the Open University of Catalonia. That institution was created with the same lifelong learning mission as its predecessors, addressing the needs of the emerging ‘information and communication society’ and ‘knowledge society’ of the early twenty-first century, with a determined and intensive use of new information and communication technologies (Duart, Salomón & Lara, 2006).

Moore & Kearsley (2011) identified a fourth generation, which they labelled as ‘teleconferencing’. In the United States, the eighties witnessed a rapid growth of teleconferencing technologies for distance education. The affordances provided by these new communication technologies led educationalists to envision myriad opportunities for pedagogical innovation. As Garrison commented back then, “Teleconferencing technology,

and the resulting change in conceptualizing education at a distance, will help bring it back to the larger field of education where it properly belongs” (Garrison, 1990, p.23).

The transition to the next generation of distance education was accelerated by the advent of the World Wide Web. Just a few years before, the development of digital technologies was growing quickly, with computers affording the management of large textual corpora, images, video and audio (Demiray & İşman, 2001). Content in a wide variety of formats could not only be easily stored and reproduced, but also distributed, firstly in networks with the Internet, boosted then at large scale through the Web. Web-based education spread quickly, bringing ease of access to large quantities of published information. This quickly evolved with the introduction of authoring tools in the picture. Web users quickly became content publishers, initially aided by the proliferation of virtual classrooms, also called Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs), which are still today influential technological systems in universities for online learning provision, both on campus and at a distance. Authoring tools started to diversify later on, providing tools for both teachers and learners to produce a wide range of digital artefacts. To this, the power of social networking technologies completes the picture of a current distance learning generation with high potential to transform education. The extended use of this combination of technologies, together with a drive from the open education movement, is what paved the way to the irruption of MOOCs in higher education.

The distance learning generation to come involves technologies that, although they have a certain state of maturity, are still in their early infancy for pedagogical use. These are the three acronyms: VR, AR and AI (Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality and Artificial Intelligence).

The pedagogical exploitation of all the above-mentioned tools is a different story, which will be discussed in the next subsection.

2.2.4.2. Distance education from a pedagogical perspective

The previous subsection has addressed the evolution of learning technologies for distance education. This section will delve into how pedagogies have evolved over the last decades to accommodate the needs of the learning communities using new information and communication technologies, with a focus on the evolution from distance learning to online learning.

Anderson and Dron (2010) divided the evolution of learning theories in the context of ‘online’ into three stages.. The first stage was dominated by behaviourist approaches, in which learning occurs in a one-way transmission of knowledge from the content created by the

educator, to the learner, under a guided process with limited flexibility. These guidelines are set up by the expert, who not only decides what knowledge is to be acquired, but also through what process learning is going to take place.

Although such an approach coexisted in time with others involving more social interaction, it was considered the most effective because of the individualisation of the learner, and its flexibility (Holmberg, 1989). Another feature of this unidirectional approach is that it has often been considered to be highly scalable, and indeed this is why it was adopted by the first MOOC platforms, when MOOCs started to have tens and even hundreds of thousand learners (Rodriguez, 2012). Such a statement is not without controversy, as the claimed scalability of MOOCs using behaviourist pedagogy has been widely questioned. Davidson, for example, suggests that pedagogy heavily based on the transmission of content does not scale well because it has limited assessment methods, and it does not adapt to learner diversity (2012).

Anderson & Dron's second stage consisted of the incorporation of social constructivist pedagogical approaches. These were made effective with the advent of computer-mediated social interaction tools such as videoconferencing and live chats. Built on a combination of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and Piaget's developmental theory, social constructivism places context as the cornerstone of the learning process (Bandura, 1977). Learners build new knowledge over the foundations of their own existing knowledge, assisted with the scaffold of a context managed by the instructor. Such an approach demands interaction with peers, but also a great deal of dedication from the instructor, despite its non "sage on the stage" role. This is the main challenge for the scalability of MOOCs using such an approach.

Such a scalability challenge is addressed in Anderson & Dron's third generation of technology-enhanced distance education pedagogy, namely connectivism. Assuming a ubiquitous access that allows us to form dense and highly interactive networks in the Web (Castells, 1996), George Siemens and Stephen Downes theorised that knowledge is encompassed in actors such as students, teachers, educational materials and social media. The learning process consists of exploiting these networks as a pedagogical approach. Connectivism often encourages the use of communication tools external to the VLEs, where interaction takes place in open environments (Bell, 2010). Like social constructivism, connectivism demands intense activity from the instructor. The teacher neither provides knowledge, nor distributes it, but they need to be a central node in the network for a successful learning process (Kop & Hill, 2008).

2.2.4.3. Online distance education in the UK HE: the current picture

The questions posed in this thesis extend from the assumption that the UK higher education system is experiencing a significant rise in online learning programmes within its institutions. This section aims to provide grounds for this assumption by exploring the scene of online higher education in the UK from a market perspective, and outlining the main strategic moves towards online education made by UK universities, with a focus on those in the Russell Group.

About a decade ago, the UK online higher education market was dominated by the Open University, with only a small number of other HE institutions offering short online distance courses, mainly postgraduate (White et al., 2010). Back then, most British individuals considering pursuing a degree online would automatically think of the Open University. There were other British institutions offering online tuition, but in most cases these were the result of individual or departmental ventures aside from the educational strategies of these institutions. These 'cottage industries' did not seem to influence institutional strategies towards a serious bet for tuition beyond their bricks and mortar (Webster, 2017).

In the meantime, other countries had a more diversified pool of providers offering online higher education to wider audiences. The supply and demand in the US was significantly higher than that of the UK, judging from the comparison between the Sloan consortium reports of those years accounting for the US (Allen & Seaman 2006; Allen & Seaman 2007; Allen & Seaman 2008) and the HESA reports accounting for the UK (HESA, 2008). Just as an illustrative example, HESA reports that slightly over 100,000 were enrolled in distance learning programmes in 2007, most of them in the Open University. That year, Allen & Seaman report nearly four million in the US.

Later on, MOOCs came into the scene of UK higher education. The University of Edinburgh partnered with Coursera to pioneer MOOCs at a large scale with the launch of a series of MOOCs in early 2013 (BIS, 2013) to be immediately followed by the creation of the FutureLearn platform, who partner with a number of Russell Group universities to create open online courses in the UK context. Many UK universities joined the MOOC bandwagon, which coincided with the noticeable increase of credit-bearing online distance education programmes that can be appreciated today. Whether MOOCs have been the catalyst of this change is a frequently discussed argument (León, White & White, 2015).

The fact is that the dominance of the Open University as a formal online distance learning provider in the UK seems to be coming to an end, as many other universities are including credit-bearing online learning programmes in their portfolio, beyond the informal offerings of

MOOCs. Today, there is still little data available to report a significant growth of distance online student numbers in the UK higher education. There are certain indicators of a growing trend, however. One of these indicators is the current determination of UK HE providers to incorporate fully online learning programmes in their offerings (Webster, 2017).

An exploration of the current education strategies of the Russell Group universities that I recently carried out (see appendix 3 'Russell Group Online Learning Strategies') suggests that a fair proportion of these universities have finally decided to put mechanisms in place to support online learning, both at a distance and blended. Illustrative examples are those of the major London universities such as King's College, UCL, Imperial College; and Scottish Universities such as Edinburgh, Glasgow, which have invested in dedicated departments to develop distance online learning programmes.

Their strategy documents have a few commonalities in that respect: with the inclusion of online learning programmes, they aim to add flexibility and innovation to their programmes. They also aim to recruit more students and, in turn, to diversify their pool of students.

To this end, many of these universities are partnering with established private online learning providers such as Pearson, Laureate, Cambridge Education Group and FutureLearn. These providers can supply a few areas which universities have difficulties reaching: they are able to reach a wider range of potential students than universities, through their fully dedicated marketing departments. Also, they can provide expertise in learning design and learning technologies, since they have more staff recruitment flexibility, being able to quickly create teams of technologists and designers. They also own powerful tools for certification, record keeping and customer support. All these ancillary services can be easily absorbed by these providers, and many universities have found in this kind of externalisation the solution to their shortage of operational capacity to deliver online programmes.

2.2.5. Classifications of MOOCs

MOOCs can adopt many different shapes depending on the pedagogical approach on which they are based. As a result, many attempts have been made to group them into categories. Perhaps the most commonly known is that of Rodriguez (2012), who distinguished them into those within a connectivist paradigm, and those within an instructivist paradigm. The former, known as cMOOCs, were thought of as courses in which all members of the learning community interacted and contributed to the knowledge that the course would generate, with the guidance of the instructor. The latter were thought of as courses where one node, the instructor, or team of instructors, was the sole knowledge generator from which a massive learning community would learn.

The cMOOCs vs xMOOCs distinction has often been deemed as insufficient to describe the variety of pedagogical approaches with which MOOCs can be designed (Conole, 2016), and more sophisticated categorisations have been made over time. For example, Clark (2013) proposed a taxonomy of eight different types of MOOCs, although he warned it was just a start, and that these categories were not mutually exclusive :

- transferMOOCs: a traditional module converted into a MOOC
- madeMOOCs: a MOOC conceptualised from scratch, with innovative formats
- synchMOOCs: an event-driven MOOC, with start and finish dates, and deadlines
- asynchMOOCs: a self-paced, continuously open MOOC
- adaptiveMOOCs: a MOOC with automated personalisation of learning experiences
- groupMOOCs: a MOOC that relies on collaborative learning
- connectivistMOOCs: a MOOC that relies on networked learning
- miniMOOCs: a short MOOC addressing specific and few learning outcomes

In view of the multiple and complex shapes that MOOCs were adopting as a result of their massive proliferation, Conole (2014) proposed a multi-dimensional classification, offering twelve different spectra in which MOOCs could be situated:

- Openness: Most MOOCs are a combination of fully open resources and resources under licenses with different degrees of openness.
- Massiveness: This is also a wide and varied spectrum, from dozens of learners to hundreds of thousands.
- Use of multimedia: MOOCs differ massively in terms of the formats in which information is presented.
- Degree of communication: There are MOOCs that do not differ much from a textbook, and there are MOOCs in which all the activities are set around communicative actions, usually between members of the learning community, but also, quite often, with the instructors.
- Degree of collaboration: Some MOOCs require interactions with the learning community, some others are addressed at individuals with little time to interact with others. There are many others that are designed for learners with varying degrees of willingness to collaborate, supporting various degrees of collaboration.
- Learning pathway: at the lower end of the spectrum, the MOOC can only be completed in a prescribed sequence. At the higher end, the MOOC supports multiple learning pathways.
- Quality assurance: There are MOOCs that follow little to no quality assurance processes. There are others that need to pass thick quality assurance filters to be

released. Those filters are often set by the platform providers, although certain HEIs have their own quality assurance processes. When both the platform and the university enforce these processes, releasing a MOOC can be challenging for academics.

- Certification: There is also a wide spectrum in that respect, especially nowadays with the introduction of credit-bearing MOOCs in the UK (The Guardian, 2016). Most MOOCs offer a means to demonstrate the effort made by the learner in one way or another, although with varying degrees of endorsement.
- Formality: This dimension is tied with the certification dimension. MOOCs tend to lie on the lower end of the formality spectrum, most of them being optional and informal. The inclusion of MOOCs in formal learning contexts such as HE modules, however, can move certain MOOCs to the higher end.
- Autonomy: Depending on the amount and nature of support that a MOOC can offer, it will demand more or less autonomy from the learner.
- Diversity: There is a wide range of diversity of learning communities that MOOCs can address. Some MOOCs target highly diverse audiences, who complete the course for highly diverse purposes. Some other MOOCs target highly specific audiences at highly specific levels, sometimes with specific prerequisites.

In summary, MOOCs are highly diverse in many different dimensions. So much so that patterns are very difficult to establish. Studying phenomena derived from MOOCs - as in this thesis - should take the existence of different types of MOOCs with due caution. This is why this thesis will not take into account the types of MOOCs on which the participants were working, apart from providing a certain degree of commentary to the pedagogical tradition of the teams of academics studied in the thesis. In all cases for this thesis, therefore, the type of MOOC will be irrelevant.

2.3. Higher education transformation

Another key concept within the scope of this thesis is that of higher education transformation. Universities in the UK have been facing unprecedented challenges the last few years. Tuition fees have experienced a dramatic increase, to nearly threefold in 2012, and government funding for tuition has decreased significantly (BBC News, 2011). This has provoked a shift in students' attitudes, who have become more demanding customers (Tomlinson, 2014), leading universities to the creation of policies where student support, accessibility and transparency have become a priority.

The Higher Education sector has commercialised, bringing private companies to contribute with customer satisfaction expertise. This is especially evident when universities incorporate online learning programmes, hiring the services of providers such as Pearson, Cambridge Education Group, and Laureate, to assist the student support and administration, from enrolment to certificate issuing.

Another factor is that of the expansion and internationalisation of UK universities, who have international students and non-residential learners as a significant element of their business models. All these circumstances have forced universities to seek for a balance between offering the best quality, widening access, and optimising costs, as Daniel anticipated (2009). For this, innovative approaches are required, and MOOCs are contributing to it. In this subsection, two important aspects of educational innovation for transformation through MOOCs are discussed here: networked learning and open education.

2.3.1. The role of MOOCs in networked learning

In Section 2.1.3 "The role of competencies in digital education transformation", networked practices were presented as a core element for transformative practices. Since the advent of the Web, society has evolved into a "networked society" (Castells, 1996), where network interactions have intensified in all domains of social activity, including education. Early MOOCs are in fact a manifestation of networked learning principles (Downes, 2008), where connectivism comes to its full fruition as a learning theory.

Connectivism is a learning theory whereby the affordances of the Web enable knowledge to reside in networks of people and online resources (Siemens, 2005). The enactment of this theory into connectivist MOOCs is the epitome of networked learning, but networked learning instances can be found in MOOCs other than cMOOCs. For example, MOOCs deemed as instructivist MOOCs, also known as xMOOCs, can contain discussion forums within which networked interactions can take place within the learning community. In fact,

these networked interactions can be stimulated with mentor interventions (León, White & White, 2015).

It could therefore be argued that any type of MOOC can lead to networked learning experiences, when implemented purposefully. If networked learning is a core element of education transformation, MOOCs of any kind can contribute as transformational agents in that respect. Later on in this thesis, in the findings section, instances of networked learning will be shown and discussed (see subsections 4.2.2 'Online communication', and subsection 4.3.3. 'Interacting with the community')

2.3.2. MOOCs and open education

MOOCs are open courses. Their existence can be contextualised in the open education movement, which in turn could be framed within a wider open movement in the Web, including open source and open access (Hylén, 2006). The open movement in higher education has had an impact beyond free access to resources. To a certain extent and in certain domains, it has had an important role in HE transformation, by contributing to the renegotiation of the role of the teacher, the boundaries between formal and informal learning, and the online/face-to-face delivery (Conole & Brown, 2018)

The advent of MOOCs can be better understood with the previous existence of Open Educational Resources (OERs). Their origins are situated in a conference hosted by UNESCO in 2002 with the aim of providing education to countries with difficulties accessing proprietary educational content (Smith, 2006). OERs proliferated quickly, but they did not revolutionise higher education as expected, for several reasons:

They did not leverage the affordances of web 2.0 technologies. Although many of them had rich interactive elements, such interaction would occur between the resource and the user, and not so much between users using the same resource. Such interaction between learners is one of the fundamental features that learning resources must have in order to be in line with current pedagogical theories such as constructivism (Ulrich et. al., 2008) and connectivism (Siemens, 2005). Downes (2005) noted that Web 2.0 could enable communities of practice, and OERs lack the capacity to become part of such communities.

Another reason for their limited impact is that they were not based on a substantive body of research about the pedagogical implications of accessing information without any constraints. As Knox suggests, "proponents of OER have focused disproportionately on the removal of barriers to accessing educational content, and studies into the activities and competences of self-direction are needed." (2013, p. 830).

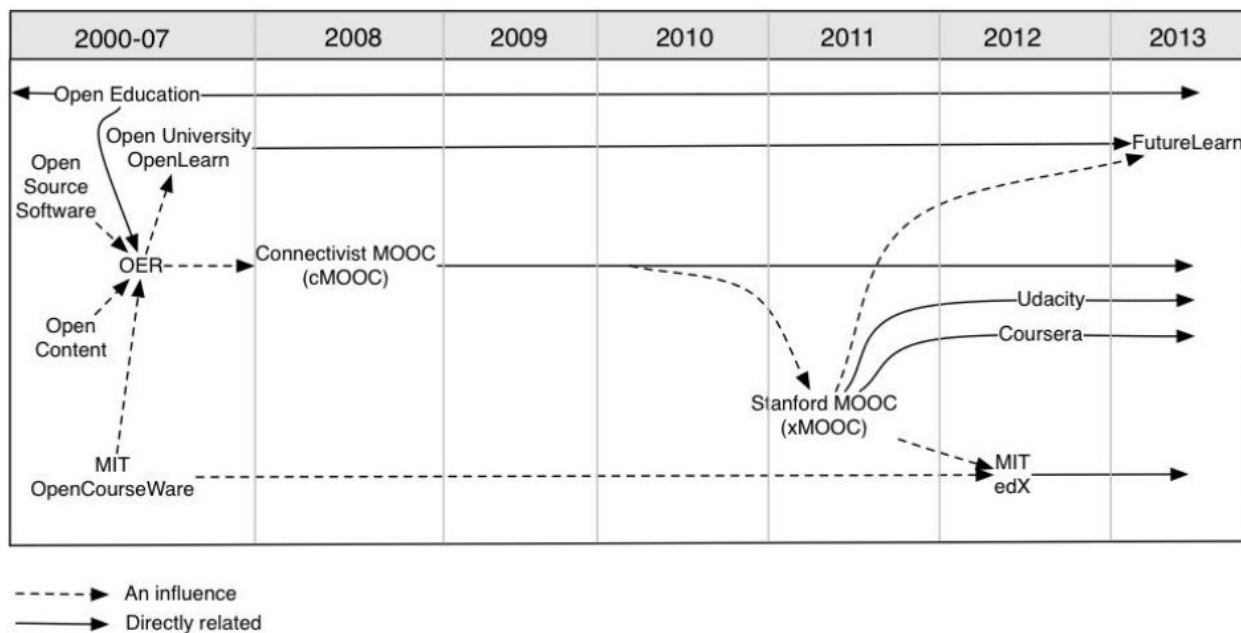


Figure 2.8. Evolution of Open Online Education (Yuan & Powell, 2013)

The limitations of OERs presented above provoked the emergence of open education forms that would allow more participation from the learning communities. These new forms of open education are known as MOOCs, which started with connectivism-inspired initiatives in 2008, and were boosted with platform-led courses in 2012 (see figure 2.8 in Yuan & Powell 2013, p.6)

2.4. Theoretical framework

This thesis is the product of a combination of studies that have drawn from different learning and socio-technical theories. This section will discuss the philosophical assumptions of this project, followed by the theoretical underpinnings within both the individual studies and the thesis have been framed.

2.4.1. Ontology, epistemology, axiology

All these studies are qualitative. As such, a set of ontological, epistemological and axiological assumptions have been made to explore both participants' perceptions and the corpus of journalistic literature in HE specialised magazines from which the findings have been drawn, as recommended in Cresswell et al. (2007).

Ontologically, it has been assumed that reality is subjective and highly context dependent, as Scotland (2012) suggests. Participants perceived the development of their competencies in many different ways, in many cases with totally different opinions and experiences. This is why the findings will portray such diversity, where different perspectives from participants will be reproduced when discussing the same themes.

Epistemologically, a certain degree of closeness between myself (the researcher) and the phenomenon was also assumed. I worked with one subset of the participants (i.e. some of the early career academics in the focus group study), and I had met several other participants in other studies, although I had not worked closely with them. That does not situate me as a complete "insider", although my job as a learning designer for online learning in a higher education institution shares a great deal in common with the practices that the participants performed in their jobs, either as learning developers or as academics involved in MOOCs. I have come across many challenges derived from the transformative nature of the space in which my practice is framed, and I have developed many skills and competencies as a result. I assume this might also be the case for the participants. Drawing from Guba & Lincoln (1988), therefore, the 'objective separatedness' between myself and the participants was minimised when carrying out the studies. Also, I adopted an interpretive phenomenological epistemological orientation, discussed in more depth in subsection 4.3 'Epistemological orientation'.

This thesis also brings with it many axiological assumptions, as is common in most qualitative studies (Denzin, 1989). That is, I do believe in the value of MOOCs as agents of education transformation, especially in the different ways they can enhance the competencies of those who teach through them. Certain bias can therefore be expected in

the value-laden discussions of the findings, derived from both my practice and research, closely related to MOOCs.

2.4.2. Theoretical underpinning

The theoretical approach on which this thesis is based is not the same as the one used in the studies, although they have several commonalities. This thesis draws on Engelstrom's Activity Theory (1999). The studies draw on Orlikowski's theory of technology in organisations. Both theories have change and transformation as their core element. The main difference is that Orlikowski's focus is the culture in the organisations, whereas Activity Theory spreads the transformation phenomenon in different equally weighted foci, which allows competencies to be drawn on more comfortably, and from a wider range of angles.

The following subsection is a brief overview of Orlikowski's theory of technology in organisations, as it deserves certain discussion despite not being the main theoretical framework for this thesis.

2.4.3. Orlikowski's theory of technology in organisations

The main theoretical influence for these studies was that of Orlikowski's work on organisational theory (Orlikowski 2000; 2001). This theory is especially relevant to studies 3 and 4 with experienced academics (see table 3.1), as it informed the design of the studies, from their research questions to the way the questions to the participants were formulated. Orlikowski's theory suggests that introducing technological innovations in organisations, in this case, MOOCs in universities, can produce a variety of outcomes with three different levels of transformation. They can maintain the established practices, and even reinforce them, maintaining a 'social inertia' in which there is little organisational change. For example, a given university introduces MOOCs; academics record their lessons on campus and upload them to the platform, in the same sequence as they do in their on-campus modules; they add multiple choice questions that they have already been using in the on-campus exams. In this hypothetical case, nothing has changed. There hasn't been any innovation in their practice, and the structure of the university also remains the same: there might be some more learners accessing the open content, and perhaps a growth in the recruitment as a result of the marketing effects of the MOOCs, but in essence, the practices and the organisational structure remains the same.

In the next level, which Orlikowski names 'application' (Orlikowski, 2001) technologies can create new ways of practising the profession. For example, in the case of MOOCs in

universities, we could see academics ‘applying’ what they have learned when developing learning materials with MOOCs, bringing it back to their on-campus modules.

The third and deepest level of enactment is that of ‘social change’. That is, structural alterations occur in organisations as a result of the introduction of new technologies. This has been deemed as unlikely to happen so far, mainly due to academics’ resistance to change. From an Activity Theory perspective, for example, Blin & Munro (2008) found little evidence to demonstrate significant transformations in the organisational structures of HEIs as a result of technological innovations such as the popularisation of Virtual Learning Environments. Blin & Munro (ibid) analysed the impact of the introduction of Moodle in their university not only did not shift the dominant paradigm of traditional lectures and tutorials, but also did not prompt any fundamental rethink of learning and teaching.

As discussed in this and the previous subsection, Orlikowski’s theory of technology in organisations fulfilled the purposes of several of the studies that comprise elements of this thesis. Its institutionally focussed lens was not deemed sufficient to draw a picture in which individuals’ development of competencies was sufficiently represented. Activity Theory was therefore adopted to build this thesis as a whole. The following subsections delve into this new theoretical approach.

2.4.4. Activity theory

2.4.4.1. Definition and history

Activity Theory (AT) can be defined as “a conceptual framework based on the idea that activity is primary, that doing precedes thinking, that goals, images, cognitive models, intentions, and abstract notions like “definition” and “determinant” grow out of people doing things” (Morf & Weber, 2000, p.81).

The origins of AT can be traced back to a combination of German philosophy (Kant, Hegel, Marks and Engels), evolving into Vygotsky’s and Leont’ev’s work in the field of Soviet psychology in the early and mid twentieth century (Engeström, 1999). This theoretical approach was developed as an alternative to the contemporary Western behaviourist and psychoanalytical approaches to education. In the 1980s, Activity Theory transcended the Soviet domain to be adopted in the West, with Engeström being one of its first and main proponents (Wilson, 2006). Engeström not only popularised AT in the Western cultural studies domain, but also adapted the model, expanding it from the individual to the collective sphere. The Soviet approach consider subjects, mediational tools, and motivations, as the

elements of a given outcome. Engeström added a layer of collective elements, namely rules, community and division of labour (Edwards, 2010).

It did not take long for this approach to be applied in other fields of research such as that of human-computer interaction (*ibid.*), mainly due to the applicability of its key elements, namely motivation, goal, activity, tools object, outcomes, rules, community, and division of labour. The introduction of MOOCs in higher education systems and the effect of this on the development of competencies is a complex phenomenon with diverse stakeholders, tools and motivations that can be mapped into the conceptual framework of Activity Theory, as will be discussed in the subsequent subsections.

2.4.4.2. Activity theory in Technology Enhanced Learning settings

One of the main argument of this thesis is that learning takes place in professional settings (HEIs) as a result of the introduction of a new technology (MOOCs). Professional development instances can be noticed when professionals - in this case academics - carry out their practices with a new technology. Activity theory has provided a valid framework to study this kind of multi-agent phenomena in workplace settings (Edwards, 2010).

For example, Bourke Mentis & O'Neill (2013) used Activity Theory to analyse the reactions of teachers when trained to use a new assessment tool. Activity Theory enabled these researchers to achieve a nuanced understanding of the ways in which teachers were reacting to the tool, taking it further than more simplistic approaches that simply label subjects (teachers in this case) as resistant to change.

Another example is the analysis of Murphy & Rodríguez-Manzanares (2008), who delved into the Activity Theory principle of contradictions to guide educational technology research. This principle has to do with the tensions generated between traditional and new practices. It usually takes place when practitioners walk out of their comfort zones when changing from practices to which they are used to, to practices new to them. By delving into this principle, Murphy & Rodríguez-Manzanares (*ibid*) argue that the process of education transformation can be better understood, especially when it comes to the disparity between the expectations of different stakeholders towards a given artefact, and their actual use by the practitioners, including its outcome.

Scanlon and Isroff (2005) successfully adapted Engeström's Activity Theory model to the use of learning technologies in the higher education domain. Scanlon and Isroff conceptualised the "Tool" element as the learning technologies. The subjects were the students, and the objects were the task or the learning situation. The desired outcome was

the enhancement of the students' learning. The rules were appropriate ethical behaviour. The context was established through the community element, which was conceptualised as the university. Finally, the division of labour element was an identification of who holds the control, that is, who is able to decide in each domain (what tool is chosen, what tasks are allocated, what kind of assessments are set, etc.). Figure 2.9 represents Scanlon's & Isroff's adaptation to Activity Theory for the use of learning technologies in higher education contexts.

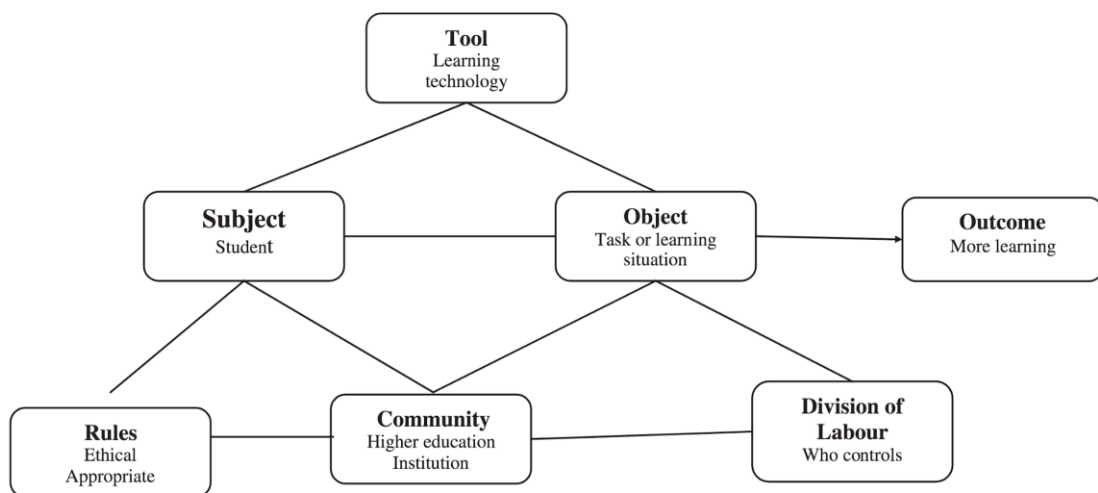


Figure 2.9. Adaptation of AT for learning technologies (Scanlon & Isroff, 2005)

Scanlon & Isroff adapted the model, respecting the triangular visual representation of it. This triangular representation has its origin in Vigotsky's concept of mediation, whereby three mediational concepts (tools, subjects and outcomes) were represented in a triangle (Engeström, 1999). Some limitations have also been suggested in the application of Activity Theory in professional settings. For example, Yamagata & Lynch (2007) recognised that the results of a study such as this thesis, which involves different actors and interactions, are highly context specific; so much so that the interaction triangle used to represent AT may not be able fully to reflect the interactions occurring in such specific contexts.

2.4.4.3. Activity Theory and this thesis

As mentioned in the previous section, this thesis has been conceptualised within the Activity Theory theoretical framework. The definitions of the different elements of Activity Theory were adapted for the purposes of this study. Many of the elements coincide with those of other adaptations of this theory, but some others have not been previously considered in the same way in related studies. For example, Scanlon and Isroff's concepts of community and tools (2005) coincide with those of this thesis, represented in figure 2.10. The subject, the object, and the outcomes, however, are different actors to those of Scanlon and Isroff.

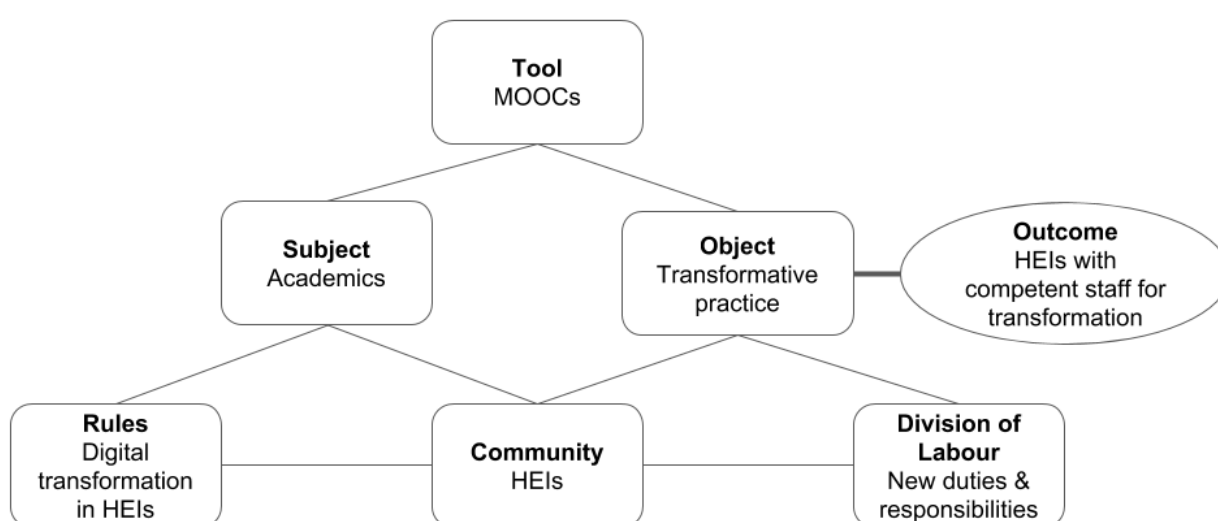


Figure 2.10. Adaptation of AT for this thesis

Each of the elements of the adaptation of AT for this thesis are described below:

- **Tool:** The 'Tool' element is conceptualised here as MOOCs. This conceptualisation was established after considering MOOCs as tools for experimentation in education innovation. This consideration was achieved after a systematic review of journalistic accounts of the role of MOOCs in HEIs (León, White & White, 2015). That study concluded that the role of MOOCs in HEIs started mainly as reputation enhancers, evolving towards testing grounds for education innovation, especially in terms of online distance education, and blended learning approaches within the campus.
- **Subject:** The 'subjects' in this conceptualisation are academics with teaching responsibilities. The participants of this study are academics, and the findings are

based on their views, their perspectives, and their insights around the introduction of MOOCs in their practices. The allocation of academics as subjects was decided based on the research gaps identified in literature reviews such as that of Liyanagunawardena, Adams & Williams (2013), Haggard et al. (2013), and Yousef et al. (2014), discussed in more detail in subsection 2.2.2. 'Published MOOC Literature Reviews'.

- **Object:** Under this adaptation of the AT framework, the object is transformative practice. This conceptualisation is based on Hoban's perspective of CPD for education transformation (Hoban, 2002). For Hoban, professional development can, and should, be used as a means for transformation in education. By participating in the production of MOOCs, academics achieve an object, namely transformational practices. Rather than planned in formal Continuous Professional Development programmes, this object is achieved informally through new interactions as a result of new 'divisions of labour'. That in turn results in the acquisition of competencies through informal means, which Myers (2015) refers to as "vicarious learning", a term coined by Bandura (1962) to refer to this informal learning process.
- **Outcome:** By using MOOCs as tools, academics come across new challenges, which provide opportunities to achieve new digital capabilities, as well as new teaching competencies. Repeated occurrences of this process can contribute to an incremental cascading of competencies within the community - in this case HEIs - which can lead to a collective preparedness to address the transformational demands that higher education faces.
- **Rules:** 'Rules' are conceptualised here as the use of digital technologies to support learning in HEIs. This conceptualisation is perhaps the most distant to other conceptualisations of rules in adaptations of AT for Higher Education and Learning Technologies, and it merits a longer discussion than for the elements above.

The reason for this allocation is that, after a systematic review of the education strategies of Russell Group universities (see subsection 2.2.4.3 'Online Distance Education in the UK HE: the current picture' and Appendix 3 'Russell Group Online Learning Strategies'), it was observed that many universities were implementing procedures by which the use of learning technologies was encouraged, if not prescribed.

A representative example is that of the UCL, which has established a “Blended Learning Baseline” (UCL, 2016), setting out the minimum expectations for the use of e-learning technologies in all modules and programmes across the institution.

Other universities have also developed policies for Online Distance Learning, such as the University of Edinburgh (2015). This policy establishes a tight alignment between the quality standards applied to the Online Distance modules and those of the rest of the university’s modules. This university also states an aspiration for all educators to become digital educators, aiming to get them CMALT certified. (CMALT is the Certified Membership of the Association for Learning Technology.

Consultancy reports such as that of PwC (2015) corroborate this tendency. This report states that universities in the UK must be aware that digital transformation in the universities transcends the IT departments, and affects every activity within the institution. It also recommends to link all digital activity to the institutions’ strategies, and invest in communities around willing and capable digital innovators.

It can be safely assumed, therefore, that harnessing digital technologies has become a ‘rule’ that should be abided.

- **Community:** In Activity Theory, Community stands for all the different actors and groups of actors in the system to be studied. In the case of this thesis, the community has been conceptualised as the staff in higher education institutions, both academic and professional services staff. The ‘community’ element should be differentiated to that of ‘subjects’. Subjects are those from whom the perspectives are studied; but these subjects operate in a wider context, in a community that comprises other groups such as students, senior decision makers and support staff.
- **Division of labour:** Another important element of this adaptation to Activity Theory is that of division of labour. The introduction of MOOCs in universities has brought a set of consequences in the roles of academics and support staff such as learning designers and media producers. Several explorations have been carried out into the relationship between MOOCs, educators and support staff (Bayne & Ross, 2014; Najafi et al. 2015), and these have tended to an appreciation from academics of the opportunities resulting from collaboration with learning designers.

A deeper exploration of the influence of MOOCs in the division of labour phenomenon was carried out by White & White (2016). Drawing on a combination of the Socio-Technical Interaction Networks theory (Kling, McKim & King, 2003) and

Whitchurch's concept of the 'third space activity in HEIs (2008), White and White mapped the roles, duties and responsibilities of a number of universities in relation to the production of MOOCs, represented in figure 2.11. As the figure shows, learning designers act as hubs in MOOC development.

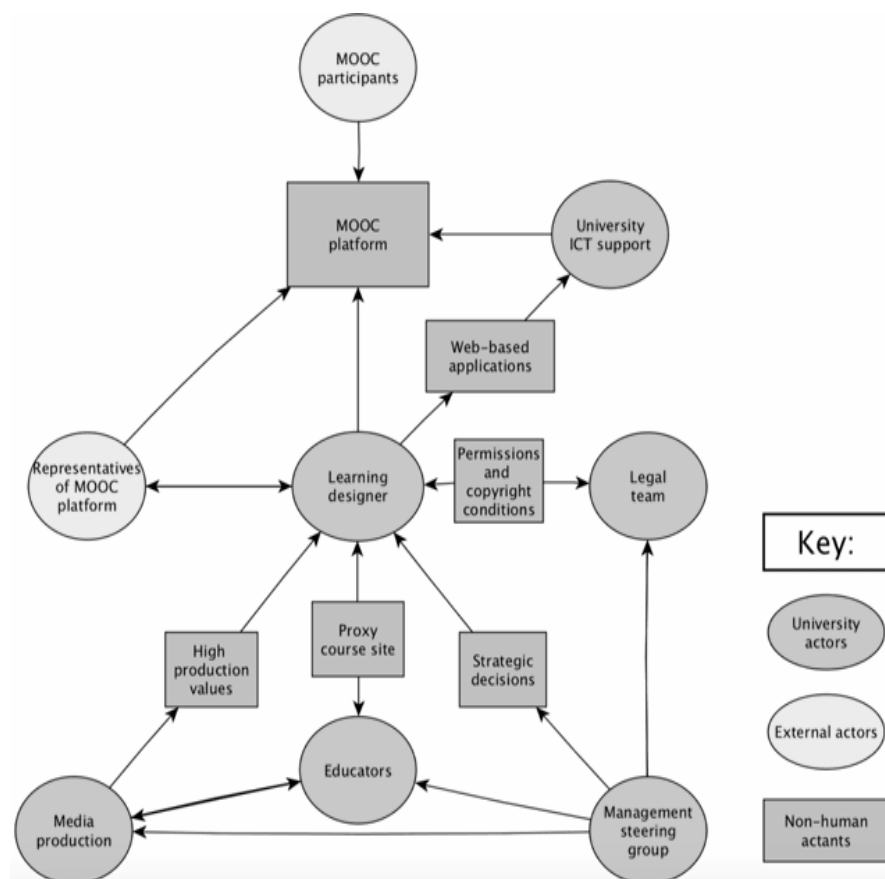


Figure 2.11: Socio-Technical Interaction Network of MOOCs in HEIs (White & White, 2016)

In this mapping, the study found that academics perceive a reduction of their influence on how MOOCs are structured and presented, in comparison to the influence they can exert on on-campus modules.

This study also points out that the mapping shown in figure 2.11 is just a snapshot in a specific setting at a specific time, and that the division of labour evolves quickly as a result both of the influence of core actors (learning designers, educators) and that of peripheral actors (especially the management steering group).

As mentioned above, the division of labour element is particularly relevant to this thesis because duties and responsibilities are closely tied with the competencies needed to carry out new tasks, and the competencies developed as a result of carrying out such tasks.

2.5. Conclusion

This chapter has explored the concept of competencies within professional settings in the Higher Education industry. By describing the state of the art of MOOCs and their potentially transformative role in HEIs, Activity Theory has been introduced as a means to represent the interactions that take place between these different human and non-human actors (MOOCs, HEIs, academics). These interactions have outcomes on the human actors, mainly in the form of learning embedded in their practice. That is, those involved in MOOCs acquire competencies for engaging in transformative practices. These interactions also have outcomes on the non-human actors, mainly in the form of digital transformation. That is, HEIs transform the way they provide education by leveraging the affordances of digital and networked technologies.

3. Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter is a detailed description of the ensemble of methods that were used in the studies that form this thesis. The chapter contains the following subsections:

- Firstly, the research questions are introduced, together with a discussion on how and why they were formulated.
- Secondly, the epistemological orientation of the project is described. This section states the validity of the insights gathered with this qualitative methodology.
- Thirdly, a comprehensive description of the data collection processes for this thesis is provided.
- The fourth subsection explains how this data was analysed, with an emphasis on the Template Analysis method for qualitative data analysis.
- Finally, the limitations of this methodology are discussed.

3.2. Research questions

As stated in the first chapter, this thesis has been developed in different stages, each of which was considered as a study in its own right. All these studies had several common elements, however: MOOCs were the topic of study, academics were the subjects, HEIs were the environments, and most importantly, there was an implicit, overarching question:

“How does producing and delivering MOOCs enhance HE academics’ competencies in digital and online environments?”

The above question is wide. The studies contained more specific questions, in response to the demands of the projects, and the research interests of the parties who collaborated in them. For example, study 1 (desk study) and study 3 (HE academics with teaching experience) placed a certain emphasis on the relationship between academics and their institution. Studies 2, 4 and 5 placed more emphasis on professional development and digital/online teaching skills. For the purpose of this thesis, all questions from all studies were synthesised into a new set of research questions. The starting point of this synthesis was the Activity Theory theoretical foundations of the thesis. The process will be described in the next subsection. The resulting set of research questions is as follows:

- Q1 What competencies do academics develop as a result of their involvement in the production and delivery of MOOCs?
 - How do these competencies contribute to transformation in digital practice?
 - How does the massiveness and openness of MOOCs influence their teaching practices, both online and on-campus?
- Q2 How do academics respond to the digital transformation demands of HEIs as a result of being involved in MOOCs?
 - What kinds of operational and workload concerns arise for academics involved in MOOCs, in relation to wider online/digital learning tasks?
 - What kinds of new work dynamics and relationships arise when academics are involved in MOOCs and other forms of digital/online learning?
- Q3 What opportunities can MOOCs bring to HEIs for a digitally competent workforce?
 - How can the teaching quality of HEIs benefit from the adoption of MOOCs in their portfolio?
 - How can the digital preparedness of HEIs benefit from the adoption of MOOCs in their portfolio?

3.3. Epistemological orientation

Epistemologically, I assumed a certain closeness with the phenomena that I was observing. I adopted an interpretive phenomenological approach to provide an account of the findings. This subsection explains this approach with detail.

This thesis is composed of studies in which a variety of methods were used to gather and analyse the data (see figure 3.1): focus groups, interviews and document analysis data collection instruments have been used to gather a corpus of data that was analysed through content analysis in some instances, and thematic template analysis in other instances. All these methods have a common epistemological approach: the findings have been jointly constructed by the participants and myself, the researcher, through guided conversation. Far from the positivist approach of a disengaged observer, these findings have been presented as my own interpretation of the phenomena that have been discussed with the participants. My own experience as a practitioner in MOOCs and educational development has been

taken into account, and a conscious effort has been made to minimise bias and preconceptions throughout all the studies of this thesis, as recommended in Hatch (2002). The approach adopted could be labelled as Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), which is commonly used in educational settings (Smith, 2004)

Steward & Shamdasani (2014) discuss two major epistemological approaches to conducting qualitative research. These two approaches could be placed in a continuum with two extremes. At one extreme there is the social constructivist approach, at the other extreme there is the interpretive phenomenological approach. Social constructivism is often used in focus groups, since it draws the attention to the different ways in which groups construct the meanings within the topic of discussion. The main account of the reality does not come from the actual statements of the participants, but from how participants have negotiated and achieved the meaning of what they are discussing. Another factor that defines reality is the context in which the conversation is taking place. In this regard, the responses to the research questions posed by the researcher do not emerge from the individuals, but from the narrative that has been collectively constructed in a specific setting, either in a group conversation, or in a dyadic conversation between an interviewer and an interviewee. Although social constructivism does not represent the entirety of the epistemological approach adopted in this thesis, certain elements of it were used to make sense of the narratives that groups of participants were constructing. Two of the five studies that constitute this thesis involved participants set in groups. A study with early career academics - more details will be provided later on in this section - involved focus groups. As it turned out, the focus of attention there was not the co-construction of meanings by the groups, since responses were isolated and largely associated to individuals. Nonetheless, it was inevitable that certain constructions of meanings could be perceived and documented, as many negotiations took place in the sessions. The data collection tool of another of the studies, referred to from now on as the 'world cafe' study - the method of which will also be discussed later on in the section - also had many elements of social constructivism.

Participants had to work in groups to provide a negotiated answer to the questions posed. The individuals were assigned roles in the group so that each of the answers were forcibly co-constructed. Also, the researcher had an important role in co-constructing the narratives and their meanings, not only by eliciting them but also by negotiating what the final version of the story would look like.

At the other extreme of the Stewart & Shamdasani's (2014) proposed epistemological continuum there is the above-mentioned IPA, which is described in more detail in the next subsection.

3.3.1. IPA in this thesis

IPA could be described as the “systematic exploration of personal experience” (Tomkins, 2017). This thesis is the result of the systematic exploration of my personal experience with MOOCs, while observing how working with this tool stimulates abilities that academics at all levels had not developed to their full potential.

3.4. Rationale

3.4.1. A modular triangulation approach

The research project leading to this thesis was carried out using a modular approach. That is, the project was undertaken in five different stages: a desk study, a focus group study with early career academics, a one-day event with professionals and academics involved in MOOCs in a HEI, a set of interviews with experienced academics, and a set of interviews with expert educationalists. Most of these stages constituted stand-alone modules that have been published in a variety of journals and conference proceedings, detailed in the “relevant publications” section of this thesis. Only the last of these modules has not been published yet; that is, the interviews with expert educationalists.

Although these modules were stand-alone, the findings of each of them informed the interview questions of the following. For example, findings in interviews with experienced academics revealed that a wide variety of competencies were developed. This variety led to the decision to use established frameworks such as the UKPSF and Jisc frameworks so as to cover it.

The findings from the second, third and fourth study were combined with the findings of the desk study, to create the final template for this thesis.

The variety of methods with which the data was obtained led to a triangulation process that allowed the themes discussed from different dimensions to be captured. Figure 3.1 illustrates this triangulation process.

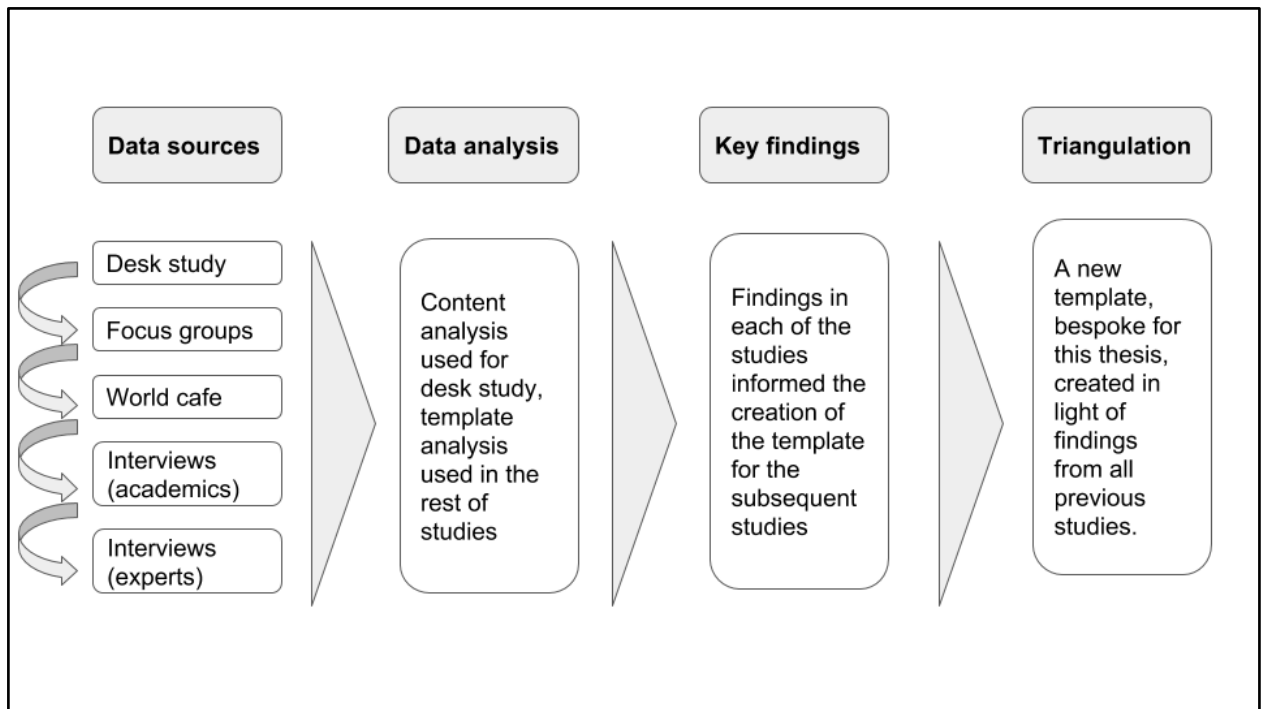


Figure 3.1 Triangulation process for the data analysis of this thesis

3.5. Data collection

3.5.1. Participants

As specified in the introduction, the aim of the whole project was to understand the usefulness of MOOCs from the academics' perspective. Participants with different degrees of expertise were investigated in the different studies. These were grouped into early career academics, experienced academics (mainly lecturers and professors), and experts in educational development. Table 3.1 summarises the numbers of participants in each of the studies that comprise this thesis:

Table 3.1. Studies of this thesis

Study	Description	No. of participants
1: Desk study	Analysis of journalistic articles	0
2: Early academics	Focus groups with PhD students working as mentors in MOOCs.	19

3: World cafe	Academics and learning technology professionals in a UK university, brought together in a one-day event	34
4: Experienced academics	One-to-one interviews with lecturers and professors (and two teaching assistants) in a Spanish university	10
5: Experts	One-to-one interviews with high-profile experts in education technologies in HE	8

3.5.1.1. Participants vs subjects

The participants were also the subjects of study, although in the fourth study the participants were asked to talk about others, as well as about themselves.

3.5.1.2. Study 1: desk study

The desk study had no participants. Most of the data was collected from specialist journalists' accounts about the MOOC phenomenon in HEIs globally, especially in the UK, the US and Australia. The main source of articles were the Times Higher Education magazine, the Chronicle of Higher Education and Inside Higher Education. These three magazines have a vast number of articles about MOOCs, and the information contained in them was considered to be a way to access to access fresh, current and topical stories around the MOOC phenomenon.

3.5.1.3. Study 2: early career academics

There were nineteen participants in this second study. They were early career academics, all PhD students within three different disciplines: Web Science, Archaeology and Oceanography. All of them participated in the capacity of MOOC facilitators. The participants were divided into four groups of four to six members, following the advice of Krueger & Kasey (2009), who suggest that groups of around five participants are ideal for fostering comfort and confidence. This is especially the case when participants are highly familiar with the discussion topic. Four sessions were considered sufficient, in line with Morgan's suggestion (1997) that three to six interviews are an acceptable range. Exceeding this number of iterations would most likely have led to data saturation, as very few new ideas were emerging in the last session, and many of them were already familiar to the researcher after the three previous sessions.

Table 3.2 outlines the four groups of participants, with short descriptions of their profiles and their motivations for participating in MOOC production and delivery:

Table 3.2. Participant profiles in study with ECAs

Gr.	N.	Profile
1	1	<p>PhD student in Web Science. Background in philosophy. Has never taught before in any setting. Interested in mentoring for research purposes rather than pursuing a teaching career.</p> <p>Mentored the Web Science MOOC mainly because he wrote part of the academic content of that course.</p> <p>Mentored the Web Science MOOC mainly because he wrote part of the academic content of that course (on e-democracy), and wanted to know how learners react to it.</p>
	2	PhD student in Web Science. Former engineer and IT teacher in secondary schools. The most experienced teacher in this groups of early career academics.
	3	PhD student in Web Science. From Saudi Arabia. Has some HE teaching experience back in their country of origin as a junior teaching assistant.
	4	<p>PhD student in Web Science. Has a background in law. Has recent HE teaching experience as a junior demonstrator.</p> <p>Mentored the Web Science MOOC mainly because he wrote part of the academic content of that course, and wanted to know how learners react to it.</p>
	5	PhD student in Web Science. From Syria. Has some teaching experience in a university of their country of origin.
2	1	<p>PhD student in Web Science. Just finished a degree in Psychology. Little teaching experience, has worked as a demonstrator.</p> <p>Mentored the Web Science MOOC.</p>
	2	<p>PhD student in Web Science. Just finished a degree in psychology. No teaching experience.</p> <p>Mentored the Web Science MOOC.</p>
	3	PhD student in Web Science. Background in Computer Science. Averse to social constructivism, much keener on behaviourist approaches. No teaching

		<p>experience, but fair awareness in different pedagogical approaches.</p> <p>Mentored the Web Science MOOC mainly because he wrote part of the academic content of that course (on cyber security and botnets), and wanted to know how learners react to it.</p>
	4	<p>PhD student in Web Science. Background in Computer Science.</p> <p>Mentored the Web Science MOOC mainly because he wrote part of the academic content of that course (on cryptocurrencies and cyber crime), and wanted to know how learners react to it. No teaching experience</p>
3	1	PhD student in Archaeology. Mentored in the Portus and Ancient Rome MOOC. Translated the whole course into Italian. Interested in bringing her research topic to large audiences, especially in Italy. No teaching experience.
	2	PhD student in Archaeology. Mentored in the Portus and Ancient Rome MOOC. One year of HE teaching experience as a teaching fellow. Interested in the MOOC for teaching innovation.
	3	PhD student in Archaeology. Mentored in the Portus and Ancient Rome MOOC. Little teaching experience as a demonstrator. Contributed to the MOOC content. Interested in how learners engage with her content.
	4	PhD student in Archaeology. Mentored in the Portus and Ancient Rome MOOC. No teaching experience. Did so because she was after teaching experience.
	5	PhD student in Archaeology. Mentored in the Portus and Ancient Rome MOOC. Reasonable teaching experience, three years as a teaching assistant/teaching fellow. Highly interested in networked learning and learning technologies.
4	1	PhD student in Oceanography. No teaching experience. Interested in participating in the MOOC for outreach and research dissemination purposes.
	2	Same as above
	3	PhD student in Oceanography. No teaching experience. Interested in participating in the MOOC for outreach and research dissemination purposes. Aiming to pursue an academic career with teaching duties. MOOC for interacting with learners.
	4	PhD student in Oceanography. No teaching experience. Interested in participating in the MOOC for outreach and research dissemination purposes.

	5	Same as above
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3.5.1.4. Study 3: World Cafe: a combination of professionals and academics

In this study, 34 staff members with different levels of seniority were involved in a one-day facilitated event. Most of the staff members were academics who were involved in the production of MOOCs, but there were also librarians, learning designers, administrators, marketing officers, members from the legal services of the university, and a partnership manager from the MOOC platform in which the courses were hosted. The following table breaks down the roles of these participants, and how many there were:

3.5.1.4.0.2. Table 3.3. Participants breakdown in the World Cafe study

Institutional role	Role in the MOOC programme	Number
Professors	Lead educators (lead MOOC content production)	5
Lecturers	Lead educators (lead MOOC content production)	3
Lecturers	Secondary educators (contribute to content)	9
Learning designers	Exclusively dedicated to the MOOC programme	2
Learning designers	Partially dedicated to the MOOC programme (in charge of one, or two MOOCs)	3
Librarians	Exclusively dedicated to the MOOC programme, in charge of asset management	1
Multimedia producers	Partially dedicated to the MOOC programme	2
Legal services	Partially dedicated to the MOOC programme, in charge of contracts with external providers such as the platform and copyright management	2
Platform representative	Platform partnership manager. They attended the event representing the platform	1
MOOC mentors	Teaching fellows and researchers involved in delivering the MOOCs	5
Marketing officer	Partially dedicated to the MOOC programme, in charge of the marketing operations.	1

3.5.1.5. Study 4: academics involved in MOOCs

The participants of this study were academics in a Spanish university. I collaborated with this institution in two MOOC-related research projects. The interviews were carried out in that institution during a research visit. Most of the academics were professors who led the content production of the courses. They were all highly interested in the MOOC phenomenon and eager to participate in the study. They were also very keen to share their experience as to how they developed new competencies as a result of their involvement in MOOCs. Table 3.4 provides a brief description of their profiles.

