The Sparks and Spooks of SPOCs and MOOCs

Guidebook

Alona Chmilewsky teaches emerging trends in Technology Enhanced Learning

Hello Curious Minds,

Welcome to Sparks and Spooks of SPOCs and MOOCs! This course takes you on a journey to discover the nuts and bolts, the myths and truths, and ultimately, the sparks and spooks of SPOCs and MOOCs models in the context of Technology Enhanced Learning. Steadily, the course walks you through a conversation about SPOCs and MOOCs to help you form your own opinion about what matters and what doesn't when it comes to teaching and learning with online technologies including but not limited to the topics about:

- *emerging trends in the context of Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL)*
- *contemporary theories that inform online learning models*
- *an ongoing conversation about the phenomena of SPOCs and MOOCs*
- *the best providers of MOOCs and SPOCs*
- *course design for MOOCs and SPOCs*
- *video lectures for MOOCs and SPOCs*
- *copyright licensing (Creative Commons)*

This guidebook is created as a supplement to the course to help you with your learning. It includes the lecture scripts for all videos, as well as references, tasks and recommended reading.

Bon Voyage!

MEET YOUR NEW INSTRUCTOR:

Alona Chmilewsky

"Three words that define my purpose are Uplift, Seek and Expand, or USE for short. USE knowledge to become a better human", is the way Alona Chmilewsky describes her life philosophy and professional mission. USE is an acronym that she also used to coin her innovative pedagogy (i.e., USE pedagogy) which is grounded in Alona's theory of Humanization of Online Learning developed as part of her PhD research at the University of Cambridge, UK. Currently, Alona is a lecturer in (English) Academic and Business Communication at Hanken School of Economics, Finland. For the past 10 years, Alona has been actively involved in development, production and promotion of Open Educational Practices. In 2011, Alona's Open Educational Practice was listed in UNESCO's "Best Open Educational Practice". In 2012, Alona represented Finland on behalf of Aalto University at UNESCO's OER World Congress. Her other engagements include cooperation with INTED Scientific Advisory Board, involvement with League of European Research Universities on Open Access, and collaboration with international community of the UNESCO in OER and OEP.

Session 1. The Sparks and Spooks of SPOCs and MOOCs: Course Introduction

VIDEO SCRIPT:

Welcome to Oxford and the course! Behind me is a Bodleian library, or simply "the Bod" - one of the oldest libraries in Europe that boasts over 13 million printed items. Although it has been around since the seventeenth century, many of us will recognize it as the Hogwarts Library from the Harry Potter Movie. I could not possibly find a better place to for us to set off on our journey to explore the phenomena of MOOCs and SPOCs!

The world famous contemporary visionary Sadhguru once said that "Essentially education is basically about enlarging the horizons of human perception". I am Alona Chmilewsky, and in this video I introduce the course that aims to expand our understanding of the emerging trends in the context of technology enhanced learning such as Massive Open Online Courses known as MOOCs and Small Private Online Courses known as SPOCs.

This course is designed as a Small Private Online Course to serve as an example of this emerging concept. Conceptually, it resembles a learning journey that unfolds through places and events to tell about affordances and challenges of SPOCs and MOOCs including, but not limited to the conversation about:

- evolution of the MOOCs and SPOCs concepts
- theories and practices of SPOCs and MOOCs, as well as
- copyrights and Creative Commons Licensing

And since this course is entitled The Sparks and Spooks of SPOCs and MOOCs I could not resist adding a bit of a magic spark to it by launching it from the place that is very much associated with both learning and magic.

Session 2. The emerging trends in the context of Technology Enhanced Learning

Key points:

- trends that shape contemporary education
- challenges of the new millennium
- origins and promises of OER movement

VIDEO SCRIPT:

The building behind me is a Technology Academy of Finland which is situated in Espoo - a high-tech city and the research centre of Finland. It is here, back in 2012, a Swedish speaking Finn, Linus Torvalds was honoured with the Millennium Technology Prize in recognition of his creation of Linux, a famous open source operating system. Linux made an impact on many areas of human endeavour including technology and education. And it is of no coincidence that we begin our conversation about the emerging trends in the context of the Technology Enhanced Learning from this very place.

