

Different routes to skills development in MOOCs

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Introduction

Some thoughts about skills

Employability skills

An opportunity for OERs?

Two approaches

OU/FL MOOC on Effective Networking vs Google Digital Garage Bonus Material on Self-Promotion

How to compare?

Prospects for a study

References

Discussion

Your thoughts on refining the research question and a workable design would be welcome

INTRODUCTION

SKILLS – WHAT ARE WE TEACHING?

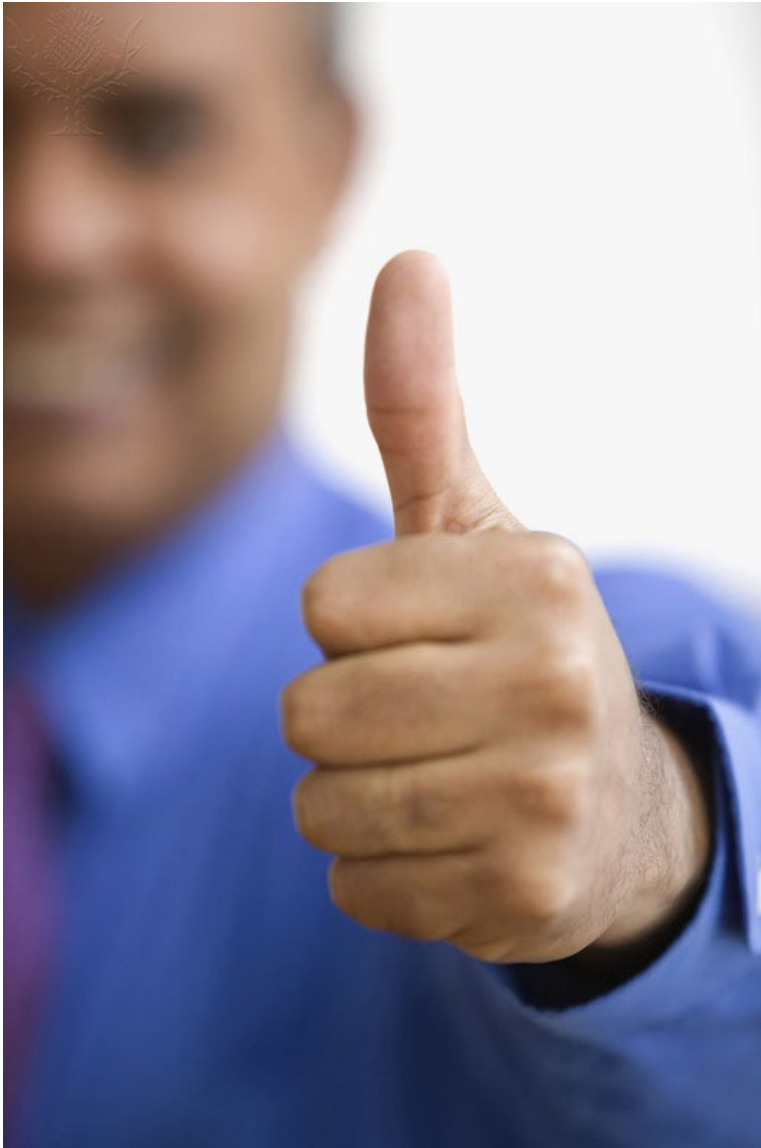
Inconsistent language and assumptions

- ‘skill’ or ‘competency’?
- hierarchy of skills within competencies?
- levels?
- what’s included? Are attitudes/values/ethics skills, or foundational prerequisites, or something else altogether?
- complex bundles
 - can we make like for like comparisons of skills development?



INTRODUCTION

SKILLS – CONSENSUS



General agreement that key skills (or competencies):

- Lead to important desired outcomes
- Are relevant to all individuals
- Can be learned
- Are widely applicable to a number of contexts

(OECD, 2013)

