"A Clear Vision toward Global Competent Teacher"

Presented by Prof. Megha D Gokhe
M.Sc., M.Ed., M.Phil, NET/SET
Thakur Shyamnarayan College of Education and Research
Kandivali (East), Mumbai – 400 101
Mobile No. - 9769931177

The globally competent teacher is that teacher that is adequate and fit to teach globally. He is the teacher globally effective to impart knowledge in the level of education he is trained to teach. He is not only an effective teacher in his nation but in other nations of the world.

What are the strategies and tools we need to fundamentally transform educational practice and educational institutions to meet the needs of young people, teachers, communities and society today, and respond to the changes likely over the coming years? Too often we ask the question – how can we improve what we are doing? Or, how can we 'modernise' education? Too rarely we ask the question – how do we go about testing out and putting into practice fundamental change? Or, more precisely, how can we transform education? – everything from toothbrushes to financial services are described as 'innovative' to the point that the word has become degraded and reduced to mean, too often, a simple incremental improvement or addition.

As Hargreaves (2000) argues, "you cannot have innovation without creativity", and creativity is not simply about incremental improvement, it is also a process which breaks down existing patterns of mind and develops new ways of doing and seeing things. One useful definition for innovation is "the successful exploitation of ideas, generated at the intersection of invention and insight, which leads to the creation of social or economic value".

This sort of innovation is increasingly required in order to make the sorts of fundamental changes in educational practice that are needed to respond to social and technological developments. For example, the changes in organisation of working and social life and in local and global relations that have been brought about by the use of information and communications technologies increasingly place demands on schools to change not only how they teach but what they teach, with an ever greater emphasis being placed upon the development of creative, collaborative and thinking skills, amongst others.

Instructional Strategies

Effective online instruction depends on learning experiences appropriately designed and facilitated by knowledgeable educators. Because learners have different learning styles or a combination of styles, online educators should design activities that address their modes of learning in order to provide significant

experiences for each class participant. In designing online courses, this can best be accomplished by utilizing multiple instructional strategies.

Multiple Instructional Strategies

Traditionally, in a teacher-centered classroom, instructors control their environment because they have a monopoly on information. As faculty are beginning to teach online, learning is becoming more collaborative, contextual and active. Educators must first design their curriculum, goals and objectives and then consider how the online environment can best serve the instructional objectives and activities of that curriculum. This requires changes in pedagogy, with instructors taking the role of facilitators of information while guiding students toward solutions. In order for online learning to be successful, teachers as well as learners must take on new roles in the teaching-learning relationship, and faculty must be willing to release control of learning to the students.

Educators should choose instructional strategies that are most effective for accomplishing a particular educational objective. From this perspective, instructional strategies are tools available to educators for designing and facilitate learning. Below are ten instructional strategies which have been effectively used in the traditional classroom and can likewise be used in the online learning environment:

Learning Contracts , Discussion, Lecture, Self-Directed Learning, Mentorship, Small Group Work, Project, Collaborative Learning, Case Study, Forum

Learning Contracts

Learning contracts connect educational needs to individual student needs and are useful when there is diversity in learner needs and interests in a class. A learning contract is a formal agreement written by a learner which details what will be learned, how the learning will be accomplished, the period of time involved, and the specific evaluation criteria to be used in judging the completion of the learning. Learning contracts help the educator and learner share the responsibility for learning.

Learning contracts can be extremely effective in the online environment. Because physically meeting with the class to discuss learning goals, objectives, and expectations is not possible online, instructors must be very clear and concise in what is expected from the learner. Likewise, the learner must also be clear about what he/she expects from the instructor and the course. A learning contract can facilitate negotiation and clarity of learning goals and outcomes. Sample learning contracts can be placed on a web page for the student to use as examples, and students can be encouraged to brainstorm ideas for learning contracts with their online peers as well as negotiate the final contract with the instructor through utilizing email or online conferencing.

Lecture

The lecture is one of the most frequently used instructional methods in education. It assumes the educator to be the expert and is an efficient way of disseminating information. Most educators agree that the purpose of lectures is to lay foundations as the student works through the subject, and good lecturers know their students and develop their lectures according to the students' needs. Most importantly, lectures are most effective when used in combination with other instructional strategies.

Online lectures can be presented in a variety of ways. Lecture notes can be placed on a web page for the learner to review. Notes can be put together in a packet and either downloaded from the Internet or sent via snail mail. Lectures can also be presented via audio or video over the Internet.. Short lectures provide enough information to serve as a basis for further reading, research, or other learning activities. Another obvious advantage of online lectures is that they are readily available for students to revisit again and again as needed.

