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Examining a MOOC-based CPD course for English Language teachers from two differing perspectives.

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Experiences of Timorese Teachers in a blended Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) for Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Background

- Growing body of literature on MOOCs in the Global South (Traxler 2018; Laurillard & Kennedy 2017; McGreal 2017)
- Little study of the **lived experience** of online learners in the South (Garrido et al. 2016; Nti 2015; Daniel et al., 2015; Rhoads et al., 2013)
- Timor-Leste as 'new' nation (Nygaard-Christensen & Bexley, 2017) liberalised telco industry 2012; opportunities for online learning?
- Emerging evidence of success in blending MOOC content in Southern contexts (Jaffer, et al., 2017; Maitland & Obeysekare, 2015; Bulger et al., 2015; Adams et al., 2013)



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INTERNET





Method

- Participatory Action Research
- 4 week course, 'Teaching for Success: The Classroom and the World'
7 language teachers and facilitator met 6 times
- Each participant interviewed before and after, plus focus group interview/ 'hanging out'
- Worked with two Timorese collaborators to code transcripts and identify benefits and challenges

Theory

- Bourdieu's *Theory of Practice* (1977) and *Forms of Capital* (1986)
- Connell's *Southern Theory* (2008)

Findings: Benefits

1. Access to quality learning resources
2. Sharing with and learning from others
3. Encouraging reflective learning
4. Motivating teachers to try new things develop their teaching
5. Improving participants' English

Findings: Challenges

1. Internet access
2. Time management
3. Unfamiliar pedagogy and course design
4. Limited certification payment methods and prohibitive cost

Conclusions

- Potential for scalable expansion; facilitation supports and extends the ‘cascade model’ (Laurillard and Kennedy 2017)
- Clear benefits in scaffolding language and digital literacy development plus subject area competence: 4 of 7 participants upgraded- saw value in certificate
- Familiar limitations around access, new unfamiliar pedagogies, payment, and day to day challenges of life in Dili
- ‘Change is inevitable, growth is optional’
- MOOCs are a very ‘Northern’ phenomenon- we need more Southern academic voices on the platform

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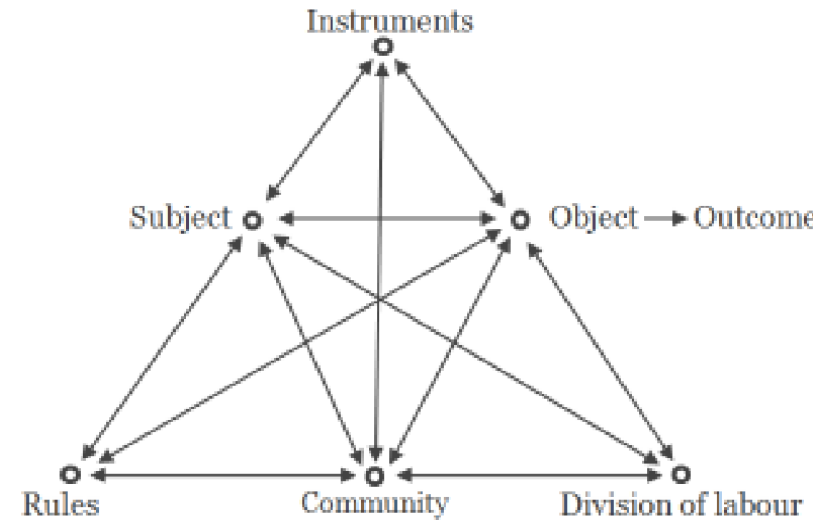
Impact of MOOC-based professional development courses on self-directed and critical learning

Shahrzad Ardavani

Supervised by Aileen Ackland & Sarah Cornelius

Outline

- Motivation and Aims
- Theory and methodology
- The findings
- Conclusion



Motivation

There is a growing need for developing countries to participate in global education through educational technology.

Although

there has been a proliferation of MOOCs, they are not always internationally-oriented or underpinned by an appropriate pedagogical framework. Students may not always be prepared to utilize MOOCs which can be beneficial to them.

Therefore

there is a need to develop MOOCs which address the needs of these culturally and experientially diverse students so that access to international networks of learning can be enhanced.

