

Communication preferences of MOOC learners

: Is grouping enough?

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MOOCs and Social engagement

- MOOCs?
 - Digital innovation in Web 2.0
 - Reflect the personal, networked, and openly collaborative practices

Earlier

- Spontaneously formed groups
- Supported each other

NOW

- Encourage the formation of study

MOOCs and Social engagement

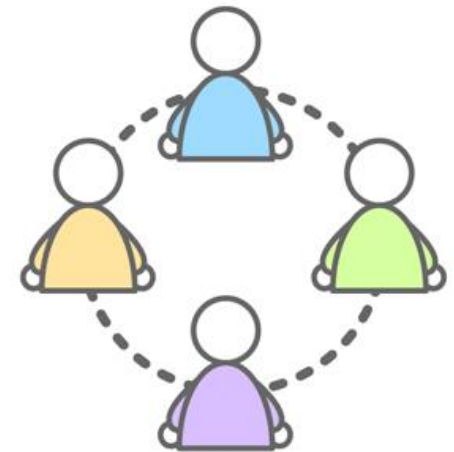
- “Student feelings of Social isolation affecting retention and dropout rates”
- Social isolation and additional variables



Personal



Institutional



Circumstantial

MOOCs and Social engagement

- “Dropout Rates is Far steeper than expected.”(Wang, 2013)
- “MOOCs students who remain in courses are struggling stay involved.”(Yang et al. 2013)



Social engagement promotes commitment and lower attrition(Yang et al. 2013)

Purpose of the Study

1. Understand the communication-related preferences of MOOCs
2. Understand the rate of course completion influenced with group preference
3. Add to the knowledge base on persistence and course completion in MOOCs

Research methods

- Class
 - Creativity, Innovation, and Change in Coursera (CIC)
- Pre-course and feedback surveys
 - Preferred mode of communication
 - Relationship between MOOC learner's communication mode preferences and
 - Level of English proficiency/education
 - gender
 - age

Creativity, Innovation and Change(CIC)

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PENNSTATE

Creativity, Innovation, and Change | 创意, 创新, 与变革

Let's make history together - again! 让我们再一次创造历史!



About the Course

In 2013, over 130,000 people from more than 190 countries came together in this MOOC to explore creativity, innovation, and change.

What did we DO?

- We discovered creative uniqueness through Creative Diversity.
- We used Intelligent Fast Failure to build innovative skills.
- And we applied CENTER principles to drive personal change.

That was CIC 1.0, and it was a BLAST!

