

Effectiveness of the Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) Using Educational Technology In The English Language Classroom At An Educational Context

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of the Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) Using educational technology in the English Language classroom for English Language students following university transfer program at Thai Nguyen University of Sciences (TNUS). The study made use of the descriptive method to determine the current situation of using the course and propose the solutions to improve the quality of the course. There were 43 students who were the respondents of the study. From the data obtained in the study, the results about the assessment of effectiveness of the course implementation were revealed. The findings indicated that the availability of appropriate resources and support of the course made a major contribution to the learners' engagement and motivation.

Keywords: Massive Open Online Course (MOOC); Educational technology; English Language Classroom

1. Introduction

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) have drawn a growing amount of interest during the recent years. For English language educators, MOOCs are considered a valuable resource to foster their professional development and classroom management effectively. For the course learners, MOOCs give the opportunities to experience the thorough subject matters systematically through lecture videos, quizzes, discussion, and reflections.

In accordance with Yousef, Chatti, Schroeder, Wosnitza and Jakobs (2014, p.9), MOOCs have had a significant impact on both the way of teaching and learning. The fundamental goal of MOOCs is to give a large number of students new possibilities to participate in free online courses from any location in the world. Because of their distinctive characteristics, MOOCs are a successful technology-enhanced learning model in higher education and beyond. Nikolaos Koukis, Athanassios Jimoyiannis (2019) also shared four key design features of MOOCs which are the connection of the course material and teacher learning strategies with the classroom's actual educational environment, establishment of specific course learning objectives, promotion of teachers' collaboration in learning, and development network of peer learning.

Considering the popularity of MOOCs and the teaching context, it would seem reasonable to implement the MOOC Using Educational Technology in the English Language Classroom for English language students following university transfer program at Thai Nguyen University of Sciences (TNUS). Observing the process among the students getting involved in the course, evaluation of effectiveness of this MOOC is vital to improve the course design and implementation. This issue inspired the researchers to do conduct this study to probe into the MOOC learners' involvement and participation.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Environment

Thai Nguyen University of Sciences (TNUS), one of the key institutions that makes up Thai Nguyen University, was the subject of the study. TNUS has had a reputation as a centre for education, research, and technology transfer in the natural

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sciences, social sciences, and humanities in Vietnam's central and northern mountainous provinces during the past 20 years of foundation and growth.

2.2. Research Design

This study employed a descriptive type of research. In the light of Ariola (2006), when data are gathered to characterize people, organizations, places, or events, descriptive research is used to describe the data and features regarding the subject of the study as well as current behavior or characteristics of a certain group.

The survey questionnaire for the students following the MOOC Using Educational Technology in the English Classroom was the type of research instrument used in this study. The questionnaire responses from the participants provided as the data for the statistical analysis.

2.3. Participants

The respondents of this study were the 43 senior English major students following university transfer program at TNUS. All of them reside in different districts in Ha Giang, a mountainous province in the North of Vietnam. They work as teachers in primary and secondary schools in their area.

The profile of the gender of the respondents is shown in Table 1. The majority of the respondents are females comprising 83.72 percent or 36 of the 43 total population. There were 7 male respondents comprising 16.28 percent. This seems to indicate the general pattern in teaching job in Vietnam where female workforce was predominant.

Table 1: Respondents' Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	7	16.28%
Female	36	83.72%
TOTAL	43	100.0%

The profile of the educational attainment of the students is determined in Table 2. It can be observed that while 76.75 percent of the respondents have earned the degree of Associate, only 10 attained the education at the tertiary level with 23.25 percent.

Table 2: Respondent's Educational Attainment

Educational Attainment	Frequency	Percentage
The degree of Associate	33	76.75%
Bachelor's degree	10	23.25%
TOTAL	43	100.0%

The profile of the respondents' majors was summarized in Table 3. All 10 respondents holding the bachelor's degree do not specialize in English or English related. While that, 27 out of the 33 others majoring in English Language Education at college accounts for 62.79 percent. This appears to conclude that the respondents who participated in this study possess a certain background knowledge in English and the course implementation may be at ease.

Table 3: Profile of Respondents' Majors

Profile	Frequency	Percentage
English Major	27	62.79
Non English Major	16	37.21
TOTAL	43	100.0%

2.4. Data Gathering Instrument

The data-gathering instruments used in this study are the survey questionnaire. Formulating the questionnaire, books, journals, magazines, online references, and other materials were to read, synthesize, and utilize as bases. The survey questionnaire was to assess the effectiveness of the MOOC Using Educational Technology in the English Classroom when the researcher carried it out for senior English Majors following University transfer program at TNUS. Standard methods were followed in gathering the responses so that the questions were designed to be more objective, certain and understandable to ensure ease in the collection of the desired information.

