

## RECENT PEDAGOGICAL TRENDS

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### **Blended learning - Concept and implications for classroom:**

Blended learning is a formal education program in which a student learns at least in part through online delivery of content and instruction with some element of student control over time, place, path or pace. While still attending a "brick-and-mortar" school structure, face-to-face classroom methods are combined with computer-mediated activities. Proponents of blending learning cite the opportunity for data collection and customization of instruction and assessment as two major benefits of this approach. Schools with blended learning models may also choose to reallocate resources to boost student achievement outcomes.

Babu M, Sameer (2009) defines Blended Learning as a fruitful effort in integrating live classroom activities including face-to-face instructions along with online learning and instructions so as to reap the maximum benefits by utilising the best elements of all through effective planning by an ideal facilitator. (Babu M, Sameer. One plus two is not always three: A look into the merits of Blended Learning.

### **Terminology:**

#### **History of the term**

The concept of blended learning has been around for a long time, but its terminology was not firmly established until around the beginning of the 21st century. One of the earliest references to the term appears in a press release in 1999, when the Interactive Learning Centers, an Atlanta-based education business, announced its change of name to EPIC learning. The article mentions that "The Company currently operates 220 on-line courses, but will begin offering its Internet courseware using the company's Blended Learning methodology." The meaning of blended learning widely diverged to encompass a wide variety of synthesis in learning methods until 2006, when the first Handbook of Blended Learning by Bonk and Graham was published. In this publication Graham challenged the breadth and ambiguity of the term's definition, and defined

'blended learning systems' as learning systems that "combine face-to-face instruction with computer mediated instruction." Currently, use of the term blended learning mostly involves "combining Internet and digital media with established classroom forms that require the physical co-presence of teacher and students."

### **Word usage and context**

The terms "blended," "hybrid," "technology-mediated instruction," "web-enhanced instruction," and "mixed-mode instruction" are often used interchangeably in current research literature. However, recent researchers in the United States tend to use the term "blended learning" with more regularity.

### **Advantages/ Disadvantages: Advantages:**

Proponents of blended learning argue that incorporating the "asynchronous Internet communication technology" into courses serves to "facilitate a simultaneous independent and collaborative learning experience", and this incorporation is a major contributor to student satisfaction and success in such courses. The use of information and communication technologies has been found to improve access to as well as student attitudes towards learning. By incorporating information technology into class projects, communication between lecturers and part-time students was improved, and students were able to better evaluate their understanding of course material via the use of "computer-based qualitative and quantitative assessment modules" in a study by Alexander and McKenzie (1998).

### **Disadvantages:**

Blended learning has a strong dependence on the technical resources with which the blended learning experience is delivered—these tools need to be reliable, easy to use, and up to date in order for the use of the Internet to have a meaningful impact on the learning experience. Additionally, IT literacy can serve as a significant barrier for students attempting to get access to the course materials, making the availability of high quality technical support paramount.

It has been observed that the use of lecture recording technologies can result in students falling behind on the material—in a study performed across four different universities; it was found that only half of the students watched the lecture videos on a regular basis, and nearly 40% of students watched several weeks' worth of videos in one sitting.

**Flipped classroom- Concept and implications for classroom:**

Flip teaching or a flipped classroom is a form of blended learning in which students learn new content online by watching video lectures, usually at home, and what used to be homework (assigned problems) is now done in class with teachers offering more personalized guidance and interaction with students, instead of lecturing. This is also known as backwards classroom, flipped classroom, reverse teaching, and the Thayer Method."

**Traditional Vs Flipped Teaching:**

The traditional pattern of teaching has been to assign students to read textbooks and work on problem sets outside school, while listening to lectures and taking tests in class.

"My AP Calculus class was a really anxious environment; it was weird trying to get through way too much material with not enough time. It was exactly the opposite of what I was looking for when I got into teaching." (A teacher explaining what motivated her to adopt flipped teaching.)

In flip teaching, the students first study the topic by themselves, typically using video lessons prepared by the teacher or third parties. In class students apply the knowledge by solving problems and doing practical work. The teacher tutors the students when they become stuck, rather than imparting the initial lesson in person. Complementary techniques include differentiated instruction and project-based learning. Teachers are blending flipped learning with traditional in-class lecturing through tools like edu Canon or EDpuzzle that keep students accountable to video lessons at home through time-embedded formative assessments.

