



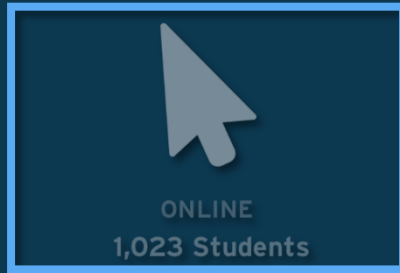
What does educators' engagement with MOOC discussions look like?

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Teaching on MOOCs is not easy!



Size (massiveness)



Diversity (openness)



Design complexities
(learning paths)



Evaluating learning
outcomes



Giving feedback



Being active participants
in the learning process



What do we know about teaching on MOOCs?

Far too little attention is given to MOOCs from a teaching perspective (Oven-Lindsey et al. 2015; Nacu et al., 2014; Fournier, Kop, and Durand, 2014)

- A systematic review of 60 articles on MOOCs (2008-2014) by Raffaghelli et al. (2015):
 - 4 out of 60 focused on teaching on MOOCs or educators
 - mainly examined educators' roles and experiences not their practices
- A more recent systematic analysis of the empirical studies published between 2013–2015 by Veletsianos and Shepherdson (2016):

Research Strand	Frequency (%) of Total Papers
Student-focused	83.6
Design-focused	46.4
Context and impact	10.9
Instructor-focused	8.2

Noticeable absence of focus on teaching and educators from emerging research on MOOCs



Where can teaching happen in MOOCs?

- Steps (learning material)
- Discussions
 - Free-flowing discussions alongside the course materials which promote “water-cooler” type conversations about the course content
 - Flat-structured format (not threaded or nested)
 - Participation scale
 - Semi-synchronous nature

The screenshot displays a MOOC interface for 'WEEK 2: PROCESSES, ACCOUNTS AND FINANCES'. At the top, there are navigation tabs: 'To do', 'Activity', 'Replies', and 'Progress'. Below these, two blue boxes represent 'WEEK 1' (ending 30 Jun) and 'WEEK 2' (starting 7 Jul). The main content area for Week 2 includes an 'About week two' section with a green 'ABOUT WEEK TWO' graphic, explaining the focus on business processes, accounts, and finances. Below this is a list of activities: '2.1 INTRODUCTION TO WEEK 2 VIDEO (01:21)', '2.2 ABOUT THIS CASE STUDY ARTICLE', '2.3 CONTROLLING OPERATIONS AND TECHNOLOGIES VIDEO (05:38)', and '2.4 SOPHIE'S BUSINESS CHALLENGE VIDEO (03:53)'. A graphic for 'ACTIVITY ONE' is also visible.



Research Questions

1. In what ways do educators contribute to MOOC discussions?
 - a. What **types** of contributions do educators make to discussions?
 - b. What is the **level** of educators' contributions?
 - c. In what ways do the level and type of educators' contributions **change over time**?
2. Whether and in what ways do learners engage with educators' contributions?
3. What outcomes do educators intend to achieve by contributing to discussions?





