Integrating MOOCs into University Modules

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Innovative education – adapting to the Networked Age

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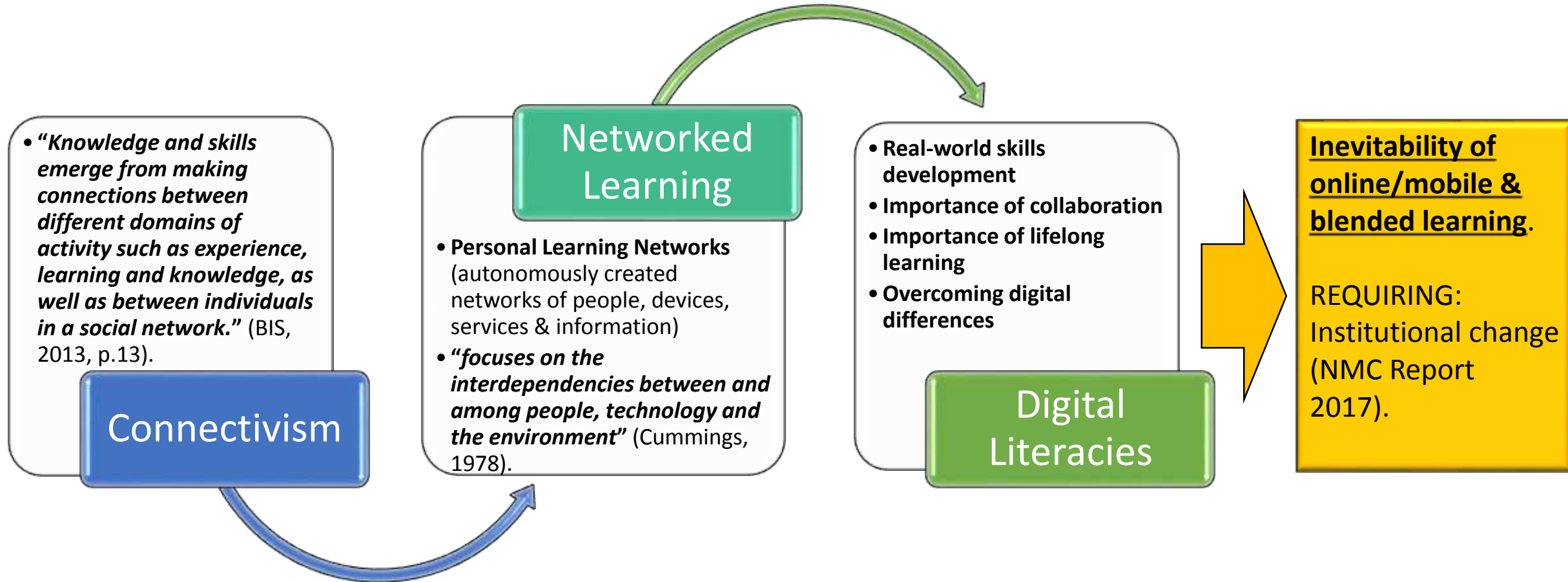
What our talk will cover

- The big picture
- The Web Science Series of Mini MOOCs at Southampton
- MOOCS into modules – the opportunities
- Our study
- MOOCs into modules – the challenges
- Next steps

The big picture

- We've moved from "*MOOCs will destroy universities*" to "*MOOCs can enhance the reach and value of university courses*"

- Forward thinking institutions see MOOCs as building blocks of flexible, networked curricula and collaborative partnerships (eg Coventry, Leeds, Deakin, UNSW)

- Reflecting on #CCK08, Siemens (2014) noted:

    "*To date, higher education has largely failed to learn the lessons of participatory culture, distributed and fragmented value systems and networked learning.*"

A Socio-technical Approach to HE Teaching & Learning

- *"Knowledge and skills emerge from making connections between different domains of activity such as experience, learning and knowledge, as well as between individuals in a social network."* (BIS, 2013, p.13).

Connectivism

Networked Learning

- **Personal Learning Networks** (autonomously created networks of people, devices, services & information)
- *"focuses on the interdependencies between and among people, technology and the environment"* (Cummings, 1978).

- **Real-world skills development**
- **Importance of collaboration**
- **Importance of lifelong learning**
- **Overcoming digital differences**

Digital Literacies

Inevitability of online/mobile & blended learning.

REQUIRING: Institutional change (NMC Report 2017).

ECAR Study of [UK] Undergraduate Students and IT, 2014

- Technology is embedded into students' lives, and students are generally inclined to use and to have favourable attitudes toward technology.

