



Adult Education – Methodology for IO1 *(Eruditus Language School)*

The main objective of **IO1** is to develop and test an innovative training programme that will give to professionals/ volunteers in schools and informal educational settings skills, knowledge and confidence in teaching and indeed dealing with environmental issues. It will also provide teachers, headmasters and other users (interested and meeting the access requirements, like as lab technicians) with a tool to interconnect, exchange information and experiences and express their views and ideas about the school digitization practices, so putting up a collective intelligence on the matter.

A1 – Choose the methods, differences between the methods and methodology: based on aims, target group, time, space, experience, preferences, individuals, topic.

- Introduce methods
- Establish Methodological connection
- Introduce your instruments
- Discuss your analysis
- Provide background information
- Discuss sampling process
- Address research limitations

The main feature of distance learning programs is the use of an asynchronous platform system (Moodle), which promotes learner's critical thinking and creativity by linking learning to practice, reflection, case study and exploration. The trainer, for his part, designs e-courses with the capabilities of using educational material such as videos, presentations, images, etc. In addition, the use of an online platform (Moodle) promotes learner's individualized learning pathway, as well as the ability of participants to interact, principles that are

compatible with the critical thinking that governs the principles of adult education.

The development and diffusion of e-learning tools and technology has deeply changed the opportunities for (adult) education. Originally, a great emphasis was placed on the methodological potentialities provided by the technology, considered as able to substitute other educational methods. Later, it emerged the need to analyze the technological opportunities of ICT in a multi-disciplinary setting, with the creation of educational strategies based on the integration of a wider range of available methodologies (the “blended” approach).

Adult Learning highlights that adult learners are fundamentally different in their methods of learning in comparison with children.

The key is to accommodate to these and design training and eLearning courses in a manner that is most effective and engaging for them.

This analysis presents the characteristics of the adult learner, and effective techniques for e-learning in adult education.

In general, the characteristics of the adult learners are as follows:

They decide to participate in a learning process for specific reasons and because specific needs arise. Possible incentives are the professional development, fulfilment of social roles, personal development, and prestige acquisition.

They have a broad and diverse range of experience, knowledge plurality and shaped perceptions in which they invest emotionally. These experiences are different since they derive from a variety of adult life situations, businesses, sense of social responsibility, political roles, family relationships etc.

They possess their own preferred learning styles. They prefer to learn in a certain way, depending on the characteristics of their personality, abilities, and experiences. Some adults learn by studying alone, others being involved in organized learning activities etc.



The view of experienced adult educators Hiemstra & Sisco (1990) about adult learners.

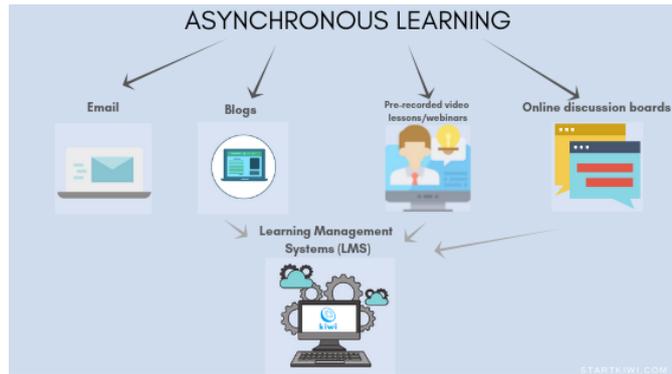
Adult learners:

- stop participating in education when they feel they are losing their time
- are interested in education as a side job; other issues occupy their time and interest
- come to education because of an emergency need or a motive
- do not always reveal the true reasons for participating in a training activity; they might be seeking for new friends, want to be members of a team or want to acquire knowledge
- want to feel comfortable
- want to create social relationships
- have very little time
- like to be treated as mature people
- appreciate the friendly concern on behalf of the trainer
- want confirmation that they can succeed in whatever they want to do or learn
- need reward and encouragement
- need satisfaction from reaching goals
- are motivated by an intensive need for learning
- are impatient trainees, are pressed by time, and rush to implement what they have learned and the skills they have acquired
- have rich experience to share with the group
- may be facing problems
- appreciate a clear and well-designed learning experience
- are fast in evaluating and assessing good teaching

There are four basic categories of online learning methods which can be used in adult education.