Research Design

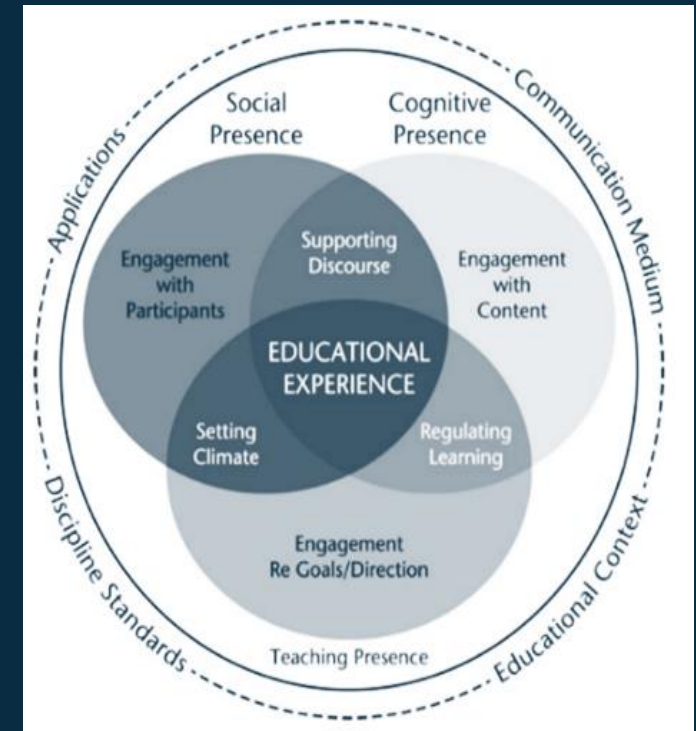
Stage 1

Examining the exchanges between educators and learners in discussions

- Type: Content analysis of exchanges based on the Community of Inquiry Framework
- Level: Number of exchanges educators contributed to
- Changes over time: variations in the type and level of educators' contributions over the course of a MOOC

Community of Inquiry framework (Col)

- Most widely adopted explanatory conceptual framework associated with online and blended education (Garrison, 2016; Joksimovic et al., 2014; Garrison and Akyol, 2013)
- Describes learning and teaching through the three interdependent elements of:
 - Cognitive Presence
 - Social Presence
 - Teaching Presence



(Garrison 2016: 58)



Community of Inquiry framework (Col)

Cognitive presence:

- the extent to which meaning is constructed through communication and collaboration
- 4 stages: triggering event, exploration, integration and resolution

Social presence:

- plays a mediating role between cognitive and teaching presences
- creates conditions for free and open communication, and allows personal relationships to be developed over time to improve group cohesion

Teaching presence:

- The backbone of Col and represents the leadership aspect of it
- 3 elements: Design and organisation, facilitating discourse and direct instruction

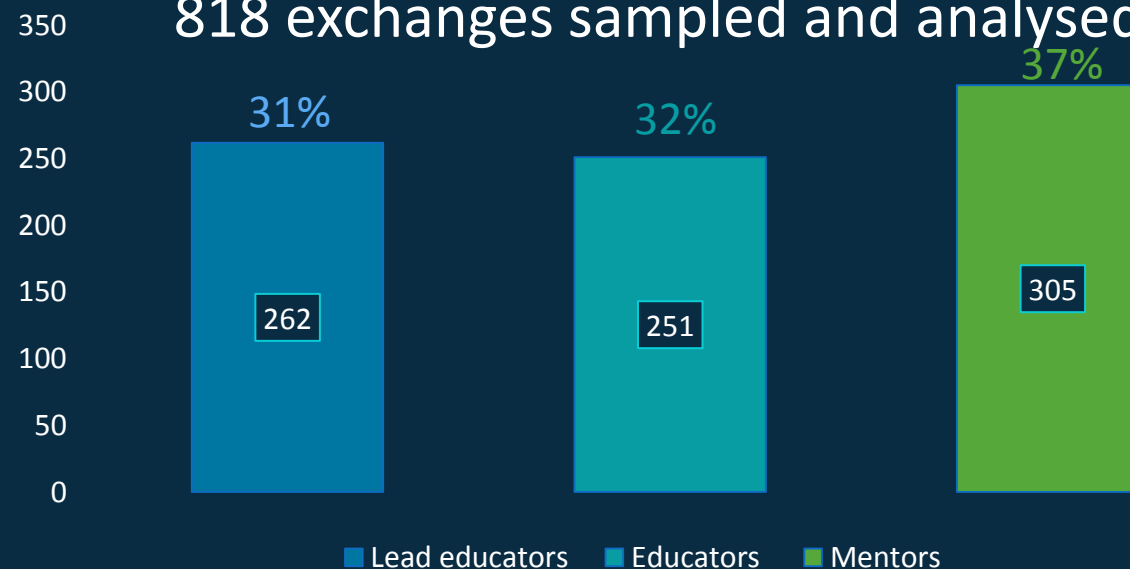


Data overview

3 MOOCs
 History (lead educator + 4 educators + 2 mentors)
 Arts (lead educator + 5 mentors)
 Business (lead educator + 3 educators + 6 mentors)