- More students than ever have experienced a digital learning environment. **The majority say they learn best with a blend of online and face-to-face work.**

- **MOOCs can provide that blended learning effectively.**

The Web Science Series of mini-MOOCs

- Web Science: how the web is changing the world

- Digital Marketing

- Power of Social Media

- Linked Data and the Semantic Web

- Learning in the Network Age

- Southampton's [Futurelearn MOOC page](#)

The Power of Social Media MOOC #FLsocialmedia

- Integrated with an existing on-campus 'Curriculum Innovation' module to encourage interaction and aid exam revision

- Students posted their group videos on YouTube and shared with MOOC learners for feedback/discussion

- Students wrote a short reflection on the additional learning achieved from their MOOC interactions

Learning in the Network Age MOOC #FLlearningnetworks
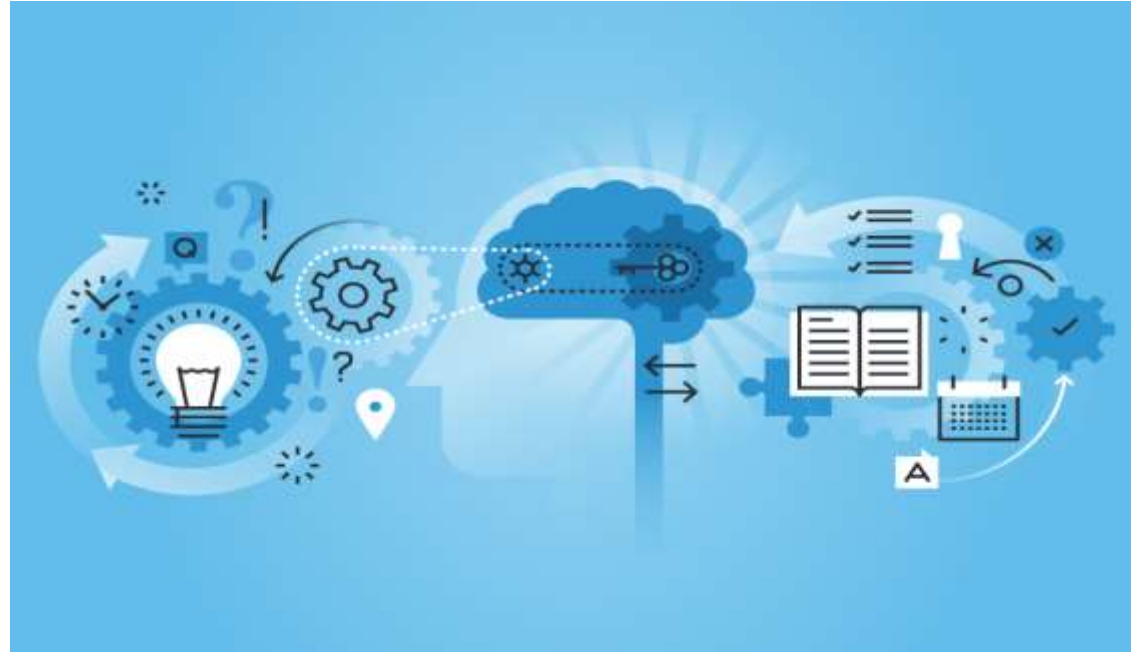
"Universities should prioritise [MOOC] courses that will be designed from the outset to address fundamental questions about teaching and learning." (Reich, 2015)

MOOCs in the classroom: opportunities

- Testing ground for educational innovation – e.g. the flipped classroom and/or blended learning
- Allows students to engage with a global community of learners
- Provides flexibility of study time/location
- Allows real time monitoring of student performance

Our study

- Two MOOCs were integrated in real time into an undergraduate module for revision purposes:

  - 46 undergraduate students were surveyed about their experience before and after the module
  - They each wrote a 500 word reflective summary of their experience
  - Exam results were compared with those of the previous two years
  - Students' standard module evaluation surveys were reviewed

