

Frustrating or Frictionless: Diversity in Asian and European perceptions of authority in MOOCs

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Abstract:

In this talk I present our joint work by first tracing theoretical tendencies in an Asian and European ways of conceptualizing the teacher. For reasons of simplification throughout the talk, a Danish perspective is taken as exponent for a European perspective and a Thai perspective is exponent for an Asian perspective. It is not important whether those are representative for whole parts of the world, but rather our aim is to show that there are differences in practice that contradicts a convergence that is highlighted in theory and research. We show that there is a theoretical convergence on reducing the role of the teacher and thinking of the teacher a discrete human being. Secondly, we analyze our own data and show that the teacher is by no means gone by is operating as a culturally shaped authority assemblage, which gives preferential treatment to those participants who can decipher the implicit cultural code embedded in course material and interface of the MOOC. Lastly, we discuss the implications of our study for MOOCs as cultural diverse online spaces and the role of the teacher in this regard.