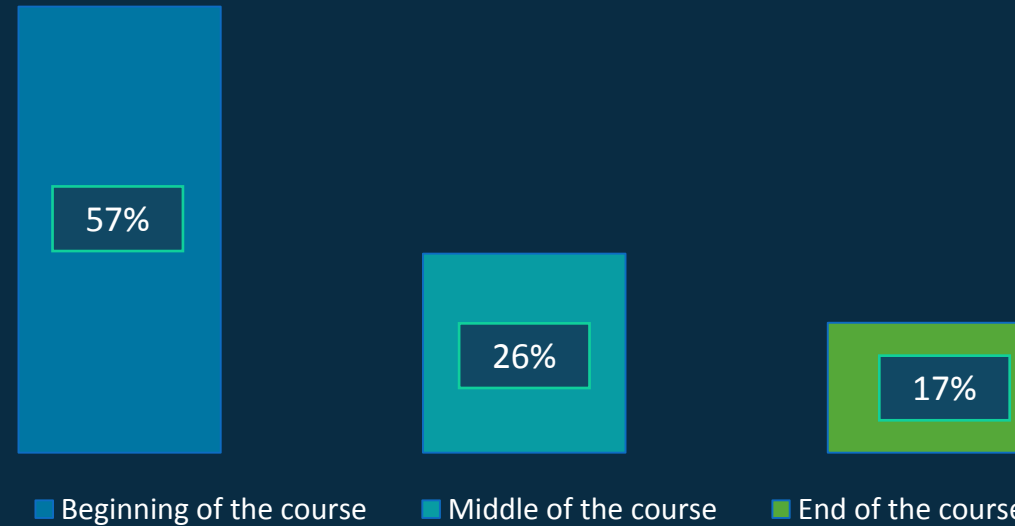


(Lead) educators and mentors engaged with 2,832 exchanges
 818 exchanges sampled and analysed





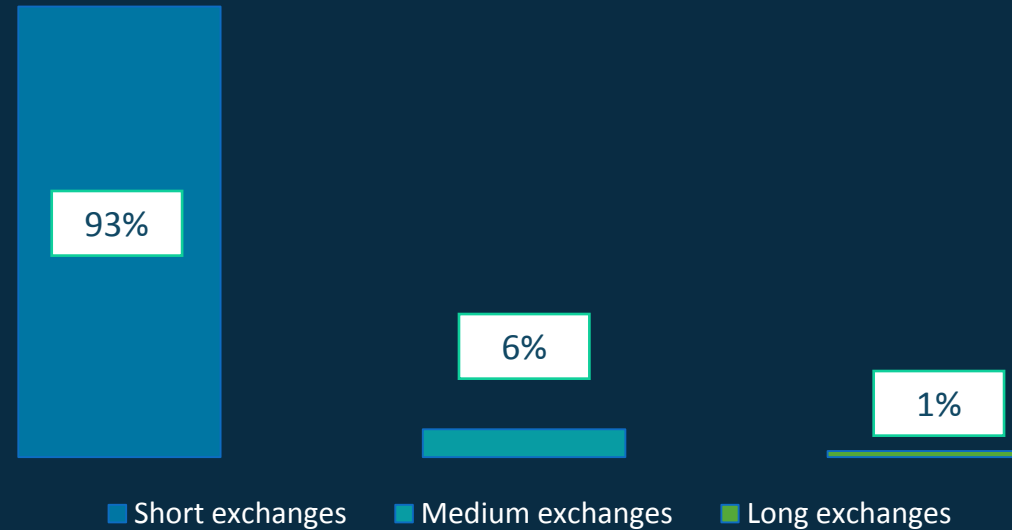
Data overview



Beginning of the course (1st third of the course)
Middle of the course (2nd third of the course)
End of the course (3rd third of the course)



Data overview



Short exchanges
Medium exchanges
Long exchanges

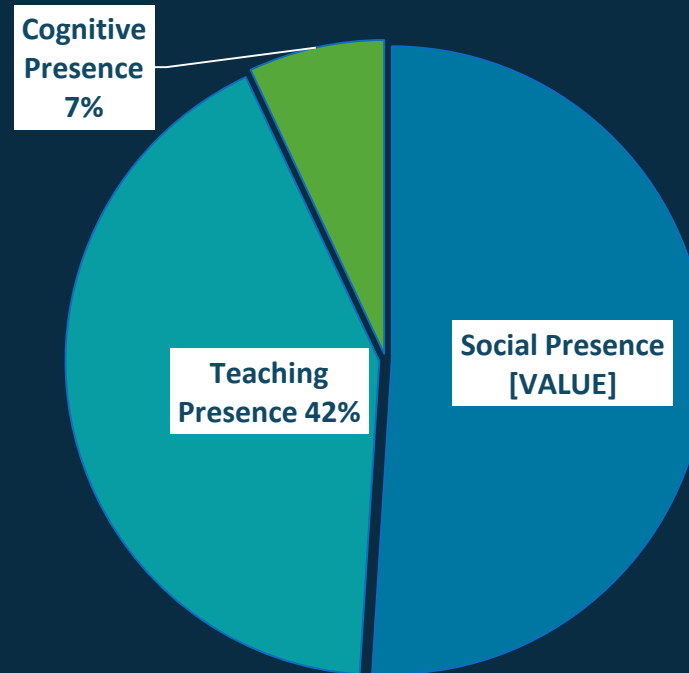
(1-5 comment exchanges)
(6-10 comment exchanges)
(11-16 comment exchanges)