Discussion

Discussion is the instructional strategy most favoured by learners because it is interactive and encourages active, participatory learning. The discussion format encourages learners to analyze alternative ways of thinking and acting and assists learners in exploring their own experiences so they can become better critical thinkers. The discussion is often the heart of an online course.

The Internet offers several modes for discussion including mailing lists which focus on particular topics and online conferencing programs. Both of these options utilize asynchronous communication. Synchronous (real time) communication can be offered by utilizing chat rooms or text-based virtual reality environments, better known as Multi-user Domains (MUDs) or Multi-user Object Oriented Environments (MOOs).

Self-Directed Learning

Self-directed learning is learning initiated and directed by the learner and can include self-paced, independent, and individualized learning as well as self-instruction. Whatever terminology is used, self-directed learning places the responsibility for learning directly on the learner. Learners who take the initiative in learning and are proactive learners learn more and better than passive learners (reactive learners). Online learning supports the self-directed learner in pursuing individualized, self-paced learning activities.

Mentorship

The aim of mentorship is to promote learner development drawing out and giving form to what the student already knows. A mentor serves as a guide rather than a provider of knowledge and serves the function of introducing students to the new world, interpreting it for them, and helping them to learn what they need to

know to function in it. Mentors in education teach by interpreting the environment and modelling expected behaviours. They also support, challenge, and provide vision for their students.

A major benefit to online mentorship is the opportunity for frequent, convenient communication between mentor and student. Weekly or even daily journals and communications can be sent between mentor and student via e-mail, providing an ongoing "dialogue" which supports the development of the mentor relationship and offers numerous opportunities for timely feedback on student questions, concerns and issues.

Small Group Work

In small groups learners can discuss content, share ideas, and solve problems. They present their own ideas as well as consider ideas put forth by others. In this way, they can be exposed to a variety of viewpoints on a given subject. There are many small group formats that encourage and provide opportunities for interaction:

The discussion group allows learners to reflect on a subject under discussion and present their views. Discussion within the small group is often on high intellectual levels - specifically analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The instructor's role is to act as a consultant to the groups.

Role playing is another format available for use with small groups and involves recreating a situation relating to a real-world problem in which participants act out various roles. Role playing can be used to simulate real-life group work situations and can help learners gain a fuller understanding of a problem or situation.

Games requiring two or more groups to compete while attempting to meet a set of objectives are another form of small group learning. The game follows a set of rules and procedures and information is provided which requires decision making.

Online learning environments offer several distinct benefits for small group work. First, they allow small groups to work independently while still having access to the instructor. In some cases where it is difficult for all members of an online class to meet synchronously, small groups can be organized according to their time zones, making it possible to find a convenient time to meet synchronously. Larger groups can benefit by communicating asynchronously via conferencing programs. A second benefit of online environments for group work is that they equalize control among participants. Factors such as geography, gender, or disabilities do not disadvantage learners in this environment. Finally, the instructor is able to respond directly to questions and needs of particular groups without taking the time of other groups.

Project

Online projects give students an opportunity to pursue their special interests and can be done individually or within groups. Projects also provide students with practical experience and a sense of accomplishment. Using projects in a learning activity makes the learning more relevant to the learners. Products can be shared with

others in the class and critiqued. Many times an individual project is only critiqued by the facilitator, but by sharing individual projects with other participants, the learner has the opportunity to obtain more diverse viewpoints and feedback.

Many of the instructional strategies discussed above can be considered group projects. Group projects can include simulations, role playing, case studies, problem solving exercises, group collaborative work, debates, small group discussion, and brainstorming. As with individual projects, participants in group projects should receive peer feedback to expose them to diverse viewpoints. With independent and group projects learners pursue special interests, write or create for an audience, and publish or present their findings and conclusions via the Internet. The Internet provides the potential of receiving feedback from experts or interested peers outside the course by accessing the project online.

Collaborative Learning

Collaborative learning is the process of getting two or more students to work together to learn. Students often work in small groups composed of participants with differing ability levels and using a variety of learning activities to master material initially developed by an instructor, or construct knowledge on substantive issues. Each member of the team is responsible for learning what is taught and for helping teammates learn.

Online learning models are natural environments for collaborative learning, but they are not collaborative learning environments by definition. Learners may interact with other participants without collaborating, for example when receiving on-line tutorial help. Learning activities have to be specifically and somewhat carefully designed to work effectively.

Case Study

The case study is a teaching strategy which requires learners to draw upon their past experiences, is participatory and has action components which are links to future experience. The key to a successful case study is the selection of an appropriate problem situation which is relevant both to the interests and experience level of learners and to the concepts being taught. In the online environment case studies can be presented on web pages and discussed in conferencing groups. Cases can be developed by class groups as collaborative projects. In addition, the vast resources of the Internet can be tapped by students and educators to contribute data, information and expert advice to case development and analysis.