Table 3.4. Participant profiles of the study with experienced academics

Participant	Profile
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1	Professor in Law with over 40 years of experience in Higher Education. Recently involved in a project of law and food security, and they developed a MOOC in that topic for dissemination purposes. New to online teaching but has become an enthusiast of online learning after doing the MOOC, especially when comparing it to on-campus teaching.
2	Lecturer in Law, involved in the same MOOC as above. With little prior experience in online and blended learning has pursued the online learning delivery further, developing SPOCs.
3	Senior lecturer in Civil Law. Experienced in the use of learning technologies and blended learning, especially through VLEs. Has got her own website, and is active in social media for education purposes. Lead educator in a Civil Law MOOC, and enthusiastic about the MOOC movement.
4	Professor in Organic Chemistry. Has been championing online learning in their department for over ten years, obtaining numerous funds for several learning innovation projects. Has developed two MOOCs on the topic in an independent manner. Has got a well-equipped recording studio in their office. Uses learning analytics to improve their online tuition.
5	Recent PhD graduate in Psychology. Works as a learning technologist supporting the MOOC programme. Has been engaging with academics to produce MOOCs for about two years. Enthusiastic about the potential of MOOCs to transform education. Reports having developed teaching competencies by supporting MOOC production.
6	PhD candidate in Modern History working as a teaching assistant. No previous experience in online learning, and self-reports having few digital literacies. Recognises having become much more digitally competent as a result of her involvement in a MOOC on Spanish literature of the renaissance.
7	Senior Lecturer in Law, involved in the food security MOOC mentioned in respect to participant 1. With vast experience in online and blended learning, they run a semi-online Masters programme in city planning. Enthusiastic user of Moodle, they see more networked learning opportunities in traditional VLEs than in MOOCs.
8	Lecturer in Law. Has contributed to a MOOC in administrative law. They have some experience in the use of VLEs for blended learning, and are interested in increasing the online elements in their modules. They report that MOOCs have not been an eye opener, although they recognise they have learned about educational video and instructional design.
9	Professor in Philosophy. Has led the development of an organ transplantation ethics MOOC. Joined the MOOC programme out of curiosity, gaining a positive experience although not interested in pursuing it further. They got what they wanted from the MOOC: finding out about public opinions on the organ

	transplantation topic. Does not believe in the potential of MOOCs for learning innovation in their specific field, although recognises it may work in other contexts.
10	Professor in Modern History. Lead educator on a MOOC about El Quijote. Little experience in online learning before MOOCs, beyond a few teleconference sessions and setting up forums and chats in Moodle. MOOCs have changed their understanding of online learning, so much so that they have replaced the instructional design of the online learning elements in their on-campus module.

3.5.1.7. Study 5: expert educationalists

The last study for this thesis was conducted with expert educationalists as participants.

Table 3.5 outlines their profiles.

Table 3.5. Participant profiles of the study with expert educationalists

Participant	Profile
1	Participant 1 (P1) has over 25 years of instructional/learning design experience. They are currently a senior lecturer in education technology, and run a Master's degree programme in this area. They have been involved in the MOOC movement since the very start, before 2010, pioneering the creation of these courses in the UK. P1 is an advocate of the open movement, and an enthusiast about the networked learning potential of MOOCs.
2	P2 is a highly recognised learning developer in the UK, author of highly influential books in the area of education technologies. They have led the development of an important digital competency framework in Higher Education, used worldwide. Currently working as a director of an institute on learning technologies and innovation in a UK university.
3	P3 is another recognised learning developer, co-author of an influential European competencies framework. P3 is one of the main proponents of the digital badges movement, and an advocate of the affordances of the digital technologies for the formal recognition of informal and lifelong learning.
4	P4 is a senior lecturer of learning technologies in a UK university. P4 is a former co-chair of the Association of Learning Technologists (Alt) and author of a few books about online learning. P4 specialises in online tutoring, having developed widely-used handbooks for this purpose.
5	P5 leads the online learning programme of a Belgian university. P5 has a broad e-learning consultancy background, and was charged to implement the MOOC programme in his institution. P5 specialises in online curriculum design and instructional design, and does not consider themselves an academic, but a senior learning technology professional.
6	P6 works in an Italian University, as an online courses designer. P6 led the development of a European MOOC platform, in which the emphasis was multilingual and multicultural education. With over 30 years of experience in educational technologies, P6 advises European universities on how to implement MOOCs in their portfolio.
7	P7 is a senior lecturer, and the academic lead of the learning analytics department of an important Australian university. With a background in educational psychology, P7 has developed widely recognised MOOCs about higher education teaching practice.

8	P8 is a professor, and the director of the ICT competence centre of a renowned Portuguese university. P8 has a long history of training teachers in the use of learning technologies.
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3.5.2. Data collection instruments

3.5.2.1. Focus group interviews

It should be noted that the author of this thesis trained and line managed these facilitators, mainly for practical reasons. At the time of the interviews, back in 2014, it was difficult to find MOOC facilitators, as this role was relatively new. Another reason was that participants in the different focus groups had worked together in teams, and the researcher was keen to investigate how they interacted with one another to perform their mentoring tasks. This is not always considered advisable, as Agar and McDonald argue (1995) that too many assumptions are made and too many statements are taken for granted when participants are known to one another, which could impoverish the quantity and quality of the data resulting from their conversations. Also, as mentioned at the start of this subsection, the researcher was known to the participants, in the capacity of their line manager. That could lead to the risks associated with the so-called ‘observer’s paradox’ (Labov, 1972) whereby participants, especially when set in groups, can tilt their responses towards what they perceive the observer wants to hear, diminishing their objectivity, and increasing their bias. All these potential hindrances were taken into consideration, mainly by avoiding invasive interventions during the sessions.

It was still decided to proceed in this way, however, and in fact, the insider status of the researcher was considered an advantage because, as other authors report, groups where participants are known to each other can help the researcher elicit more sophisticated accounts of the topics being discussed in the conversation, since the environment is easier to control (Monaham & Fisher, 2010). Practical reasons had more weight in the decision made, as “where differences in group dynamics are not an issue, practical concerns may govern the choice between strangers and acquaintances” (Morgan, 1997:10).

3.5.2.2. World Cafe

A full-day event was organised in the our university, the second part of which was the World Cafe event. The first part was open to all staff and had the purpose of showcasing the progress made with MOOCs within the institution, and included an invited talk by the

CEO of the partnering MOOC platform. In the second part, all members of staff involved in MOOC production and implementation were invited. A total of 34 members of staff attended, including the core project team, academics, learning designers, mentors, media producers, librarians, members from the legal services team, administrators and a representative from the partnering MOOC platform.

The data was collected through World Cafe (Aldred, 2009), an instrument for data collection aimed at gathering perspectives of large groups of participants in organisations in a reduced amount of time. This method aims to give voice to as many participants as possible, and it is often used to gather insights of all members of staff on matters concerning an organisational change, process, approach or new technology. The incorporation of MOOCs as an educational technological innovation can therefore be considered a suitable topic of enquiry with the World Cafe approach.

In this method, all participants attend a facilitated event, in which a pleasant environment away from the work routine needs to be set up. In the i1 case, this was a hospitality facility within the University, where refreshments and lunch were provided. In an iterative process, participants were divided into small groups on tables led by a host, of around 5 to 8, where they were invited to discuss a theme, prompted by a question. They were encouraged to share their thoughts by writing on flipcharts. When the question changed, the groups were redistributed to different tables. In i1 there were four iterations of this process. The questions were formulated with the intention of both extracting as many insights as possible from the participants, and at the same time shedding light on the research questions. These were the following:

- What do you think has gone well with the MOOCs at our institution? What are we proud of? What has changed in your practice as a result of your involvement in MOOCs?
- What challenges have we faced? What did not work well? What did we miss?
- From what we know and what we've learned this morning, how can we, as a group, capitalise on the opportunities that MOOCs offer? What would you and/or i1 do differently?
- What would be a first or next step for MOOCs at our institution- both for you, and /or the wider programme? What would you say the three key priorities should be?

The outputs of the participants, in the form of anonymised sentences and drawings represented in flipcharts, were transcribed into one document, which was treated as a list of themes in response to the formulated questions. These themes are discussed in more details in subsection 4.5.3, titled “the template”.

3.5.2.3. One-to-one interviews

Eleven short (some 15 minutes) semi-structured interviews were conducted in i2. The participants in the interviews were staff directly involved in MOOC production and delivery: four professors, four lecturers, two PhD students working as teaching assistants, and an instructional designer. The academics were from varied disciplines, namely philosophy, computer science, chemistry, literature and law. The questions were the same as those asked in the first stage in i1. The interviews were recorded and transcribed.

The transcripts of these interviews were then analysed against the template created in stage 1. The analysis was carried out by researchers from both i1 and i2.

3.5.3. Ethical considerations

This thesis is composed of studies that involve human participants, except for the first desk study. Two of the studies involving participants were conducted in compliance with the ethical research governance guidelines of the University of Southampton (ERGO). Ethical approval was sought and obtained for each of these studies through the statutory process set up by the university. This process uses a submission tool called ERGO 2, which assigns unique IDs to the submissions. These IDs were 13380 for the study with early career academics, and 27342.A1 for the study with expert educationalists. The permissions for the study with experienced academics were obtained from the Spanish university where it was conducted, using their own processes.

The universities where the studies were conducted had similar requirements to grant ethical clearance. The main criteria were:

- Participants must be handed an information sheet, and must sign an informed consent form, to be safely kept by the researcher.
- Identifiable personal data must be anonymised.
- A Data Protection Plan must be in place.
- Participants must be treated respectfully, and must feel comfortable during the whole period of their participation.

3.6. Data analysis

3.6.1. Template analysis

The same method was used for analysing the output of all the conversations with participants: the focus groups with ECAs, the interviews with academics, and the interviews with expert educationalists. This method is the so-called Template Analysis (TA).

Cassell (2008) defines Template Analysis as “a structured technique for analysing qualitative data that enables researchers to place some order on their data from the start of the analytic process” (Cassell, 2008:221).

This is a popular qualitative data analysis in a wide range of contexts, especially in education. In fact, the increase in the popularity of TA in educational contexts has been noted (King, 2012).

TA is commonly applied to text transcribed from interviews, focus groups and other qualitative data collection instruments. The text is analysed against a set of themes that form a “template”, hence its name. The template can be organised in a variety of structures, including lists of themes and hierarchical models.

The themes that form the template become codes. These codes are used as pointers to search instances within the text that match the themes. When the the text corpora to be analysed are too large to be managed manually, qualitative data analysis software such as NVivo and ATLAS.ti is used as an aid to search and record instances against the codes (Lewis, 2004).

The template is usually constructed in an iterative process. Firstly, the themes of a coarse template are usually pre-defined after a background analysis, such as a literature review. Then, an initial exploration of the data reshapes the template, with a finer granularity. Once this template is designed, the researcher conducts a deeper analysis of the text, searching for instances that match the themes and sub-themes established in the template. The template can be refined after a further iteration, during the exploration of the data.

The number of iterations of this process depends on the epistemological orientation of the project (Waring & Wainwright, 2008). That is, the researcher can decide whether or not to modify the template as new themes emerge during the analysis. This flexibility is determined by the distance set between the researcher and the phenomenon. If the researcher is a distant observer of the phenomenon, less flexibility is usually allowed to modify the template during the analysis. If the researcher is placed close to the phenomenon, for example as a

participant of it, more freedom is usually allowed to modify the template as further iterations of the analysis are conducted.

3.6.2. Rationale for Template Analysis

TA was the chosen method for the analysis of data obtained from the interaction with participants since it provided the flexibility needed for this multimodal project. Ever since I started engaging with participants, I had the intention to classify their interventions in previously established sets of coarse themes, while still allowing myself the chance to discover emerging sub-themes as I delved deeper into the data. I achieved this by following King's recommendation that "the essence of template analysis is that the researcher produces a list of codes ('template') representing themes identified in their textual data. Some of these will usually be defined a priori, but they will be modified and added to as the researcher reads and interprets the texts" (King, 2012 p. 426).

Another reason why I chose TA was that it affords different configurations in the distribution of themes, or codes. It also encourages the finding of relationships between such codes, and describing such relationships. I considered that as an important feature due to the Activity Theory framework that I was using, since the relationships between its different elements are as important as the elements themselves.

Before choosing TA, I considered other approaches, but they had certain limitations. One of these was Content Analysis, as I had already used this in the analysis of published journalistic texts for my MSc dissertation, as well as in the first stage of the PhD study (see White et al., 2014; León, White & White, 2015). Content Analysis places too much of an emphasis on the quantity of occurrences of a theme in the text. This frequency of occurrences often determines the conclusions achieved after the analysis. On the contrary, thematic analysis (including TA) "pays greater attention to the qualitative aspects of the material analysed" (Joffe & Yardley, 2004).

3.6.3. The template

The template was developed to address some of the research questions directly, and some other research questions indirectly. That is, all the themes in the template were extracted from the conversations with participants to address the first block of research questions (Q1). The second and third blocks of research questions (Q2 and Q3) were addressed as a result of the interpretations made from a combination of the conversations with participants, my background research and my professional experience.

For reference, the research questions are repeated below:

- Q1 What competencies do academics develop as a result of their involvement in the production and delivery of MOOCs?
 - How do these competencies contribute to the transformation of digital practice?
 - How does the massiveness and openness of MOOCs influence their teaching practices, both online and on-campus?
- Q2 How do academics respond to the digital transformation demands of HEIs as a result of their involvement in MOOCs?
 - What kinds of operational and workload concerns arise for academics involved in MOOCs, in relation to wider online/digital learning tasks?
 - What kinds of new work dynamics and relationships arise when academics are involved in MOOCs and other forms of digital/online learning?
- Q3 What opportunities can MOOCs bring to HEIs for a digitally competent workforce?
 - How can the teaching quality of HEIs benefit from the adoption of MOOCs in their portfolio?
 - How can the digital preparedness of HEIs benefit from the adoption of MOOCs in their portfolio?

Most of the questions of the first block (Q1), are addressed directly in the template, since they involve the competencies of the subjects. This is the reason why the core element at the top-level of the template is named 'transformational competencies'. That is, the whole template revolves around the competencies that academics ('subjects' in the Activity Theory model adapted for this thesis, from now on called the 'AT model') develop to become digitally competent ('object' in the AT model) and thence to achieve in turn educational transformation (outcome in the AT model).

Figure 4.2 is a graphical representation of the template:

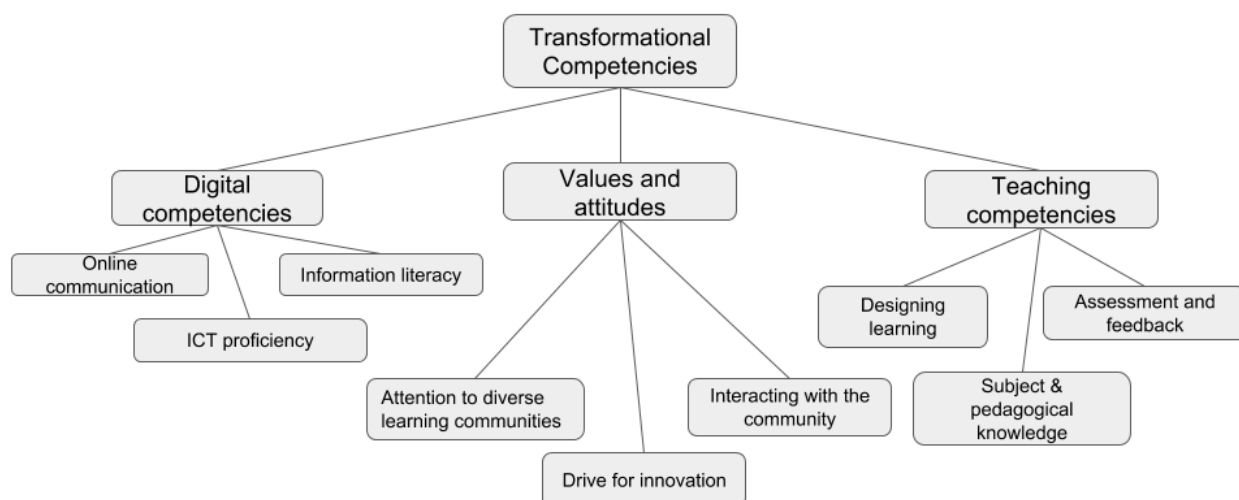


Figure 4.2: Template for this thesis

Rather than reproducing a single established theoretical competencies model, the branching at the middle level was designed as bespoke to the scope of this thesis, with influences from Weller's (2011) Transformative Practices model discussed in subsection 2.1.3, and the widely used three-dimensional division of competencies (Westera, 2001), namely cognitive, social and functional competencies. This is why the template at this level was divided into digital competencies, responding to the digital competencies frameworks that influenced the interview questions; attitudes and values, responding to the social dimension of most competency frameworks; and teaching competencies, responding to the UKPSF teaching competencies framework that also influenced the interview questions.

The low-level branching of the template was decided in a similar process. One of the low-level themes, or sub-themes, directly address elements of the AT, namely 'interacting with the community' under the 'attitudes and values' branch. The remaining sub-themes were chosen in view of their relevance in the conversations with the participants.

The following subsections discuss each of the mid-level themes further.

3.6.3.1. The Digital Competencies theme

The 'Digital Competencies' theme comprises the 'ICT proficiency', 'Online Communication' and 'Digital Literacies' sub-themes because these were considered to be the main conversation topics that emerged in the interviews.

- The **‘ICT proficiency’** name of this sub-theme has been adopted from the Jisc Digital Capabilities framework (Jisc, 2018), where it is described as “The confident adoption of new devices, applications, software and services and the capacity to stay up to date with ICT as it evolves. The capacity to deal with problems and failures of ICT when they occur, and to design and implement ICT solutions.” (p.2). A similar description is provided in the Jisc Digital Literacies framework (Jisc, 2014) under the “ICT literacy” branch of the framework, described as “Adopt, adapt, and use digital devices, applications and services” (p.1).

The instances of this sub-theme are therefore accounts from participants regarding the enhancement of their abilities to operate ICTs. As will be shown in the findings, most of these ICTs are related to audiovisual production, as very few instances of any other aspect of ICT skills occurred in the sessions.

- **‘Online communication’** is a prominent sub-theme in this template. Competencies for online communication can be developed during the delivery stage of a MOOC, when interacting with the learning communities. These competencies are important in a wide variety of professional settings in the digital economy, and deserve special attention.

All digital competencies frameworks place emphasis on online communication, providing extensive definitions and sub-categorisations of this aspect (Jisc, 2014; Jisc, 2018; HEA, 2017; European Commission, 2018). In this template, two main aspects of online communication were considered: digital identity management and communication in social media.

Digital identity management is an important aspect of online communication for academics, as their online self-representation is becoming as important as the way they self-represent offline (Laurent, 2015). The effective management of a personal online presence has become fundamental to successful academic practice, and MOOCs often make this evident to academics. Finding the balance between disseminating content and maintaining privacy is often a challenge that requires competencies for it, as reflected in most digital competency frameworks. For example, both Jisc Digital Capabilities framework and DigiComp (2018) name it ‘digital wellbeing’ (Jisc, 2018).

Another important skill for academics when communicating online is harnessing the power of social media to maximise dissemination practices (Mewburn, 2013). Activities such as blogging, tweeting, slide sharing and participation in academic

networks powered by social media tools such as Academia.edu, ResearchGate and Mendeley require competencies that can also be honed by participating in the production and delivery of MOOCs.

- **‘Information literacy’** was selected for this template since it is relevant to the production of MOOCs. When producing and delivering MOOCs, academics usually tread around the boundaries of open and closed content, as well as the copyright and sharing licenses (Bernstein, 2014).

The Jisc and DigiComp frameworks include other specific digital literacies such as data literacy and media literacy, but these were discarded since they fell beyond the scope of the conversations with the participants, as well as the research questions.

3.6.3.2. The Values and Attitudes theme

The middle branch of at the middle level of the template, namely ‘Values and Attitudes’, was included at the same level as the other two branches - digital competencies and teaching competencies - because they were considered equally specific to both types of competencies. This is also why its sub-themes, ‘Attention to learning communities’, ‘Drive for Innovation’, ‘Interaction with the Community’ refer equally to both digital and teaching competencies.

Another reason why ‘Values and Attitudes’ was included as one of the three core themes is that most definitions of competencies take into account this social dimension, together with cognitive and practical dimensions. Specific competency frameworks such as the UKPSF (HEA, 2011) also include this *savoir-être* as a core dimension to describe competencies and good practice.

Within this theme, three sub-themes were established, taking into consideration the scope of this thesis: attention to diverse communities, drive for innovation, and interaction with the community.

- **‘Drive for innovation’** was included on the understanding that it is an important factor for education transformation, the ‘object’ element of the Activity Theory model for this thesis. As stated by Jisc (2014), “Strategies and policies will guide direction but change happens ‘on the ground’ through ‘change agents’ working to support staff and students in developing their skills and practice.” (p.9) This sub-theme, therefore, contains instances in which participants state their motivations for innovation, and how they contribute to a bottom-up change culture within their organisations.

- **‘Attention to diverse learning communities’** was another selected sub-theme for two particular reasons. First, because this aspect is highlighted in the competencies frameworks for teachers presented in this thesis, such as the UKPSF (HEA, 2014), Zabalza’s (2004) and Perrenaud’s (2004). Second, because MOOCs expose teachers to highly diverse learning communities, with varied cultures, knowledge, cognitive levels and approaches to learning. This can provide opportunities to raise awareness of the diversity of learning communities beyond the enrolled students in the classroom.

3.6.3.3. The Teaching Competencies theme

The Teaching Competencies theme was included to represent one of the main hypotheses in this thesis: that by teaching with MOOCs, academics can rethink the way they teach in the classroom.

Again, three sub-themes were selected among a large number of common descriptors from teaching competency frameworks. This selection also responds to the number of instances in the conversations with participants, and the relevance to the research questions.

- **‘Designing learning’** is a common descriptor in the *practice* dimension of teaching competency frameworks. The UKPSF (HEA, 2011) describes it as “Design and plan learning activities and/or programmes of study”, although another UKPSF practice descriptor was included in this sub-theme, namely “Develop effective learning environments and approaches to student support and guidance”.

Under this sub-theme, there will be instances of teachers who have made adjustments to the way they design their modules, or the way they plan their lessons, as a result of what they have learned when participating in the design of a MOOC.

- The **‘Subject & pedagogical knowledge’** sub-theme encompasses all descriptors of the knowledge dimension of teaching competency frameworks such as the UKPSF. The reason for this significant merging is the relative lack of relevant instances in the interviews, despite being prompted by the interview questions. In fact, many of the instances were negative, that is, experienced participants tended to deny subject specific or pedagogical knowledge when developing MOOCs.
- **‘Assessment and feedback’** are two sub-themes in one. It encompasses to the abilities relating to delivering assessment feedback to students, as well as the feedback that practitioners obtain from students.

3.6.4. Beyond the template

The second set of research questions (Q2, Q3) are more related to the ‘object’ and the ‘outcome’ elements of the AT model. The answers to these questions are not directly extracted from the findings, but from the combination of my experience, background research and conversations with participants, as stated at the start of this section.

The three-dimensional structure was also used in the templates of those studies for this thesis that involved participants, namely the focus groups with early career academics (León, Fielding & White, 2016), and the interviews with experienced academics involved in MOOCs (León, Cobos, Dickens & White, 2018), as explained further in the subsections below.

3.6.4.1. Template for the focus group study with early career academics

This template was created through an iterative process. That is, a first list of themes was used to craft the prompts for conversation in the focus group sessions. These themes were divided into two blocks, namely “effects” and “implications”.

The “effects” block was related to how participants’ experiences as MOOC mentors had an effect on their competencies to teach in online and digitally enhanced environments. Initially, subthemes under this block were related to skills development, both digital skills and teaching skills. After a first superficial analysis, however, the sub-themes of this block were reorganised as confidence, skills and knowledge, as can be seen in figure 4.3. This reorganisation of the themes responded to the predominance of conversations related to the confidence gained when interacting online with learners. It should be remembered that most of the participants in these focus groups were PhD students with little teaching experience. Another theme, “knowledge” emerged from the conversations, since there were many instances in which participants declared having acquired further topic knowledge.

The “implications” block could also have been named as “challenges”. This block had to do with the challenges encountered when teaching online, especially in relation to participants’ exposure to high numbers of learners whom they did not know. Again, after a first superficial analysis of the data, two more sub-themes were added to the block, mostly related to their working relationships with the employer, as well as among themselves as a team.

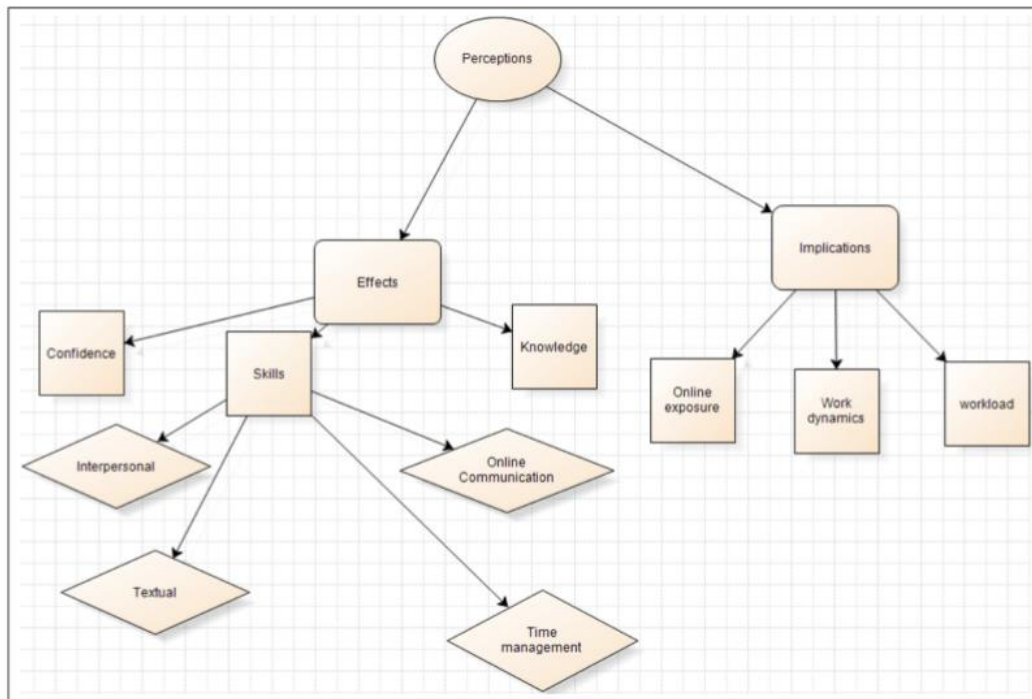


Figure 4.3. Template of focus groups with ECAs

3.6.4.3. Template of interviews with experienced academics

The template for the study with experienced academics was designed to obtain insights about how they perceived the influence of MOOCs in three different dimensions, at an increasing level of abstraction.

The first dimension was the influence of MOOCs on themselves as individuals, or *subjects* in the Activity Theory scheme. The second dimension consisted of the influence on their institution as a *community*, again within the AT scheme. The third, and most abstract dimension, was the influence on higher education as a whole. The third dimension was especially important because I wanted to gather a wide a variety of perspectives on the big picture of MOOCs in Higher Education, from those who practice it and thus are in regular contact with students.

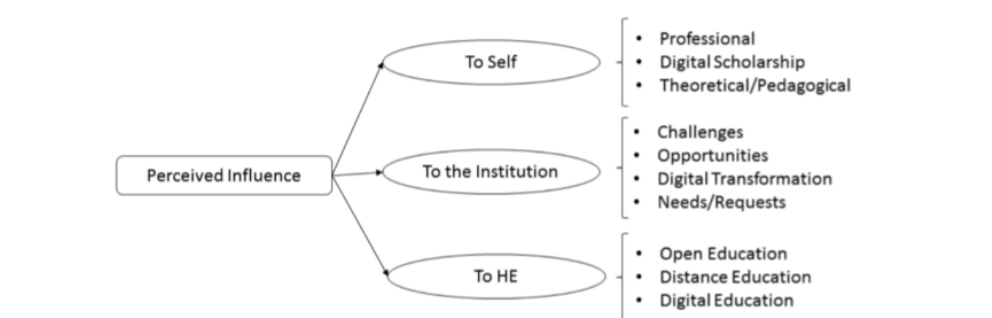


Figure 4.4. Template of interviews with experienced academics

3.7. Methodological limitations

The inherent limitations of qualitative research can be contested by the epistemological orientation with which the studies of this thesis were conducted.

For example, the findings in each study are specific to each of the contexts in which they were obtained. They may not, therefore, be reproducible to other contexts, both in space and in time. While this lack of reproducibility is a hindrance from a positivist perspective, it is not from a constructivist perspective. Indeed, as Kvale suggests (1995), the validity of a

research study can be socially constructed, with a combined input from both the researcher and the participants.

This social constructionist perspective also tackles the problem of the lack of precision of the instruments with which the phenomenon is measured. In fact, no objective measurements were made when analysing the transcripts of the interviews, simply because counting specific instances of a theme was not going to provide a reliable account of the realities of their contexts.

There was one limitation that was present even within the constructivist paradigm, however. That is, the research was conducted over a span of five years, and this is a long period for the views of the researcher to remain the same, especially when a long and steep learning curve occurs in the course of a PhD study. Interpretive phenomenological approaches are able to transcend time when the phenomenon evolves, but they may have loose internal reliability when the researchers' views evolve as well. This becomes especially relevant when reading the publications of the studies integrated in this thesis, some of them published a few years ago, and this thesis itself, written a few years later. The same studies may therefore contain certain differences in the interpretations, depending on whether they are read in the published papers or in this thesis.

4. Findings

A large body of qualitative data has been obtained and analysed. Lengthy conversations have been held with over 35 participants, and 34 more have provided their insights in a one-day event. Also, over 100 journalistic articles were analysed in study 1. This chapter synthesises the analysis of this large and rich corpus of data. The insights and opinions gathered here have more commonalities than differences, perhaps due the profiles of the participants, all of whom were interested in MOOCs. Nonetheless, a rich diversity of responses was found, sometimes with opposing views as to how MOOCs affect academics' competencies to transform higher education.

4.1. Presentation of the findings

This section presents the findings obtained through the the conversations with participants (studies 2, 4, and 5), following the structure of the template proposed for this thesis (see subsection 3.6.3, "The template", in Chapter 3). The presentation of the results contains many short excerpts from the interviews and focus group sessions that were carried out. The transcripts of all these sessions are contained in the appendix named "Transcripts". In order to make these excerpts easily searchable within the context of the transcripts, each excerpt contains a label, the structure of which is presented in the table below:

Table 4.1. Structure of the excerpt codes.

Study number	Participant number
S2: Focus groups with early career academics	P1...Pn
S4: Interviews with experienced academics	P1...Pn
S5: Interviews with expert educationalists	P1...Pn

For example, an excerpt from the first participant (P1) participant in the study with experienced academics (S2) will be labelled as S2P1. It should be noted that the S2 transcripts were originally in Spanish, but the excerpts presented in this section have been translated into English. Here I should point out that I was the translator, and I did not notice any risk of confusion between what was expressed in Spanish and what was translated in into English.

4.2. Digital competencies

The first block of this template is about digital competencies. Over the course of my involvement with MOOCs, ever since I started, I perceived that MOOCs stimulated the curiosity for digital education of academics involved. I generally noticed an intensification of the interactions of these academics with digital tools. The extract below, from a professor in philosophy, is a representation of this intensification:

“I have taught in virtual learning environments before, using different platforms, but since I am with MOOCs, my experience with online teaching, and digital learning tools in general, has multiplied! What is more, I recently see myself talking about digital learning much more, I’m more interested.” (S4P9)

This perception was constructed over innumerable interactions I had with academics of various disciplines such as medicine, applied linguistics, English literature, computer sciences and law, as part of my learning designer role. These findings respond to the intention I had when I designed the interviews: rather than *whether*, I aimed at finding out *to what extent, how* and *what kind* of digital competencies were enhanced when teaching through MOOCs. This subsection will address three aspects of digital competencies: ICT proficiency, online communication, and information literacy in digital contexts.

4.2.1. ICT proficiency

Proficiency in Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) sits at the core of the Jisc framework of digital capabilities. These are functional skills that consist of the ability to use devices and software confidently. This core section of the Jisc framework also mentions “the capacity to deal with problems and failures of ICT when they occur, and to design and implement ICT solutions” (Jisc, 2018). This capacity to deal with problems and failures of ICT was mentioned by an expert educationalist, who called it “resilience”. In the extract below, this education developer explains that a core ICT competency is being able to solve problems in challenging situations, rather than simply mastering the use of specific tools:

“That usually gets translated into something like resilience, so they need resilience at many scales. They need resilience at the trivial scale like you and I experienced at the beginning of this call, you know, I mean there's a lot of people that just fall apart when they go like “oh my god I'll use Hangouts or nothing”, so they need some resilience. They need also to manage their own expectations that said they need to have some comfort and familiarity with how their operating platform works and what it's capable of doing, so that they know when something is misbehaving or when it's actually not.” (S5P1, senior lecturer in education technology)

Although it is true in a wide variety of digital education contexts, the context of the extract above was the inclusion of MOOCs in the teaching practices of academics. The

conversation was around the use of synchronous tele-conferencing tools for online distance learning, which are often novel to the everyday practices of academics.

Another set of ICTs that are often new to academics are audiovisual technologies.

Developing learning materials with these technologies is often a challenge that requires the information to be presented in ways that academics are not used to in their everyday practices.

In the extract below, another expert educational developer mentions video as a format to which many academics are exposed for the first time when developing MOOCs. This participant reckons that video is the most common novel technology that leads academics to rethink their practices, as shown in the extract below:

“Video, mostly video. But not only using the cameras, the audio, the lighting (which they do despite someone else being in charge of the technical aspects). Also sharing videos, embedding them, putting them in the Web. And also they get a sense of how the video should look, how the scene should be set up, what is its optimal length depending on the audience, etc. For some this is quite a significant experience. Being recorded opens a new world of use of technologies in so many different ways!” (S5P5, Senior Educational developer)

The statement above was made in a context where academics are the ‘talents’ in the audiovisual product. That is a setting in which academics only need to talk to a camera and audio recording equipment that has usually been set up by support staff such as audio/video producers or learning technologists.

In the interviews, however, there were also instances in which academics declared having learned how to operate these devices, usually thanks to the current user-friendly video recording and production tools embedded in computers and smart devices, such as mobile phones and tablets. The extract below belongs to a conversation in which a lecturer reports having learned how to record and share ad-hoc videos as review content for the MOOC they developed:

“I don’t think my everyday teaching is going to change much, but there is something remarkable that I have learned, which is talking in front of a camera. And not only that. I have also learned how to record my own videos with a reasonable standard for a less-than-an amateur, mainly thanks to what I learned in the recording set, and to the advice I got from the support staff. They gave me great pieces of advice on how to record my own videos with just the the computer and a decent webcam and microphone. They showed me how to frame myself, how to get reasonable lighting and audio with the very simple tools I had available. I even learned basic post-production techniques (mainly top-and-tailing, adding captions, etc.), and what format to use to export it to Youtube. I didn’t know it was so easy, with in-built tools that any computer has! I have recorded and uploaded some videos by myself. They are not core content, they are just some additional comments and feedback, but still I am very satisfied with the result!” (S4P9, Professor in Philosophy)

The testimony above reports having learned how to produce and share videos for ancillary learning materials with decent quality standards for educational purposes. There was another participant who took this further, however. With a set of funding that they received, a Professor in Chemistry bought a semi-professional video recording studio that they set up in their office. This professor trained themselves to produce high quality videos for the further editions of their Chemistry MOOC. In the extract below, this professor explains how they ended up using such professional audiovisual equipment:

“Well, the truth is that it has been quite a while since I started using learning technologies, with this ADA project that I have just mentioned. Mainly, what I have done differently is upgrading my equipment, and adapting it to its use within the Internet. With the ADA project, we are talking about quite a few years ago, when this technology did not exist. All I had available was an overhead projector, that I still keep here [points at an old overhead projector]. Everything that I had within my reach, I utilised. Look, here at my right I have a liquid crystal screen in which I can display molecular models. This screen is nearly 30 years old, and now I can achieve the same with an application on my computer. I have always been quite keen on technology. And now I have these two 4k TV cameras, all these microphones and these studio lights. I bought this with an innovation grant I received. This equipment is quite complex to use, so I attended a few video production courses to learn how to use this. My first “movies” were the videos for the Organic Chemistry MOOC.” (S4P4, Professor in organic chemistry)

In the focus groups with Early Career Academics, there were very few instances in which participants reported having acquired or enhanced ICT skills. There were several reasons for this. First, the development of ICT skills was not included in the interview questions, since the scope of the discussions was more oriented to their teaching skills. Also, the tasks they performed only required participating in forums and social media with tools with which all participants were highly familiar.

4.2.2. Online communication

The development of online communication skills was a recurrent topic in the interviews with all three categories of participants. Rather than spontaneous, this recurrence is mainly due to the design of the interview questions, and the emphasis that I placed on this topic during the sessions. I placed this emphasis because I consider MOOCs as digital communication tools, the good use of which requires a set of digital competencies. As discussed in 2.1.6 ‘Digital Competencies’, these digital communication competencies are reflected in most digital skills and literacies frameworks, such as both Jisc frameworks of digital literacies (2014) and digital capabilities (2018), the Digital Lens on the UKPSF (2017), and the European Commission’s Digital Competence Framework (2017).

Many participants stated that, while communicating in front of a camera was generally the most important skill that they developed during the production stage of a MOOC,

communicating in social media and the Web was the top skill developed during the delivery stage.

The main means of teacher-learner communication in computer-mediated communication is text. In the extract below, an expert educational developer notes the need for teachers to enhance their written communication skills in settings where the affordances for spoken interactions are limited or nonexistent:

Well, MOOCs require teachers to develop a wide range of skills, if we want to do them well, both when they are trainers and trainees online. Communication skills, being able to express yourself only with writing - have in mind that video exists now, but when I began, not that much - and the fact that we have to support others, give constant good feedback to help learners and keep them engaged in those courses. So it helps to develop all these kinds of soft skills (S5P8)

Textual skills were also a recurrent theme in the conversations with Early Career Academics (ECAs). They came across large numbers of comments, and they perceived having gained the necessary agility to read and address them quickly and reliably:

"to be able to read the information very quickly, instead of starting and reading it word for word, you start scanning your way through, and then you pick up something very very quickly, six or seven in a row for example" (S2F1P2)

"- R. So do you think there is a difference in your quick reading skills between before and after you started?"

- P3. Huge! (S2F1P3)"

In that respect, many of the ECA participants also stated having honed their summarising skills, recognising that reaching diverse audiences online requires being succinct:

"And that's one thing I've found...I gave a talk at a research group meeting earlier and even from communicating my science to particularly non-scientists it....forces you to say things in as few words as possible..." (S2F4P2)

In fact, one of these participants was able to point to specific instances in which verbosity was not rewarded in online communication contexts such as the discussion forums where they were operating:

"I agree with that. I have also found that the longer that my comments would tend to be, fewer "likes" I would get. That made me a bit sad. Some would ask and I would answer, and many would not even get back to me."(S2F2P2)

There were several occasions in which ECAs recognised having acquired summarising skills thanks to the restrictions imposed in specific spaces of the MOOC platform where they were working. In the extract below, a participant explains how being forced to keep within a character limit worked to their own benefit, since they learned how to compress the information that they were trying to convey:

"I think one thing that I found it improved over time as I was doing the facilitation was fitting my responses in the comment boxes. Basically, I found that the Futurelearn comment box was quite short and some of the questions that people were asking were incredibly broad; they wanted to get a nice answer, sort of thing. So I tried to learn to compress all this information. I think it helped in that sense, definitely." (S2F2P3)

The summarising skills gained by facilitating in MOOCs transcend to other academic domains, as the following participant states:

"For me, having done the MOOC twice now, it does provide you with a means of being able to summarise your work in a much more effective and succinct manner" (S2F4P2)

4.2.3. Information literacy

Perhaps one of the most important skills required in environments where digital transformation is taking place is that of managing digital content. As should be expected, all of the participants in these studies had long experience in managing digital learning materials, as an intrinsic element of their everyday practice. At the very least, all participants were confident users of the VLEs in their universities, regardless of their age and academic discipline. For example, there was a professor in law in his last year before retirement, who had been uploading their teaching materials and managing his lessons and students through the VLE for nearly 20 years:

"I have carried out a bit of online teaching in the past, in a Telecom Law masters. That postgrad degree was mixed, where students came from different places, as we were more than one institution organising it. I have been managing the VLE for quite a while. I think we started in the early 2000s! I used it mainly to share materials, most of them cases for my students to read. I also managed the forums, the questions in them, and some activities around it. I would share materials with students that I had already seen in person; they were all subscribed. I could see how they could take advantage of the flexibility and convenience of having everything in the VLE, although at times there were certain inconveniences too. For example, many students were expecting to have the materials available in paper too, so there was a bit of duplication of work at times. I was not too worried about sharing those materials, I never worried too much about copyright issues, I thought it was just like using a digital version of what I used to do before. However, with MOOCs the thing changed. I was aware that I had to be a bit more careful, as I was sharing materials with lots of unknown people. I had quite a few discussions about it, about licensing and related issues. I realised this was quite a different way of sharing content, and thought had to be put into it!" (S4P1)

From the account above, it can be inferred that, as a result of their involvement in a MOOC, the participant enhanced their skills for managing, curating, organising and sharing digital content for learning, teaching and assessment. An increase in their knowledge about the copyright rules can also be appreciated, especially as a result of discussions with the wider team supporting the MOOC production.

That was also the case with less experienced academics. In the extract below, an ECA explains how they learned about their authoring rights in digital contexts:

"I met so many institutions that I have never heard of, and it shows that you can move beyond the classroom and design or facilitate content online, so it is about innovative teaching methods, which is quite exciting and quite good for your career purposes as well. I also was able to gauge the value of my input, and that of others. I mean, I authored a few learning resources for this MOOC, and also authored a great deal of comments. I was asked to sign copyright release forms, and was explained what was meant in these forms. Now I have a much better idea of what my rights are as an author in all these digital contexts, including MOOCs, which I thought once you put your stuff in a MOOC you have no rights on it, but apparently it is not the case!" (S2F1P4)

There were many other instances in which discussions about the implications of sharing materials online within MOOC contexts occurred. In the World Cafe event, the topic of digital resources licencing was one of the most recurrent ones. Most of the conversations touched on the theme of whether certain resources should be shared, and under which conditions they should be shared. In that event, there were many instances in which academics invoked knowledge recently acquired, either by having asked copyright experts - mainly learning designers and asset managers from the MOOC production team - or by having consulted specific documentation, especially the Creative Commons information sites.

The theme of information literacy was also touched upon in the interviews with expert educationalists. An interesting sub-topic was that of contributing to pools of knowledge in open educational environments. In the following extract, one of these experts explains how teachers who were taking a MOOC about teaching in digital environments - a MOOC developed and delivered by the interview participant - had to think about the implications of sharing content in digitally open environments:

"...so I'll give you a couple of examples: so for, example, one of the activities that always worked really really well on the early online courses and MOOCs that we ran was building an annotated reading list as a group, so this idea was of everyone from whatever background are pooling what they know already, and using that as an introductory icebreaker. And that has, designing that activity to suit a diverse audience continues to have benefits in all of the online courses that we run. So, I think that thinking about a very diverse audience has been really important for designing activities that help people to understand the open world that they're living in, such as activities to create a Wikipedia entry. for example. So we're all living in this age where openness is an important feature of it, and you have to engage in that to truly understand it. So you have to contribute to the knowledge pool that is available in the online world, such as through Wikipedia, in order to really understand it." (S5P2)

4.3. Values and attitudes

4.3.1. Attention to diverse learning communities

Attention to learners' diversity is an important descriptor in most teaching competencies frameworks, and the interview questions were designed to address this topic. As a result, many participants provided rich accounts about how producing and delivering MOOCs led them to contemplate this issue from new perspectives.

In the extract below, a early career academic reflects upon the fact of interacting with massive and diverse learning communities. This is an example of many conversations in which participants perceived that having wide and diverse audiences was a highly stimulating educational experience:

"I think with the exposure to arguments and things like that, I think, because of the nature of the MOOCs, in a lot of cases, you can be teaching to thousands of people rather than just teaching, let us say, to a lecture room full of people, you get all sorts of different responses and different debates and discussions about things that you would not get in the classroom, even in the most diverse lecture hall. You probably would not get the same scale and scope of responses as what you get online, so I think that does help." (S2F2P3)

In the extract below, a senior educational developer uses a metaphor to state that an important quality of a good teacher is the ability to address diverse learning communities in terms of cognitive capabilities. By the end of their intervention, the participant explains how MOOCs can help harness this diversity attention ability.

That one is interesting. I met a researcher who used a metaphor that I love: He said that he has met many teachers that try to recall the learner experience. So how was your time at the university and stuff. And the guy would tell them, ok but how many students were in your class? The teacher would say well, some 300 sometimes. And this researcher asked the teacher: do you think you are the best representation of the general population? Have in mind that you may well have been in the top 5% of a class of 300. And on many occasions, teachers have never thought about that. It is clear that they are not the best example of an average learner, they are successful, but they should not be a model. I think that addressing a MOOC reminds that in great measure. Reminds that there are various audience, and reminds the fact that they need to catch them all. (S5P5, senior educational developer)

In fact, expert educational developers showed an inclination to discuss the positive aspects of having diverse learning communities extensively. In the extract below, one of these experts introduces the concept of knowledge pools, whereby there is an activity in which learners contribute with annotations. This not only helps engage and empower a large part of the learning community, but it also enriches the course:

"...one example is one of the activities that always worked really well on the early online courses and MOOCs that we ran, was building an annotated reading list as a group. So

this idea was of everyone from whatever background pooling what they know already, and using that as an introductory icebreaker. And that has, designing that activity to suit diverse audiences, continues to have benefits in all of the online courses that we run. So I think that thinking about a very diverse audience has been really important for designing activities that help people understand the open world that they're living in, such as activities to create a Wikipedia entry, for example. So we're all living in this age where openness is an important feature of it, and you have to engage in that to truly understand it. You have to contribute to the knowledge pool that is available in the online world, such as through Wikipedia, in order to really understand it. So, you know our online courses will now include that kind of activity, it's not the kind of thing you're looking for exactly.” (S5P2)

Certain disappointment around the richness and variety of contributions from learning communities was also observed. In several interviews, there was a recurrent theme of a gradual loss of sophistication in the comments which learners would contribute:

“I started to lose interest in the comments of the participants. While at the first run of the course there were many of all sorts, in the subsequent runs there were predominantly introductions sort of ‘Hello my name is... I am from ...’. At its best, there were some saying ‘thank you, that is interesting’. That was a bit disappointing, and I really thought about what we could do to spark more interesting conversations. We don’t know why, but I think it is because there were many more participants in the first run, more participants making comments, so it was easier to find interesting ones.” (S4P10, senior lecturer in Modern History)

The above account was not the only one. There were more in which some disillusionment was evident regarding the ability of MOOC learning communities to contribute to substantial creation of knowledge. It must be noted, however, that this was only the case study with participants who were using a platform that did not have social learning as a marked pedagogical underpinning. The participants who were using a more social learning oriented platform seemed to have a different experience, in which the interactions with the learners had an array of challenges, but these did not include a lack of depth in the discussions.

4.3.2. Drive for innovation

In the conversations held with the participants, there were many instances in which the theme of innovation was addressed. Drawing from these discussions about innovation, it could be inferred that the involvement in MOOCs sparked a willingness to try new approaches to teaching. For example, participants provided new ideas and suggestions as to how certain features of MOOCs could be harnessed within the institution. These suggestions came especially from Early Career Academics, who were generally more spontaneous than the rest of the participants in terms of providing suggestions for experimental teaching. In the extract below, a participant of the focus groups study discusses how the flexibility of MOOCs could be harnessed in on-campus modules.

“I always see that it should be combined with off-line learning, so I see that the negatives come from offline teaching when you wonder why the lecturer did not record that lesson

for me to watch it when I am in a good mood. Some people would learn better in the morning, some in the evening... But it should be combined with live discussion, part of the interaction could be offline. I can think of meet ups where the learners come to know each other. And I think it should be in the start or in the end.” (S2F1P5)

4.3.3. Interacting with the community

In the Activity Theory framework adaptation for this thesis, higher education institutions are communities in which members interact around the introduction of new tools. The participants of this study were members of those communities, and they reported that they interacted in new ways as a result of the introduction of MOOCs.

When adopting new technologies and approaches to teaching, such as MOOCs, contextual factors such as the strategies in the universities and the trends within the institutions can be significant. In the early adoption phase of introducing new technologies there are occasions in which there is little interest in engaging with this kind of imposed innovation. In the interviews, there were cases reported in which there was no interest in developing MOOCs from the teaching staff, despite the fact that there was substantial budget allocation for this venture. The extract below is an indirect account of an education developer who was charged with developing MOOCs in liaison with academics:

*“...I bid with a colleague for money from the pro vice-chancellor to develop MOOCs from *****, and we got money and we really really really tried hard to work with the faculties to devise and run for MOOCs. We only ever got one off the ground and we gave the money back to the PVC it was too difficult to engage academics.*

R. Was it like herding cats?

P2. Yeah it was not... the reasons where we fell down, and we wrote an evaluation report, and stuff which I'm happy to share with you, were very practical issues about budgets, and finances, and where was the time going to come from. So we had some academics and some faculties were keen that we should come to do things strategically but they couldn't work out how to incorporate this into workload planning ” (S5P2, expert in online education development)

As the interviewee states above, there were practical issues that were precluding academics from engaging in the production of MOOCs, despite their willingness to do so. A very important issue seems to be incorporating the time for producing MOOCs in their working time. This theme was recurrent in the interviews with academics, who provided direct accounts of how they felt about the allocation of duties for developing MOOCs:

“There is a need for more support from the institution. I worked on this course intensively for several months. This task should be recognised, and rewarded with an alleviation of teaching hours at the very least” (S4P10)

“The institution has to take into account that the effort in a MOOCs is similar to the effort in our face-to-face lectures” (S4P4)

From the statements above, it could be inferred that the introduction of new teaching approaches such as MOOCs demands a commitment from the whole community, i.e. members of the university at all levels of responsibility. They demand fluid internal communication, empathy and understanding of what is really involved in terms of workload.

As well as being demanding, MOOCs can also offer insights into online learning and innovation. In the extract below, an expert educational developer observed that trainee teachers tend to learn by doing, especially when it comes to processes and procedures specific to organisations. In this context, involvement in MOOCs offered valuable experiences from which trainees could benefit.

This is what I think about MOOCs and online learning. It is important, sometimes but I have some doubts when it is based on very practical procedures, if it is easy, I am sure that for some people it is not so obvious, so easy, to learn procedures. By procedures I mean how things are done in an organisation. I am sure that for some of the trainees it is not that easy to learn those skills online. It is important that someone close to them helps them learn them, because they are very practical, very contextual, and it is very difficult to learn them from distance, both physical and cultural (S5P8)

4.4. Teaching competencies

4.4.1. Designing learning

Lesson planning is an important element of teachers' competencies. Planning beyond the lesson, be it a unit, a module or a programme, are responsibilities that increase with experience and the duties allocated to teachers. One of the expert educators pointed out that MOOCs can prove to be useful and meaningful test-beds for teachers to take planning further than they are used to. This can in turn become useful in helping teachers at the early stages of their careers to experiment with holistic approaches to planning:

I think there is some change in that respect. Without MOOCs, you have to plan your programmes very well, your lessons, your syllabi, your learning outcomes, etc. But with MOOCs, you have to think very hard and program everything, develop all the materials very carefully, predict the interactions with the learners, etc. So it helps trainee teachers to have things very clear in their mind, so then they can make a good plan. They have to develop the planning much more, compared to attendance-based face-to-face classes. (S5P8)

This is not only applicable to novice teachers, but also to experienced ones. In the following excerpt, another expert participant explains how online courses, and especially MOOCs, force practitioners to engage in transformative practices, moving towards learner-centred approaches, and careful planning of activities for collaborative learning:

“yes so actually the one I’d like to highlight is activity design, and I don’t know if this is to do with MOOCs particularly but it is certainly to do with online courses. When you teach online you have to be a lot more explicit about what your activity design is, in advance, than you do in a classroom. So in a classroom you can still wing it. If you’re a skilled experienced teacher you can go into a class not really knowing what you’re going to do and you can just respond to the group’s needs, and you can decide what to do. In an online course you have to plan it all out in advance, and your activity design is more explicit. Your activity design is also much more learner centred. So in a classroom it’s very much, I’m afraid, still about what you do as a teacher. But when you’re designing an online course, you have to think about what will the learner be doing in this situation, otherwise it doesn’t work. So your activity design has to be more learner-centred. Activity designs that work in online courses tend to have some kind of product so something that this particularly collaborative learning activities, so something that the students are working on so they tend to be more activity orientated anyway.” (S5P2)

4.4.2. Knowledge

A common indicator of competency reflected in teaching competency frameworks is that of subject knowledge. Discussions with the participants suggest that MOOCs can have a positive influence in that respect, especially with Early Career Academics. On several occasions, ECAs stated that mentoring in MOOCs helped both to consolidate their topic knowledge, but also to give them confidence by showing that they had broader knowledge than they initially thought:

“I thought it was quite nice when you knew the answer...for me because I changed fields slightly when coming to my PhD so I always feel like I don’t know anything compared to everyone else...so it was quite nice to know that I did know stuff, and that I could share it...” (S1P18, PhD student in Oceanography)

“You initially may think you are not fit to facilitate on this topic or anything like that and you realise I do know much stuff. That kind of proves that to yourself.” (S1P4, PhD student in Web Science)

Accounts from experienced lecturers and expert educationalists were more varied than those from ECAs. When asked whether MOOCs have had any role in their core knowledge of the topics they were teaching, some of these participants stated that there was no influence in any way on academics’ knowledge. For example, a learning developer stated that:

“No, I do not have any recollection of any academic ever telling me that they have learned new things about their area of expertise. I think the main reason is that, in our university, those who are selected to produce a MOOC are senior academics. And I have talked about it with them, they all tell me that the content they provide is known by their students in the earliest years of their degrees.” (S5P7)

The above extract states it very clearly: there is hardly any new knowledge acquired by academics when developing MOOCs. Not everyone had the same opinion, however. In the extract below, another expert educationalist states how subject knowledge is gained by discussing the content with other teachers and learning designers:

“OK, so MOOCs and online courses tend to be produced as as a team and so I think having to work with other specialists to decide what to teach and how to teach it does extend your disciplinary knowledge ... they have to share it back with the other subject experts and we don't do that very much when we're teaching face-to-face but in an online course you do share your subject expertise and discuss the content of the course with other teachers” (S5P2).

4.4.3. Assessment and feedback

Judging from the accounts of some participants, it was found that MOOCs provided opportunities to experiment with innovative assessment approaches. On some occasions, these approaches were evaluated and, after realising that these did not meet expectations, they were changed. For example, a participant explained how the team realised that a peer-review assessment in a course was not working, and decided to move the assessment to a forum-based approach:

“Innovative and varied. One layer, more superficial, is Matching, MCQs, True or False, etc. What is interesting is the second, deeper layer. It is usually peer assessment. There was a time that peer review was not working because many people waited for their review forever, so we decided to do it in groups and forums, where people talk to each other. And then we use external tools. For example in histology we use a tool called cytomin, which is a virtual microscope where you can have annotation layers and all this kind of stuff. We show a tissue, we provide the tool, and we ask a question. They put the answer on the layer, and then it is evaluated by other people.” (S5P5)

There were also instances with opposite views, in which participants showed some scepticism as to whether MOOCs were equipping academics with innovative forms of assessment. For example, a learning development consultant stated that most MOOCs were simply reproducing old forms of assessment, not only not innovating but also causing a retrogression in the progress that had already been made in terms of assessment innovation:

“I think the negative things I see again and again are what I call a disease: the use of multiple choice questions. This has nothing to do with assessment. This is the representation of the inability of teachers to assess. For example, we have this French philosopher who wrote a book called "The trees of knowledge". And the idea of this book was that people would be able to create their own 'coat of arms' where they would describe their interests, competencies, etc. and they did that on paper. They could draw a chart, they would put it on the wall, and discuss it. And then someone decided to use technology to do it. This tool, which was just a tool for mindmapping, in comparison to the use of pen and paper where people could think about themselves, reflect about themselves, to learn about others, to recognise others, suddenly the digital tool could be used by HR management in order to manage people [...] So technology can add an entropic effect to pedagogy, but they have the potential to destroy pedagogy.” (S5P3).