Sessions

Jul 14th 2014 - Sep 1st 2014

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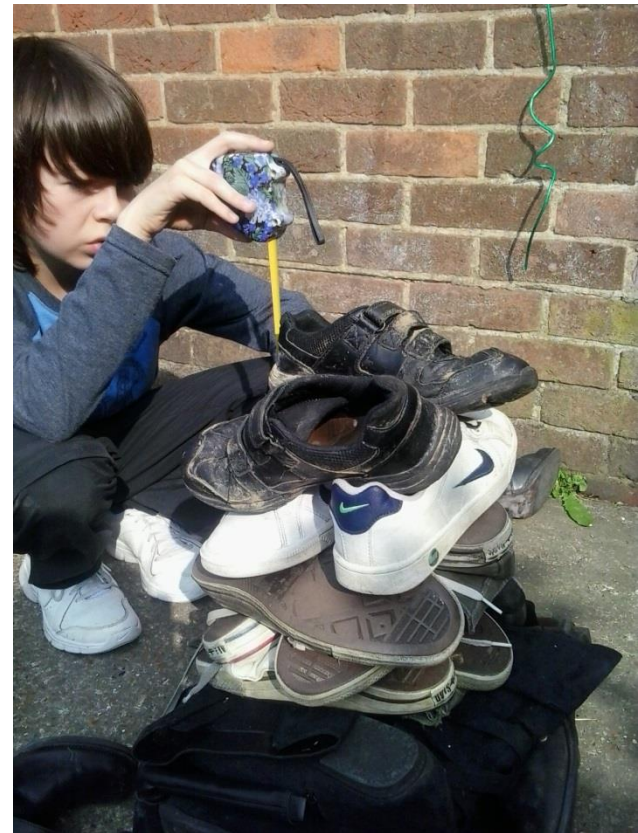
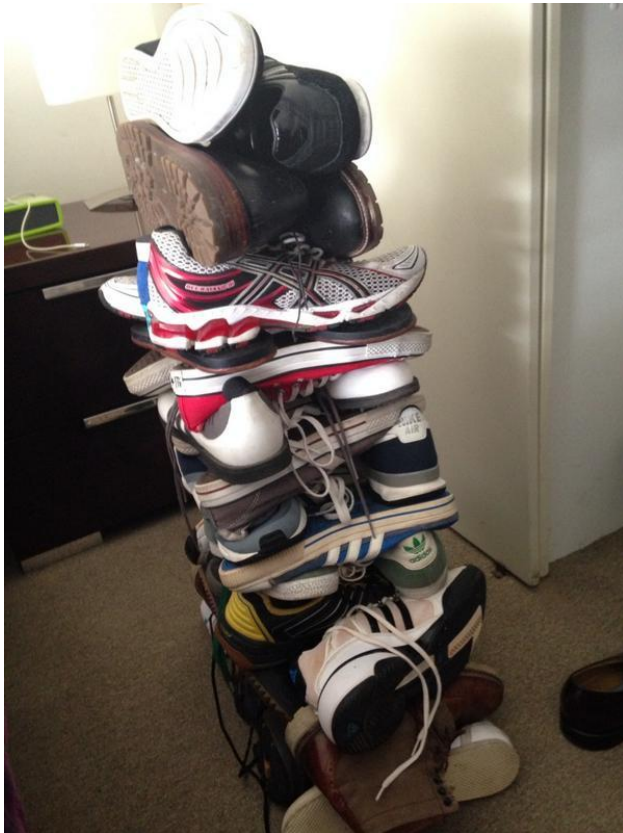
[Earn a Verified Certificate](#)

Eligible for

- Verified Certificate
- Statement of Accomplishment

Creativity, Innovation and Change(CIC)

- ✓ *Instructions: Build a tower of shoes as tall as you can. Do not use any support, glue or binders. Measure it and divided by the number of shoes. Judge its beauty.*