Within the last two decades, we have witnessed a remarkable transformation in the ways we connect, trade and communicate. It is evident that the world is now interacting more than ever in history and we are embracing the culture of active participation, cocreation and collaboration enabled by the Internet technologies. In this fluid, rapidly changing environment, learning has become vital for professional and personal success which can only be achieved with high quality education. Therefore, Finnish Ministry of Education emphasizes the need to redesign learning environments to incorporate technological innovations that could widen access to and improve the quality of education (Finish Ministry of Education, 2017).

One way to address the need is to turn to the lessons learnt from the Open Educational Resources movement that draws on the contemporary open philanthropy that views knowledge as public good and promotes transparency, sharing and collaboration on a global scale. The essence of Open Educational Resources movement can perhaps be best described in the words of Albert Einstein, “If I give you a penny, you will be one penny richer and I’ll be one penny poorer. But if I give you an idea, you will have a new idea, but I shall still have it, too.”

In its simplest form, the concept of Open Educational Resources (OER) describes any type of educational materials in public domain or released with an open license that can be legally and freely used, copied, adapted, and redistributed (UNESCO, 2012). More specifically, Open Educational Resources include:

• Online learning content, for example full courses, course modules, video lectures, online library collections, e-books, and similar;
• Online tools including software to support development, use, reuse and delivery of learning content;
• Implementation resources including intellectual property licenses to promote open publishing of materials (OECD, 2007).

The Open Educational Resources movement prompted the most recent phenomena in the field of Technology Enhanced Learning known as Open Educational Practices, namely Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and Small Private Online Courses (SPOCs). The term MOOC was coined by Stephen Downes and George Siemens in 2008. The first MOOC was developed by the professors from Stanford University and released in 2011. Since then, the world of technology enhanced learning has never been the same. The MOOCs and their shy cousins SPOCs are growing in number every day. It is evident that MOOCs and SPOCS are here to change and perhaps challenge the ways we teach using technology to provide high quality educational opportunities. Thank you for listening and see you soon.

References:

Finnish Ministry of Education. Education and Learning, Knowledge, Science and Technology for the Benefit of People. Proposal for Finland dd. 24.10.2017. Retrieved from https://minedu.fi/documents/1410845/4177242/Proposal+for+Finland.pdf/08a7cc61-3e66-4c60-af75-d44d1877787d/Proposal+for+Finland.pdf.pdf

OECD (2007). Giving Knowledge for free. The Emergence of Open Educational Resources. Paris, 3-140. Retrieved from http://213.253.134.43/oecd)pfds/browseit/9607041E.PDF

UNESCO (2012). 2012 Paris OER Declaration. World Open Educational Resources (OER) Congress, UNESCO, Paris, June 20-22. Retrieved from http://www.unesco.org/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/Events/Paris%20OER%20Declaration_01.pdf

TASK:

In your notes/learning journal answer the following questions:

- What was the most/the least helpful online tool you have ever used for your learning/teaching? Why do you consider it helpful/useless?

Session 3. Open Educational Practices: SPOCs and MOOCs

Key points:

- Open Educational Practices
- MOOCs and SPOCs defined

VIDEO SCRIPT:

I am now standing at the doorstep of UNESCO headquarters in Paris. It is in the walls of this institution many ideas were born that inspired what we know today as MOOCs and SPOCs. Perhaps, the most notable event happened in 2012 known as the World Open Educational Resources Congress. This Congress culminated with the adoption of Open Educational Resources Declaration that called the governments of the world to support and mainstream Open Educational Resources and Open Educational Practices around the world.

Open educational practices or (OEP) denote "practices around the creation, use, and management of open educational resources" (OPAL, 2011, p. 4). More specifically, OEPs describe processes, pedagogies, technologies that support teaching, learning and research (Beetham, H., Falconer, I., McGill, L. and Littlejohn, A., 2012), namely:

- production, management, use, reuse of open educational resources
- development and application of open/public pedagogies in teaching practice
- access to open learning opportunities
- practices of open scholarship such as open access publication, open science and open research
- practices of open sharing of teaching ideas and know-how use of open technologies in an educational context

That being said, it is possible to argue that Massive Open Online Courses or MOOCs and Small Private Online Courses or SPOCs are open educational practices that are characterized by open access, video-based teaching content, and flexible learning paths. More specifically, the term MOOCs describes an open-access online course that allows unlimited, or in other words "massive" participation. These courses are often offered free of charge. However, recently, a small fee can apply, for example, to cover certification. MOOCs design encourages as much independent learning as possible and relies on networking with like-minded peers.

