A photograph of a desk with a laptop, a lamp, papers, and a mug. The text is overlaid on the image.

# MASTER THESIS ABOUT THE RELEVANCE OF THE CONTEXT FOR THE MOOC LEARNER EXPERIENCE

eduhub.ch / SwissMOOC  
Renato Soldenhoff – March 25, 2015

**Abstract**  
**Masterthesis zur Relevanz des Kontextes für die MOOC**  
**Learner Experience**

angefertigt an der  
Universität der Künste Berlin, Zentralinstitut für Weiterbildung / Masterstudiengang  
Leadership in Digitaler Kommunikation

Diese Masterarbeit beschäftigt sich mit der These, dass der Kontext der Lernenden für eine erfolgreiche Teilnahme an einen Massiv Open Online Course (MOOC) relevant ist.

Im Theorieteil wird eine wissenschaftliche Recherche zu MOOCs und derer Nutzer, zur User Experience und zum Kontext durchgeführt. Zwei Theorien aus dem Feld der User Experience zum Thema Kontext helfen, die Forschungsfragen zu formulieren:

Forschungsfrage 1

Wie gestalten Lernende ihren Kontext?

Forschungsfrage 2

Wie beeinflusst der Kontext die erfolgreiche MOOC-Teilnahme?

Zum Abschluss des Theorieteils wird ein theoretisches Kontext-Modell vorgestellt, um anschließend die Kontexte der MOOC Learner Experience zu beschreiben. Das Modell dient als Hilfsmittel für die praktische Untersuchung und für die Auswertung und Kategorisierung der Ergebnisse.

In der praktischen Untersuchung wurden 13 Probanden eines MOOC per Skype interviewt. Die Ergebnisse geben einen Einblick in deren Nutzungsmotive und den damit verbundenen Faktoren, die zu einer erfolgreichen Teilnahme führen. Dabei zeigte sich, dass die Probanden bewusst oder unbewusst ihren Kontext gestalten, doch dass der Kontext immer relativ zur Person zu verstehen ist. Einzelne Kontextfaktoren haben eine Relevanz, doch werden sie von den Lernenden unterschiedlich gewichtet.

Die Masterarbeit präsentiert zum Abschluss sieben Potenziale der MOOC Learner Experience für Lernende und Anbieter, die sich aufgrund von Theorie und praktischer Untersuchung herauskristallisiert haben.

Renato Soldenhoff  
20. Juni 2014

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# Master Thesis

## About the relevance of the context for the MOOC Learner Experience

Written for

The Berlin University of the Arts

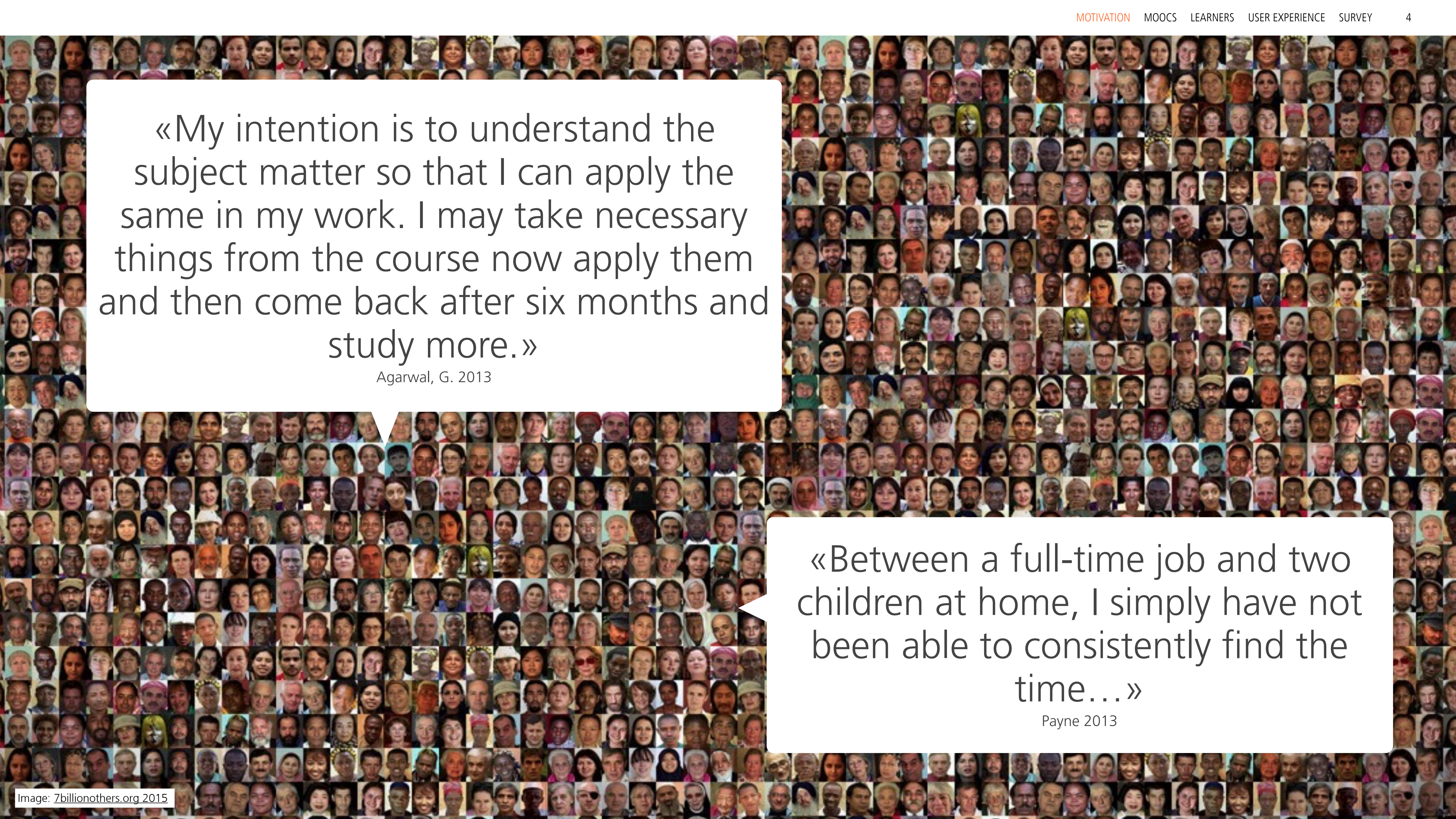
«Leadership in Digital Communication»

July 2004

«Let's teach the world.»

Koller 2014





«My intention is to understand the subject matter so that I can apply the same in my work. I may take necessary things from the course now apply them and then come back after six months and study more.»

Agarwal, G. 2013

«Between a full-time job and two children at home, I simply have not been able to consistently find the time...»

Payne 2013

«Learning is context specific...»

Falk/Dierking 2000

How do learners design their learning context?

The context is relevant for a successful MOOC Learner participation.

How does the context influence the successful participation?



Who is attending?

What are MOOCs?