1. Asynchronous Online Courses

These courses are mainly referred to as self-paced programs. They are time independent, which makes them accessible 24 hours per day/7 days per week.



There is a type of interaction - teacher/student in the form of virtual meetings, weekly or monthly “check-in” online conversations or emails. These courses can be accessed from multiple devices, making it easy to learn on the go.

Classes consist of downloadable pre-recorded lectures or slide presentations with or without voice-over commentary.

Collaborative tools, such as Google Drive, may be used for coordinating group projects or other interconnected activities. Student learning support tools are often provided.

Many training programs offer this online learning method as it provides the most flexible learning environment possible.

Learning Activities for Asynchronous Online Classes



Asynchronous online classes offer students more flexibility and reduce access challenges, although large files such as streaming video can still present internet bandwidth challenges. You can help students succeed in asynchronous courses through

careful course design, including building a community of inquiry that includes cognitive presence, instructor presence, and social presence.

Since building a community of inquiry is important to student success in asynchronous courses, these courses can especially benefit from a constructivist approach, which focuses on students constructing their understanding of content together.

Asynchronous active learning can take many forms, including:

- Quizzes, a form of retrieval practice that can include multiple choice questions
- Reflection journals
- Blogs
- Wikis
- Student presentations
- Annotation
- Timelines
- Podcasts
- Discussion boards

Course content can come from different sources and be delivered in different formats.

Open pedagogy can be particularly useful in online education and encompasses not just open education resources (OER: freely available content), but also other aspects of openness such as collaborative construction of materials as part of a course.

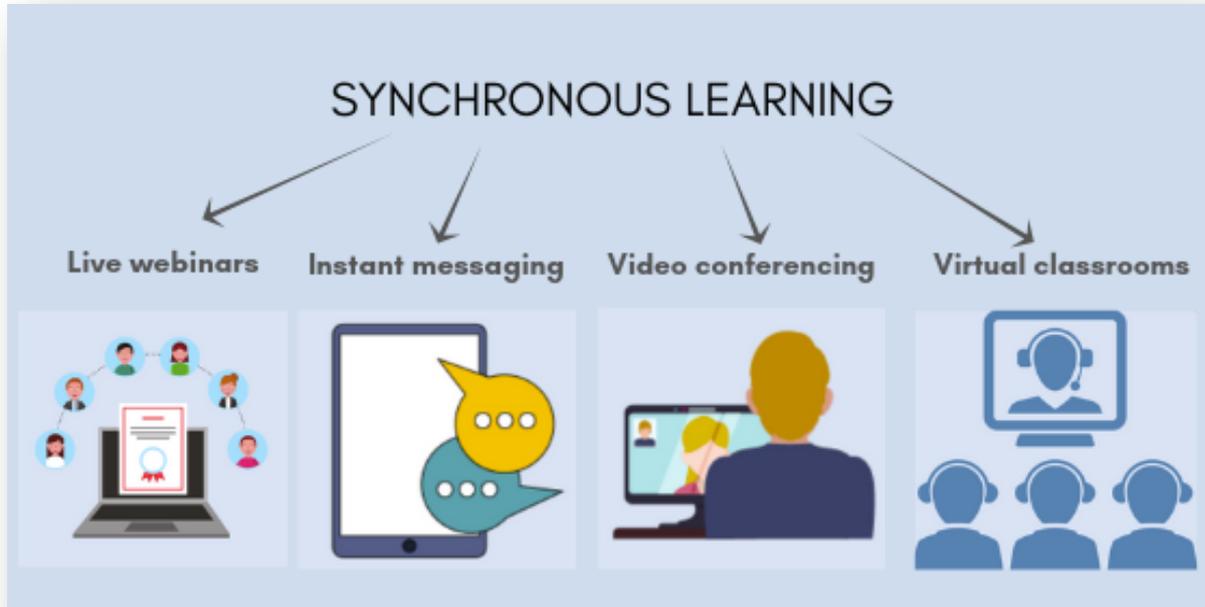
Asynchronous learning activities can benefit from a seemingly endless array of tools. When selecting tools, one should carefully consider how many tools should be introduced. While learners will likely use common tools such as Blackboard, Zoom, and Panopto in many of their courses, student time investments will get increasingly steep if each of their instructors introduces a large number of additional tools. Each time we use a new tool in a course, we will need to teach students how to use it. An easy way to do that is to embed a link to a video tutorial at the location where the student is expected to use the tool. Many software providers offer these video tutorials on their website or YouTube channel.