Aims

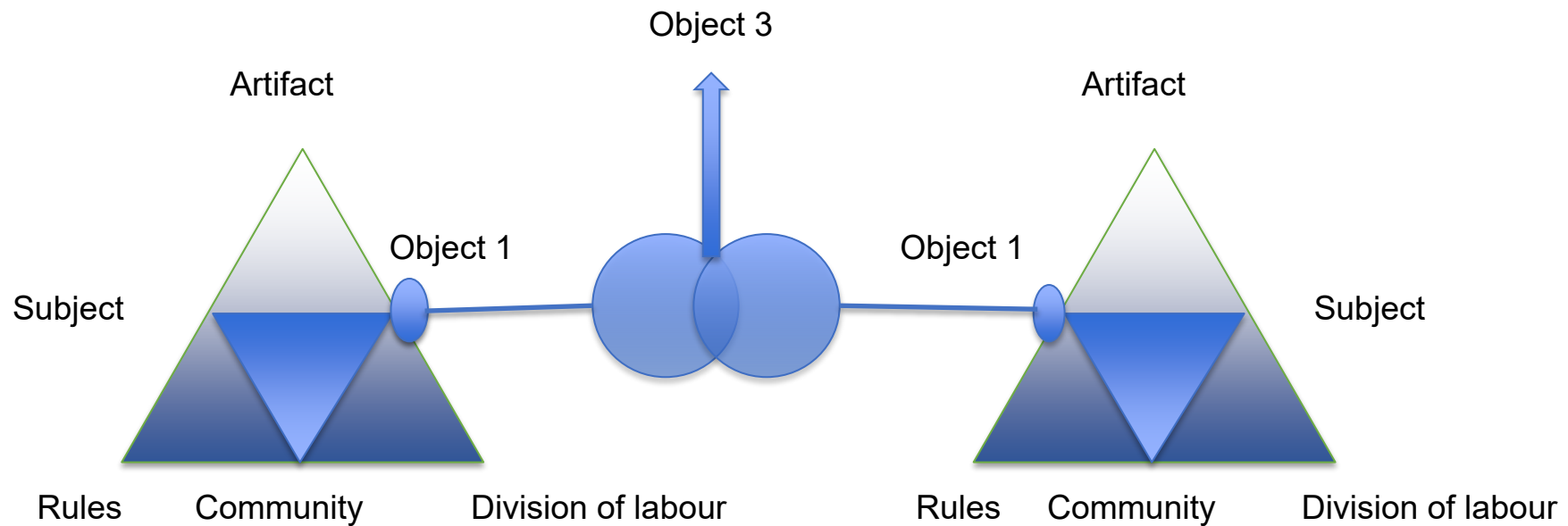
To evaluate and explore English language teachers' lived experiences of engagement in a CPD course ('Teaching for success: Learning and Learners', run by the British Council) on the FutureLearn MOOC platform.

Learners with different cultural and educational backgrounds bring different expectations and assumptions to on-line learning.

To explore the extent to which participants' expectations, learning goals and aims have been met through examination of their concerns, critiques and criticisms of a MOOC.

Theory and Methodology

SYSTEM RELATIONS, A model of activity theory (Engeström, 2001, p. 136).



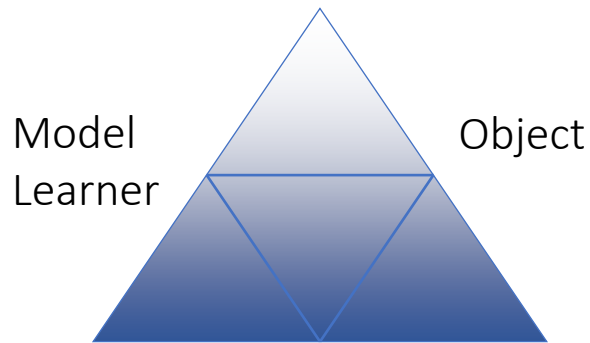
Theory and Methodology

The creators (educators and designers) of a MOOC for English language teaching (ELT) development and model learner.

International Educated English language teachers on the course [L SEP]