The user experience  
and its context

The context of the  
MOOC learner experience

# What are MOOCs?



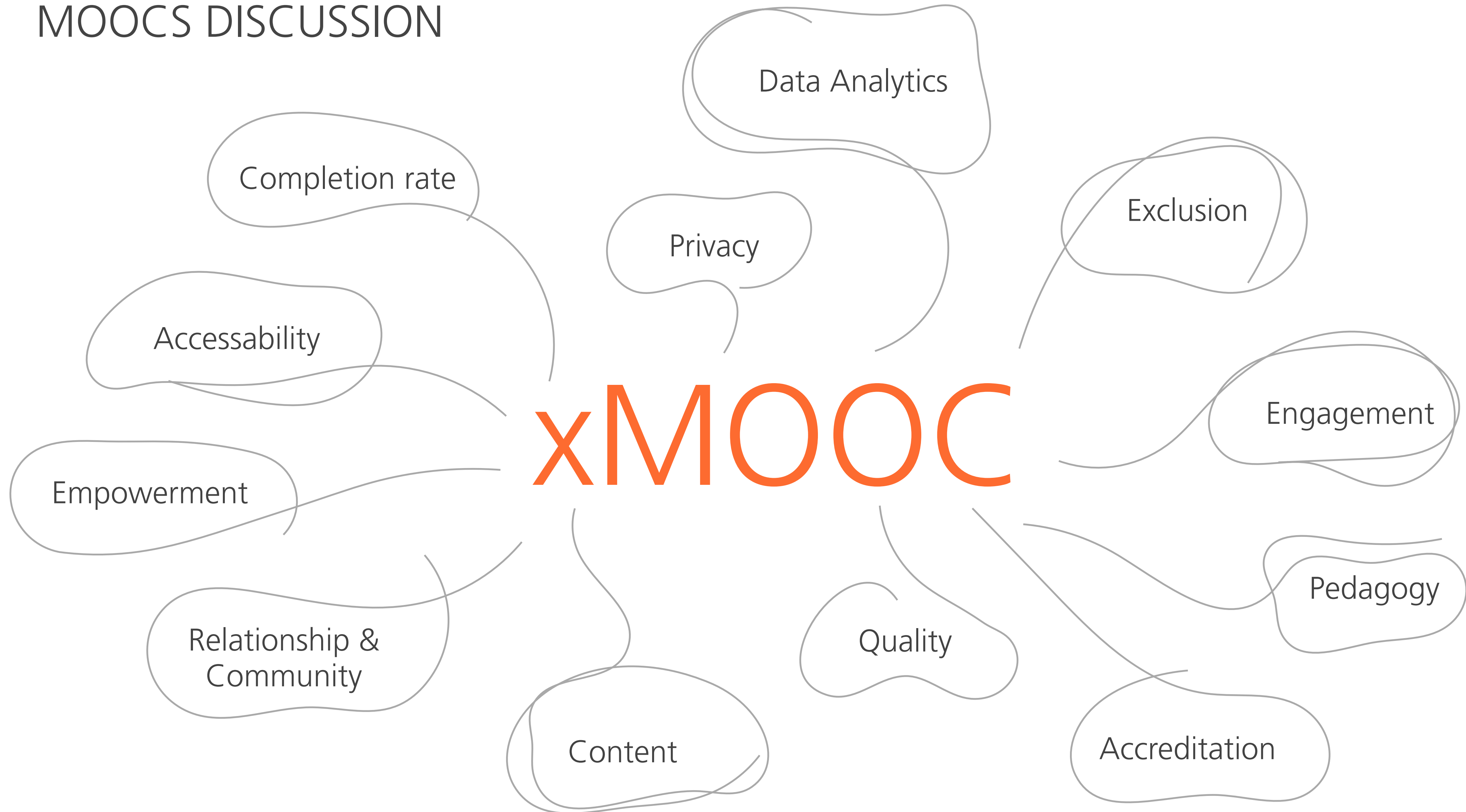
## MOOCS TYPOLOGY

MOOR SPOC SMOOC

DOCC xMOOC cMOOC

smOOC BOOC bMOOC

# MOOCS DISCUSSION



# Who is attending?

# LEARNERS



«In addition to being highly educated, the Coursera student population tends to be young, male, and employed, with a majority from developed countries.»

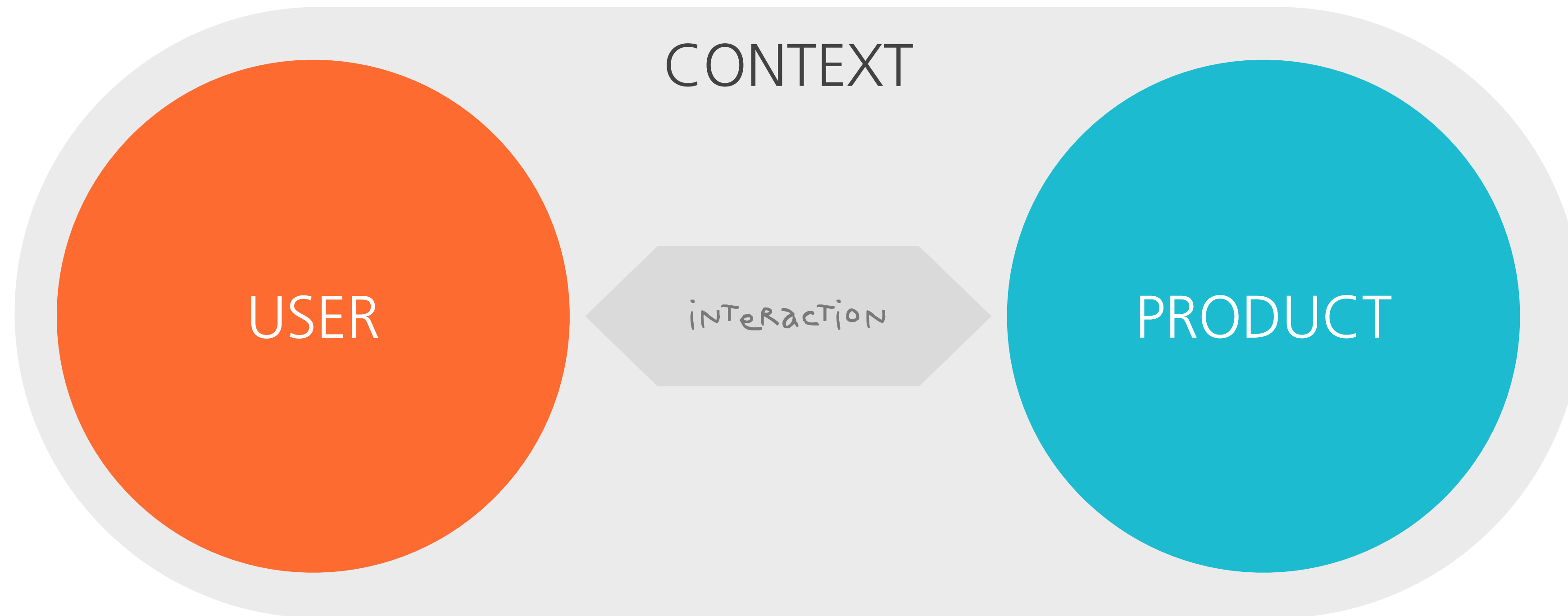
Christensen et al. 2013

# LEARNERS (AIMS) FROM A PROVIDERS VIEW



# What is a User Experience & what is context?

# USER EXPERIENCE



Jensen 2013; Roto et al 2011; ISO9241-210

# CONTEXT

## Ubiquitous Computing

Context is relative to each individual and is not stable.

