

Effective Asynchronous Learning through Google Classroom on the onset of COVID- 19 Pandemic for Tertiary Level Learners

Dr. S. Sharon Grace

Assistant Professor

Department of English, Shift-2

Shri Shankarlal Sundarbai Jain College for Women,

T.Nagar, Chennai- 600017.

gracysharon89@gmail.com

9962084548

ABSTRACT

This paper highlights the importance of the Asynchronous learning opportunities with the onset of COVID – 19 Pandemic. Most of the learners at the tertiary level involve themselves towards the tool Google Classroom to complete their tasks, test and assignments. The asynchronous learning process gets facilitated by the active participants that is the teacher (instructor) and the learner as well. This paper concludes by highlighting on the aspects that would promote both such as monitoring one’s teaching and tracking their learner progress.

KEY WORDS

Asynchronous Learning, Feedback, Tertiary Level Education, Online Tools, Assessment, Grading.

INTRODUCTION

Learning during the COVID – 19 Pandemic has drastically transformed worldwide Teaching and Learning through the major shift from ‘Blackboard to Keyboard’. There are more changes and challenges adapted by the teachers and students in their everyday class. Exposure to online classes and offline assignments are put into regular practice. While referring to the testing area, there is major role played by the Asynchronous learning. The assiduous student would require time and other related factors to the class such as the internet connectivity, gadgets like Laptop, Tablet and Mobile Phone to take up his/her everyday class. Be it an offline task, assignment or evaluating a test, it lies with the learner to devote time to work hard and accomplish the given tasks on time.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Since middle of the year 2020, it has become a great challenge for the Higher Educational institutions to continue their academic year due to the adverse onset of pandemic COVID – 19. It has been further evidenced in the article by Dhawan, S (2020) where most of the teachers get stuck up towards teaching online with the shift from the traditional set up of face-to-face lectures in a classroom way of teaching. When addressing the major shift of teachers and learners from ‘Blackboard to Keyboard’ Rovai, PA (2000) recommends ‘to design and implement a course that fosters community among learners who are physically separated from each other’. He furthermore lists out the factors that can influence sense of community among distant learners such as ‘the student- instructor ratio, transactional distance, social presence and instructor immediacy, group facilitation, and self- directed learning’ (2000). It is also grounded with support about the success rate of ASL (Asynchronized learning) by a study by Northey et al (2015) in their findings witness that student ‘participation in the asynchronous setting relates significantly and positively to students’ academic outcomes (final grades)’. On the aspect of feedback by teachers, Alvarez et al (2012) state that ‘when teacher feedback includes suggestions and questions, instead of direct corrections, the students respond more constructively, they discuss the content they are working with, and as a result, they effect significant changes in the arguments of the text they are revising’.

GAP BETWEEN TEACHERS AND LEARNERS

Learning has been modified through the effect of COVID-19 Pandemic at all levels right from Primary Education till Tertiary Level. There is a gap felt between the teacher and their learner. It is difficult for a teacher in an online class session to clarify each and every learners’ doubts unlike the usual synchronized learning setup. The focus on various group of learners has lost. There is lack of more connectivity among the teacher with their learners such as the mixed ability group, slow- learners, dyslexic learners etc. Teachers have witnessed the gap in reaching out to their learners towards rendering their support or on the announcement upon assignment or offline task. There are few more issues like:

- (i) Poor connectivity of the internet
- (ii) Lack of focus upon individual learners.
- (iii) Technical issues with the learning device as mentioned earlier.

SOME CONSIDERATONS TO OVERCOME LEARNING CHALLENGES

In order to overcome challenges that are faced by both teachers and learners there is a remedial way to fix the technical issues and the problems related to learning. Asynchronized basic learning tool such as Google Classroom could support towards assigning an offline task and on the other hand, it would aid the instructor to follow his/her group of learners through offline means. A teacher can assign a task or pose a question for the class test in Google Classroom.

ROLE OF FEEDBACK AND GRADING IN OFFLINE ASSESSMENT

Teachers can split up their mode of assigning learners through these four important categories:

- (i) Assigning the learner through the question based on their choice
- (ii) On correcting the errors
- (iii) On providing Feedback
- (iv) On Grading the learners

The first and foremost vital part of an assessment is choosing the question to assess the learners in the most relevant manner. This lets a teachers' their total freedom and space to assess their learners through the choice of question. The question could be varied according to the length, marks and types such as MCQ's, Short answers and True or False etc. (These features are available in Google Classroom). Secondly, while referring about the connection the answer manuscripts could be readily available either through an attachment or answers could be directly posted under the question column. The teacher has an opportunity to invest time and focus on correcting the answers through inbuilt features. Finally, the Feedback could be carried in an easy manner through teachers posting their feedback on the comment box that lies closer to the answer (manuscript). Each and every learner could receive their feedback instantly at the end of every assignment and it is also easier to grade them based on the proportion of the marks that is set for each and every assignment. The grading could be based on the choice of teacher for allocation of marks based on the type of question. They decide to assign based on the assignment or a test question.

CONCLUSION

The Asynchronized learning could help learners to receive the feedback in an easy manner and for the teachers it would help them towards following their learners progress throughout the academic year. The mode of assignment or conducting test becomes much easier for the teachers at the tertiary level. Moreover, the cycle of assessment and feedback can go hand in hand for teachers to track their teaching and specially to monitor the progress that in in a continuous order. Learners would also be benefitted through the feedback they receive and they would use the tool Google Classroom to monitor their own success in a systematic manner.

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