Instrument



Model
Learner

Object

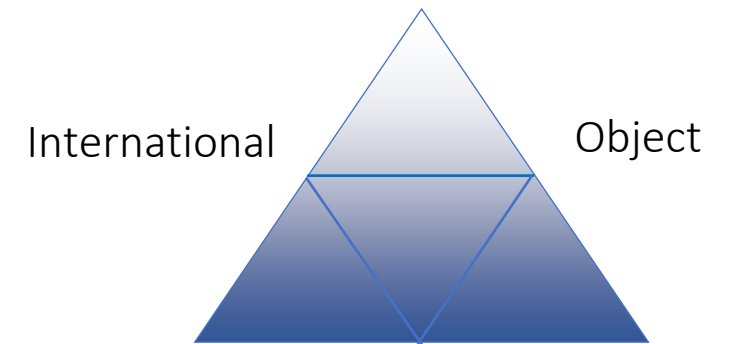
Rules

Community

Division
of labours



Instrument



International

Object

Rules

Community

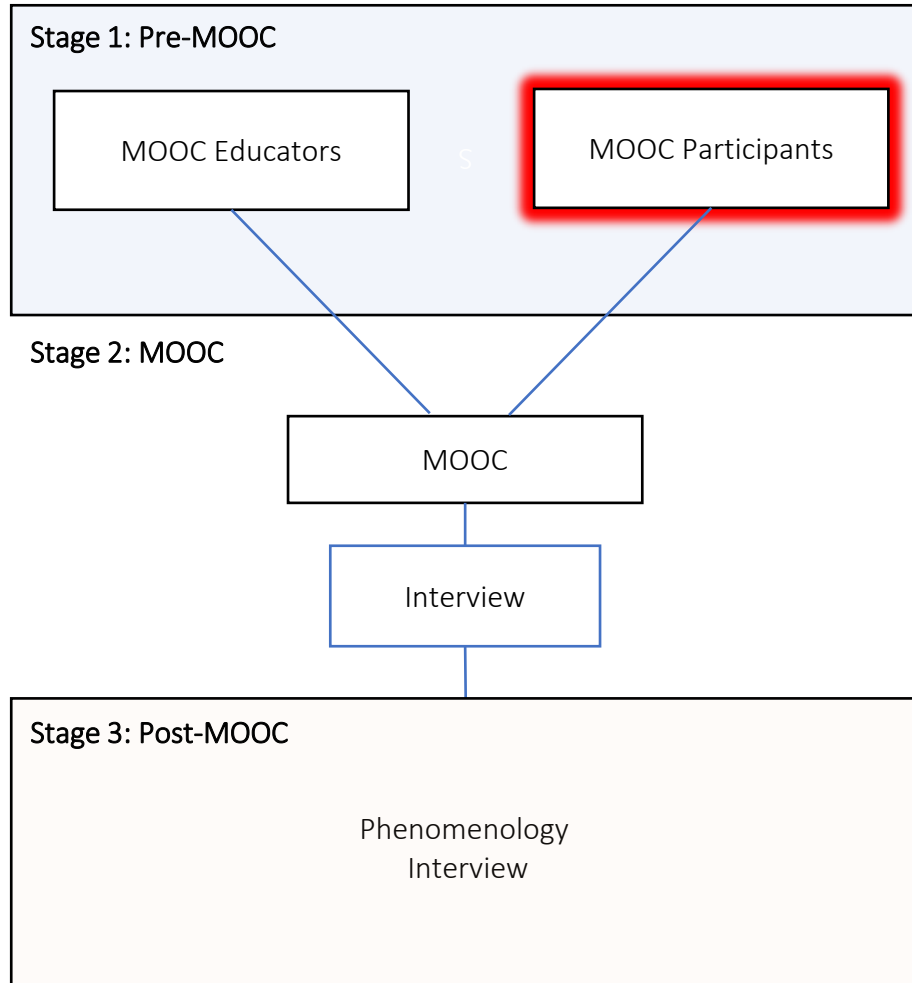
Division
of labours

Theory and Methodology

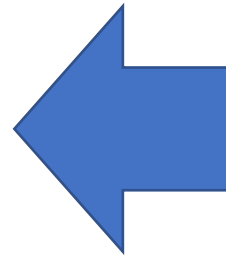
The three big Cs (Concerns, Critiques, Criticisms)

- Concern is something related to an activity or content that causes learners to worry.
- Critique is defined as the act of expressing opinion about the good and bad parts of a thing.
- Criticism is defined as the act of expressing disapproval and noting the faults of a thing.

Theory and Methodology



Survey



Weekly Brookfield Critical Incident Questionnaires (Stephen Brookfield, 1995):



Phenomenological semi-structured interviews

Theory and Methodology

Brookfield Critical Incident Questionnaires

1: At what moment during the previous week's activities did you feel most engaged with what was happening?

2: At what moment in this week's activities did you feel most distanced from what was happening?

3. What activities during the previous week did you find the most insightful and helpful?

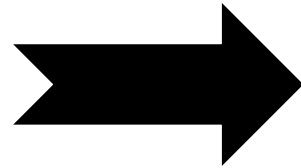
4. What activities during the previous week did you find the most puzzling or confusing?

5: What about the previous week's activities surprised you the most?

The findings: Cultural differences in feedback?