There is also feedback that can be obtained from learners in online courses, which can help academics' competencies to develop. In the following extract, a participant states that

online learners provide honest, unfiltered feedback that can be more difficult to obtain in face-to-face settings:

I think probably what they take back is a greater empathy with being a learner and better understanding of how the course fits into the learners' lives, and other things that they're doing. So when you work with people online they tend to share stuff about what's going on in other parts of their lives, they tend to talk more openly about how things are, providing honest, unfiltered feedback "this module fits in with this module", "this activity is clashing or complementing something else", etc. You don't necessarily get that in a face-to-face class, so I think this kind of empathy and a better understanding of the students' perspective and the students' needs comes through quite well. (S5P2)

5. Discussion

This chapter contains a discussion based on the insights generated from the findings reported in the previous chapter (Chapter 5: Findings), in combination with the literature presented in the background chapter (Chapter 2: Background and Literature Review). In the first section, a narrative of the impact of MOOCs within the scope of this research is described. Secondly, a detailed discussion is provided on how staff respond to the digital transformation forces in HEIs. The third section rounds up the discussion with an account of the challenges and opportunities for a competent workforce. The fourth section is a justification of how this thesis has attempted to transcend contextual differences such as disciplines, pedagogical approaches and university strategies.

5.1. A transformative cycle

In light of the findings generated from both the interviews and the literature review, a cyclical model is suggested as a common narrative about the role of MOOCs in helping staff to prepare for educational transformation within universities.

1. HEIs are driven towards a digital transformation.
2. Academics are required to adapt their competencies to new digital environments.
3. MOOCs have come into the HE scene as new education technologies.
4. Many academics have become involved in the production of MOOCs
5. Many academics have intensified their use of technology-enhanced learning approaches
6. Many academics have adapted their practice to digitally-enhanced environments
7. Competencies are cascaded across the institution
8. Digital education transformation in HEIs is facilitated

This cycle is graphically represented in figure 5.1:

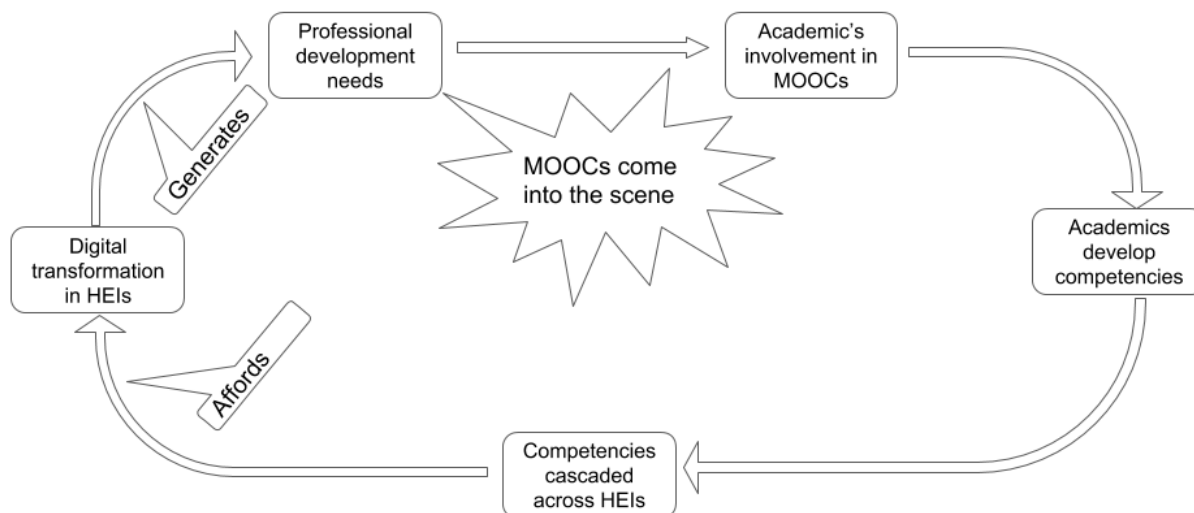


Figure 5.1: Interpreted cycle of MOOCs influence in HEIs transformation

This narrative is presented in a cyclical fashion on the understanding that the driving forces for digital transformation in HEIs are not only external. That is, the societal demands for a more accessible, flexible and networked education do not provoke change on their own. At its best, these external pressures can generate tension, but not transformation. Only a combination of these external forces and the internal push from competent staff can generate sufficient momentum for transformation to occur. Under the lens of this thesis, MOOCs can be a contributory element to this transformation. The following subsections are more detailed descriptions of each of the elements of this cycle.

5.1.1. HEIs are driven towards a digital transformation.

In the introductory chapters of this thesis (chapters 1 and 2) it has been suggested that universities are organisations that are relatively sensitive to digital transformation forces (PwC, 2015; Eggers & Bellman, 2015). Much of this transformation has to do with the advent of the Web (Windschitl, 1998), placing different forms of online learning at the core of this phenomenon (Picciano, Seaman & Allen, 2010).

The conversations with the participants corroborate this tendency. There was a generalised understanding that those were the rule of the game: ‘we have to use all these new digital technologies, we have to play the game with these new rules, and much of this happens online’. Participants rarely questioned that their practice required these new tools. Indeed, while some of the most experienced educationalists would point out that we are not making

a big difference by teaching with these new tools, but still, the use of new tools was hardly contested. This fits in with the adaptation of the Activity Theory framework for this thesis, which places the use of digital technologies as *rules*. These rules are co-constructed between the observed acceptance attitudes internally, and the external pressures of the digital economy.

5.1.2. Digital competencies requirements.

The idea that the use of digital technologies is a *rule* entails that academics are required to be competent in such use. What Beetham and Sharpe (2007) and Weller (2011) advise as good transformational practice is starting to become a requirement, judging from policies such as those reflected in some strategic documents (UCL, 2016; University of Edinburgh, 2015) discussed in Section 2.4.4.3. 'Activity Theory and This Thesis'. These policies require academics to use certain digital technologies to meet good practice standards.

As found through the interviews, developing MOOCs was not usually a requirement for the academic participants. They did not have a wide choice of digital tools to develop or deliver their materials, however. The content management system, for example, had to be the one provided by the platform where the MOOC would be hosted. The videos had to be recorded to such a standard that only multimedia production teams could set up the filming sessions. The communication tools (forums and other social media) were those chosen by the platform providers and the learning design teams.

In short, academics had to adapt their teaching to the tools they were provided with. This adaptation process can be considered to result in a further process of competency acquisition, especially in the competent use of digital technologies. Whether these competencies are all leading to transformation is a different issue. In fact, the participants had divided opinions on this: some thought that teaching with these new tools would equip them to teach differently, and some others thought that they would teach in the same way but with different tools. There were even some who suggested that these tools were actually causing a retrogression in teaching practice.

5.1.3. MOOCs have come into the HE scene as new education technologies.

The fact that the irruption of MOOCs has captured the attention of a large proportion of the HE academic sector in the UK is undeniable (Daniel, 2012). The fact that they have still not revolutionised HE is also undeniable (Webster, 2018), although they can be considered as

contributing agents of transformation. In the cycle proposed here, MOOCs' main contribution to transformation is the push they exert for academics to use digital learning tools.

Through the interviews, it was found that some participants considered MOOCs as a turning point towards the meaningful use of new teaching tools and approaches over the Web. That perception was far from unanimous, but there was some consensus that has been some move towards new approaches to teaching through technologies since MOOCs came into the scene.

5.1.4. Many academics have become involved in the production of MOOCs

A common internal process for MOOCs to soak into an institution is through an agreement between a platform provider and the senior management of a university, usually with the highest institutional authorities involved. A task force is then created to advertise the partnership, call for expressions of interest to participate, and select the best of these. This is the process that was followed in all the institutions to which the participants belonged. Detailed descriptions of this process are found in White & White's work (2016) from the lens of Socio-Technical Interaction Networks (STIN) theory.

This process tends to involve many academics in an institution, usually depending on the size of the investment. This involvement can be direct and indirect. Some academics are tasked with leading roles in the MOOC development, but many are asked, or volunteer, to contribute with content, advice, reviews and support.

5.1.5. Intensification of the use of digital learning tools

When academics join a MOOC endeavour for the first time, they often also use certain digital tools for the first time. They do not always operate all these tools, for example the content management system provided by the platform, which is usually handled by the learning designers. Academics are, however, often asked to collaborate in the production of digital assets. For this, they use digital tools novel to them, and very often they are trained in this by other MOOC team members.

A significant example is the discussion forums when the MOOCs are running. Judging from the conversations with participants (see subsection 4.2.2), this was on many occasions the first time they made a meaningful use of semi-synchronous social media communication tools, which elicited their reflections on talking to unknown people in Web 2.0 environments.

5.1.6. Digital practices after MOOC involvement

Some of the participants recognised an intensification in their use of digital tools after their involvement in MOOCs, especially social media and multimedia tools. Some are keener to participate in a video recording after their MOOC participation, feeling more confident to do so., Some others use their newly created LinkedIn and Facebook groups, and there were some who incorporated a blogging system in their modules.

That is not true for absolutely everyone, as there were some others who reported not having experienced any change in that respect. However, it can be argued that MOOCs contribute to the popularisation of digital practices in the institution. Perhaps it would be going too far to state that MOOCs convert academics into digital practitioners, but they certainly establish scenarios for the meaningful use of, and reflection about, digital education technologies.

5.1.7. Competencies are cascaded across the institution

MOOCs are sizeable projects that require frequent communications among teams with diverse roles in an institution, mixing staff in professional services departments, libraries and academic departments (White & White, 2016).

The knowledge transmitted through team meetings, queries, support sessions and other communication events cascades through these networks, infusing digital competencies across the institution, in turn contributing to a reinforcement of the institutional digital culture. It is noticeable that participants in the studies often reported having ‘talked about digital with many people’ intensively during their involvement in MOOCs.

5.1.8. Digital education transformation in HEIs is facilitated

From the observation that frequent instances of transformation occur at individual level, it can be inferred that the university moves towards digital transformation at an institutional level from bottom-up pressures.

5.2. Responding to HEIs’ digital transformation requirements

In this thesis, digital transformation has been theoretically conceptualised as a driving force. It has been assumed that digital transformation has become a requirement, regardless of the extent to which it has been achieved so far. As a requirement, it expects a response. This

section contains a discussion of the responses of relevant individuals and the communities to which they belong, i.e. academics and HEIs, to these demands for digital transformation.

5.2.1. The principle of contradictions in action

One of the key principles of Activity Theory is that of contradictions (Engeström, 2001), which are particularly present in educational technology contexts (Murphy, 2008), as discussed in Chapter 2, (2.4.4.2 Activity Theory in TEL Settings').

The enactment of this principle of contradictions was repeatedly observed in the conversations with the participants, especially when reflecting upon the potential of MOOCs as agents of educational transformation. On several occasions, participants stated their view that the technologies used in MOOCs were simply reproducing old forms of teaching.

This becomes especially apparent in the area of assessment, where a few participants stated that MOOCs were often just new placeholders for quiz questions that were no different to the old multiple choice questions that had been used in tests in order to save the time involved in providing meaningful feedback (see section 5.4.3 Assessment and feedback).

Other examples of contradictions can be found in those participants who were expecting to engage in interesting conversations with wide communities of learners, but instead found that the forums were littered with small talk, personal introductions, and praise of the content, at best (see section 5.3.1. 'Attention to diverse learning communities')

It should be noted that contradictions not only work in the direction of barriers to transformation, but also in the opposite direction, as motives for change and development. As Engeström points out, "as the contradictions of an activity system are aggravated, some individual participants begin to question and deviate from its established norms. In some cases, this escalates into collaborative envisioning and a deliberate collective change effort" (2001, p. 137). This was also observed in the interactions with the participants. There was a recurring theme in which participants were demanding more institutional support to develop MOOCs as a starting point to keep developing further online programmes. Their liaisons with learning designers and learning technologists created communities of practice in which there was a collective lobbying effort towards establishing structured institutional support to the development of new forms of educational provision, mainly in the form of the inclusion of these new tasks in their lists of statutory duties and responsibilities (see 4.3.3).

5.2.2. Different HEIs, different agendas

The role that MOOCs play in HEIs is highly variable not only from institution to institution, but from time to time. The support mechanisms in place, the staff and teams allocated, the funding dedicated, all these factors can quickly change over time, resulting in a radically different scenario depending on where and when it is observed. This fluidity has been reported in works such as that of White & White (2016).

The impact of the institutional agendas in respect of MOOCs was widely discussed in the interviews, especially in the World Cafe study and the interviews with experienced academics. The individual views and experiences of each of the participants were highly varied. Different participants had a different understandings of the intentions of the university in respect to MOOCs. Some thought of MOOCs as merely instruments for experimentation. Some others had a very clear idea of MOOCs as exclusively public engagement tools. Others understood the multiplicity of purposes for embracing MOOCs in the institution. Perhaps the most common understanding was that MOOCs are so new that their ultimate purpose is yet to be determined, both by the senior decision makers who ordered them, and by the academics and professional services who developed them.

5.2.3. Platforms and pedagogies

MOOCs are usually the product of partnerships between institutions and platforms. These platforms not only offer the hosting, but also the user interface of the courses (Yuan & Powell, 2013). The user interface influences the user experience, and in turn the learner experience. This is why the pedagogical underpinnings of a platform can shape how the learning object of a course are distributed and displayed.

In this thesis, some of the studies were carried out in an institution who partnered with FutureLearn, while another study was in an institution who partnered with edX. Some influence from the platform's pedagogical philosophy, or perhaps alignment, was noticed in some specific instances. These instances were not analysed in depth, or exploited, as they were out of the scope of this thesis. It should be mentioned, however, that behaviourist tradition is still current in many settings, and clearly tangible.

5.3. Opportunities for a competent workforce for transformation

5.3.1. Teaching competencies for transformation

In section 2.1.4 'Teaching Competencies', a table was presented with a model for teaching competencies and motivations. After analysing the findings, the following table adds the enhanced competencies that can be acquired as a result of the participation in the development of a MOOC.

Table 5.1. MOOC-enhanced competencies

TEACHING COMPETENCY	DESCRIPTION
Planning of the teaching and learning process	Encompassing the management of the different approaches to learning from a problem solution perspective, given a) the different discipline-specific pedagogies and the different stages of intellectual development and b) the different context-specific pedagogies relevant to online and flexible learning.
Content preparation	Applying awareness of the wide diversity of learning communities, and knowing how to use a seamless pedagogy. Emphasis is put on careful quality assurance of the materials presented, given their potentially global reach.
Organisation and justification	Organising their own continuous professional development in view of the new interactions with learning design professionals. Choosing the most appropriate training among the different options in the institutional offer, in light of the awareness of diverse learning communities' needs, acquired as a result of new interactions with these communities.
Use of new technologies	Adapting the institution's context to the current society of information and knowledge. Competence in the use of novel learning technologies, adapting these to their teaching and learning processes.
Teaching methodology design	Applying the needed and available extended resources to organise novel and meaningful learning experiences, selecting the most appropriate method depending on the digital learning activities proposed, and developing innovative instructional tasks.
Communication and interaction with students	Enhancing the pedagogical skill of building the meanings of knowledge, and communicating it to wide and diverse audiences, not only with in-house students, but with a wider learning community.
Tutoring and	Offering new forms of support and orientation, especially through the organisation of scalable approaches to online mentoring, by leveraging

counseling	network learning approaches.
Assessment	Creating ingenious scalable assessment approaches beyond the multiple choice test, taking advantages of the learners' potential ability to self-assess, and to assess others. Selecting the most relevant feedback needs of diverse learning communities so as to maximise the impact of general feedback messages.
Reflection and research about teaching	Acquiring an enhanced awareness of the relationship between the duties and dilemmas of the teaching profession, both in the open and closed educational spaces, where there are a set of values that challenge social reality; Fostering critical thinking, solidarity and justice in global, networked and online contexts.

5.3.2. The element of confidence

Confidence is an important trait of a competent educator, as explained in section 2.1.5 'The Role of Confidence in Teaching Competencies'. In the focus groups with ECAs, confidence was a prominent theme, and many participants stated having gained confidence when mentoring in MOOCs. There were also more experienced academics in study 4 who stated that MOOCs enhanced their confidence in front of a camera, or in their social media interactions (see section 4.2.2). Therefore, it could be argued that MOOCs enhance competencies by enhancing confidence.

However, confidence is not an element usually included in teaching competency frameworks. There are exceptions such as the Facilitation Competency Framework of the National College for School Leadership (2012), but they are not usual.

The absence of explicit and fully elaborated mentions to confidence in most competency frameworks is understandable for several reasons. Perhaps the main barrier to the inclusion of confidence is that there is little research that seeks empirical evidence on the relationship between competency and confidence in educational settings focussed on educators, despite the abundance of studies on the relationship between confidence and the attainment of pupils (Metcalf, 1997).

Another obstacle is that both confidence and self-confidence are difficult to benchmark against competency frameworks, as it is difficult to support with evidence. There are of measuring tools for this purpose, such as the Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965), widely used in social research, but no attempts have been made to incorporate them into competency frameworks.

5.3.3. Digital literacies development: cascading knowledge across staff

A fundamental element of a smooth digital transformation in an organisation is a digitally literate workforce. This is the reason why a digitally literate workforce has been considered an *outcome* of the whole Activity Theory mapping in section 2.5.4.3 'Activity Theory and This Thesis'. As explained in that section, when using MOOCs as *tools*, academics (the so-called *subjects* in the AT map) engage in new *transformative practices* that have a digitally literate workforce as a desirable *outcome*.

The findings displayed in this thesis contain a high number of instances in which academics at all levels of experience, from novice to expert educators, engaged in practices that were perceived as means of enhancing digital competencies. Through their involvement with MOOCs, many of the participants recognised their engagement in a wide range of digital practices, in line with Weller's descriptions of the transformation of digital practice (Weller, 2011), discussed in section 2.1.3 'The role of competencies in digital education transformation'.

5.3.3.1. Information and media literacy

A significant example is that of information and media literacy, as described in the Higher Education teachers' version of the Jisc digital capabilities framework (Jisc, 2018).

Within the findings chapter, section 4.2.3 'Information literacy', it can be appreciated how many of the interviewed academics became aware of the legal issues around managing digital content, especially in terms of copyrights and licensing. Much of that knowledge emerged and spread around the institution as a result of the interactions created around MOOC production and delivery. Academics engaged in frequent conversations and negotiations with staff, mainly learning designers and asset managers, who had broad expertise in digital copyrights and licensing. These academics were not necessarily digital champions with expertise and inclinations to digital practices, which means that digital learning designers were not only 'preaching to the converted'. Instead, it could be argued that a specific element of digital education culture, namely content sharing, spread around the faculties, reaching academics who had not previously thought about it in detail.

The element of open practices is particularly relevant to the development of information literacies. Many of the open practices that, according to Weller (2011), contribute to digital transformative practices are closely related to content sharing. The cascaded knowledge about 'what open means' and 'what is open and what is not' within the institution as a result of the inclusion of MOOCs in their portfolio is palpable. Frequent discussions about openness take place in the course of the MOOC development and delivery activities, in

which academics necessarily engage by the sole fact of forming part of a MOOC development team. That was also an important part of the discussions with participants in the interviews, especially when discussing the value that they were adding to their learning materials, and the positive mission they were accomplishing by making these learning experiences available online for those who otherwise were not able to afford it. As well as the provision of free educational resources, the value of openness as the freedom to reuse and repurpose a large corpus of content openly available was also a recurrent conversation topic in the interviews.

The above are all arguments to support the idea that MOOCs can contribute to the diffusion of important elements of open and digital culture across HEIS, a digital culture that is needed for effective digital transformation processes.

5.3.3.2. Online communication and networked learning

Another representative example is that of the skills for online communication. The Jisc Digital capabilities model places emphasis on these kind of skills by dedicating a whole section to digital communication, collaboration and participation, defining it as the capacity to communicate effectively in digital media and spaces, participate in digital teams and working groups, and to participate in, facilitate and build digital networks.

In subsection 4.2.2 'Online communication' of the findings chapter there were several accounts of academics at all levels, from ECAs to expert educationalists, illustrating a process of having developed new digital communication skills when interacting in social media. The interactions of these academics were carried out for educational purposes, and many of them perceived an enhanced understanding of networked learning through practice. As discussed in section 2.1.3 'The role of competencies in digital education transformation', networked practices are considered to be an essential element of digital practice transformation (Weller, 2011), and MOOCs can play an important role in equipping academics with this capability. One of the main ways in which the development of these capabilities is enacted through MOOCs is that of participation in the communicative tools provided by the MOOC platform. These usually come in the form of forums, where the learning communities interact as part of their learning process. These participation forums are often complemented with adjacent spaces in other social media such as Twitter, Facebook and Youtube, where academics have the opportunity to interact - and often do - with learners as part of a learning activity. These interactions often place educators in spaces that they would not otherwise visit frequently, therefore integrating them in social interaction digital forms that may be new to them.

6. Conclusion

This thesis is the result of the insights gathered during six years of research and professional practice around MOOCs. Sustained on the theoretical foundations of Activity Theory, the thesis has placed HEIs in a universe where forces such as digitalisation and changes in educational demands have allowed the emergence of new educational tools such as MOOCs. It has shown how academics, the subjects of this study, engage in real-world experiences to hone their competencies, ultimately helping HEIs to meet the challenges of education in the digital economy.

In this conclusion chapter, the research questions posed in the thesis will be answered. Later on, a discussion of the contributions of this thesis will be presented. These will be followed by a set of recommendations for different HEIs stakeholders, namely ECAs, established academics, and senior decision makers. Finally, future work will be suggested that builds on this ongoing research project.

6.1. Answers to the research questions

In this subsection, the three blocks of research questions will be answered. The questions were the following:

- Q1 What competencies do academics develop as a result of their involvement in the production and delivery of MOOCs?
 - How do these competencies contribute to a transformation in digital practice?
 - How does the massiveness and openness of MOOCs influence their teaching practices, both online and on campus?
- Q2 How do academics respond to the digital transformation demands of HEIs as a result of their involvement in MOOCs?
 - What kinds of operational and workload concerns arise for academics involved in MOOCs, in relation to wider online/digital learning tasks?
 - What kinds of new work dynamics and relationships arise when academics are involved in MOOCs and other forms of digital/online learning?
- Q3 What opportunities can MOOCs bring to HEIs for a digitally competent workforce?

- How can the teaching quality of HEIs benefit from the adoption of MOOCs in their portfolio?
- How can the digital preparedness of HEIs benefit from the adoption of MOOCs in their portfolio?

6.1.1. Question block 1

As the analyses conducted in the different studies of this thesis suggest, academics often seem to develop a wide range of competencies as a result of their involvement in MOOCs. Of these competencies, some are perceived as more salient than others, depending on how experienced academics are.

More experienced academics seem to enhance three main sets of competencies: their ability to communicate in digital contexts, their understanding of the implications of sharing content online, and their drive to explore innovative educational approaches without compromising quality standards. On the other hand, they do not tend to perceive a significant reinforcement of their teaching competencies beyond MOOCs, with the exception of isolated instances in which they rethink the way they deliver specific pieces of content.

Early career academics seem to develop different kinds of competencies when working with MOOCs. These are more related to teaching, consolidating their abilities to communicate discipline-specific content. The main source of this consolidation is often an enhanced confidence in their own subject knowledge and their ability to explain it.

Both experienced and non-experienced academics find in MOOCs a set of challenges that require them to find creative solutions to new problems. These are mainly related to the fact that they are not in control of their learners' profiles, due to the openness and massiveness of MOOCs. By having to anticipate how their content is going to be received, as well as having to reflect upon multiple learner reactions and feedback, often in the form of comments, academics engage in certain transformative practices that often encourage them to rethink the way they teach back on campus. This is not always the case, however. It should be clarified that the fact that certain transformative practices take place in MOOC development processes, does not mean that academics are transforming education by working with MOOCs.

6.1.2. Question block 2

For academics, involvement in MOOCs seems to provoke certain changes in their responses to digital transformation in Higher Education. They often perceive that MOOCs as

tools are too new to fit in to the long-established organisational processes in their institutions. On the other hand, they display a generalised eagerness to participate in educational innovation ventures as members of newly created teams with an unprecedented variety of roles and responsibilities.

Academics also tend to place trust in the know-how of digital learning specialists for the MOOC development process. That is especially true in pedagogical and online communication aspects. They tend to follow guidance and instructions, and negative reactions towards the advice from professional services are rare. As an exception, perhaps there is a certain generalised resistance to give in when interpreting content sharing regulations and policies.

Among academics involved in MOOCs, there is also a generalised feeling that more effort is needed to establish the role of MOOCs within the institutional strategies. Academics demand much more support from senior management in that respect, as it seems that MOOCs are staying in the experimental stage for too long. The incorporation of MOOC-related tasks in contractual duties and responsibilities in exchange of the equivalent alleviation of non-MOOC related tasks is perhaps one of the main demands in that respect. The allocation of support mechanisms such as teaching assistantships and more multimedia production support are also elements that academics perceive as lacking.

MOOCs also seem to generate new forms of collegiality within the institutions. Teams are usually created with academic and non-academic members at different levels of seniority, but the novelty of the projects seems to reduce hierarchical distances, at least while projects are in the development stage. In Activity Theory terms, the use of MOOCs as novel *tools* seem to contribute to a reinforced sense of *community* where subjects with different levels of responsibility experiment and innovate together, with little certainty about the outcome of the product.

6.1.3. Question block 3

MOOCs can contribute to a transformational culture in HEIs, if appropriately aligned to their strategic agendas.

From an Activity Theory Perspective, MOOCs can quickly and effectively spread a culture of change in the *community*, i.e. the institution. They can become helpful *tools* to familiarise *subjects*, with innovative educational approaches. Frequent and intense interactions around those novel approaches emerge when MOOCs are introduced in the institution.

Conversations with different stances are generated. These internal discourses bring online, digital education, and educational transformation into focus. Even though these stances can sometimes exhibit resistance, scepticism and rejection, they still raise awareness and cascade knowledge about digital learning innovation. The presence of these discourses within the institution can therefore contribute to a digitally and transformationally competent workforce.

A lack of sustained support from senior university decision makers, however, poses some risk of missing these opportunities. Sustained support means a steady alignment of MOOCs with the digital and educational aspects of the university strategy over time, instead of intermittent and impulsive initiatives, too often in response to specific funding opportunities. It is of paramount importance to envisage the middle- and long-term benefits of MOOCs in the institution, often intangible at first glance, and look beyond the short-term outcomes. This is the best way to avoid disappointment and disillusionment, too frequent a reaction to MOOCs from HEIs, often due to short-sighted attitudes rather than research-informed insights.

6.3. Contributions of this thesis

This thesis has been the product of a series of studies that have shed light on the competencies for higher education transformation achieved through involvement in the production and delivery of MOOCs. These studies have been published in relevant journals and conference proceedings, attracting a high number of citations for a pre-doctoral project. In this section, a breakdown of the contributions is presented.

6.3.1. Theoretical contribution

One of the main contributions of this thesis is a novel interpretation of certain elements of the Activity Theory model. MOOCs have been placed as a *tool* for education transformation within an activity system. The use of innovative digital technologies has been interpreted as a *rule*, on the understanding that there are limited alternatives to it. This assumption may seem technologically determinist at a first glance. By accepting this rule, however, the new tools we are provided with can be used *purposefully*, to tackle the challenges of education in the twenty-first century.

6.3.2. Methodological contribution

In order to weave five studies conducted over five years into a unified and coherent narrative, a template analysis method was deployed on the ensemble of the raw data, instead of the analysed data of each of the studies. That is, a new template was created only for this thesis, which would align with the Activity Theory based conceptualisation, and the research questions also bespoke for the thesis. The description of this methodology contributes with a novel approach to combine different studies, drawing directly from their raw data instead of from its previous interpretation.

6.3.3. Empirical contribution

This thesis has contributed novel empirical evidence of the effects of MOOCs in the development of competencies defined in established frameworks such as the UKPSF and Jisc Digital Capabilities framework. Through interviews and focus group sessions, rich discussions have taken place with a significant number of participants on how MOOCs have been - or not - a catalyst for change in their educational practices. For this reason, all the transcripts of these discussions have been added to the appendices section.

6.3.4. Axiological contribution

This thesis is an unhidden pitch for the adoption of MOOCs in HEIs, beyond the hype they experienced a few years ago, between 2012 and 2014. Without ignoring the reservations held by a significant part of the research community, this thesis has stated the intrinsic value of MOOCs from an unusual angle. This angle relates to the informal, vicarious learning that occurs when MOOCs are used as teaching tools.

MOOCs are often portrayed as unfulfilled promises of education transformation, democratisation and monetisation. These discourses are often deterrents for university strategic decision makers adopting or continuing support for MOOCs in their institutions. The discourses, therefore, tend to result in MOOCs not being given sufficient time in which to evolve, mature and adapt in order to fulfil their promise. This thesis states the value of MOOCs from an alternative perspective, with a firm belief that MOOCs are still promising transformative agents for quality higher education in society.

6.4. Recommendations

As explained in several passages through the course of this document, this thesis is the outcome of both research and professional experience gathered over nearly six years of MOOC-related activity. The conclusions achieved as a result of the observations made during this period have given me a platform to make three sets of recommendations, addressed at three different levels of seniority. This section will start with recommendations to ECAs, followed by recommendations to established academics, and finishing with recommendations at strategic and policy levels.

6.4.1. Recommendations to ECAs

6.4.1.1. Seek for opportunities to participate in MOOC delivery

Participating in MOOC production and delivery is advisable for ECAs, if opportunities arise. One of the most common routes to becoming an established academic is through the completion of a PhD and a subsequent series of postdoctoral research positions, to achieve a lectureship later on. Over this early career stage, it is not uncommon to be assigned some teaching tasks with not too high levels of responsibility. Marking, assisting practical sessions, running occasional seminars, covering absences, are some of the tasks usually performed at this transition stage. MOOC-related tasks could be added to this list of activities and could smooth the transition from researcher to teacher. The contact with the learners is meant to increase gradually as the academic career progresses, but the engagement in teaching

activities can sometimes be abrupt, for example from having performed a few demonstration tasks to running a whole module. ECAs should therefore consider participating in MOOC delivery, such as mentoring and teaching assistantship, when the chance is presented.

In fact, ECAs should actively seek these opportunities for their own benefit, for two main reasons: They provide work experience in digitally rich environments, which enhances digital competencies; they also provide a potentially high number of rich interactions with learners, relatively experimental and at a relatively low risk, which enhances a wide range of teaching competencies.

6.4.1.2. Seek out opportunities to participate in MOOC production

For ECAs, opportunities to contribute to MOOC content are perhaps not as frequent as those to deliver it. They are not nonexistent, however, and can provide a wide range of opportunities not only for training, but also to enhance reputation and CVs.

ECAs are therefore advised to seek out these opportunities, and take advantage of the interactions with multimedia production and learning design professionals that result from providing online content in this context. On most occasions, the pedagogical principles that generate the constraints in the specialist content required in MOOCs, are applicable to the wider context of higher education.

Participating in the production of a MOOC in the early stages of one's career can also introduce curriculum design practices, and other activities related to more senior academic practice. ECAs are therefore encouraged to make the most of the interactions with senior academics resulting from planning and producing MOOCs.

Also, ECAs should make efforts to maximise the impact of their contribution in MOOCs, by recording it in their lists of academic achievements, as well as promoting their work through a variety of digital platforms, since the mere awareness of it can itself be a valuable result of their participation in MOOCs.

6.4.1.3. Seek certification, engage in reflective practice

Professional certifications such as HEA fellowship and ALT membership can be beneficial for the career progression of ECAs. Obtaining these certifications requires producing a reflective practice document, assessed against a set of criteria, widely described in this thesis. If an ECA has collaborated in a MOOC, it is highly advisable to invoke the experience acquired in such activity. As explained in the thesis, participation in MOOCs addresses many of the descriptors in these certification systems. It is therefore advisable to become familiar

with the requirements of these certifications before engaging in any teaching activity, including a MOOC. This way, practice can be carried out with these criteria in mind before hand, making it easier to address and record the most important descriptors of teaching quality.

6.4.1.4. Participate in MOOCs as a learner

For ECAs, signing up as learners to a MOOC, or several MOOCs, in their discipline is highly advisable. This helps develop an understanding not only of how content is delivered to wide audiences, but also how these audiences receive it.

Full participation, including frequent interactions with other learners and completing the assessments, can provide a complete and detailed picture of the intended learner experience of a particular MOOC. This can equip ECAs with an enhanced understanding of how learning materials should be presented for a positive learning experience.

It is important to observe how the content and activities are sequenced, how and what type of the tasks are set, where it is apparent that more resources have been deployed to multimedia production, and other aspects of course design. It is also important to do this with a critical eye, assessing what is to be praised and what can be improved.

6.4.1.5. Consider the risk attendant to online exposure

Participating in a MOOC involves broadcasting to relatively large numbers of unknown people who are likely to express opinions. It is not a one-way communication process, but a two-way one. In this process, one party, the educator, is always known. The other party, the learner, not always. It is therefore advisable to make a clear differentiation between one's academic professional identity and personal identity.

Online identity management is an important digital skill for digital wellbeing. That becomes especially true when it comes to MOOCs, and it deserves sufficient attention.

6.4.1.6. Balance time and workload against reward

One of the main challenges posed by being involved in MOOCs is perhaps establishing boundaries between non-paid outreach activities and paid tasks. MOOCs are often seen as a springboard for academic recognition. ECAs involved in MOOCs, especially PhD students and candidates, can benefit from the experience gained in participating in these ventures, and from the recognition associated to it. It is rare, however, that ECAs are able to obtain direct financial rewards to compensate for the amount of effort put in to producing MOOCs. Indirect rewards are neither guaranteed, such as criteria promotion within the institution,

criteria explicitly mentioned in job descriptions. In other words, it is rare to find an academic job advertisement in which having been involved in MOOCs is a 'bonus'. It is therefore advisable to see MOOCs as a complementary activity with long term and uncertain rewards, and to devote full dedication only when clearly stated in the duties and responsibilities of an academic contract.

6.4.2. Recommendations to established academics

6.4.2.1. All of the above

All the recommendations for ECAs expressed in the previous subsection apply also to more experienced and established academics. MOOCs and online learning are relatively new to most academics, and the change of context involves a change of approach. When navigating in such uncharted terrain, it is advisable to stay well informed, not only through research and journalistic literature, but also through frequent informal inquiry within the institution.

6.4.2.2. Empower the juniors

If a senior academic is given the opportunity to participate in the development of a MOOC, it is advisable to seek as much involvement from junior academics as possible. Involving juniors should not only consist of letting them participate as voluntary teaching assistants during the delivery stage, but also involving them in the creation stage.

It is also advisable to seek as many resources as possible to reward their participation, either financially or by alleviating them from other duties and responsibilities. To maximise the impact of their participation in the development of MOOCs on their careers, senior members should provide junior members with guidance on how to match the skills acquired against teaching and research excellence frameworks, and advise on how to get this appropriately certified and recorded.

6.4.2.3. Research and publish

Academic literature on MOOCs is relatively new. As of 2018, publications about MOOCs are not older than six or seven years. Besides the frequently commented 'end of the hype', MOOCs are still a subject of academic interest. MOOCs are still present in most digital education calls for papers, and academic communities of many disciplines still demand MOOC-related literature. When involved in a MOOC, every academic should think of conducting research on any aspect of it, be it the analysis of their outcomes, a reflection of

their experience, or the impact in their target learning community. There are still many research gaps to be filled in this area.

6.4.2.4. Champion and lobby

MOOCs are new tools for HEIs, and as such it is still difficult to establish an HE system-wide common understanding about their role. It is also still difficult to determine their outcomes, and whether they fulfil their mission. These uncertainties often lead to institutional disengagement, which in turn leads to the MOOC-supportive policies being discontinued, or never adopted in the first place. This disengagement from senior decision makers can easily extend to online and digital learning supportive policies, which in turn can stifle education transformation. Continuous bottom-up pressure is therefore needed to raise the profile of MOOCs and other transformative approaches to the higher echelons of institutions.

6.4.3. Strategic and policy recommendations

This third set of recommendations is addressed at those who have strategic responsibilities in a university. All these recommendations are made on the premise that running MOOCs requires a financial investment, the recoverability of which can be achieved with appropriate internal policies. If appropriately conducted, MOOC projects can add significant value to the educational provision of these universities.

6.4.3.1. Consider long term marketing

Since the early days of MOOCs, many universities have included MOOCs in their educational catalogues to be used as marketing tools. In many cases, funds originally allocated for marketing activities were dedicated to the production of MOOCs. The difficulties in finding immediate evidence of conversion from the leads created by MOOCs, however, has led many institutions to reduce or even discontinue funding. A strong recommendation here is to support MOOCs in a sustained manner in order to harness the long-term reputational benefits that they can contribute. MOOCs are relatively inexpensive digital marketing tools that can enhance the web presence of the institution, especially when compared to traditional communication and marketing services. Outcomes and conversion assessments should therefore be made in a much longer span of time than is currently the case. Also, the benchmark of these assessments should be adapted to the current demands of the digital economy, in order to avoid short-termist decisions that may not always be appropriate for the marketing interests of the institution.

6.4.3.2. Consider the digital maturity of the institution

It is highly advisable to consider the contribution that MOOCs can make to the digital maturity of the institution. When involved in MOOCs, staff handle an array of digital tools for educational purposes, beyond the platform interface. They engage in frequent social media interactions, they produce content in new formats such as video and animations, they experiment with novel authoring tools, and they often analyse the impact of their work in the learning communities. Such intense activity can therefore prepare the institution for the new digital challenges that it will inevitably face in the very near future. It is therefore advisable to integrate MOOCs into the digital strategies of the universities by creating mixed teams of academics, third-space professionals - i.e. learning designers and learning technologists - , media production staff, and Information Technologies staff. Assigning the development of MOOCs to these teams can enhance their cohesion, leaving the institution in a strong position to face the above-mentioned digital challenges.

6.4.3.3. Consider the mission of higher education

Most university strategy documents state that their ultimate mission is to provide a service to society, recognising that education is a social good to which universities must contribute. This argument should always be on the table when making decisions in terms of the resources to be dedicated to MOOCs, and it should be granted the weight it deserves.

Although there are some well-founded critiques of how and why MOOCs are not fulfilling their apparent promise of becoming agents for social mobility, these discourses should be interpreted with caution and should not be used as arguments to preclude universities from embracing MOOCs. It may be true that, initially, they have mainly reached those already educated, but very little time has been allowed for them to permeate in layers of society where the real need resides. It is therefore recommended not to make premature decisions based on these criticisms.

6.4.3.4. Encourage internal use

It is advisable to establish policies whereby the materials developed for MOOCs must also be used internally in credit bearing modules. Such a policy would have a number of parallel benefits. Firstly, it would guarantee the authenticity of the learning experiences in which MOOC participants engage. Learning in a MOOC of a given university becomes a similar experience to learning as a registered student, which in turn becomes an authentic taster, or primer, of a full programme. Secondly, the quality of the learning experiences for in-campus students can be enhanced, since the materials developed for MOOCs are under the scrutiny

of large learning communities, whose feedback can be effectively harvested. Finally, appropriately planned activities in which both internal students and external MOOC participants interact can become enriched learning experiences for all.

6.4.3.5. Secure academics' time

Developing MOOCs has often been understood as an additional activity in which academics engage voluntarily in exchange for enhancing their impact and having the opportunity to experiment with new educational approaches. This is not a sustainable approach to engaging academics with MOOCs, however, since these can be discouraged when the initial enthusiasm expires.

An institutional commitment to MOOCs should involve the inclusion of MOOC-related tasks into the lists of duties and responsibilities in contracts for academic staff, as well as in the list of objectives in their appraisals. Time devoted to MOOCs should count as much as time devoted to any other administrative, research and educational tasks. Otherwise, a generalised feeling that working with MOOCs is an unrewarded activity can spread in the institution, as well as the risk of associating it to any other kind of education innovation activity. That can in turn become yet another barrier for education transformation in the longer term.

6.5. Limitations

As with any research project this thesis has certain limitations, the awareness of which can be useful for future research. A description of the methodological limitations was provided in section 3.7. There are other limitations that affect the whole study, mainly related to the positionality of the researcher, the differences in the contexts where the research was conducted, and the evolving nature of the topic. These three limitations are discussed in the subsection below:

6.5.1. Personal bias

Both the researcher and the vast majority of participants in all the studies were manifested MOOC advocates. The selection criteria for the participants inevitably involved having taught through a MOOC, so the sample was already self-selective. Perhaps more objectivity was found in the last study in which expert educationalists were interviewed, but even in that there was a generalised advocacy for MOOCs.

Although a serious attempt at a fair treatment has been given to the discourses that reflect upon the misgivings of MOOCs, most of the conversations took place on the assumption that MOOCs were beneficial to education, and to society as a whole. The nuances of such a statement have been the main object of study of this thesis, but a bias towards positive attitudes to MOOCs can be appreciated throughout.

6.5.2. Diversity of contexts

All participants in these studies were European. That is perhaps the only trait that they had in common. The diversity was high in the rest of aspects.

Perhaps the most pervasive diversity consisted of the pedagogical underpinnings of the platforms where participants' MOOCs were hosted. In the study with experienced academics, participants were operating on an xMOOCs platform with a marked behaviourist philosophy of learning. In the conversations with these academics, there were many references to innovation and practice transformation, and the behaviourist philosophy of both the platform and the university was palpable at times. This was different to the constructivist pedagogical underpinnings on which most of the expert educationalists focused when conducting the last study. ECAs remained more neutral in respect to learning theories, although they were trained to conduct a social-constructivist based practice, and in most cases that was their first teaching experience.

Another pervasive contextual diversity was that of the strategic role that MOOCs had in the different universities in which participants worked. This resulted in diverse accounts of participants' experiences around the role of MOOCs in their institutions.

Although these diversities were anticipated, they made it somewhat problematic to achieve a unified corpus to be analysed. A thorough attempt was nonetheless made at addressing questions that were common to a variety of contexts, regardless of the differences in the learning theories influencing the participants, and the strategies of the universities where they were working.

6.5.3. Prevalence

The research work leading to this thesis started when MOOCs were at a very early stage, indeed when the FutureLearn platform had barely started to operate. MOOCs have evolved significantly since then, as has the literature about MOOCs, and the role of MOOCs play in universities. To address this limitation, this thesis has analysed phenomena surrounding MOOCs, such as the competencies that they generate. It has therefore attempted to avoid

the portrayal of a blurry image in motion by targeting elements of their evolution that are not so time sensitive.

6.6. Future work

This thesis addresses an unexplored research area, by relating MOOCs and professional development for teachers in the digital economy. I believe that more research in this area can make a significant contribution to transformation in higher education. This section suggests avenues for future research, both for accreting and extending the scope of this project.

In order to provide more grounds to the answers of the already formulated research questions by accretion, two measures are suggested. The first is the addition of quantitative analysis (6.6.1), the second is a further set of interviews with assessors of established bodies for teaching certifications (6.6.2). In order to expand the scope of the research, the focus will be moved towards a fundamental stakeholder: students (6.6.3).

6.6.1. Quantitative analysis

I have developed this thesis within an epistemological orientation in which I reached my conclusions by interpreting the combined narratives of the participants, the literature, and my own professional experience. Although this approach is purely qualitative, it allows the inclusion of quantitative elements without compromising its validity. Mixed methods are extensively used in social science research, and valuable research can be produced with them (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

In order to add a quantitative element to this ensemble of studies, a survey that has already been designed, is included in Appendix D. This survey intends to involve a large number of participants, initially across the UK, with varied levels of experience and involvement in MOOCs and other online learning ventures. The survey intends to determine how working with MOOCs is perceived as a way to stimulate the competencies needed to teach in a twenty-first century university.

6.6.2. Interviews with assessors

This thesis has generated insights about how academics can gain competencies to face the challenges of transformational practice. The thesis has broken down these competencies into recognisable elements, present in the most widely-used excellence and competency

frameworks in the UK. These insights could be valuable in informing further updates of these or other competency frameworks.

These insights on their own could inform policies at a large scale, but they may lack authority to become influential, after all they come from a doctoral thesis and a relatively short career. A further layer of authority could be added with one more study, however, this time with assessors of official certification bodies such as the Higher Education Academy and the Association of Learning Technologists. A set of interviews with these assessors, touching on the transformational competencies needed and gained through MOOC practice, would add significant value to this project.

6.6.3. An important stakeholder: HE students

This thesis has studied the transformational effects of MOOCs in learning provision, focussing on the perspectives of those who *produce* education in universities. For a more comprehensive portrait of this educational transformation, the perspectives of those who *consume* education in universities will be analysed. That is, HE students' perspectives on the transformational potential of MOOCs will be studied.

My experience as a practitioner and previous research that I have conducted will contribute to establishing the base of this additional study. I have integrated MOOCs in the classroom in different ways, which has allowed me to observe HE students' interactions with MOOCs in the classroom. For example, I was involved in the delivery of a curriculum innovation module, called 'Leaving and Learning in the Web', where the MOOC 'Learning in the Network Age' was integrated. We conducted and published a study on the effectiveness of MOOCs in the classroom (Fair, León-Urrutia, Harris, 2018). I also participated in the publication of a systematic literature review paper about approaches to MOOC integration (Eradze, León-Urrutia, Kerr, Reda, 2019). Collaborating in both of the aforementioned papers, in combination with my practitioner experience, has allowed me to envision the direction this intended future work, with an action plan involving different stages:

- First of all, the research questions will have to be expanded so that they include HE students as subjects. The new set of research questions will ask about the effects of integrating MOOCs in universities on the development of digital and professional competencies of students.
- Secondly, digital competencies frameworks will be incorporated in the study, both for setting a wider background and for benchmarking participant's responses. The chosen framework will be DigiComp (European Commission, 2017).

- Thirdly, the different pedagogical approaches used in the integration of MOOCs in HE classrooms will be explored and analysed, to determine their effectiveness in the development of competencies of students.
- Finally, observations will be conducted and analysed with learning analytics techniques, following the approach of Eradze, Rodriguez Triana & Lampeere (2017). This combined approach proposes semantically annotated lesson observation data to extract nuanced insights of the learning and teaching process that occurs in the classroom. However, the observations will not only be conducted synchronously during the sessions, but also the interactions of students in their virtual learning networks will be observed asynchronously.

This addition will reinforce the contribution to the growing body of research about the effects of MOOCs in Higher Education, touching on an underexplored area: MOOCs' as professional and digital competencies enhancers. This specific sub-area of study is gaining traction, with new publications being released such as that of Van de Poel & Verpoorten (2019), in which the potential of MOOCs for developing competencies is being noticed.

The recommendations made in the previous subsection (6.4.3) will therefore gain grounds on which to be sustained.

7. Relevant publications

I started my PhD studies by the end of 2013, and finished by the end of 2018. Over those five years, I authored over 30 articles, and attracted nearly 200 citations according to Google Scholar.²

This section is an annotated bibliography of the publications that have resulted from the personal research project associated to this thesis. In each of the entries below, an abstract of the publication is provided, together with an explanation of its relevance to the thesis. The publications are listed in order of perceived relevance, instead of chronological or alphabetical order.

² <https://scholar.google.co.uk/citations?user=KScplH425m0C&hl=en>

León-Urrutia, M; Fielding, S. and White, S. (2016) Professional development through MOOCs in higher education institutions: challenges and opportunities for PhD students working as mentors. *Journal of Interactive Media in Education*, 1, 1-11. ([doi:10.5334/jime.427](https://doi.org/10.5334/jime.427))

“The advent of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) has been altering the Higher Education landscape in recent years. This kind of courses are penetrating in an increasing number of universities, the majority of which do not seem to have intentions to stop offering them in the short term. Such courses are generating new educational scenarios to which universities have to adapt, which creates a set of challenges and opportunities, most of them related to the use of technology in education. This study aims to shed light on such challenges and opportunities when a university employs postgraduate students as MOOC mentors.

For this study, a set of focus group interviews were conducted in an English university to PhD students in various disciplines. In the interviews, participants share their experiences as mentors, especially regarding how they developed certain teaching and digital skills, and how they faced certain challenges related to their digital identity.

The results suggest that participating in MOOCs as mentors can help early career researchers to develop certain teaching, digital, and academic skills that could be beneficial for the institutions they work for, and for themselves. However, their online exposure sometimes raises certain implications for their public image, their working conditions, and their online professional identity.”

This was the first significant journal publication during the course of my PhD studies. It responded to a call of papers from the Journal of Interactive Media in Education, inviting research papers within the scope of the FutureLearn Academic Network. As a result of the publication of this paper, the identification of the scope of this thesis was significantly eased. The paper fulfilled different functions: it contributed to the definition of the internal approach to MOOC mentoring within our institution. It also contributed to the body of research that forms the theoretical and pedagogical underpinnings of the FutureLearn platform. It also formed one of the three main pillars of this thesis, namely the interviews with ECAs.

León-Urrutia, M., Cobos, R., & Dickens, K. (2018). MOOCs and their Influence on Higher Education Institutions: Perspectives from the Insiders. *Journal of New Approaches in Educational Research*. 2018, 7 (1): 40-45. doi: 10.7821/naer. 2018.1. 252
URI: <http://hdl.handle.net/10045/72498>.

“Since Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) became a global phenomenon in 2012, there has been constant evolution in the way Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) make sense of them. HEIs embracing MOOCs have dedicated a variety of human resource to this venture. Only in a minority of cases, staff have been appointed exclusively to this role. In all other cases, MOOC related tasks have been allocated to professionals who were already performing other educational tasks. This article contains a study that captures the experiences of these professionals in a Spanish university and a British university, as relates to their involvement in MOOCs. Interviews and group sessions were conducted to ascertain the influence of MOOCs in their practice, and in their opinions about the role of MOOCs in their institutions. The results seem to suggest that participants have positive attitudes towards incorporating MOOCs at the university, although they demand a serious bet for this educational approach from the strategic decision makers in the institutions.”

This publication was the result of the combination of two studies: the World Cafe Study and the study with experienced academics. The latter study was conducted in collaboration with two universities, who partnered with two very different MOOC platform providers. This collaboration sparked frequent conversations in which the pedagogical underpinnings of the platforms were widely discussed, compared and contrasted.

The publication helps understand the extent to which an external platform can influence the pedagogical approach to online learning. One institution-platform partnership had a behaviourist predominance, where many instances were found to illustrate such an approaches. The other institution-platform partnership embraced a predominantly social constructivist approach. The strategic approaches of the institutions were also intensively compared and contrasted. These comparisons led to the realisation that both approaches were only predominant, but not exclusive. That is, the ‘behaviourist’ partnership had many participants realising the social learning role of MOOCs, but there were not many behaviourist inclinations in the ‘constructivist’ partnership.

Another key finding in this paper was that academics demand a much clearer and determined policy towards innovative approaches such as MOOCs. That was the case in both institutions studied, where a lack of fluency in the communications between different hierarchical levels was reported.

León-Urrutia, M., White, S., & White, S. (2016, February). MOOCs in Higher Education Magazines: A Content Analysis of Internal Stakeholder Perspectives. In *Computer Supported Education: 7th International Conference, CSEDU 2015, Lisbon, Portugal, May 23-25, 2015, Revised Selected Papers* (Vol. 583, p. 395). Springer

“Higher Education magazines have echoed the rapid spread of MOOCs in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) since 2012. In their pages, MOOC related articles are proliferating. The focus of such articles has often been the disruptive nature as well as the survival of this new form of open online education, especially the first years. However, there is also a great deal of mentions of how internal stakeholders in HEIs perceive the advent of MOOCs. These perceptions are the object of analysis in this article. Using the Content Analysis (CA) method, MOOC related sources in three Higher Education magazines during 2014 have been analysed against a set of key themes. These themes have been established by combining data from two previous studies: a Content Analysis of MOOC related academic literature, and a set of interviews to internal stakeholders using grounded theory. As the findings indicate, in 2014 the main concerns of internal stakeholders have been the new teaching practices and new work dynamics resulting from the incorporation of MOOCs in their working routines. It is argued that educational media no longer focuses on the debate of the future of MOOCs. Rather, the debate is on how MOOCs should be best implemented from a practitioner’s perspective.”

This publication was the result of two years of intense reading and curation of journalistic articles about MOOCs. In 2013 and 2014, MOOCs were a frequent topic in HE magazines. We systematically stored and tagged MOOC related articles with a curation tool called Scoop.it. This curation tool did not give us significant web presence, just hundreds of visits to our site (<https://www.scoop.it/t/moocs-and-heis>), but it did allow us to classify hundreds of articles into themes and categories, which eased the creation of a systematic journalistic literature review. The paper was published in the CSEDU conference proceedings, and selected for a Springer Lecture Notes volume, attracting dozens of citations.

Fair, N., Russell, S., Harris, L., & Leon Urrutia, M. (2017). Enhancing the student experience: integrating MOOCs into campus based modules. (Educational Media International, in press)

“Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are continuing to expand in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). According to Class Central, over 1500 courses started in May 2017 alone. In some cases, these courses are becoming integrated into institutions, to such an extent that they are being incorporated in the on- campus curriculum. Externally-facing MOOCs are being used as part of face-to- face modules, often with the aim of leveraging the networked learning opportunities that these kind of open courses offer.

There are a range of benefits which learners can enjoy when undertaking a university module in which participating in a MOOC is part of the syllabus. Firstly, there is the opportunity to learn from the latest research in the subject, often before it is published more formally. Secondly, they can collaborate not only with their peers, but with a global learning community, exposing learners to a significant diversity of ideas, approaches, experience and knowledge. Thirdly, there are all the well reported benefits to being able to study where, when and with whom you chose.

There are also benefits to the creator university beyond that of developing teaching resources. Learners’ engagement with the content may help to co-create research in real time, both for academic research and for research into MOOCs themselves. In addition, complex materials such as network maps or interactive games that have been developed for a MOOC at considerable care and expense, and been subjected to thorough quality assurance processes, can also be reused in other contexts within the university, for example for student recruitment or staff development purposes. In summary, there are a wide range of opportunities emerging from the integration of MOOCs into the classroom.

However, at the moment it is not easy to evaluate the outcome of integrating MOOCs into traditional university modules, as there is not yet a great deal of research reporting on the area. Moreover, there are a wide range of methods that have been and can be used to this end: the participation in the MOOC may or may not be assessed; the role of the MOOC within the module can vary (teaching, revision, primer...etc); the role of on-campus learners can vary from mere participants to teaching assistants or content producers; the proportion of the MOOC learning materials used as module materials can also vary; and the timelines of the module in relation to the MOOC can also be very diverse. It is therefore important to assess the effectiveness of various initiatives in order to find the optimal internal uses of MOOCs.

This paper reports on a socio-technical intervention in which 46 undergraduates on the Online Social Networks module at the University of Southampton also had the Learning in the Network Age and Power of Social Media FutureLearn MOOCs, and an offline support programme, integrated into the syllabus for revision purposes. Learners were surveyed before the module started to establish their prior experience of and attitudes to MOOCs. In order to reach an assessment of the effectiveness of the intervention, the module final grades and result profile, the learners assessed reflections and the anonymised end-of-module feedback forms were analysed. The module grade average increased by three percent, moving up a band, and the number of top grades awarded doubled. However, learner reflections and feedback were rather more mixed, with equal numbers of learners finding MOOCs of great value for deepening understanding as those who gained little benefit from the experience. Such diversity of outcomes led the researchers to a discussion of the barriers affecting a socio-technical approach to HE teaching and learning.”

This paper reflects the insights gathered during my participation in a Curriculum Innovation module as a teacher. In this module, we integrated a MOOC which students had to

participate in as part of their coursework. This was an eye-opening experience in many aspects: we learned how, as teachers, we currently tend to overestimate the digital competencies of the students, as well as our own. We also learned about the diversity of approaches to learning with the Web, and about the multiple shapes of the personal learning networks of the students, as well as our own.

The paper was presented in the ICEM'17 conference in Naples, and selected for an issue of the Educational Media International journal, soon to be published.