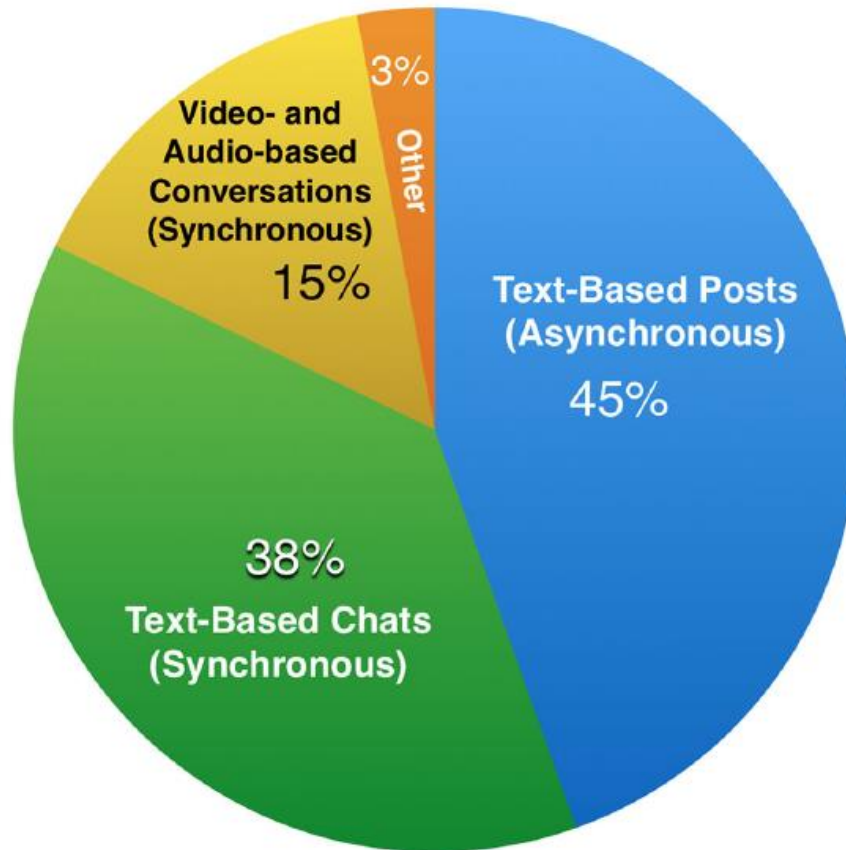
Participants

Comparison of course participants and grouping study participants	In CIC MOOC		In grouping study	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Gender	<i>N</i> = 3803 ^a		<i>N</i> = 655 ^c	
Female	1825	48	381	60
Male	1978	52	245	38
Countries represented	187		92	
Country of participation	<i>N</i> = 39,069 ^b		<i>N</i> = 863 ^c	