Rhetorical move of critic in the UK

Positive commentary

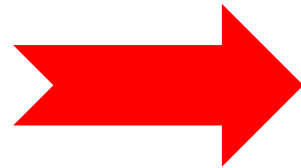


Negative comments



Rhetorical move of critic in Mexico

Negative commentary



Positive comments

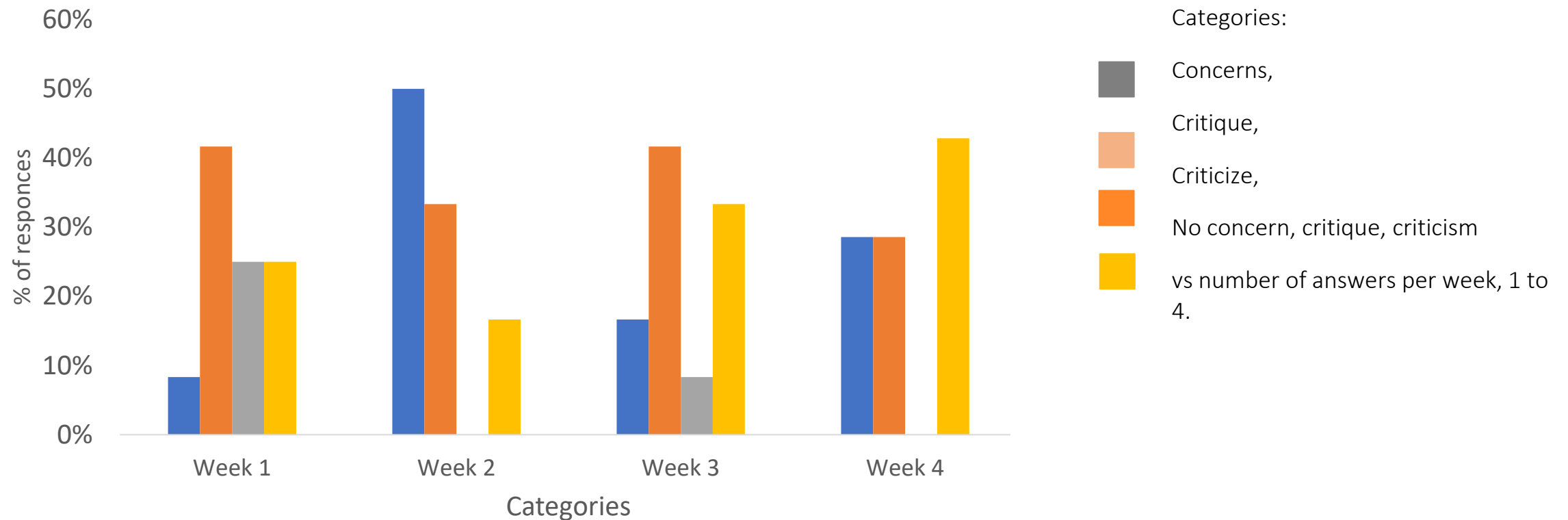


“There was scarcely any other activity than to watch the videos or read the articles and reflect and post a comment on a specific question. Nevertheless, pondering about those subjects (such as motivation or praising) helps not to forget how important our role as humans is.”

Participant A

The findings:

Frequency of Concerns, Critiques, Criticisms and no Cs in the span of four weeks (Brookfield Critical Incident Questionnaire)

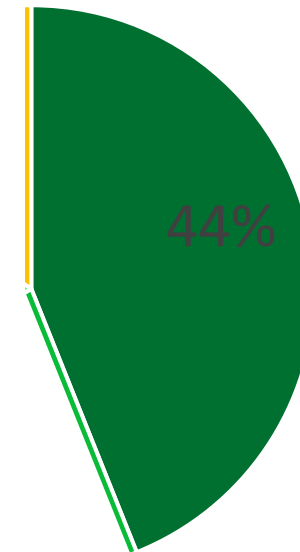


The findings:

Four main tendencies for Cs

A. Participants have Cs of the MOOC

% of responses



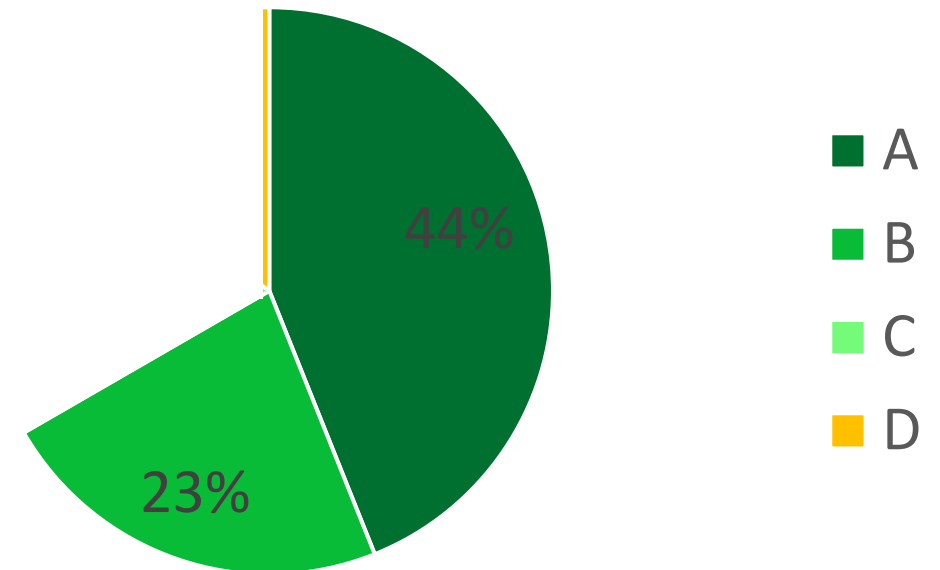
The findings

Four main tendencies for Cs

A. Participants have Cs of the MOOC

B. Participants show Cs of other factors impinging upon the MOOC (i.e. internet connection, lack of time or lack of concentration).

