

MOOCs - Breaking new ground, while building on the history of online learning

Associate Professor, PhD

Lars Birch Andreassen

Aalborg University, Denmark

ASEM LLL Hub Meeting, Delhi, India, 3 Nov 2015

‘Self-Learning in a Digital Era’

The new promises of MOOCs

Education which is

- affordable
- accessible
- attracts new participants
- develops new student roles? and teacher roles?

Ideals of democratic access to education,
participative involvement of students

From the first MOOC ..

- The first Massive Open Online Course, a kind of blended learning:
 - 25 students on campus along with 2300 online students with free access to course activities
 - a course led by G. Siemens and S. Downes in 2008
 - the term "MOOC" invented by D. Cormier and B. Alexander when describing this course
- Participative pedagogy
 - Study what you want; Contribute where it suits you

.. to the next generation ..

- A course on Artificial Intelligence
 - offered freely by Stanford University in 2011
 - attracting 160,000 students
 - called *xMOOCs*, as an *extension* of the university's ordinary courses
- Instructive pedagogy
 - Read the texts; see the videos; write the assignments

.. to MOOCs today

- which can often not be defined as either a *cMOOC* or an *xMOOC*.
 - (Bayne & Ross study of MOOCs in UK)

The development of MOOCs build on a history

- The vision of the internet:
 - ‘information wanna be free’
- Shifts between open and democratic movements vs. commercial movements
 - development of internet and online communities, and in education, a promise of access and participation
 - internet as a static display of webpages, empty LMS’s
 - blogs and web 2.0, users could contribute
 - user-driven content is not just free

“Now everything will be completely different”

"I believe that *n n n* is destined to revolutionize our educational system and that in a few short years it will supplant largely, if not entirely, the use of textbooks. I should say that on the average we get about two percent efficiency out of schoolbooks as they are written today.

The education of the future, as I see it, will be conducted through the medium of *n n n* ... where it should be possible to obtain one hundred percent efficiency.”

Thomas Edison, 1922, on *the motion picture*.

Another history: Online education

- Established in separate departments
- Viewed as second-rate?
- Integrated in 'ordinary' education
- New approaches developed

The hype about MOOCs ..

.. the high expectations will probably not be met.

- But MOOCs have changed the questions:
 - Now educational planners have to ask “Why not ..?”
“.. offer this course free and for everyone interested?”
- And MOOCs have made some changes to our understanding of teacher roles and student roles

New roles

- Teachers
 - make different learning paths available
 - which is more than just video lectures and quizzes
- Students
 - voluntary and self-driven approach
 - find individual way through the number of resources
 - find networks and collaboration partners
 - which is more than just 'do your homework'

Thank you 😊

lba@learning.aau.dk