White, S., Davis, H., Dickens, K.P., Leon-Urrutia, M., and Sanchez-Vera, M. M. (2015). MOOCs: What Motivates the Producers and Participants?. In *Computer Supported Education: 6th International Conference, CSEDU 2014, Barcelona, Spain, April 1-3, 2014, Revised Selected Papers* (Vol. 510, p. 99). Springer.

“Within the current educational landscape, Massively Open Online Courses (MOOCs) have stimulated extensive interest and hype in a short time. It has been asserted that these open courses are no more than a prelude to the disruption that traditional Higher Education Institutions will experience from the growth of online education. Meanwhile, institutions are making increasingly significant investments to produce MOOCs, and learners are enthusiastically enrolling in large numbers, often in tens of thousands. The analysis presented identifies a spectrum of motivating factors for universities, and suggests likely areas for future attention and developments. It further identifies a range of motivations for learner participation, which may not be identical across cultures and which MOOC providers might wish to take into account.”

This was my first academic publication experience in the field of MOOCs. The paper was published in the CSEDU conference proceedings, and selected for a Springer Lecture Notes volume, attracting nearly a hundred citations.

The paper was written in the context of a fruitful collaboration with the University of Murcia. The paper combines two studies, one of which was my MSc dissertation. The other study consisted of a survey to MOOC learners, the design and dissemination of which I contributed towards.

León, M., White, S., White, S., & Dickens, K. (2015). Mentoring at scale: MOOC mentor interventions towards a connected learning community. *Proc. Eur. MOOC Stakeholders Summit*, 13-17.

“The “Understanding Language: Learning and Teaching” MOOC produced by the University of Southampton/British Council attracted a large number of enrollments (almost 30,000 active participants) and incorporated a design structure aimed to promote social learning. This combination of high participant numbers and ‘learning as conversation’ approach (Ferguson & Sharples, 2014) posed a significant challenge in terms of course mentoring. This article explores the novel approach to course management and facilitation used on the MOOC, with a particular focus on the training, management, and intervention strategies of course mentors. The paper outlines a cloud based, flexible and collaborative system for managing and connecting mentors which was useful in organising a geographically distributed group of mentors. Further, in the context of social learning at scale, a role of ‘mentor as connector’ is proposed to align with the affordances of the MOOC platform and the particular course design.”

This paper was published in an experience track. It was written to share my experience as a MOOC mentor lead, where I was charged to design a strategy to facilitate MOOCs for thousands of learners, when published handbooks for MOOC facilitation were scarce.

The paper focuses on the role of mentors as networked learning promoters. It describes a set of actions and strategies to enhance the connectivity of the learning community in a MOOC. These recommendations were well received by the FutureLearn academic network, and have been published in the FutureLearn Partners site for reference to new partners.

Leon Urrutia, M., Yousef, AMF., and White, S. (2015) Learning from MOOCs: the role of mentor qualities. At Web Science Education Workshop @ Web Science Conference 2015 Web Science Education Workshop @ Web Science Conference 2015, United Kingdom. 2 pp.

“MOOC learners are able to share responsibilities for their learning. In the same note, course mentors play an important role in improving learning outcomes, assessment and enhancing learning activities. The aim of this paper is to determine some methodologies and approaches that can guide and help course mentors in teaching and management their MOOCs.”

This short paper was presented in a satellite event of the WebSci'15 conference in Oxford. It was meant to be a position paper, and does not contain research findings. The insights gathered during its production, however, were instrumental in narrowing down the topic of this thesis.

The paper discusses the competencies that educators need for running a MOOC, revolving around Biggs and Tang's constructive alignment concept.

9. Glossary of terms

Academics - This is a key term in this thesis. This term is used throughout this thesis to refer to participants in all of the studies, who were PhD students working as facilitators in MOOCs, higher education academics with teaching responsibilities, and expert educationalists.

Competencies - This is a key term in this thesis. The term is used as the predominant term to define the ability to perform tasks in professional and educational situations.

Early Career Academics (ECAs) - This term is used throughout this thesis to refer to participants in one of the studies, who were PhD students working as facilitators in MOOCs. This profile is often referred to as 'Early Career Researchers', but here they are called 'Academics' because they were engaged in academic tasks beyond just research. In fact, many of them had academic aspirations that included teaching as part of their desired activity.

Experienced Academics - This term is used throughout this thesis to refer to participants in one of the studies, who were PhD students working as facilitators in MOOCs

Expert educationalists - This term is used to refer to the participants of the last study of this thesis. They were all established academics, recognised experts in the field of education technologies in higher education.

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) - This term will be used to refer to universities, interchangeably.

Skills - Skill is the ability to do something well. In this thesis, this term is used in specific contexts in which the acquisition of this skill takes place. For example, in the first study with ECAs, skills is frequently used in the template, in the interview questions, and in the group conversations. The term has certain crossovers with *competencies*, although the latter will be used as a key term through the thesis.

Transformation - This is a key term in this thesis. Transformation is a marked change in form, nature, or appearance. In the context of organisations, transformation is a change in processes, procedures, and policies. In this thesis, the focus lays on the role of digital technologies in the transformation of Higher Education.

Universities - This term will be used to refer to Higher Education Institutions, interchangeably.

World Cafe - This is a method to gather opinions and insights from a large number of members of an organisation in one individual event. The term will be used to refer to one of the studies in this thesis, where this technique was deployed.

10. 10. Glossary of abbreviations

AT - Activity Theory

ECA - Early Career Academic

HE - Higher Education

HEA - Higher Education Academy

HEI - Higher Education Institution

ICT - Information and Communication Technologies

Jisc - Joint Information Systems Committee

MOOCs - Massive Open Online Courses

TA - Template Analysis

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13. Appendices

13.1. Appendix 1. Transcripts

13.1.1. Focus group interviews with ECAs

13.1.1.1. Group 1

Participant	Role
Manuel Leon (M)	Researcher, Moderator
Reuben P1	Participant
Robert P2	Participant
Nora P3	Participant
Lisa P4	Participant
Nada P5	Participant

R. Hello, this is focus group n.1 on MOOC facilitation and skills development. We are going to start asking a question about your previous experience on teaching, online teaching, teaching in MOOCs, and your online professional identity. Let us start with (P1) Could you please tell us about your teaching experience so far, if any?

P1. In terms of MOOCs, I have done a step in the WebSci MOOC, preparing the texts and the writing a bit of the materials to be looked through, and then I did a similar thing for the Digital Marketing MOOC. In terms of face-to-face teaching, I have not done a big deal apart from helping a student with his project. What else could I tell you?

R. Can you tell me about your online professional identity as an early career researcher?

P1. Aha. Yes, this is something that I am aware I need to cultivate, so I guess I have my own website with some papers on it, I try and follow other researchers and people who talk about related stuff. I use things like Academia.edu a little bit, I guess I, every six months I make sure that everything I put out is relatively up-to-date, and I try and delete things that are no longer true about my research. This makes you think on your current direction and the direction you are going to.

R. Thank you. (P2), can you tell me also a little bit about your teaching experience? I know you have broad experience, and online teaching, and also MOOCs. Could you please tell us a little bit about it?

P2. Twenty years teaching in classrooms at university level, college level, and secondary level. Online, facilitating the Web Science MOOC and the Do Your Research Project MOOC. I have created reviews of academic papers to be included as resources to be included in the WebSci MOOC. As regards of my online professional identity, there is my University profile, I am also being interviewed by the AACE (Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education) so I will be on a journal site. I am also starting to work with CAS BCS, reporting on teacher stories with regards of teachers as researchers in schools.

R. Thank you. P3?

P3. Hi. So in terms of teaching. I have done like five years teaching back home at the university. I have done demonstrating tutorials and stuff like that. In terms of online teaching, the Web Science MOOC is my first experience, so I haven't done any online teaching before. Regarding my online identity, I have my University web page, both in Southampton uni and the University I work in Saudi, and I have a Linkedin profile, and twitter account. I do not update my Linkedin profile really often. It has very basic information about it, it has nothing really specific. My twitter account is not so professional. It is half way through.

P4?

P4. So, in terms of my teaching, I have been facilitating seminars for about five years, but I am now in a teacher academic role, so I have some experience in lecturing, creating modules, and doing everything it is supposed to be done in Higher Education as a tutor/facilitator. With MOOCs I have only done the Web Science MOOC, where I designed and delivered a lecture on it, and I also took part in the facilitation. I have actually some further online teacher, as I did some personal tutoring to undergraduate students. One of my students, I taught them long distance, so obviously using the web as a tool to conduct the sessions, it was the best course of action really. Regarding my online academic identity, it is

something that I try to manage. I am very self-conscious of keeping my personal private life away from the academic face I am trying to portray online. I manage twitter, academia.edu, linkedin, and things like that. Coming back to twitter, when I first started with it, I tweeted personal and joky posts, but the content matter changed dramatically, as well as the people I follow, and make contact with.

R. With the same account? You have not changed account?

P4. Yes, I have. I did create a specific academic account for research purposes, but I just got to the point that, because I have followers that are quite important to me academically, it just made sense to merge the two of them, rather than changing the identity of that really.

R. Same here. It started being a personal account, and now I only use it for academic and professional purposes. I only tweet about MOOCs now.

P4. So you are loosing followers because you are boring.

R. Yes!

P3. I forgot to mention that my role on Web Science was not only facilitating, but also preparing some materials for one of the weeks.

R. Yes. Well, now I will ask a question and anyone of you can answer, I am not going to point to anyone. What are your thoughts on the importance of communicating with the public about your field of study? What are your first thoughts on this?

P4. I would say it is imperative. I think this is one of the biggest problems with academia, it is the "silence of", hugely important sociological and social research that has implications for people and public and society, and if it is just broadcast to the academic community, kept in academic journals, how does it ever going to have and impact and make a difference? So it needs to be out, it needs to be in the public eye, and obviously broadcast to the right people.

P2. I think, from experience, when I started my research, very excited, MSc, PhD... But when I talk to my friends, when I go back home, I could see their eyes glazing over. Nobody would ever ask me what I was doing, and then I realised they don't care. That's just what I am doing, it is nothing to do with their life so they don't care, so I think if you are going to get your message out there, you have to do it in such a way that it is not an academic way. You are not speaking to academia, you are speaking to the general public, so it has to be coached, short, sharp, "this is what I am going to do, these will be the results, these will be the benefits", as opposed to "x said this and y said that" you don't have to reference it. You just have to come up with a broad story.

P4. It iactually, when I talk about something, especially now that I am teaching, it has to be engaging. That is the key, telling it to your audience, putting it in a way that it would interest them or something that they can identify.

P2. That is what I was about to say. When people ask me what I am doing, I just step back from my academic persona and say "yes, ok" and I try to make it easier, like for kids, as opposed to a couple of years ago when it was taking an important part of my time, I was thinking all the time, it was important to me but not important to other people.

R. Yes, and do you think there are benefits for the filed of study? and for your own career?

P3. I find talking is always good. When I talk to people about what you are doing, your research, really outside academia, I think it makes ... it you put it in a way that can be engaging, then it will have a good outcome. There might not be of a huge benefit for the academic field in general but, for you personally, I think it is good to talk about research and engage people in it, I think.

R. Ok, do we agree if I say that our work as facilitators helps on this respect?

P4 From my particular perspective, I think I had an advantage in the sense that I gave a lecture about by specific research. So when I was engaging with people, both it did really helped me think through the particular issues related to my area of study, like "talk about that" and supposedly be expert in that. So I know I can do that, so yes, it was a huge benefit for me in that respect. If I were facilitating on something that it is not my area of research, I don't know whether I would have been able to have the same positive beneficial feedback, or just experience from it.

P2 I think it heavily depends upon what is the objective, how, as in design, is it a hands off or a hands on MOOC. So basically, if it is a hands on, the first time we did Web Science, it was very much less, we were promoting the participants discussion, so you were getting connectivist learning, so therefore, answering at how it promotes facilitator... facilitator's job is not to promote themselves, you are doing it there because you are actually there to facilitate other people, and possibly untangle some of the knots that are created through misunderstandings.

P3. From my experience, I was surprised to see the discussions and reading them. Especially for the week that is related to my research. I was surprised to see how people with no real experience on the topic are discussing topics and subjects, they have really shown deep arguments in the MOOC, so it was interesting to see other people's perspective

on things. As an academic, you are really digging deep and somehow you forget to see the big picture. Seeing the other people connecting the dots, I think it was really interesting.

P2. That reminds you to step back, especially for attaining a different perspective.

P4. I would say though, the conversations that came up in the forums, followed by the data that I could not use, I just thought wow! there is so much valid information, so valuable, but obviously... It would help me with my thinking, it is obviously something that I could just think.

R. So they gave you some new perspectives that you would not thought about

P2. They certainly reminded you

R. In your facilitation activity, as your work, what was the most useful thing that you learned as a result of having participated in the facilitation team?

P3. Ok, having done three MOOCs, I think the first thing I developed is my ability to really track things and see how, to notice issues that I need to take further or to reply to, and to just not follow the discussions as they go. The first MOOC was kind of difficult in that respect, but the second was half way through, and in the third I think I became an expert of really noticing where issues are and what people are talking about, so , this is my experience.

R. Ok, Any more useful things you learned?

P1. I guess something I learned from the MOOC is that everyone has quite a good understanding of the kind of implications of the research I was talking about, so It was kind of refreshing and kind of encouraging to see that. Understand that people are coming on the MOOC were interested on the topics but I was surprised about how people engage so it gave me an idea of the level of knowledge I could assume when talking about my research which is quite useful.

P2. I thought it was quite useful to follow a thread from the beginning, when it starts off, and then see a subthread starting. It was very interesting, it gave us a different perspective on how people are viewing the topic and how different arguments or discussions can develop through the topic. Also, to be able to read the information very quickly, instead of starting and reading it word for word, you start scanning your way through, and then you pick up something very very quickly, six or seven in a row for example

R. So do you think there is a difference in your quickly reading skills between before and after you started.

P3. Huge!

P2. Huge, my confidence in identifying and picking up.

P4. So when I started facilitating, I felt compelled to write everything. For example, if there is a question, a comment, or a discussion, I felt compelled to sort of write it down. But I felt I should or could have, but it is only through other process that I realised that actually there are communities forming. They didn't actually meet my input, they did kind of discussed it among themselves, and this is probably actually a set in the dynamic, that was going on there, so that was something i realised in a longer way.

P3. There is one thing. Because we have done the MOOC three times, you know before it starts, the issues that people will pick on, and what they will really have difficulties with.

R. So a rerun of a MOOC helps you predict what there is going to be going on, and you appreciate it.

P3. Yes, you know from the beginning the topics that will have much discussion and the others that they will be accepted and people will move on.

R. Ok, that brings us to a further question one thing is a rerun of a MOOC, but what if you did a different course? Would the previous experience in the previous MOOC help in any way?

P3. I think the skills you build are transferable from course to course. The content is different though, so you will have the issue with the content but not with your way around in terms of facilitating.

P5. I think in the same area, in the same level, the people who are interested in the same way, but if your experience helps, it is really from a really hard field, I think it would be different.

R. Ok, and now this question is related to your work online and offline in a team, so what are your thoughts on the importance of the working environment for this particular task? Has working in the office, or remotely, made any difference? How did you communicate with the rest of the facilitation team? How important for you was face-to-face interaction with the team?

P2. I don't think that face-to-face was very important. One of the great things about it was that it was built to facilitate from anywhere.

P3. Yes

P2. And as soon as you opened your machine, you log in, start looking, and go forward in your slot. It didn't matter where you were, that is the great thing. That is what it made it so manageable. I mean, I was at a conference in Montreal, and I could facilitate from there. Or I would be facilitating from Scotland, or from anywhere really. I think that was a great thing.

R. How exactly did you do that?

P2. This was managed by time slots. Not too much time management required, as long as you make sure that you are keeping on top of things, of any potential issues that may have arisen.

P3. I think when we first started the MOOC, we had meetings and things where we discussed what we are going to do, and that was really helpful at the beginning. But for the second or third MOOC, I think the good thing is that you can do it anywhere really.

R. How did you report your daily work, and the issues that you were coming across?

P4. We used a google form.

P2. Yes, the google form was excellent, I found it really helpful at the end of each session. I also sent e-mails to the lead facilitator or the educators. The ability to say "I am a little bit unsure" at any time was quite helpful, because we had the support there, and we had the time to think about our responses. We could progress something not only "upwards", but also to the rest of the team.

P4. It was quite reassuring that you had other people working with you, and you can see what their point of view is, and what issues they have picked up and passed on to you.

P5. For me, as I can see, if I have to tell anybody the issues that I need to solve, I only need comments or advice from one person, so I would e-mail them directly. And they email me for some other issues, but it depends on the range of interest.

R. Ok,

P3. I think when we used the forms, that was much more organised, to be honest

R. So for you, the form is preferable?

P3. Yes, I think so.

R. Anything you found particularly surprising or unexpected about your participation in the MOOC? Something that you would not have expected? Something that you didn't not it was going to happen, and it actually happened? Either positive or negative?

P2. I started to have many followers in the platform and I didn't know how to feel about it.

R. Was this feeling of "becoming famous" unexpected? Did you feel uneasy with that?

P4. It didn't just happen with the MOOC platform. I had people from the MOOC following me on twitter, sending me questions also on twitter, and I probably was not so prepared for that.

R. Prepared in which sense? In coping with so much to do, so many people to talk to? or in a different sense?

P4. Well, not so much as having so much to do, it is just that I didn't foresee so much notoriousness. I was obviously tweeting about the MOOC, but I kind of thought that the queries would be kept within the forums in the platform, I didn't expect them to come into my twitter feed as well. It was not that I couldn't handle it, or too arduous task to deal with. Instead, it was that I didn't see that coming.

R. Let me please follow on that. Did you feel that any boundary was trespassed?

P4. Well, not really. As I said earlier, I see my twitter account as a representation of my academic identity anyway. I mean, if they track me down on Facebook, then I probably would have been quite alarmed. That would have been different.

P3. I think that what I was not expecting when some of the participants addressed people personally, and asked them specific questions, if you are not an educator, if you are only a facilitator, you won't expect people to address you personally, and to direct questions to you, by your name! I think we had an incident once, in MOOC 2, regarding this, and it was a question directed to me, and I didn't appreciate it, especially because it was about content that I had not created.

P5. I had a similar experience. Someone asking what you think Nada?

P2. I think that is a skill which possibly facilitators should be taught or made aware of. How actually make the presence felt on the MOOC in such a way that you are giving just enough information to be helpful but not being the educator. Or perhaps encourage participants to address you directly, although trying to promote the idea that you are there just in case there is something that is making a problem.

R. Ok, could you keep that last thought for this next question? What would have been useful to know before you started facilitating?

P3. That there is someone, that you are not alone, I mean, Kate and yourself, being there and reassuring us that we don't need to worry, that If you can handle it just let us know. I think it was really good to have this sort of support

P2. Yes, I think, to be shown or given the level of facilitator facilitation, how personally involved you would become with the MOOC, do you discuss in such a way as if you were in a classroom, are you there with a teacher persona? Are you the "sage on the stage"? or are you expected to develop a rapport with any participant who happens to wish to develop a rapport with you?

P4. Definitely, I agree. It is about the boundaries of being a facilitator. What is to be a facilitator in this environment? Are you hands-on or are you there to take part in the discussion, or are you there only to make sure that nothing bad happens. Where is that line? Is it possible to even have such a clear distinction? I don't know, but maybe a little bit more thought on discussion would have helped in the preparation before undertaking the role.

P3. I think, when I started the MOOC, I used to look at other facilitators way of communicating. Especially I hadn't done the first week so I observed what other people had done, and this helped me to do the facilitation on the week that I was assigned for, so... And that was only on the first MOOC, I think, because it was a new thing.

R. Well, it was very new. It was the first MOOC in our university.

P2. I think that what was very helpful was the first time you introduced yourself on the MOOC, you would word your introduction to set the stage for the rest of the MOOC. "I am here, and you can expect me to be supportive but I am going to take a hands-off approach" By making that clear at the beginning, maybe that is why participants did not try to engage too much with myself as a facilitator. I do think that was quite important.

R. Do you mean right at the beginning in your first comment, or in your profile?

P2. In my first comment. The profile can be read at any point of time though. The first comment also lets participants know what they can expect from you. It is like when you go to the classroom. The first words you tell to the students are very significant.

P3. And I think because the MOOC for each week they had different people, and the names of those people were explicitly listed on the week's first post, I think participants will know that you are part of the facilitation team and you are taking part on it. Because the names are there, participants will expect you to be there and will expect many things, and this is why people may address you personally or make questions directly to you.

R. So is it that some learners may build some kind of dependency on one facilitator?

P3. Yes, I think so, because the names are there, so they expect that you will be there. Of course it depends on the person, and how do they see this whole MOOC thing. But some of them may expect you to be there for them if they see your name written as a representative of the course.

P2. I think it is interesting because a MOOC is radically different to classroom teaching or a lecture. But there are things that may not have changed that much. You must let the participants know what they can expect from facilitators. Where the boundaries are, which is what you would be doing in a classroom situation. We have been looking at content, at overseeing, but we have not thought about "this is what we have to get the participants be prepared for"

P1. It is a good idea to clarify what is expected from you. Especially when in the MOOC there are many facilitators involved. It would be good to have that coordinated as well. If I am facilitating week 5, for example, and I have got a different set of expectations, offering different kinds of help, that would potentially be confusing, so coming back to what I said before, it would be good to have that clear.

45 R. Now I am going to ask you a general question to wrap up. Have MOOCs made any difference in your career and skills set? Do you think you have made any difference in your learners learning?

P2. I think it is very difficult to know whether in fact you have changed or whether you have made any effect upon your learners

R. What is your feeling?

P1. In terms of the effect on the learners, a lot of those that were doing the DM MOOC were doing it as professionals, and so they brought a lot of their experience. Also, from the comments that I read it seems like they are taking a lot out professionally, they were taking the knowledge to their jobs, even if they hadn't the opportunity to do any of it, but at least they were enabled to point at academic resources with their colleagues, and try and put into practice any of the things that were taught in the course. In terms of what I learned from facilitating the course, some people I met in the course and I had direct contact with them, I guess it is a good thing to have in the future, because it is a pioneering area, it is good to be part of that. It is a nice line on my CV.

P5. For me, it comes often to my mind that when I want to teach people that are at far distance, they should learn this. If the MOOC wasn't there, we should make it! Actually, I think it is more complex than just a blog or a course, and I start to think of contacting some people who make these issues happen. So now I hear people saying "oh, MOOC is the solution, it should be there!"

P2. I wondered that when you start you become a sort of a MOOC evangelist. Having spoken to so many teachers, having been to so many schools, supporting exam boards preparation, you say to teachers "have you done this MOOC?" or "have you done this other MOOC?" or "have you thought about that?" and just putting the word out there. Actually speaking to people because no matter how widely known we think the concept is, I would suggest it is still very unknown to the majority. I wonder how many people, if you stopped them in the street, would know what a MOOC was.

R. Ok, apparently everyone is agreeing here.

P4. I would like to say, from the experience I have had, when I was going for academic jobs, and specifically teaching roles or lecturing, and you would be asked what sorts of innovative teaching can you bring, you would have the opportunity to discuss the MOOC. I met so many institutions that I have never heard of it, and it shows that you can move beyond the classroom and design or facilitate content online, so it is about innovative teaching methods, which is quite exciting and quite good for your career purposes as well. I also was able to gauge the value of my input, and that of others. I mean, I authored a few learning resources for this MOOC, and also authored a great deal of comments. I was asked to sign copyright release forms, and was explained what it was meant in these forms. Now I have a much better idea of what are my rights as an author in all these digital contexts, including MOOCs, which I thought once you put your stuff in a MOOC you have no rights on it, but apparently it is not the case!

P2. Yes, and then you start thinking "you could teach this through a MOOC" or "this concept could be explained to so many more people through a MOOC". I think it should be of interest to know how many people who acted as facilitators would have any negative views about it, because in here it is quite positive. I feel quite positive.

P5. I always see that it should be combined with off-line learning, so I see that the negatives come from offline teaching when you wonder why the lecturer did not record that lesson for me to watch it when I am in a good mood. Some people would learn better in the morning, some in the evening... But it should be combined with live discussion, part of the interaction

could be offline. I can think of meet ups where the learners come to know each other. And I think it should be in the start or in the end.

P4. That sounds parallel to what the Open University does. In the Open University, you are not physically based at the university, you do it online, some times in physical meetings, but they obviously have a blended approach as well where they meet up every so often in group seminars as part of the course. That works, as a tried and tested method it works, so I agree with you, but maybe.

P3. I think what makes MOOCs special is not being traditional teaching, everyone with the same age and background, and all that. When it comes to MOOCs, you have people from all sorts of different disciplines, all sorts of different backgrounds and work experiences, so we cannot really compare the two forms of education because they are completely different, and that is what makes MOOCs so special.

P5. Actually I was curious and I wanted to know about the people. Actually they try to show their expertise. I have worked there.

R. All these conclusions you make, and all these reflections, would you have reached the same reflections or conclusions if you hadn't been involved in the facilitation of a MOOC?

P3. I would not have seen it to be honest.

P5. As a student of other MOOCs, I like the idea. A facilitator is somewhere in between, not an educator or a student. Still I need that experience for this.

R. Anything else you want to say?

P1. Yes, I don't know if this is relevant, but I am a member of this organisation called Creative Commons, and I have been pleased to create content with this sort of liberal license. Teaching on a MOOC is a sort of career platform because you can create licensed content that anyone else can use, and you get credit for that. The way the platform is set up does not lend itself to be remixed in different ways, so some of the links would go offline between courses and stuff like that. So I was a bit disappointed in that respect, as the platform claims to be open, with materials that can be reused, but in reality it seemed like it was not as good as I would have hoped in that respect.

P2. Yes, it is easy to forget, when you are creating learning resources, you should attribute all the effort, it is so easy to forget that if you are showing a picture, an excerpt, etc... do you have to pay for it? who pays for it? To make it all fully open would be fantastic but I wonder if... there seems to be much enthusiasm for MOOCs from universities. I wonder if those who

are so enthusiastic are taking on board, or considering the intellectual property rights aspect of it.

R. Ok, thanks very much for so many interesting insights.

13.1.1.2. Group 2

Participant	Role
Manuel Leon (M)	Researcher, Moderator
Will Lawrence P1	Participant
Huw Fryer P2	Participant
Dominic Hobson P3	Participant
Gareth Beeston P4	Participant

[00:00:00] R. We are going to start the Focus Group Number 2, and I am going to ask you to introduce yourselves first, and tell me a little bit about your previous experience on teaching in general, online teaching and learning, teaching and learning in MOOCs, and then, more specifically, your experience on MOOCs, both teaching and learning, and finish by talking a little bit about your online professional identity as an early career researcher. This means how do you show yourselves on the Internet. Can you start, W?

[00:01:29] W. Hi, my name is W, . The first question was experience in teaching? I don't have much teaching experience, apart from helping out as a lab assistant in some modules.

In terms of MOOCs, I had some involvement with the most recent MOOCs in Futurelearn. I was mainly supporting, adding some information from participants onto a database, where about they are from and their introduction. The next question, sorry?

[00:01:48] R. Have you written any materials for MOOCs?

[00:02:04] W. Yes, although what I wrote was already written for previous coursework. It was adapted for the purpose of the last Web Science MOOC.

[00:02:18] R. How about your online professional identity?

[00:02:18] W. I have a linkedin account that I update every now and then, and that is about it, really. Pretty bad.

[00:02:23] H. Hi, I am Huw Fryer. Teacher experience, yes, I have done a teaching assistant job in a couple of modules the last few years, I filled in during a couple of guest lectures for some people every now and again, and then, online, I made a video for the Web Science Futurelearn MOOC, and then I sort of participated in moderating that. In terms of my online learning I sort of doubled with MOOCs here and there the last few years with MIT Open CourseWare, for learning maths. I have done, well, started, many things on the coursera recently with Crypto stuff recently. My online profile, I think I have an ECS webpage, but I try to keep myself offline as much as possible.

[00:03:32] D. Hi, I am D, and the first questions was about experience with MOOCs?

[00:03:49] R. Experience in teaching in general

[00:03:52] D. I have no teaching experience at all apart from a couple of guest lectures, quit specific to my topic on cryptocurrencies and crime and things like that. And attending to introduction to teaching courses for postgraduate and things like that.

[00:04:16] R. Ok, any teaching experience with MOOCs or any other online learning form?

[00:04:16] D. Yes, so I don't have much specific teaching experience in MOOCs apart from that video file I did for Futurelearn, but nothing previous than that. I have started a few MOOCs as a learner, but as many others, I have not finished any. I think that is quite a common thing.

[00:04:49] R. Your online professional identity?

[00:04:56] D. I don't really have much of an online profile. I have leftover personal profiles from when I was younger. I have a facebook page from my undergraduate days and not

much more. I don't have any professional profile on the web, but hopefully some stuff is coming soon, it is something to do before I graduate, hopefully.

[00:05:17] C. Ok, I am C. Teaching experience? I have done some seminars and lectures and tutorials, but that is about it. First experience with MOOCs was making content and teaching in the Web Science first run, and I have done something similar with the Digital Marketing one, and I have facilitated in both of them. Like the previous ones, I have started many as a student but I have finished very few. My professional profile. I have a linkedin page, twitter, I think I have an ECS site but that has not been updated for a long time.

[00:06:10] R. Do you keep them updated?

[00:06:16] C. I update Linkedin when anything happens. I include random stuff in Twitter, and the website, rarely, I usually forget about it.

[00:06:33] G. I am G. and I have some teaching experience and training with different clients and academics and stuff. I used to train on virtual learning environments in content management systems back in Portsmouth. I am also currently a digital marketing module here, doing a bit of seminars and facilitation. With the MOOCs, my own experience with them is maybe doing a couple of courses, one in data analytics and another one in something I don't remember. I have done some facilitation on the digital marketing MOOC between October and December, and then I developed a tool as part of the module for the MOOC, I developed like a twitter visualisation as part of it so you could see how hashtags spread over time. Regarding my professional identity, I have a linkedin profile which I update every now and then when anything changes but not much changes in the phd world. Also, I have got my agency website recently set up, I don't now whether this counts as a professional profile, but it has got my name to it so. I haven't got an ECS web page, I have not touched it, so I don't know. I am also a digichamp here at the university so I have a profile on the digichamps blog too.

[00:08:56] R. In your profiles, do you mention and make it clear that you have been a MOOC facilitator. Do you think it is important to include this on your profiles?

[00:09:19] C. I have that on my linkedin page. I put it on there towards the end of last year when I started looking for jobs once I finished my PhD. Yes, I thought it is a good thing to put in there.

[00:09:48] R. So no one else?

[00:09:52] H. I don't have that on my online profile but I have it on my CV now that I am starting to apply for jobs. Basically because of the same reason for showing that I have demonstrating: I think it shows the skill to convey information across, it is quite an important thing for a teaching role.

[00:10:08] G. Yes, I can see the importance of it but I have not done it yet.

[00:10:16] R. What are your thoughts on the importance of communicating with the public about your field of study? Are there any wider benefits, both for your field of study and your career? Can you think of any other impacts of your work as a facilitator in MOOCs?

[00:10:30] W. For the first part, specially for your course, I think Web Science is quite a niche degree really, so I think it is quite important to communicate with the public about it. You may say to many employers that I did a web science degree but many do not really understand.

[00:10:52] D. I think also the nature of Web Science is that there is a lot about communicating things that you are learning. Particularly from computer science and security, i think is really quite important to communicate these ideas with the public, and we have not been doing very well up to now in that respect. A big strength of where Web Science lies is that it communicates our research to the general public even in more complex areas.

[00:11:37] R. And you think facilitating on the MOOC helps on that?

[00:11:37] D. Yes, definitely, I think the Web Science MOOC in particular, again, to introduce the world to Web Science and Things like that, I think it gave a good picture of what Web Science is, and where it could go and things like that.

[00:11:54] R. Same with Digital marketing?

[00:11:54] G. Yes, obviously as Digital Marketing is extremely important to have organisations and networks of people all over the world, so it is extremely important to these people to get on there and advertise themselves and link business and stuff so it is absolutely paramount that it is done as part of digital marketing MOOC or digital marketing courses generally. It is all about who you know really, rather than just what you know, so...

[00:12:20] R. Any other impacts of having facilitated in a MOOC that you can think of?

[00:12:28] D. I think it has been already mentioned about getting your name out there so particularly I think the web science because we all did a little bit on our own individual research, and obviously the Web Science MOOC sign up was about some thousands of

people, so it is good to get your name out there associated to that particular research area, even if it is just with people that are starting to look at the MOOC and things like that.

[00:12:53] C. It is good that facilitators can learn about what people think about the subject as well. For example, in the digital marketing one, people had very mixed opinions about marketing, it is portrayed quite negatively in a lot of different circles, and I think that came through as part of some of the learners, they did not really see benefits that marketing can have and there are good things about marketing and they were just focusing on the bad things of marketing and its bad press, so it is kind of good to understand how the learners kind of pictured the particular discipline the particular discipline in that, and with the big dataset of having thousands of learners you can kind of see what people think about it generally.

[00:13:38] R. And do you think you made any difference through your work as a facilitator?

[00:13:49] G. Yes, as a practitioner of digital marketing I generally spread the positive vibe of digital marketing and I also highlight the negative effects that data online can have on privacy and such like that. I mean many people saw there was a new kind of opportunity in digital marketing. They saw traditional marketing methods as the way forward, there is all what is necessary whereas digital marketing is extremely different. Digital can have a lot of benefit and I kind of promoted it by trying to moderate its negative sides as well.

[00:14:47] R. Ok, So you were working in a facilitation team. What was the most useful thing that you learned, or what was the most useful skill that you acquired, if you acquired any, as a result of participating in a MOOC facilitation team?

[00:14:58] D. I think one thing that I found it improved over time as I was doing the facilitation was fitting my responses in the comment boxes. Basically, I found that the Futurelearn comment box was quite short and some of the questions that people were asking were incredibly broad, they wanted to get a nice answer, sort of thing. So I tried to learn to compress all this information. I think it helped in that sense, definitely.

[00:15:35] H. I agree with that. I have also found that the longer that my comments would tend to be, fewer "likes" I would get. That made me a bit sad. Some would ask and I would answer, and many would not even get back to me. I also found that a lot of people disagreed with me, which is fine, but you don't really want to sort of get involved too much because that thing kind of applies at it best with learners interacting amongst themselves, and ours should be just a light presence. So I had to learn to bit my tongue quite a few times before saying "your are wrong", "you are wrong", or find more diplomatic was in saying that.

[00:16:32] R. OK, so by the end of your, let's say, involvement in the MOOCs, do you think you felt less the urge of getting too emotionally attached to your message and to what you were doing? Also, would you say that you learned how to interact with large numbers of people without giving too much of you?

[00:17:13] H. Yes, at the end I think I felt certainly a lot more relaxed about it. It is not just necessarily with me. I personally disagreed with some of the content we put up. This is what research is about isn't it? Yes, and I think, again, towards the end, you sort of learn the sort of language you can use, which is not going to come back and bite you if someone decides to quote you. That certainly developed as I went on. Maybe the language was still the same but, rather than having to think a lot before posting something, I could put a comment in a lot easier.

[00:18:16] R. Anyone else?

[00:18:17] C. Yes, I did find that you do put the comments less personally as it went on. It starts often with other stuff and you go "oh my god what have I done", but then the same many people and the actual subset saying that is quite low so you may say well, this guy may be just having a bad day and that's all.

[00:18:34] R. Do you think it would be useful this depersonalise, as a skill, in the future in any aspect of your career? May having gone through this have helped?

[00:19:02] D. I think it will be because that is one of the issues why I don't have a big profile online, I don't belong to professional stuff online, I think it is that element of, well, actually there is a lot of people out there who disagree and think all my work is wrong, and I think part of going through a phd is becoming confident in the field of study and things like that, and think that exercises like this help, because you get to see the common arguments against what you say from the public. You have the opportunity to get a broader view of different sides of the argument, which helps obviously with confidence.

[00:19:30] H. Actually, not on the MOOCs, but this morning I had a couple of good practice questions for the theses, thrown in at the end. I think, a couple of times, that person made a really good point, and that can be really useful.

[00:19:49] G. An also, as a facilitator, you are actually facing questions and you realise that, actually, can I do this?

[00:19:59] R. Lack of confidence?

[00:20:01] G. Yes, crisis of confidence. You initially may think you are not fit to facilitate on this topic or anything like that and you realise I do I know much stuff. That kind of proves that to yourself.

[00:20:11] R. Ok. What are your thoughts on the importance of the work environment for this particular tasks as a facilitator? How did you communicate with the rest of the facilitation team? How important, or not, for you, was face-to-face interaction with the rest of the team?

[00:20:28] D. So, I did not really interact with the team at all, as I did not officially signed up to be a facilitator when I put a video on there, but there were lots of questions on there that I thought they would be interesting and this is how I became a facilitator after that. I don't know what effect that made because the shape of this Web Science MOOC was obviously that we had our own little sections talking about my research, so it was not really necessary to talk to other members about my research because I am the most qualified person for that.

[00:20:51] R. Well, we have to clarify that there were two kinds of facilitators, some that facilitated throughout the whole course, and other ones who were more focused on subject specific questions. You were more content specific, and mainly remotely, and it worked did it not?

[00:21:25] D. Yes, it worked particularly well because it was on my area, but I understand that if I had to facilitate with other information it would have been useful to have people there to speak to, about this information

[00:21:42] R. Anyone else?

[00:21:42] G. I guess, for digital marketing, I mainly used e-mail because I was away for most of it. I was even in a different time zone, which made in interesting trying to figure out the times and all that. Yes, I kind of felt I did not really need to liaise with the other team, not really that much apart from timings and it is about it really

[00:22:09] H. Yes, it found the timing was what the thing we talked about most often because, assuming that we are sort of having one person in the morning and one person in the afternoon, if you have someone working 11 to 12 and another 12 to 1, then, you know, you are missing out on everything between, say, like 9 o'clock because, there is no point being there because the person who has been before you has done everything. I work in the same bay as Chris, we were working together and this was quite useful. We didn't end up working at the same time and all that.

[00:22:46] G. Yeah, I think one of the things we talked about in terms of time, the shifts, let's call them shifts, tended to head towards the end of each of the shifts trying to avoid maybe avoid that happening, I mean obviously you can always do that but when you head towards the end of it and you can cover everything within the time frame that actually commented

[00:23:13] R. So you found it useful, the communication system that was set up for the facilitation? There was a shift rota, there were forms as well, and a course map at the beginning of the course, for checking every step. All that was all cloud computing based, google docs. Any thoughts on that, was it useful, or you could have done without?

[00:23:58] G. It is kind of good to know when my shift was so that I could plan it ahead. The Google docs were functional, it was enough.

[00:24:25] H. And also, I think at the start of the MOOC we received an e-mail addressed to everyone, when I did reply. One time, when I didn't not the answer to one of the questions, someone saying "this is wrong", and when I tried to work it out I said "actually that is right". I turned out I was wrong, and I realised on a sunday night. I sent an email and someone got back to me in about half an hour, so it worked.

[00:24:55] R. Anything that you found unexpected or surprising about your MOOC participation?

[00:25:22] D. Two things. One was the filming, it was quite a strange experience, quite professional set up: "don't worry about what you are going to say, there will be 10.000 people watching that." And also the responses of some of the participants, they were quite confrontational at times. I should have really expected that, especially due to the nature of the topic. Some people were saying things like "this is awful", or "this is rubbish". Something to be expected in the web, this is actually the nature of the web, but still I was quite surprised about that.

[00:25:57] G. It is quite interesting because this is a free education platform, we are supposed to be providing education for free, and I would say to them "you don't have to continue if you want!"

[00:26:16] H. For me, again, in a sense I knew this was going to happen, but I was surprised how little people know, and there is no reason why they should know anything, I mean, I have done a Masters, and I am heading towards my PhD. Compared to many people I am highly educated, but at the same time the thing that just surprised me was that people don't know about how to use a very simple piece of software, "oh, so you don't realise that is the

think, you don't know that because you have an apple this automatically saves", and, yes, it should not have been, but it was.

[00:27:05] R. Yes, especially with certain kinds of courses where you would expect a minimum of prior knowledge and skills, despite the fact that the courses are open to everybody.

[00:27:11] R. Ok. Is there anything it would have been useful to know before you started the facilitation, or do you think everything was ok in that respect.

[00:27:37] H. Yes, everything was ok generally. I think if someone would have posted something really abusive, I am not sure how I would have reacted to that, maybe. But people had their names and their profile, so I think this would have been an unlikely scenario.

[00:27:53] R. So, before starting facilitation, all facilitators need a clear understanding of the code of conduct and what to do when learners break it?

[00:28:05] H. Yes

[00:28:05] R. OK. Now, for wrapping up, can you tell me if it has made any difference? I mean, having participated in the facilitation of a MOOC.

[00:28:22] D. I think it makes a contribution similar to any kind of teaching does effectively, so all the things you get like gaining confidence on the exposure to different arguments and things like that, so I think it helps a lot in those, if anything in a slightly "bat-to-way" or like a confident environment, because personally I am a lot more confident in front of a PC than in front of a lecture theatre full of people I guess. I found it particularly useful and nice and easy to sort of teaching things. It is a good start.

[00:28:49] R. Like a transition stage.

[00:28:49] D. Yes, exactly.

[00:28:49] C. So I found, so I have just started a post in which I am designing the curriculum and course template for an online course, so knowing from experience what the process is would be useful. It is at least something I used in my interview. It worked well for me.

[00:29:05] R. Ok,

[00:29:13] H. If I hear back from a job application I have done, I will let you know how useful this has been. They haven't got back to me yet.

[00:29:31] G. I think teaching of any kind of description, online or off-line, is a really good experience for any kind of job you expect to get, any sort of career, just because of that confidence in being able to put across your points in an organised manner, whether by writing or by speaking, that's fine. And MOOC is quite good for a transition.

[00:29:59] R. The only thing is that, because none of us here in this room has got a wide and broad experience in online teaching in aspects other than MOOCs, so none of us can really compare, but what I gather from you is that the general feeling is that it is useful, it is good experience, and it is a good start.

[00:30:26] G. Yes, I think it is an additional thing to standard off-line teaching rather than a replacement of.

[00:30:33] C. Yeah

[00:30:34] G. So I think it kind of enhances the media around a particular course.

[00:30:42] C. I was thinking that if you want to get some experience on this while you are doing a PhD, afterwards you can say that you have been involved with the creation of course material and the delivery of it, facilitating and helping people understand stuff, which you might not ordinarily get unless you end up teaching a module for your supervisor and that sort of thing. So yes, it seems like there is a good opportunity there.

[00:31:14] M. Ok, can I ask you to do now some speculation, some guessing? Let us say that we are now experienced teachers, both off-line and online, we have done online courses, we have been teaching all kinds of online courses before the advent of MOOCs, would your responses have been similar? Would facilitating in a MOOC have made any difference or would it have helped in any way, would you have enhanced any skills?

[00:32:06] D. I think with the exposure to arguments and things like that, I think, because of the nature of the MOOCs in a lot of cases you can be teaching to thousands of people rather than just teaching, let us say, a lecture room full of people, you get all sorts of different responses and different debates and discussions about things that you would not get in the classroom, even in the most diverse lecture hall, you probably would not get the same scale and scope of responses as what you get online, so I think that does help.

[00:32:33] R. Even in an ordinary online course with a lower ratio like 1 to 30 or similar?

[00:32:33] D. Exactly

[00:32:38] G. I think it is kind of more manageable manageable than, say, you have a seminar full of fourth year students like all talking at the same time whereas online you kind of go systematically and then you try to manage it that way, yeah, so it kind of reduces the "noise", the "miss-points" you get.

[00:33:12] R. And also the fact that it is not really synchronous,

[00:33:22] C. Yes, you have time to come up with a good answer, better than on the spot.

[00:33:28] R. Well, I think that is about it, thank you very much, I appreciate your contributions. Anything else you would like to add?

[00:33:39] H. Yes, I was thinking if we were more experienced, then we might be more inclined to maybe teaching, say, a basic skill whereas at the moment we are presenting an introduction to our research and I think these are two slightly different things. I sort of talked about patching in a small part the research I am looking at. And it is a good introduction to the subject, I put some links there and people seems to be quite interested and involved. Someone like Dave Millard presented something on how to do network graph analysis, so these are two sort of different kinds of content that we are contributing to, and this is a good distinction to make.

[00:34:31] G. I mean, interactive tools that you can have on the MOOCs are quite good and something to look forward. Actually they enhance the content beyond the just "read and write", and actually doing stuff. When we created the tool for the Digital Marketing MOOC, it showed to be quite useful.

13.1.1.3. Group 3

Participant	Role
Manuel Leon (R)	Researcher, Moderator
Eleanora Gandolfi P1	Participant
Catriona Cooper P2	Participant
Jane Walker P3	Participant

Matthew Harrison P4	Participant

[00:00:03] R. Hello, this is Focus Group Number 3, on MOOC facilitation and skills development. We are going to ask a question to each of the members of this focus group. I will start with you. Can I ask your name and your experience in teaching, if any? Can you also tell me about your experience in online learning and teaching? This includes MOOCs. Finally, can you tell me about online professional identity as an early career researchers? They are many questions, I will repeat them if you need.

[00:00:55] P1. Hello, my name is P1, and I am a part-time PhD student at the University of Southampton, and I don't have any teaching experience in a university context or online. But I have been involved in the Portus MOOC as a translator and the connection with the Italian community and the MOOCs.

[00:01:50] R. Have you facilitated in this MOOC or in any other?

[00:01:50] P1. I have replied to some of the comments. I have not been engaged on a daily basis, but I have helped a little bit. I have been more engaged with the Italian community via social media, trying to push interest in MOOCs. The main issue that I have experienced is that the MOOC, as is designed at the moment, is mainly in English and does not support any other way on the comments section. It is difficult to engage with a community where users are not confident in speaking a second language.

[00:02:39] R. Ok. How do you display yourself in the Web as an early career researcher?

[00:02:54] P1. I have a LinkedIn account, I have a twitter account, I have Facebook, G+, so, many tools. A collection of social media. I am trying to use them only as a professional tool to advertise what I do, rather than using them for personal reasons. I try to make a distinction of what I use for work and what I use for personal matters.

[00:03:25] R. How do you make this distinction?

[00:03:28] P1. I just decide what I think it is more appropriate. For example, in Twitter, I tweet about research content. LinkedIn is more on my full-time job for the University. Facebook is more for my private life. So I tend not to share anything related to my research

in Facebook. This may not be the best approach but I find it easier not to mix up personal with professional in social media.

[00:03:59] Ok.

[00:04:02] P2. Ok, so teaching experience, I have... by the way my name is P2..., I have some teaching experience in the archaeology department giving a few lectures. I have been a teaching assistant on a couple of courses for a couple of years. Before that I did some tutoring for high school children. Regarding the MOOC, I have been acting as a facilitator this year, and I just created some content. That's it really.

[00:04:37] R. Ok. How about your online professional identity?

[00:04:42] P2. Yes, I have Academia.edu, I have LinkedIn, a blog, none of which I particularly keep up-to-date but at least I try and keep some of the most relevant stuff. I also use Twitter, somewhere between academically and not academically. I use it kind of as a way of CV approach where people see I am a real person, at the same time as also being a researcher and running an academic life. And then, in Facebook I keep that completely private, people don't access to that at all unless they know me.

[00:05:17] R. Is it being useful? Are you seeing any outcomes, actual or potential?

[00:05:22] P2. Yes.

[00:05:27] P2. I find twitter is the best way to communicate with researchers from other universities, and to discuss issues about my research, which is quite interdisciplinary. And then there is people who hopefully I am going to start a post with, they really engaged me and convinced me to use that rather than any other forums.

[00:05:47] R. How about you, P3?

[00:05:49] P3. Hi, I am P3, first year PhD, here at Southampton. I had a teaching assistant experience for a couple of years at different university. I have experience tutoring different undergraduates, and my role in the MOOC is not officially as a facilitator but I answer questions on a daily basis, and I have contributed with material to the course content.

[00:06:20] R. How about your online professional identity?

[00:06:24] P3. I have and academia.edu, linkedin, facebook completely private.

[00:06:41] R. And you, P4?

[00:06:41] P4. Hi, I am P4, I am also a PhD student, I am currently co-lecturing and co-teaching an undergraduate module, a class called naval archaeology this semester. I have also done a couple of bits and peaces of, a couple of lectures for Masters Students before. I facilitated on the MOOC last year, and I am doing it again this year. Last year I was only facilitating for one week, I would only comment about content that I had contributed to for the MOOC, whereas now I am doing it for the full course, so I am teaching on stuff the development of some of which I was not involved. Regarding my online presence, I have my facebook which I keep completely private, not academic. I have a twitter account that I use more for academic stuff than personal stuff but occasionally personal stuff does slip in, because people don't respect that it is for academic purposes sometimes, and I also have a twitter account and facebook page for for what I call the archaeologic network, just like an academic network. I also have a wordpress blog. I don't have linkedin. I have a Mendeley profile but I don't use it though.

[00:08:35] R. Anyone uses Mendeley?

[00:08:35] P1. There was an archeological computing research group that was part of Mendeley which we all joined like three-four years ago.

[00:08:44] P4. Also, yeah, I have a profile in that research group. We, both P1 and me have profiles in the archaeological computing research group, I which links to my twitter I think, but maybe not to my blog.

[00:08:54] R. Ok, now I am going to make a question for anyone of you to respond. What are your thoughts about the importance of communicating your field of study with a wider audience? Are there any benefits for your field of study? Are there any benefits for your own career? Can you think of any other impact of your work as a facilitator, either for you, your career or your field of study?

[00:10:15] P2. Engaging the public with my field of study I think it is quite important because my PhD is funded by the National Trust, which means that a lot of my output is to be used by them. Therefore I have to engage with the public when I collect my data on sites.

[00:10:38] P1. For me it is quite important because my PhD is about cross-cultural communication and public engagement. So now so I have to engage with a wide audience, and it is important for me because I look at the ways we communicate and how we can make clear the messages that we send. We are so used to communicate with archaeologists that we don't take into account people with different backgrounds, not only cultural but also language and other barriers that I consider in my research.

[00:11:44] P3. It does not have any direct impact in my personal research but I think it is important for getting more to the general public to engage with archaeology and on where that is actually about. Especially from a perspective of funding, a lot of people think that it is not an important thing, not something worthwhile to spend money on, and this is one way to show people what it is about.

[00:12:12] P2. None of my doctoral projects and none of the field projects I do have a direct public engagement or community engagement, so it is not something that links in the same way as my colleagues does in terms of public engagement. But I do believe it is important to communicate what we do to be public, and also it is important in the academic environment. It is something that universities look towards.

[00:13:21] R. Do you think MOOCs are a good way of doing that? Is being involved in MOOCs benefits you in that respect?

[00:13:36] P2. I think it is a good form of communication, there are different types of learning in which one can get involved, you can see the impact that you make on the way people think about the past, from the comments. It is really nice reading a lot of the comments, like "this completely changed the way I thought about the past" or "this is really relevant to what I do" or "where I am from". You can really see how you are touching people, affecting people, which is great. But I am aware that the MOOC is only skewed in its demographics that it is mainly retirees etc. etc. It is not reaching everyone. As a format I think the audience has got real understanding, it is not like a news article where you find comments like "oh, it is the oldest x ever found" or "it is an amazing beautiful thing", In the MOOC, people really engage with the roman past, the society of the time and things like that.

[00:14:49] P2. Very much engaging with the everyday rather than the individual, really exciting bits, I think. It is quite an accessible way, even if we aren't actually accessing that many wide range of the demographics, like a lot of people getting at this kind of learning environment. I say that with ver much.

[00:15:27] P3. I think a lot of it is just having people knowing that it exists rather than it being accessible, I think that it is more well known within the UK than in the US, where most people don't know about MOOCs, that's nothing I heard about when I was there before coming here.

[00:15:45] P1. Yes, but MOOCs started in the States.

[00:15:45] P3. Yes, but they are in a different platform than what we use here, and it is not something that as far as I know reaching within the universities quite as much. A lot of the

online courses comes down to recording lectures in class and then putting them online on an online platform.

[00:16:06] P2. So content is not created specifically for the MOOC, but just added for...

[00:16:12] R. Ok. So these are all impacts on your field of study, but how about the impact of yourselves, in your career, having been involved in the facilitation of MOOCs? Is there any useful skill that you have acquired?

[00:16:24] P4. I think it is good at honing your teaching skills, just in that you have to deal with a much wider audience that you usually would have to deal with in any other teaching duty at the university. When you are doing community projects for kids or whether you are doing undergraduate outreach activities, you know the age range or the kind of expertise that you are probably going to be dealing with, whereas people who I read the profiles of in Futurelearn, necessarily with all that information it might be unclear whether someone is a retiree or a kid or whatever, or how much education they have, or what is their educational background, or how many other courses have done elsewhere or whatever, it really makes me think about how to communicate with as wide an audience as possible. An also it makes me think about how to be diplomatic, how to provide diplomatic answers and giving room for them to discuss their own ideas but also trying to rain in kind of wild speculation or things getting off topic and things like that.

[00:17:42] R. Have you seen yourselves in challenging situations in which you have had to think about how to get out of there or how to sort out an issue? Do you see yourselves different in that respect before and after having done the facilitation of MOOCs? Are you more equipped with this kind of skills?

[00:18:11] P2. Do you mean on the MOOC, and how this has affected?

[00:18:12] R. Yes.

[00:18:12] P2. I would say definitely I really have to think about how, how would I say, I stop a bomb going off. There have some definite debates which I felt I had to try and calm down and clarify what was going on. I definitely think I am getting better at that. I am getting more diplomatic and polite, at least. I can definitely see myself running community groups with people who have a very fixed idea about what they think it is right.

[00:18:51] P4. Yes, I definitely agree with that. But I think that is probably something that we had to deal with, the two of us, and maybe just because in previous years when I was just asked to comment on anything that I had expertise on, I would avoid the things that look like

arguments. On this one, we have a different role, we are the first line of defense against people going off the rails, insulting each other, people being rude to each other. We had to try and get conversations back on tone and things like that.

[00:19:38] R. So, mainly your social role as a facilitator has developed social skills in the forums?

[00:20:00] P4. Yes.

[00:20:07] R. Ok. Anything else?

[00:20:08] P1. Well, my personal experience is that I refreshed many things that I kind of forgot down the line. It is weird because this MOOC is actually about my heritage, being italian, but many times you kind of, because it is not what you are doing every day, it is not your area of expertise, you kind of forget things. The facebook group was particularly relevant. There were colleagues posting questions and me saying to myself, "yes, I remember this", and then someone commented "oh, that's good". You may know in an approximate way, and then there is an expert in the group who can suggest the right answer, just thinking about it.

[00:20:57] P4. I have to agree with that. Just because I have worked in the Portus project since my Masters, last time I was writing it was kind of a bit of a refreshment of my masters dissertation. Now that I am dealing with all the different weeks and all the different steps in the course I don't really know about the project, and people who just joined the university like Katherine, Mike, Stefania and other people, who I didn't really know before and now I have to speak to them about their expertise, so now I am kind of refreshing my knowledge of what is currently going on at the project, refreshing things that I have forgotten about the project that I have already done, and speaking to people that I haven't spoken to.

[00:21:46] P2. I would say exactly the same. I didn't have anything to do with the portus project for this site, and it was actually a massive learning curve for me in terms of the roman stuff.

[00:22:08] R. A massive learning curve in terms of content?

[00:22:12] P1. It is more that you bring expertise from a different field. I pretty much, when I was in Portus it was four years ago and then I had no idea. Then we did other things like everyone else did. But when we came back together and went back and contributed with added value. I see ourselves as added value to the course.

[00:22:37] P3. For me, I have never worked on this project before. All my research is on Ostia so the connection between Portus and Ostia and the questions that people are raising are very applicable to my own research and things that I might need to consider in the future. In that respect, it has been helpful.

[00:22:57] R. Great! Ok, now let us move to something a bit more practical, more related to practicalities I mean, which is the working environment. What are your thoughts on the importance of the working environment for this particular task as a facilitator? What I mean is, how did you communicate with the rest of the team, and how important for you was face-to-face communication with the rest of the group?

[00:23:27] P4. So the rest of the people who were facilitating?