China	9377	24	165	25
India	2735	7	54	8
United States	7423	19	130	20
Other	19,534	47	385	45

- Language Preference : English
→ Chinese students : prefer English

Preferred mode of communication

◆ Asynchronous VS. Synchronous



Asynchronous

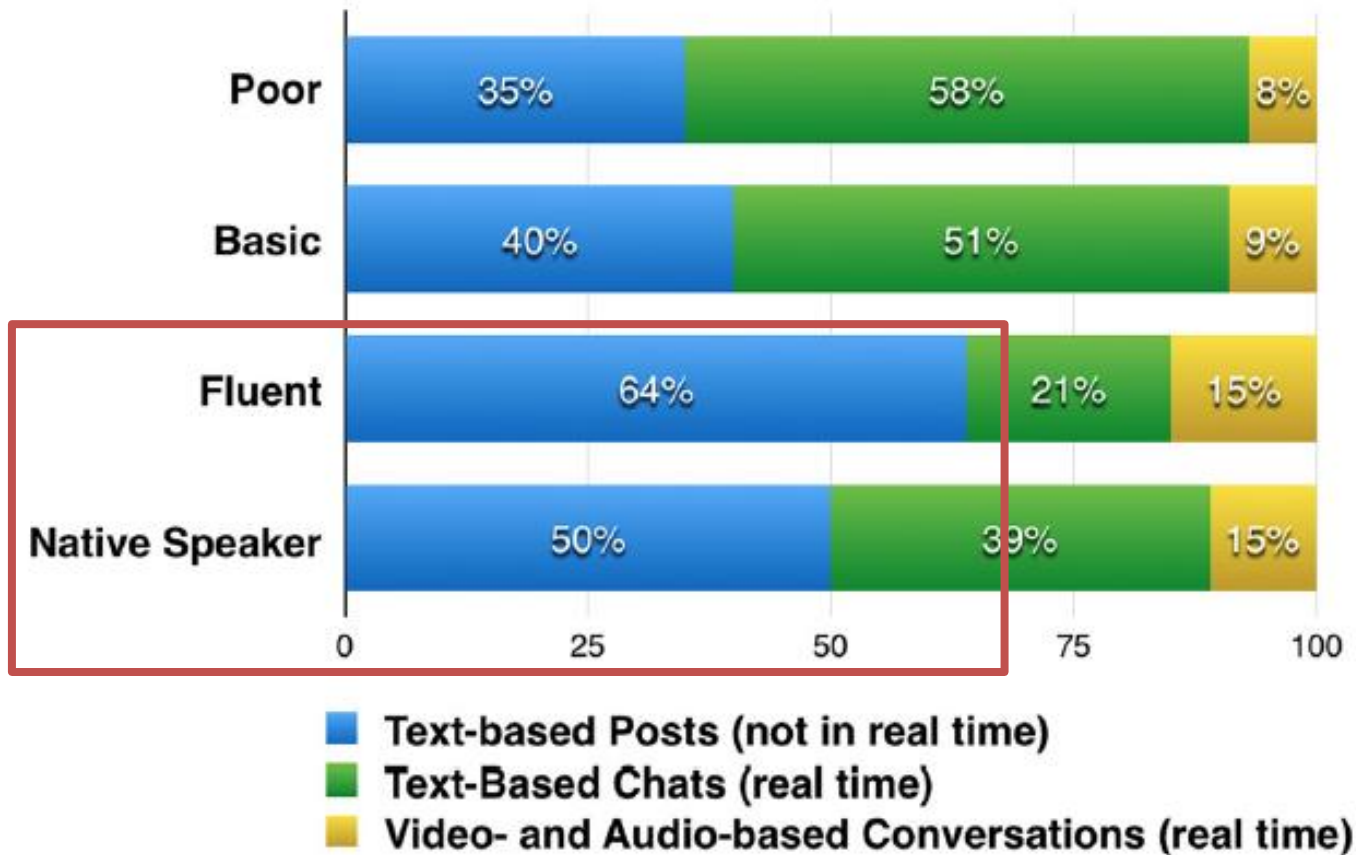
- Text-Based Posts
 - Forum
 - Question board

