

Synchronous and Asynchronous Learning Objectives in Higher Education System

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ABSTRACT

This article deals with the perspectives of asynchronous and synchronous teaching, choosing appropriate methods and techniques of learning for students, designing learning objectives and course content, the way teachers deliver their training/teaching, as well as students' availability in online and offline mode of interaction.

KEYWORDS: *online learning, learning objectives, synchronous, asynchronous learning, course content, mode of interaction.*

Asynchronous and synchronous learning has multiple and relevant opportunities for both the teacher and the learner. The array of teaching/learning options, the readily available preparation and delivery of curriculum and resources, and the relevance to contemporary information and presentation formats capture opportunities for educators and educational needs.

Choosing the method of learning for students will depend on a number factors such as learning objectives, course content, the way teachers deliver their training/teaching and students' availability. When there is a choice between two formats of online or distance learning my own preference would go to hybrid learning model which unites both formats: asynchronous and synchronous.

Asynchronous learning doesn't require real-time and immediate interaction it can give our students some time for digesting suggested materials and learning them thoroughly. In asynchronous model students will deal with available content first which they may access any time suitable for their schedule. Moreover, asynchronous learning will help to engage students into a wide variety of instructional interactions and tasks, which students may do independently, or in collaboration. In my view, this learning format can be applied mostly to teacher-student and student-student modes of interactions.

Asynchronous learning supplemented with synchronous learning tools such as zoom conferences, educational video conferences, interactive webinars, online discussions, chats and lectures etc. will bring a variety to learning online benefitting both teachers and students of live interactions. A combination of both formats will offer flexibility needed to reach different students with varied schedules and available resources.

Before applying a blend of asynchronous and synchronous learning to our students as a teacher, we should do a lot of planning and appropriate delivery of the course content. To my view, simple tasks, processes and standardized procedures will work best with teacher-student and student-student lines of communication. In asynchronous learning

process, students will learn how to be dependent on their peers or group mates and be capable of solving simple virtual class problems. On the contrary, more complex processes such as open discussions, Q&A, problem solving etc. should be organized in the presence of teacher i.e., during synchronous learning. From my personal standpoint, majority of modes of interactions will suit synchronous learning context that are just the matter of careful organization.

In writing objectives, we have to take into consideration the level of students, their interests, and learner preferences. Differentiated instruction means providing multiple choice of tasks for learners' preferences. The objective here is to involve learners and provide with tasks that are of their interest and capacity. Some students are good at writing tasks, while others have ability to constructing or performing an action.

Objectives for multiple-choice questions: to pick out important features and information via guiding questions.

Objectives for open-ended questions: to apply cognitive load in a meaningful way; to analyze and reflect on their own learning experiences.

Applying materials in a meaningful way taking into consideration students' attention is important in teaching. This can be accomplished by using techniques like: segmenting (cutting information into small pieces), signaling (highlighting main points with symbols, colors, and cueing), weeding (eliminating extraneous information, complex background).

Learners will be involved actively by packaging video with interactive questions, using guiding questions,

Instructor's notes facilitate learners to pick out important information, focus on similarities and differences of concepts.

Recommendations to colleagues:

1. Think about the cognitive, performance and affective goals in designing materials
2. Chunk the info and keep the germane ones.
3. Include interactive questions to make the learning meaningful
4. Check their comprehension by assigning open-ended questions and reflections.
5. Be up to date and keep lifelong learning.

Language elements are crucial as we teach the content with the help of the language:

1. the key words of the topic or we call it metalanguage to use academic language in oral or written presentation or report, to comprehend the context;

2. language structures to construct appropriate content;
3. language skills to integrate and reinforce;
4. language strategies to better acquiring and managing the tasks.

In writing objectives an instructor should be aware of the theories of learning:

1. appropriate action verb;
2. specific and measurable outcome;
3. learner-friendly instructions that are easy to follow and fulfill.

Recommendations for the colleagues on writing objectives:

1. Be specific, measurable and clear in writing objectives;
2. Write the objectives from learners' perspective taking into account their age, level, preference and needs;
3. Start from the backwards thinking about the outcome of the module.

Objectives of this task are:

1. students will revise and retrieve the previous topics;
2. students will self-assess and check their comprehension;
3. students reflect on the inputs of the course.

According to Bloom's taxonomy, students reflect on the following outcomes:

1. Remembering: identifying, remembering, listing, retrieving, naming;(type of task: self-assess tests)
2. Understanding: categorizing, classifying. (type of task: self-assess tests)

Types of Sequencing:

The Iterative Pattern: Repeating the Same Assignment, Varying it by Topic

The teacher guides learners to revise the home tasks they skipped due to poor net connection, or lack of time, or irresponsibility through repeating the same topics but varying them by different assignments. The designed task will help those students to catch up with the group and get some points to show their results.

Recommendations to colleagues:

1. Design online tasks keeping in mind the aim and objectives of the lesson, or module;
2. Don't be allured by multi-functional online tools, instead take your learners' level, LL and ICT competence, sociocultural aspects too.
3. Scaffold your task from easy to complex to build their skills and confidence;

4. Give them chance to complete their tasks by varying the tasks due to their strengths and interests.

As a conclusion it can be assumed that online teaching demands a great deal of dedication in setting clear objectives, delivery of curriculum, course content, relevant resources, contemporary information, learner involvement, learner-friendly instructions, specific measurable outcome.

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