[00:23:29] R. Yes

[00:23:29] P2. It has been helpful for us (P4 and P2) two because we sit back to back quite often. It is quite helpful to turn around and go "Is that polite enough?" or that kind of engagement, but I am happy enough with the e-mail if all people reply to them.

[00:23:58] R. Have you created any group in any social media?

[00:23:58] P4. Yes, I set up a Facebook group, but to honest, this is the least positive thing about facilitating. The MOOC has been understanding what various members of the team have which responsibilities. Some people were facilitating on a casual basis, people like P2 and I have designated shifts, and trying to establish whether people have or have not to contribute, and whether or not they are obliged to contribute... all this has been a minefield for me. I have spent a lot of time speaking to other members of the project about what I can or can't ask people to do, and whether it should be trying to stress that people should get involved, that is voluntary, that they need to get involved. All this has been difficult, so the idea of setting a facebook group was a way to defer to other people's expertise if I am having trouble in answering questions, but making sure that it wasn't putting a direct order to respond immediately or respond at all. So at the start I was asking whether it is ok if I have a question that I cannot answer myself but I know who does know, whether I can e-mail that person and ask them to provide expertise, because if they haven't signed up to facilitate the course, is that really part of their responsibility? they worked on the project, to the outcomes of the project, so should they be contributing or not?

[00:25:53] R. Yes, we are all learning how to approach this, it is so new.

[00:25:53] P3. From me, I was asked to help with it but I was never given any instruction about what I would be doing. So I basically just gone on the approach to answer as many questions as I can every day, but I don't have set hours.

[00:26:19] P4. I thing what we did was fine though. I think the facebook group works ok, and people have joined up, given opinions and things, but I also see people face-to-face time, and a lot of my answers have been by speaking to other members of staff in the coffee room in the archaeology building.

[00:27:26] P2. This is the second time the course runs, so I wonder, since everything happened really quickly, there was not facilitation in place when it started

because last time there was people like P2 doing bits and peaces, no wonder whether this would have made it easier, like I said, this person is only available in week 2 and vaguely answers questions, and then, we should push things in the direction that it finds things in relevant. What worked really well is as facilitators to see everything and figure out who would be the best person to answer that question if we cannot do it ourselves, this kind of thing. Because there are a few.

[00:28:09] R. Initially that is why I thought this kind of google forms that everyone can fill would work. Still, we are tweaking it every time we run a MOOC for this to be effective.

[00:28:35] P1. My problem is... I know that I have not been commenting a lot, but having a full time job and doing a part-time PhD, and going back home and just see "oh, let me see what is happening", there are comments, and comments to comments. It is very difficult to track. I start by the top one and by the time I arrive at the end there is, well, that is it. And then probably just one day, so I find really useful to have the group that says "oh, is there someone who can help there?" Because it is easier for me to access Facebook, see the question and then I can say "oh yes, I know that one". It can be something here, but I am sure that that person can tell you more about it. So for me, as a non-full time PhD or facilitator, it is easier.

[00:29:28] R. So for you it is easier to use a structured internal communication system.

[00:29:34] P1. Yes, because it is quicker than emails, because I receive millions of emails. Wlih the system, I can just go there, see if I can reply, and just do it. It takes me seconds.

[00:30:32] R. Ok, next question: is there anything you found particularly surprising or unexpected about your participation in the MOOC as a facilitator?

[00:30:50] P2. I think I am surprised probably about how much probably I spent time googleing about other people's questions. A lot of the time I was thinking "oh, you could just google that" Then I kind of realised that obviously that is my job. An then, when I ask someone "just google it" I wonder what our level of expertise as researchers we are meant to sift through..

[00:31:29] R. Does it relate to a limited digital literacy by the learners, especially the skills to look for information?

[00:31:33] P4. There is a problem that surprised me. It was an unanticipated problem. A lot of learners on the MOOC do not understand what our job is, and we were often asked technological questions. "This website does not work, my computer does not display this, etc."

[00:32:31] R. This may refer to the "technical" role of the facilitator. This should have to be worded before we started. You also have or don't have a technical role, and we have to make this clear at the beginning.

[00:33:02] P1. Yes, that is a problem with the technology because if you think about it, you just need to send it out on the web, and someone will reply to you. It is similar to twitter: you send a tweet and someone may retweet or reply to your question. It kind of makes you a little bit lazy because you just wait for someone to help you. If it is not going to be a facilitator, it will be someone else learning in the MOOC that may help you. In that case, I think it is a problem with the idea of sharing the space that may not be particularly related to the topic or the content.

[00:33:37] P4. But also the content that we created for Portus MOOC, does encourage you to have external resources. I think we spent a lot of time stressing that, people have complained that there is too much content in the MOOC to cover in the amount of hours, but they are including in there the extra content we were providing, and the external links we provided. I think, for us, and for people within similar level of digital literacy, we have quite clear what is external content and further study if you wish. But that maybe does not come across to many of the users.

[00:34:38] R. Ok, now another question. What would have been useful to know before you started facilitating the MOOC?

[00:34:59] P2. We got a fairly comprehensive introduction, that was fine. I think it would have been grate to have it clear who else was involved, and what level of involvement each of us had.

[00:35:30] P4. Yes, because I ended up contacting people who didn't know they were meant to participate or contribute in any way.

[00:35:52] R. Anything else?

[00:35:52] P4. Well, how to escalate various types of issues. You provided me with instructions about that. A clearer understanding of what the chain of command is would have helped. Actually, the learners found many issues in the content, and I recorded them all.

[00:38:56] P3. It would also have been good to have a course map where we can identify the issue in each step.

[00:39:16] R. Ok, one last question, to wrap up: Has participating in the MOOC made any difference in your career and in your skills?

[00:39:48] P4. I can pay my rent! Now seriously, it has been quite a positive experience.

[00:40:17] P2. It is something that is going to look good in your CV. It looks good because it shows what you can offer to a wide range of people in terms of wider engagement, and impact assessment, etc.

[00:40:40] P1. It also leaves a nice track on the web. You become more visible. It made me be more aware of what I produce, and it makes me think how best to present my work. I have gained communication skills.

[00:42:02] R. OK, thank you very much for your contributions, and all the best!

13.1.2. Interviews with experienced academics

13.1.2.1. Participant 1

R. Hola, te puedes presentar y contarnos brevemente tu trayectoria académica, y tu experiencia con el MOOC?

AM- Soy *****, catedrático de derecho administrativo en la universidad autónoma de madrid desde entre 1994. Entré mucho antes como ayudante en 1974 y luego saqué la cátedra en la universidad de valladolid donde estuve dos años inolvidables. Mi dedicación principal ha sido la organización administrativa el procedimiento administrativo. urbanismo y medio ambiente pero en los últimos años al hilo de un proyecto de investigación financiado por la universidad autónoma abrimos un nuevo frente en compañía de unos colegas de la facultad de ciencias sobre la seguridad alimentaria. El resultado de los trabajos que realizamos allí pues fue un libro que se llama estudios jurídicos sobre seguridad alimentaria

y a raíz de esa publicación en el marco de una iniciativa de la universidad autónoma para promover una serie de cursos mooc se nos ocurrió que una de las secuelas de ese proyecto de investigación podría ser también que nosotros hiciéramos un MOOC sobre seguridad alimentaria. Y ese ha sido hasta ahora experiencia más importante en la materia. En otros aspectos he llevado a cabo en docencia online en algunos cursos de urbanismo del instituto nacional de administración pública y también en el máster sobre gobierno y derecho de las telecomunicaciones que se organizó desde hace varios años en esta universidad liderado por la escuela politécnica y con la colaboración de la facultad de derecho y la de económicas. El máster era mixto, ya que hay alumnos, sí eso lo llevaba roberto molina. He estado manejando el aula virtual durante mucho tiempo, sobre todo subiendo materiales, principalmente casos. También organizaba los foros y las preguntas en ellos, además de las actividades. Allí empecé a darme cuenta de qué significaba enseñar online. Todos esos alumnos estaban matriculados en mi curso, pero gozaban de mucha más flexibilidad que antaño, con las ventajas y los inconvenientes que ello conllevaba. Por ejemplo, algunos no querían entrar en el aula virtual y preferían los materiales donde siempre. Eso sí, en el aula virtual estaba bastante tranquilo, sabía que podía compartir casi cualquier cosa sin tener que preocuparme de los derechos de autor. La cosa cambió bastante con los MOOC. Allí tenía que andarme con más cuidado, porque estaba compartiendo con mucha más gente, que además no conocía! Me informé, por supuesto, y me di cuenta de que es un mundo distinto!

RC- en tu opinión qué ha funcionado de los MOOC de la autónoma, que han aportado a la institución, de que podemos sentirnos más orgullosos?

AM- pues yo creo que de lo que nos podemos sentir más orgullosos es precisamente de haber dado el primer paso y haber puesto los carriles de un tipo de docencia en el que no teníamos ninguna experiencia. Ese yo creo que es el principal logro. A título personal lo que más me ha gustado es ver las diferencias entre la docencia presencial y esta docencia online, porque que los profesores tradicionales formados en la enseñanza presencial sobre todo en derecho, lo fiamos todo o casi todo a la palabra. Los contenidos también son importantes pero la forma de transmitirlo. Y entonces aquí en los MOOC he visto que tan importante o más que la palabra es la imagen y por eso nos vinieron muy bien los cursos de formación y después los contenidos ya no se transmiten tanto con la palabra, sino con los materiales. La palabra es una guía para ponerte en relación con unos materiales que has preparado y que pones a disposición de los alumnos. En síntesis, había más tipos de docencia y más posibilidades fuera de la de la presencial tradicional en la que nos habíamos formado.

RC- Tú crees que ha cambiado tu práctica docente tras tu participación en la creación e impartición de MOOC, ien qué aspectos?

AM- pues yo creo que ha cambiado algo pero sustancialmente no, por una razón porque en parte la práctica de los MOOC ya la veníamos incorporando los últimos años a través de las páginas moodle del curso. Al haberse apoyado en la plataforma moodle pues entonces la experiencia de aportar sentencias que cuelgas en la página para que la vean los alumnos que quieran, o recibir información de ellos op enviarles mensajes e incluso organizar pequeños foros y eso ya lo estábamos haciendo a través de la plataforma moodle. Antes decía a quien le interese esto pues que se vaya a reprografía y ahí dejo la sentencia para fotocopiarla. Eso ya se acabó de tal manera que como seguramente sabes aquí el centro de reprografía ha cerrado. Digamos que la experiencia de MOOC ha sido totalmente nueva, pero facilitada por esta experiencia de Moodle.

RC- que desafíos habéis tenido que afrontar? Qué no ha ido tan bien o has echado en falta?

AM- Pues para mí el desafío más importante ha sido mi falta de experiencia y del conocimiento en el manejo de las herramientas informáticas. Eso es lo que me planteaba dificultades elementales. Cómo subo esto, que hago con esto otro, pero afortunadamente en el equipo pues hay otros miembros má jóvenes y más expertos a los que recurría y me decían tienes que hacer esto o no te preocupes mandámelo y yo o los compañeros lo subimos. Quiero destacar en ese sentido la labor de la oficina que nos ha ayudado muchísimo siempre con la mejor de las sonrisas. Gabriela es un encanto y ha ayudado muchísimo.

RC- Cómo podemos resumir todas las oportunidades que nos ofrece un MOOC?

AM- yo creo en la línea de lo que hablábamos al principio antes de empezar la grabación que te abre un horizonte de conocimiento en cualquier ámbito. O sea para un profano porque yo me parece que será difícil que haga un MOOC sobre derecho administrativo, no tendré tan mal gusto no? Pero sí estoy seguro de que haré en materias que no tienen nada que ver con mi especialidad porque son puertas que se te abren y que las tienes en tu casa en el ordenador y por lo tanto las posibilidades de profundizar en lo que a ver si damos formación continua en definitiva puedes culturizarte, son fantásticos

RC- y que hacen los MOOC de la UAM diferenciadores de los demás?

AM- no sé me he asomado brevemente a alguno pero no lo he llegado a completar

RC- serían para ti los siguientes pasos que la institución debería dar (tres) como prioridad?

AM- Pues yo creo que quizá deberíamos pensar que deberíamos hacer más mooc pero pensando en el interés de las materias identificando campos en que sería interesante hacer MOOCs de tal manera que no se dejara a la iniciativa de los profesores, que también podría ser, no hay que cerrar posibilidades. Que haya iniciativas de profesores están muy bien pero los que hemos hecho hasta ahora como sabes muy bien han emanado de nosotros. Como habíamos estudiado la seguridad alimentaria hemos hecho de eso. Si hubiera sido protección de datos pues a lo mejor lo hubiéramos hecho sobre protección de datos. Yo creo que la universidad, en función de sus prioridades, debería identificar temas e invitar a sus PDIs para que hagan cursos en ese ámbito. Esto me parece que es muy importante por una razón, que es que de esa manera la universidad podría enganchar los mooc, que son una puerta de entrada en determinados ámbitos, con sus propios cursos de especialización, experto o máster o tal, y que no fueran versos sueltos que se han configurado a iniciativa de cada profesor, sino que en la medida de lo posible formara un cuerpo coherente. Otra prioridad quizá, no sé hasta qué punto se hace pero si no se hace suficientemente, difundir entre los alumnos la existencia de esos MOOC. Yo eso no sé hasta qué punto se mandan mails y redes sociales, pero como yo por una pequeña experiencia mi hijo está estudiando aquí el doble grado de derecho y políticas y no tiene ni idea de estos cursos. Es verdad que los alumnos están muy cargados y es un poco torpe pensar que van a dedicar su tiempo libre a hacer MOOCs, pero a lo mejor hay alguno que por curiosidad o en verano pues llega el verano terminará los exámenes pues podría hacerse un par de MOOCs sobre la historia que le gusta, o algo. Hasta ahora no lo he conseguido, pero nunca se sabe.

RC- luego ya lo último te preguntamos si ha habido un antes y un después de tu manera de concebir la docencia online tras participación en los MOOC y en que aspectos

AM- Un antes y un después sería demasiado exagerado pero. Pues mira, una cosa que me ha sorprendido no hemos hablado de eso es que para mí desde el punto de vista del aprendizaje como profesor lo más importante es el cuidado que hay que tener con lo que dices en los videos, a la preparación de los videos y también la preparación de los materiales. Eso se va a quedar ahí si lo haces mal que te puede retratar. O sea, cuidado exquisito en la preparación de los materiales y la docencia presencial metes la pata y al día siguiente dices oye perdonad, me he equivocado porque esta ley que sí resulta que está derogada tal y cual, eso no lo podés hacer. El gran cuidado que hay que tener con los materiales. Y otra cosa que me ha sorprendido más bien desfavorablemente es que hay muy poco intercambio en los foros entre los participantes. En el nuestro por lo menos todos sobre todo los hispanoamericanos, se presentan "soy fulanito escribo desde ecuador me

interesa mucho esto por bien desde hace unos años me dedico a la agricultura ecológica y entonces quiero saber etc. y entonces sale otra desde México "yo soy fulanita y estoy muy interesada en estos por tal y cual" pero no hay intercambio. Cuando hacemos preguntas para provocar el debate pues se espera que haya opiniones encontradas y pero los debates suelen ser pobres. Con sinceridad con menos interés por mi parte. Eso me lleva a la reflexión de que los profesores deberíamos ser más activos y tienen más protagonismo los foros y hasta ahora no lo había asumido porque pensaba que mi papel no era ese. Supongo que con práctica se puede asumir el punto intermedio, no demasiado protagonismo pero tampoco quedarte al margen.

13.1.2.2. Participant 2

R. Hola, nos puedes contar brevemente tu trayectoria académica, y tu experiencia con MOOCs_

M. Hola, me llamo ***** profesora de derecho administrativo en la facultad de derecho de la ***** y bueno, he participado en un curso MOOC en el pasado y, estoy coordinando, y participando también en otro pero, déjame exponer brevemente mi experiencia en relación con los MOOC: en cuanto a mi experiencia previa en enseñanza online creo que no podemos decir a ciencia cierta la extensión no tanto en la variedad como, en los años que llevo de impartir, docencia online.

R. En qué ha consistido?

M. He sido responsable de un módulo de, enseñanza online en el máster de derecho local no sé si los años ser, modo creo que son cinco ediciones como, os digo responsable de un modo de entero, en qué consiste esa enseñanza online, es semipresencial pero es básicamente, online una vez al mes los alumnos vienen, les damos una pequeña sesión, introductoria con una conferencia que a veces orsoni en el aula en él no, responsable del modelo o bien en la, persona y personaje te sepa y conozca, bien el tema y ella eso arrancó una, temática de un bloque de del máster, que es dura todo un mes era actividad se, desarrolla a partir de saga sin, presencia se desarrolla con online ante, cuatro semanas con actividades variadas, a que con mucha participación no es no, es lee los

documentos y tenemos enormes, no todas las hermanas tienen lecturas, muy andantes con el material lo tienen, disponibles una un té es el arroz de, casos prácticos que prevean desee sido, colocados soros generales de dudas, inforó final tercera semana de con con, un debate activo sobre un tema que, también se proponen y que también, tienen materia descolgados respecto el, módulo terminar con una última sesión, presencial que consiste en que jackson, nos vienen a tirar en un caso práctico, que curan atender igualmente pero que el, régimen persona eso lo hacen por la, mañana y por la tarde tiene la nueva, sesión presencial del siguiente movida, por alto ni icomos digo es, semipresencial pero en realidad tienen, cuatro horas presenciales y el resto, actividades online y variadas o chapa, kukoc un poquito más depreciado online, también tengo bueno perdón antes de, terminar ese modo ese máster como os, digo de ello tenido una experiencia de, nun esposa es irresponsable de un mes, del módulo en estos años y el último, año soy directora codere su directora, de ese máster y soy y tengo del módulo, se seca y aumentado mi experiencia en, este en este ámbito, os experiencia online menor es que parte, con un máster de nuevas tecnologías, él se siente pena por el título de un, masaje es imagen hay dos y únicamente, una sesión presencial pero hay un, poquito de un poquito de online porque, hay un osasuna que stanford a ese y que, estaban que están conectados en una, videoconferencia presenciar este asunto, en italia de esto no habrá si no lo, considero buenas baña y ya no son los, de él con éste baja calidad o smoke ni, participación en elecciones, alimentarias pp que emita la verdad, porque yo era corresponsable de un, modelo de una de las semanas que sos una, presencia mucho menor y además es que, el otro responsable ellas con antena, chinchilla el coordinador en la que, tenía gran peso, entonces yo obedecía órdenes mónica a, hacerte vídeo public mónica de la, abuela textito en bonn mónica en yo eso, no lo que sería más wernicky desde la, contacto pero no he tenido una ventana, activa pero la génesis del pulso porque, año siguiente cuando la nueva, convocatoria y estaba metida en un grupo, de trabajo muy variado multidisciplinar, de sobreprecio del mediador y deje esta, es la mía la mía y y empuje a los, otros a que las desee mucho nos, presentamos la la solicitud y nos, concedieron y estamos en plena un, procesador de ymad elaboración de ahora, sí que estoy metida hasta arriba porque, si coordinadora ser esposa de una semana, a ies juan antonio que merecen mis, órdenes que también está conmigo pero, que también es una broma ardientes el, o qué pero no tenemos coordinar a, los demás tiene no tiene ninguna, experiencia en moca y que además son, muy reticentes que les costó mucho, meterse de estamos muy bien bueno, programas en tafalla con las preguntas, la primera reto es, qué piensas tú de opinión quiero que, ha funcionado los montiel autónomas que, han aportado destitución y por lo tanto, decretado sentir más orgullosos, yo creo que supone que la autonomía no, pierda un carro un tren traiga el, teórico gerlo y que lo hemos cogido a y, al vuelo la autónoma el prestigio como, cama de universidad moderna, esto lo tenía al coger al

vuelo y lo ha, entendido perfectamente tienen, perfectamente desde los responsables y y, lohan y la oncca está llendo meses y lo, que imprimieron en la portada que dio, que aprovecha es aprovechado más una, buena plataforma bien no se puede pensar, en mejor esta forma la temática no las, temáticas años súper interesante the, city cuando los días de irse al menos, interesante los nuestra era la matanza, en estos días que no podemos competir, es que eso no había estimado, colaborador no competimos de compañeros, de viaje que espera antes de que si algo, es que cuando alguien real esto último, si el sun bowl nosotros zona bajo, paraná pero veo que los muy buenos pero, yo me han dado y positivamente a los, otros es la parte positiva que te he, visto en las demás pueden haber un, óvalo de otras disciplinas este payaso, y esa gente no sabe lo que es y no no no, digo que interesante que volví toque, más disciplinada muy bien elegidos que, ha cambiado si tú crees ha cambiado tu, práctica docente trust impartición, creación del mundo y que ha cambiado es, que a retos, yo les digo que yo tenía ya muchas que, a ti te asusta pensar line y además, esto sólo se contará pc hablar pero lo, cierto es que yo en docencia ordinaria, en en grado igual tienen un montón de, actividades online y yo hace muchos, años ya hacía que todo de tiempo en, traslados, mijares que todo el tiempo en cosas, previa de actividades de de clase de, cuesta posterior retroalimentación, hacernos eco no se nos recuerda el, tiempo en que recoge el último papel, hacemos es que yo no pt papel y que todo, es corrección desde which is us que se, ha hecho desde luego los foros las, entradas online que sé es que entonces, esa parte haré lo que sí ha quedado, quemada de su misión más divulgativa, intentar ser más divulgativo el que se, puede hablar de cualquier cosa hasta no, nos al alza al estudiante todo es esa, ese esfuerzo lo también el moc medio, dado a realizarlos y le permite que a, veces es cuenta antes anunciados a veces, pensaba puesto en la prueba antes de ser, muy complicado pues habló con toda otra, forma, y digo por si mira que haya ganado ticia, romero colonna decía vamos a haber, sesionar, aunque sea complicado pues hasta donde, lleguemos pero bajamos bajamos un poco, el al lenguaje y todo mundo podrían a, todos problemas en lugar de ser corto de, miras decir esto no que modifique, tengamos a lo cómodo pues vale a, lugares más costoso pero no pueden, eso sí es ha hecho del teatro que puede, ser que desafíos urgentes hacia qué, desafíos us afrontado o habéis, afrontado en el grupo ileso, afrontamiento de esos desafíos que no, veo bien y que has echado en falta muy, bien lo que dice adiós queríamos todos, supernovatos el que vamos creciendo esto, no va a salir esta sensación que, tenemos no de que no va a salir algo, bueno, hay desde luego yo nosotros los, técnicos los de oas como la uam x usb, que si no lo puedo decir, hay como sin dejarnos respirar no digo, en negativo en positivo, no no es que siente pasos invidentes que, cuando cerrando la fecha una fecha que, no puedo veo así si vamos a robar, dentro de diez días terminé bien no, súper amable todo pero hay avance o no, una adenda para allanar fundamental eso, es clave, entonces yo creo que es

el holandés, activos que éramos todos novatos que, nos metimos a ver esto y haciendo de mí, esto no va a salir si esto no tenemos ni, idea no entendía yo no entendía el, proceso general, yo no entendía no entren no veía el, resultado como lo es el resultado final, y luego apareció entonces yo creo que, ese será el desafío es bueno y eso al, tiempo claro de eran dificultades, pero que después más experiencia pero, haces de forma más enriquecedora lo que, sacar más partido, si yo peores ahora en él es una serie, para que el nuevo modelo el gnomo en el, que salir partimos con ante mello con, experiencia, los demás están en la fase de, incredulidad interior a israel motiva el, calor de su gente ya veréis para quedar, precioso todo es esa parte eso se lo, hemos sacado adelante muy bien en tu, opinión, cómo podemos resumir las oportunidades, que ofrece uno más y cobren los laicos, tienes y no perdonó a meter yo diera, soporte ideal de los retirados genética, porque de llegar a cualquier club, persona del planeta que ayer iguale a su, estética primer punto tenemos un, agricultor de indonesia matriculado, nuestra parte nuestro curso que es, alucinante podés pensar que quieras a, cualquier persona del planeta y que le, puedes ayudar o l puedes incluso te, puede enseñar cosas hasta que me, quieren de nosotros los a ello se pueden, divertir los podemos divertir nosotros, esa sartén para mí ha sido una, oportunidad de diversión ya me ha, pasado bien me pasado abril y me ha, cambiado eso como decía antes la, perspectiva de que se puede explicar, cualquier cosa es el mismo lenguaje lo, hacen ahora mis nuevos compañeros otras, áreas con menos no diciendo es que yo, no soy capaz de explicar de forma, sencilla si se puede preparar forma, sencilla y de otros etarras oscar otra, oportunidad para mí llegar a personas, cercanas a mí que no ente que nunca, saben lo que hago yo por fin han visto y, renata podio y mis hijos ven un vídeo, en la que aparezco yo y pueden tener, un asunto y de amigos y se aprestó pero, sin homicidios derecho y demás temas, antes es capaz de contar esto hay pues, no es tan complicado pues en pescan, rollazo qantas que hacen los mock del, agua que sean diferenciadores de los, demás, yo no sé por qué pero yo lo noto, cercano yo no puedo no lo posee para, acá por el formato de los vídeos que, las demos a ti que coppola y media si no, se parte para ello el otro autor coruña, y soltó como cerca nos puñal o no nos, aproxima pero es eso sí comentó, cuáles serían los siguientes pasos en, tu opinión qué destitución debería, dar si puede ser humeral tres pasos los, puntos que debe a la destrucción ya que, tenemos unos muy una situación un un, estatus que lo que debíamos hacer ahora, no lo sé si estoy sereno del inglés, pero esa cosa tú y los incisivos que, ayer se podía comerme años y que yo, que lo intentamos y ese no mejor en, castellano lo sé que creo que chantal, inglés stone aspecto es imprescindible, y pues no lo sé no lo sé la verdad no, sé si podemos hacer, sí sí es posible una no sea una masa, mensaje que largó más cortos unas xt, yesarías abono b algo de láseres, estaría bien entre relacionados en, lugar de solamente que a veces y dimitan, poco porque nos quedamos cortos cada, post y Perú muchas semanas es un payaso, pero

es verdad o niveles avanzados de, grandes desniveles cambio estaría bien, porque hará como es público haya, abierto pues no sabe si algunos n va a, resultar aburrido porque es demasiado, idente y o baratos es muy complicados y, entesa sin antes a su nivel a intentar, que sean nivel allí es que este cómic, es de muy bajo y eso atrae a gente pero, también puede suponer un rechace tras a, mejor nivel pro nivel didáctico que, hará muy bien, para mena y puedes decir si ha habido un, antes y un después a un antes y un, después en su reto concepción de la, agencia online se tasó para que pasaran, muy bien qué aspectos y ya veo que no, nos radicalmente pero yo sí que lo, domina todo con otros ojos lo mira todo, con otros ojos, penosamente la docente señalar vida ya, que 'no y pensando hoy que en esto, podían encontrar el estado sea, democrático es lo que os digo que esta, sensación de de que todo es posible, llevarla a cabo y letras, y a mí me tranquiliza mucho de vuelta -, la el vínculo para sociedad canadiense, en un agujero y que no van a estamos con, la sociedad y poder aportar cosas hay, una visión atencón los investigadores, que amate para unos años y está en, prisión ya más divulgativa del no que, lo citó somos y qué estupendos, entonces me llevaba a todos a mirar todo, control upon thames pértiga terminan, con enzimas ya nos dan una pronta pero, samuel, el tiempo nos alegra muchísimo que no, podamos más rápido de lo que hablo de, que ya no hay llamas ya habían cobrado, que estimaban marca melancon con lo, rápido que hablo ya encima camino y ver, espoleada con un de premura la verja.

13.1.2.3. Participant 3

RC- Juan Antonio, nos puedes contar tu experiencia previa online?

-JAC- buenos días soy Juan Antonio Chinchilla profesor de la facultad de derecho de la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. Mi experiencia con los MOOC consiste en primer lugar en la dirección o codirección del MOOC de seguridad alimentaria que hace justo tres días hemos terminado la segunda edición con carácter previo que sí había tenido una vinculación relativamente amplia con la docencia semipresencial. Llevo siendo nuevo director de tres módulos de un máster semi presencial que ofertamos en el Instituto de Derecho Local desde hace cuatro años. Además soy codirector de uno máster semipresencial que ofrece la Universidad Menéndez Pelayo con el Instituto Nacional de Administración Pública. Este es sobre urbanismo y bueno también desde la implantación de la herramienta Moodle en la Universidad Autónoma, sí la he utilizado como una herramienta docente de primer orden en tanto las clases más magistrales como de seminario no simplemente como un depósito de documentos que puedan consultar los alumnos sino como herramienta de intercambio tanto en opiniones, de actividades de auto aprendizaje de los alumnos.

-RC- la primera las cuestiones, en tu opinión, qué ha funcionado de los MOOCs de la UAM, qué han aportado a la institución y de qué nos podemos sentir orgullosos?

-JAC- En primer lugar yo creo que lo que ha permitido es que sirvan como ventana hacia el exterior respecto a la actividad que nos empeñamos en la Universidad Autónoma tanto nuestra actividad docente como la actividad investigadora que desarrollamos los distintos profesores. Yo he sido a la vez alumno de otros MOOCs ofertados por otras universidades y creo que el papel que hemos desempeñado los distintos MOOC elaborados con la Autónoma está al mismo nivel.

-RC- en que ha cambiado tu práctica docente tras tu participación tanto en la creación del MOOC

-JAC- creo que mi caso concreto los cambios han podido ser mínimos porque como he comentado la experiencia previa que yo tenía de docencia online es relativamente amplia y que prácticamente lo que he intentado es volcar esos conocimientos previos en la docencia

si hay algunas modificaciones algunos inputs recibidos tanto el personal en formación, unos cursos que hemos realizado, hablar ante la cámara, hablar en público que bueno siempre aportan alguna cuestión que uno no había racionalizado previamente o ejerciéndola de facto en la docencia presencial, de las charlas conferencias que se dan fuera de la universidad sinceramente no creo que haya supuesto un cambio significativo

-RC- cuáles son los desafíos que has tenido que afrontar a la hora de crear e impartir un MOOC y cuales, tú o tu equipo crees que no han ido tan bien, qué has echado en falta?

- JAC- Bueno, nosotros por suerte o por desgracia somos de los primeros participantes en las convocatorias del MOOC y el problema que nos encontramos era la falta de apoyo técnico con un equipo suficientemente amplio, por ejemplo en nuestro caso tuvimos que grabar menos vídeos de los que pensábamos inicialmente porque no había una estructura suficiente para grabarlos, editarlos. Por fortuna era un equipo que iniciaba su actividad y yo creo que esas carencias las han suplido tanto con su profesionalidad, su disponibilidad

.sí es verdad que ya nos hemos planteado para una tercera edición de nuevos reestructurarlo a la luz de las observaciones recibidas de alumnos que han participado, de nuestra propia visión de cuál ha sido el resultado final, inicialmente no sabíamos muy bien el nivel de calidad o de exigencia que queríamos establecer para los alumnos, no sabemos si teníamos que bajar mucho el listón para permitir sólo a cualquier alumno o queríamos un nivel más próximo a lo que puede ser universitario, ahí estuvimos dudando y yo creo que al final quedó algo digamos intermedio. Entonces tenemos que reflexionar sobre si queremos seguir en ese nivel intermedio o dar un salto cualitativo hacia una mayor profesionalización del MOOC.

-RC- Cómo podemos resumir las oportunidades que ofrece un curso MOOC?

-JAC- voy a responder desde una perspectiva del usuario del mismo y un modelo que me permite por un lado es obtener conocimientos por parte de profesionales con los que si no difícilmente podría llegar a entablar algún tipo de relación, formas nuevas de enseñar puntos de vista distintos, y lo uso tanto como herramienta de aprendizaje para mi formación universitaria formación docente como herramientas simplemente destinadas a ser un

elemento como hobby, he cursado cursos sobre historia de la guerra civil en estados unidos simplemente porque es un tema que me gusta, he cursado MOOCs de adquisición de capacidades docentes, he cursado MOOC relacionados con mi especialidad en derecho, quizá simplemente es que me permiten, lo que antes te exigía tener que irte a hacer una estancia fuera para tener cierta visión de cómo otros profesores imparten, aquí tienes esa visión directa

- Qué hace a los MOOC de la universidad autónoma diferenciadores de los demás?.

.-JAC- Eso es complicado, lo que nos puede diferenciar es que intentamos ser una universidad abierta y accesible a todos

-RC- Cuales serían los siguientes pasos que debería dar esta institución respecto a los MOOCs, en tu opinión qué tres prioridades, .debería abordar la institución?.

.-JAC- En primer lugar yo creo que un mayor nivel en los cursos de formación del profesorado que vaya a impartir estos cursos,. .por un lado. El segundo es homologar una mayor inversión en medios técnicos y del servicio que preste el apoyo por ejemplo tenemos determinados programas de animación etc. pero hay muchos más en el mercado de los que se podría disponer, yo por ejemplo en alguno de los cursos que se han realizado hay una herramienta de estas herramientas para el aprendizaje que creo que la herramienta se denomina Cerebo con la que trabaja. .también bastante EDx, aquí no la tenemos, también me parece que puede ser muy útil en determinados tipos de MOOC, lo intento solventar con otras herramientas gratuitas que hay pero bueno es algo más pedestre, quizá este sería el segundo punto. Y el tercer punto diría que es una concienciación al resto de docentes de la universidad de que esto no va a sustituir a la universidad presencial pero sí debe ser una apuesta decidida de futuro, tanto MOOC como incluso dentro de lo que es nuestra docencia presencial configurar nuestros cursos como SPOCs

-RC- en tu opinión y desde tu perspectiva has tenido o habido un antes y un después en la manera de entender la educación online tras su impartición o tu participación perdón y en qué aspectos?

-JAC- vuelvo a insistir no tengo un cambio notable no hay un punto que pueda decir éste es el momento por mi experiencia previa aquí lo que he hecho ha sido trasladar esas experiencias previas a la actividad tanto personal como de el grupo. Mis compañeros ninguno salvo una persona había participado en actividades semipresenciales, en principio fueron muy temerosos, pero sí reconozco que mi papel fue tirar de ellos y decirles que esto no es nada distinto y puede funcionar muy bien.

.-RC- Has aprendido algo de los estudiantes que lo hacen gratis y en abierto que que no están inscritos o te pueden decir lo que quieran

-JAC- hemos tenido algunas o muchas críticas positivas , alguna negativa y de donde puedo realmente aprender es de las dos, de las críticas positivas porque lo que pasa es que alumnos que no puedes sacar una rentabilidad oficial, aunque relativa porque la primera edición sí podían obtener un certificado no verificado pero sí de impartición casi todos lo tuvieron y lo que veías es que llegabas a rincones del planeta donde la en vida pensabas que alguien podría llegar a tener un nivel de acceso a estudios universitarios primero te satisface, valoras tu labor. Las críticas negativas las encajas igual que en una docencia presencial, no a todos los alumnos les gusta y en esas críticas lo que tienes que ver qué es lo que te han criticado y si es razonable o no. Las últimas críticas que tuvimos fue simplemente que a los profesores en uno de los test no había revisado la pregunta y había una pequeña incorrección entonces un alumno enfadado porque su nota en ese test habría bajado , entonces tuvimos que pensar qué hacíamos sin anulábamos este test, etc. Yo creo que sí aprendes. Qué aprendes de las críticas negativas? tienes que mejorar porque esto no es simplemente llegar grabar un día y desconectar. Hay que estar pendiente del MOOC intentar responder a los alumnos, -JAC- apretarte un.

.-RC- hacéis el mismo caso a las críticas de de los de los alumnos inscritos en en tu experiencia pasada que a las de los del MOOC?

-JAC- Aunque conscientemente te diría no, creo que inconscientemente sí. Hay un elemento, porque hasta ahora en que yo había impartido era semipresencial con lo cual si tenías al menos por una vez al mes un contacto con los alumnos,. pero el contacto físico y ese plus aquí y no lo tienes nunca, contacto físico, esa es una de las cuestiones que de cara a la tercera edición hemos decidido intentar solucionar creando algún tipo de evento. .porque sí es algo que echamos en falta, y quizá vinculado sobre todo lo que tú dices Si no estás con con un ordenador de por medio y no notas esa presencia

-RC- perfecto muchísimas gracias.

13.1.2.4. Participant 4

EB- Mi nombre es *****, soy catedrático de química orgánica de la universidad autónoma de madrid y mi participación en los moocs pues es desde hace aproximadamente dos años que empezamos con el MOOC de "química orgánica un mundo a tu alcance" y ahora estoy en la fase de construcción de la segunda parte de ese curso que en realidad tiene el mismo nombre y mi experiencia anterior en este tipo de actividades pues fue fundamentalmente en el entorno de lo que se llamaba ADA madrid y eran cursos muy parecidos a los MOOCs, la única diferencia es que no se incluían materiales audiovisuales, es decir concretamente vídeos. De esto estoy hablando de hace lo menos probablemente doce años ya y estuve ligado a ese proyecto con tres cursos diferentes aproximadamente unos 10 años. En ese tiempo la comunidad de madrid cambió mucho de parecer porque inicialmente empezó con mucho con mucho poderío en cuanto a que incluso financiaba monetariamente los cursos, después se pasó a simplemente dar una recompensa en el pod, en el plan docente, y en los últimos años ya ni eso. Y luego al final murió el programa. Duró como una docena de años aproximadamente.

RC. en tu opinión ***** que ha funcionado de los MOOC de la UAM, que han aportado a la institución, y de que podemos estar orgullosos

EB- Pues yo simplemente cuando he visto el número de alumnos que se han apuntado al curso, ha sido del orden de monos una media de unos 3500 en las cuatro sesiones temas tenido regladas de seis o siete semanas de duración, a mí eso ya me ha parecido francamente impactante porque la universidad autónoma tiene una ventana no sólo en este

curso sino los cuatro en este caso van a ser ocho que se van a producir, eso es fundamentalmente el mayor beneficio, que es ventana que da al exterior a un montón de personas

RC- Ahora el curso está abierto y en self-pace. Cuántos alumnos tienes?

EB- hace exactamente tres días estábamos poquito por debajo de 1500 pero tenía una rampa que es ascendente a razón de unos 25 a 30 alumnos por semana

RC- Y tienen un un mejor comportamiento con los otros es decir que están ahí manteniéndose, o van desapareciendo?

EB- Sinceramente es que eso no lo puedo saber porque lo único que tengo es la matriculación pero no tengo idea de la desmatriculación, y lo único que teníamos antes como referencia era la participación en foros y en este caso la participación en foros es prácticamente nula

RC- Están abiertos los foros?

EB- Está todo el curso exactamente igual que antes, lo que pasa es que la gente no participa en los foros.

RC- Ha cambiado tu práctica docente tras su participación en la creación y luego impartición de los MOOC? Si ha cambiado en qué aspectos?

EB- Pues la verdad que como llevo tantos años con esta historia de ADA madrid y demás, hace muchos años que ya he adaptado cuestiones audiovisuales a la utilización de la internet etcétera. Antes de ADA madrid estamos hablando de hace años y la tecnología no existía, a mi alcance lo único que había a lo mejor era un retroproyector. Todo lo que yo tenía mi alcance siempre lo utilicé, de hecho aquí a mi izquierda tengo una pantalla para utilizar en un retroproyector, una pantalla de cristal líquido transparente en la cual se podían poner modelos moleculares y demás, esa pantalla tiene 20 o 25 años y ya la empleaba yo en su momento. La tecnología siempre me ha gustado.

RC- Cuáles son los desafíos a los que te has enfrentado a la hora de crear material para MOOCs, impartirlo y que no ha funcionado o ido bien y que te ha faltado?

EB- Lo único que yo diría que ha faltado es apoyo institucional desde el punto de vista no de poner medios que cada vez hay más medios a mi disposición para poder hacer las cosas, sino reconocimiento institucional a un nivel parecido al que tienen las clases presenciales . Como desafíos afrontados no sé si es algo muy importante pero bueno ponerse al frente de una cámara es algo que no es habitual y que causa un cierto respeto al principio.

RC. cómo podés resumir las oportunidades que ofrece un MOOC?

EB- Es una pregunta muy general no sé realmente en mi caso concreto la química orgánica es una ciencia muy dura, yo diría que si nosotros estuviéramos, somos como lo que la leyenda de las ingenierías para la química, somos la materia la materia más dura más exigente y que los alumnos tienen más dificultad para para pasar. El tener una asignatura evidentemente a un nivel muy relativamente somero de este calibre es una oportunidad increíble porque se hace en español en español hablan 300 millones de personas en el mundo pero simplemente con poder acudir a los institutos de toda nuestra geografía y que pudiera eso aportar una ayuda no solamente a los alumnos sino los profesores, pues la verdad es que sería algo muy importante en el caso concreto de mi materia

RC- muy bien tú crees que los MOOC de la UAM son diferenciadores de otros?

EB- La verdad es que no puedo opinar porque no tengo mucha experiencia de otros MOOCs salvo lo que he podido ver de los que se han editado aquí como el de La Vida del Quijote, Android, etc.. Yo diría que tienen unas características. La idiosincrasia del profesorado ya viene dada por la UAM y eso probablemente queda ahí reflejado pero no no puedo encontrar unos detalles concretos en los que poder incidir.

RC- y ahora si pudieras pedir a la institución tres cosas que deberían hacer?

EB- Pues lo primero sería de alguna manera reconocer esa tarea docente exactamente yo la pondría exactamente al mismo nivel que la tarea docente reglada, presencial, etc. porque la verdad es que incluso yo diría que cuesta menos preparar unas clases que un MOOC. Es que en mi caso como tengo una cierta autonomía pues las cosas que me fallan estoy encontrando siempre lo he encontrado desde el principio cuando empecé con melchor siempre he encontrado arreglo, es decir siempre ha habido una o dos o tres personas que ahora hay más que siempre me han ayudado en aquellos digámosle agujeros negros en los

que mi conocimiento las tecnologías pues falla. Entonces cenar a ese nivel no puedo decir nada porque estoy verdaderamente muy satisfecho.

RC- y ya por último puedes decir si hay un antes y un después en tu concepción de la agencia online por tu participación en el MOOC, y si es así en qué aspectos.

EB- Sí lo que pasa es que me gusta participar en todo lo que significa innovación pero no soy un absoluto y total forofo de nada es decir que cada cosa tiene su foro su zona de utilización y en algunas ocasiones yo soy un poco escéptico incluso de mi propio trabajo, no sé, como siempre suelo decir, se trata de que cuando tú haces una actividad y la quieres presentar hacia la gente pues no necesariamente eso sea una motivación sino que no sea una desmotivación porque yo creo en la libertad de todas las personas y por lo tanto si tú te planteas hacer un MOOC y tú tienes un grado de dedicación y una voluntad de hacerlo pues realmente no se necesita mucho más, evidentemente si los contenidos no están bien organizados o hay algún problema en errores etc. pero la verdad es que como son tantos años y los cursos han sido probados en varias plataformas diferentes pues en este caso concreto no sucede, pero yo creo que cada cosa tiene su sitio y la ventaja enorme que tiene esto es el que una persona a su aire totalmente en cualquier momento que le apetezca pueda hacer este curso y pueda introducirse en materias tan duras como por ejemplo la química orgánica y muchas otras que hay en otros cursos que ofrece edx y las demás plataformas

13.1.2.5. Participant 5

-GS- buenas tardes soy ***** trabajo aquí en la universidad autónoma de madrid desde hace dos años, en marzo de este año empecé a trabajar como gestora y desde dos mil catorce he sido estudiante en prácticas y no tengo ninguna experiencia de antes de haber empezado aquí en uamx con la docencia en general pero una vez entré aquí pues comencé a dar cursos de formación a los docentes sobre la plataforma edx y open edx y ahora pues sigo trabajando de gestora

-RC- en tu opinión qué crees tú que ha funcionado de los MOOC de la UAM, qué han aportado a la institución? de que nos podemos sentir más orgullosos?

-GS- pues yo creo que los MOOC lo que ha funcionado principalmente ha sido para dar visibilidad a la universidad porque estamos trabajando con estudiantes de todas partes, ha sido lo más interesante pero sobre todo yo creo que ha sido un poco enfocado en darnos nosotros cuenta con las universidades del valor que tiene la enseñanza online y ver todas las cosas que podemos lograr con ella cómo acercarnos y pues ver desde otro ámbito la enseñanza.

-RC- como docente ha cambiado tu práctica docente tras tu participación en la creación o impartición de algún MOOC, si se ha dado el caso, en qué aspectos?

-GS- yo creo que sí, sobre todo la metodología que se utiliza los cursos de edx y que es toda la secuencia de aprendizaje, estar muy pendiente de los estudiantes de no sólo aportarles información sino también recibir por su parte feedback, sí que lo hemos reflejado, es notorio pero mucho en esos cursos de formación a los docentes los primeros que hicimos a esos últimos que hemos hecho porque la dinámica cambió mucho, la de la clase

-RC- cuáles son los desafíos que habéis afrontado desde la oficina a la hora de crear los MOOC y que ha ido no tan bien y porqué, qué se ha echado en falta?

-GS- pues en un principio puesto que no teníamos mucho background pues fue un poco aprender sobre la marcha entonces puestos a que no son procesos contras, los contras siempre enfocados al tiempo, ves que llega la fecha y el proyecto no está terminado ahora les falta algo pero vamos a sobrepasar en general en todo ámbito pero sería uno de los más destacados, planificación y coordinación entre todos aquí, al fin y al cabo no es sólo el trabajo de la oficina sino de trabajo con el docente y el docente tiene una carga que, pues normalmente esto no es lo más prioritario y supone pues mucho mensaje de reuniones y cambios y demás,

-RC- cómo podemos resumir las oportunidades que puede ofrecer un MOOC?

-GS- yo creo que como docente pues influye mucho también la versión, cómo enseñas, cambia tu forma de ver, no es lo mismo lo presencial, a lo que estás acostumbrado, sino cambiar de perspectiva, es cómo poder llegar a tantas personas que les siga pareciendo interesante, eso influye mucho en el docente, y como estudiante diría que los cursos online dan muchos temas que normalmente no te meterías en ellos, no puedes a lo mejor meterte en una clase de biología o meterte en un grado porque no tienes el background, pero si te interesa algo muy específico que resulta que lo han puesto en un MOOC, puedes investigar sin coste asociado y ver qué tal se te da y si luego te sirve para algo... pues como estudiante vienen muy bien y luego también pues para tu propia carrera profesional y estar pendiente de todas las novedades de si sale algo nuevo puedes aprender un montón y tienes también luego, en el caso de esto de los MOOCs con certificado pues una justificación de que efectivamente lo has hecho bien

-RC- qué hace a los MOOCs de la UAM diferentes de los demás MOOC?

-GS- pues yo diría cómo nos involucramos como equipo porque todos los que estamos en la oficina pues participamos absolutamente la creación de todo y entonces pues buscamos mucha calidad y que esté todo con el mayor detalle posible con y eso pues hay otras universidades que no se meten tanto en ello. Otras dejan más libertad a los profesores para que lo hagan a su manera y demás que lo cual está bien también, son diferentes métodos pero a nosotros nos gusta involucrarnos absolutamente en todo, leernos los textos, vernos los videos, y estar hasta hasta el último detalle pendientes

-RC- Cuáles serían los siguientes pasos que esta institución debería hacer ahora en tema MOOCs? tenemos unas instalaciones tenemos un personal tenemos cursos, tenemos una buena plataforma con la que seguimos con muy buenas relaciones, ahora qué tres deseos pedirías a los reyes magos? además estando en la posición en la que estás que seguro que te hacen bastante caso porque tienes cerca a una persona que te podría escuchar, qué cosas pedirías en prioridad?

-GS- Pues no solo desde mi posición ahora es sino también un poco como estudiante diría que acercarlos a la universidad porque ahora los MOOCs se centran mucho en lo de fuera, en los estudiantes que no tenemos, en los que están más allá, y tambien pueden servir muchísimo dentro de las clases como complementos de, como cursos 0, como cursos durante. En general están enfocados al público a todo cualquiera pero sin perder MOOCs, pasaríamos a SPOCs, son cositas, un término medio, provechar ese formato en las aulas y que los estudiantes también de aquí ya no sólo que les convaliden créditos

para hacer MOOC están dirigidos a todos sino que también pues se haga de los MOOCs algo interno de la universidad, es decir, que sean SPOC que sí es algo interno y sabes que es pequeño, pero para los cursos de grado esos cursos cero, durante, a dar más visibilidad a todo esto de la enseñanza online que no...

-RC- tú crees que hay poca visibilidad es decir tú crees que los alumnos de la autónoma no tienen mucha constancia de que existen los MOOCs?

-GS- cuando comenzamos esta nueva tanda ahora en octubre, la cuarta, se mandaron mails y banners como otras veces en publicidad, pusimos un montón de carteles por todas las facultades, en las cafeterías y estuvimos repartiendo panfletos en la entrada del metro en el del autobus, y a raíz de eso, empezaron a tener visibilidad, empezaron a venir, pero hasta ahora no no yo creo que aún estuviese tan puesto. Precisamente por eso quisimos hacer esa inversión de tiempo y esfuerzo para publicitarlo, y los estudiantes respondieron muy bien. O sea que sí tuvo un poco de repercusión ese involucrarnos más en el campus con ello más allá de un mensaje que pueda llegar por el correo, por webmail, que luego no lo miran tanto.

-RC- Más pasos, más prioridades?

-GS- Pues el tema del inglés la verdad es que me parece algo también muy importante la verdad que es si queremos, dependiendo del público al que nos queramos lanzar, irá en un idioma o en otro, pero si queremos que se nos reconozca a lo mejor un poco más como universidad en otros ámbitos pues el idioma inglés, siendo más universal sí que sería más apropiado, pero siempre sin perder el castellano. El público que solemos atraer más es el latinoamericano pero tampoco por el idioma, yo creo, sino porque también los temas que solemos tratar son los que más les interesa. Por eso, si perdiésemos el español a lo mejor no habría tanta gente de allí. El tema de la diversidad lingüística ayuda a la visibilidad.

-RC- Y algún otro tema?

-GS- Diría que más blended learning. Ahora mismo los SPOC que están sólo siendo proyectos de innovación docente que están utilizando a alguna que otra persona que no están a lo mejor muy puestos en qué es eso de nuestra plataforma y que han empezado a dar pequeños primeros pasos pero todavía no, pues visibilizarlo también, como nuevos formatos de enseñanza, ya no es tanto lo mejor incluso utilizar la plataforma Open EDx que es lo que hacemos aquí, sino simplemente tratar de otra forma los cursos online. Moodle también tiene muchas herramientas: cuestionarios, crucigramas, tienen montón de cosas pero no se utilizan, entonces yo creo que sí que puede ser también una de las claves.

-RC- y bueno tú piensas que hay un antes y un después del trabajo con los MOOC sobre qué es la docencia online?

-GS- Desde luego, hasta ahora las herramientas online se utilizaban para dar el material, para colgar muchos pdfs, sin embargo yo al menos cuando me metí aquí pues ya vi un mundo distinto de enseñanza online, no es sólo leer documentos online, es más cosas: peer review, corregir a los compañeros, la variedad de formatos ha sido lo que más me ha abierto los ojos. También herramientas porque eso también ahora que los utilizamos mucho aquí en la oficina, se acabaron los power point se acabaron muchas cosas, vamos a utilizar mapas conceptuales, infografías, cualquier cosa un poco más dinámica que te ayude a aprender pero que también sean poco más divertida y que te aporte otras cosas, ya que ha cambiado la percepción.

13.1.2.6. Participant 6

R. *****, por favor siéntate muy buenos.días.soy ***** soy.doctoranda de historia moderna en.universidad autónoma de madrid y.licenciada en historia con un master.en historia antigua y ciencia de la.antigüedad y estoy haciendo el doctorado.también en historia moderna.en concreto sobre literatura espiritual.en la españa del siglo y todo gira en.torno al ámbito de la españa imperial.el imperio español y de la cultura del.siglo de oro -RUTH- anterior a trabaja en el.MOOC has tenido docencia presencial o.docencia online cual era tu experiencia.antes de empezar a trabajar en el MOOC.en particular

J. docencia online no he dado pero.sí he dado alguna.clase que me han pedido algunos profesores.dar alguna clase en la.universidad en concreto pedro.garcía martín

R. En tu opinión, qué ha.funcionado de los cursos online MOOCs.de la UAM, que han aportado a la.institución y de que podemos por tanto.más orgullosas -JASMINA- Bueno pues la resonancia.de la universidad autónoma de madrid.la calidad de las enseñanzas que damos.en esta universidad en lo que es dentro.de mi campo en historia que estamos.dando a conocer la historia moderna en.concreto el siglo de oro español tanto.política como culturalmente hablando e.incluso también social y estás dando más.resonancia a una asignatura que ya.existía dentro de la carrera que es la.España del Siglo de Oro en tiempo el quijote.creada por el profesor pedro garcía y.martín y que tuvo mucho bastante.éxito no prueba de ello es que yo la hice.en la carrera gracias a esa asignatura yo.luego me conduje por la vía de.la historia moderna española porque yo.para arqueología y bueno nos está dando.propaganda y un material muy bueno.que elaboró el profesor

R.- en general la calidad.de los materiales de los cursos online.que se estan difundiendo en abierto.

J. no conozco los demás.cursos por supuesto yo hago.referencia al mio y, bueno, el éxito y la.y la calidad

R. Ha cambiado tu práctica docente tras tu.participación en la impartición del MOOC?.si ha habido ocasión de tener docencia?.

J. De momento no porque ha sido más bien.clases por la ausencia del.profesor por petición expresa del profesor.son pero sí me está dando una formación.bastante buena para el día de mañana.si yo consigo dar clase de la universidad.a la hora de elaborar preguntas porque.dentro de del foro aunque yo intento.resolver.las dudas que tenga, si ya es una cosa muy.específica sobre el quijote llamo al.profesor para los Pedro García martín para.que el me asesore pero yo lo que hago.también para dinamizar el el foro es.ponerles preguntas y

crear debates para.que los alumnos participen y y por ello.también ha tenido bastante éxito porque.unas personas, los alumnos han.participado y han comentado.

R.- O sea, has promocionado y fomentado el Social Learning, muy bien. Cuáles.son los desafíos que se han afrontado.la hora de crear y partidos mooc, cual es.tu perspectiva de lo que no ha ido.bien y que has echado en falta?

J. pues de momento y no echo en falta.nada.hombre es más difícil controlar a la.hora de que como no son clases.presenciales es muy difícil que.participen muchos alumnos. Tampoco.participan mucho presencialmente no? pero.el contacto también hace mucho. Pero bueno,.eso es la desventaja que tiene.este campo no? en este tipo de.cursos pero vamos hasta la hora yo no veo.ninguna pega

R. cómo podemos resumir las.oportunidades que ofrece un MOOC en general?.

J. Que una asignatura.en concreto que se da en una universidad en.este caso española y en concreto en.madrid se da a conocer al resto de españa y.al resto del mundo lo que hace.también que el resto de las personas se interese.por esa asignatura o por se en mi caso.eso conocimiento incluso.haya gente que se anime a seguir.investigando estudiándose el tema o que.incluso venga a la universidad autónoma.de madrid

-R. tienes constancia de que haya venido alguien?

J. hasta ahí tanto no.porque eso habría que tener contacto.más directo con el alumnado y decirles.bueno que tal pero sí me di cuenta por.ciento anoche cuando estuve mirando el.foro de que hubo una alumna que ya.dentro en el curso año pasado aunque.estaba todavía archivado le gustó.bastante y quiso hacerlo este año.ya de manera vamos con los materiales.haciéndose exámenes y todo porque.le había encantado o sea que...

R. y.no habéis tenido.noticias de alumnos que han empezado a hacer.tesis doctorales o trabajos de.investigación relacionados con el MOOC.de otros países, otros centros?

J. no lo se

R. Pedro me lo notifico.creo que era un país de lengua árabe..expresiones de interés relacionados con hacer una tesis una investigación de algo relacionado con el quijote....que hace a los MOOC de la UAM.diferenciadores de los demás?.

