EXTENDING MOOC CAPABILITIES WITH DEDICATED NETWORKS: THE E-PORTFOLIO TRAINING CASE

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This paper presents new ways of expanding learning scenarios by means of an extended MOOC that differentiates from traditional ones in several ways. Firstly, it is the result of a coordinated effort of organizations, including three different universities. Secondly, it is inserted in a European project broader action of fostering e-portfolio adoption through the creation of a European network of experts, researchers and users. Thirdly, it makes use of innovative scaling up pedagogies for crowd learning, focusing on scaffold and self-regulated learning together with the implementation of the latest notions of social learning. Finally, it pretends to act as a synergy element of the network, both providing and nourishing from each other.

MOOCs variants, the search for novel forms of open education

Even if the MOOC movement recognizes a foundational moment in Siemens Connectivism and Connective Knowledge open course in 2008, it is widely known that AI-Stanford like courses (or xMOOC) has gained worldwide attention and impact. xMOOC are usually criticized as traditional ways of conceiving education packaged in new forms. But MOOC response seems to show capacity of adaptability. MOOCs' variants are starting to offer original solutions blurring boundaries between formal and new forms of education and blending open education with the traditional educational offer. Exploration of new formulas illustrate the case: embedding MOOC using a higher education blended approach or adopting a flipped classroom approach where MOOC video lectures, exercises and quizzes supplement secondary school courses. The Haggard, Brown, Mills, et al. (2013) report shows diversity in the intentions of enrolled people to MOOCs. The statistical analysis of the participants' behaviour let identified four distinctive profiles: auditing, sampling, disengaging and completing. Many participants in MOOC declare to enrol for specific (bits) units or parts of a MOOC. They do not all have the intention to complete the course or they do not sign for recognition, but instead they declare to be interested in concrete competence development or being curious about specific knowledge.

Exploring transformative ways of educational provision

The European EPNET (http://www.eportfolio.eu) project aims at fostering e-portfolio practices for different actors from an integrative approach. We focus on the intersection between learning and professional stages of an individual trajectory, and we situate the e-portfolio as an asset useful to different stakeholders as broad as teachers, employers, governmental administrators and professional bodies. The project plans the provision of a MOOC-inspired open set of modules for self-regulated learning. Our proposal stands on seven independent modules aiming at providing conceptual and instrumental knowledge for the creation of an e-portfolio strategy and prototype solution, regarding individual or institutional objectives. Modules are organized around activities linking theory and practice. Conceptual content is presented in rich media formats using a variety of sources including videos, online presentations, interactive content, and readings. Each activity is provided with illustrative examples showcasing diverse situations and cases of e-portfolio use. We follow principles of scaffold learning applied to online learning by means of supporting instruments. Most of the activities are accompanied with templates and guidelines. To support the sense of ownership the participant is encouraged to set its personal goals and decide on the number of modules to take and the pace for doing so.

The modules will be delivered in first place as a MOOC within the EMMA platform, a development of the homonym European project (http://www.europeanmoocs.eu). This MOOC is part of a greater effort within the EPNET project which has established a network of interested people and that interacts through the Europortofolio portal (europortfolio.eu) and a set of local chapters. We envision providing an environment that connects the learning space (MOOC) with the Europortfolio network. This environment will support lasting debate spaces, open folders for participant-productions' sharing, and functionalities for easing social interaction: RSS feeds notifying content addition, notifications of new messages to interest-focused groups, list of contacts with associated digital profiles. Once a person enrols and registers to this interrelated environment, it may benefit from previous participants contributions, and in turn contribute to the growing of the community and the publishing of its own productions and ideas.