% of responses



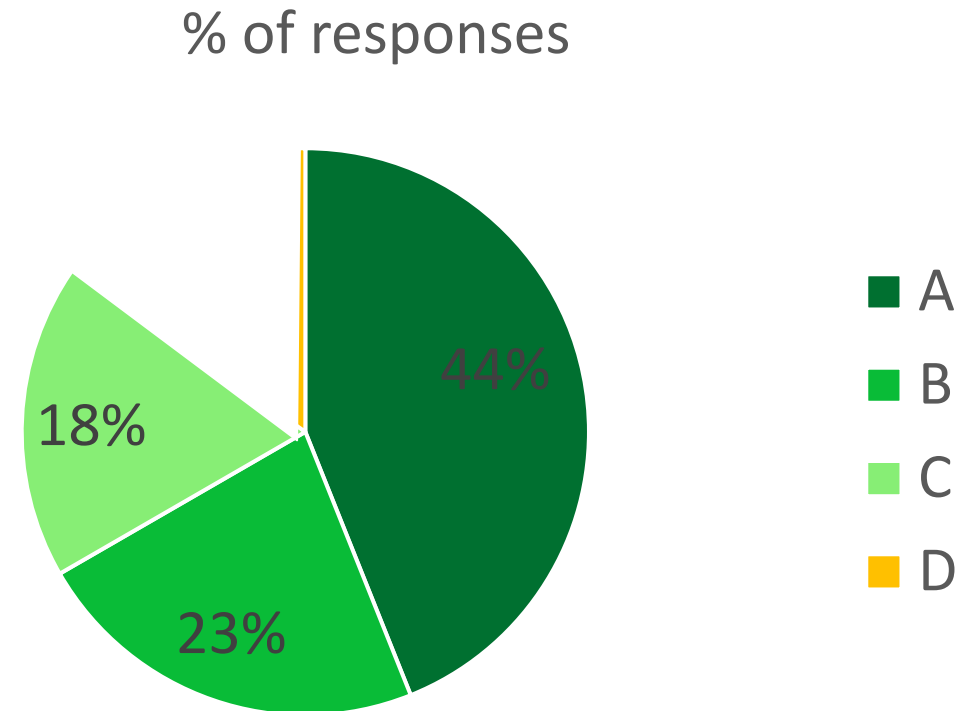
The findings

Four main tendencies for Cs

A. Participants have Cs of the MOOC (i.e. internet connection, lack of time or lack of concentration).

B. Participants show Cs of other factors impinging upon the MOOC.

C. Participants are engaged in self-critique



The findings

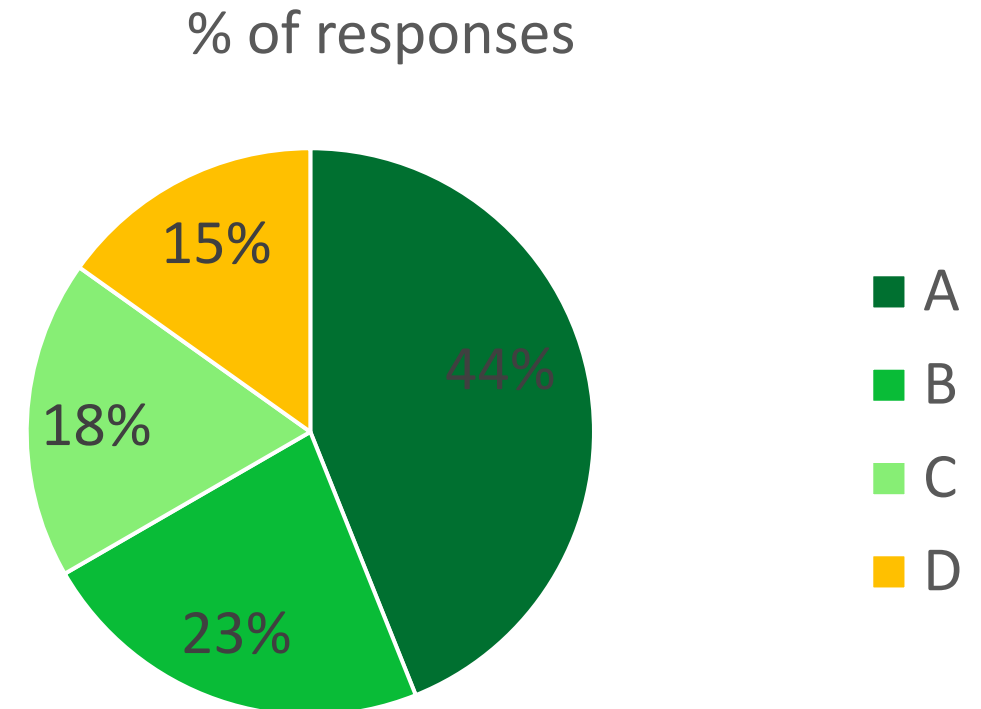
Four main tendencies for Cs

A. Participants have Cs of the MOOC (i.e. internet connection, lack of time or lack of concentration).

B. Participants show Cs of other factors impinging upon the MOOC.

C. Participants are engaged in self-critique

D. No concern, critique, criticism



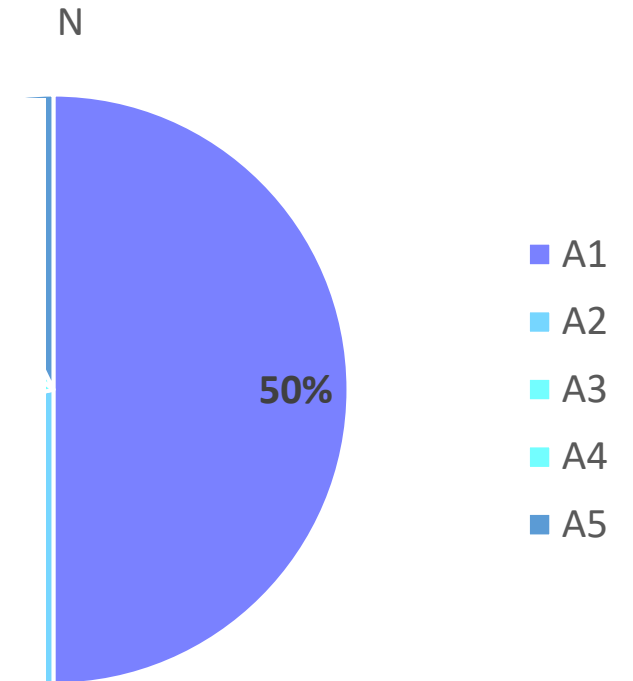
The findings:

The MOOC content as the most criticized tendency

A1 = basic

“I didn’t get even involved in the discussion [about building rapport]... , because it is something that we learn by experience. ... It does not bring something new to me.”

