How to design for transition: Beyond MOOCs

project **Minerva**

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Outline

- A few thoughts on MOOCs
- EAP MOOC and SPOCs
- 4 SPOCs = 1 NAL course
- Challenges
- Our approach to meeting (some) of them

What MOOCs do …

Bates (2012):

- Throw the learners to the wolves; only the fittest survive (Bates, 2012)

- But: successful innovation builds on the work of those who have gone before

- **So: *To what extent do MOOCs really change the nature of the game, and to what extent are they more an extension and development of what has gone before – and hence should aim to incorporate previous best practices? Or will that destroy them?***

What MOOCs do …

Downes (2012):

- MOOCs **don't change the nature of the game; they're playing an entirely different game**

- MOOCs require motivated students

- *MOOCs provide an environment where people who are more advanced reasoners, thinkers, motivators, arguers, and educators can practice their skills in a public way by interacting with each other.*

What MOOCs really do …

Tubman, Oztok, Benachour (2016):

- Confront us with unique pedagogical challenges not present in other socio-constructivist learning environments: the scale and diversity of participation

- Offer opportunities for "surface level interactions" (interaction data as indicator for depth of learning in sociocultural sense)

- *Platform features* rather than subject matter are the biggest factor for low level interactions, and surface level of learning.

- And: expectations for participation need to be clear to create opportunities for written interaction that can support conceptual changes

- Rationale: "writing composition typically demands higher order thinking process"

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- A pre-undergraduate course in **English for Academic Purposes** for learners at IELTS 5.5 aiming to study at an English-medium university

- **100 hours of study:** 1 MOOC (free) followed by 4 SPOCs (fee)

- Platform: FutureLearn

- Learning design based on the academic process, i.e. it engages students in meaningful activity through a carefully guided cycle of:

Input	Transformation	Output

Image: head4success.com

- **6 weeks of study** @ 3 - 4 hours/week
- **Theme:** water
- **Focus on four skill areas:** listening, speaking, reading and writing, plus language development and information literacy
- Skills and language are developed through **interaction** with input texts, audios, videos and the **creation** of short written output texts or short audio recordings and **engagement with peers**
- All weekly productions contribute to a longer **output at the end of the MOOC**: a short written report on water challenges facing the world

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Week 4 of MOOC

Input: language for proposing solutions

Transformation:

Listening and note making: three short videos showing solutions to water issues

Step by step building concise notes into a coherent paragraph

Output: Write paragraph and share

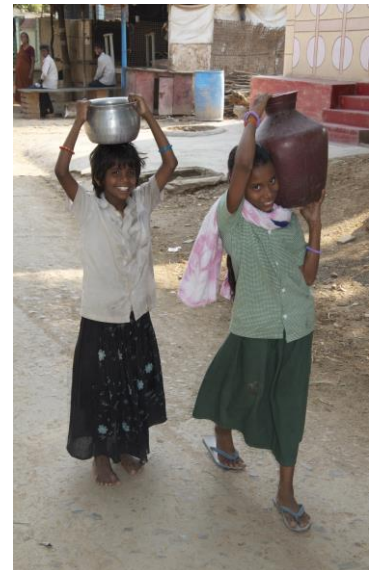**Save:** for final output in week 6: short report

Photo: Chris Longman

- **4 SPOCs** focusing on the language functions, academic vocabulary and skills development needed for a particular output (assignment)
- **Each based around a theme:**
  - arts/media,
  - design/innovation,
  - business,
  - well-being/happiness.

  www.industry.org.il

- Learners can choose to study one SPOC at a time or two together, depending on available time.
- **Fee** covers tutor input in groups and individualised feedback on a draft outputs.
- **End point** IELTS 6 to 6.5

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