Results from pre-module survey

- 53% of learners had participated in some form of online learning previously

- 64% of learners had, at best, only a vague idea about what a MOOC actually was

- 69% had never studied in a blended way
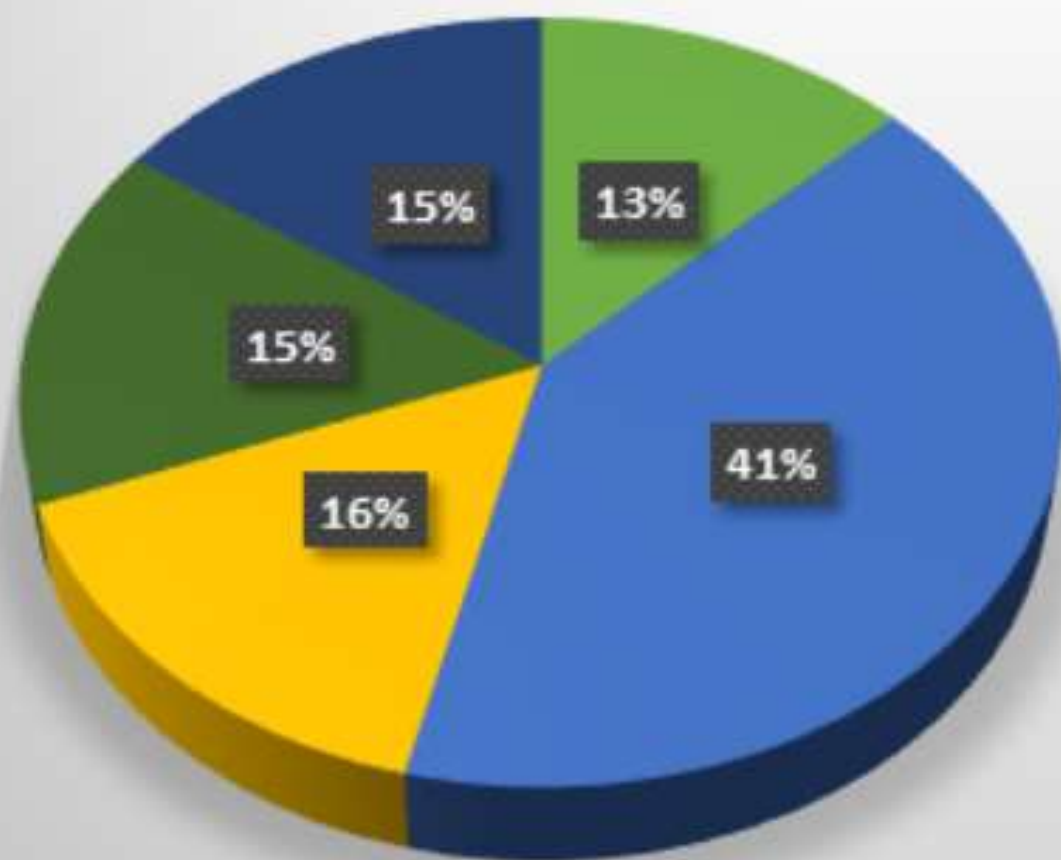
- 81% had never participated in a MOOC before

Results from pre-module survey

- Of those students who had prior experience of MOOCs:
  - 44% found them a convenient way to learn
  - 36% found them useful for revision
  - 36% said they were best combined with offline study
  - 19% learned more from MOOCs than lectures
  - 19% learned more from lectures than MOOCs
  - 3% said MOOCs were a waste of time

Online Social Media module results 2015-2017

| Exam grade bands (percent) | | |

Percent

	2015	2016	2017
0-24	0	2	2
25-39	2	2	2
40-49	9	4	2
50-59	35	33	20
60-69	43	47	52
70-79	11	11	22
AVERAGE	58	59	62

Learner comments on the value of participating in the MOOC

Sample student comments

- *"I was able to deepen my understanding in a more connected way".*
- *"The idea that learning is occurring all around me had not occurred to me before, which is why developing my PLN [Personal Learning Network] had such a profound effect on me".*
- *"The discussions surprised me with how much they furthered my knowledge. They gave insights and different perspectives that I would not have considered before".*
- *"The main benefit has been in signposting areas that I need to understand more, and having a huge community on hand to help".*
- *"By engaging with one of the learners who shared his knowledge, he gave me pointers to interesting and relevant contemporary essays – this is something that cannot be incorporated into a printed textbook".*
- *"I'm not confident asking questions in class but I got a lot of value from contributing to MOOC discussions".*

MOOCs in the classroom: challenges

- Overall the results were mixed, despite the apparently similar learner profiles

- Variable levels of digital literacies amongst students:

    "Most studies show that the MOOC experience demands skill and aptitude in online social networking, and that these baseline capabilities are not widely enough shared for MOOCs to present a realistic format for many learners" (BIS, 2014, p5)

- Prior expectations and experience of "the right way" to teach and learn can be well entrenched.

Next Steps

- Repeat intervention (November 2017) on an intensive module of approx. 40 level 2 students of BSc Marketing based in Singapore.

- The module runs online, students create content and read/comment on each other's contributions.

- This year they will additionally draw on specific sections of the LITNA MOOC as a content resource and engage with learners from around the world in real time.

References

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