Forum

The forum is an open discussion carried on by one or more resource people and an entire group. The moderator guides the discussion and the audience raises and discusses issues, make comments, offers

information, or asks questions of the resource person(s) and each other. There are two variations of the forum: the panel and the symposium.

Because the online environment facilitates group communication, it is ideal for the types of information exchange typical in forums. In fact, the forum can be more convenient and effective in the online environment than in the traditional classroom because speakers, experts and moderator can participate without having to travel or even be available at a particular time. Both synchronous and asynchronous communication can be utilized to support online learning forums.

Online Education Access and Success

Considering the history of human learning, three major types of learning systems can be seen regarding the medium used for connecting learners to the learning context. The first learning system can be called S-learning, using speech as its primary medium to promote learning. The second learning system, gradually gained prominence using print as its primary learning medium can be considered as P-learning. Very recently, around 1990's, E-learning has become all encompassing and important learning phenomenon and can be regarded as the third learning system which uses the electronic technology as its primary medium for human learning. An effective and successful online learning experience concentrates on 3 C's content, communication and community.

Formats for Online Learning

 Teacher-Led:

This mode of online learning is parallel to the role of a traditional classroom teacher except in a virtual environment. The online teacher provides the content, direction, and feedback to the students. The teacher presents content, prepares time schedule, gives assignment, establishes deadlines, administers tests, and grades student work. The teacher plays an active role in monitoring student learning. This delivery format is totally dependent on the use of technology tools such as e-mail, chat, web meetings etc. to communicate and interact with students.

Blended Learning

To support face to face instruction, digital material was used to play a supplementary role. A blended learning approach combines face to face classroom methods with computer-mediated activities to form an integrated instructional approach. Blended learning is a balanced mix of traditional face-to-face instructional activities with appropriately designed online experiences. The goal of a blended approach is to joint the best aspects of both face to face and online instruction. This format links the communication benefits of a traditional

classroom environment with the power of internet-based learning tools and resources. Educators utilize this format to expand and reinforce classroom-based instructional activities and to extend learning beyond the classroom walls an time.

Teacher-Facilitated

The teacher acts as a facilitator and mentor providing resources and advice to students as they engage in the process of learning. As the instructional leader, the teacher is responsible for curriculum, instruction, and assessment. However, student input in these areas is respected and valued. The teacher established learning goals based on standards and addresses these goals in broad-based, interdisciplinary units of instructions that allow students to make cross-curricular connections. In this format, the teacher acts as a "guide on the side" rather than as a "sage on the stage." Students, therefore, become self-reliant as they learn to seek help from each other and to solve problems for themselves. The teacher provides opportunities for students to share the results of their efforts. A key role of the teacher is that of a facilitator to ensure that students are engaged and making progress.

Self-Paced

A growing number of online educational products and services can be used by students with no teacher involvement. These products are often referred to as "self-paced" and they usually work best for highly independent learning who regularly demonstrate self-initiative and motivation, and require little guidance and direction. In self-paced learning, the content, learning sequence, pace of learning and possibly even the media are determined by the individual learner. "Learners' Autonomy" is respected. A self-paced approach allows the learners to make many of the decisions about when, where, what and how quickly to learn. The teacher functions as a guide and facilitator of learning modelling life-long learning. As much as students need knowledge in core subjects, considering the fact that knowledge keeps on changing and increasing with such a fast pace, they also need to know how to keep learning continually throughout their lives. Life-long learners keep themselves updated and demonstrate information and communication skills; and problem-solving skills; and interpersonal and self-directional skills.

Conclusion

The online learning environment allows educators and students to exchange ideas and information, work together on projects, around the clock, from anywhere in the world, using multiple communication modes. Given the advantages and resources of this rich learning environment, how can multiple instructional strategies best be utilized for online learning? Just as in the traditional classroom, instructional strategies are most effective when employed specifically to meet particular learning goals and objectives. Online learning

can employ any of the strategies discussed here. Much of the power of learning via the Internet lies in its capacity to support multiple modes of communication including any combination of student-student, student-faculty, faculty-student, faculty-faculty, student-others, others-students, etc. Taking into account the varied learning styles of learners and providing opportunities for self-directed and collaborative learning, educators can facilitate powerful, effective courses geared to achieve specific learning goals and outcomes using the vast resources and capacities of online learning.

The online learning environment is, after all, just another learning environment, in some ways similar to and in some ways different from more traditional environments such as conventional classrooms, seminar rooms, or labs. When we move our class onto the Internet, we should plan for and make the best use of the online environment.

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