Long Distance Teaching "Elearning" Versus In-Classroom Teaching

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Abstract: This article illustrates the differences of long-distance teaching that is e-Learning (online learning or learning via Internet) and in-classroom education. These extraordinary times caused by the CORONAVIRUS-19 have been challenging to all of us—teachers, students, schools, colleges, and most importantly—the families. Therefore, this research article explores the teaching aspects of long-distance learning versus in-classroom education. It will also provide an insight into teaching methodologies for eLearning compared to pedagogical approach to in-classroom teaching.

Keywords: Long-Distance Teaching, Long-Distance Learning, e-Learning, In-Classroom Teaching.

Introduction

The teachers of all the subjects have been experiencing challenges in teaching the students across the schools, colleges, institutes and universities. And, it has not been either easy on the students and their families. In these extraordinary times due to the COVID-19, we all have to make necessary adjustments to accommodate learning via Internet and Information Technology such as smart phones and computers as a result of Virus and quarantine procedures. Therefore, we, the teachers, need to ensure that our students are continuing to learn per their educational curriculum. However, it has not been an easy transition for all of us—teachers, students, educational administrators, our families, and our jobs because all of us had to continue working and become teachers to our own children at home at the same time.

Argument

While it is seems that teaching online may not be as difficult or challenging, in fact, it is! Even though, we have high-speed Internet, Information Technology, and ever fast and available tablets, laptops and smart phones—our teaching methodologies, however, are not up in par with it. The concept of teaching online is not new and its dominance has been vibrant in the United States for the purposes of only obtaining the specialized courses for college and higher academia certifications. Even then, the long-distance learning involved on-site (on campus) and off-site (online) courses resulting in hybrid learning and teaching.

However, due to COVID-19, our world has changed. We all have to adapt and adopt better practices to teach online and make it as pedagogically sound as if it were in-classroom teaching. It may take some time but through the consistent trials of teaching online, we may be able to get to the point of sound pedagogical teaching practices for long-distance teaching.

Literature Reviewon Long-Distance Learning "eLearning." According to the Office of Distance Education and eLearning from the Ohio State University in the United States of America at **https://odee.osu.edu/instructors/distance-education/quality-assurance/teaching-strategies** there are four important strategies that have significant impact on student learning, engagement and satisfaction. They are Instructor Presence, Student Peer Contact, Variety of Teaching Methods, and, Meta-cognition and Student Support.

Although, there is one review on long-distance learning, I believe it is the most relevant to consider in this article because it specializes on e-Learning and its current website has immense resources.

We are all experiencing challenges that we all need to overcome at our jobs whether we are teachers, doctors, nurses, cooks, drivers, engineers and many other essential workers. Having necessary resources at hand are of the utmost importance when we all have to make it work within the means we all dwell.

The teachers of all the subjects have been experiencing challenges in teaching the students across the schools, colleges, institutes and universities. And, it has not been easy on the students and their families. In these extraordinary times due to the COVID-19, we all have to make necessary adjustments to accommodate learning via Internet as a result of quarantine.

Therefore, we, the teachers, need to ensure that our students are continuing to learn per their educational curriculum. However, it has not been an easy transition for all of us—teachers, students, educational administrators, our families, and our jobs because all of us had to continue working and become teachers to our own children at home. Therefore, when it comes to teaching via Internet or long-distance learning, the Ohio State University, USA, the Office of Distance Education and eLearning and provides incredible tools to accomplish this task.

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Online Teaching Strategies

According to research, there are four areas that help teaching online effectively. It is important to note that these four areas could be integrated into the course or some. It is not necessary to include all four areas to have a successful online class.

Instructor Presence

The presence of the instructor outside the classroom teaching is utterly important because it enables the students to hear, listen and reciprocate the learning. The students would feel more comfortable knowing the fact that their learning abilities are supervised via several steps:

The first one is regular planned instructor communications with the class via regular announcements or weekly scheduled virtual meetings.

The second one is carefully planned instructional content such as interactive worksheets, power point presentations, video and audio resources.

The third one is regular teacher participation via Information Technology (IT) for the class discussion.

The final step is for the teacher to provide personal feedbacks on the assignments.

Student Peer Contact

Evidently students are more engaged if they have opportunities to interact with each other and feel part of the team. Therefore, there are two strategies to create this environment.

The first one is to develop student group or peer assignments so they could work together.

The second one is to create opportunities for discussing these assignments via IT so they could practice their listening and speaking abilities.

Variety of Teaching Methods

In order for students to understand and feel active participant in learning, we have to engage multiple teaching methods. The students' learning success depends on maximizing different learning activities. As a result, we need to provide different methods of teaching methodologies.

The first one is to develop teaching resources that could be delivered directly via live online and indirectly via learning resources portal on school's website.

The second one is to create interactive assignments, worksheets and follow-up activities so the students can demonstrate their learning abilities.

The final step is to integrate these skills into practicing their learning abilities into real-life scenarios.

Metacognition and Student Support

The success of e-Learning depends on meaning experiences the students would have from the carefully crafted teaching methodologies. The students need to feel connected on their journeys to learning the language through study guidance.

Therefore, there are several strategies to ensure their learning is emphasized through recognition of different teaching skills.

The first one is to develop detailed and structured course plan and teaching resources.

The second one is to provide goal and objectives about the course design and organization.

The third one is to develop steps within the course plan where students are encouraged to brainstorm the ways they want to learn and engage in the lesson. For instance, the students may have variety of e-Learning resources such as library research, smart phone or computer devices, student web portal, or interactive learning.

The fourth one is to create student opportunities where they could choose the means to complete the assignments.

The fifth one is to develop e-Learning methods to have feedback on students' learning abilities such as goals, study strategies, and progress.

The last one is to design course feedback where students are asked to provide information on their e-Learning skills and whether they have any additional comments or suggestions.

In-classroom teaching

We are all familiar with in-classroom teaching because it is the best methodology for students to learn. Having students in the classroom and provide them with individualized teaching tools allows them to have guided learning experience. However, due to the COVID-19, in-classroom teaching is barely possible. We do have opportunities to teach in hybrid form where we combine in-classroom and online but sometimes, we are forced to teach fully online. Therefore, it is imperative to have options that enable us to still effectively teach our students.

Statement of Research

Teaching on-line lacks essential elements of teaching methodologies because the teacher is not able to connect with the students' abilities to learn and experience in-classroom education. Therefore, e-Learning must have the needed resources for teachers and students to make teaching and learning accessible and fulfilling experience. Therefore, the Office of Distance Learning and Education with the Ohio State University provides the invaluable resources to teaching e-Learning.

It has become obvious that teaching online is not the same as teaching in-classroom. All the essential elements of learning styles according to the popular theory—visual, auditory, reading/writing, and kinesthetic become impossible to accomplish for e-Learning. Each learning style requires different teaching methods. For example, the students with visual learning styles require a lot of visual resources. Students in this category would have no problem learning on-line. The same could be plausible for students with auditory learning styles as e-Learning provides for voice and microphone tools. The students with reading and writing learning styles might have better experiences learning on-line as long as there are plenty of resources. However, it will be very challenging for students with kinesthetic learning style, as this category requires tangible teaching resources.

Conclusion

This article examined better practices and tools to teach online and make e-Learning experience as meaning as in-classroom education. It has also provided meaning strategies to develop and design lesson plans that better fit teaching e-Learning.

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