-J. yo hablo referente al mío.claro, es muy dinámico, se compagina texto.e imagen y bueno luego también.nosotros tenemos como particular el.telenoticias que lo que hace también

que sea más ameno más divertido ,.además de aprender te estás divirtiendo y los exámenes.ejercicios o evaluaciones son bastante accesibles para todo tipo de niveles y de formación no solamente gente de historia.sino de otros campos incluso.si no han hecho un tipo de estudio en.concreto un o elevados y esos es muy.positivo luego como también tenemos una.sección dedicada a música también es.muy agradable escuchar pues los.excrementos de la época entonces.hace todo pues muy dinámico no.y posiblemente dan más en ese sentido de.más facilidades a la hora de.dar clase en comparación con una.clase presencial en una universidad no.porque podés incorporar materiales.que no puedes a lo mejor hacerlos.directamente en la propia clase como son.los vídeos o imágenes de los sitios,.museos y de los cuadros y luego la.música.

R. cuáles serían los hitos pasos a dar.por la institución respecto a los MOOC?.en tu opinión cuáles deberían ser tres.prioridades en orden que la institucion debería.dar estos momentos

J. bueno yo creo que la propaganda sería muy.buena, más de la que se está dando .porque vamos a ver esa.plataforma la cocen cierto número.de personas por lo visto el primer año.en ese se vio bastante información.sobre ello.pero claro si tú no informas al resto.de que existe esa plataforma y dentro de.esta plataforma ciertos cursos dentro.de historia pues claro la gente no lo.sabe los que entran entran ya.han visto ese curso o lo han realizado. Entonces la.propaganda es muy positiva. Yo he.intentado dar propaganda de.ello incluso dentro de de grupos de.facebook de historia..yo no sé si a raíz de eso ha entrado más.gente o no pero la propaganda.sería un punto a favor . -RUTH- Segundo punto y tercer punto?

J. bueno como ya ha habido gente que ya.ha realizado en mi caso este curso.intentar reformar incorporar nuevos.ejercicios o si metiendose dentro del siglo de oro español.fomentando también.otros autores no? el catedrático.P.G.M. se ha dedicado más a la historia.del quijote pero también fomentar.otros puntos dentro de la propia.la historia como puede ser la política como.puede ser por ejemplo lo que yo estudio.que es la espiritualidad española Sta. Teresa de Jesús hasta el SXVII.y ademas tambien.lo han pedido algunos alumnos.

R. O sea, ampliar contenidos o hacer otro curso.complementario -JASMIA-.sí porque incluso algunos alumnos lo.han pedido en el propio foro que lo he visto.años anteriores incluso en éste en que.decía que que si podíamos más.adelante hacer un curso dedicado por ejemplo a.Lope de Vega o Calderón de la barca.o monográfico pero dentro del.mismo contexto o a otros puntos que hay propia

R. Último punto?

J. pues por todo lo demás.por lo menos dentro de mi campo lo veo.todo bastante bien en cuanto a.materiales, videos,...a lo mejor también el.acceso por lo menos este año no.tenía acceso a poder.mandar un correo a la página de inicio.esto en años anteriores sí.pero no me ha hecho falta pero a lo mejor en caso de que para.poder informar a los alumnos de que.existe el foro que por favor participen.aunque no estén obligados pero que es.conveniente porque es una herramienta.muy positiva a la hora de interactuar.entre todos nosotros y compartir, como.somos personas de diferentes países.diferentes culturas y diferente.formación es muy positivo que entre.todos nosotros compartamos lo que.sepamos en este caso sobre la españa.imperial o sobre la españa el siglo de oro.y sus conocimientos a la hora de en caso.de este curso el quijote o como.le conocieron o como o cómo serán sus.respectivos países no? el primer año.también fue muy positivo porque.había gente por ejemplo de méxico que.estuvieron hablando del.de guanajuato y de la propaganda que se.da y del interés que sobre sobre el.quijote y sobre cervantes entonces es.una manera también de que a lo mejor.desde mi campo y sin meterme.mucho porque es el campo del profesor.pero si informales de que por.favor participen que es una cosa muy.positiva una herramienta muy positiva para.compartir entre todos nosotros ,..conocimientos y también dudas y.

-R- Y ya por último ha habido un antes y un.después en la manera de entender la.enseñanza online tras tu participación en.el MOOC y en qué aspectos?

-J-Bueno.como he estado diciendo a la.hora de informar o dar más.propaganda en otros centros.universitarios incluso en otros países.para dar a conocer tu trabajo y tu.materia de estudio para mí me ha resultado.muy positivo, me ha abierto.también un poco el ámbito online.porque encima.manejar el ámbito de las redes y si.tengo suerte el día mañana me.gustaría hacer un MOOC.referente al estudio que yo estoy.haciendo no? que es sobre la espiritualidad.literatura espiritual española que es un.campo muy interesante, prueba de ello es.que me he fijado, no se si seguirá en activo.que había uno más o menos relacionado con lo.que yo hago estudio investigó que es.sobre sor juana inés de la cruz en.méxico, era uno de los cursos que vi la.página de the edx no sé si seguirá.estando activo o no pero me llama.muchísimo la atención incluso digo bueno.pues sí e siguiera dando me.encantaría hacerlo no porque además mi.intención si continuó por esta vía.que dios lo quiera si pues me gustaría.hacer un un MOOC sobre este campo que es.bastante desconocido, fue conocido en su momento.pero ahora no tanto a mí.me animó bastante para dar a conocer.pues me mi formación mis.investigaciones.iy sorbe todo pues el campo que yo estudio.

-R imaginabas cuándo empezaste a enseñar online que iba a ser así todos los retos que te has encontrado o ha habido algo que no te esperabas?

-J bueno al primer año era bastante desconocimiento yo más o menos me imaginaba cómo podía ser a raíz de las redes sociales..en facebook.más o menos podía imaginar cómo podría ser. lo que sí me di cuenta es del gran interés de la gente el y participación preguntando y también opinando, dando su parecer en este caso.caso pues el tema que nosotros tratamos.y también pensé que iba a ser.incluso poquito más frío no?.pero la gente luego pues es muy cercana en algunos aspectos y ya incluso cuando cogen confianza.ya te tratan como de tú a tú como si fuera una clase presencial aunque sea a distancia.entonces eso es algo que me agradó bastante.sobre todo las felicitaciones por parte.de algunos alumnos por la labor que llevé a cabo con ellos a la hora de informarles ayudarles y asesorarles, entonces una cosa que me alegró bastante no? aunque sea algo a distancia algunos alumnos parecían muy cercanos.

-R tú crees que te servirá cuando hagas tu MOOC?

-J Sí,.porque me está dando más pistas como al tratar con el alumnado q.que es lo que más interesa.que lo que menos interesa o qué es lo que suelen pedir la gente quiere pedir.es algo que me e está ayudando incluso para cuando tenga que dar una clase presencial.también va animando a la hora de poner imágenes e incluso crear otras preguntas.

13.1.2.7. Participant 7

CJ- Me llamo *****, soy profesora titular de derecho civil en la universidad autónoma de Madrid y mi experiencia ha sido muy positiva con los moocs. Antes de los MOOCs había tenido contacto también con el mundo de la a través de las nuevas tecnologías primero creando mi propia página a través de la cual me comunicaba con mis estudiantes no solamente en la preparación de materiales docentes sino también para facilitarles el acceso a la jurisprudencia, a las instituciones del estado, a las instituciones europeas, a las principales fuentes de doctrina a través de esa página web que creé con esa finalidad. Esa experiencia fue sumamente positiva, además facilitaba mi trabajo como profesora y también facilitaba el acceso de los estudiantes a unas fuentes de información que otra manera habrían tenido que buscar por su cuenta y con la consiguiente multiplicación en la inversión de tiempo y además creo que se agilizaba el conocimiento de esas fuentes de conocimiento a las que cualquier estudiante puede y además de tener acceso. Después de la experiencia con mi propia página web irrumpió en el mundo de la docencia Moodle, la plataforma como todos los que han tenido acceso saben, ha sido un instrumento muy importante en el avance de la docencia puesto que ha facilitado esa comunicación del profesor con todos y cada uno de los estudiantes volcando ahí los materiales docentes que se necesitaban para la asignatura muy especialmente también en cuanto a los seminarios, no solamente para las clases magistrales, sino a mi juicio es una herramienta que facilita mucho la docencia en lo que se refiera a seminarios porque, como no la gente los imparte sabe, necesita un continuo, una constante comunicación entre profesor y estudiante para preparar con tiempo y tener allí a disposición del estudiante los materiales con los que se va a trabajar, qué es lo que se quiere de ellos, interactuar con el estudiante, recibir su feedback, que ellos puedan colgar allí sus materiales, sus respuestas a las cuestiones y a los trabajos que se les va proponiendo, los resultados, la aplicación de resultados, de evaluación resultados, etc. También para colgar en esa plataforma los materiales, ahora me refiero a las asignaturas, que facilitan a los estudiantes el seguimiento de la asignatura magistral. No hay que olvidar que el plan Bolonia requiere por parte del estudiante una implicación mucho mayor en ese trabajo, en esa tarea docente, o sea, una colaboración del docente con el estudiante, una implicación de uno y de otro, y eso requiere una comunicación constante y también por parte del docente facilitar al estudiante contar con los materiales que tienen que utilizar puesto que se multiplican, no solamente en la asignatura, estamos hablando de una pluralidad asignaturas, y para que el estudiante no se vuelva loco y pueda seguir ese ritmo que se le exige de preparación de materiales de realización de trabajos, de aprendizaje de los distintos temas en el espacio más comprimido de tiempo quizá que antes, pues eso necesita esa ayuda, esa herramienta que facilita las nuevas tecnologías y que sin la ayuda

de las nuevas tecnologías no habría sido posible o habría sido muy difícil, con un rendimiento menor por parte del estudiante, si tiene que ir a la fotocopidora a hacer colas etc. para alcanzar esos materiales, o tener que ir a la biblioteca, no hay materiales suficientes en la biblioteca, libros para todos los estudiantes, de todos los temas que se les va a exigir que trabajen, etc. con lo cual las nuevas tecnologías suponen un antes y un después en la enseñanza universitaria desde y ya por último año pasado o hace dos años comenzamos con los MOOCs, que fue una experiencia maravillosa de innovación docente. Primero desarrollamos un proyecto de investigación sobre seguridad alimentaria y a raíz de los resultados de ese proyecto de investigación que fueron no solamente seminarios de profesores multidisciplinares e interdisciplinares sino también la publicación de un libro con los resultados de ese proyecto de investigación. Decidimos básicamente los directores de ese proyecto de investigación realizan también un proyecto de innovación docente basado en la temática de los MOOC para aplicar los resultados y aprovechar los resultados de ese proyecto de investigación a la transferencia del conocimiento difusión del conocimiento, a cuanta más gente mejor, y a todos los interesados por supuesto en la seguridad alimentaria con esa finalidad iniciamos un MOOC el año pasado sobre seguridad alimentaria dirigido por Juan Antonio Chinchilla y por Ángel Menéndez que dio como resultado un primer curso entonces en el curso en el año 2015/2016 y un segundo curso porque se ha repetido ahora en el curso académico 2017/18. Estamos muy satisfechos con los resultados, hemos logrado llegar a estudiantes del mundo entero, a personas interesadas ciudadanos interesados en la seguridad alimentaria, a técnicos, a expertos interesados en la seguridad alimentaria y ha sido positivo desde todos los puntos de vista.

R- En tu opinión, ¿qué ha funcionado en los MOOC de la UAM que han aportado a la institución y de qué podemos estar más orgullosos?

C- En la UAM podemos estar muy orgullosos de la buena programación de los MOOCs que ha habido desde el rectorado. En rectorado se creó un grupo especial para fomentar los MOOCs en toda la universidad, ese grupo ha funcionado con una eficacia maravillosa, como yo no he visto jamás a nivel de gestión. Encabezados por Cobos, impulsados por ellas también por Silvia Gil como vicerrectora, por Ruth como encargada de esa oficina, se impulsaron, entonces la información llegó a todos los profesores, a todo el profesorado de la UAM, el impulso, el seguimiento, los cursos, la facilitación de cursos para preparar al profesorado para la impartición de esos MOOCs, que son cursos desde cómo hablar ante la cámara, cómo gestionar la plataforma online seguimiento desde todo tipo de ayudas para aplicar las nuevas tecnologías a la elaboración y preparación de los materiales que íbamos a colgar en el MOOC, con un grupo de expertos de estudiantes que, liderados por Ruth Cobos han ido colaborando de la forma más eficaz en el apoyo al profesorado para que

aplicasemos las nuevas tecnologías a la transmisión de ese conocimiento y la transferencia de ese conocimiento a través de la plataforma online, de los MOOC, y bueno, un despliegue desde luego efficacísimo que ha dado como resultado que se puedan llevar a cabo los MOOCs con toda facilidad por parte del profesorado, con todo el apoyo de ese grupo, que gestionado por Ruth Cobos en todo momento facilitando enormemente la labor del profesorado que prácticamente descansaba en la gestión, no exagero. Desde luego mi experiencia ha sido esa, he descansado muchísimo en el grupo de profesionales que ha preparado por cobos y que gracias a las cuales se ha ido llevando a cabo todo. No ha habido absolutamente ningún problema en ningún momento, todas facilidades. Claro, para mí para mi como profesora, supongo que para cobos que ha gestionado todo pues en el día a día ha supuesto un trabajo ingente.

R Ha cambiado to práctica docente a raíz de tu trabajo con MOOCs?

C Mi práctica docente ha mejorado en el sentido que dispongo de mayor conocimiento sobre las herramientas que están a nuestra disposición a su vez, para mejorar la la docencia a través de las redes sociales y las nuevas tecnologías. Conozco mejor que antes, gracias también a los cursos de innovación docente que que se han gestionado con esa misma finalidad, pues el conocimiento de las herramientas de las que se expone es muchísimo mayor.

R Pues ahora te voy a preguntar sobre los desafíos que has afrontado.

C Es que de verdad me parece que ha ido del todo bien al equipo de Rectorado. Hemos trabajado en el sentido que hemos ido respondiendo al ritmo que nos marcaba el equipo que gestionaba desde rectorado. Siguiendo esas pautas, alguna reunión de vez en cuando, pero sobre todo ha sido para informarnos a nosotros y para ponerse a disposición. No ha habido problema en absoluto, yo no tengo ninguna sensación de carga ni de nada, sencillamente seguir un poco el ritmo de las pautas que nos iban marcando, como ya habíamos hecho previamente la investigación, estaba muy avanzado por nuestra parte, solamente era ya poner los resultados de esa investigación al servicio del equipo no. A mí me ha facilitado el equipo, me han hecho realizaciones de casos prácticos a través de nuevas tecnologías pero no lo hecho, yo les he contado lo que quería y han colaborado de tal manera que a mí me encanta el resultado, tengo conocimiento de cómo hacerlo y de que se puede hacer

RC- Cómo podemos resumir las oportunidades que ofrece un MOOC en general, cómo tú venderías lo que son los MOOC?

CJ- Los MOOCs ofrecen el acceso al conocimiento de todos los ciudadanos a través de las nuevas tecnologías de una forma muy asequible porque ofrecen gran flexibilidad en cuanto al horario, a la dedicación, al tiempo que cada uno quiera y requiera, para acceder al conocimiento, entonces es una herramienta que está disponible online, una persona tener mayor o menor interés y adaptar la herramienta justo al interés que tenga. Tener mayor o menor disposición de tiempo y adaptar la herramienta también al tiempo del que disponga, etc.

RC- Y qué hacen los MOOC de la UAM diferenciadores a los demás que pueda haber en el mercado?

CJ- Bueno, para responder esta pregunta tendría que haber realizado más cursos, yo solamente tengo conocimiento a través de lo que me he asomado un poquito al principio para ver. Hay una riqueza muy grande de contenidos, una variedad, de ciencias, de letras, en los distintos ámbitos del conocimiento. El contenido es muy rico, variado, he comparado con otros de la universidad de harvard por ejemplo, y bueno pues se puede encontrar un nivel aproximado.

RC- Cuáles serían en tu opinión los siguiente pasos a dar por la institución, tres prioridades?

CJ- Recomendaría vivamente la obtención de algún proyecto europeo que contribuya al desarrollo de estas tecnologías con una inversión fuerte de dinero porque eso supone también posicionar a nuestra universidad mejor, eso en primer lugar. En segundo lugar proyectos nacionales también puesto que para España la buena posición de sus universidades y en concreto de la universidad autónoma de Madrid supone también y una inversión que merece hacerse, y en tercer lugar una financiación y un respaldo mayor por

parte de la propia universidad autónoma de Madrid, con la búsqueda de financiación para generar este tipo de grupos este tipo de equipos y este tipo de apoyo a los profesores y a la docencia.

RC- Hay un antes y un después en lo que es su concepción de la docencia online?

CJ- Sí, antes he respondido un poco. He conocido más las herramientas. También, a mí me gusta muchísimo el mundo y la creatividad. Entonces la docencia en derecho antiguamente al estilo clásico tradicional no era tan creativa, podía serlo, pero a mí lo que me ha ayudado en mi labor como docente es utilizar y desarrollar capacidades actitudes que ya tenía, yo siempre decía que el derecho anquilosa el alma porque la norma jurídica es demasiado cuadrículada demasiados ladrillos muchas veces y a mí el mundo de las nuevas tecnologías lo que ha hecho ha sido hacerme disfrutar como docente, hacerme desarrollar en el mundo profesional capacidades y actitudes que yo tenía siempre ganas de desarrollar como al margen de la profesión que es talento creador o creativo que lo tengo, me habría gustado mucho hacer bellas artes, lo dejé a un lado para dedicarme al derecho, y siempre lo he anhelado porque el derecho como digo anquilosa el alma. Entonces realmente estas nuevas tecnologías me han servido para disfrutar como docente los en desarrollar la capacidad creativa que tengo darle cauce y mejorar mi docencia a través de esas dotes que uno tiene y que no desarrollado antes con el sistema tradicional o clásico de lecciones magistrales, no de la misma manera, esto me abrió un mundo inmenso y que mejora además mi tarea docente, mi comunicación con los alumnos su modo de percibir la asignatura con mayor disfrute, creo, mayor agilidad que les permite rentabilizar su tiempo de aprendizaje, captar los contenidos de una forma más ágil y por lo tanto poder conocer más en menos tiempo.

13.1.2.9. Participant 8

B Me llamo ***** soy profesora de la facultad de derecho de la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid y concretamente de derecho administrativo. No tengo experiencia anterior en la docencia online salvo alguna vez de forma puntual pues me han grabado en algún máster porque tienen esa forma de actuar me han pedido permiso para grabarme han grabado la clase también porque el máster a mejor tenían alumnos online u otros para utilizarlo en clase como posible presencia en redes o docencia online. Y luego posteriormente al MOOC he realizado también un SPOC multidisciplinar con diferentes profesores yo era la única de derecho y el resto de ciencias de alimentación y tenemos pensados más para asignaturas de derecho porque la experiencia ha sido muy buena.

R Qué piensas que ha funcionado en los MOOC de las UAM? De qué podemos sentirnos más orgullosos?

B Este segundo año creo que la organización ha sido muy buena nos han guiado muy bien para entender qué significaba el MOOC y cómo ir enfocando los conocimientos que teníamos para hacerlos de la manera más efectiva posible y transmitir los conocimientos de la manera más eficaz posible más atractiva. Y luego en lo que es la impartición del MOOC, salvo a lo mejor alguna incidencia que hemos tenido pues porque a lo mejor un video funcionaba, o que no se entendía bien la pregunta como las habíamos formulado por parte de los usuarios de los alumnos, pues todo ha ido muy bien, los alumnos han estado muy contentos así no lo transmitían en los foros y además hemos tenido bastantes alumnos. unos 3000. la segunda edición aún no sabemos.

R Habéis tenido que afrontar desafíos?

BR- Más bien limitaciones personal por ejemplo las grabaciones es lanzarse a la piscina totalmente. No sabes bien cómo va a quedar y sabes que vas a estar expuesto entonces yo creo que las imitaciones han sido sobre todo personales, de todos, ha sido cerrar un poco los ojos y confiar en la universidad y confiar en que el trabajo al final pues tiene su fruto pero no sabes bien ese fruto cuál va a ser ni si va a resultar en un producto que pueda estar al nivel que se exige en la autónoma. Yo creo que lo que hemos echado en falta ha sido la falta de experiencia cada uno de nosotros y luego pues que en Derecho no estamos acostumbrados a utilizar no sólo los medios que hay de videoconferencias central. En ciencias por ejemplo yo creo que están mucho más acostumbrados, trabajan así en muchos ámbitos, pero el derecho es todo mucho más tradicional, entonces lanzarnos a algo así es complicado. Otro reto es que la materia jurídica pues ya de por sí pone un poco a la gente a la defensiva, entonces transmitir algo que sea divulgativo o multidisciplinar dentro de lo que

es la perspectiva jurídica sin abandonarla nunca, transmitir algo de ese modo pues es complicado. No estábamos seguros de si eso iba a resultar comprensible por un lado y por otro lado atractivo, que la gente siguiera, a lo mejor la primera semana llegan se paran y ya seguían, entonces ha sido un reto importante

RC- Cómo podemos resumir las oportunidades que ofrece un MOOC?

BR- Pues yo creo que acceso a un derecho fundamental, que es el derecho a la educación. Yo por eso me lancé. aunque parezca mentira me lancé por eso porque creo en ese derecho fundamental, igual que en otros muchos. En Derecho creo que es nuestra labor. Estamos explicando derechos fundamentales a través de los casos o de una manera más teórica, cuando tenemos una oportunidad de poder hacer efectivo aunque sea una milésima, ese derecho, lo tenemos. Estamos obligados, porque si no, qué estamos explicando?

RC. Tú crees que ha cambiado tu práctica docente tras tu participación en el MOOC, en qué aspectos?

BR- Mucho. Por ejemplo utilizar vídeos en classmate al menos para captar la atención de alumnos o sorprenderles. Siempre lo intento en clase alguna manera sobre todo con clases los lunes a las ocho y media y de la mañana, en la clase de derecho administrativo. Se me ocurre pues ponerles un video así para empezar aunque sea un caso práctico que luego es que podría resultar más aburrido pero al menos ya ven el video y los alumnos aprecian que traigamos algo distinto a clase. Y luego también en intentar en las explicación, en determinados momentos de la explicación, dar como flashes, explicar la clase como una película. Y entonces paro la clase y es como un fotograma.

RC- En tu opinión, los MOOC de la UAM son diferenciadores?

BR- Yo creo que son menos encorsetados, con otros me ha dado esa sensación. Yo creo que somos como más cálidos, me meto en muchos en francés es que me gusta mucho lo que hacen y me parece que aquí a lo mejor por nuestro carácter son como más cercanos. Por ejemplo de filosofía no? Como si estuvieran en tu salón. Los americanos también son cercanos pero lo veo más marketing. Los nuestros son como más domésticos. Nosotros nos salimos un poco de ese estilo.

RC. Qué tres pasos debería seguir nuestra institución ahora?

BR- Un paso importantísimo que eso sí que es que algo está fallando es que los alumnos no lo saben. Muchos no saben ni que existe. La comunicación de la UAM es importante. Se

beneficia gente de Colombia, México y nosotros no. No tiene sentido esto! Lo del inglés no lo veo prioritario, por ejemplo. Y otra cosa, precisamente esa gente de América Latina es un público importantísimo: seguro que muchos que han visto nuestros MOOC han venido luego para acá. Es la mejor publicidad que podemos hacer. Otra acción importante, que la los profesores que se dediquen a hacer MOOCs se descarguen de otras cargas docentes o administrativas o lo que sea. Algunos compañeros nos dicen: para qué os metéis en eso? Está muy bien que se refleje en el currículum y en experiencia docente, pero estaría muy bien que computase en la carga docente. Sí, es voluntario, pero hasta que sea forzoso! Si vamos hacia una universidad que necesite financiación privadamente, los MOOC pueden convertirse en fundamentales, y estas plataformas situarán a la universidad en un sitio o en otro. Y la inversión irá por un lado o por otro. Estoy segura de que los MOOCs tendrán una influencia en los rankings, y la financiación irá por ahí. Y lo conectaría con los alumni, con los egresados. Habría que buscar la manera de que los MOOC estén en los eventos con Alumni, por ejemplo para paternariado. Con Alumni es mucho más fácil además que los MOOC lleguen a las empresas.

RC- Ha habido un antes y un después en tu percepción de la docencia online a raíz de los MOOCs?

BR- Sí, claramente. En el aspecto de la gran eficacia que puede tener este tipo de docencia. Cuando estamos hablando siempre del derecho a la educación, del derecho a la cultura, y de que no haya limitaciones económicas, muchas veces las medidas que se toman, por ejemplo en el grado a mí me parece que hay una discriminación económica, porque muchos alumnos que necesitan trabajar para poder realizar estudios universitarios, pues no lo pueden hacer. Antes podías hacer la carrera sin aparecer por clase pero ahora pasan lista, etc. Entonces, los MOOC cumplen esa misión de que no haya discriminación económica de acceso a la universidad, y luego se le da acceso también a personas que ya han dejado de trabajar, eso es un público también a tenerlo en cuenta. Personas que están en casa, o que ya están prejubiladas, y les abres una ventana enorme, que a lo mejor tampoco hemos pensado mucho en eso, que hay mucha gente que está con ilusión, cursando MOOCs, y que estás dándole una nueva vida que no tenían. Yo conozco a alguno que está enganchado. En lugar de estar enganchado al sálvame, pues se enganchan a un MOOC.

13.1.2.9. Participant 9

R. Hola, ¿te puedes presentar y contarnos tu experiencia con MOOCs y docencia online?

P. Sí. Mi nombre es pablo de Lora, soy profesor titular de filosofía del derecho en la facultad de derecho de la universidad autónoma de madrid. Mi experiencia docente abarca los,

últimos casi 25 años y mi, experiencia previa en docencia virtual, se reduce únicamente a la de haber sido alumno o usuario de alguna antes de involucrarme activamente en los MOOCs de nuestra universidad, que he impartido durante tres años. Este MOOC versa sobre los desafíos, éticos y jurídicos de trasplante de órganos. Antes de esta experiencia, mi única experiencia en docencia virtual se reduce a haber sido estudiante o alumno de cursos, virtuales en la plataforma Qsair y Uno. Desde que estoy con los MOOCs, mi experiencia con la docencia virtual y con herramientas digitales se ha multiplicado. Además, últimamente me doy cuenta de que hablo mucho de elearning, estoy bastante interesado.

R. En tu opinión qué ha funcionado de los MOOC de nuestra universidad? Qué han aportado a la institución y de qué nos podemos sentir más orgulloso?

P. de lo que nos podemos sentir más, orgullosos es de haber conseguido, elaborar cursos con gran calidad a pesar, de los muy escasos recursos de los que, se dispone al menos en comparación con, otros muchos están en el mercado y que, tiene una calidad semejante es que el, ior se cuentan con recursos de los que, contamos aquí eso es lo que me parece, que te vas a ser nuestro principal, motivo de orgullo que han aportado a la UAM, la verdad es que no lo sé con certeza, que lo explique esas cosas se miden, quiero pensar en lo que más conozco que, es el mío han aportado visibilidad, global y, conocimiento por parte del del, profesorado en general y de los, estudiantes de la existencia de este, mundo y

R. que tú piensas que tu su, docencia no práctica docente ha, cambiado tras la participación la, creación y e impartición de munch y se, ha cambiado en qué aspectos,

P. Yo creo que en esencia no va a cambiar, yo no apor to o no traigo el recurso a mi docencia presencial por una razón muy simple, que es que no tengo docencia presencial de las materias del MOOC que hemos desarrollado. Eso sí, he aprendido a hablar ante las cámaras. Y no sólo eso. También he aprendido a grabar mis propios videos con mi ordenador, con una calidad más que decente para un aficionado, gracias a lo que aprendí en el set de rodaje y a lo que el gran equipo de la oficina MOOC me ha enseñado. Me dieron grandes consejos de cómo encuadrarme delante del ordenador, de cómo posicionarme, y algunas técnicas sencillas de postproducción, básicamente cortar los trozos del principio y del final, e introducir subtítulos. No sabía que era tan fácil con las herramientas de hoy en día, al alcance de todos! Pero he de insistir que esto no lo he llevado a mi docencia presencial, que sigue siendo básicamente la de siempre y mis, posibilidades de introducir, herramientas son más limitadas pero, alumnos que eso permita me reúno con, ellos en una lección teórica una vez a, la semana dos horas con los y luego, se dividen en tres llamados grupos de, seminarios que cada uno de ellos cuenta, con aspirantes es postular son muy, pocas, teo de incorporar ese tipo de larra, miente.

R. cuáles crees tú gaseosas acciones que, habéis afrontado noval y ti tú por tú, solo y que aido que no ha ido bien y que, has echado en falta a la hora de, afrontar son página para poder crear y, poder batir al banco, yo creo que para nosotros el mayor, desafío ha sido adaptarnos a un formato, que pide, mucha concreción y y a veces el uso de, tdt de estrategias de recursos, desarrollo de la docencia que nos dará, setián están más pensados para otro, tipo de materiales que para materias, más vinculadas a las humanidades o, ciencias sociales es decir hay toda una, serie de procesos que se suponen el, aprendizaje que están muy pensados para, aprendizajes mucho más mecanizable son, más secuencia hables que encajan peor, que lo en casa pero encajan peor con, mayor dificultad en el aprendizaje de, otras disciplinas o en la docencia de, otras disciplinas s para nosotros ha, sido el mayor desafío y había otra, parte de la pregunta siguiente y lo que, ha fallado Pérez echado en falta en sus, desafíos, la obsesión ashdod yo creo que lo que, siempre los hay con un poco lo de antes, creo que, pues no tenemos necesidad de más de, más recursos el oro que todo lo que, supone la traslación audiovisual o, ahora traslación tecnológica por, decirlo así es algo raro central, para lo que se necesitan más personas, de las que se dispone en la universidad, y luego yo concretamente con los de hoy, alicia no no tenemos fácil el escaño, por ejemplo no vamos vamos a encontrar a, nadie que nos asistan donoso cesc y, fernando ha podido y no formando lo, están otras tantas para todos incluso a, ese nivel, yo no tengo fácilmente la posibilidad, de disponer si ha sido facilitado este, martes y luego por otro lado también es, verdad que antes de dicho yo no lo tengo, la posibilidad de dar esta docencia del, que forma parte del muro y me da pena, que en otros centros donde civil, podrían hacer uso de ella pues tengamos, esta falta de sinergias tanta burocracia, y esa cosa que es muy de la ciudad, española de las repartan bentos, estancó por este sendero sólida aquí, estoy solo y no digamos que hay coca, coca por el sida, sí y que podemos usar como podemos, resumir dos porque bien conoce un poco, generando yo creo que el moco ofrece la, oportunidad de poder extraer de esos, cursos, por ejemplo algunas lecciones co, unidades de aprendizaje que pueden ser, valiosos en otros en otros ámbitos y a, veces es difícil saber qué pueden ser, valiosos en otros ámbitos no y eso, puede puede digamos ser útil para, profesores de otras disciplinas que, podrían hacer con su agresor de aso, recursos y entiendo que el afán de la, un asalto naval madrid cuando ha, propiciado la estación de estos cursos, online si no otros más pequeños hasta, rosas por sí es una manera inteligente, de amberes, a sacar partido de eso, y yo me parece que son muy útiles para, el reciclaje para la aprendizaje de, personas que está en un momento de, transición profesional tras no poder se, hará que telesp lo que hace a los, montera bandipora ojeadores de los, remachó, yo creo que no se destinan que muchos ya, que si yo comparo las experiencias que, yo conozco con otras docencias tribu, tuareg son moll homologables, no sabría decir algún tipo de vídeo, que hacemos o por equipo de ejercicios, no porque me

parecen otro él como algo, que él mismo en nuestro monos uso pero, que se ha visto en otros del autónomas, y en otros por autónomas que es la, dramatización poner los jueces sólo ha, visitado no ha visto en otros cursos, no yo creo que a él lo que conozco de, los mucho de la autónoma todos los, recursos hasta donde dios se han, explotado todas las postulaciones, pactado y, y en ese sentido los que creo que para, bien no nos distinguimos por lo malo, central y gasta periciales a favor no no, lo sea no me parece que no, yo lo conozco pero cuál es el mismo un, anciano con los colada característico, del autónomas que no se haya o no haya, que esto no está bien que hace en cuál, sería en en tu opinión, los siguientes pasos tres pasos podemos, decir pulgadas que hará la, destrucción de veía llevar a cabo muy, de llevamos unos años, tenemos ocho mucho están haciendo no, podemos tenemos una situación que está, fontes qué tres cosas tú dirías a, situación pues ahora podéis hacer esto, esto y esto va más visibilidad a orar, para que sea bueno yo creo que tres, cosas muy escasas y manatí comensal, entre éstas una obvia que pide, cualquiera empezando por los coros, no puedo decir si hay otro de los, menores pasan y extinción, susana marcos marcos de madera de más, personal más personal del cuerpo de ser, estudiantes de informática que son, captados en contraste que ser el, régimen yo no me voy a pronunciar que, ahora el gran follón al respecto de, esto creo que los estudiantes para los, estudiantes de la politécnica es una, oportunidad estupenda profesional o de, iniciación o de cómo se quedara mar de, prácticas o contratados en otras, facultades y thames del príncipe bueno, que yo creo que él el el elemento, diferenciador volviendo a la pregunta, anterior es que detrás de esta docencia, pong o al, recursos informáticos capacitaciones, técnicas que para tener cualquiera yo, no las tengo en comparación con las que, trabajan en la oficina con todos en esa, oficina tiene que trabajar más, esos presos una primera cost, la segunda cosa es reconocimiento de, créditos en las titulaciones oficiales, o sea yo creo que las personas que hacen, esos cursos con aprovechamiento en, superan los obstáculos o los filtros o, las pruebas que correspondan merecerían, con ello obtener créditos satén, concesión de créditos hasta antes del, auto no hacer nuestros no puede tener, estados stc por ejemplo tu curso son, st semana poco más que eso que entrara, health un más que dejen atrás y yo, creo que sí es verdad que, estamos por la internacionalización, pues con los controles que se aparten, ante no sería difícil que hubiera más, moss líneas o bilingües comarcas, antonio hacernos cuestiones se supone, que esas son las tres cosas por las que, habría que apostar muy bien y ya casi, terminan bien tú piensas que habido un, antes y un después de tu manera de, entender la docencia online y si es así, en qué aspecto de participación el, tema de los mock si hay un antes y un, después para los mención laden no lo, formarán a clase sino de anciana en, concepción se haya aspectos cosas ha, sorprendido a la hora de tener pocos, holanda que pueda saltar o anécdotas, las, claro cuando yo era usuario o sea estaba, al otro lado de la pantalla por decirlo, así la idea que yo

claro a mí me lo, hubiese un curso por ejemplo sobre el, behavioral economics de un tipo enanos, que me parecía algo inalcanzable en, términos de juego de centros de, lamentación recursos y mi experiencia, al hacerlos musel autónoma es que, incluso con esa menor cantidad de, recursos que podían hacer cosas, dignísimas muy profesionalmente muy, logradas eso ha sido mi mayor sorpresa, comprobar que accede a este nivel son, más quienes tienen posibilidades, una portavoz elena menor por lo demás, no creo que es que el resto de las, cuestiones digamos más justas tibás, caso ya no estará esta historia la, última des bildes abren hecho no, sabías que fuera a ser posible una vez, estemos en l, en cine se produce después de gente lo, haga algo por ejemplo que en sí es, verdad que te das cuenta que no es, posible es cuando tú tienes estos, muchos de paja moncho donde desfilan, muchos lo de antes son muchos profesores, asistentes realidad no dispongo los osos, y los demás pero bueno voy a colgar, más.

13.1.2.10. Participant 10

RC- buenos días pedro primero te presentarás nos dijeras en qué MOOC has trabajado y si antes de trabajar en ese MOOC tenías experiencia previa en trabajar en docencia online - PGM- me llamo***** soy catedrático de historia moderna en la universidad autónoma de madrid He elaborado el MOOC la España del Quijote en la primera edición de cursos MOOC que realizó la universidad autónoma y mi experiencia online hasta entonces se limitaba a la docencia en el máster en algunas asignaturas del mismo pero simplemente a través de foros, de chat, y de alguna conferencia por skype

R. la primera pregunta es que en tu opinión qué ha funcionado de los MOOC de la UAM, que han aportado a la institución?

P. yo siempre hablo por mi experiencia con un MOOC que tienen dos palabras universales que son España y el Quijote por lo tanto me ha permitido dirigirme a un público de muchas nacionalidades de muchos países y de diversos niveles culturales entonces el impacto ha sido muy importante cuantitativa y cualitativamente. Cuantitativamente porque yo hice un cálculo de esa asignatura impartida durante 10 años que ha sido la trayectoria docente que se dio en la universidad pues me arrojaba en torno a 100 alumnos presenciales mientras que el MOOC en la primera edición llegó a tres mil alumnos de ochenta y ocho países es decir que desde el punto de vista cuantitativo en apenas siete semanas han llegado a más gente que en 10 años y desde el punto de vista cualitativo me ha sido muy enriquecedor como profesor porque me han venido aportaciones y trabajos de alumnos de distintos países que tienen una mirada nacional hacia esa temática de manera por poner un ejemplo que lo clarifique que mientras los orientales se centraban en los textos que hemos colgado en los materiales digamos de lectura literaria o historiográfica porque lo que les interesaba era aproximarse a la cultura española y los latinoamericanos se ha centrado más en los videos porque están viviendo una situación casi postliteraria como nosotros con post literario me refiero a que cada vez menos y prefieren ver vídeos y cuantos más cortos mejor y prefieren una información visual y directa

R. de qué deberíamos estar más orgullosos de los muchos de los cursos online MOOC de la UAM

-P. Primero de habernos incorporado a tiempo. De ser de las universidades pioneras en España en destinar recursos y meterse en una plataforma tan prestigiosa como edX. Y en segundo lugar de la diversidad de los mismos. Los comités que los han seleccionado han tenido el buen criterio de no ir sesgando la información sólo hacia ciencias exactas sino repartir el abanico de contenidos entre ciencias y letras y ideas pioneras ideas que estén

proyectadas un poco como la estrategia de la universidad haciendo futuro orientadas hacia el futuro

-R. ha cambiado tu práctica docente tras tu participación en los MOOC?.

-P. Lo ha modificado un poco en la medida en que pueden incorporar materiales ya tenés que ya había hecho acopio son para elaborar el MOOC pero el MOOC no ha sido sino una secuencia en un continuo en mi entendimiento de la docencia siempre he participado en proyectos de innovación docente e incorporado nuevas tecnologías no como fin de la docencia sino siempre como medio. Me he dado cuenta del efecto multiplicador del MOOC y por lo tanto el podido hacer combinaciones entre en clases presenciales y alumnado que al mismo tiempo está matriculado en los MOOC que por la experiencia en el edición de el el año pasado y finalmente algunos de estos materiales han servido para extensión universitaria no sólo para mis clases pongo un ejemplo celebramos en las últimas jornadas cervantinas que ha conmemorado el la muerte de miguel de cervantes celebramos esa jornada y el telenoticias del mundo sirvió para ilustrar a un público más general y a la vecindad de madrid contarle la historia del siglo de oro a través de un material que haber en principio fue concebido para un MOOC, luego ha servido para la extensión para la proyección social de esos contenidos para extender el conocimiento a todos los públicos.

R. cuáles son los desafíos afrontados a la hora de crear el mooc cuales crees tú que han ido bien y cuáles se han echado en falta?

P. El desafío era enfrentarme con una nueva herramienta, yo tenía los materiales, tenía la experiencia docente, pero desconocía por completo cómo estructurar esos materiales. Entonces he aprendido a trabajar, si tuviera que elaborar otro mooc ahora tendría las cosas mucho más claras. A ordenar o no de acuerdo con los criterios que hacen más operativo el curso y que modulan el nivel de los contenidos del lenguaje del público al que va dirigido que en este caso hablamos es un público universal. entonces ese ha sido el gran desafío. En cuanto a lo que he echado en falta. .no tiene que ver con la impartición organización de del curso sino con el apoyo institucional por parte de los departamentos de las facultades sino a nivel aspecto académico, que se nos reconozca, ya que no hna sido retribuidos económicamente pero por lo menos que se te reconozca en tiempo o en carga docente y y que este trabajo te hubiese liberado de otras asignaturas presenciales al menos ese tipo de reconocimiento pero práctico, no sólo las felicitaciones por haberte embarcado en esta aventura, por haber sido pionero, sino en el aspecto práctico.

-RC- ¿Cómo podemos resumir cuáles han sido las oportunidades que ofrece un MOOC, y que hace a los MOOC de la UAM diferenciadores de los demás MOOC que podemos encontrar en cualquier plataforma?

-AGM- Los MOOC de la UAM lo que están aportando son las líneas de investigación punteras que se están dando en la universidad y son unas líneas que responden a las señas de identidad de la misma donde apostamos siempre por una educación de excelencia, por una investigación puntera y por el compromiso social. Esos tres pilares sobre los que se ha edificado la universidad están reflejados en los cursos.

-RC- Y ya por último cuarta pregunta cuáles serían los siguientes pasos que debería dar la institución si puede ser en tu opinión darnos además en tres prioridades decir que tres cosas debería abordar ahora con respecto a los MOOC y en qué prioridades?

-PGM- Abrir al mercado anglosajón los MOOC existentes en inglés. La segunda seguir ampliando el número de cursos, de contenidos diversificando porque hay otras muchas líneas vanguardistas, y en tercer lugar estructurar mejor el reconocimiento académico, el trabajo invertido en los mismos

-RC- ¿Ha habido un antes y un después en tu manera de entender la enseñanza online a raíz de haber participado en producción y en la enseñanza de MOOCs?

-PGM-Sí ha habido un antes y un después, no he vuelto a repetir los cursos que daba en el marco del máster en historia moderna que se limitaban a los chats, por supuesto se han visto enriquecidos con la forma de trabajar los MOOC y con la variedad de materiales que hemos colocado con los que hemos trabajado por lo tanto sí han marcado y me ha cambiado la visión que tenía de la enseñanza online.

-RC-Muchísimas gracias, ****.

13.1.4. Interviews with expert educational developers

13.1.4.1. Participant 1

R. okay so could you please tell me a little bit about yourself and why do you think I'm interviewing you because the

G. yeah I'm reading from your form now because I have experience in developing a MOOC I've taught on MOOCs I've engaged with MOOCs for several years yeah since maybe maybe

R. yes all these books that you've you've been involved with are in your in the your current institution what do you know I mean I first trying to think the exact time sequence

G. I suppose I became interested in MOOCs when through with george siemens and connectivism and stephen downes though we were doing through Jisc the joint information systems committee on community community based support for research programs that's even before they went mainstream, so we have george siemens as a keynote speaker at a conference that i ran in probably even maybe two thousand eight my god I'm guessing yeah yeah two thousand nine then in the next in the next year we were doing social software community based support for research and development programs so I mean it was a quite a geeky learning squad lots of people maybe universities involved across the UK, big program anyway we had a confluence of all of the people engaged in the program George Siemens spoke and God is interested in his ideas I guess there were people I think Steve ***** and Graham ***** probably invited him yeah well I'm not sure Graham is living now I think he lives in Seville he lives in Spain anyway yeah yeah

R. I met him in Ischia you know yeah okay

G. yeah so ***** anyway I was working with those guys and those guys and girls Jesse Fraserit was part of the and God amber Thomas Amber's mom okay

R. why then you and then you so you got involved in these kind of things outside of your university and in the university where you are well

G. I was a research fund holder I am with others so I helped grant from the Jisc for god knows who ended up being a couple of million pounds in the end most of it we dispersed to other people but yeah we managed to well I personally managed to substantial support and synthesis projects for the Jisc all around open learning Design for Learning user centered design participant design those were the you know the buzz phrases really so the idea of MOOC as a co participate or elearning thing experience event course whatever you however

you want to call it where mass participation and Masco participation was enabled, so George did a couple of MOOCs in think it's the famous one yet but an easy man collective knowledge yeah ***** yeah and I dipped in and out of CC ten I didn't complete it I wasn't as hardcore is Jenny ***** you've read Jenny ***** work I presume

R. Jenny Magnus yes rings a bell yeah read Jenny ***** she's been involved since the beginning and also Bonnie what's Bonnie Dave Cormier bond Stuart only I met I met Dave as well yeah so there will be people that could tell you about the early context of

G. they've got me and he told me he invented the word yeah yeah it was them that gave me the idea that I wanted to do a MOOC for Educational Development we were looking at a call from the higher education Academy that was inviting innovation in education in online educational development and I was sat down with Rona we were kind of doing well we could do this so we could do that and Rona said so tell me George what do you really want to do I said I'd like to do a MOOC for it dev yeah sure that's great George

R. just so you know you are answering the next question there so go on go on please

G okay all right so she said great go ahead do it so I got **** wait and Jennie ***** Jo **** who else they were the main ones really Graham no no Graham was involved in he wasn't involved in the MOOC he was involved in the earlier research project anyway we had a small team four or five people and we developed FSL t first step in learning and teaching higher education yes yes I have it in front of me with Neil current at the moment right yeah it's not right it's lit ran its last time this year we just we just said goodbye to FSL t but you have kind of brother or sister course which is called teaching open online open course is that that we also said goodbye to the higher said goodbye okay yeah okay but what we have done is in effect we've mainstreamed them because we've turned we've redesigned our twenty credit introduction to learning and teaching I think it's a learning and teaching in higher education and learning and teaching in higher education has adopted completely really the methodologies and practices of FSL T so FS LT has led to the transformation of the educational development curriculum at ***** yeah

R. have you roughly got some figures these are just roughly of how many takers and how many complete tears

G. I'm professor T as God Amina must know I mean the numbers aren't the numbers about huge the numbers are huge by [Music] internal staff development centers so I think about forty people this year I'm probably thirty in the two previous years so a couple maybe a hundred and twenty yeah yeah yeah academic credit yeah so they haven't got any great that

that's yes attached yes we found that the open participation open participation declined so we started off with maybe three or four hundred people and the open dissipation in the first year yeah and I made a hundred in the second year yeah and in the third year maybe forty kinds of yes but but the internal for credit was growing call many things are you know deeds run it just around once a year once a year okay look and yeah what is in the in the first semester we run credits face to face introduction to learning and teaching in the second semester we run FS LTE and toque teaching open online courses credit courses equals credit courses is the same as what you get face to face in the first semester yeah yeah what we've done now is we are running the same course in both semesters you can do it in either semester face to face or online simultaneous synchronous Adobe Connect activity based cohort based ok so now these takers these people who have taken the course yeah

R. what do you think they have gained in comparison to to the course that for example the one I did in my university that it was a it was pickup which it was for for get for obtaining the higher education Academy fellowship and I didn't I did it face to face sessions and then a lot of assignments what is the difference what is for you do you why why a MOOC and not for us why a MOOC

G. why a MOOC was to expand the community of people with whom you can have an educational development conversation and to bring open online learning into the educational development conversation so data it had two intentions one was to experiment with techniques for learning and teaching in a course that was about learning and teaching so yeah so you know we're supposed to be playing with this stuff this is this is this is what we're supposed to do yeah so that was that that so there was some intrinsic interest in the form and that apply the form in our own curriculum was also a challenge worth taking on and then to you know because that's equally is a you know a reflexive you know we subscribe to a reflective practice yeah so so where comes good where these intentions

R. these aims where they met?

G. yes I think largely they were I think it would I think we would have liked to have had a larger number of people I think it was hard to sustain the energy for the open okay especially without there being some concrete business model for funding visiting tutors or whatever it would take to actually run it at scale we worked with several other MOOC providers and in the the whole team that did the University of Pennsylvania's Coursera MOOCs okay MIT did our course yes that was two or three of them before maybe they did old globe do you know did you anyway at the University of Pennsylvania's geriatric nursing did an open online course called Old Globe about I see a Aging in the world yeah they that twenty twenty thousand kind of level you know yeah .So they were on our course to sort of learn how to

design online learning and then they went and applied the lessons in their course their courses and then we went and they invited us and I we were guest tutors on their course it was good,so again today a wider community of Educational Development practitioners

R. Okay so now you as a as an educator teacher pedagogue since you run open online courses that's anything changed in your practice or in your or in your way to see education higher education and online education can you do differently or do you think you do better oh you have is

G. the things I do differently is the things I do better what was there what was the other one yeah those things I do differently I do a lot more conversation through media like this through Skype or through hangouts there are still the problems like we had at the beginning getting our protocols lined up. Digital literacy is still fairly infant I can I mean I've been running webinars for years I are an IRC synchronous IRC chat for learning in the energy industry in I think even even before yeah so yeah the company that I worked for back then was bought out by an American company that was going up the dotcom ladder and then they went yeah yes so I'm not learning social learning social software I see MOOCs in a continuum from the earliest of the collab distributed collaboration is what I call it called it for a long time or computer aided collaborative learning

R. do they the letters of the off of MOOC massive open online course do they mean the same to you?

G. the first time that came across us today was to recognize the cMOOC xMOOC distinction. I certainly aspired to the cMOOC vision, I recognize that the dominant model of learning is more amenable to the xMOOC version that said to me the xMOOC is a publishing venture rather than a learning and teaching venture. For me the learning and teaching is always in the collaboration between the people rather than the consumption of knowledge products.

R. You always thought that?

G. Yeah well yeah I don't know, I mean the fact I didn't think of it they gave me certainly the early MOOCs gave me some a new way of conceptualizing the open web, so yeah I'm an open web guy the open movement.

R. Thanks and now I have two more big questions and we don't they are related when another is a second of change of section and I will start by asking you what competencies and capabilities and skills do you think are needed for any higher education teacher today in the digital with so much digital going on now knowing that you have you have trained so

many what do you think they need I think they need to be able to be comfortable with things not working the way they expect them to work?

G. That usually gets translated into something like resilience, so they need resilience at many scales. They need resilience at the trivial scale like you and I experienced the beginning of this call, you know, I mean there's a lot of people that just fall apart when they go like "oh my god I'll use Hangouts or nothing", so they need some resilience. They need also to manage their own expectations that said they need to have some comfort and familiarity with how their operating platform works and what it's capable of doing, so that they know when something is misbehaving that it's actually not. I mean I was at a hotel yesterday in Ormskirk and I tried to get on the WiFi and the little WiFi thing is going BBU up and down up and down up and down up and down they're not connecting why does it not connect always games it connects everywhere and then says the wife the brooder reports a self assigned IP address and will not be able to connect to the internet which is generally happens when there's something happening in the router so as you call hello can you please reset the router because oh yes you're on corridor yeah that's right it's been gone I've had to reset it there once or twice today I'll read for you in a minute sir yeah she hangs up five minutes later the Internet's back but there's a lot of people who could see that and wouldn't you know they just say there's no fucking WiFi and click off you know just forget it all right yeah so so there's an manage expectation towards Turkey yeah working knowledge of your own whatever you carry with you man I carry a MacBook Pro and Android phone and you know there's I've carried Windows laptops and so on mostly they all mostly work these days and all slightly differently but you need to know the the basic fundamentals enough to get your platform connected to the Internet wherever you are yeah maybe just your desktop but for most people it is it is at least a desktop at home and a desktop at the office and for the kind of academic life I lead may I have an office but I'm never there yeah have three campuses you know a whole bunch of fix machines we have net you know Android no Chromebooks yeah now we have a zero I was up in at Edgehill University yesterday there's eduroam I live in Oxford I go to Oxford University Libraries there is a Jerome yes I know they need an awareness of this no such thing as a anymore as our physical office that that one will go everyday or or they yeah they really find limited space no physical space yeah yeah yeah the physical redefining but also the other way around people who are comfortable being digital nomads if you call it that need to understand that there are some people that need to be more territorially fixed and that doesn't necessarily have to be a an indication of reluctance to change or yeah good and for about the if they have taken the considerations that they have to make in respect of their expectations towards the way their learners they learn online yeah there's a lot of talk about generational factors certainly leaving them there

is a continuum of change I don't believe in the in the punctuated equilibrium models of generations there's no no Bad's residents visitors planners lawyers and so on yeah so they can be a little bit useful sometimes the stimulating conversation but I don't think they are a accurate model of the world as it is but that's okay the what do I think people there is a sort of a level of conversational literacy that people have to have through their computers and call it call it how you will you know compute raided communication computer mediated communication and for me learning is largely a communication Act Gordon takes place through communication acts I prefer communication acts that are dialogues of sorts there can be lots of ways that dialogic communication happens yes right you can have a dialogic communication with yourself you can have a dialogic communication with the book you can have a dialogic communication with the website and you can design things to be more easily dialog good yeah

R. So and then the second question is related and it's a few have you come across you can you you can you can answer by an example or ass or you can tell me a story of someone that you've met or whatever but teachers teachers who is there any way that teachers anything that teachers do differently as a result of having been involved in a in an online course or in a MOOC G. I'll tell you an example there's this history professor who has been tasked to develop work he has volunteer to to develop a MOOC he has put all his materials in a more in in that MOOC and then he has come across a lot of comments from learners and then he has rethought his way of teaching not only online but also but also he has taken back to he has taken it back to to case everyday lessons that he does in campus this happens all the time it happens all the time just like that. Yes, I mean it it is happening more now than it used to it is getting to be routine we had a master's degree in international relationship international relationship and politics and politics and a related master's degree in I think it was the electronic security certainly in security studies, anyway delivered in a multimodal fashion using lecture capture and face-tofa-ce and synchronous and asynchronous distant and synchronous and asynchronous facetoface and distributed at the same time modes of teaching. I'm doing MA in education I'm teaching and leading an MA in education a jewel that uses that mode so I've got some students they're in my class face to me it's a small seminar there's not many people but some of them ones in blackpool ones in God where Lemington Spa and to her in Oxford you know there's a new I'm going tomorrow to construct civil engineering construction management they're redesigning their masters programs to be able to increase substantially the amount of distance learning that is possible within the frame of the course so there are there are real issues with the funding of part time professional study these days the people can't take time out of work so less and less and less and less time people can take out of work wherever they're working so increasing the

interactive flexible but it's not just the flight it it's it's actually adding the human contact into the into the distance and that's what MOOCs have taught people how to do MOOCs have taught people how to use discussion forums how to use text chat how to use voice chat, I would call academic multimedia and the phrase that I use is academic multimedia they valorising the use of multimedia for academic discourse that's what MOOCs have helped to do.

R. thank you!

13.1.4.2. Participant 2

R. where do you work at the moment?

S. so I work at the University of ***** as of the last couple of weeks in what capacity and a head of the department of technology enhanced learning

R. can you tell me a little bit about your previous experience in terms of time um and then of teaching online teaching and learning and of MOOCs? What you've done in the past and what are you explain what are your next steps?

S. Okay so I have been teaching and learning online since the mid seventies I think. I'm very old! I was first introduced to online teaching through a course run by the Open University called teaching and learning online which was run by Tony Kaye and Robin Mason, so I was very lucky to be taught by the best people in the field, and I went on so I did that course as a student over a modem for Boeing Boeing modem in a system called the first class conferencing system, and then I came back as a tutors and helped on the next run of the course. And in the next after I carried on tutoring on it until it finished and then I went to work at the Open University. After having had that experience where I was responsible for the recruitment selection and training of online tutors within the Institute of educational technology, so I was responsible for monitoring the quality of online tuition for programs in the masters in open distance education and then I went to ***** in as a senior lecturer and educational development in learning technologies, and I developed and ran online courses that we sold as a consultancy business so I ran loads! I ran with Greg Banfield a course called online tutoring, which ran for many many years as a short four week course. It wasn't a MOOC because we charge for it, and with participants in each run it was underpinned by notions of collaborative and constructivist learning, and I was running that course over and over again. I think which really developed my online teaching and then once we got that, we developed lots and lots of other short four-week professional development courses for teachers in higher education and we ran those for about years until MOOCs overtook them and they became unnecessary.

R. Okay, when MOOCs overtook, do you consider yourself, let's put it, an a victim of that? Or are you a partner in crime?

