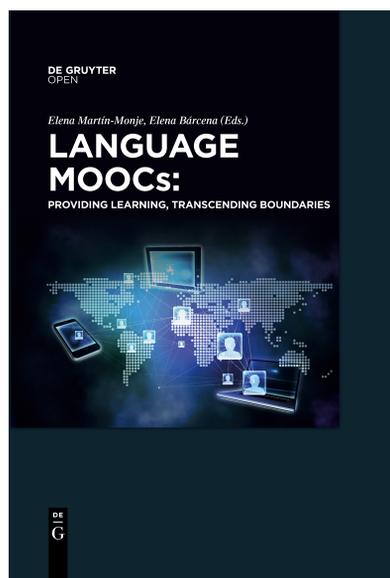


Language MOOCs: Providing Learning, Transcending Boundaries. Elena Martín-Monje and Elena Bárcena (eds.), (2014). Berlin: De Gruyter Open. ISBN: 9783110422504,175 pages

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Whether as students or experts, we are all surrounded by new technologies related to language teaching in the modern world. That is why we are fortunate to have stumbled upon one of the first original books on such a commonly used and innovative teaching model as the LMOOCs (Language Massive Open Online Courses). The book was intended to provide necessary information on how to obtain learning- and teaching-related goals through massive online courses, based on research conducted by experts who have put such courses into practice. *Language MOOCs: Providing Learning, Transcending Boundaries* has been written in collaboration with renowned experts who work and carry out research at prestigious universities around the world. It has been edited by two Spanish professors and researchers from the National Spanish Distance-learning university (*Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia; UNED*) who boast extensive experience in teaching MOOCs, Dr E. Bárcena and Dr E. Martín Monje.



The book contains ten chapters that—thanks to their scope and interest among pedagogues in terms of content as well as their style and format—draw us to read and study them: from the very first chapter, written by the editors as an introduction and an outline of what we are to find in the book, all the way to the last chapter, a conclusion written by Jozef Colpaert (Universiteit Antwerpen, Belgium). The chapters cover various pedagogical, linguistic and sociological aspects stemming from the research of all the co-authors. Moreover, the book proposes new lines of research and goals to aspire to in these new and innovative teaching methods.

Chapter Two, written by Maggie Sokolik (University of California, Berkeley, USA), reflects on the characteristics that make up an effective LMOOC, with effectiveness seen in terms of creativity inspired by music and video as well as based on different types of assessment. Chapter Three, written by Antonio Moreira Teixeira (European Distance and ELearning Network, Portugal) and Jose Mota (Universidade Aberta, Portugal), proposes a methodological model for setting up collaborative LMOOCs, based on personal responsibility, interaction, interpersonal relations, innovation and inclusion. Chapter Four, co-authored by Tita Beaven (The Open University, United Kingdom), Tatiana Codreanu (Laboratoire ICAR, France) and Alix Creuzé (Institute Français, Spain), deals with the important issue of motivation to learn through LMOOCs. The authors analyse students' backgrounds, motivations

and expectations before taking the course as well as their perceptions upon completing it. From the results, they offer advice to course designers on how to keep students committed to the learning process from start to finish. Chapter Five, much like the previous chapter, also offers a valuable empirical study on the role of instructors, identifying their skills from a theoretical and practical standpoint. We must also point out that the author of this chapter, Maria Dolores Castrillo de Larreta-Azelain (UNED, Spain), was also creator of the first MOOC to win a prize in Spain. Chapter Six, by Fernando Rubio (Utah University, USA), analyses the issue of comprehensibility by comparing a MOOC course on pronunciation vis-à-vis a traditional offline course, gathering the perspectives of a large number of students. Chapter Seven, authored by Timothy Read (UNED, Spain), plays a more technical role, analysing the features of a platform suitable for these types of courses, as well as resources and exercises, from a technological standpoint. Chapter Eight, written by Covadonga Rodrigo (Fundación Vodafone, Spain), focuses on the benefits LMOOCs offer to students with disabilities, enabling them to study at their own pace and along with their classmates, which favours social inclusion. Finally, Chapter Nine, by Inma Álvarez (Open University, United Kingdom), deals with a topic that is rarely touched upon in similar research analyses—the impact of such courses from an ethical and aesthetic point of view, explaining such considerations and their implications within the proper context. In the last chapter, Prof Colpaert points out not only the possible weaknesses of LMOOCs but also lays out reflections on the present and visions for the future.

While certain chapters may seem to have been intended to reaffirm the success of this way of teaching, all theories are backed up and argued to be true, thus providing a degree of reliability and validity throughout the entire text, until the very last chapter.

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