adapted from Dourish 2004

## Ecological Psychology

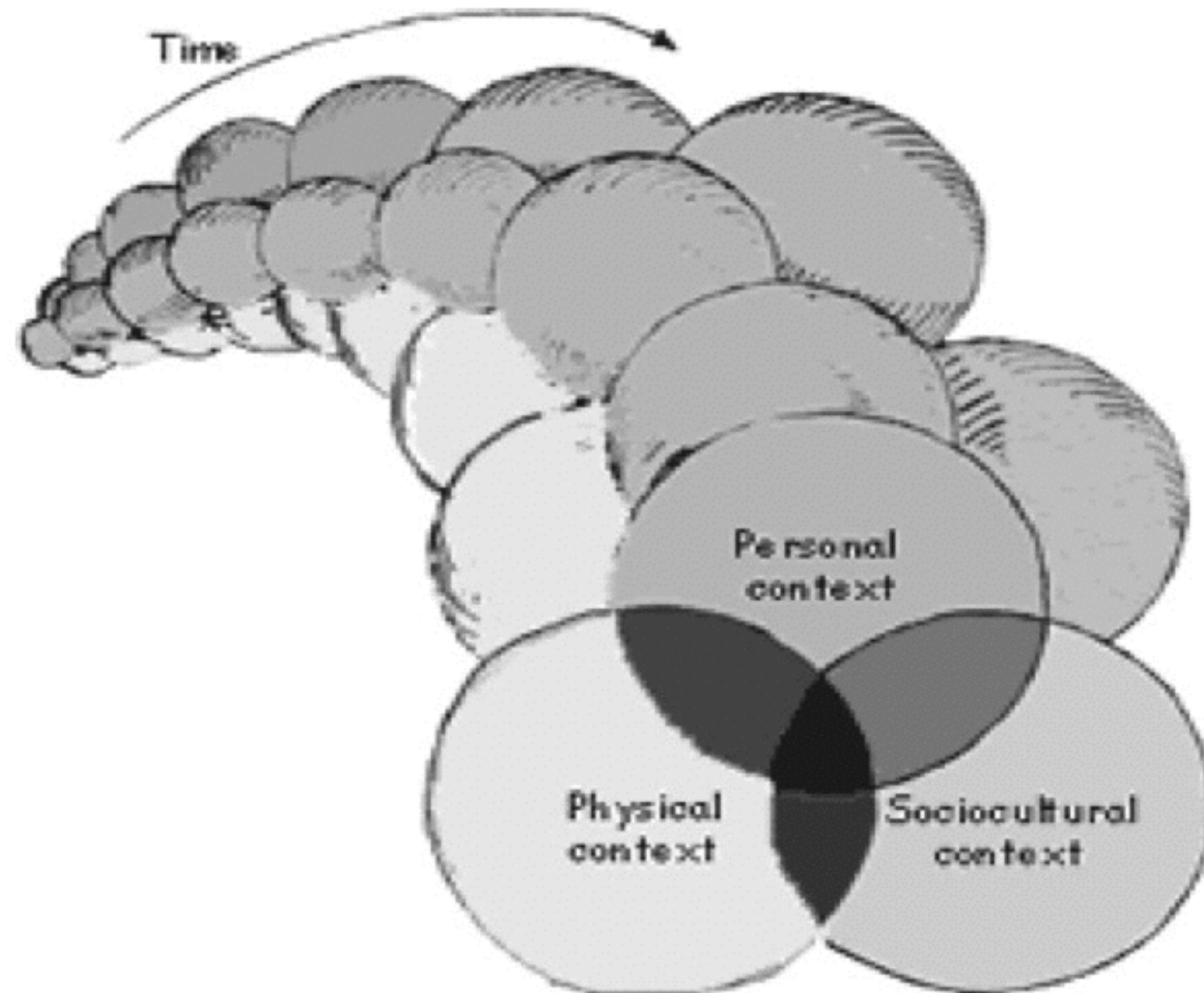
The physical-spatial context affects the individual's behavior (Behavior Setting).

adapted from Hellbrück/Fischer1999



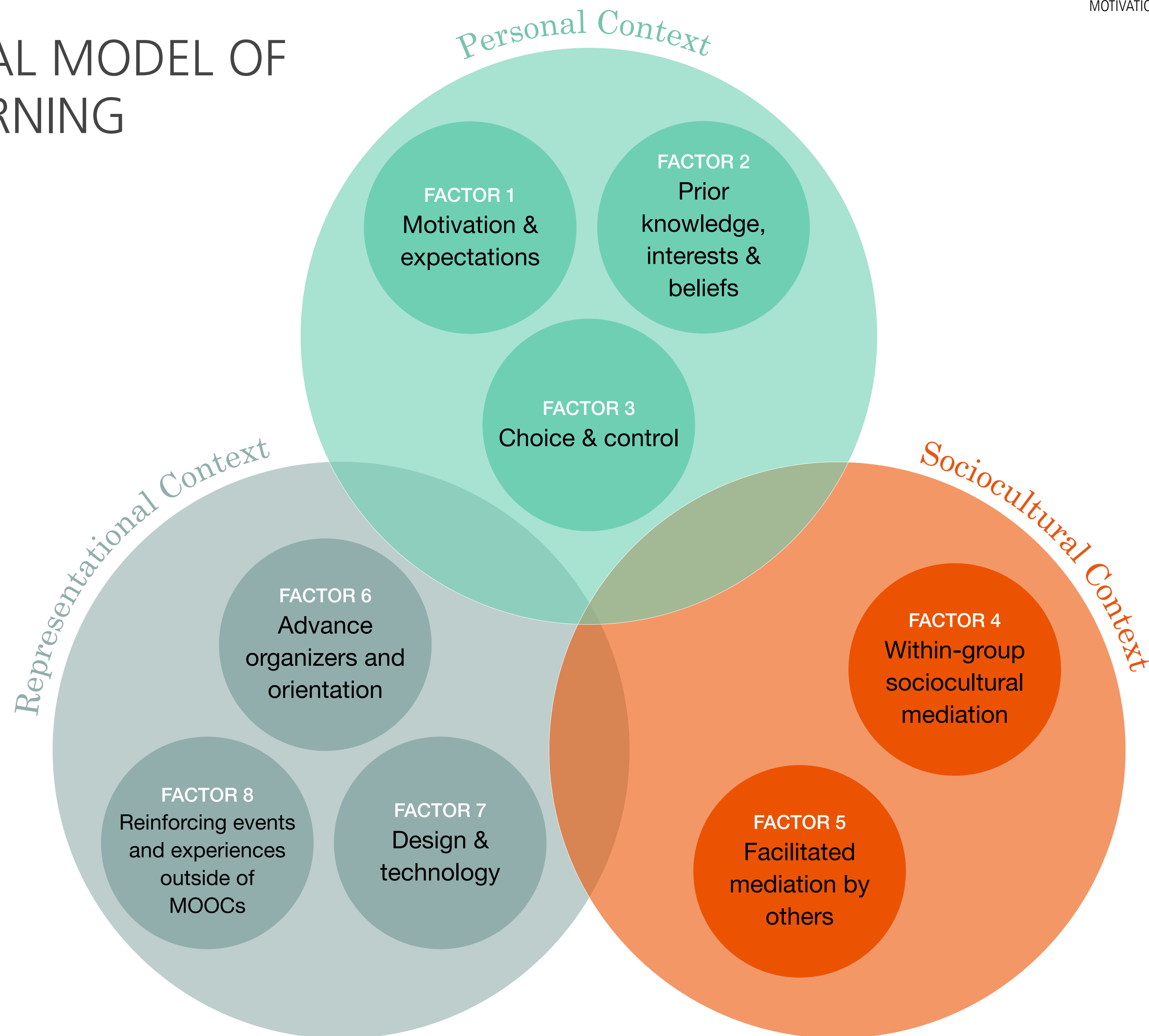
What now?  
Bring it to practice...