To assure convenience in the collection of the desired information, the survey questionnaire is divided into two sections. Part 1 seeks to obtain personal information of respondents. Part 2 consists of question items with a view to discovering the students' opinions about the course in general, its contents, and their participation in the course.

To verify that the instruments' contents are accurate, the questionnaires were validated with the assistance of professor experts in the subject. Prior to conducting a dry run test to determine the reliability of the instruments, suggestions and adjustments were incorporated into the questionnaire's final version.

In conclusion, the methodology of the study has been demonstrated as the standards for the researchers to adhere to when carrying out the investigation. The data analysis and results are described in more detail in the following section.

2.5. Data Gathering Procedure

As soon as the set of questionnaires was improved based on the comments and suggestions in the initial validation, a short briefing was given to all participants to explain the study's objectives, procedures and the importance of completing the questionnaires. The questionnaires were administered to the subjects given a maximum of 30 minutes to answer. The completed questionnaires were then collected by the researchers. Schedule for giving of survey questionnaire was set in order to have organization. As soon as the conduct of survey questionnaire was accomplished, the items in the survey questionnaires were tallied for analysis and interpretation.

2.6. Procedure of data analysis

The data were subjected to the following statistical tools for meaningful interpretation and analysis of the study:

- Data were analyzed using the Microsoft Excel statistical applications.
- Percentage: This was used to determine the magnitude of the frequency in relation to the whole responses.
- Ranking: This was used to determine the positional importance of responses.

The analysis in this study was mainly limited to questionnaire responses that were collected. Collected data were coded and charted for each group of participants. The figures in the charts were explained, in some cases, together with practical experience of the researcher.

3. Results

3.1. Effectiveness of the course in general

In the evaluation of the effectiveness of the course in general, a set of 6 questions was addressed to the students to answer and their responses were recorded and rated according to the Likert scale. The results are illustrated in Table 4 as follows.

Table 4: Respondents' Opinions about the Course in General

Respondents' opinion	Rating scale				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Overall, learners were satisfied with the quality of the course.	0%	0%	11.63%	23.26%	65.11%
2. Learners clearly acknowledged the instructional objectives and procedures of this course.	0%	0%	16.28%	62.79%	20.93%
3. Learners understood the materials in this course.	0%	0%	18.6%	69.77%	11.63%
4. Learners have improved the level of knowledge and skills through this course.	0%	0%	20.93%	74.42%	4.65%
5. This course was relevant to the career.	0%	0%	27.91%	67.44%	4.65%
6. This course could make it easier to work in learners' field.	0%	0%	23.26%	69.77%	6.97%

A list of 6 items was presented for evaluation from respondents who experienced and reflected about the course. It can be observed that the different items ranged from rating of Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree, with the majority choosing Agree, Neutral, and Strongly Agree respectively. Remarkably, no participants expressed the disagreement or strong one with all the six items rated. Regarding the percentage of learners' satisfaction about the course overall, 65.11 percent shows their opinion Strongly Agree which held the highest. It may be inferred that the course brought significant benefits to the learners and they enjoyed the experience through the course. Furthermore, the table also indicates that the proportion Agree of learners' understanding about objectives, procedures and materials of the course is the most noticeable. Apparently, the students show their awareness of the course when they get involved in the activities designed. What is more, the data figure out that 67.44 percent of the learners share the Agree opinion, the highest rate compared to other scales, on the relevance with their job career. This may imply that the course is practical and valuable for the learners to gain hand-on experiences related to their work. Additionally, it can be estimated that rating Agree accounts for the highest in almost all 6 items given, which appears to reveal the students' high appreciations about the course.

3.2. Effectiveness of the course contents

A list of 6 respondent's opinion items was presented for evaluating the course contents according to the rating scale from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. The result is shown Table 5.

Table 5: Respondents' Opinions about the Course Contents

Respondents' opinion	Rating scale				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. This course was up-to-date with developments in the field.	0%	0%	46.51%	41.86%	11.63%
2. The difficulty and workload of this course were appropriate for the level.	0%	0%	44.19%	48.84%	6.97%
3. The course was logical and easy to follow.	0%	0%	13.95%	65.12%	20.93%
4. The course materials were well prepared and carefully explained.	0%	0%	11.63%	69.77%	18.6%
5. Course assignments were interesting and stimulating.	0%	0%	13.95%	62.79%	23.26%
6. Course assignments were relevant and helped learners practice new concepts and skills.	0%	0%	25.58%	67.45%	6.97%

It can be observed that the different items ranged from rating of Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree, with the majority choosing Agree, Neutral, and Strongly Disagree respectively. No respondents manifest the dissatisfaction in 6 statements given. The students seem to receive useful knowledge and skills from the course.