Synchronous

- Text-Based Chats
 - QQ
 - Text message
- Video/Audio-Based Conversation
 - WhatsApp
 - Skype

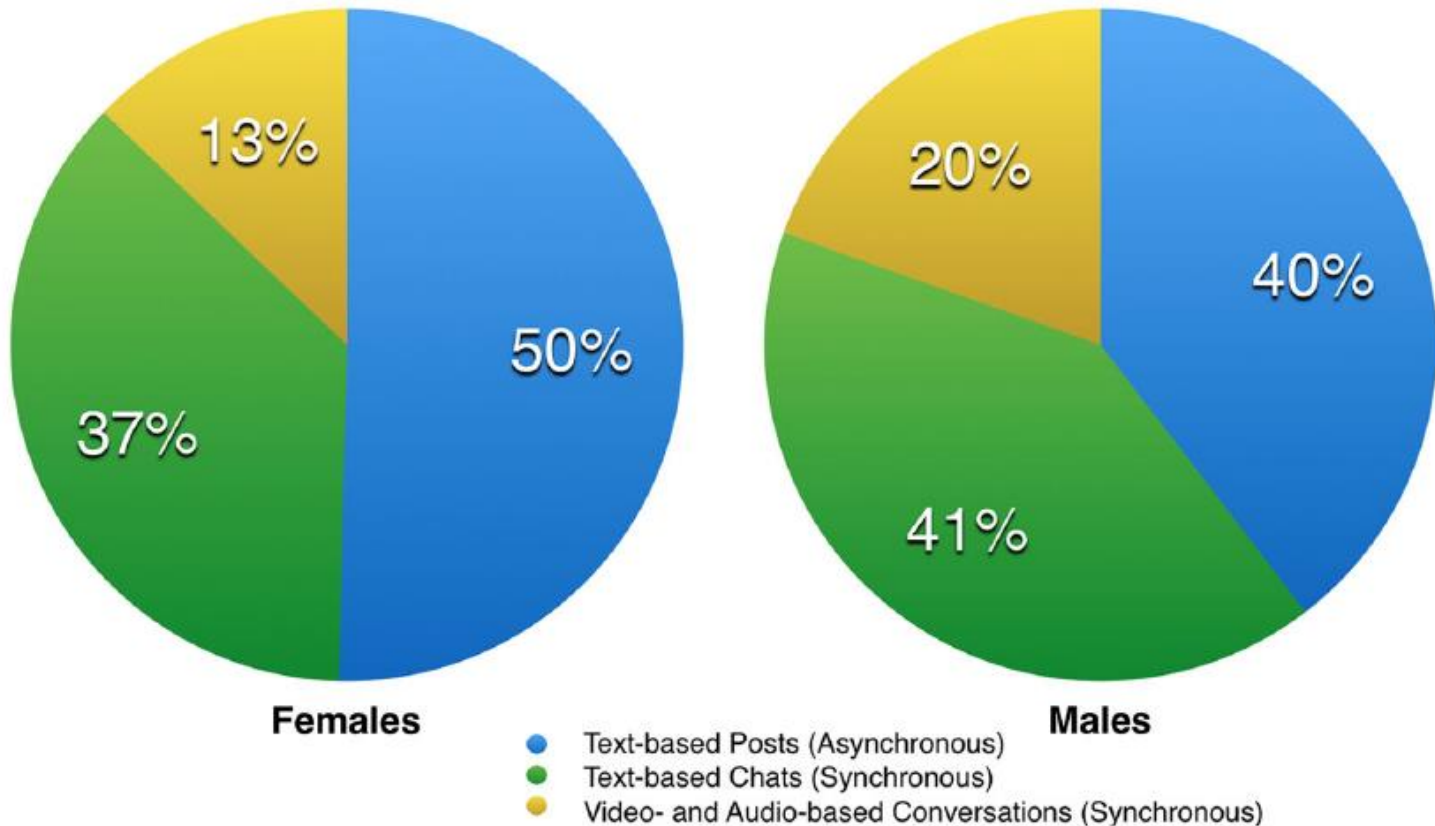
Preferred mode of communication

◆ English language proficiency



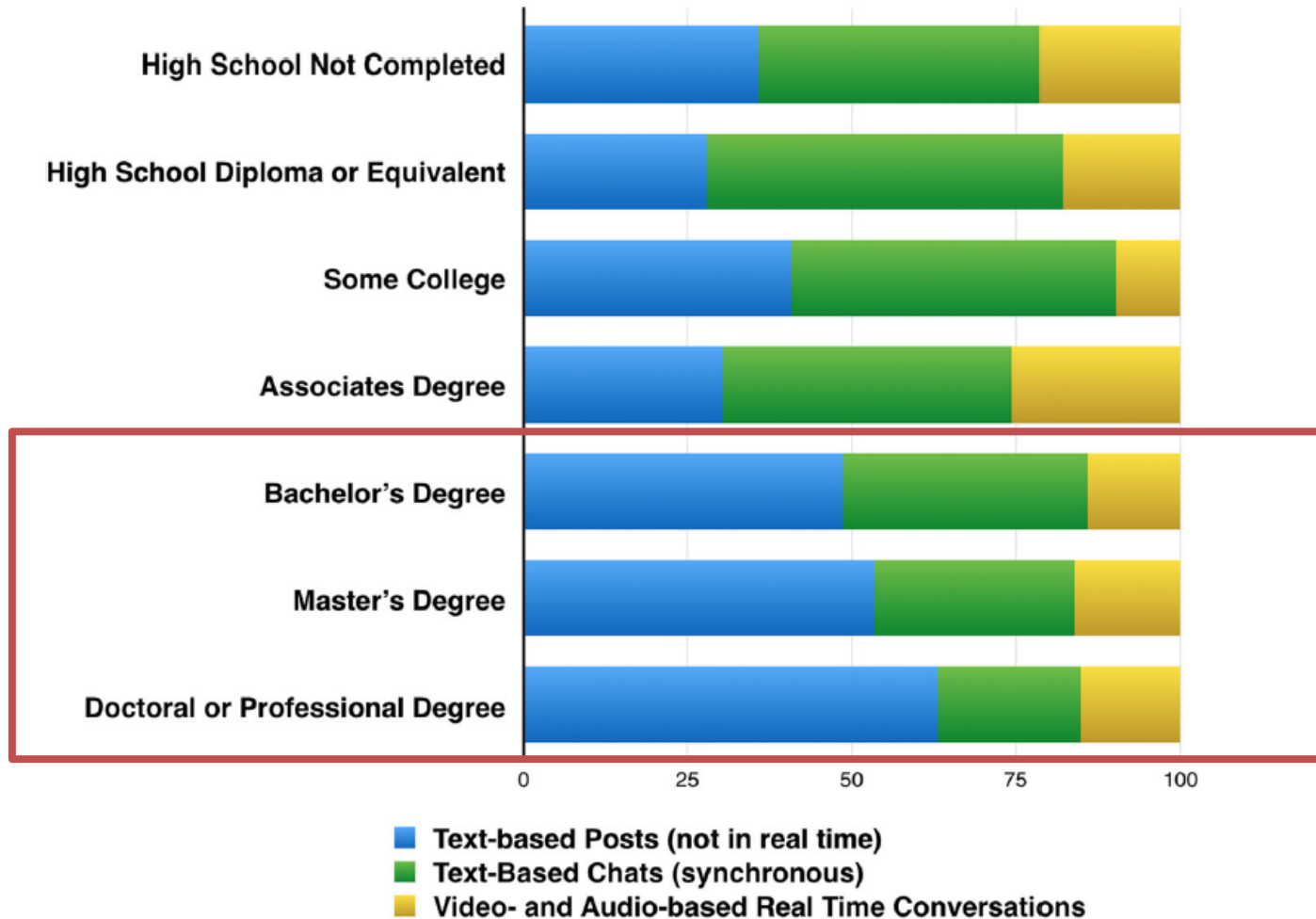
Preferred mode of communication

◆ Gender



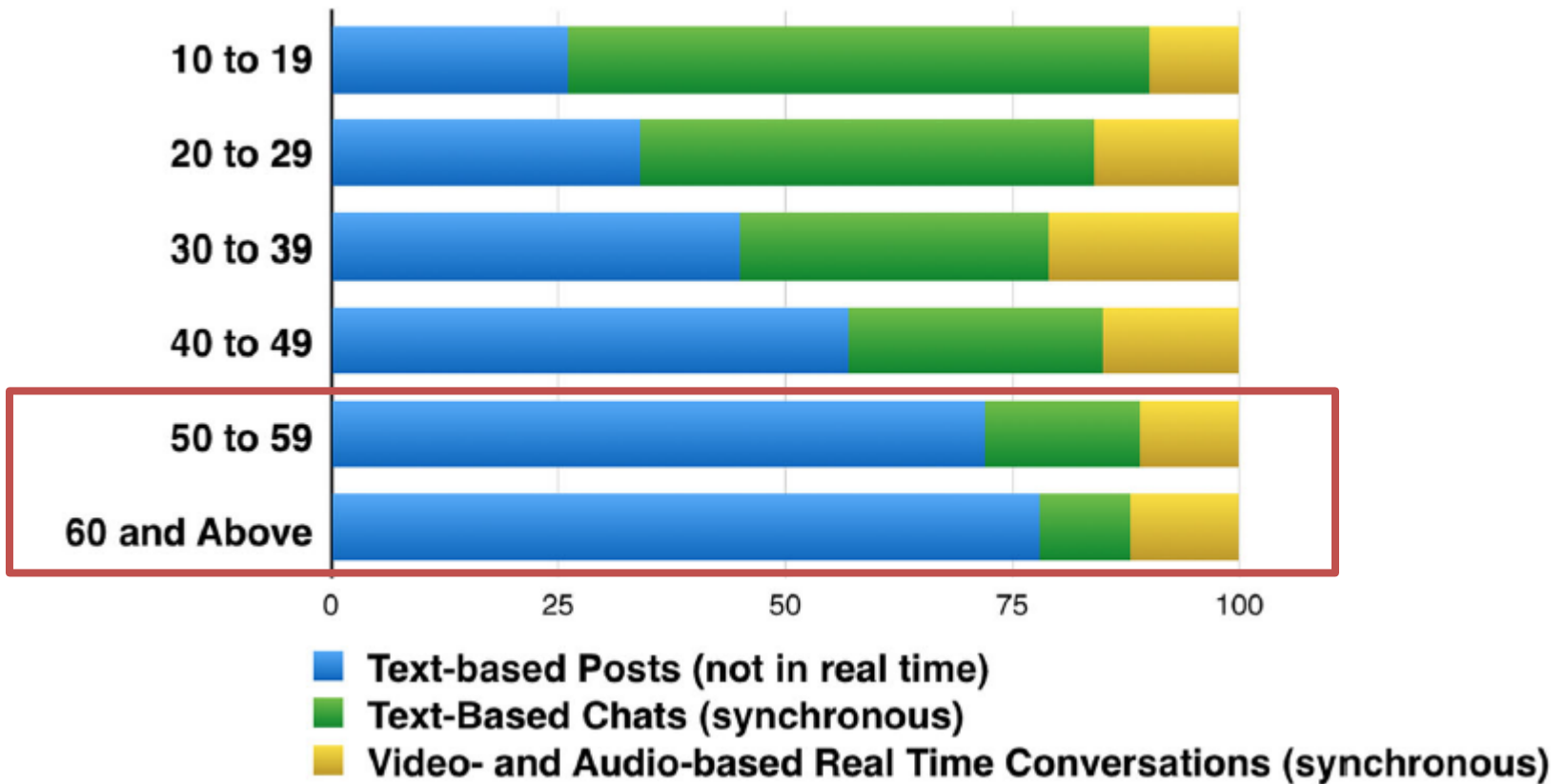
Preferred mode of communication

◆ Education Level



Preferred mode of communication

◆ Age



Course Completion

◆ English Proficiency

	Did not complete		Completed		Completed with distinction		Total	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Poor	29	72.5	6	15.0	5	12.5	40	100.0
Basic	118	76.1	9	5.8	28	18.1	155	100.0
Fluent	199	72.9	18	6.6	56	20.5	273	100.0
Native speaker	127	67.9	15	8.0	45	24.1	187	100.0
Total	473	72.2	48	7.3	134	20.5	655	100.0

Course Completion

◆ Age

	Did not complete		Completed		Completed with distinction		Total	
	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Under 40	331	76.1	27	6.2	77	17.7	435	100.0