# CONTEXTUAL MODEL OF LEARNING



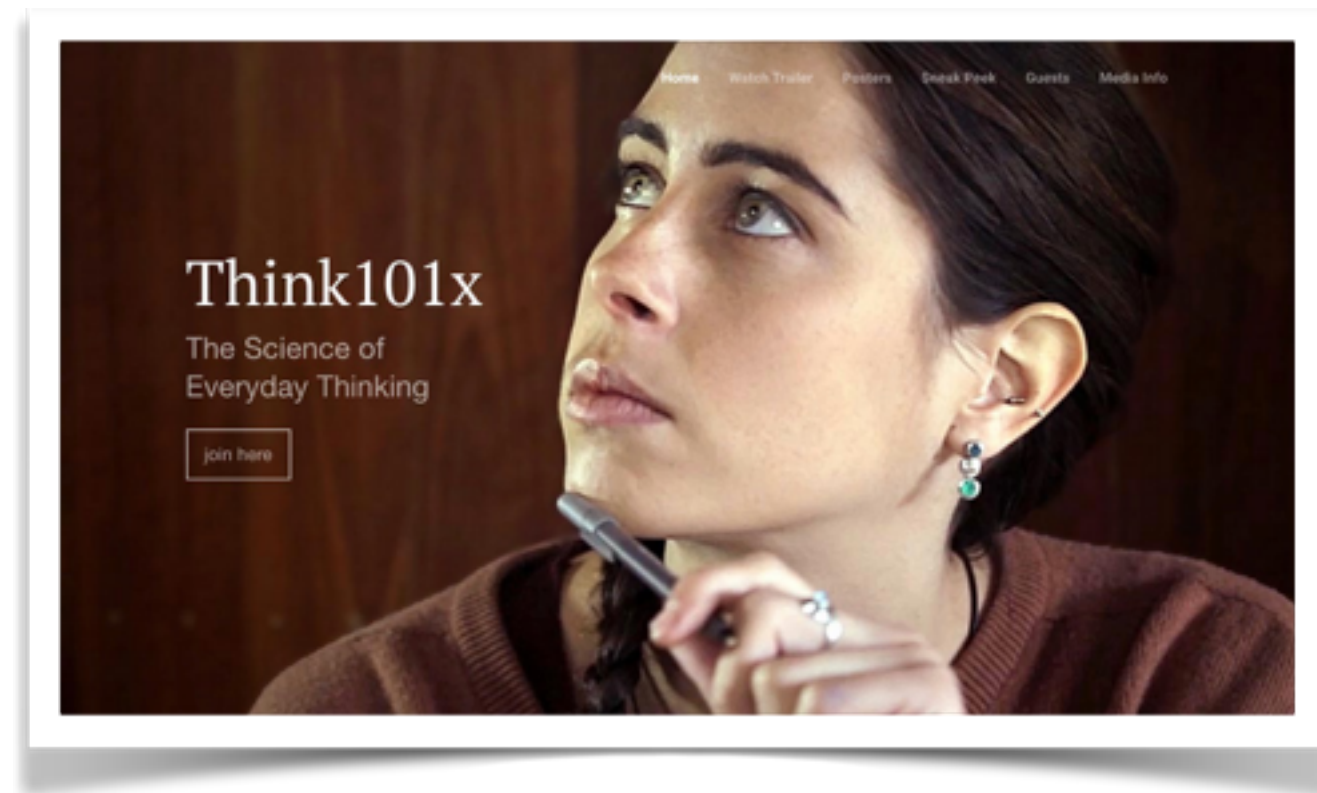
Falk/Dierking 2000

# CONTEXTUAL MODEL OF MOOC LEARNING

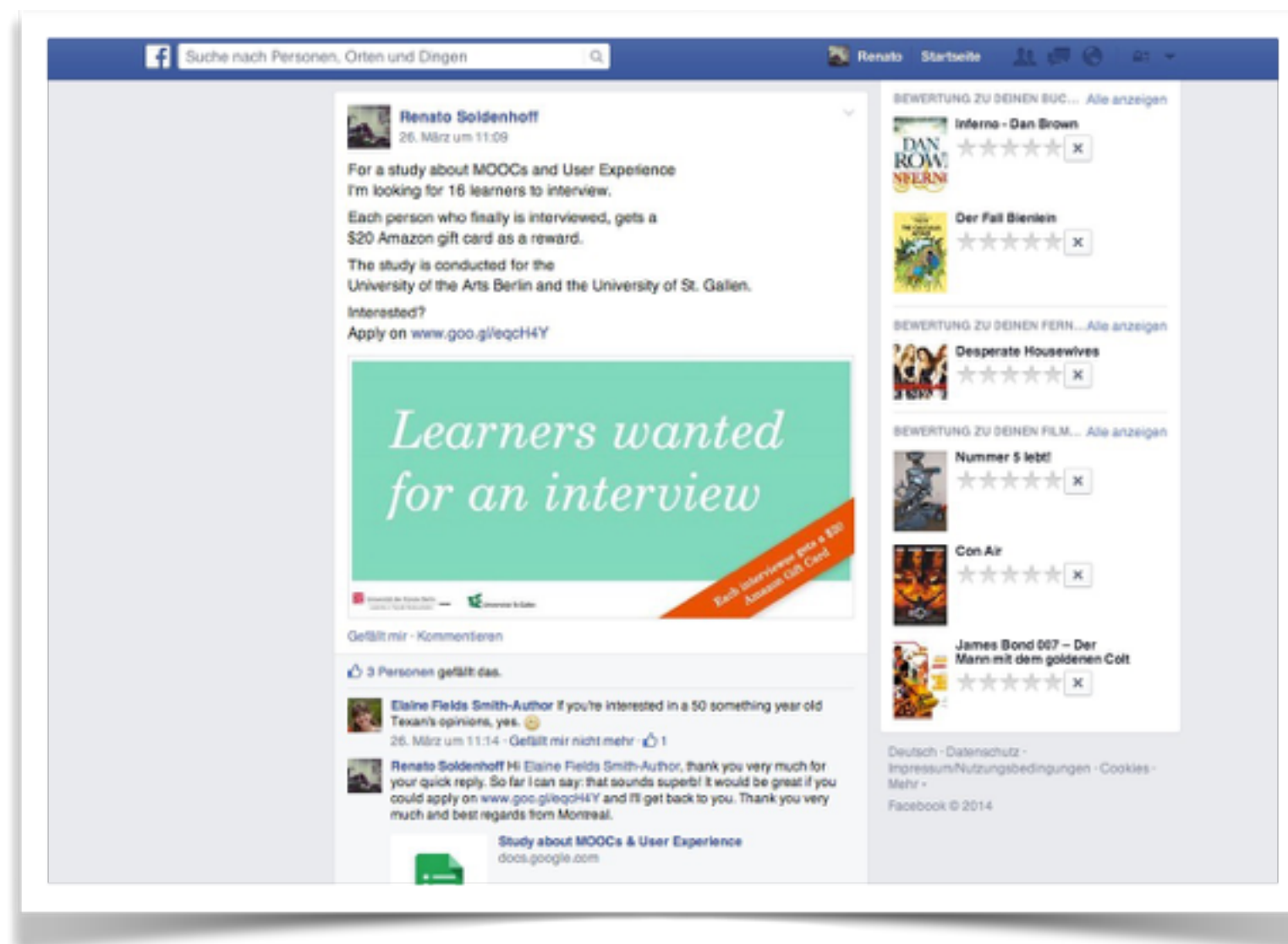
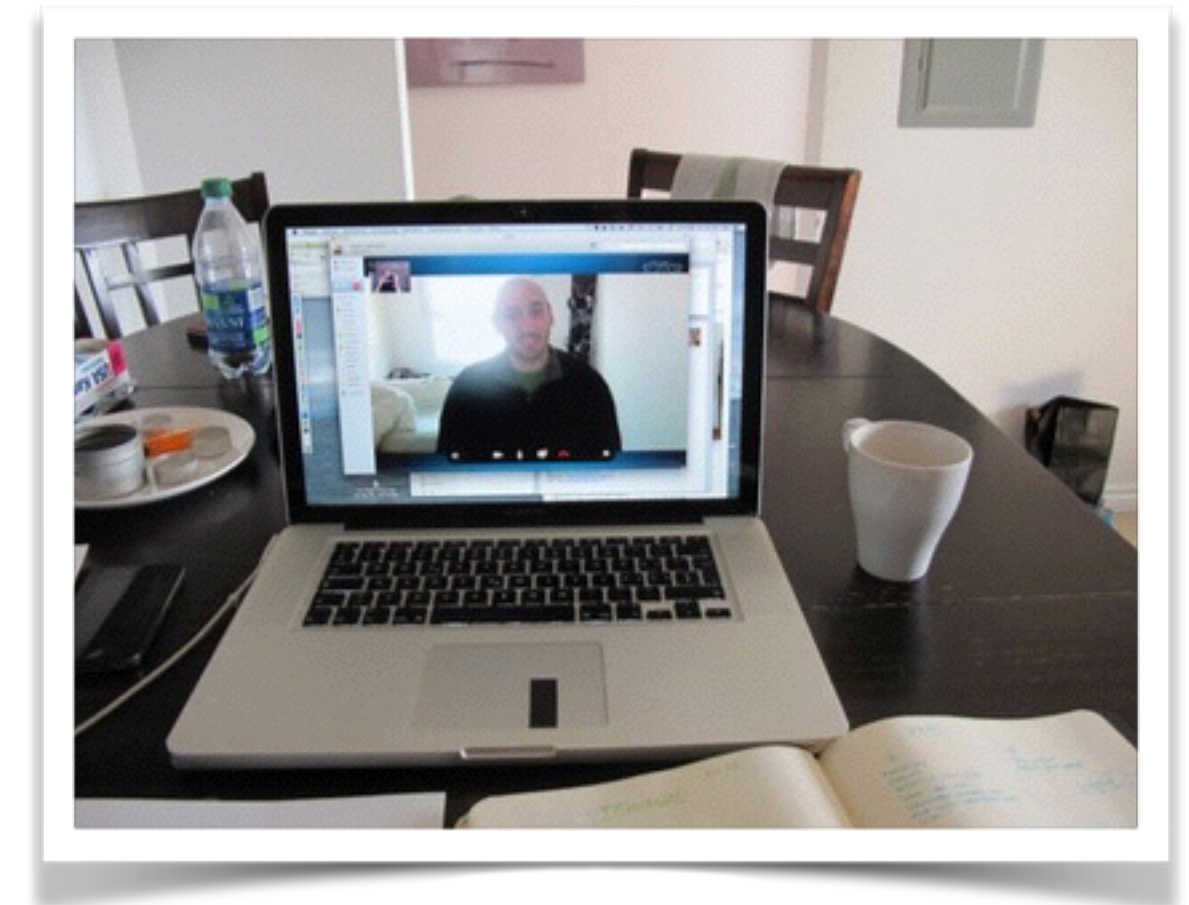