Type of contributions

Teaching Presence indicators

- Seeking to reach consensus
- Encouraging or acknowledging student contributions
- Setting climate for learning
- Drawing in participants, prompting discussion
- Providing valuable analogies
- Offering useful illustrations
- Confirming understanding through explanatory feedback
- Diagnosing misconceptions
- Supplying clarifying information



Social Presence indicators

- Expressions of emotions
- Self-disclosure
- Use of humour
- Asking questions (non-task)
- Expressing (dis) agreement
- Complementing and expressing appreciation
- Phatic, salutations and greetings
- Vocatives
- Group reference

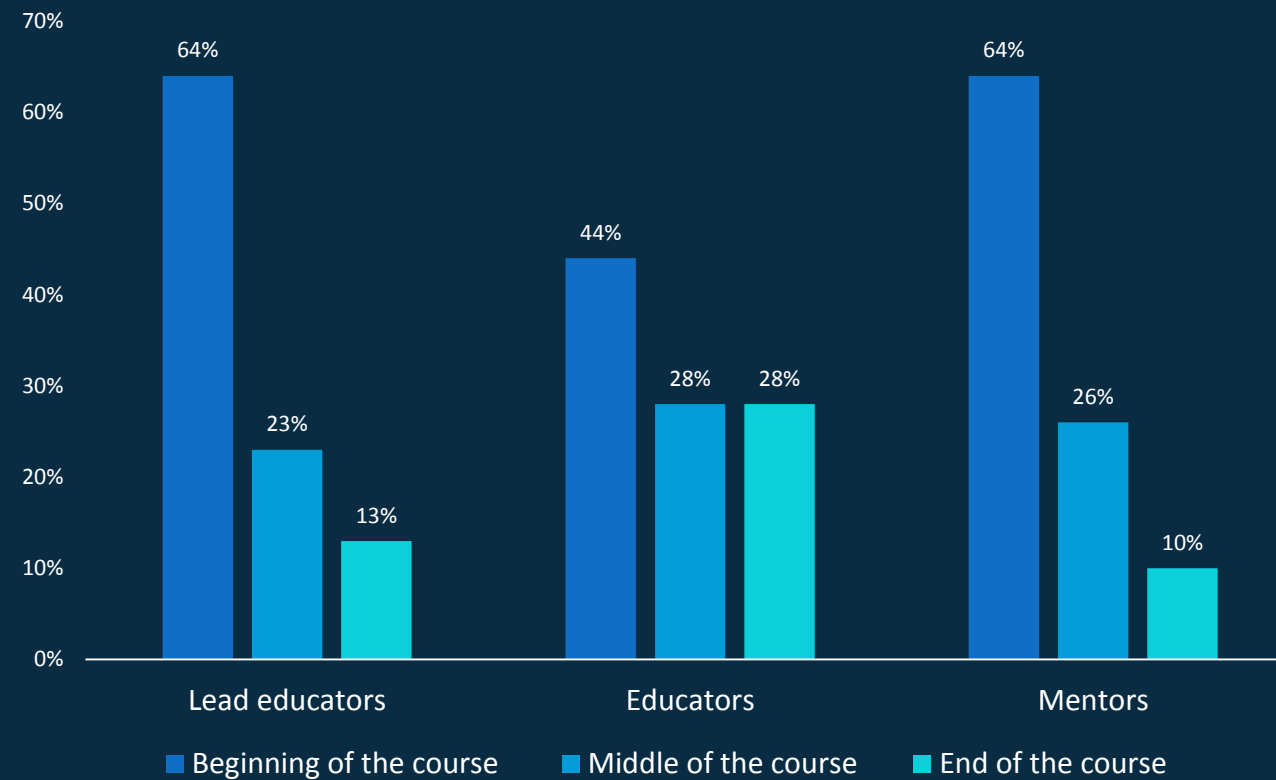


Type of contributions

	Lead Educators	Educators	Mentors
Social Presence	41%	31% ↓	54%
Teaching Presence	53%	60% ↑	40%
Cognitive Presence	6%	9% ↑	6%