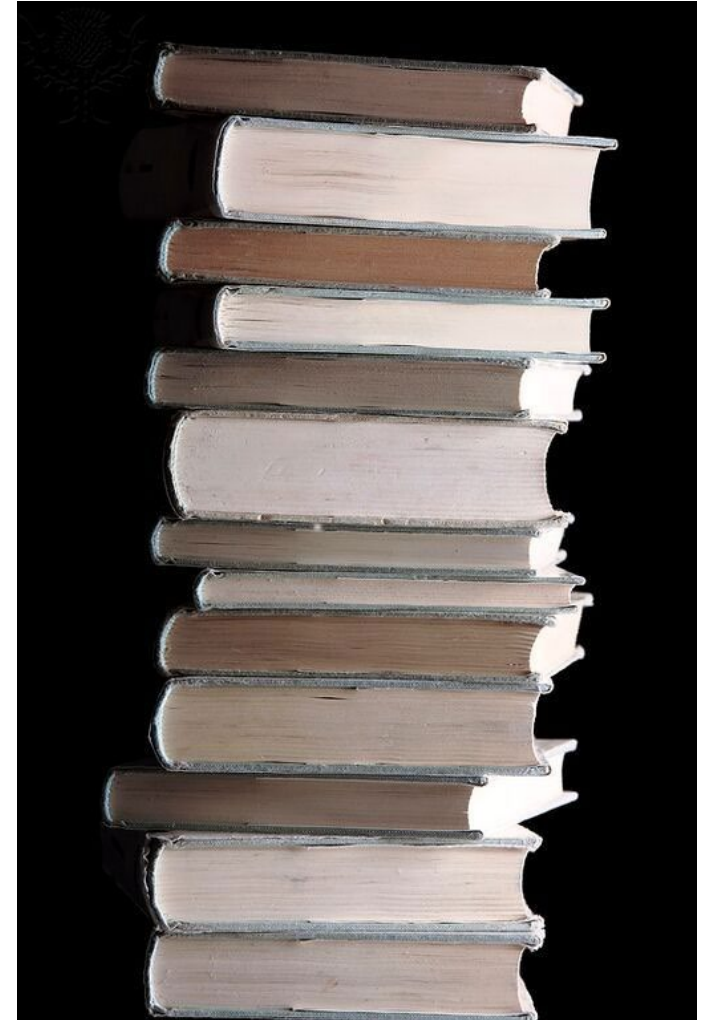
Soft skills (e.g. resilience, adaptability, communication, team work)

Hard skills (e.g. specific technical skills such as coding)

Cinque (2017) compares a number of strategies to teach creativity (a 'soft skill') in MOOCs; but cites Gamage's (2016) scepticism on MOOCs for skills development because of lack of interactivity and collaboration.

Okada, et al (2014) point to 'colearning' (collaborative open learning) in OERs and social networks as itself developing key skills in learners.

Calonge and Shah (2016) note employer expectations of MOOCs in reducing the mismatch between graduate skills and industry needs, particularly 'employability' skills.



EMPLOYABILITY

Priority skills area for OERs

81% of employers valued employability skills as the most important factor when recruiting graduates (CBI Employer Survey, 2012)

- ‘Employability’ an important motivator for 2016 launch of OU/FutureLearn Business and Finance Fundamentals program

‘Google pledges to help 1 million Europeans to find a job or grow their business by 2020 as a part of its ongoing initiative Grow with Google.’ (Google, 2018)

- Via Google Digital Garage (Certificate in Fundamentals of Digital Marketing) plus related online and face to face development and training in 28 EU states.



TWO APPROACHES

Employability skill: articulating and communicating your strengths to employers

| OU/FutureLearn MOOC | Google Digital Garage: Bonus Material |
|--|---|
| Business Fundamentals: Effective Networking | Build Confidence with Self Promotion |
| 4 week MOOC, 3 hours per week | 3 videos, 7 minutes in total |
| Part of a program aligned to OU Level 1 Business Management BA degree (including theoretical content) | Supplementary material for people registered for <i>Google Certificate in Fundamentals of Digital Marketing</i> via Google Digital Garage |
| MBA alumni and contributing experts to illustrate and explain networking issues and skills. Mentors/comments. | Credible experts and workshop participants. Individual self-study. |
| Discussion, downloads and peer review steps to prepare, draft and feedback on 'Elevator Pitch' within platform | Illustrates and cues activities external to platform (includes list making, emailing, power posing). |

HOW TO COMPARE?

Relative strengths and weaknesses

Effective Networking (OU/FL)



Learning through embedded activities
(but sharp fall in participation at Peer Review step)

Inductive approach (assumes involvement from learners at the time)

Build Confidence with Self Promotion (Google)



Cues for action but not online

Deductive approach (can withstand repetition, assumes take-out and practice)

- Calonge, D. S. and Shah, M. A. (2016) 'MOOCs, Graduate Skills Gaps, and Employability: A Qualitative Systematic Review of the Literature', *International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, Vol.17(5), p.67-90
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THANK YOU

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