Participant I



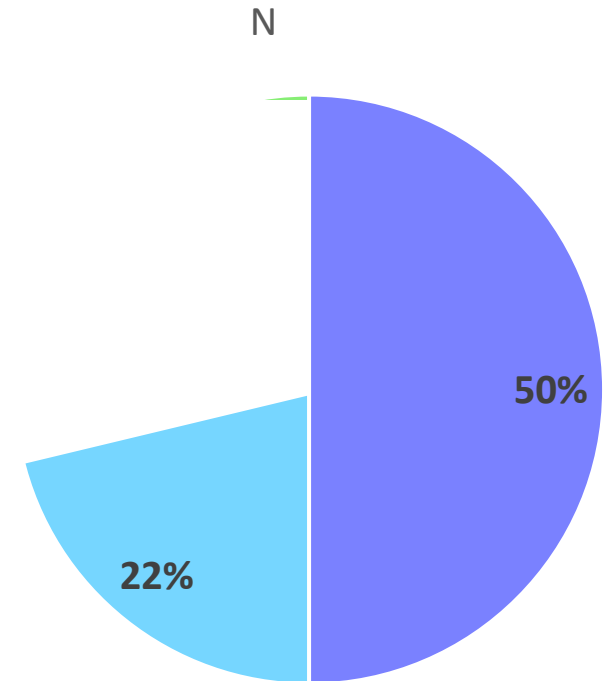
The findings

The MOOC content as the most criticized tendency

Basic

insufficient differentiation to meet participant metalanguage needs on the course

“Teaching Pronunciation. I have never taught pronunciation, and maybe for that I felt distanced as I think I needed a little more in depth explanation of how to teach it...”
Participant Z



The findings

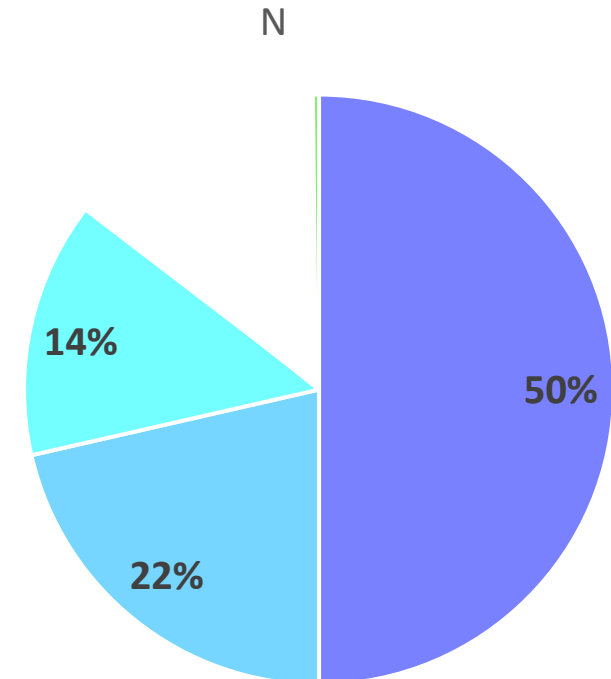
The MOOC content as the most criticized tendency

Basic

Insufficient differentiation to meet participant metalanguage needs on the course