Potential Disadvantages

This methodology is not appropriate if the following considerations present obstacles:

- Time and space distortion
- Difficulty with discussion with large number of participants
- Participants lack motivation to do the course work on their own
- Instructors are unable to organize and provide training materials, tests, and assignments, and feedback on time
- Subject of course requires interactive educational environment
- Access to immediate help is needed during the course

2.Synchronous courses are conducted in a live learning environment, creating a platform for students and instructors to interact in the same session together.



These courses take place in real time and can take many forms including virtual classroom, live webinar, live webcast, and video/audioconferencing, instant messaging, and more.

These types of courses can be used for any topic but are regularly used with a demonstration or visually-based subjects such as chemistry, physics, engineering, art, photography, among others. Maintaining a sense of community and personal connection is a big motivating factor for students to attend class each day.

Professors teaching synchronous courses are not limited to just content delivery method: they can combine them with additional technologies to accommodate a wider range of learners.

The following tools are just some of those that support real-time communication:

- Streaming video platforms
- Live chats, individually or course-wide
- Web conferencing tools
- Telephone availability
- Virtual office hours

Each of these tools encourages live participation and interaction, though some online professors also capture and upload lecture videos and chat transcripts for students who occasionally miss class. (Purely asynchronous courses, however, rely heavily on such materials.)

Potential Disadvantages

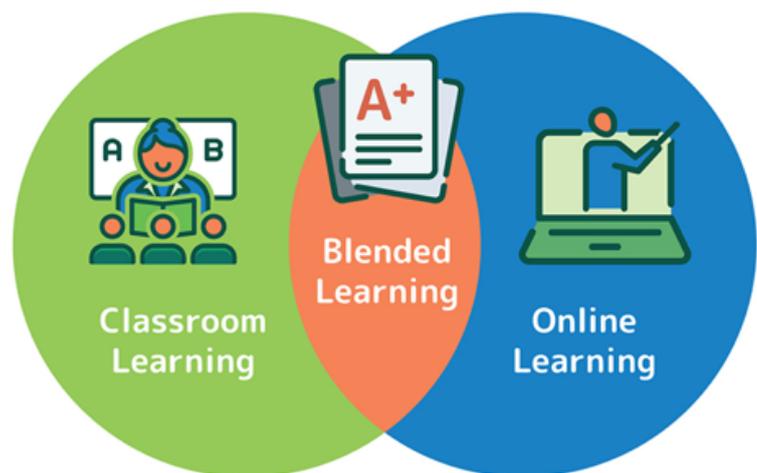
This methodology is not appropriate if the following considerations present obstacles:

- Scheduling difficulties
- Technical issues with audio and video
- Increased equipment requirements
- Lack of human contact
- When hands-on work is important for effective learning/teaching
- Participants with low self-discipline

3. Hybrid or Blended Online Courses

As the name implies, this type, of course, combines specific aspects of synchronous and the asynchronous learning systems. They often have scheduled, live classes several times during the semester, but use pre-recorded lectures or presentations to deliver additional course materials. In another type of hybrid learning called the Flipped Classroom Learning, the students are required to self-study a particular topic (mostly online) and interact with the teachers in the classroom to clear doubts.

This structure is most often utilized for soft-skills training that focuses on person-to-person interactions.



Potential Disadvantages:

This methodology is not appropriate if the following considerations present obstacles:

- The online components used in some formal educational settings are highly dependent on online learning management tools to post schedules, assignments, facilitate discussions, etc

- Requires the students to have proximity to the brick-and-mortar classroom or face-to-face meeting place, if this is a component
- Requires the students to have adequate technological skills and equipment for the online component

4. Competency-Based Online Courses



It is a personalized approach to learning, where specific skills are mastered to support a particular employment goal. A faculty mentor oversees the process and evaluates if and when competencies are reached. It is a self-paced program, but unlike a traditional asynchronous learning course, there are no pre-recorded lectures or other materials. The learner and the instructor together create a learning process using the web-based documents, books, and job experience to help the learner develop skills and to define how and when competency has been achieved.