Flipped classrooms free class time for hands-on work. Students learn by doing and asking questions. Students can also help each other, a process that benefits both the advanced and less advanced learners.

Flipping also changes the allocation of teacher time. Traditionally, the teacher engages with the students who ask questions — but those who don't ask tend to need the most attention. "We refer to 'silent failers,' " said one teacher, claiming that flipping allows her to target those who need the most help rather than the most confident. Flipping changes teachers from "sage on the stage" to "guide on the side", allowing them to work with individuals or groups of students throughout the session.

**Flipped Mastery:**

Traditionally, each topic in class receives a fixed amount of time for all students. Students who do not master the material get no extra time. Mastery learning upends this approach, by requiring each student to master the topic before moving to the next one. Flipped mastery learning applies the mastery concept to flipped classrooms.

Mastery learning was briefly popular in the 1920s, and was revived by Benjamin Bloom in 1968. It has shown dramatic success. The teacher provides materials, tools and support. Students set goals and manage their time.

Mastery rewards students for displaying competence. Students who initially turn in shoddy work must correct it before moving on. Before flipping, mastery learning was impractical in most schools. It was not possible to give different lectures for different groups of students. Testing was also impractical, because fast-learning students could reveal the test to those who followed.

In a flipped mastery classroom, students view each lecture and work on each exercise or project when they have mastered the precursors. As of 2013 only a few teachers had blended flipping and mastery.

Tim Kelly, winner of the Presidential Award for Mathematics and Science Teaching, adopted flipped mastery with his colleagues Corey Sullivan and Mike Brust. Sullivan estimated that 40 to 60 hours of work outside school for each of 12 units per course were required the first year. Another Presidential Award winner, Spencer Bean, converted after his daughter went through Kelly's class.

Flipped mastery eliminates two other out-of-class routines: daily lesson planning and grading papers. The latter happens in class and in person. Replacing lectures with group and individual activities increases in-class activity. Every student has something to do throughout the class. In some classes, students choose how to demonstrate mastery - testing, writing, speaking, debating and even designing a related game. Moodle provides one way to manage the testing process. It creates a different test for each student from a pool of questions. Advocates claim that its efficiency allows most students to do a year's work in much less time. Advanced students work on independent projects while slower learners get more personalized instruction. Some students might not get through the year's material, but demonstrated competence on the parts they did complete

**Distance Learning -Need and importance:**

Open and Distance Learning (ODL) system is a system wherein teachers and learners need not necessarily be present either at same place or same time and is flexible in regard to modalities and timing of teaching and learning as also the admission criteria without compromising necessary quality considerations. ODL system of the country consists of State Open Universities (SOUs), Institutions and Universities offering education and includes Correspondence Course Institutes (CCIs) in conventional dual mode universities. This is becoming more and more significant for continuing education, skill updation of in service personnel and for quality education of relevance to learners located at educationally disadvantageous locations.

At school level, National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) provides opportunities for continuing education to those who missed completing school education. 1.4 million students are enrolled at the secondary and higher secondary level through open and distance learning. In 2012 Various state government also introduce "STATE OPEN SCHOOL" to provide distance education. At higher education level, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) co-ordinates distance learning. It has a cumulative enrolment of about 1.5 million, serviced through 53 regional centres and 1,400 study centres with 25,000 counsellors. The Distance Education Council (DEC), an authority of IGNOU is co-coordinating 13 State Open Universities and 119 institutions of correspondence courses in conventional universities. While distance education institutions have expanded at a very rapid rate, but most of these institutions need an up gradation in their standards and performance. There is a large proliferation of courses covered by distance mode without adequate infrastructure, both human and physical. There is a strong need to correct these imbalances.

Arjun Singh Centre for Distance and Open Learning, Jamia Millia Islamia University was established with the assistance of Distance Education Council in September 2002. Major objectives of the Centre is to provide opportunities for higher education to those who are not able to draw benefits from formal system of education. The Open Learning System allows a learner to determine his pace of learning and provides education at the doorstep of the learner. The mode of transaction is through self-learning print material, supplemented by audio and video programmes. It has further scope of students accessing material through internet and various other media.