In the literature, two MOOCs models are described: cMOOCs and xMOOCs. The cMOOCs stand for the connectivist MOOCs meaning that they are developed and delivered through open-source web platforms and rely on social learning and interaction. The xMOOCs mean content-based MOOCs that are structured in a conventional way and

delivered through certain learning management platforms, such as, for example, Coursera.

The term Small Private Online Course (SPOC), coined in 2013, describes a specially tailored version of a MOOC that allows limited participation. The Small Private Online Course can be both offered free of charge and for a fee. Unlike MOOCs, SPOCs are mostly delivered through institutional course platforms such as the MOODLE, for example. Therefore, they are often open only to the students enrolled with the institution. Thanks to the limited audience, SPOCs presume more teacher-student interaction.

Both MOOCs and SPOCs models offer possibilities for re-thinking the ways of teaching with technology. One great affordance of MOOCs and SPOCs is that it is possible to use them in traditional, blended and online classrooms. For example, the video lectures from MOOCs and SPOCs can be used in traditional classrooms to free teachers from routine lecturing. This way, the teachers can get more time for face-to-face consultations and personalized feedback. Another possibility is to teach theoretical parts of the course online using SPOC or MOOC content and practical parts in class. This way, the teacher may allocate more time to the practical assignments and consultations. With time and place flexibility, MOOCs and SPOCs offer many opportunities for experimenting with both technology and pedagogy. As the famous saying goes “sky is the limit”. Thank you for listening and see you soon!

References:

OPAL (2011). Report. Beyond OER: Shifting Focus to Open Educational Practices.

Beetham, H., Falconer, I., McGill, L. and Littlejohn, A. (2012). Open practices: briefing paper, JISC.

TASK:

In your notes/learning journal answer the following questions:

- Can we consider any MOOC/SPOC an open educational practice? Why?
- How can we use MOOCs and SPOCs in learning /teaching?

Session 3. MOOCs and SPOCs: "To Be or Not to Be"

Key points:

- Myths and truths about MOOCs and SPOCs
- Challenges and successes of MOOCs and SPOCs

VIDEO SCRIPT:

This beautiful cottage in Stratford-upon-Avon is believed to be the birthplace of the great English poet and playwright – William Shakespeare. His works are translated in more than 100 languages and remain highly topical regardless time, culture and historical perspective. Take for example, Hamlet and his famous line," To be or not to be, that is the question" which to me represents the complexity of questioning reality. Since our topic today is about questioning the phenomena of MOOCs and SPOCs, I find it particularly relevant to start this conversation from here with another famous quote by Shakespeare," There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so".

Within the past decade, open educational practices such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and Small Private Online Courses (SPOCs), transformed the very landscape of educational opportunities. In 2001, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology made its entire curriculum visible to public through an initiative called MIT Open Courseware. In the years to follow, the initiative has been adopted by many leading universities, to mention but a few such as Yale, Harvard, Sorbonne, and Stanford.

In Finland, MOOC and SPOC movement is also gathering pace. In 2011, the Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences launched an institutional Open Courseware (OCW) platform and joined the Open Education Consortium, a worldwide platform that hosts MOOCs from around the world. The same year, the University of Helsinki began implementing a policy of open access to scientific publications and launched a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) in programming. Recently, Aalto University launched My Courses platform that hosts institutional online courses including MOOCs.

Although the number of MOOCS and SPOCs are soaring there is still some scepticism regarding the value of MOOCs and SPOCs to benefit learning and teaching. Therefore, it is important to get a glimpse of the ongoing conversation about challenges and benefits of open educational practices or in other words, sparks and spooks of SPOCs and MOOCs.

In the early days of MOOCs, higher education institutions were mostly concerned with the effect MOOCs might have on their practices structurally, financially and technologically. One of the myths of the time was that universities would use MOOCs to lower costs by firing faculty. As time passed and many lessons were learnt, it became evident that MOOCs are here not to destroy faculty but to strengthen it. Nowadays, most universities use MOOCs to showcase their best teaching practices to attract attention to both their institutions and faculty. After all, it is faculty that plays crucial role in creating and delivering educational content.