Potential Disadvantages

This methodology is not appropriate if the following considerations present obstacles:

- Need to ensure that learners have made use of the learning
- A mechanism for feedback/follow-up is needed or desirable
- A human “sage on the stage” is advantageous for delivery
- The learning needs to convey a framework and “big picture”
- The learners are less experienced in the topical area (i.e., this is not for “basic training”)
- There is a reasonable fear that skills will be lost over time if employees rely overly on being able to “look it up” as needed

Instructional Strategies for Online Courses

Online programs are designed to convey the same knowledge and skills as campus-based programs, so teachers often adapt the same instructional methods to the online teaching environment. In some cases, delivery is virtually the only notable difference; in others, the technology fundamentally changes or enriches the learning experience. The instructional strategies described below are widely used in online courses.



Lecture

Lecture is perhaps the most prevalent instructional strategy used in higher education—on campus and online. Just as they would in a classroom, many online professors use lectures to transmit information, promote comprehension, and spark students’ interests. Learning management systems (LMSes) typically allow instructors to record lectures, deliver them live, or both. However, it is helpful to keep in mind that lectures place students in a passive role, which could negatively impact student engagement in the online learning environment. Both CSN and the ION suggest online lectures are most beneficial when used in conjunction with more active instructional strategies.

Discussion

Whether used in conjunction with lectures or as a separate learning exercise, class discussion supports learning and actively engages online students in the learning process. Learners have an opportunity to ask questions and communicate their ideas while practicing analytical and cognitive skills. According to Kenneth Chapman, Vice President of Market Strategy at Distance2Learn, many students feel more comfortable participating in discussions online than in the classroom. In synchronous courses, professors pose questions and discuss course material using real-time chats and web-conferencing tools. Students enrolled in asynchronous classes tend to communicate with peers and instructors using discussion boards, Web forums, and social media tools.

Demonstrations

Teaching by showing is just as prevalent in online courses as traditional ones. Demonstrations are a mainstay when it comes to conveying certain concepts and processes. They are also among the instructional methods enhanced by the virtual learning environment. Online instructors frequently upload recorded video

demonstrations to the LMS regardless of whether they delivered them synchronously or asynchronously. Students can review these clips as often as necessary to master the lesson.

Simulations

Simulations delivered in a realistic digital environment allow online students to test practical skills and knowledge remotely. Major colleges and universities sometimes use simulations to prepare online students for fieldwork traditionally carried out in a face-to-face setting. These virtual experiences are applicable in several fields and disciplines. Online biology students can use simulations for dissection while the University of Southern California uses managerial simulations that let students make decisions and experience their outcomes. According to Harvard Business Publishing, simulations reinforce key concepts and let students explore them in a real-world context.

Preparing simulations was once a lengthy, tedious process, but leading LMS platforms can streamline the process by allowing instructors to choose from a variety of scenarios that complement course content. Professors can also search open source educational resources (OERs) like Merlot for compatible simulations made freely available by their creators.

Games

Like simulations, games let online students gain practical experience in an accessible digital environment. They can also increase student participation as learners may find them more engaging and less stressful than simulations. Educational technology developers integrate game-building applications directly to simplify the design process.

Online instructors can use leaderboards and other motivating tools to introduce friendly competition and, in turn, motivate students to master whatever skills and concepts the game is meant to convey.

Case Studies

Case studies are another instructional method that places students in an active learning role while promoting research, problem-solving, and high-level cognitive skills. When used in a collaborative way, these exercises present another opportunity for online students to connect and learn from one another. It can be helpful for instructors to suggest reputable online resources students can consult for information.

Problem-Based Learning Projects

Problem-based learning (PBL) encourages students to practice many of the same skills as case studies while actively solving problems. Projects are usually collaborative in nature: teams of online students can use collaborative document programs like Google Drive to manage their work and share information. Small group chats and forums can also become a sounding board for theories and

discussion. An online resource called WebQuest lets instructors find, create, and share the type of inquiry-based assignments used in PBL projects.

Guided Design

Guided design is an inquiry-based instructional method that encourages online students to familiarize themselves with resources available in their local communities. In guided design, learners are tasked with solving open-ended problems. Unlike most PBL projects, this technique requires students to complete some work outside of class. Guided design emphasizes independent research making it ideal for teaching students in self-directed online degree programs.



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