S. No (laughs) so I haven't run any MOOCs or designed any MOOCs other than last year when ran a MOOC for eleSIG, the special interest group for elearning researchers, a special interest group people interested in learner experience research and we ran a

MOOC on the EMMA platform, which is a European funded project which I don't recommend. Although it was a wonderful European community of participants, and the platform was designed to provide translation for example so people could do the the MOOC in a language of their choosing rather than being forced in to do it into English, that was really good, but we but we ran with small numbers and we're looking to do it again on different platforms next year. I bid when I was at ***** university, I bid with a colleague for money from the pro vicechancellor to develop MOOCs from *****, and we got money and we really really really tried hard to work with the faculties to devise and run for MOOCs. We only ever got one off the ground and we gave the money back to the PVC it was too difficult to engage academics

R. Was it was like herding cats?

S. Yeah it was not... the reasons where we fell down, and we wrote an evaluation report, and stuff which I'm happy to share with you, were very practical issues about budgets, and finances, and where was the time going to come from, so we had some academics and keen some faculties that we came to do things strategically but they couldn't work out whether this how to incorporate this into workload planning whether it was a marketing budget whether it was a consultancy or CPD in courses so they just couldn't allocate time to it I have to say we were doing it very early so we were we're doing it very early and we also oh yeah we had one other thing that ran we had one other course that ran out of the unit that wasn't me, it was ****anonymised**** which was called first steps in learning and teaching which rank ran as a MOOC and we also had the teaching online online course so we had two first steps and took which were modules on our postgraduate certificate that were open to a wide audience and we had about people on each of those and international open audience but they've also now finished yeah yeah yeah so George will tell you the story behind that so they are now being those modules now run as part with postgraduate certificate and you can only do them if you do the full postgraduate certificate and pay the fee and it's gone back to being so it's Louis certainly in the time that I was Briggs I oversaw the kind of development of the online courses in the early s with Greg been field and can teach online online courses and then we went on we provide and then we went back to close to courses it yeah that is very very interesting our story and this one off of a university having all the budget and everything ready for running a few moves but due to very obvious and very common complications the ball deciding that it is not worth it is my niece twenty maybe we don't see we don't see the way the way out of this report not publish anything about it anyway yeah I mean which would give you the full story on it because George was the audit leader for that and just put a note in the evaluation report and the success I think that came out of that is we did George did set up a open platform

so we we use some of the money to buy a hosted version of Moodle separate the University Moodle server which ran as an open server because we couldn't run our MOOCs on Moodle you had to be registered student to get access to Moodle and that open platform just as I was leaving Brooks a few weeks ago was being handed over to IT services as a core system now so it's been adopted as a core University supported system but the open platform isn't really used for MOOCs it's used for other online experiments which require openness and so for more yeah but yeah it's to be used for other purposes it works so freaks come it's used for pre-arrival students so they're not registered yet can't access moving on Japanese studies for it so they need to really get their Japanese language skills up before they arrive so they they all come in at same level they've got loads of summer work to do formative quizzes and listening to Japanese and they do that on the open server before they arrive we've got a the biggest use of it. I think is probably architects doing their professional diplomas out in practice though it's CPD so a CPD course again where they're not registered students but they still need access to eportfolios and other systems the psychology demonstrators produced some brilliant open so we are open resources on teaching statistics which they thought were good enough to share with the world and they put them on the open server so that was really good so lots of and we did run another one actually we ran a MOOC so a project I let go for about that funded by the education training foundation where we ran a MOOC for leaders in FE so we ran a MOOC on digital for principals and vice principals of FE colleges and we ran that on the open server but again around once when it had funding I put in lots of proposals for how we could make it sustainable and get it funded to run again partnerships with professional bodies going back to the original funder asking for an extension funding nothing straighten you've done the big part and then which would be just taking the fruits.

R. okay well that's great so now we are going to move to your who to the area of professional development and pedagogical skills and its relationship with MOOCs so first of all I'm going to ask you I'm going to ask you something that not every no interviews is is able to ask me but you might be able to tell me something about it once you came across the first open course, say MOOC or any anything else, have you opened to the world, have you noticed any any change or any do you do anything different ever since? Has there been a before and after before you came across, before you got involved in something that it's open to to learners that you don't necessarily know?

S. Okay so you being as a teacher do we do things differently, I guess that's what you mean.

R. Well, also as an educator in the wider meaning of it

S. Right, I think I have done things differently and I think it's in the level of activity designed really. So even where we have closed courses, rather than links we're still very conscious of notions of openness, and how people can benefit from learning in an open educational environment, so I'll give you a couple of examples: one example is one of the activities that always worked really well on the early online courses and MOOCs that we ran, was building an annotated reading list as a group, so this idea of everyone from whatever backgrounds they are pooling what they know already, and using that as an introductory icebreaker. And that has that designing that activity to suit diverse audiences as continues to have benefits in all of the online courses that we run, so I think that thinking about a very diverse audience has been really important designing activities that help people understand the open world that they're living in, such as activities to create a Wikipedia entry, for example, so we're all living in this age where openness is an important feature of it and you have to engage in that to truly understand it. You have to contribute to the knowledge pool that is available in the online world such as through Wikipedia in order to really understand it. So, you know our online courses will now include that kind of activity, it's not the kind of thing you're looking for exactly. I wrote a book last year called ****anonymised***** or something in the series, and at the end of each chapter, at the end of each encounter, I labeled one of the activities open up a special open up activity and those are things that come from our experience of running open online courses yeah yeah definitely check it out I will so okay so you're you say that in your own practice there's PIPA there's been if not a change and there's been an influence and since since the time mobile learning came about and especially MOOCs but I can I assume that you have ever trained or worked with or helped all the academics develop develop online courses and open online courses, so yeah yeah so with both the digital leadership open online course which I was the project leader for, we drew on expertise from a wide project team and, oh, I recruited and briefed the course facilitators similarly with the ****anonymised**** MOOC that we ran the learner experience research MOOC that we ran last year. We went with a very broad set of people most of whom didn't have any experience of running online courses and supported them through that process, with some success I would say, and obviously I mean those are just MOOCs, but in terms of online courses you know I've got nine years worth of experience of training hundreds and hundreds of online tutors, so I trained the all of the online tutors who taught at the London School of Hygiene in Tropical Medicine, for example, as a consultant I went in and trained them for years. They're both running online courses for them on how to be an online tutor and doing face-to-face workshops they leave you to learn I know them in imbalance can I deliver.

R. Thanks. So now I'll asked you about your own experience, and what you have witnessed in other people that you have trained, because this is the third and last part of the interview and it's when we map these all these new skills that that academics gained by being involved in the development and delivery of MOOCs or online courses, against the the UKPSF you might be familiar with. I'm going to pick a few descriptors of each of the areas of activities and we are going to talk about them. So, in the dimension of the areas of activity the first descriptor is '*design and run learning activities and programs of study*', so have you seen any difference, or any change of approach?

S. yes so actually the one I'd like to highlight is activity design, and I don't know if this is to do with MOOCs particularly but it certainly to do with online courses. When you teach online you have to be a lot more explicit about what your activity design is, in advance, than you do in a classroom. So in a classroom you can still wing it. If you're a skilled experienced teacher you can go into a class not really knowing what you're going to do and you can just respond to the group's needs, and you can decide what to do. In an online course you have to plan it all out in advance, and your activity design is more explicit. Your activity design is also much more learner centered, so in a classroom it's very much, I'm afraid, still about what you do as a teacher. But when you're designing an online course, you have to think about what will the learner be doing in this situation, otherwise it doesn't work. So your activity design has to be more learner-centered. Activity designs that work in online courses tend to have some kind of product so something that this particularly collaborative learning activities, so something that the students are working on so they tend to be more activity orientated anyway.

R. Okay perfect because now the question is if you have witnessed seen in all these people that you have trained?

S. I think probably what they take back is a greater empathy with being a learner and better understanding of how the course fits into the learners lives, and other things that they're doing. So when you work with people online they tend to share stuff about what's going on in other parts of their lives, they tend to talk more openly about how things are, providing honest, unfiltered feedback "this module fits in with this module", "this activity is clashing or complementing something else", etc. You don't necessarily get that in a face-to-face class, so I think this kind of empathy and a better understanding of the students perspective and the students needs comes through quite well.

R. Thank you, okay, one more descriptor of this first area of activity is a assessment and feedback. any change or any any change of approach?

S. Assessment is so difficult to get people to rethink and I think it's probably one of the biggest challenges in higher education at the moment, so we have been talking about diversifying assessment ever since. I've been in educational development and we still haven't managed to do it, and the fact that the fact of getting them involved in online courses has made an influence.

R. Thanks. Now core knowledge. The subject the subject material. Do you think is there any way those academics who are teaching any module, any subject, know more about their subject or parts of their subjects?

S. OK, so MOOCs and online courses tend to be produced as as a team and so I think having to work with other specialists to decide what to teach and how to teach it does extend your disciplinary knowledge so we worked on so I'm thinking of courses that I did for ****anonymised***** which produces online courses, and they've worked as a course author and of course reviewer and of course kind of general overall lead scoping the course again working with lots and lots of different tutors and they had to share a course plan and very a very very early draft stage so what was important to include and what topics were important to include and why yeah and then at every stage in the course production this is a you know quite an old freshman page turning click course restaging the course production they have to share it back with the other subject experts and we don't do that very much when we're teaching face-to-face but in an online course you do share your subject expertise and discuss the content of the course with other teachers

R. Thanks. Just one more descriptor of this of this dimension: quality assurance and quality enhancement for academic and professional practice with a particular focus on teaching so quality QA any sudden influence or any any way in which the quality assurance is approached after MOOCs came to the lives of these people?

S. Well I think in my experience the QA has been very light touch in online courses but one of the things that validation panels often ask for in an online course is to see fifteen or twenty percent of the content before they'll validate the course. So they actually want to see some of the website, you know, they want access to Moodle, they want to see the course materials, now they would never dream of asking an academic to share their lecture notes with them but they do ask to check the quality of both the content so 'is it up to date?' 'is it relevant?', and the activity design which they should be able to see for an online course. So should be improving the quality but I think they know to ask for it but then they don't really know what to look for once they've asked for it.

R. Thanks. Could you now tell me a story, or an anecdote, of how an academic has enhanced their competencies after participating in a MOOC?

S. I think the most interesting and successful use of learning technologies in recent years has been synchronous online group tutorials and so synchronous so Adobe Connect type things and certainly for ****anonymised**** courses MOOCs first steps learning teaching we use those intensively from a very early stage before anyone else is using them really, so um weekly face to face Google Hangouts whatever is and I think to give that that personal contact really.

R. I remember *****anonymised***** saying that he has witnessed teachers becoming much more resilient, he said 'resilient' to to last minute changes or challenges, the for example the panel not working and trying to find an alternative call, or the Adobe Connect failing to connect, and they become much less fearful.

S. Yes, actually *****anonymised**** has been a fantastic proponent of them I'm very skilled confident in using them and so whether that's so he's run online tutorials he's run online action learning sets and and in a digital leadership course we used online action learning sets and he's run online virtual conferences, he's run online synchronous teaching observations, where you actually have to do a micro teach in this environment. He's been really a mentor with it and I think that's a very good use of learning technology to bring these students together

R. Thanks. let's do the very last dimension of the UK PSF it's the professional values they mentioned and in this dimension, as well as the first descriptor which is also about inclusive learning, which is attend to individual learners and diverse learning communities.

S. there's two things I think when we ran first steps in learning and teaching for example and recruited teachers at an early stage of that their career from the Middle East and the Far East and Africa South America you know we were working with people who did not have access to the types of professional development and qualifications that we were offering and that was really humbling to be involved in those courses and to be able to support those teachers so that that's one part of inclusivity that you don't that comes with a MOOC with an open online course and the other one is obviously student loan difficulties and disabilities because if you've got a student in an online course who you have no access requirements no entry requirements so you open online course no entry requirements no registration really they just turn up and then they say I cannot read this I cannot hear you you it really makes you think about being more proactive in the design of your course and the design of your materials so in it in a campus based or an online course

where you have registered students students fill out a registration form you say have you asked have you got any access needs they say yes I need my course in this format you you scurry around as quickly as you can behind the scenes to make it available to that one student in that one special way and we certainly had cases in our closed fee-paying online courses of students with visual impairment completely blind asking for a different version of the course and I was providing it but in an open online course you are suddenly faced with these students who have turned up and then at the beginning of the first synchronous tutorial said oh but I'm blind and that really makes you think I should have spent more time you know understanding principles of universal to something understanding how to make my materials accessible before I got to this point actually and one last the very last descriptor that they want to that I want to mention here is the three means the use of evidence informed approaches and outcomes from research scholarship and continuing professional development in other words do teachers since they started since they started started to develop MOOCs do were more learning more in tune with with pedagogical theory and have you noticed or have you think that no I think we may even have taken a step backwards so some of the most pop on MOOCs are based on a so called model of mastery learning you know so look at Sarah for example and that's a very old fashioned outdated unproven pedagogy so I think in a way we've stepped backwards actually I think what has happened I think if you think of MOOCs as part of a whole movement towards open scholarship then that's been helpful so even helping teachers to understand that they can access the pedagogical literature themselves and there is more stuff openly available to them through open publishing models that's important they can self publish and use Creative Commons licenses and contribute to teaching repositories you know if you see MOOCs as part of that bigger openness agenda I think it is improving access to pedagogical knowledge perfect well I think that's all do you have any other comments no I'm almost embarrassed when you ask me the beginning what MOOCs have been involved in I couldn't think of many and then as I've gone on I've thought of like five more

R. Many thanks, now I'll stop recording, thank you very much for your time!

13.1.4.3. Participant 3

R. Hi S. Very many thanks for participating in this study. As you have read in the information sheet, I am the MOOC programme coordinator at the University of Southampton, and this interview is part of my last study for my PhD. You have been selected as a participant in this study due to your experience in developing competencies frameworks. Although, judging from your literature, your focus is on learners' competencies, this study focuses on academics' competencies. So here is the first question: what is your experience with MOOCs, either as a learner or as a producer?

S. As a learner, I have just been through several MOOCs about online learning environments for teachers. First of all, it is important to distinguish two kinds of MOOCs. The first kind are those made for glorified teachers who are followed by thousands of people. I wonder whether there is anything new in that approach. This kind of e-learning has been there for very many years. Even at the time of satellite courses you had hundreds of thousands of people registered. So the question is whether there is anything new. The idea to have something massive has been there for many years. If you take the book of Sir John Daniel about universities, it mentions the idea of courses addressing the masses already in the 60s. Therefore, the idea has not changed. What has changed is the medium that we are using, what I have seen sometimes is a regression in the media, that sometimes we had more new media before than now. For example, I remember in the 70s, in the French TV there were courses of a French University that broadcasted courses to millions of people. So education at that time, massive distribution of education already existed, but it was much more organic within the global broadcast of mass media. So what we have now, MOOCs, in a sense already existed at the times of television.

R. Was it not one-way?

S. It was not just one way because there were feedback channels, for example when you had a TV broadcast you could have groups of people watching it together, interacting locally, so it was not only one-way. It is a misconception because you can have something broadcasted, but then you could have local groups meeting at the time of the broadcast, after the broadcast, etc. Of course now with the Internet, communication is much easier, we don't need to be at the same location, but I think that the things we see today are not absolutely new. What is new for the people who didn't know the past is one thing, but it doesn't mean it is absolutely new. And I think what has changed is that when xMOOCs are very much like what we had when we had this TV, cMOOCs are what I consider relatively new, because what has changed is the move from mass media to knowledge media, where knowledge is distributed. For example, when I think of a learning environment, if you take

cohort A, you call content n and then $n+1$, does the content of the learning environment change? Is new information changed and added? This is the era of information management, but what I have seen is many MOOCs that are not organised as exploiting the power of management yet. They are still mainly in the mass media where if you take n and you want $n+1$, the content of the learning environment has not changed.

R. Ok, so, in that respect, one additional question: how widespread do you think it was, in the past, when this was broadcasted in the TV, and how widespread is now? Do you think the awareness of the teaching community is bigger now? Or is it more or less the same as in the past?

S. I can't answer to that question. The only thing I can say is that before it was organically leaked through traditional mass media. It was embedded there. It was part of it. And then it was removed. A proper study would be needed to see the outreach that these things have in comparison.

R. Let us move to those who provide, the teachers, the academics. Academics in HEIs are supposed to hold a set of skills, or competencies, that have been defined in many different frameworks. For example, we have one here, the UKPSF, developed by the HEA, in which they define a set of competency based standards by which you carry out your job as a teacher. These frameworks are usually set up for traditional teaching, but then there are many teachers and academics who have been allocated online teaching duties. In your view, how this skillset is difference? What added skills should these teachers hold to provide online learning?

S. This is a subject I have been working on. I worked on a project consisting of the definition of a competency framework for elearning. When you introduce technology in education, you can do it roughly in two ways. One way is assimilation: you do what you did yesterday but with new technologies. The process is the same, but use different tools to do the same. You need new skills, but not necessarily competencies. I think there is a difference. Skills are the know-how, and competencies are the skills, knowledge, and values. The other way is that, if you introduce technology, you have to ask yourself what can you do with technologies that you could not do before. And then, this will require a new set of competencies because, of course if you move from mass media where the teacher is the producer and editor of content, the broadcaster, consumed by learners so they can absorb it, then we have not changed much. On the other hand, the objective of the competency framework is to transform education. To be able to do things with technologies that we could not do before,

for example to take into consideration the fact that we have moved now from mass media to knowledge media. And that the world of learners is not just about to consume knowledge, to respond to tests and exams, but with the co-construction of this knowledge there is a different kind of learning environment. And so you can't dissociate the skills, the set of competencies with how you want to transform your organisation. A good competency framework is designed not just to show what we can do today, but to bring what people should be able to do tomorrow. It is impossible to dissociate the competency framework with the values associated to learning, and what is the division of them. Can we say that the vision of HE has changed? If it is to say that now we are moving to onsite learning to online learning, we have not said anything interesting, or even intelligent. Yes of course if we have computers we can use the computer instead of a book. But if you use the computer as a book, it is still a book. Also, what I have seen is that the introduction of technology has had negative effect. In some cases, I notice that technology has impoverished education by the massive use of testing and multiple choice questions, because it is a way that teachers find convenient for assessing, but it is impoverishing education to an extent that I have never seen before. It is a real pauperisation of education.

R. You may have seen many academics in action. To what extent this ideal that you describe about education transformation is being enacted?

S. We are talking about a very old model. If you take changes that are common in education, which are evaluation, assessment, etc. The original idea of evaluation is to show the value of it. But now, what we add to our educational system, is not that at all. We don't try to value the people. When we do an assessment, you just separate those who can do from those who can't. Those who know from those who don't. So the idea is not to value the individual, but to split the learners between different categories. The most subtle and the worst way to do it is when people use the normal distribution as a way to assess whether they have done a good or bad assessment. The common thinking about assessment is that you should have a bell, a curve where there are a few good, a few bad, and a large number of mediocre people in the middle. And this is used as the ideal model for assessment. So assessment is not based on valuing the individual, but on the model which is rating them and distributing them in groups. Has this changed? Not really, we still use a very old and traditional mode.

R. Can you tell me a specific negative story about technology not contributing to positive change, and a positive one?

S. I think the negative things I see again and again are what I call a disease: the use of multiple choice questions. This has nothing to do with assessment. This is the representation of the inability of teachers to assess. For example, we have this French philosopher who wrote a book called "The trees of knowledge". And the idea of this book was that people would be able to create their own 'coat of arms' where they would describe their interests, competencies, etc. and they did that on paper. They could draw a chart, they would put it on the wall, and discuss it. And then someone decided to use technology to do it. This tool, which was just a tool for mindmapping, in comparison to the use of pen and paper where people could think about themselves, reflect about themselves, to learn about others, to recognise others, suddenly the digital tool could be used by HR management in order to manage people. One example I saw was that an HR manager in need to fire people, would use the information provided by this tree of knowledge as a means to fire people without damaging too much the organisation. So we moved from a tool that was designed to empower individuals, that went to move into technology that could empower the organisation and to disenfranchise individuals. This is the most powerful example I've seen where moving from paper to technology disempowers people, totally. To a lesser extent, I have also seen this with badges. At the beginning badges were designed to recognise informal learning. But then there came the badges for formal recognition of learning. And so, badges that at the beginning were designed to empower people, what happened is that there emerged applications to store badges for the backpack. Basically the message was that the only entities that have the right to recognise learning are institutions, not people. People only have the right to beg for recognition. So while on paper everybody was able to create their coat of arms, with badges we had people that were forbidden to create their own badges. Of course that has slightly changed, but not really, we still have the mentality that only institutions are the only ones with the right to issue badges and not individuals. And they think this is value but it is not totally true because if you think of what you can do with endorsements with badges, they have more real value than the recognition of an institution. So technology can add an entropic effect to pedagogy, but they have the potential to destroy pedagogy.

There are also good examples of use of badges, where people are connected, communities benefit, and people benefit from the community. As a positive example I would like to mention the MOOC by Stephen Downes. He is the one who understood the power of knowledge media, and that learning is not about consuming knowledge, but connecting it and producing it. This is where we can differentiate a good MOOC from a bad MOOC. An advanced learning environment, a learning entity is one that transform itself. If people are using the MOOC, contributing to it, the MOOC will be different by the end. The MOOC

becomes the representation, or the memory, of the learning community. What we don't do so well today is integrating education and media.

R. So, does a competent educator understand the nature of distributed knowledge?

S. Well, probably we need both approaches above mentioned. Think of us having two parts of the brain, xMOOCs would be the rigid brain, and cMOOCs are the neocortex. One for learning to do things, and one for learning to be.

13.1.4.4. Participant 4

R. Hello *****could you please could you please tell me who you are and what do you do in your university?

S. I'm ***** I'm a senior lecturer in the School of Education at the University of **** and my main roles there one is that I am program director for the teaching qualification for further education. so I teach on that program which is a blended program. We have online versions and we have face-to-face versions and we have a mix of two but that is very much about encouraging practitioners' you know' further education to develop their their teaching practice and I'm always very keen to help develop digital practice as a particular element of that but that's that's a partly distance learning partly face to face. I'm also the academic lead for the MOOC project at the University of ***** and the development of FutureLearn MOOCs supporting the academic teams I can give up strategy in the area trying to develop the universities expertise in MOOC development. Then I have obviously other research projects and like some of which you're attracted to learning on in mobile learning in higher education. Also I'm doing research into some other MOOC processes

R. How long have you been have you been involved in online learning projects?

S. Well, before online learning existed I think I started before we even had really email you know when I started memo Israel departments but I've got involved in distance learning very early in my career so I started in about developing the first distance learning course in geographic information systems which became a big international network silly as part of that we started experimenting ways using the internet using email you know still in its very early stages at that point so really ever since then I've been working in distance learning and most of the distance learning things that I've done have been with learner's of the professional settings so people are already working the other thing that I'd spent years doing part the place where my career was working with the Open University so also was an online tutor for them on their online masters course the on verb to call the Mao DMA in online and distance education and I also worked freelance as their consultants doing various online learning projects for companies in UK and the States so yeah per week more like years now

R. I think that that's qualifies thank you so let's move to MOOCs for the moment and I I would like to make a very simple question: why MOOCs in your university?

S. Our university is a very traditional campus based we call it an ancient Scottish University there's not a wasn't until a few years ago huge amount of distance learning or digital learning and there were pockets around the university and I think it was felt that getting

involved in MOOCs was an opportunity to develop the university's digital capacity but for learning within the institution about you know digital learning online learning trying to pull different people and ideas together so I think that that's been one of the main motivations I think the other one this is this is an assumption from my side but I think there was a lot of other people doing it you know we could see or our university could see Glasgow getting involved Edinburgh you can see the competition getting involved and think well perhaps we should have a go at this too I think there's always an element of that amongst universities as well if the competition of doing it then then we need to control but I think probably the primary motivation was really about upskilling you know sort of digital context.

R. Thank you and from those motivations what results can you see MOOCs are yielding to the institution?

S. it's it's been a massive learning experience for the institution and has really helped develop more coordinated and common understanding. I think of some of the issues around digital learning it's brought people together who hadn't necessarily worked together before across the institutions and different units have had to work on this on a single project and that's been really beneficial I think the other benefits the sort of the numbers actually is a big benefit you know it's being able to say numbers like what we've had a hundred thousand people who've interacted with University because of MOOCs. They start to take notice when you can give numbers like that, so it's been good at raising awareness of what digital can achieve. It's been good for broadening the reach of the university for a sort of knowledge exchange those kind of areas as well and they're not things we necessarily measured but obviously there have been benefits around those areas, both for the individual academics involved you know wider and it's also allowed us to experiment a bit again and just you know through the blended learning approach that we've used with it. With the Africa MOOC, you know, it's allowing us to experiment a bit and just show what might be possible with digital learning.

R. Great! from the top of your head could you please expand on the figures that you have just mentioned?

S. it's sort of roughly the first MOOC we developed was called Africa sustainable development for all that was a MOOC that was aimed at engaging professionals in subsaharan Africa as well as elsewhere in the world it was never expected to be a huge number of students huge number of learners I think that has been runs that we heard of that was it three what might be four I think you I can't remember three or four runs of that once I think the biggest numbers on that world were less than so it was a relatively small Mook but the second one we developed which is nutrition and wellbeing that immediately started

to get big numbers I think the first run of that was learners and that's now continued I think that's done four runs and there's two more planned why not two other one in January so the numbers on that one have taken us you know much much higher so that's been I think over each time we would run it so so that's the two we've got at the moment the Africa one had we were not running anymore we're just running nutrition more at the moment and then the plans afoot to hopefully develop some more in the near future okay yeah thanks yeah I think is quite informative and now I this question is a bit general and you will have Pro you will probably have to to divide people into groups because the question the question as a as I wrote it is what are people's behavior and attitudes about MOOCs in your institution so what I guess is there will be different people with different attitude and behaviour so you please tell me the trends that you have identified from your own front from Annie and this is about your views on that so yeah yeah yes I can only give you some anecdotes and not cover everything certainly amongst academic stuff I think there are or to clear groups and probably some in between so I think it's to two polls if you like in the energy one is excitement you know people get it straight away they understand what this is about and how this might be used to engage more learners and we doing things that they can't do any other way so I definitely have some academics that fit into that kind of category and they would look to do things you know they've always got I get very creative people who can see opportunities at the other end of the spectrum are the academics who looks massive what am I going to do if I've got a thousand students in a class and they immediately get pulled off I think a little bit by some of the challenges of being exposed there's an academic to a very large audience and the nation is around dealing with large student groups like that that probably is the forefront of their thinking rather than the sort of opportunistic people okay in your opinion yeah which group is bigger it's how you feel it yeah yeah yeah I think there's probably a group in the middle somewhere you are a little bit fearful not as those who immediately go oh one mega blue students who can possibly see the bench I think the bigger group is probably in the middle but there's a little bit of fear and worry about what it means but also some understanding of some of the opportunities but I think there's also a big group who don't really know what MOOCs are yes so they've done what you say what do you mean when you say they never done one yeah interacting with them so that's actually the bigger group so that it yeah because you there's a spectrum between those who get the point and those who are who are kind of scared about the the massive audiences but could you also please define a spectrum between those who see the value and those who don't see it are the other different groups in the in that spectrum the value of the value proposition of MOOCs and how can how the benefit that they can bring to the institutions and to them personally that's more difficult I think I would hesitate to do that I'm not comfortable with the first yeah okay okay great yeah yeah it's a it's quite a

demanding question okay so the communities of practices that that emerge around the
 around and outside the MOOCs in in your institution have you have you noticed four main
 groups groups of interests ways in which different word dynamics ways in which different
 people who had not worked together before or who had not least before the earliest seen
 now have you have you noticed any any any any of these events in the in the university um
 yes I I think so it's difficult to point to specific examples but certainly it has eased kind of
 communication between different groups I can see for example in the nutrition course that
 the marketing people and the academic team have been working together quite well and
 obviously they talk to each other straight away now whereas before it would have been all
 who do I go and find in marketing work as the connections have been made gone okay
 husband in the cup inmate yeah I think connections have been made between groups of
 people even for myself as that I'm not being a lead educator but but in the program you
 know if I want to go and do video stuff for example I know who to go and ask now in the
 audiovisual team so it's I think it's making those connections it's been really helpful and just
 within that community as you say the community of practice around the MOOCs that's
 made communication and collaboration a bit easier process who do you think it will help in
 any other activity in activities other than MOOCs yes I do I think particularly some of the
 connections between people exactly Learning Team the audiovisual team the marketing
 team you know as we look at developing online programs in a bigger way which is which is
 where we're heading next as a university again making having those connections made
 just facilitates the sort of collaborative work has got to go on okay yeah now I'm going to
 move to to a question about you yourself in the way you the has there been a
 before and after in the way you do your job as a as an online learning expert when the mood
 came into your life that's a really interesting question and I'm saying that as a reflect on that
 little bit more meaningful answer that I think has actually I think one of the things that I
 have more awareness of a slightly better understand or more interesting as the
 understanding better is the whole sort of international element of a student group and all
 the cultural issues and international issues so I should have done some more work you
 know with it without the core science at the beginning that I teach on their teaching
 qualification for EFI which which we usually referred to as the tea qfe and we were bringing
 in international elements to that for example I'm working with a group in Finland and South
 Africa and so I think it has raised my awareness of some of the opportunities of
 intercultural and international dimensions that you can add into distance learning and of
 some of the tools and activities and things that you could do with groups in that sort of
 context so yeah and certainly it's have an influence on some of the other things I've done
 one of the things I did last year was to help with the design of a new online course for our
 masters students in education around critical reading and and this was going to be a fairly

big student cohort we didn't have resources to facilitate intensively so ideas from a MOOC design of correcting to that course great yes sorry I've been there before I don't think that and just different ways of presenting things and discussions and organizing the material so yeah definitely it's fairly impact on some of the things I do that's very interesting and and I'm very glad to hear it actually so now I'm moving to the very last section and it's your views and it's a is not about you anymore is about do you see other people learning from being involved in MOOCs other people I mean other other teachers lecturers and academics mainly academics so yeah and in that section what are before going to move specifically you think are they needed confidences and capabilities in the in this digital era for both online teaching and faceto face teaching can you please give me a brief overview of what do you think are the most important ones most important competencies yeah um being a digital teacher in the digital era has knitted yes well I would have to provide the first thing I think is understanding of your learners the ones with that I think it's understanding who you you're actually working with and the ability to build effective relationships with them whether it be faceto face or yes I don't think learning is going to take place unless that you know you get appropriate trust and rapport and I can't say the word you know exchange of ideas between teachers and learners and so on so that's I think what to come first I think given its digital that you're talking about in particular I think actually there's a need for a bit of risktaking a bit of creativity people who are prepared to just try things out and make mistakes and learn from those I think that's a really important sore a kind of personality trait in a sensitive yes you know I think that without the willingness to try things out experiment you know make mistakes sometimes things aren't going to work but you just have to try it and see then then it's very difficult to actually develop your practice and and in this in the sort of climate of continual change that technology brings you know you've got to be able to resilient and that'll be another word in between I have heard that in previous interviews so you know yes yes yeah so I don't know those are actually competencies I think the other thing that's really important actually and it kind of links to distance learning online learning whatever is is again it's about creativity but it's an understanding of design and thinking through effective ways of designing activities and engaging learners design side of things competencies in that area as well I think that is very very much UK PSF actually and it's India it's one of the dimensions of the framework and is described as you as you mentioned it so yeah that's great and then well there are more dimensions in the in the you the professional values and respect individual learners and diverse learning communities promote participation in higher education and equality opportunity for learners use evidence informed approaches and then there is a core knowledge about education itself for example knowing how learn how students learn and the use of appropriate learning technologies obviously analysis of evaluating effectiveness of teaching Salty's self

attentional on teaching so now that's the the last most important question and I'm probably the most demanding one when MOOCs came to the to the university to to university there were there were academics involved in the creation and and in the development and in the in the delivery of those MOOCs yeah do you have you noticed do you think visca has made any difference in any of these dimensions of the framework or in in the description you have made just before about what are the skills attitudes and behaviors that uncon and competencies that that the teachers should in the digital era that moot helped and yeah if you could come up with one or two anecdotes or examples yeah yeah I think I would have to say overall that's a really difficult question to answer I would yeah that's a good question was a very difficult one of the reasons it's difficult to answer is it worried I don't know where this is an impact of a MOOC or just coincidental but what has happened at Aberdeen is an awful lot of the academic staff who's been involved with the loops I've actually moved on so we've had a huge change of staff you know one of our lead educators les several of her team left the other the other lead educator actually left as it started to work as a team with a second educate you know you just have massive changes in staffing so that makes it quite difficult to answer because I don't really know what some of those people are now doing but on the other hand I would say yes definitely I mean I think the the lead educator that I've worked most closely with certainly it's been a learning experience for her in terms of things like open access and making videos and all of that lots of the technical aspects which I'm sure will go on and have an impact on other aspects of what she does she's not actually a teaching member is now she's more a research member of staff but she does a lot of public engagement activities so it will have had an impact I know on on some of the things she does in that arena so linking it specifically to the PSF kind of ideas is really hard that's my challenge actually yeah but but yeah definitely I can't imagine that anybody who goes through the process of being a leader Decatur welting knowing probably very little about MOOCs or just having experienced them as a learner and going through the whole design process and facilitation that they're going to be taking things away from that that's going to help them in all sorts of aspects of you know the PSF everything from and I think particularly you know you mention the word reflection at the a at the end I would I would put that back in that core competence list actually I think reflection and kind of curiosity and and inquiry and interest in learning from Aquarian I think those developments as well I just think that you take forward as an academic if you're you know following this kind of frameworks and doing your job effectively so I can't see how it can fail to have an impact so that's not really a very good answer to your question cuz you wanted specifically an example if you want I can I can also mention again some of the dimensions of the of the framework for example yeah let's do you mind if I professional values dimension here you know respecting the visual learners and diverse learning communities you have mentioned that

especially especially when with the African Morgan yes yes yes I think actually it just we'll just pause there because I think that is an example I mean that there have been definitely learning for the team on that one where they have all the students but we've done some research with the students and they've fed back to us saying you know this this wouldn't be possible in a classroom we couldn't interact with learners in another international context other than through that using a MOOC approach so that obviously has an impact on what the the academics are doing in their own tutorials and the discussions they can have and and the learning that they've had and I have actually had the lead academic on the Africa MOOC person who's leading it now say to me you know that engaging in the MOOC has been a learning experience for him because he have opportunities to interact or hear from some of the participants out there in subsaharan Africa so so yes that's definitely been something that's helped him in that context yeah and please let me read one that that you will like a Penn College the wider context in which higher education operates recognizing the implications for professional practice our knowledge in the wider context yes so of you think if you're working with a MOOC you know is it active the normal it will not but knowledge exactly I think it would be impossible not to yeah yeah and then yeah I know there they mention the in areas activity for example the mission engaging in continuing professional development mmhmm again impossible not to I mean you've got to learn if you're involved in a new project you've got to learn about effective use of video you've got to learn about open access resources and copyright limitations and restrictions you've got to learn about different approaches to engaging students without actually being there in person so again I think almost impossible not to learn things to be involved as much this one might be a bit elite less related but how about assess and give feedback to learners yeah that's an interesting one because I think the assessment and feedback thing is a challenge in MOOCs obviously there's there's tests of things and yes you could learn I think certainly from the feedback and suggestions from for example the future than team when like I think that's a really useful words learn to be under estimate it is to write good multiplechoice quizzes and online assessments so I think that's that's certainly an area where there can be really specific useful learning feedback more generally I think it's that's a challenge still in MOOCs isn't it is to make sure that all learners are getting effective feedback there's a way that you know you know that the sort of feedback process is working and the way you would hope it would so that that might be something that's yes and then the last dimension I will big only tool when is one yeah you're gonna think it's too obvious but the use and value of appropriate learning technologies definitely though I think and that that's where I could give you some specific examples because it's an academic teams have worked with the learning technologists very closely you know the ideas have worked both ways that the technologist has come up with some suggestions for tools for

them to use for example I think padlet was used in one of our courses I'm not sure whether the academics knew about that tool before so there's been sort of an exchange of ideas and you know that the design ideas might come from the academics and then the technical ideas so he oh there's definitely learning around that I think yeah they acknowledge the value of Butler they acknowledge the value oh yes that was that was happy without that when they same here saris in here yes yes and finally one another one repeat the implications of quality assurance and quality enhancement for the academic and professional practice with a particular focus on teaching I think the big issue around quality and quality assurance in a MOOC context is the fact that you're going out to a open global audience so again I think this is one of the things that contributes to the fear of those academics who are a little bit more offensive about the whole idea that your work is being exposed to a global public in a sense so it's got to be good it's got to look good it's got to be right you know it's not that you're just putting it on the private ple doesn't matter if there's finding mistakes or errors or whatever in there so much you know nobody will really see that you can correct it but if you put your work out to a global audience under this colony of too many eyes yes so it when it brings quality rights before yeah and yeah so that one I think is certainly something that people will engage with in a MOOC context okay yeah I think yes have you got anything else to say in general any further comments oh you should remind me what the big question is that you're trying to answer how's the only thing I can think of that's a question is do MOOCs help in enhancing teacher competencies for academics specifically do be do academics the fact of being involved in MOOCs does it does it enhance their their skills and capabilities learn attitudes and behaviors towards yeah yeah yeah okay yeah no I think it's good set of questions you ask them because it does reveal doesn't it some of the examples and isn't well that has happened but yes and from my perspective I would certainly say yes yes yes there's no level my understanding of who said that wider context what's going on it's been great to engage with a nextel perspective and and I think the other thing with the mooc project in the part that featured in partnership is actually this engagement with other partners and finding out more about what's going on you know in other institutions as well that's that's a really important learning opportunity yes okay Sarah I really appreciate that this is this is gold to my good thank you I'm going to stop the recording now and let's talk you one we can talk a few minutes off the record okay

13.1.4.5. Participant 5

R. Good morning, what is your name?

JF. *****, and I work at the University of *****, in Belgium

R. Have you read the information sheet, and do you agree with everything written there?

JF. Yes

R. This interview will be divided in three parts. The first part is about you and your experience in online learning. Can you tell me a bit about this?

JF. I started designing online learning in 2001, 16 years ago. I designed online learning for online Masters degrees in the University of Geneva, and later on in Strasbourg. I both taught and designed. Then I moved to the University of Lieje as an instructional designer, where I have designed the Virtual Campus. I was there to train teachers in educational technology, to help them understand how can they integrate the digital into teaching. I also developed and coordinated over 25 blended learning projects in that university. We are on the verge of finishing 11 more.

R. Excellent, this means you qualify as an interviewee for this part of the project, in which experts in training teachers in online and digital learning are interviewed.

R. How about the MOOCs at your university? Why did your university embark in MOOCs?

JF. We started to get interested in MOOCs back in 2014. In 2016 we started to develop some. We waited because we wanted to see how the MOOC environment was evolving, and how our presence there would be relevant. So what we did is watch, learn, and when we thought we were ready to make a contribution, we proceeded. We also responded to certain bottom-up pressures from teachers who had heard about MOOCs, who contacted the Vice Chancellor with interest. That led Senior Management to charge our digital learning team to start a project for four MOOCs. There are a few conditions for us to develop MOOCs: they have to be integrated in the campus. We cannot justify the expense if it is not for better teaching in the campus. The first thing is to get the teachers agree that the MOOC they develop is integrated in the modules they teach. The second thing is that MOOCs, for us, are a collegiate affair. We do identify one academic who is the leader for a particular MOOC, but we want them to work in team with other colleagues of the department, and even from other departments. We ask them to form a team, and work as a team. In our understanding, it is more interesting for students to be in front of collegiate teachers who work in teams. It is also interesting because it creates dynamics, and students notice that. The third thing is that we

follow all educational principles of multimedia design for online learning, and when we design an activity, we prime pedagogical principles such as collaborative learning. Therefore, every MOOC in Lieje needs to have an educationally innovative component. If they meet all these three criteria, the MOOC goes forward.

R. This is a great policy. Now, at a professional level of academics, what have you observed in terms of attitudes of academics towards MOOCs in your institutions? How they react to it? Can we divided them in groups?

J. Ok, sadly I must say that most academics don't get it, or don't show interest. They are too busy with their research and their teaching, and there are not many expressions of enthusiasm. However, I must say that there were many who changed their attitudes. When the MOOCs started to be produced, and then release them, we noticed that many teachers understood that MOOCs were giving a lot of outreach and visibility. After visibility, they were interested in the dynamics because they see the colleague teachers who do MOOCs in the department, inviting colleagues going to MOOC lab sessions (we will talk about this later), because we do believe that a MOOC has to be produced in a community of practice. So when the MOOCs started to spread out, when they got published, people saw the results, thousands of learners, a high quantity for being in French, and then other expressions of interest started to pop up. Now we are producing our 11t more MOOCs, and I am personally invited to department meetings almost every week to talk about MOOCs. Departments are starting to collect money to do their own MOOCs, so now we are we are in the exposure stage. People in the university have seen what we've done, what their colleagues have done, and in almost every faculty people want to do one or two MOOCs. Most of them want to fund the MOOCs, especially now that the pilot period has ended, the vice chancellor fund has ended. We had funds to produce 8 MOOCs, and we have done so. The expressions of interest have kept coming though. Now we need to find a sustainable model and most departments have understood and agreed.

R. So you have observed a change of attitude.

J. Yes, people don't laugh anymore. Now they start to take them seriously.

J. Yes, people don't laugh anymore. Now they start to take them seriously.

R. Now let's move to competencies. Let me first talk about the UKPSF. It is the professional standard framework for HE teachers in the UK. It is divided in 3 dimensions, very much in line with the definition of competencies. The three dimensions are skills, knowledge, and values/attitudes. That is what is measured in the UK to certify recognition in the HEA. My

argument is that having been involved in MOOCs helps enhancing the descriptors of these dimensions. We will start by areas of activity, and we will go through some of the descriptions to fit it in the interview. Designing learning activities: have academics gained any skills in that respect?

J. Definitely. In the MOOC process we spent the first six weeks designing and planning the MOOCs. So we have sheets that people have to follow, which include models, sequences, content, activities, objectives to follow, so at the end we have a full map of the MOOC. And that is the most interesting one because the design is there, so I think teachers are not normally asked to produce such documents in their normal classrooms. They do the syllabus, but the syllabus is still rethoric of them. However, when they are asked to produce something like a MOOC, the first part of our project process emphasises a lot these competencies, which they definitely gain in the area.

R. How about teaching and supporting learning?

J. Teaching and supporting learning comes when they are producing video. Actually, when you change the format to what they are used to for transferring knowledge, when they have to come from a place where they have plenty of contact hours with the students to provide all sorts of lengthy explanations, and they are exposed to a new situation in which they have to condense, summarise the most important knowledge in a few minutes, in a room in front of a camera, that situation created the need to add clarity and brevity to the explanations, to expose knowledge in a certain fashion, in a step-by-step procedure, so I do think that the instructional design behind the scripting of the videos is also evolving. A lot of teachers who came out of this experience said "I am never going to teach the same way". The majority of them told me so. We changed the scope, we got them out of their comfort zone, so when they were asked to produce another kind of teaching, they discovered things and asked themselves questions that they had never ask before. Now we switch to "support learning". The fact that there was a large audience, brought together the third pillar -let me say that in Belgium we often use the analogy of three pillars: the research pillar, the teaching pillar, and the service to the community pillar. And I think that MOOCs address the three pillars, especially the third. In terms of the teaching pillar, there is an example: if I am a physics teacher who has to explain gravity, I assume a lot of knowledge from my students. However, if I am to explain gravity to people the knowledge of whom I don't know, I will have to think of how to explain it properly. In that way, I also develop these competences too, and it even has an effect on my own subject knowledge, because I have to think about it from a different angle, that I may have not explored before.

R. Any thoughts on assessing and providing feedback?

J. Yes, definitely! because feedback is something that is not developed at all. Assessment practice in Belgian education is mainly used for exams. Teachers are not usually used to spread the courses with evaluation and feedback, so definitely the MOOCs that are designed week by week, with activities at the end of each week, forces them to think, and propose assessment, both formative and summative. For this assessment, they are asked to deliver feedback. That is a discovery for most of them, and an exercise in which they are very happy to engage. It is funny because it is a question that they have not thought of before. So actually I do think that the nature of MOOCs makes them understand that it is a good thing to have small assessment tasks along the course.

R. What is the main form of assessment that you ask them to deliver?

J. Innovative and varied. One layer, more superficial, is Matching, MCQs, True or False, etc. What is interesting is the second, deeper layer. It is usually peer assessment. There was a time that peer review was not working because many people waited for their review forever, so we decided to do it in groups and forums, where people talk to each other. And then we use external tools. For example in histology we use a tool called cytomin, which is a virtual microscope where you can have annotation layers and all this kind of stuff. We show a tissue, we provide the tool, and we ask a question. They put the answer on the layer, and then it is evaluated by other people.

R. How about engaging in CPD voluntarily, finding out about pedagogical innovation?

J. I think not yet because we will come to it further down the road. We are a huge fan of ****anonymous****, our academic director, who is a very engaged sort of writer. We have written a few publications with the teaching academics, so we do have that policy in our general approach where we accompany action research to our practice. We finished a MOOC last week and we are in the process of gathering data, I know that the histology MOOC is already preparing 5 articles about their experience, and the other MOOCs have got publications in the pipeline too. It is important to underline that teachers in Higher Education need to publish, especially on their discipline area. This means that they do not have so much pressure in terms of publishing about pedagogy or about teaching.

R. Let's move to core knowledge. Do you think having been involved in MOOCs has a positive influence on the knowledge of an academic? For example, do physicists know more about physics after being involved in a MOOC?

J. They will not know more about physics, but they will sometime realised that there are some elements of physics of which they really have not talked much about. So I don't

believe their knowledge does not expand, but I do believe it consolidates. Sometimes it breaks certain stereotypes. It also helps in getting ideas clearer, when you are teaching to a different kind of audience in a different kind of format. There is a mirroring effect, as you reflect on how you have explained a theory, a formula, or whatever, and on top of that you see how your audience has reacted to it.

R. How about knowledge of different learning theories and their application?

J. I think not much, because MOOCs are a bit self-selective in that respect. Those who come to the programme, they come willing to teach well, and they all have done quite a lot of background reading, they come with knowledge. We help a lot in that respect, to make things better, but I don't think this is a competence that they develop because they already have it.

R. How about how students learn? Any knowledge gained?

J. That one is interesting. I met a researcher who used a metaphor that I love: He said that he has met many teachers that try to recall the learner experience. So how was your time at the university and stuff. And the guy would tell them, ok but how many students were in your class? The teacher would say well, some 300 sometimes. And this researcher asked the teacher: do you think you are the best representation of the general population? Have in mind that you may well have been by the top 5% of a class of 300. And in many occasions, teachers have never thought about that. It is clear that they are not the best example of an average learner, they are successful, but they should not be a model. I think that addressing a MOOC reminds that in great measure. Reminds that there are various audience, and reminds the fact that they need to catch them all.

R. What technologies do you think are those where most competencies are developed?

J. Video, mostly video. But not only using the cameras, the audio, the lighting (which they do despite someone else in charge of the technical aspects). Also sharing videos, embedding them, putting them in the web. And also they get a sense of how the video should look, how the scene should be set up, what is its optimal length depending on the audience, etc. For some is quite a significant experience. Being recorded opens a new world of use of technologies in so many different ways!

R. And how about course evaluation?

They are not very engaged in this aspect just as yet. We have our own evaluation system, but they do not seem to like that. We are devising a new evaluation approach, and we are

trying to hear about the result. They do have the interest of knowing how students react to the course. We have a measurement tool that we share with them, we involve them in using it to analyse the results.

J. Do they learn about any quality assurance processes?

We share with them certain quality criteria on instructional design, so in the activity creation process we provide them with a list of criteria and ask them to respect them. However, because this is an early stage, I cannot really tell if these criteria are new to them or whether they are learning anything from them.

R. How about attitudes and values? Do you think there is any change in that?

Well, I think that the ones who accept doing MOOCs are already there, but I have noticed that they feel they are putting themselves in danger. I explain, some of them come to us and say well, I have been teaching this course for 10 years, I am ready to face a larger audience, and I need that to change the way I see my course. And they are scared with that. The first thing I ask them is to identify the audience to whom they think they are going to teach. They could be their own students, K12 students, etc. Each time they design an activity they look back and say ok, how we are addressing this audience? Many times I notice that they reflect upon it, and adapt the activities after thinking about it for the second time. So yes, I think they learn about the diversity of their audience, and they come across aspects that they hadn't thought before, such as accessibility, ease of language, where and when they provide information about the activities, etc. And of course, they really think about how they want to present themselves in front of such large audiences. Some of them have told me that it is like being in TV for the first time!

R. How about equality of opportunities for learners?

J. Our MOOCs are not certified. They also do not require qualifications to enter. We are therefore providing access to the wide community. So we observe in the forums that we are talking to people who are unlikely to be our students at the university, you know, a 60 year old woman, a clerk in an office, people who are accessing university courses for free without the need to enrol to the university. It is important to highlight that the teachers with whom we work understand that. They come with a vague idea, they have read about it, talked about it, but when they do the MOOCs they are able to see this with their own eyes, with tangible examples. I think that is quite powerful because they kind of confirm what they had only heard about before. They understand it more because they are confronted to it.

R. How about acknowledging the wider context in which higher education operates, recognising the implications for professional practice?

J. Yes, definitely. We do have a lot of answers about that. For example, we have a PhD student in management, studying the management practice of Coursera. From her we drew on how we can teach to francophone audience on how to use it for management practice. From there we are devising a course in management practice. This is an example on how the new practices around MOOCs can be translated to wider management practice in other professional settings, in an interesting way. Another example is international migrations. We are developing another course about international migrations, to help practitioners understand where migrants come from. We understood better the concept of transnationalism, and how we can learn from the journeys that migrants do, and what can they bring to us. So I think this another example of how we can transcend the walls of the universities in that respect.

R. A wrapping up questions. Teachers who are involved in MOOC become better teachers?

J. I think they do. And I have two anecdotes: you as a teacher expose yourself to audiences that will not hesitate to tell you what they think of you. I think that changes people. And I think it also helps promote the good ones. I know a teacher whose name has pushed around in a good way thanks to MOOCs. We have another example. There was an assistant teacher who was in his fifties. He had been teaching in a secondary school for many years. He could not get a tenure at the university for many years, he had quite a bad contract. This September he finally got a tenure. And this was thanks to having developed a MOOC. The University recognised it as an essential criterion to obtain this tenure.

R. Thanks!

13.1.4.6. Participant 6

R. now we are recording what is your name?

K. *****

Okay ****, have you read and understood the information sheet

K.. yes and I agree to the terms

R. Thanks. could you tell me just a little bit of your experience us as a teacher, as a teacher training and as a MOOC developer?

K. okay it will be my teaching experience is that only in the context of online teaching or teaching in general well teaching in general and online teaching in particular. Because I'm quite old when my experience of teaching goes back a long way to the pre sort of technological era so I have a long experience both in the classroom both in the private and public sector and then of course slowly we moved in to tell you know beginning with computer language teacher and then I've moved from a university level. Now I teach I still teach language to normal classes of second year degree students and then as a different University. I've been involved in our, well I actually work for the online learning center and so involved I've been involved in couple creation and specifically as well MOOC production, creation and aspects of for how long the last six years have worked in.

R. Could you please tell me a little bit about the MOOCs in this university with a focus on why the university has decided to take MOOCs onboard?

K. okay the university had to have a closed number policy because there were far more applications sorry sot again we're a public university in italy the cost of university the university fees is actually really low and so we tend to be on the side of education as a public good we're funded mainly by the state not by the tuition fees and and then as i say we had to run introduced a close number policy in many departments, not only medicine and architecture where it's a bit more common but the you know far more people wanting to come here then we have places for just quite simply in terms of classroom space and time in terms of so i think that it was part of an overall policy you know from on high to be able to offer this online alternative which would ease up a little bit the classroom space available so the so I mean there's also issues of internationalization a kind of question of moving with the times MOOCs are branding and I think that would explain also I'll move into but you know I think I think the main ones for us were that but it's an opportunity it's an opportunity to offer courses online which mirror what's available in the classroom and give students are more flexible learning or Frank you know they can do it at home they can

do it in the library they can come to the class it's not absolutely flipped classroom in all cases but our weeks are absolutely perfect mirror versions of the oncampus courses and offer their students alternative

R. Thanks. So now that you have you have talked about the strategic level let's talk about the practitioner level. What you have observed yeah what is the reaction of the lecturers not of the staff not only those who participate in modes but those who hear that there are MOOCs in their university?

K. This is a very broad question

R. Could you divide them in groups of people who say there are many people who don't care there are many people who are enthusiasts there are not so many people who have this feeling about whatever

K. I think evokes a question for me because I would say that we have the the first group who the first group of professors involving uncoded do you see them yes um perhaps about percent okay good ish remember I think the the group who came forward are the enthusiastic maybe innovators but also I hope I'm allowed to say this I actually think they're very good and they know that they're very good a lot of them are big personalities they attract a crowd in the lecture theatre and on the in the online environment they look good they sound good and they got a lot of presence and I think it's easier to be this is mean a burden I think it's easier to be a MOOC teacher to do lecture capture to do an online course when you know that in front of the camera you perform you know how to perform you know how to speak to an audience some of these people have been on telly have been on the radio or been on that you know they're kind of big and they're not scared there's another group who a little bit more fearful of the idea that maybe their role is going to be used up by this new form of online learning and so they're resistant to change and it's a classic situation that'll encourage people not to come to class it'll encourage standards to drop that'll encourage and then you've got some people I think in the middle who are tentatively experimenting because also don't forget that you involute in the middle group you can also have the people who use MOOC which they didn't actually author yeah so you can have them you can have blended or flipped mode using with you sort of teacher of that court was using somebody else's MOOC as a kind of textbook for variety and interest bit of innovation okay thank you so different attitudes before and approaches and different reactions to the arrival of moxie and thanks that Lee University and some more than others that's

R. That's perfect thanks! so now the the work dynamics in at the university the communities of practice that has been formed when MOOCs have arrived have you noticed any change or any new interactions or a new teamwork dynamics?

K. We're fortunate enough here at this university to have a University Center then there's a bit of a sort of special interest group that as the rhythm around us and you know with the professor's you who are doing the week's but perhaps not as much as I'd hoped they've done you know they kind of did it and then did a revised version of it but I'm not quite sure whether there is enthusiastic because we are in the whole concept and you know know the different ramifications mhm we were talking about that today won't we that there is no you know there's no war MOOC model and yet here we have a template and and a very you know a very good template but there's all kinds of things outside that template that individuals can convey and there could be a lot of discussion around maintenance I'm not sure that's really happening.

R. okay thanks, so we have talked about yourself a little bit, now we are moving to the last and probably longest section in and it's all about how how most have made an impact even in the skills and competences of teachers here in this institution. We are going to do this by mapping it against an excellence framework professional standards framework which is a UKPSF that I'm going to pull out. We're going to look at it together we're going to read that some of the descriptors and some of some of the dimensions and we are going to make some comments on it. Okay so the framework touches on three areas of activity very similar to many of the definitions of what competencies are: areas of activity that have skills, core knowledge, and professional values. So this have got a few descriptors in each in each dimension. I would like anyway to start with design and plan learning activities and/or programs of study: what have you observed in well either when training teachers or when helping them develop MOOCs, or when talking to them?

K. Well I think MOOCs improve this aspect of teacher activity. I said before we're very much sort of public rather than private so we don't have very much in the way of the customer survey satisfaction surveys and for our students and stuff we don't have a system we don't have the sort of systematic observation and and marking of our performances teachers and this is speaking for myself I think you can get lazy when you know that nobody's checking up for you you you know you're very much free to go in there and do what you like I don't have performance indicators to to respect particularly the only one perhaps is that the students get through the exam but then I write the exam I examine the students so in a sense a bit of a sort of close shot planning a MOOC you know an eight week or a nine week MOOC with a template imposing the submission of a syllabus well in

advance imposing the selection of a certain amount of learning activities to incorporate beyond the the lecture capture sorry there would you call it anyway talking head lecture sort of video and you know collection of activities exercises tasks I think the mix do a lot to focus your mind on the objective these specific learning objectives and how you might choose to help your students achieve those objectives

R. Thanks, that is great because because you have said that this is even more to in universities where performance indicators are not are not so much in place as in other countries or in other university systems. Anyway, have you seen teachers rethinking the way they provide assessment and get feedback to learners as a result of having been involved in developing a MOOC?