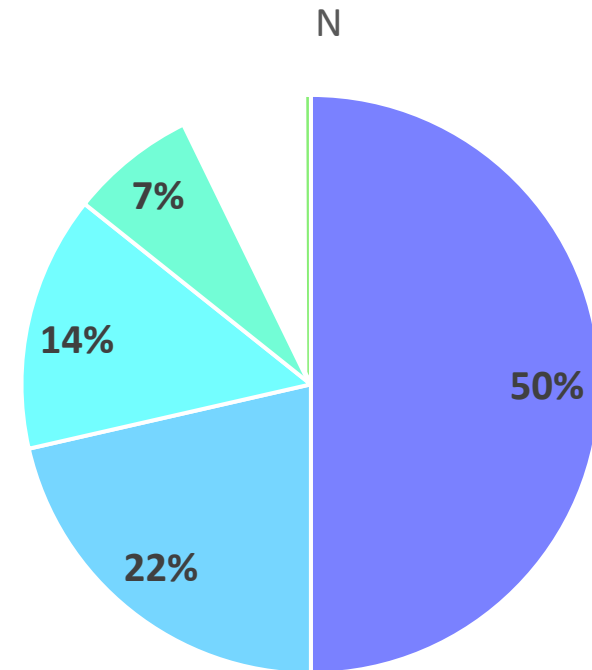
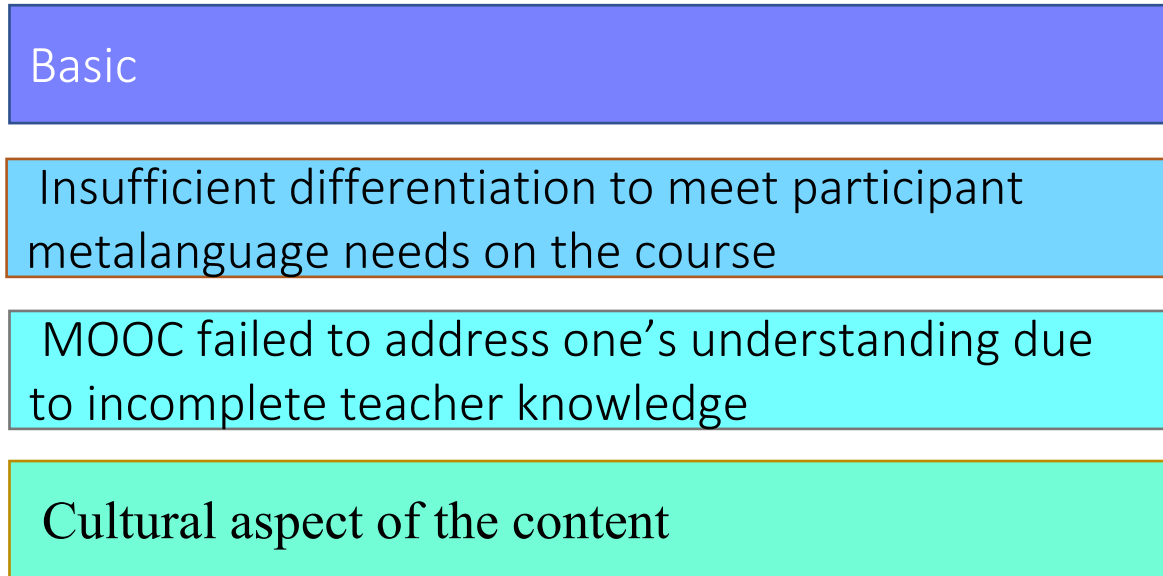
MOOC failed to address one's understanding due to incomplete teacher knowledge

“The activity that was in Knowledge about language, talking about socio linguistic... It did not give me the practical thing to improve my teaching skills.”
Participant R



The findings

The MOOC content as the most criticized tendency

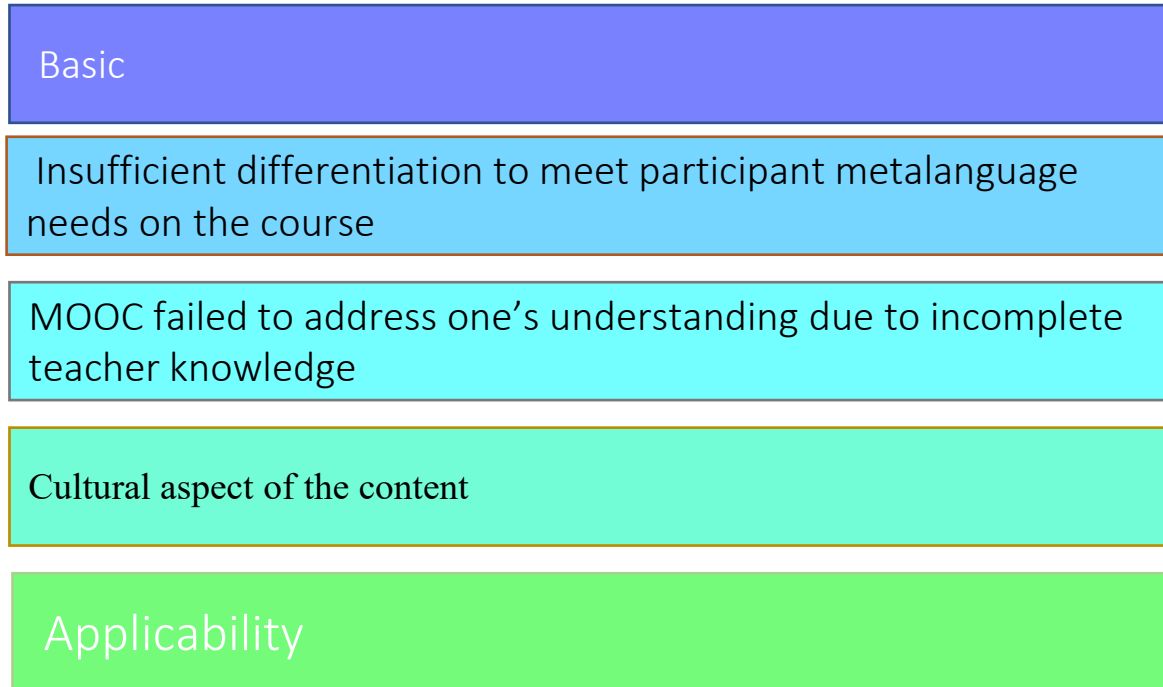


“I think it was the video ..., because everything about that classroom felt weird. The students being separated by gender, wearing uniforms, answering like soldiers, the teacher paying attention almost exclusively to the male students. I had to surpass all this to achieve the concept I was supposed to observe and reflect upon.”