adapted from Falk/Dierking 2000

# RESEARCH DESIGN



Online form



# GUIDED INTERVIEW



Intro

**Pictures & answers**

1st battery of questions

**Successful participation:** motives & personal success

2nd battery of questions

**Active context design:** preparation & participation

3rd battery of questions

**Relevance of the context for a successful participation:**  
achieve aims & improvements MOOCs

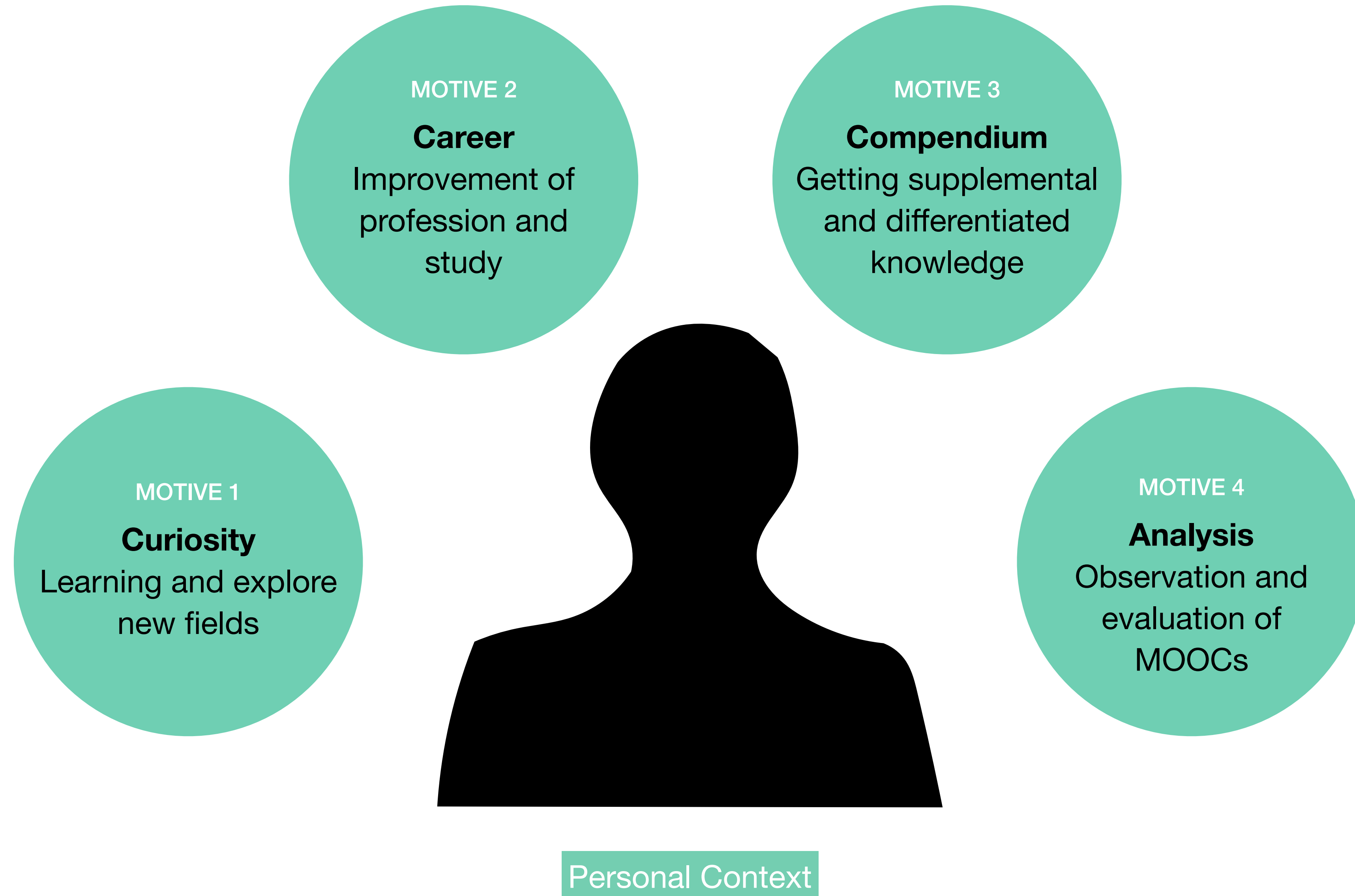
Outro

**3 advices for future MOOC learners**

# 13 PROBANDS



# SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION: MOTIVES



# SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION: PERSONAL SUCCESS

## Individual Success Factors

## Motives

Learn & apply the learned knowledge

**MOTIVE 1  
Curiosity**

**MOTIVE 2  
Career**

**MOTIVE 3  
Compen-  
dium**

**MOTIVE 4  
Analysis**

Certificate

**MOTIVE 1  
Curiosity**

**MOTIVE 2  
Career**

MOTIVE 3  
Compen-  
dium

MOTIVE 4  
Analysis

Improvement of the career

MOTIVE 1  
Curiosity

**MOTIVE 2  
Career**

MOTIVE 3  
Compen-  
dium

MOTIVE 4  
Analysis

Completion & Breakup

**MOTIVE 1  
Curiosity**

**MOTIVE 2  
Career**

MOTIVE 3  
Compen-  
dium

MOTIVE 4  
Analysis

Educational material & behavior

MOTIVE 1  
Curiosity

MOTIV 2  
Karriere

MOTIVE 3  
Compen-  
dium

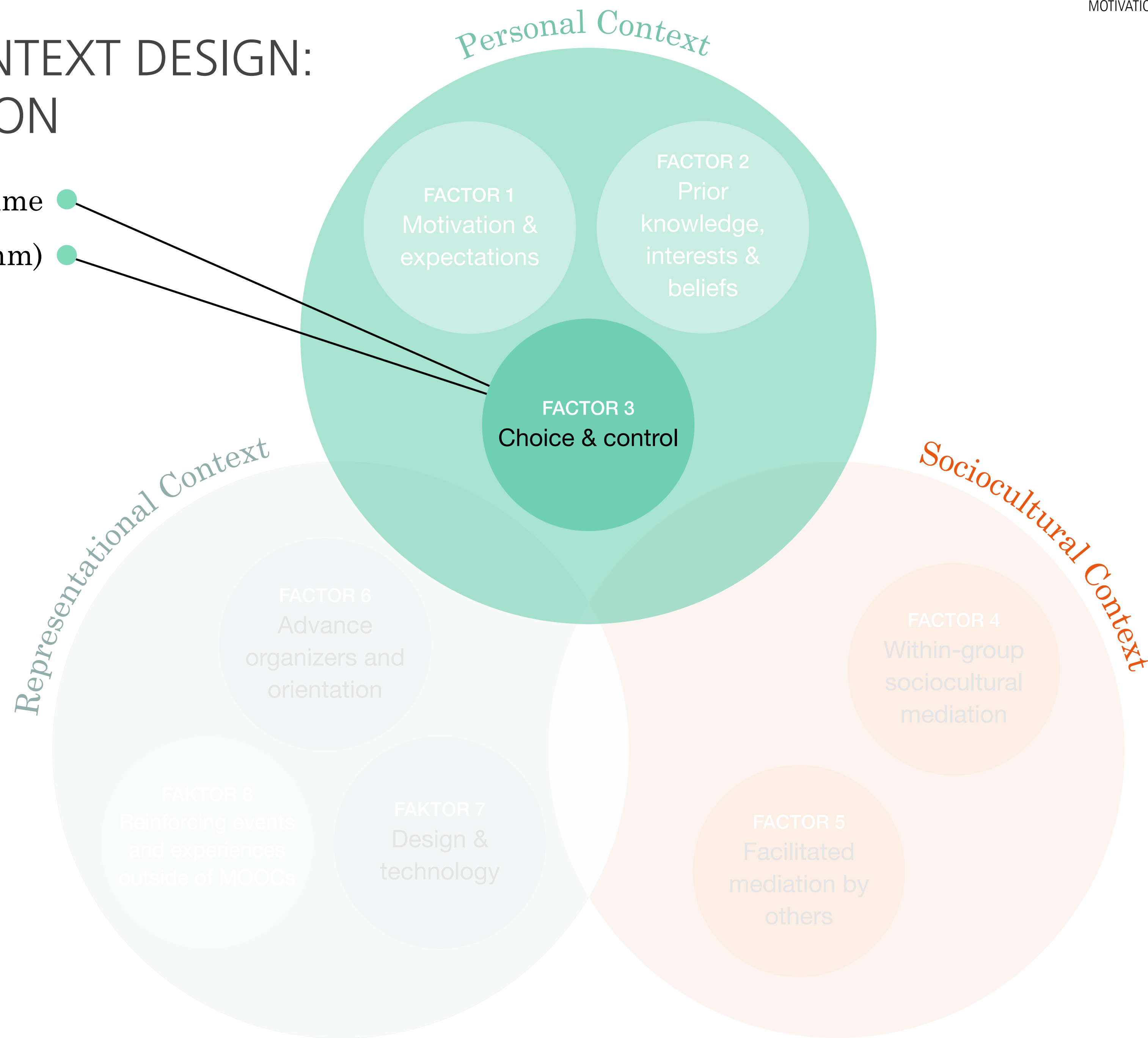
**MOTIVE 4  
Analysis**

Personal Context

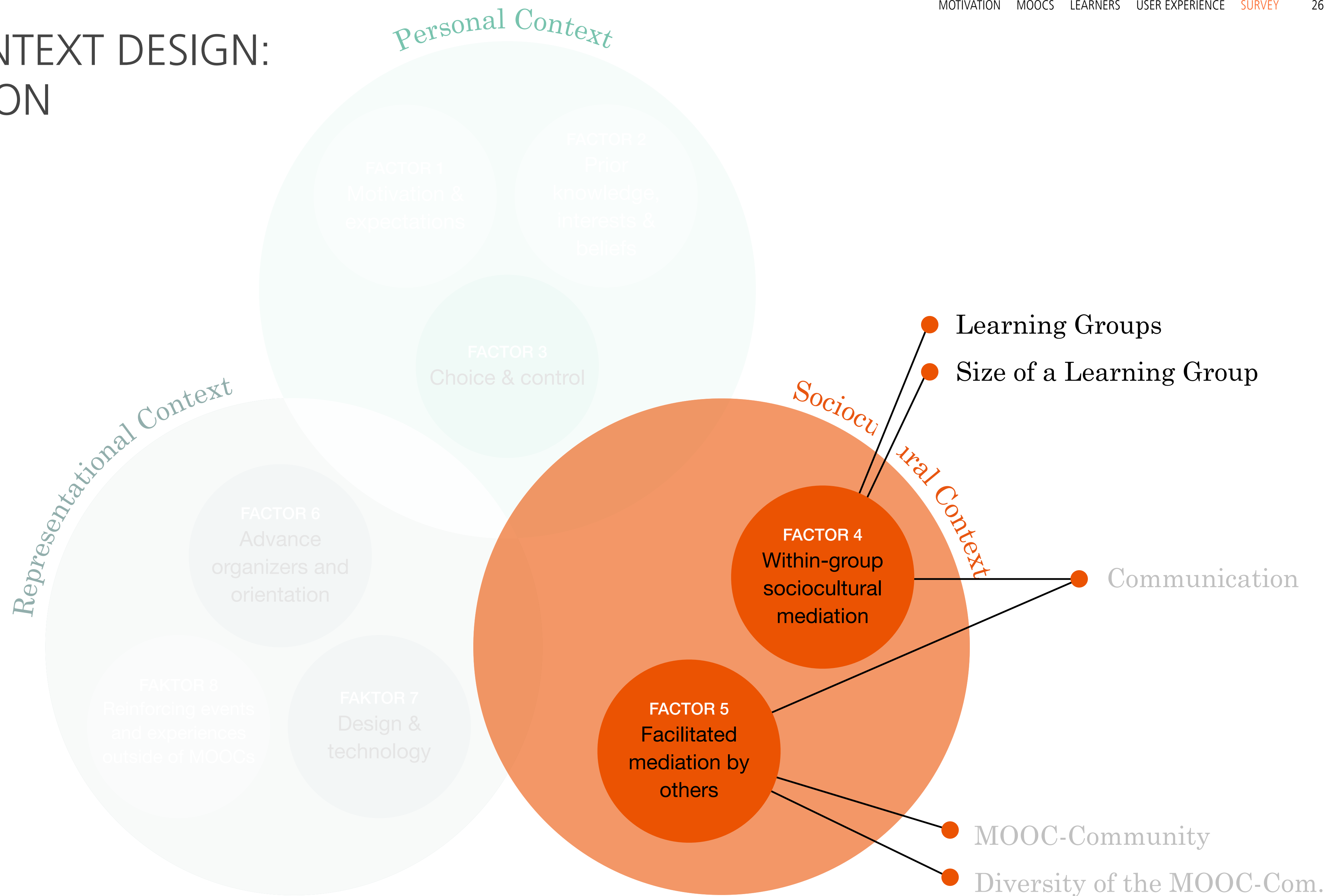


# ACTIVE CONTEXT DESIGN: PARTICIPATION

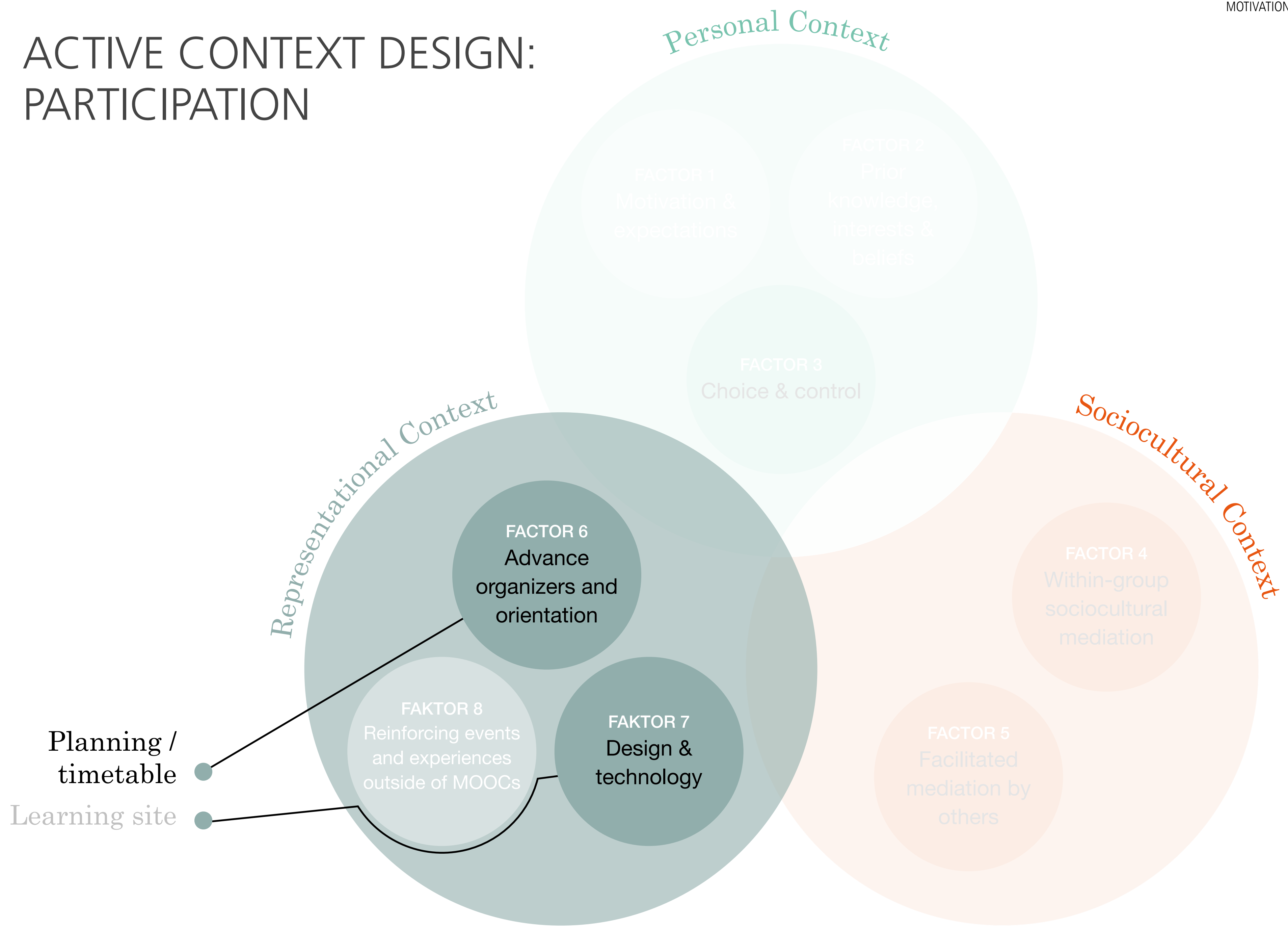
Invested time ●  
Participation (rhythm) ●



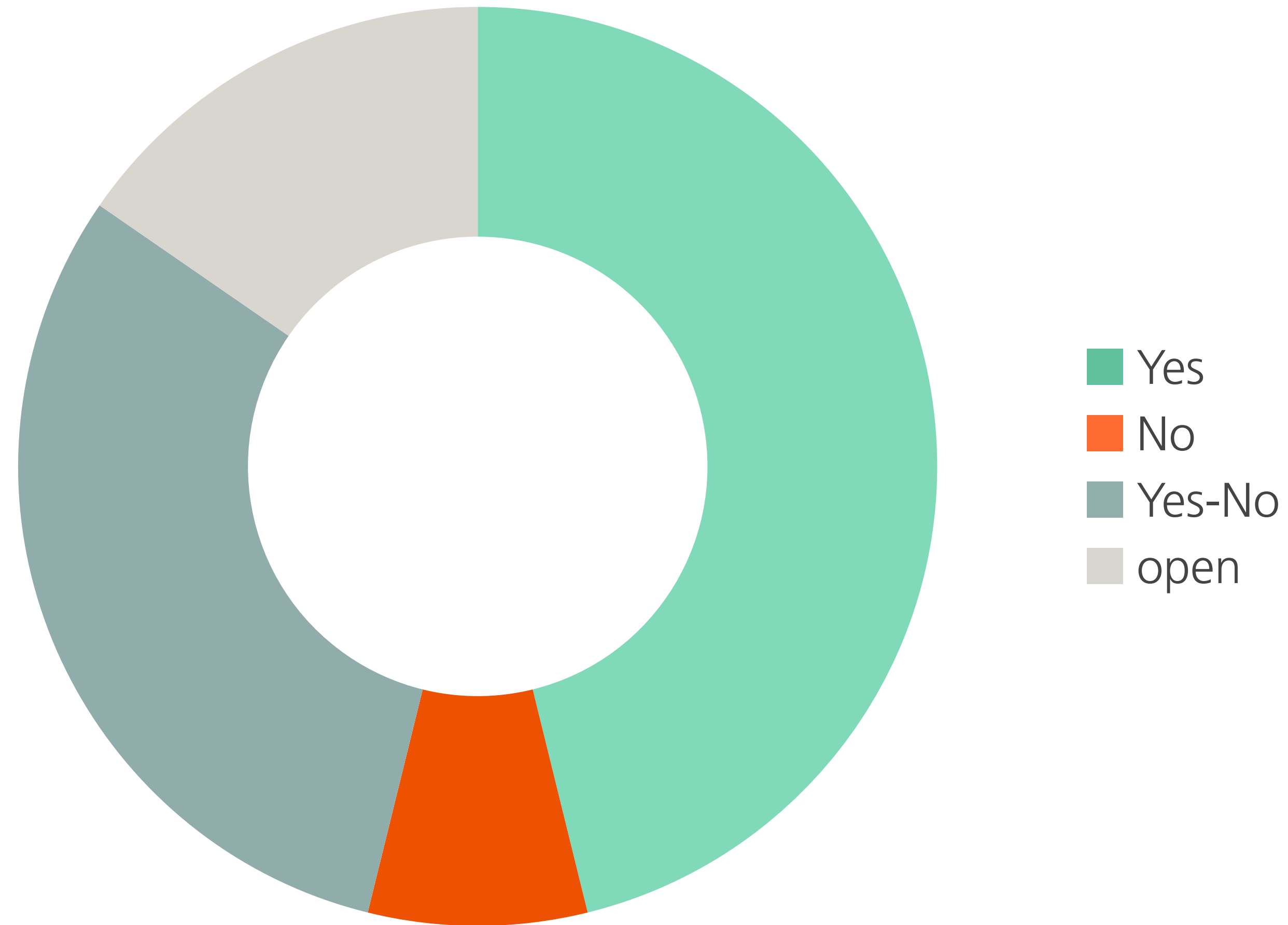
# ACTIVE CONTEXT DESIGN: PARTICIPATION



# ACTIVE CONTEXT DESIGN: PARTICIPATION



# RELEVANCE OF THE CONTEXT FOR THE OWN SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION: ACHIEVE PERSONAL AIMS



# RELEVANCE OF THE CONTEXT FOR THE OWN SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION: IMPROVEMENT OF MOOCS TO SUPPORT