Concerning the preparation and the thorough explanation of the course materials, the respondents give their own opinion with the rate of 69.77% for Agree. Based on this, the learners seem to achieve certain information properly and ambiguity is not the hindrance to access the resources provided in the course.

Regarding the appropriateness of course activities, it can be seen in table 5 that 48.84 percent of the respondents agree that the tasks designed in the course are challenging enough to deal with. This is followed by the opinions Neutral and Strongly Agree corresponding to 44.19% and 6.97% respectively. From these data, the students may affirm that participating the course is enjoyable and meaningful. The course seems to support the learners with scaffolding, enough guidance and resources.

With respect to the course assignments, the students take it for granted that they are engaging and impactful. The respondents present their opinions Agree and Strongly Agree which comprise 86.05% in terms of level of interest and stimulation of the course assignments. Similarly, 74.42 percent of Agree and Strongly Agree viewpoints support the relevance and practicability of the tasks.

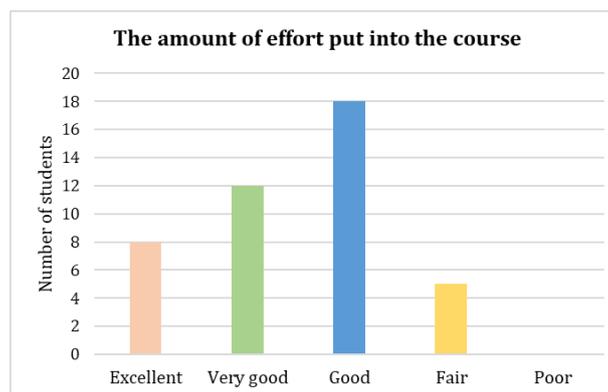
In general, the course contents address the gaps and issues encountered by the learners. Seemingly, it is also accessible, usable, and compatible with different learners' preferences, levels and goals.

3.3. Effectiveness of Learner participation

Learners' involvement is analyzed in the light of two criteria, namely the amount of effort that the learner put into the course and the number of average hours per week the learner spent on the course.

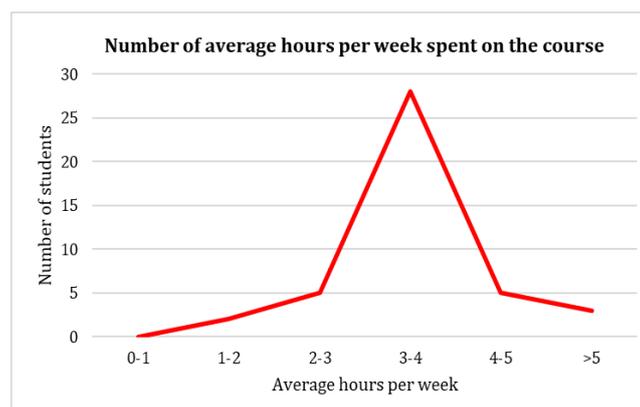
From Figure 1, it can be observed that the respondents invest the amount of effort ranging from Good, Very good, Excellent to Fair. No student admit the poor effort into the course. The data appear to signal the overall success of the course. The course participants find it interesting and they made their serious attempt to fulfill all the tasks given in the course. All the learners showed some certain determination to experience the course contents and interaction to discuss the issues raised.

Figure 1: The amount of effort put into the course



As regard to Figure 2, the students showed their devotion in the course by spending the about 3-4 hours per week for learning experience, which accounts for 65.12 percent of the total. Noticeably, 8 out of 43 learners made the best use of more than 4 hours per week to discover and enjoy the course. These facts seem to draw the conclusion that the course is somehow beneficial to the students. Therefore, they were willing to utilize their time to complete all the quizzes, assignments, and reflection when they joined the course.

Figure 2: The number of average hours per week spent on the course



4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

- The MOOC Using Educational Technology in the English Language Classroom receives the great attention from the senior English language students following university transfer program at TNUS.

- The course in general and contents in particular meet the learners' needs and align with the learning outcome.
- The students generate their strong motivation when they put efforts and time to experience the course.

Major contributions of the study are as follows:

- English language teachers and learners need to develop the deeper awareness of the effectiveness of using MOOCs into English teaching and learning.
- MOOCs issues may become more favourable, which is likely to receive greater interests from scholars and researchers to implement more potential research into "MOOCs in English Language Education research".

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