40 or above	138	64.8	20	9.4	55	25.8	213	100.0
Total	469	72.4	47	7.3	132	20.4	648	100.0

- ◆ Syn/Ansnyc, Education level and gender
 - No significant differences

Communication Tools Used in group

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
QQ	19	20.4
Facebook	15	16.1
Coursera forum	12	12.9
Text message	9	9.7
Skype	9	9.7
Email	9	9.7
Phone	6	6.5
WeChat	5	5.4
Whatsup	2	2.2
Face to face	2	2.2
Other ^a	5	5.4
Total	93	100

* Other includes Google+, Zoom, Twitter, Google Hangout, Blog etc.

Communication Tools Used in group

◆ QQ

- User-friendly interface
- Learners can type Chinese easily



If I work in a group from other countries, and use a tool I am not familiar with, thinks won't work so well for me.



Communication Tools Used in group

◆ 3 Major Issues

- The Synchronous ad hoc

1) Tool accessibility for the global audience

2) Tool and language preferences across nations and cultures

3) The different forms of Internet censorship in different countries

Conclusion

	Synchronous	Asynchronous
Syn VS. Asyn	Text-Based Chat Video/Audio based Chat	Text-Based Post
English Proficiency	Poor, Basic	Fluent, Native
Gender	Male	Female
Education level	Below Some College	Above Bachelor's Degree
Age	young	old

- ✓ A better understanding of these factors will help encourage group learning online environments.
- ✓ But an immense amount of time and effort is required to collect and analyze the data from thousands of learners.
- ✓ Information like that shared above can be used as baseline data upon which grouping decisions can be made MOOCs for designing support structures.

References

- Zhang, Q., Peck, K. L., Hristova, A., Jablokow, K. W., Hoffman, V., Park, E., & Bayeck, R. Y. Exploring the communication preferences of MOOC learners and the value of preference-based groups: Is grouping enough?. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 1-29.
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Q/A