Another myth is that MOOCs offer less educational quality. This myth was born out of the high retention statistics as many learners fail to stay with the course to the end. However, it is possible to argue that learners drop the courses for many reasons and not necessarily because the MOOC offers less educational quality.

Lately, the conversation switched towards the challenges and benefits of creating and delivering MOOCs and SPOCs. It is generally acknowledged that designing and running a SPOC or MOOC requires a considerable effort including but not limited to writing scripts, speaking to camera, selecting and building course content, using online tools, managing content management platform and social interaction. However, at the same time, it can be both an interesting and rewarding experience for both the teacher and learners. After all, we are living in the exciting times when technology can help us to make the educational process more flexible and engaging, as well as open and transparent. Thank you for listening and see you soon.

References:

Fisher, Douglas H., Isbell, Charles L., Littman, Michael L. Compiled and edited by Wollowski, M., Neller, T., Boerkoel, J. (2017). Ask Me Anything About MOOCs. Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence.

Fox, A. (2013). Viewpoint. From MOOCs to SPOCs. Supplementing the classroom experience with small private online courses. Communication of the ACM. Vol. 56, No.12.

TASK:

Do the required reading and answer the following questions:

- What is your stance on MOOCs? Is it a positive or negative disruption?
- What is your stance on SPOCs? Is it a positive or negative disruption?

REQUIRED READING

Fisher, Douglas H., Isbell, Charles L., Littman, Michael L. Compiled and edited by Wollowski, M., Neller, T., Boerkoel, J. (2017). Ask Me Anything About MOOCs. Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence. URL: *https://aaai.org/ojs/index.php/aimagazine/article/view/2729/2630*

Fox, A. (2013). Viewpoint. From MOOCs to SPOCs. Supplementing the classroom experience with small private online courses. Communication of the ACM. Vol. 56, No.12. URL: https://cacm.acm.org/magazines/2013/12/169931-from-moocs-to-spocs/abstract

Session 4. MOOCs and SPOCs: theoretical background

Key points:

- From Behaviourism to Constructivism
- Connectivist theory of learning
- Dialogic learning theory

VIDEO SCRIPT:

I am standing in the grounds of Darwin College in Cambridge. The building behind me was once a home of the Darwins, one of whom, Charles Darwin, is the father of the theory of evolution. Today, Darwin College is known for its diverse master's and PhD student community as well as famous alumni who have achieved eminence in scholarship and life. As a member of Darwin College, I find it to be a perfect place to step into a conversation about the theories that enhance our understanding of SPOCs and MOOCs phenomena.

Prior to the era of Internet and World Wide Web, there were three general theories of learning that shaped our understanding about the ways we learn and teach with technology – behaviourism, cognitivism and constructivism. Behaviourists believed that learning can be stimulated by positive and negative reinforcements. Cognitivists hypothesized that process of learning in human brain is similar to the way computer processes information. More precisely, learning occurs when information is received, processed, encoded, stored and retrieved when needed.

The cognitive learning theory as well as behaviourist principles of reinforcement have guided the development of both computers assisted instruction (CAI) and instructional software (e.g. simulations, drill-practices, tutorials). Over time, computer assisted instruction attracted much criticism for several reasons. Firstly, many educators felt that learning specific content is not enough to attest the quality of learning. Secondly, "directed instruction" implied passive role of learners in relation to their learning, thus, making them less motivated to learn. Thirdly, solely computer-based learning seemed to endanger the social aspect of learning, or, in other words, ability of students to cooperate with each other. Altogether, these deficiencies triggered new pedagogical thinking and with it, a new paradigm of teaching and learning known today as constructivism.

The roots of constructivist can be traced back to the famous Socrates' teaching method commonly referred to as Socrates' dialogues. The modern vision of constructivism largely derives from the works of John Dewey, Lev Vygotsky, Jean Piaget, Jerome

Bruner, Seymour Papert and Howard Gardner. Constructivists see learning as an active mental work, not passive reception of teaching. In other words, learner is not only actively engaged but also responsible for his/her own learning.

In the context of teaching, the constructivist view of learning manifests through teaching practices that encourage active learning. In more specific terms, it means that students construct their knowledge in connection with real life (e.g., real-life problem-solving tasks) and with each other (i.e., cooperative learning) though relevant meaningful activities (e.g., project-based learning).