K. Well I think that's um a possibility when you do let's say assignments rather than you know the quizzes with that are marked just automatically oh they're very easy to mark but on an assignment on their assessment the feedback is written and public sometimes or even peer peer media and I think in both cases the fact that it's lasting that it's in black and white and lasting it has made people reflect very much on tone on what's essential in giving feedback you know let's not be too predicted to be out the small things but let's from the outset set the parameters for the feedback that we want to give what to people what do I really want people to learn from doing this assignment and how can I see whether they really have learned what that what you know the they were intended to learn and if they haven't how can my feedback constructively enable them to improve their performance on the same task next time and again I think that that the online learning environment brings these issues much more to the fore just because it's all lasting it's always all there and you don't want to be you don't want to be caught saying anything that's not constructive that's mean illthoughtout right now I'm thinking of moving to the next next dimension unless you have seen any descriptor here that you would like to emphasize so we have talked about design and design company learning activities and assessing an agreement there are three more and unless you are particularly but particularly interested in in mentioning one of those well practice is very very brief easy the approaches to student support I would say that here that's quite difficult because then obviously the weakest then it's available online but the actual you know the additional things like I'm setting up some kind of communication network here some kind of virtual classroom with some kind of own forum that's quite difficult because not all the e the big and the VIP members faculty have the time or the inclination to do more than the make itself and so they tend to employ they tend to have a junior what they use they use junior maybe phd's if we're lucky students which sometimes works out really well but sometimes the assistants are not given the guidance that they might need because after all it's not so easy to manage virtual learning

environments it's not for me it's not a given that you know how to either encourage facilitate engage motivate guide there's a lot a lot of different roles that the online tutor needs to have and and not having the subject knowledge makes it even more difficult to carry out that role successfully mmhmm shall we move to the next dimension and talking too much no no you're not absolutely yeah you're I mean we could we can take more than half an hour if needed it every minute more is more value to my to my research so the core knowledge about is what they call knowledgeable are the teachers about these six different descriptors and let's imagine there's a there's a teacher who has been involved in a movie in physics or whatever and do you think or have you observed that they gain any more knowledge in the subject material either by expansion or by contraction being a teacher yes no okay no no I think that Italian professor it's in terms of subject knowledge the core knowledge are amazing I think they have anyway they have it anyway and they are not gonna gain they are going to gain it by having been important now they do all kinds of research they're very very very intelligent other professors it takes a long time to get there very good yeah perfect appropriate methods for teaching learning and assessing in the subject area and at the level of the academic program you think they gain anything or they or they are also so knowledgeable that well this one is a difficult one isn't it because how long is the piece of string I mean you know since since they they are the ones who determine the content of the syllabus and the parameters for the exam and and write the exams and do the exams then I would say no because they've kind of they said it mmhmm and how about the weather they they incur or they come across any Discovery on how students that would say yes yes I think sometimes and I think that's been a bit of a revelation I think it's been really interesting some professors we are talking about how teachers learn both generally and within their subject disciplinary areas yeah sorry but yes I think the I think some professors have youth makes instantly flipped my discovered to their surprise about how group work and project work could be really successful and how I think it's easier to get to know your class in flipped mode very often delivery modes in lecture theater don't really enable the professor perhaps to get to know the students as individuals and I think a lot more convert and certain characters come out and and the learning so learning through doing learning in groups learning through more independent research you've been able to present it to the class all those kind of things I don't they were taking place before so this is what they know about it and this is out of this dimension but it's a do you have you seen any have you witnessed any anyone of all these teachers who have taken this back to their day to day practice yeah yeah yeah you know to you I mean I really have mmm it's more I think they have because I don't really really I'm not really able to go in and yeah my feeling a few yes okay yes about the use and value of appropriate learning technologies do you think they are more spoton now the technologies that they

use in the classroom I think that a lot of individual variation here still in one of our mix there was one of one of the teacher training mix that was on the Emma platform I feel this guy using padlet for class in tricky introduction using all kinds of little thing very very effectively I think we're getting better on the macro but I think we still got a way to go they might go on day to day self reflection and evaluation of the of the of their own teaching do you think the self reflect more and they they assess more their own teaching and their and the effectiveness of bitch gosh I don't know as Marquess said this morning you know higher education institutions in the world in Europe T do not have a good track record for really monitoring the effectiveness of what they do and that's at the institutional level but it's also at the level of individual teachers you get a cause pockets of excellence and you get people who tend to be myself reflecting but if that's a sort of general phenomena I don't know I think personally that performance management and classroom observations goes a long way towards actually encouraging a more self reflective approach to teaching if you don't have that I think it's quite easy to teach for years the same way it's possible and there's no one who's gonna stop you yeah okay but you know it's not what you know blanket shall we move oculus dimension professional values attitudes behaviors wave being yes the server address yeah do you think they have because they have made any difference most of minute any differencing in which teachers respect individual learners and they were learning communities well yes I think that refers back to my previous point about you know in a flipped classroom so the contents been done at home and then you have the discussion or the project work or the tasks and I I think has increased respect for individual learners rather than for account second descriptor is related actually they promote participation in higher education and equality of opportunity for learners so do you think do you think there's been any anyone in your conversations with these stitches and what things more about why education so it should be more inclusive and should be should be more to before more people are for a wider range of people than it is at the moment I find that one quite difficult in my opinion but I'm ENGLISH because I'm weeks mirror the on campus cause the standard for me is quite high I don't think the attitude is very inclusive although a MOOC is open to everybody in theory I think that we have quite high standards yeah and a lot of people just wouldn't or couldn't get interested in that sort of level of specific news and and and quality as well whatever academic you know that there are real stop return for acknowledge the wider context in which higher education operates recognizing the implication for professional practice for an emphasis on the wider context beyond the walls of the university and I think makes brilliant for this I mean as soon as you go online and you know open access you're you're very aware that you're in some way you know carrying the banner of the university you're part of the branding you're part of of the internationalization and so that's quite you know that's quite an important role to have and I

think everybody's quite conscious of that and and be I think the curve they sign up to be apart of an open access movement open education resource and you know they're putting themselves on the line very generously because they want to share what they do with a wider community of learners and I think that's admirable and and there's a lot about people's attitudes to education as a social good and an opportunity for others okay and finally having discussed these three dimensions to what extent do you think this is self selective to the to the teachers that we have been talking about so we have will have said that in some ways when MOOCs came to the university that has made a difference said certain difference in the way teachers and academics think about education and think about how they teach yeah do you I repeat to what extent do you think they came already with this attitude or to what extent do you think the attitudes have actually changed so an example would be yeah I'm interested in doing MOOCs because I'm already selfprotective I'm Oliver I I already am already good at I have quite solid knowledge of my subject yeah I did not saying it I think that they're self selecting in terms of people who know they have the core knowledge you know they know they're international experts in the field and people are going to be interested in listening to them and I think also confident mmhmm you know I mentioned that before but I think our best new teachers that they see have quite a lot of presence would you call it charisma yeah yeah yeah and so but I think it's um I think they increased in those in in the other quality as time went on through the make program do you think and they did I mean you know they do they go on the Federica platform and Federico Segundo knows the Federico platform is bound and knock down the fact early but a trickle down and we're getting more and more people every year who wanted to do away so we've had different phases different brands and whereas in the first what I said about you know the big wings worries they might have come forward in the first round but then as time has gone on then we've had more and more applicants to to make a week so we shouldn't have thought about it no I'm sure they wouldn't no no and I think you know they've seen how much it's appreciated and yeah all that all that stuff about it being for the greater good great do you have anything else to add all of this conversation especially especially the last part of the well I still feel we haven't we haven't said very much about the training that might be needed and I think in some ways yeah I think in some ways yeah thing that we a small project but an interesting one if you think some of our teacher training experience in different fields because I used to work on English language teacher training and we imported some of those ideas you know cuz of English language training and there's quite a lot about trust management classroom present setting up diverse activities so that the class doesn't get boring English for other purposes in out of writing so I'll have a lot of classroom management to keep the students and the organizing the feedback after tasks and lots of stuff so we imported some of that I created a

small course for the teaching assistants who were going to be the online tutors and tried wasn't very successful but I think it was an interesting experiment don't start yeah and perhaps they're carrying on and then we also have somebody in Lee and in the team here in the MOOC products on team who is quite good at it was not like acting skills but just bit about how to be in front of the camera it just kind of firm advice on performing to the camera which was also really useful and you could see the improvement of training we're also trying to try to write a kind of teaching assistant or two or movement or handbook yeah yeah yeah that would be that would be ideal thank you thank you that is in the end I think he success recording now

K. Thank You R

13.1.4.7. Participant 7

R. Thanks for participating in this study.

L. Welcome!

R. So first question: could you tell me your experience with MOOCs, online learning, as a teacher trainer?

L. I have been an academic developer since 2010, basically involved in academic and professional development courses, partly online and partly f2f. I have moved a full PGCE from f2f to online learning.

R. Ok, MOOCs in your current university: why do you think your university is investing in MOOCs?

L. Well, the original driver was experimenting with online technologies. Partly, the reason was that at the time there was no online presence at all. The university then put a lot of money in experimentation for online learning courses, partly because they were approached by Coursera initially. Partly also was pushed by the previous vicechancellor, who wanted the university to become the MIT of the southern hemisphere, and therefore there was that kind of pressure for presence online and in the MOOC space. Later on, we looked at alternative providers (Edx, FL), and we adopted them too. Initially MOOCs were centrally developed in a bespoke department, and now they are being shared with the faculties. With Coursera things have got a bit cold because of their new 'on-demand' model. With FutureLearn we have some 15 MOOCs with many iterations. We may stop after that. There are no plans for new courses at this point. We will deliver further runs but then there is no further intention to deliver new futurelearn courses. Instead, we plan to redevelop a number of courses in OpenLearn.

R. From your perspective, what are the attitudes of people in your university towards MOOCs? What trends could you identify?

L. From my view, I think there is a generalised lack of understanding of what MOOCs are for. If you look at the hype of MOOCs, fundamentally I don't know... the fundamental problem is that we had a number of considerable changes in the organisational structure, which came from top-down. The academic portfolio change was huge. When we initially started to fund the MOOC initiative, none of these senior people were around. That also means that we went from the rapid cycle of hype and implementation to a massive shift, which have to do

with the realignment of the traditional objective. At the same time we have to add the deployment of what we call the 2025 strategy, which is putting 'digital' at the centre, although they also mean that the focus has been pushed towards blended courses. At the same time we have the creation of Alliance+, and that has diverted the focus of the development of online programmes, which is moving us away from MOOCs. So there you have a bunch of people who have no idea what MOOCs are for even being involved in the process, we have also those involved in the development and deployment of MOOCs who were very positive about the impact that these MOOCs are having, and they actually understand what MOOCs are used for, then you have a bunch of academic managers who do not necessarily understand why we even started. And then we have this category of supporting people, educational developers who have been involved in the process, they actually matured a strategy for development of online resources, digital resources, they have now been pushed to more senior in the development of the 2025 strategy, so now we have a so-called 'sparked learning strategy' where all the money is going. They are developing over 600 courses, mainly foundation courses, over the next 5 years. This is a massive endeavour, who they are really looking into redesigning courses for online provision.

R. Ok, my next question is, have you seen any change in the dynamics of these different roles, different liaisons, relationships?

L. I think we've got two different types of reactions, partly related to the approach to development. Some look at restructuring things completely differently, and that is an interesting starting point. Then there is the those who look more at scaling up by making not so radical changes. There has definitely been a complete shift of the type of people that are suited, equipped to do development. I, for example, was in the academic development team as an academic. Now I am not in that team anymore. The new team only comprises professional staff. So my title has also changed into 'academic lead for education intelligence', which is an unusual role. These professionals may have PhD in a number of disciplines, but are not necessarily trained in teaching. It is an interesting choice as well. So we got this massive expansion of really knowledgeable people but do not have much idea about teaching. And these multidisciplinary teams are those helping the academics develop their courses. So there are this bunch of people experienced in developing MOOCs, and now all of them have moved to managing roles who are leading these new people in developing courses. And that is independent of the fact of whether their MOOCs were successful or not. The way to measure success is also an interesting problem, there is no single definition. And then other relationships developed after MOOCs, such as research collaboration to do with the area of analytics, but limited to those people who were involved, rather than skilling up institutional learning. It hasn't soaked into the student community, for example.

R. Ok, let us move to competencies. When MOOCs came to your life, have you noticed any change in the way you design learning and teach?

L. The answer is no. The reason is because in all cases that we had included MOOCs, we basically had to redesign based on the limitations of the platform, and then leveraging on the massive and networked features of them. Although not necessarily true in all instances, in many occasions we had to push the boundaries of feasibility to develop for both Coursera and FutureLearn. We had to create our own LTI tools in order to extend the features of what the MOOC platform can offer. So the most important thing is the fact that we try not to be constrained by the limitations of the platform, we have pedagogical strategies in place, and we did not want to give up on them. What we did instead is add features to the platform in order to accommodate to these strategies that we already had. And this is because we still think they work better than what the platforms can offer just by themselves. So, has it changed anything we do? No, because the technology has not pushed the design in any direction.

R. And how about the academics that you have worked with?

L. Again, the broad answer is possibly not. There are instances, however, in which we got academics to go through the process of rethink their practices. I cannot tell if that has affected every aspect of their practice, but it certainly opened up the perception of what does it mean to teach very large learning communities, with different types of motivations that our students may have. So whether it has changed their way they conceive their teaching, or they design their assessment, or the way they provide feedback to students, that is something I cannot tell. What I can tell is that they appreciate the fact that they can easily interact with the students, whether they expected it or not. But as I said, I really don't know if it has any effect in the way they carry out their day to day job in the f2f lessons.

R. So, in terms of practice. Do you think they design and plan learning activities in a different way? Any anecdote in that respect?

L. They probably don't in their normal practice, but when we actually talk about interaction, and when designing the MOOC, they do really think about what they are doing. I think in most cases, and this is the interesting part, it is their interactions with the educational developers. Educational developers are the ones that really reconsider.

R. How about assessment and feedback?

L. Again, only for the particular cases of the MOOC. They think a lot about assessment, but mainly as a result of the limitation of the platforms.

R. Ok, and how about core knowledge.

L. No, I do not have any recollection of any academic ever telling me that they have learned new things about their area of expertise. I think the main reason is that, in our university, those who are selected to produce a MOOC are senior academics. And I have talked about it with them, they all tell me that the content they provide is known by their students in the earliest years of their degrees.

R. How about the use of appropriate learning technologies? Do they get more knowledgeable about that?

L. I don't think so. Again, due to the limitations of the platforms. Have in mind that the amount of options that they have for their blended courses are much larger than the options that they have in a MOOC. Most of the conversations are "why can't I do this in a MOOC, while I can do it in Moodle"?

R. So do you notice any separation?

L. Yes, of course

R. How about values and attitudes? Any changes in the way they approach the diversity of learning communities?

L. I think the key response I can give you there is, in appreciation for the diversity of the learners, and potentially the novelty or unexpected reactions of different types of learners that teachers may have not met before. Both positive reactions and negative ones. I noticed many discrepancies between their expectations of what participants in MOOCs actually say and how they engage, and what they actually found out. In most cases, they think they gain from the interaction with this wider audience. Whether this informs their approaches to learning and teaching in general in their day-to-day, I am not so sure.

R. Ok, how about acknowledging the wider context in which Higher Education is framed?

L. I don't think their views change for a very simple reason: their starting point is already grounded in social engagement. MOOC creators are a self-selective group. It is a big thing at strategic level. In the expression of interest guidelines, we asked for a strong drive on social engagement, so only those who were up for it expressed interest. For example, the physics course was meant to be bridging between high school and university, the franchise and low-cost culture MOOC was targeting people from non-traditional backgrounds, and what their understanding is of franchising, and many other courses that were targeting diverse groups, diverse learning communities. So if we look about the impact of these

courses on the attitudes of academics, I must say that not much because they were already selected to have these attitudes to looking outside the university.

R. Ok, so to wrap up?

L. Yes, this is important: so the main impact that I have noticed is just confirmation. Confirmation of their abilities to design learning, confirmations of their attitudes to open learning, and an opportunity to get a promotion. But in terms of the competencies development, not so much. Those who were selected for the MOOC programme were known to be excellent teachers already. So, in short: MOOCs developed their careers, not their competencies.

13.1.4.8. Participant 8

R. Hi, thanks for participating in this study.

Z. A pleasure!

R. Could you tell me a little bit about your experience as an education developer, MOOCs, and online learning?

Z. I work at the University of */**. I taught Portuguese and French for over 20 years. After that I became a teacher trainer. Then, before moving to the University, we began teacher training online in the mid nineties. Now I work for the Government from the University, and we work in all projects related to ICT in education, not only for universities but also for other settings (primary, secondary, etc.) At the beginning we developed only online courses because teachers in Portugal need credits to progress in their careers, and these credits are attained by doing CPD, and it can be done online.

R. Thanks. Why was your university keen in developing online courses?

Z. My university began very early for two main reasons: we want to be reach all lusophone countries, and there by that time we were very well located. Portugal Telecom was in our city, and had a strong connection with the university, so it was of great help. But the main reason of course was to help students who are far away, who do not have the opportunity to come presentially to the university.

R. Ok. Now I am going to ask about your own experience with MOOCs and other online courses. What has changed in how you see online education, and how you see the skills needed of a teacher in this digital era?

Z. Well, MOOCs require teachers to develop a wide range of skills, if we want to do them well. Both when they are trainers and trainees online. Communication skills, being able to expose yourself only with writing - have in mind that video exists now, but when I began, not that much - and the fact that we have to support others, give constant good feedback to help learners and keep them engaged in those courses. So it helps to develop all this kind of soft skills, but on the other hand, little by little they will also develop a little bit of hard skills, technical skills. This is what I think about MOOCs and online learning. It is important, sometimes I have some doubts when it is based on very practical procedures, if it is easy, I am sure that for some people it is not so obvious, so easy to learn procedures. By procedures I mean how things are done in an organisation. I am sure that for some of the trainees it is not that easy to learn those skills online. It is important that someone close to

them helps them learn them, because they are very practical, very contextual, and it is very difficult to learn them from distance, both physical and cultural.

R. Ok, now I am going to pull out the UKPSF, and discuss it with you. From your experience, how MOOCs have helped these teachers that you have worked with in growing their skills. I will start from the Areas of Activity dimensions. How about designing learning? Have you seen a before and an after?

Z. Yes, I think there is certain change in that respect. Without MOOCs, you have to plan very well your programmes, your lessons, your syllabi, your learning outcomes, et. But with MOOCs, you have to think very hard and program everything, develop all the materials very carefully, predict the interactions with the learners, etc. so it helps trainee teachers to have things very clear in their mind, so then they can make a good plan. They have to develop the planning much more, compared to presential F2F classes.

R. How about teaching and supporting learning?

Z. Ok, delivering it. About the support, I am sure -and I have come across several teacher trainees points of view- that when it is online, I feel that the teacher is quite close to the learner. Especially when they interact in the forums. I am sure that when the teacher has the opportunity, they provide an answer, support. It is not the same in a room, because there are less chances. The class time is limited, so online can become much more personalised. And teaching is the same that I said about planning, things cannot happen spontaneously. This is important.

R. How about assessing?

Z. From my experience, it is different because when online you don't have direct contact with a person, physical contact I mean, so you have to be very clear and convincing in what you say. You have to be more supportive, much more careful, and much more timely. If you don't provide feedback on time, you can lose the trainees. They will go away.

R. Ok, now let's move to the core knowledge dimension. Do you think teaching online enhances the knowledge on how students learn, within the subject area and generally?

Z. I think that since they are so strongly obliged to think about learning, they have to think about learners. They have to think what is the best way to teach students with specific profiles and backgrounds. Having the obstacles in mind (online, distance, etc.) they have to think about the diversity of the learning community, you know, 'this one has difficulties to learn the procedures', 'this other one struggles with the theory', etc. Trainers really develop

strong knowledge about the way of learning of each trainee. They have to reflect much more about their teaching. Online is very demanding, so a MOOC is not a thing that can be easily done. Preparing a programme is challenging.

R. How about course evaluation and quality assurance and enhancement?

Z. Well, in this specific area, I think some MOOCs are attended by some people who are not really there to complete them. These people cannot really tell me whether the activities and materials work or not. In terms of evaluation, if people have to develop some activities in which learners have to give opinions, or engage in discussions, I can know if my teaching is suitable or not. Have in mind that we receive numerous and varied feedback from students on the spot, without having to wait for their responses in the end of course survey. That is highly valuable. We have many more grounds to assess the quality of the questions that we make, the activities that we prepare. We can see the dropout rates within one run of a course, or from run to run, which can tell us whether it is working or not. I think we become more reflective teachers.

R. Ok, let's move to values and attitudes. Do you think there is any impact in our attention to diverse learning communities?

Z. I think so. If I work with a student from Africa, with different ways of exposing himself, or a teacher with special needs, I try to adapt to their demands and need. We have to try to understand what is happening with them. My experience is more with small classes, I know that with MOOCs it is a different stories.

R. Do you think that MOOCs have made us think more about providing different learning opportunities?

Z. I have my doubts about it. There are many different types of difficulties that learners come across, such as learning difficulties, access difficulties, cultural differences. I think that we are not yet in the level of saying that it creates equality. Actually, I think sometimes it can create inequality. MOOCs help with autonomy of learning, but not to everyone. However, I think MOOCs help teachers think about equality of opportunities. Maybe it would be necessary that MOOCs had more tutors, providing more support to those who have difficulties.

R. Ok, so to wrap up. Do MOOCs make better teachers?

Z. Well, I think when MOOCs are very massive, I think it becomes too much of a complication. It can become confusing. But online education in smaller groups is a different story. It helps teachers reflect much more.

R. Thanks!

13.2. Survey questions (for future work)

13.2.1. Section 1. You, your work, and MOOCs

This survey is anonymous. However, we need some information about you. This way, we will be able to divide the sample into meaningful groups of respondents.

Question 1.1

What is your gender?

Male

Female

Other/prefer not to say

Question 1.2

How old are you?

30 or younger

30-40

40-50

50-60

60 or older

Prefer not to say

Question 1.3

What is your current university (optional)?

Question 1.4

Which of the following options best describes your discipline?

Humanities

Social Sciences

Natural Sciences

Engineering

Maths/Physics

Electronics/Computer Science

Other

Question 1.5

How long have you worked in a university?

Please include your postgraduate research years.

Less than a year

Between 1 and 5 years

Between 5 and 10 years

Between 10 and 20 years

More than 20 years

N/A

Question 1.6

What is your role at the university?

Postgraduate Student

Lecturer/Teaching Fellow

Professor/Head of Department

Learning Designer/Learning Technologist

Non academic (tech support, administrator, manager, legal advisor, accountant, etc.)

Other

Question 1.7

What is your level of involvement producing MOOCs?

I have never been involved at all, and there is no intention for me to be involved

I have never been involved but there is an intention for me to do so

I have contributed some content and/or I have facilitated/mentored

I have been a lead educator

It is an substantial part of my role at the university

Question 1.7b

Do not worry, please answer the rest of the survey based on what you have heard from colleagues about being involved in MOOCs. Your responses are of high value.

13.2.2. Section 2. Your views on Technology Enhanced Learning

Question 2.1

Think of how the use of learning technologies has grown the last years. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about Technology Enhanced Learning?

	Completely disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Completely agree
More investment in TEL infrastructure is needed in my university							
More investment in TEL culture (policies, training, support, research) is needed in my university							

I need to invest more time in the use of TEL

My students value TEL

My students benefit from introducing more TEL in the programmes

I think a university running MOOCs provides clear examples of approaches to TEL

I am a TEL advocate

13.2.3. Section 3. Your views on MOOCs

Question 3.1

Think of your experience of MOOCs, both as a learner and an educator. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Completely disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Completely agree	N/A
--	---------------------	---	---	---	---	---	------------------	-----

The majority of MOOCs I have experienced have valid pedagogical underpinnings

The majority of MOOCs I have experienced can provide free quality education to many learners

MOOCs can prepare universities for digital transformation

MOOCs can make universities more visible

I am a MOOC enthusiast

Question 3.2

To what extent are you familiar with the cMOOC vs xMOOC distinction?

Not familiar at all							Very familiar	
	1	2	3	4	5			N/A

Consider cMOOCs - xMOOCs as a spectrum. Where in this spectrum would you place your ideal MOOC?

cMOOC	1	2	3	4	5	xMOOC	N/A
--------------	---	---	---	---	---	--------------	-----

Consider cMOOCs - xMOOCs as a spectrum. Where in this spectrum would you place your ideal MOOC?

cMOOC	1	2	3	4	5	xMOOC	N/A
--------------	---	---	---	---	---	--------------	-----

Question 3.2b

Consider cMOOCs - xMOOCs as a spectrum. Where in this spectrum would you place your ideal MOOC?

cMOOC	1	2	3	4	5	xMOOC	N/A
--------------	---	---	---	---	---	--------------	-----

Question 3.3

If you feel confident enough with the cMOOCs - xMOOCs distinction, think of it as a spectrum. Where in this spectrum would you place your ideal MOOC?

cMOOC	1	2	3	4	5	xMOOC	N/A
--------------	---	---	---	---	---	--------------	-----

13.2.4. Section 4. MOOCs and your professional development

This section is central to this survey. You will be asked about the effects of MOOCs on yourself, and the effects of MOOCs on academics in general. The questions are worded to address this distinction. Try to respond them all, regardless of how much (or little) knowledge you have about the topic. Again, you still can use the N/A button if you are not sure how to answer.

Question 4.1

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?: **being involved in MOOCs has made a difference to...**

	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree	N/A
...how I design learning activities, modules, or programmes								
...how I teach and/or support learning								
...how I assess and give feedback to learners								
...how I develop effective learning environments and approaches to student support and guidance								
...how I engage in continuing professional development in subjects/disciplines and their pedagogy								

Question 4.2

To what extent do you agree with the following statements? **As a result of having been involved with MOOCs, I know more about...**

	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree	N/A
The subject material								
Appropriate methods for teaching, learning and assessing in the subject area and at the level of the academic programme								

How students learn, both generally and within their subject/ disciplinary area(s)

The use and value of appropriate learning technologies

Methods for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching

The implications of quality assurance and quality enhancement for academic and professional practice with a particular focus on teaching

Question 4.3

To what extent do you agree with the following statements? **After being involved in MOOCs, I have noticed a change in the way I...**

	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree	N/A
...respect individual learners and diverse learning communities								
...promote participation in higher education and equality of opportunity for learners								
...use evidence-informed approaches and the outcomes from research, scholarship and continuing professional development								
...acknowledge the wider context in which higher education operates recognising the implications for professional practice								

13.2.5. Section 5. MOOCs and your digital capabilities for teaching

This is the penultimate section of the survey. It is based on the Jisc framework of digital capabilities. You may notice a certain overlap with questions in earlier sections.

Question 5.1

After being involved in MOOCs, to what extent have your digital capabilities developed, **in relation to your ICT proficiency?**:

	not at all	1	2	3	4	5	significantly	N/A
--	------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---------------	-----

Using digital production applications and devices

Working with the ICT systems in place at the university, both for teaching and administrative tasks

Assess the ICT systems in place, identifying their strengths and weaknesses for pedagogical purposes

Question 5.2

Having been involved in MOOCs, to what extent have your skills developed, related to your **information, media and data literacies?**

	Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	significantly	N/A
--	------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---------------	-----

Handle digital content for educational purposes, with awareness of openness and copyright implications

Handle digital data for educational purposes, with awareness of ethical and legal implications

Handle digital media for educational purposes, with awareness of intellectual property implications.

Question 5.3

Having been involved in MOOCs, to what extent have your skills developed, related to your **creative production?**

	Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	in great measure
Create, remix, and repurpose digital materials in a variety of media							
Create digital assessments (quizzes, collaborative assessments, portfolios)							
Create materials that involve the discussion of digital issues							
Collect and manage data through digital tools such as online surveys							
Support critical thinking about digital technologies							
Investigate and implement innovative approaches to teaching , involving digital technologies							

Question 5.4

After having been involved in MOOCs, to what extent have your digital capabilities developed, **in relation to digital collaboration and participation?**

	1	2	3	4	5
Use of digital communication tools (discussion forums, chats, skype, google hangouts, webinar software) to support learning					
Support online communication, aware of access needs of different learners					
Support online communication, aware of different social and cultural norms in different online settings					

Collaborate effectively in digital spaces, using digital collaboration tools such as cloud-based tools, wikis, and websites

Create environments / design activities in which students collaborate using digital tools

Actively participate in digital networks and social media with learners (twitter, facebook, linkedin, etc.), and use them for educational purposes

Question 5.5

After having been involved in MOOCs, to what extent have your **capabilities for developing digital learning** have evolved?

	Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	in great measure	N/A
--	------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---------------------	-----

Identifying digital learning opportunities, and participating in them

Using new digital tools to manage my own learning

To support and develop others in digitally-rich settings

Question 5.6

To what extent has your involvement in MOOCs had a role in the evolution of your **digital identity and wellbeing**?

	Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	in great measure	N/A
--	------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---------------------	-----

The capacity to develop and project a positive digital identity or identities and to manage digital reputation

The capacity to look after personal health, safety, relationships and work-life balance in digital settings

13.2.6. Section 6. In summary

Many thanks for your time in completing this survey. You have reach the last section, in which you are asked to reflect upon the overall of your experience with MOOCs, by answering two very simple and general questions:

Question 6.1

After your involvement in MOOCs, do you see yourself as a better teacher, generally speaking?

Not at all						Yes, definitely!	N/A
	1	2	3	4	5		

Question 6.2

After your involvement in MOOCs, do you see yourself as a better 'digital scholar'?

Not at all						Yes, absolutely	N/A
	1	2	3	4	5		

Question 6.3

In the previous sections, we have covered many areas of teaching and digital skills. Would you like to tell a short story of how MOOCs have developed your skills in one or more of these areas?

13.3. Appendix 3. Online Learning in UK HE

This report helps navigate through a set of public strategy documents of several British Universities, with a focus on the [Russell Group members](#), although other cases worth mentioning will be included. This document is not a curation, and contains little analysis and commentary. Rather, it lists what has been gathered, and at its best points towards the relevant passages related to online learning strategies. The first section is a list of the Russell Group Universities, the second section, other universities identified as having an online strategy worth mentioning.

13.3.1. Summary

We have gathered and read the education strategy documents of most Russell Group Universities, to understand what their visions are in terms of online, blended, and digital learning.

Most of 14 universities that we have seen so far have a wide online learning portfolio with many Masters degrees, CPD, and lifelong learning.

Some of them, such as Edinburgh, Queen Mary, Glasgow, and the Imperial College, have separate online/digital learning strategy and policy documents.

A few of them are growing quickly in that respect. QMUL aims to double their blended and online provision in the next two years. The Imperial college are recruiting a high number of online learning designers at the moment.

There are universities with leading academics in the field of digital learning, such as the UCL with Diana Laurillard, that have a dedicated team that informs the rest of the university on how online learning should be develop, with clear and elaborated guidelines and principles. The Imperial College also involves senior academics in a continuous discussion on online learning.

There obviously are no figures in the strategy documents, but in some of them it can be found that the investment is substantial. For example, the University of Edinburgh dedicated £5M between 2009 and 2013 exclusively to online learning. The round of investment continues (Sir Tim O'Shea said so last year, before leaving)

Universities such as Leeds and Coventry (non russell-group, not listed here yet) are integrating their MOOCs in such a way that they can offer programmes and credits. The investment is substantial.

Perhaps a common factor in most Russell Group Universities is that their public facing strategy documents state the intention to dedicate substantial resources to online and digital learning, with the following objectives:

- Enhance the learning experience of in-house students
- Offer a flexible learning environment
- Increase their visibility outside the university

- Recruit remote learners

13.3.2. Russell Group Unis

13.3.2.1. University of Birmingham

In their [education strategy](#), no explicit mention has been found to online or blended learning programmes. However, in their website they announced a [partnership with Wiley](#) 3 years ago, to create a programme of [3 online masters](#), and the offer seems to be growing. They have a total of [96 distance courses available](#), most of them postgraduate. It may be worth highlighting that a) they are a FutureLearn partner with a portfolio of around 20 MOOCs, and b) [they recruited the former BBC head of online learning](#) to lead their educational enterprise department.

Use VLE/skype to deliver courses.

13.3.2.2. University of Bristol

Their [education strategy](#) mentions blended learning, not online learning. It is very similar to what we do at Southampton and also recent changes in education governance structure. They do not seem to have online learning programmes, and if they do, they are not easy to find. They offer distance learning options, [mainly for research degrees](#). They are a FutureLearn partner, with 5 MOOCs in their portfolio.

They have developed 3 MOOCs which are offered 3 times per year, which align to the 'Bristol SKills Framework'. These are open online courses which can be taken by anyone and which give transferable 'life' skills (Innovation and Enterprise; Global Citizenship and Sustainable Futures. Doing one of the courses is part of the requirement to achieve a 'BristolPLUS' award <https://www.bristol.ac.uk/bristol-futures/open-online-courses/>

13.3.2.3. University of Cambridge

No explicit mention of online learning or blended learning is made in their [teaching and learning](#) strategy document, although section 9 about TEL may be worth having a quick look. It may be also of interest to know that [their Institute of Continuing Education offers 29 online courses](#), although they don't seem to carry credits (unlike Oxford, who does!)

Ed strat - boring and procedural, as if written for a committee. Good to see that researchers 'at all levels' are expected to teach. Very conservative as regards online and digital, but they do say they 'will develop a digital strategy to make teaching and learning more efficient' and sniffily acknowledge that digital can support teaching.

13.3.2.4. Cardiff University

Little mention is made to online/blended/distance learning in their [education strategy document](#), although the last page contains some statements about their intention to invest in more learning technologies (see the "enhancing the learning environment" section). They have [quite a few Online Masters programmes](#) though (although when you read the details,

these are often actually blended). They are also a FutureLearn partner, with a portfolio of 4 MOOCs, although with not too strong a drive in that direction (the MOOC lead told me).

They mention an intention to develop their capacity to create online and digital resources to support students.

13.3.2.5. Durham university

Again, nothing explicitly mentioned in their [education strategy](#). They have a [couple of distance Masters degrees](#), and they are a FutureLearn partner with another couple of MOOCs. They have a [long section on elearning](#), with an action plan (see at the bottom of the document) that includes the review of strategic funding for eLearning in various areas, but not specific to online learning. It is quite old (2003 is cited) and the parameters of the debate about technology in learning were different then. We've moved on.

13.3.2.6. University of Edinburgh

The University of Edinburgh does explicitly mention their intention to “*Building on and growing the University’s portfolio of online learning programmes and using them to innovate with new*

approaches to learning and teaching.” in their [teaching and learning strategy](#). As such, they are known for a high investment in online learning. They invested nearly £5M between 2008 and 2013 (figure found in the [Glasgow Uni online strategy document](#))

They have quite a large portfolio of [online postgraduate programmes](#), which is [continually expanding](#). They also have a large number of [MOOCs in various platforms](#). Online learning is quite embedded in the university, judging not only from their offerings, but also from their [online learning policy](#). Perhaps due to the strong drive for online learning of their former VC Tim O’Shea, the provision of online learning is a distinctive feature of this university. This is the most committed university with online learning that I have found in Britain so far, and they seem to be doing quite well in that respect.

They ‘pursue the aspiration that every educator is a digital educator’ (and they aim to have all their staff CMALT accredited). Good ODL policy - aligning clearly standard university quality mechanisms.

13.3.2.7. University of Exeter

It is difficult to find explicit mentions to any form of online learning (blended, elearning, distance learning, digital learning) in their [education strategy document](#). They mention digital in passing (in giving students effective teaching experiences). However, certain facts should be considered:

The vice-chancellor Sir Steve Smith indirectly but clearly acknowledges the need to pay special attention to digital learning in his [public address video](#) (see first 30 secs), in which uses the [Avalanche Report](#) as a reference for his statements about the need to keep up with innovation and change. The Avalanche report is highly influential and widely known, but the fact that a vice-chancellor mentions it explicitly denotes willingness to look into digital education (however it is worth noting that Exeter is mentioned as a model in this Avalanche report, so there may be certain connection).

The University only offers two Masters degrees at the moment, but this portfolio is going to grow significantly as a result of [a partnership with Keypath Education and their business school](#).

They have an e-learning team of about 8 members, and they are another FutureLearn partner with a portfolio of 8 MOOCs.

Very poorly framed video...and he is an advisor to the Avalanche Report.

13.3.2.8. University of Glasgow

The University of Glasgow seems to have placed a serious bet on digital learning, as it can be drawn from their public [strategy document](#). Their strategy acknowledges a context with three challenges: competition, growth, and revenue. Within the growth challenge, it is highlighted “the rise of innovative learning models, including online learning, distance provision and workplace CPD”. In their teaching section (see page 26), they prioritise “connected learning”, aim to bring global audiences through online and distance learning, and to use the digital space to enhance the learning experience of campus-based students. This university has a public [e-learning strategy document](#) that draws both in internal and external contexts (for students within campus, and for students outside). In the online learning section of this document, it can be highlighted their aim to grow their presence online, mainly through MOOCs with FutureLearn and iTunesU. Judging from the document, they consider themselves a modest university in their online credit bearing offerings, although they have a portfolio of over [20 postgraduate degrees fully online](#). They are also a FutureLearn partner, with some [10 MOOCs](#)

13.3.2.9. Imperial College

The Imperial College seems to take online learning seriously. Their [strategy document](#) is perhaps the most full of references to online learning (“online” is mentioned 97 times). They seem to prioritise online learning for students within campus, but they seem to have a solid determination to provide online learning materials and blended learning environments. In their strategy document they have specific sections (see appendices) for digital and online learning and online learning.

Their digital learning strategy aims to “support the delivery and implementation of both the Learning and Teaching strategy and the overall College Strategy.”, and they seem to be dedicating resources to it. For example, they have an [online learning innovation group](#) that brings senior academics staff to regular and frequent meetings. Their online learning offer seems to be expanding quickly, judging from their currently numerous job ads for online learning positions (6 positions in February), especially in the [business school](#).

They have a [digital learning hub](#) under the PVC for education office with four main objectives to be highlighted:

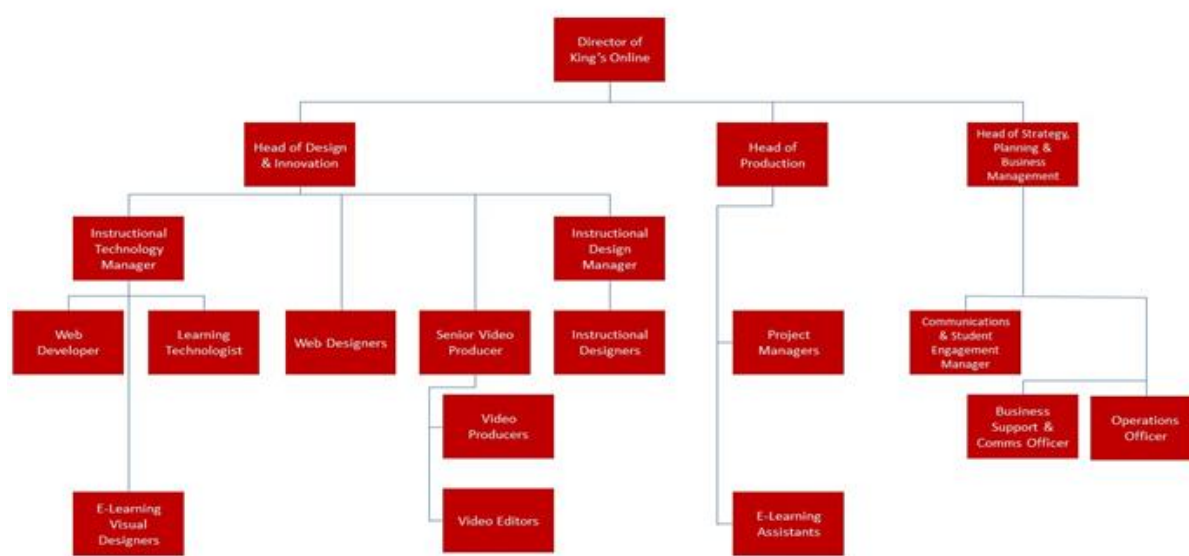
- **Enhancing the experience of on-campus students:** supporting the move towards more interactive teaching in classrooms and labs
- **Increasing our global footprint in education:** developing online courses which reflect our research strengths for large groups of learners across the globe
- **Creating global citizens able to use digital technology in professional environments:** building membership of a community which collaborates and learns effectively both in person and online
- **Generating revenue for the College:** developing online courses that can generate revenue to support the College’s core mission

They are not a FutureLearn partner, but they have 4 MOOCs with EdX.

13.3.2.10. The King's College

The King's college is one of the universities that make explicit mention to online and blended learning in their public [strategy document](#). In the document, there is acknowledgement of 'a context with an accelerating demand for high-quality education from emerging countries and a rapid expansion in online learning across the world.'(p.5) In their educational strategy section, there is a clear priority to 'Promote flexible programme structures and modes of delivery for pre-university, undergraduate, postgraduate, CPD and executive education modules.'(p.15) by means such as investing in 'digital capabilities to enable the delivery of online and blended courses.'(p.26). The university still does not have an impressively long [portfolio of online](#) programmes, although they have a reasonably wide range and variety of them, and a dedicated space called [King's Online](#) with a solid [rationale](#) for it and a comprehensive documentation, including a [code of conduct](#).

It is worth mentioning that Kings Online team is growing rapidly, and they are advertising a large number of positions for learning technologists, learning innovation managers, online learning managers, etc. Worth having a look at their organisational chart (zoom in for details):



They are also a FutureLearn partner, with a [portfolio of about 10 MOOCs](#).

13.3.2.11. University of Leeds

The University of Leeds also champions online learning. In the forefront of their [public strategy document](#), they clearly express their determination to make a "substantial investment in digital learning".

They have [digital education service](#) department, staffed with a [large team](#) who supports a wide variety of digital and online learning activities across the university.

They have an sizeable MOOC portfolio of nearly [50 MOOCs with FutureLearn](#) where they are about to reach the 1M subscribers. They have credit bearing programmes in the platform, quite a few pre-uni courses to attract students, and CPD courses. Also importantly, they have recently partnered with Coursera, where they seem to expect to host quite a few MOOCs too.

Interesting model: take the course via upgrade on FL, do final assessment programme through VLE.

13.3.2.12. University of Liverpool

This is yet another university making a significant investment in online learning. In their [strategic document](#), they claim to be the largest provider of online postgraduate programmes (p.6). The document mentions “online” as one more of their global campuses. They also have a dedicated site for heir online offerings. They do not have many extensive documents as to how they approach online learning, neither strategically or pedagogically. However, they claim in their site that they take a conversational and constructivist approach.

They have over 8000 students online, and they claim to have graduated more than 12000 from over 160 countries up to 2016 (they use HESA data to back it up). They have crafted a [nice video to watch](#) (a minute and a half or so, worth spending it!).

Their [portfolio](#) is large. They have over 20 masters, 2 doctorate programmes, and over 25 postgraduate shorter programmes (PGCerts ad PGAs). They do not have online undergraduate degrees. Liverpool is another FutureLearn partner, with 7 MOOCs most of them on medicine and health sciences. They advertise their online offerings widely. As an anecdote, I have seen their ads in Spanish newspapers.

13.3.2.13. LSE

Compared to the rest of the Russell Group, the [LSE education strategy document](#) doesn't show emphasis on blended learning, online learning, or digital learning. The document mentions blended learning briefly and vaguely.

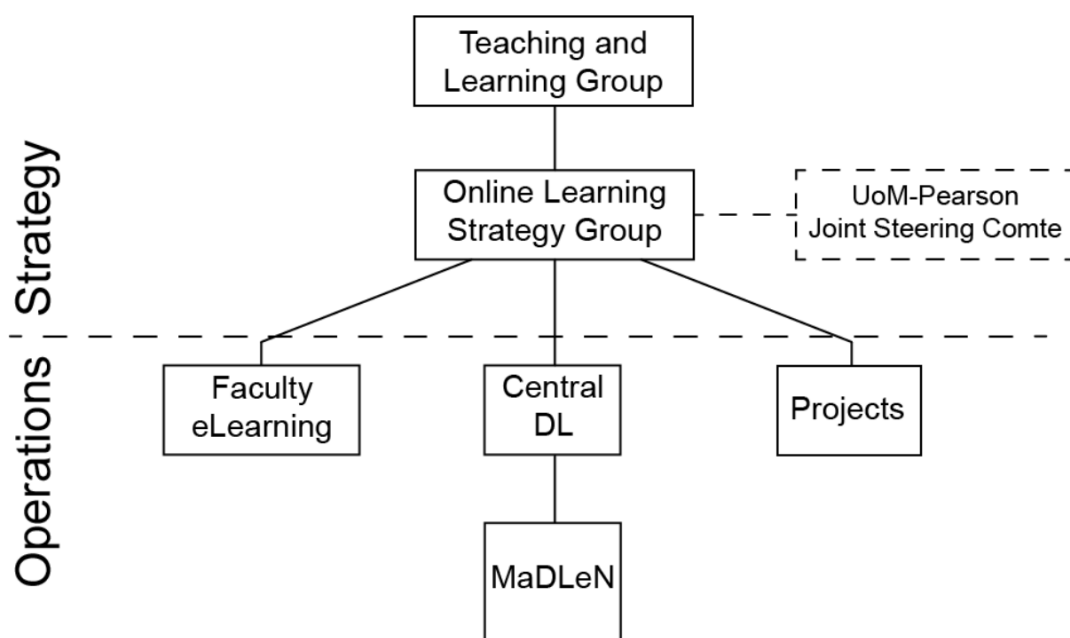
The institution offers [a few online courses](#) in [GetSmarter](#), an online learning platform specialised in short certified CPD courses.

13.3.2.14. University of Manchester

The university of Manchester places online distance learning at the core of the fifth of the five pillars of their [education strategy](#): Global awareness. To meet their internationalisation goals, they are in partnership with Pearson. They offer a [wide range of postgraduate distance courses](#), around 50, many of them in the healthcare area.

They also offer a few not-for-credit [online distance courses](#), both MOOCs and CPD. For MOOCs, they are in partnership with both FutureLearn and Coursera. For CPD they have quite a wide portfolio, although they categorise their PGR online distance masters as CPD. They use their VLE, Blackboard, for both their CPD and their PGR online courses.

Organisationally, they have an [online learning strategy working group](#), led by the president for learning and teaching. The group includes an academic director for distance learning, faculty elearning managers, and representatives from the library and the IT department. See reporting chart below:



13.3.2.15. Queen Mary University of London

QMUL has a [general strategic document](#) with a prominent presence of e-learning and online learning. At the forefront of the document, it is stated that they will:

“Grow our virtual presence to allow new modes of teaching and learning, notably by exploiting the potential of e-learning, while retaining the benefits of personal interactions between academic and student.”

The strategy contains six strategic aims. The third one suggests a serious bet for online learning:

“to provide all our students, wherever based, an education that is judged internationally to be of the highest quality, and which exploits innovations in teaching, learning and assessment.” In fact, it is explicitly mentioned that the target is to increase their blended and distance online provision by 100% in the next two years.

The university has a separate e-[learning strategy document](#). This strategy differentiates the beneficiaries, namely students, staff, and the university. It contains four key aims to be achieved by 2020:

- Ensure all students have access to high-quality online learning that extends and enhances their learning experience no matter where or how they are studying.

- Provide staff with the tools, knowledge and recognition to teach effectively with technology.
- Diversify QMUL's online teaching approaches to encourage more interactivity and learner empowerment.
- Provide a sector leading, reliable and enabling technical and support infrastructure

From the first e-learning strategy aim, it can be implied that there is an intention to produce a wide range of blended and fully online programmes. In fact, they claim to have a team fully dedicated to enhance the online learning experience of their students. At the moment, they offer two fully online programmes in business and law, developed in partnership with CEG. They also offer over 30 distance-blended learning programmes from their faculties of medicine and health sciences.

They have a steering group composed by senior academics from all faculties, with quarterly meetings that have been taking place continuously since 2013. They also have user groups who meet termly, with representation from academics, students, and administrators, and report to the steering group.

Their core elearning team has 11 fully dedicated members at the moment.

13.3.2.16. Newcastle University

This university has undergone a 2-year consultation period, just completed. The result is a new education strategy which still has not been publicly shared. At the moment, it is difficult to see what moves towards online/digital learning they are making.

Currently, the main online education provider in the university is the faculty of medicine, offering 6 masters degrees.

They are an early FutureLearn partner, although they only offer 6 MOOCs, and their portfolio has not been renewed for a while.

In a very recent [report to their senate](#), it can be inferred that investment in online provision is going to be limited, and conditioned. The only paragraph where online learning is mentioned reads as follows (notice the last words "where learner demand and broader strategic benefit merit this")

"Through this we will become recognised nationally as a leading university for the use of technology enhanced learning to support campus-based education, while also delivering targeted online programmes where learner demand and broader strategic benefit to the University merit this."

13.3.2.17. University of Nottingham

The University of Nottingham has got an important online learning component in their [global strategy](#). From their document, it seems that they are investing in their online portfolio with the aim of *"looking to new markets and opportunities for growth in the online environment."* In the document, they clearly state online learning is one of the main actions to *diversify their revenue*.

The university has established a [transformative teaching programme](#) in which online learning is one of the main elements. Within this programme, they offer open online courses in the form of [MOOCs with FutureLearn](#) and NOOCs (Nottingham Open Online Courses) in Moodle with a portfolio of about 10 courses.

They also have a reasonably wide [potrfolio of about 40 online distance postgraduate courses](#) (mainly Masters and PGcerts) in a wide range of areas (arts, sciences, engineering, health sciences)/.

13.3.2.18. University of Oxford

Their [published strategic plan](#) ends in 2018. This means we may want to wait for them to release their new strategic plan.

Their strategic document does not mention online distance learning programmes. All digital and online references are directed towards two objectives: enhance the learning experience of their own students, and enhance their online presence.

However, it is worth noting their institute of continuing education lists 183 online courses, 37 of which are CPD courses. CATS can be obtained in all of them. Also, all these are short courses of up to 8 weeks.

They have recently partnered with EdX to offer MOOCs. For the moment they offer only one, and it is difficult to find information on whether this portfolio will grow in the short term.

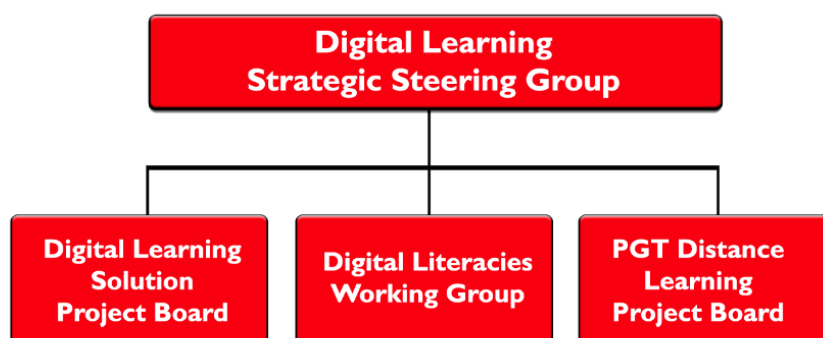
13.3.2.19. Queen's University Belfast

The Queen's University of Belfast [education strategy document](#) reveals a solid commitment to digital education, and online distance education, although blended learning is not mentioned in their document.

Their educational strategy has seven pillars, and the two last ones -Innovative and Flexible Delivery; Innovation in Postgraduate Taught Education- are supported by digital and online learning solutions. They aim to embed digital learning, assessment, support and training across all taught programmes by 2020-21. Last year (2016-17) they piloted postgraduate distance learning programmes. They have embedded a digital literacy programme for both staff and students, to support effective use of technologies

It is interesting to see how their [paced implementation of the digital strategy programme](#), starting with focus groups across the board, starting with a digital literacy audit with Helen Beetham from JISC, adopting the JISC digital literacies framework, selecting Canvas as their new VLE in 2017, and running a large series of workshops across the board.

In terms of [governance](#), they have a steering group divided in three sections:



The university offers around 30 online distance paid courses in Canvas, although it is still difficult to see whether they offer full online degrees.

They are another [FutureLearn partner, offering 6 MOOCs](#) at the moment.

13.3.2.20. UCL

UCL is another university that takes online learning seriously, judging from their [educational strategy document](#). The document contains numerous references to online, blended, and distance learnings all over it. Within their 9 general objectives, there are four that contain an important online element:

- ‘1) *To move towards personalised student support, from first contact to graduation and beyond*’ This includes the creation of an online programme for all prospective students to introduce them to the university.
- ‘6) *To develop a teaching estate that is fit for purpose*’ which includes the aim to ‘*extend and enrich the classroom experience to online learners through virtual classrooms, ‘flipping’ methodologies and tools and streaming.*’
- ‘7) *To establish a digital learning infrastructure that connects students with each other, with staff, with research and with the wider world*’. This strategic objective includes the provision of professional development to teachers who want to develop their online pedagogy.
- 9) ‘*To extend our global reach, reputation and impact from Life Learning through an extensive portfolio of short courses and CPD for personal and professional development*’ These short courses and CPD programmes involved a great deal of online learning. For this, they have developed their UCLeXtend online learning platform, a Moodle powered platform where they host most of their online courses.

In their strategic document, Blended Learning can also be noticed as an important element in their strategy. They are determined to 2034 and want to ‘*establish UCL as a blended campus in which technology supports authentic, creative and collaborative learning,*’

It is not easy to find a list of online programmes in the UCL, but a quick look in their programmes list is enough to appreciate that they have online versions for a great deal of them. A search in findamasters.com returns [36 different masters programmes](#) taught online.

They also have policy documents thoroughly developed such as [elearning baseline](#), in which they provide comprehensive guidelines for both purely online programmes, and programmes with an online element. The institution has a large department to support online learning, a Masters degree specialised in online education, and internationally reputed academics in the field of online learning, such as Diana Laurillard, chair in Learning with Digital Technologies.

UCL are also a FutureLearn partner, with a portfolio of 5 MOOCs so far, although they have partnered with the University of Leeds to provide a series of courses about online and blended learning, which have become highly popular. These courses were funded in a

specific way - project funding which soon runs out. Prof Laurillard advised (KB) that they may not continue.

13.3.2.21. University of Sheffield

Sheffield is another university placing a serious bet for online and blended learning. As reflected in their [educational strategy document](#), the top principle in their vision is 'flexibility'. Within the flexibility section, the following statement is written:

"We will continue to explore a variety of new and different ways of delivering our programmes building on our prior experience including online, blended and flipped learning. Whilst recognising that face-to-face provision remains our primary educational approach, it is anticipated that there are still further evolutions for how we view and prioritise development of our online and on campus provision..."

This unusual emphasis on online learning in a strategic document is accompanied by an unusual mention to MOOCs, and the difference they have made in the university:
"innovations such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) have changed how we think about the potential for interacting with our students."

There is evidence that supports the statements in their strategy document regarding online learning. They have an [online learning site](#) in which they list over 30 taught postgraduate distance online courses, most of them Masters degrees, and the possibility to undertake PhDs fully online. In that site they also list a MOOC portfolio of 14 open online courses. They have also a great deal of material in iTunesU

The university has a reasonably sized team exclusively dedicated to online learning, with seven members, and also quite a big TEL team, with 9 members.

13.6.1. Non-Russell Group strategies

This section contains a non-exhaustive survey of universities who are not in the Russell Group, but who are implementing blended learning strategies of different kinds.

13.6.1.1. Coventry University

Coventry University has made an ambitious investment in online learning provision. In June 2016 they released to the press their plan to develop over 50 online degrees in the next 5 years. Their plan was echoed in several media such as [THE](#).

Coventry merits attention because it is the first UK university to [partner with FutureLearn](#) to offer credit bearing degrees (most of them postgraduate).

They have a whole department called Coventry Online Studio where they develop their online courses. FutureLearn has also appointed fully dedicated staff to support this venture. There is no publicly available documentation about this.

Their online programme seems to have certain financial independence, as they have created a subsidiary company called Coventry Online Limited, (see their annual [report with financial statements](#)) owned by the Coventry University Group.

Coventry has recently been growing their reputation as an innovative university, recognised as the [‘modern university of the year’ three years in a row](#) (this year’s is Nottingham Trent, also included below). Also, their PVC for Education Ian Dunn is widely recognised for his innovative and transformative drive.

13.6.1.2. University of Northampton

University of Northampton - [Active Blended Learning](#). This strategy has been developed by and is led by Prof Alejandro Armellini. It is an all-encompassing strategy which seeks to shape a particular approach to teaching and learning throughout the whole institution.