Participant P

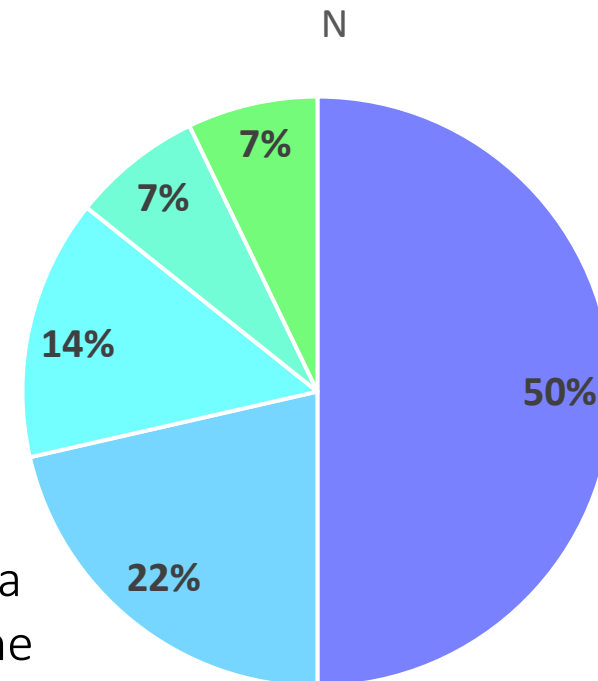
The findings

The MOOC content as the most criticized tendency



“...step 1.8 talking about praise as we just heard a comment from a teacher, we saw no practical example, or had any extra info about the concept, so that just made roll on into the next step...”

Participant Z

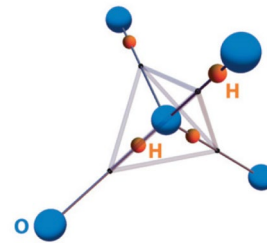
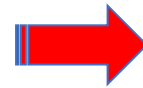
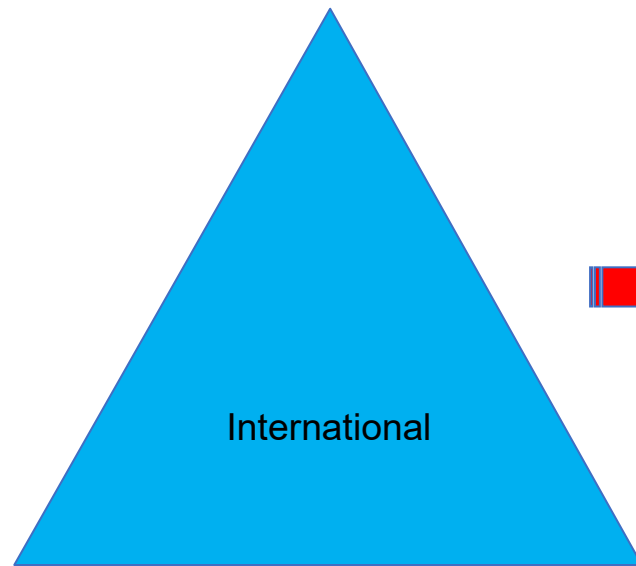




The findings

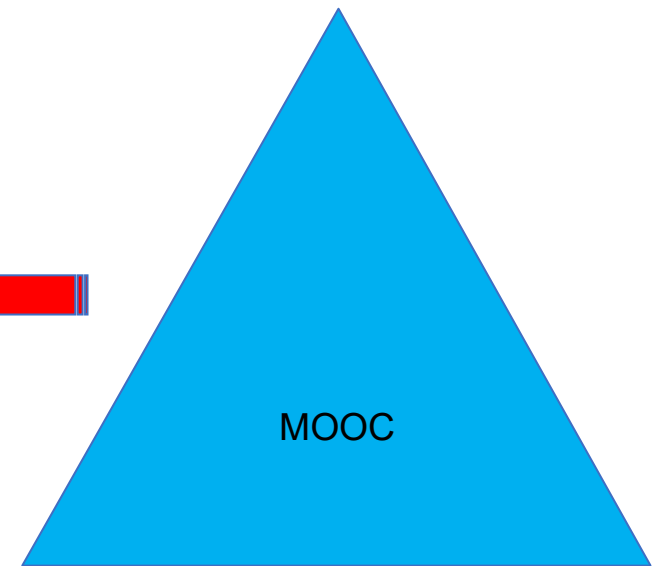
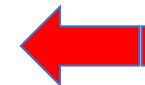
Potential indicators of contradictions

Steam to the boiling water



Three Big Cs

- Content being basic
- Not meeting participants' metalanguage needs
- Applicability



Conclusion

The participants recognized that they could critique rather than criticizing the course or other factors outside the course.

The participants are shifting from one expectation to another.

Utilizing CIQ helped them to become more self-directed and more critical in their learning.

Next Step in my research

- Looking at the other elements on which the participants projected their critique, concern or criticism.
- Exploring themes which emerged in terms of commonalities between the participants and the course. Positive responses will be associated with commonalities that exist between learners and course.

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Any questions?

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