With the expansion of the Internet and World Wide Web, educators and learners alike realized that Internet is a perfect medium for sharing and collaboration. Many constructivist approaches seemed to integrate seamlessly with the new technological trends. Dewey's cooperative learning, Vygotsky's (1978) "zone of proximal development" and "scaffolding", Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences meshes well with the affordances of online communication technologies such as e-mail, blogs, forums, Wikis and similar. Yet, with the growing evidence from research on learning and teaching with technology, it became apparent that behaviourist, cognitive-learning and constructivist schools of thought fail to accommodate all dimensions and complexities of learning in the era of World Wide Web.

To fill the gap, George Siemens introduced Connectivism – a theory that describes how learning occurs in a digital age. In its essence, connectivism sees learning as the process of creating connections as the result of interaction and reflection. In the words of Siemens, in Connectivism "we place new knowledge in relation to other knowledge. If similarities exist or revelations occur, the element is connected to our neural structure. We connect more than we construct." (Siemens 2006, 63). For example, the pedagogical model of cMOOCs builds on connectivism and encourages knowledge building through active and open peer collaboration.

Another contemporary theory of learning that helps us understand how we can teach with MOOCs and SPOCs is dialogic learning theory. According to Professor Rupert Wegerif, in the Age of the Internet, education cannot rely on the traditional logic that there is "a single true representation of reality". What we witness is the new logic of education, which is dialogic and, I am quoting, "characterizes education as learning to learn, think and thrive in the context of working with multiple perspectives and ultimate uncertainty." This presumes that through engaging in dialogic processes with others and self-mediated by technology, learners become able to construct knowledge and develop reflective thinking.

Both connectivism and dialogic learning theory open space for new pedagogies that promote openness, transparency, collaboration and co-creation. They also urge us to

rethink how we understand learning and teaching - as an ultimate destination or a process. Thank you for listening and see you soon.

References:

Ertmer, P. A. and Newby, T. J. (1993), Behaviorism, Cognitivism, Constructivism: Comparing Critical Features from an Instructional Design Perspective. Performance Improvement Quarterly, 6: 50-72.

Gagne, R., Briggs, L. & Wager. W. (1988). Principles of instructional design. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Siemens, G. (2006). Knowing Knowledge. URL://http://www.elearnspace.org/KnowingKnowledge_LowRes.pdf

Skinner, B.F. (1968). The technology of teaching. New York: Appleton

Wegerif, R (2013). Dialogic: Education for the Internet Age. London: Routledge.

Woolfolk, A.E. (1993). Educational Psychology. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 485-486

TASK:

Do the required reading and answer the following questions:

- What points from the reading do you find interesting or disputable? Why?

REQUIRED READING

Andreasen, L. B., & Buhl, M. (2015). Understanding MOOCs Through Connectivist and Social Constructivist Approaches. Proceedings of the 14th European Conference on E-Learning Ecel-2015, 34–41. URL: http://vbn.aau.dk/files/289834345/Understanding_MOOCs_through_Connectivist_and_Social_Constructivist_Approaches.pdf

Session 6. An interview with professor Rupert Wegerif from the University of Cambridge, UK

VIDEO SCRIPT:

This session is dedicated to the dialogic learning theory. More specifically, we will learn what dialogic learning theory is and how we can use it as the means to effective learning and teaching. Please welcome a leading expert in the field, professor Rupert Wegerif from the University of Cambridge, UK.

Key points:

- Dialogic learning theory in a nutshell
- Dialogic learning theory for learning and teaching

TASK:

Watch an interview with professor Rupert Wegerif and in your notes/learning journal reflect on the following:

- How do you understand the dialogic learning theory?

The aim of this question is to make you think of your own understanding of the dialogic learning theory. Your answer should reflect your own individual thoughts and simultaneously show that you have watched and understood the interview.

- In your opinion, how can we use the dialogic learning theory to become more effective online learners/teachers?

- How do you understand the value of a dialogue for your own learning/teaching?

Reflect on your own online learning/teaching experience/s. Explain how you can benefit from this value.

Session 7. MOOCs and SPOCs: the best examples and where to find them

VIDEO SCRIPT:

Nested in the very heart of London, the National Gallery hosts an impressive art collection dating from the mid-13th century to 1900. Here, you will find the most important examples of the Western painting from Giotto to Monet that continue inspiring both contemporary artists and art admirers. And since our topic today is about the best examples of MOOC s and SPOCs, I use this opportunity to begin our conversation from this very place.