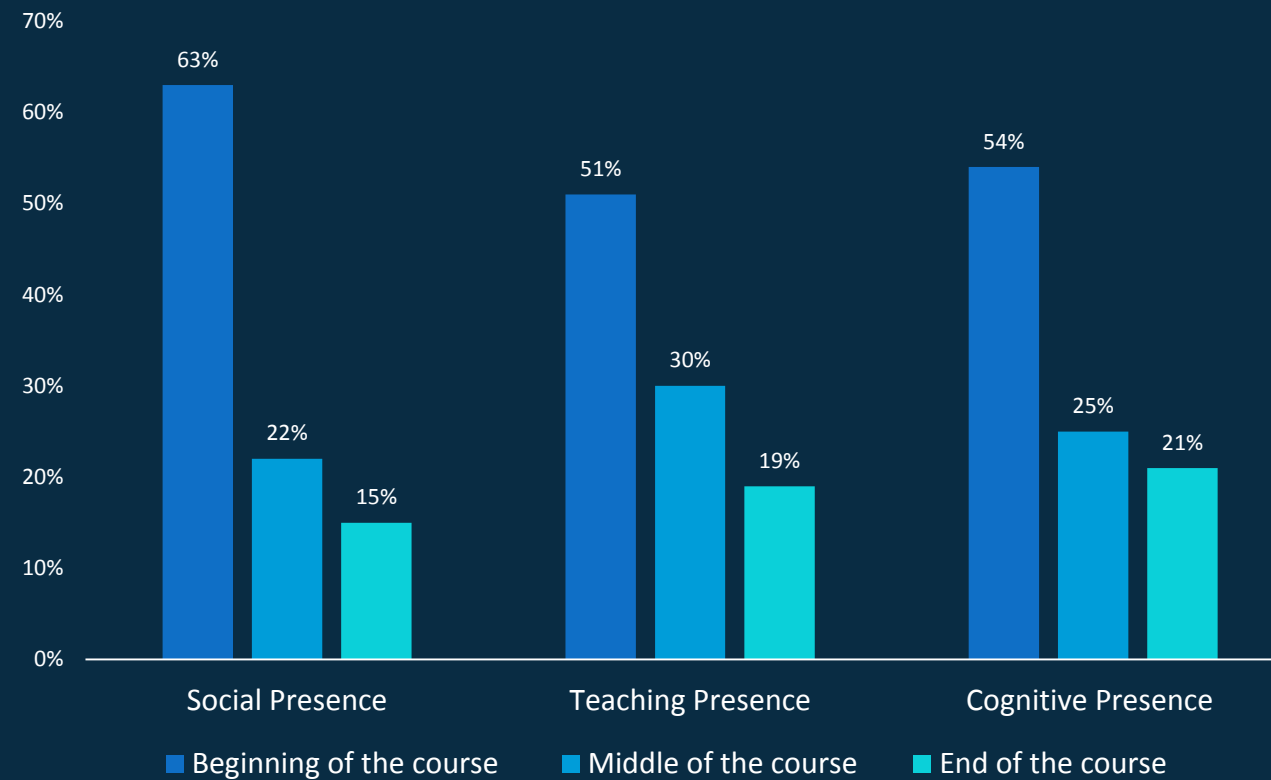


Changes over time: Level of the contributions





Changes over time: Type of the contributions





Summary

- Educators contribute most to the discussions at the beginning of MOOCs.
- They are mainly engaged in short exchanges with.
- Half of their contributions are of social nature while pedagogical contributions are their second highest type of contributions.
- As a MOOC progresses, their engagement with discussions drops.
- Among three groups of lead educators, educators and mentors, educators have the highest level of teaching and cognitive presence and the lowest level of social presence. This might be the reason that learners engage with their contributions more than mentors' and lead educators'.



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Thank you



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