Language

Course Design

Expert Feedbacks

Learning Group

Concept

Mobile

Course Length

Technology

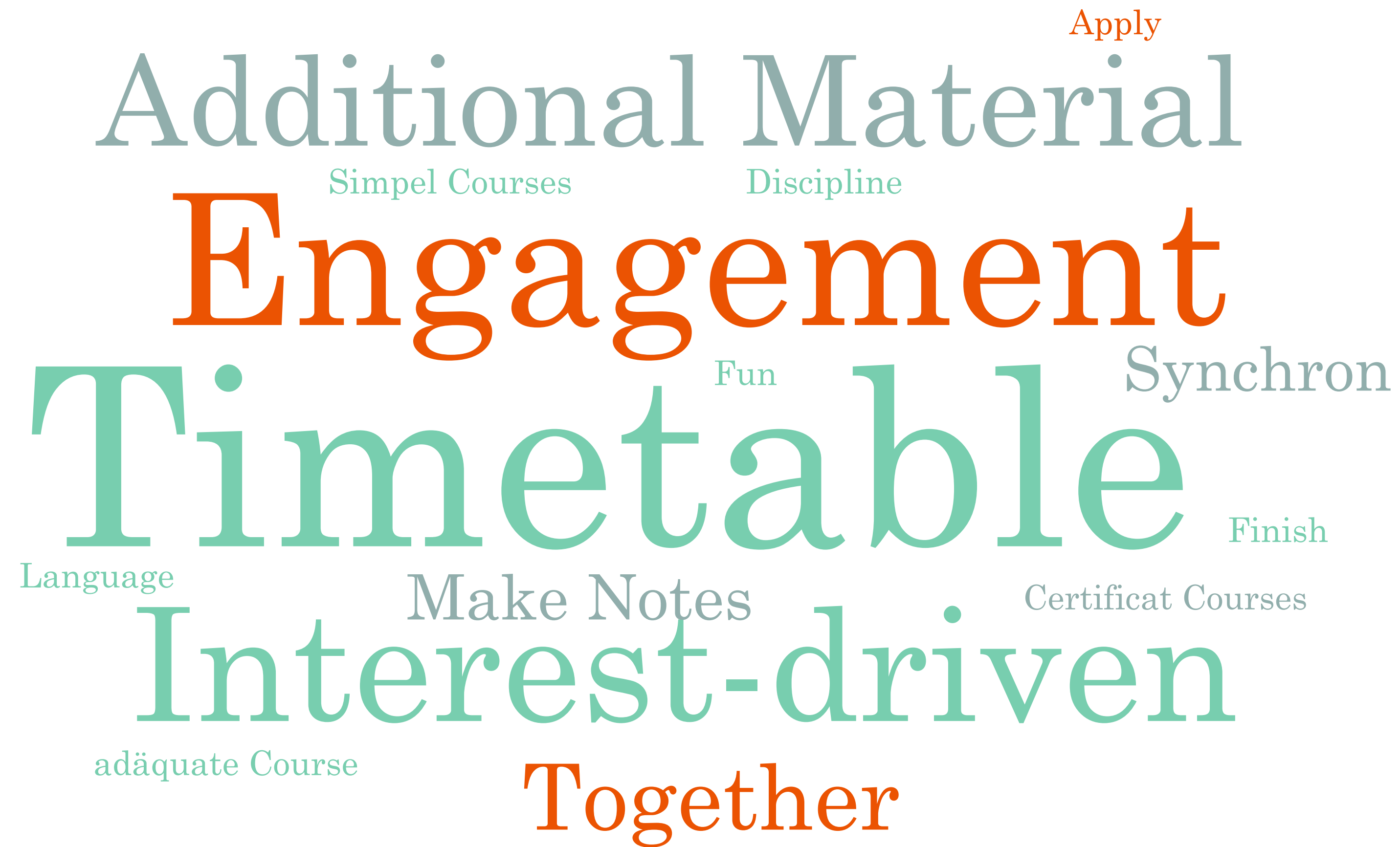
Repetition

Personal Context

Sociocultural Context

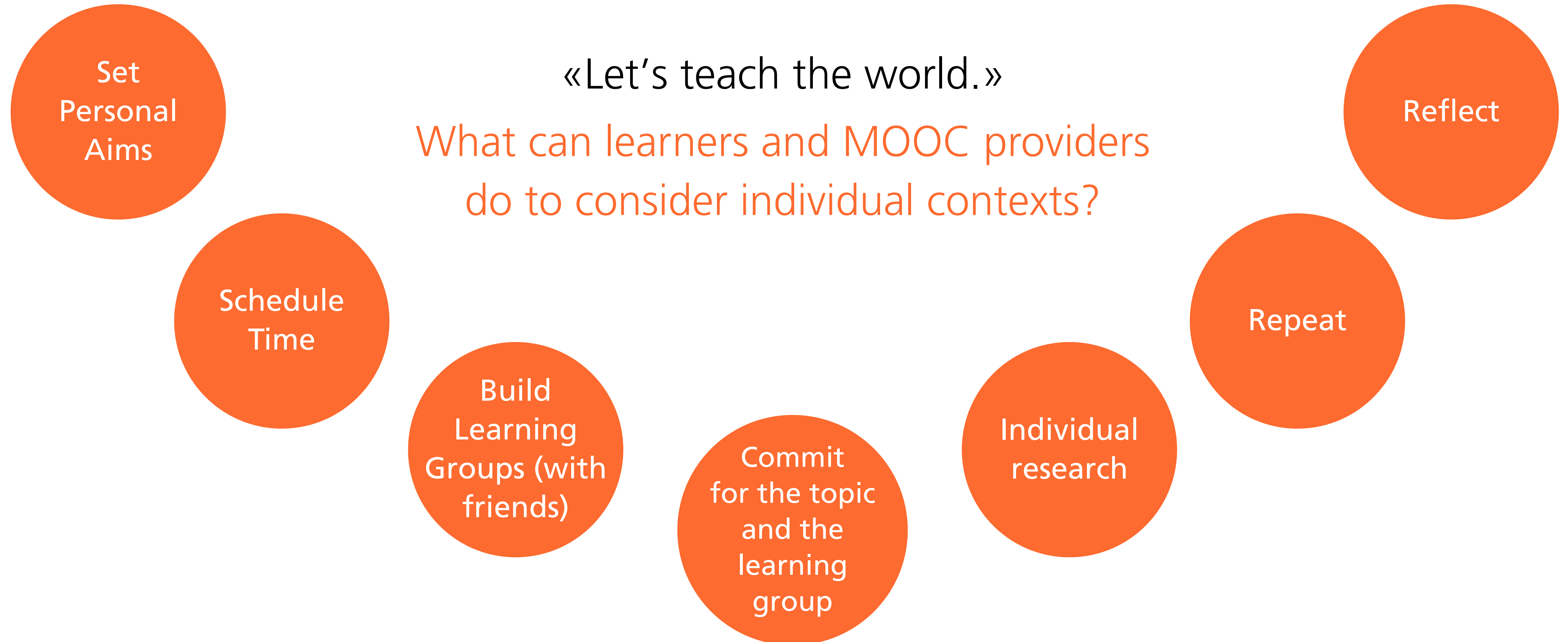
Representational Context

# ADVICES FOR FUTURE MOOC LEARNERS



Personal Context   Sociocultural Context   Representational Context

## 7 POTENTIALS FOR LEARNERS & PROVIDERS



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*Thank you!*

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Zurich University of the Arts

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Renato Soldenhoff  
Head of E-Learning

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Toni-Areal, Pfingstweidstrasse 96  
Postfach, CH-8031 Zurich  
renato.soldenhoff@zhdk.ch