Key points:

- Coursera https://www.coursera.org/
- Udacity https://eu.udacity.com/
- edX https://www.edx.org/
- Futurelearn https://www.futurelearn.com/
- Iversity https://iversity.org/

In 2001, Massachusetts Institute of Technology or (MIT) launched a platform called Open Courseware which became the predecessor of the contemporary MOOC platforms. Eleven years later, MIT Open Course Ware inspired 280 Open Course Ware projects including the Open Education Consortium – the Global Network for Open Education. Today, MOOCs can be found on such platforms as Coursera, edX, Udacity, FutureLearn, Ivercity, CognitiveClass, and many others. In this video, we will touch only the most known MOOC platforms known for the best collections of MOOCS.

Coursera, a social entrepreneurship company founded by Stanford Professors Sebastian Thrun and Peter Norvig, is the champion among the MOOC platforms as it currently hosts more than 2000 MOOCs and has 25 million registered learners and partners with 149 universities across 29 countries. On top of this, Coursera offers the most versatile learning paths in many languages.

The competitive of Coursera is edX found as partnerships of Harvard University and MIT that boasts around 1500 MOOCs and offers courses across 16 different fields of study. One interesting fact about edX is that the edX platform is open source meaning that partner institutions can customize the platform to suit their needs.

Another platform for MOOCs is Udacity that primarily offers technology-related MOOCs. In the words of Udacity, their mission is to “bridge the gap between real world skills, relevant education and employment.” Therefore, Udacity predominantly partner with

corporations, such as Google and Amazon, which enables them to help learners step into a career rather than formal education.

Futurelearn is a MOOCs provider that entered the MOOC market in 2013. It is a private company owned by The Open University that offers MOOCs from many leading universities in the UK and internationally. To the date, Futurelearn has 144 partners from around the world including both universities and institutions such as British Council, the British Library and the British Museum.

Iversity is another European platform based in Berlin. It specializes in delivering higher education MOOCs. The platform was launched in 2013 and hosts courses from more than 40 European universities. Currently, Iversity is the only MOOC platform that offers courses with European Credit Transfer and Accumulation or ECTS-integration.

I am sure, if you visit at least one of the mentioned platforms you will surely find a course that will attract your attention and perhaps inspire you to create your own small private online course that will become a MOOC one day. Thank you for listening and see you soon.

References:

https://www.coursera.org/
https://www.edx.org/
https://eu.udacity.com/
https://www.futurelearn.com/
https://iversity.org/

TASK:

Visit one of the discussed platforms and browse through the courses. Answer the following question:

- Which course/s attracted your attention? Why?

Session 8. SPOC and MOOC Course Design

Key points:

- Chunking, chunking, chunking
- One step at a time
- Chain linking

VIDEO SCRIPT:

A world-famous Finnish architect, Alvar Aalto created the building that even in the darkest days of Finnish winter is filled with light. This is Finlandia Hall in Helsinki, an example of modern design where every small detail serves the purpose to create the sense of joy and freedom. To me, Alvar Aalto's legacy represents the importance of the detail for the overall design. This resonates with the topic of our conversation about the key principles of designing a SPOC course.

MOOCs and SPOCs have many design features in common. This is of no coincidence because the SPOCs design is very much inspired by the MOOCs. Therefore, any MOOCs can become a SPOC, and any SPOC can become a MOOC. The overall SPOC/MOOC design presumes three parts: video lectures, practical tasks and supplement material, such as articles, interviews with experts and similar.

The video lectures can exist in various formats: "talking heads", "lectures recorded in the classrooms", animations, voice over the slides – to mention but a few. There has been much debate of what is the most effective format for a SPOC/MOOC lecture. Some authors insist that "talking head" is much more effective than slides. Others claim that "talking head" should be supplemented with the slides and only than the lecture can be effective. My stand is that the choice of the format depends on many variables such as learning objectives, audience, content and context considerations as well as the available resources (time, skills, technical equipment and support). I found that any format can work equally well taken it is made and delivered properly. By this I mean, that your video lecture is clear, precise and engaging.

The practical tasks for MOOCs and SPOCs include exercise, quizzes, assignments and any other activities that aim to help learners to absorb the communicated knowledge and acquire certain skills. Once again, there is an ongoing debate of what is and what is not an effective practical task. So-called xMOOCs that rely on behaviourist and cognitivist thinking, often use" structured" or "semi-structured" tasks, such as quizzes for example and for this they are very much criticized. On the contrary, cMOOCs that rely on Connectivist thinking use open-ended tasks that imply unpredicted learning outcome which is also a point for criticism. In my view, the choice of the practical tasks depends on many considerations such as learning content, context and objectives, audience, teacher's pedagogy, and available resources.

The supplement material for MOOCs and SPOCs can include but not limited to articles, books, interviews, presentations, animations. One important affordance of MOOCs and SPOCs is that it is possible to provide as many resources as needed. According to the existing research, learners report higher level of satisfaction with a SPOC or MOOC course if the resources are versatile and available instantaneously, or in other words online.

When designing an effective SPOC or MOOC course, it is also important to consider two design features: “chunking” and “chain linking”. Chunking stands for breaking the content into meaningful digestible blocks of information. It is possible to chunk the course content from large to smaller and vice versa. For example, first, you chunk the course into modules, then modules into themes, and themes into topics.

“Chain linking” means that these blocks of information are connected in a meaningful way to create a story or, in other words, a chain of content, where each piece of information builds on or leads to another piece of information. If you chunk your information well enough you can chain and re-chain the content of your course in many ways to adjust it to the needs of your audience. You can also use the information blocks to build other courses. Think of it as if playing with Lego, where each Lego block is a piece of content, and when you bring your blocks together you can create different shapes and forms that suit your needs. Thank you for listening and see you soon.

References:

Guàrdia, Lourdes; Maina, Marcelo, & Sangrà, Albert (2013). MOOC design principles: A pedagogical approach from the learner’s perspective. *eLearning Papers* (33).

Macleod, H., Haywood,J, Woodgate,A., Alkhatnai,M., Saud, e. (2015). Emerging patterns in MOOCs: Learners, course designs and directions. University of Edinburgh. Association for Educational Communications and Technology.

TASK:

Go through the course that caught your attention on one of the platforms. Answer the following questions:

- What is the design of the course like?
- Can you find the examples of "chunking" and "chain-linking"?
- In your opinion, how much the course design supports learning?

Session 9. Video Lectures for MOOCs and SPOCs

Key points:

- Types of video lectures
- Creating a script
- Speaking to the camera

VIDEO SCRIPT:

This beautiful medieval street filled with arts and crafts shops is one of many in the old town of the capital of Estonia Tallinn which is very often referred to as the city of arts and crafts. The unique objects you may find here are manifestations of human thought and creativity. I couldn't have found a better place to start the conversation about the art and craft of making an effective and engaging online video lecture.

The success of a SPOC as well as a MOOC largely depends on the quality of the video lectures. I use the word "quality" to denote a few essential aspects such as quality of filming, speaking, and post-production. To ensure an easier video creation process, it is worth to start with thinking about the overall idea of the course and how you can deliver this idea in the best possible way. For example, if your course is highly theoretical, perhaps "the talking head" format will be the best one.

By "talking head", I mean the video lecture centred around the speaker. However, if you teach, for example, a writing skills course, it can be a very good idea to use a "voice over the slides format" which allows you to animate your slides and add your voice over them. Alternatively, you can blend the "voice over the slides" with the "talking head" and even add some animation. In a nutshell, the choice of the format will depend on your objectives and available resources such as time, skills and technical equipment.

As soon as your course is conceptually ready, it is time for writing or recording scripts. There are a few ways of making this process more efficient. One way is to use a speech to text application either on your computer or mobile phone. Nowadays, there are many free speech to text applications that allow you to dictate your lecture to the device which automatically converts your speech into text. Another way is to go through your slides or regular lecture notes and convert them into the video lecture script. The third way is to record your in-class lecture on video and then transcribe it into the video lecture script.

When composing a script, it is important to remember to avoid wordiness and boring overlong sentences. Studies show that learners are more engaged with the lecture if it is precise, crystal clear, and entertaining.

When the scripts are ready, it is time for filming. The easiest way is to use an institutional video studio, yet it is not necessary. You may choose to film in other contexts too, your office, classrooms, or home library. In fact, all you need is good light, and a proper camera with a microphone.

It should be said that speaking to the camera requires certain effort and skills, such as clear voice and articulation, avoidance or unnecessary utterings and pauses, relaxed and natural delivery. Therefore, it is important to spend some time on practicing in front of the mirror or camera. In addition, it is worth using a teleprompter when recording a lecture because it will help you to read the text while looking at the camera.

Nowadays, the teleprompters can be downloaded for free and used on tablets or laptops. If the teleprompter is not available, you can consider recording parts of the lecture separately and seam them during the post- production. Yet, be forewarned, this is not as easy as it sounds because post-production itself is a laboursome process that requires the knowledge of how to use the postproduction software such as Adobe Video Pro for instance. Other than that, making a good video lecture is a pure joy. Thank you for listening and see you soon.

References:

Chauhan, J, Goel, A. (2015). An Analysis of Video Lecture in MOOC. Department of Computer Science, University of Delhi. URL: https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/abd5/a5f3100d7604552923299257c35f53c46990.pdf

Guo, P. J., Kim, J., Rubin, R. (2014). How Video Production Affects Student Engagement: An empirical study of MOOC videos. First ACM conference on Learning@ scale conference, pp. 41-50. ACM, USA.

TASK:

Find an example of a video lecture (e.g., on YouTube) that caught your attention. Answer the following questions:

- What are the strengths of the lecture?
- What are the areas for growth?

Session 10. Licensing Content

Key points:

- Creative Commons scheme
- Creative Commons licences

VIDEO SCRIPT:

Found in the 16th century, Trinity College is the most beautiful, powerful and richest college in Cambridge. It is now a home to 900 students and over 180 Fellows. One of Trinity's graduates, Lawrence Lessig, is the co-founder of the Creative Commons, a US based non-profit organization that has released several copyright-licenses known as Creative Commons licenses which are the topic of our conversation today.

Creative Commons Licenses have been described as vehicles that help creators of the content legally share their work on the Internet. In the words of the Creative Commons, they provide "free, easy-to-use copyright licenses to make a simple and standardized way to give the public permission to share and use your creative work on certain conditions known as CC licenses. There are seven regularly used licenses to choose from:

1. CCO license means that you allow to use your content without restrictions, that is to copy, build on, remake, redistribute and make commercial profit.

2. CC BY or Creative Commons Attribution Only License implies that you allow to use your content without restrictions under condition that you and your work are given an attribution. The attribution means that you ask the potential users of your work to acknowledge your authorship by citing your name, the title of your work and the original CC license it was given when published on the Internet for the first time.

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References:

https://creativecommons.org/licenses/

TASK:

In your notes/learning journal answer the following questions:

- What CC license would you use or have already used to license your content? Why?

Session 11. Graduation Day.

VIDEO SCRIPT:

Greeting from Cambridge, the city of knowledge and science. With history spanning over 800 years, Cambridge is a home to one of the oldest and most prestigious universities in the world – the University of Cambridge. Every year, thousands of students get their academic degrees in Cambridge and set off on their journeys to become fulfilled professionals. This space, in the grounds of King's College is the place where many graduation ceremonies take place. This is why, it is associated with academic achievement and success. And this is where our journey ends and I thank you for sharing it with me.

In Education, we often use the words "learning journey" to denote a process for exploration and discovery to identify, test and shift key assumptions about the future. Throughout this course, we have been following the contemporary academic conversation about the emerging trends in the context of technology enhanced learning such as MOOCs and SPOCs and I hope this course helped us understand both the sparks and spooks of SPOCs and MOOCs. This is important as we face crucial decisions regarding the fate and future of higher education.

It is evident that MOOCs and SPOCs have many affordances including but not limited to:

- Creating new flexible, versatile and engaging learning paths for learners
- Enhancing existing pedagogies and inspiring the new ones
- Communicating educational content across the time, space and cultures
- Promoting collaboration, openness and trust in the academia and beyond

It is also evident that as the emerging phenomena MOOCs and SPOCs imply certain challenges to mention but a few such as:

- Laboursome implementation
- Need for technical expertise to manage online tools, content and environments
- Need for media expertise to create and deliver video lectures
- Readiness to step into unknown territory and out of the comfort zone

If this resonates with, why not to give it a try and see what future holds. Thank you.

Yours,
Alona Chmilewsky