**Need and Importance of Distance Education:**

The concept of distance learning has emerged in various advanced countries of the world. The following points highlight the need and importance of distance education:-

**1) Explosion of knowledge**

there are explosion of knowledge because of rapid scientific and technological developments. The formal system of education on account of its rigidity and high cost, finds it difficult to incorporate new changes speedily as desired.

**2) Population Explosion**

Unprecedented growth rate of population has resulted in the corresponding increase in students. The formal education system serves a selected and limited number of students.

**3) Varied Needs**

Distance learning is needed to satisfy the varied needs of varied students.

**4) Earning while Learning**

Distance education is especially needed for those who want to learn while learning.

**5) Desire to Improve Qualifications**

There are many people who want to improve their education qualification while they are in jobs. Distance learning provides opportunities to such people to improve their qualifications.

**6) Geographical Isolation**

People may be geographical isolated because of distance or because a communication system has not been developed.

**7) Social Isolation**

People may be socially isolated or disadvantaged due to financial, physical, emotional or family circumstances.

**8) For Different Ages**

Distance learning can be used to teach people of different ages and to teach courses from a wide range of discipline areas.

**9) Universal Education**

Distance learning is needed to achieve the cherished goal of the nation for universalization of education.

**10) Democratic Aspirations**

Distance learning is needed to meet the great demand for democratization of education from those sections of society that are neglected.

**11) Self - Improvement**

Distance learning is needed from the point of view of self-learning and self-improvement of an individual who , otherwise is deprived of receiving proper education.



**12) Boon for In - Service Aspirants**

Open universities is a boon for in- service aspirants. They can improve their educational qualifications and by doing so, they can brighten up their chances of promotion.

**13) Easy Access**

It provides opportunities to large number of people who had previously been denied such opportunities.

**Reflective teaching - Concept and implications for a teacher:**

Reflective teaching means looking at what you do in the classroom, thinking about why you do it, and thinking about if it works - a process of self-observation and self-evaluation. By collecting information about what goes on in our classroom, and by analyzing and evaluating this information, we identify and explore our own practices and underlying beliefs. This may then lead to changes and improvements in our teaching.

Reflective teaching is therefore a means of professional development which begins in our classroom.

\* **Why it is important**

## \* Beginning the process of reflection.

- Teacher diary
- Peer observation
- Recording lessons
- Student feedback

## \* What to do next

- Think
- Talk
- Read
- Ask

## \* Conclusion

**Why it is important**

Many teachers already think about their teaching and talk to colleagues about it too. You might think or tell someone that "My lesson went well" or "My students didn't seem to understand"

or "My students were so badly behaved today."

However, without more time spent focusing on or discussing what has happened, we may tend to jump to conclusions about why things are happening. We may only notice reactions of the louder students. Reflective teaching therefore implies a more systematic process of collecting, recording and analyzing our thoughts and observations, as well as those of our students, and then going on to making changes.

- \* If a lesson went well we can describe it and think about why it was successful.
- \* If the students didn't understand a language point we introduced we need to think about what we did and why it may have been unclear.
- \* If students are misbehaving - what were they doing, when and why?

### **Beginning the process of reflection**

You may begin a process of reflection in response to a particular problem that has arisen with one or your classes, or simply as a way of finding out more about your teaching. You may decide to focus on a particular class of students, or to look at a feature of your teaching - for example how you deal with incidents of misbehaviour or how you can encourage your students to speak more English in class.

The first step is to gather information about what happens in the class. Here are some different ways of doing this.

### **Teacher diary**

This is the easiest way to begin a process of reflection since it is purely personal. After each lesson you write in a notebook about what happened. You may also describe your own reactions and feelings and those you observed on the part of the students. You are likely to begin to pose questions about what you have observed. Diary writing does require a certain discipline in taking the time to do it on a regular basis.

Here are some suggestions for areas to focus on to help you start your diary.

### **Peer observation**

Invite a colleague to come into your class to collect information about your lesson. This may be with a simple observation task or through note taking. This will relate back to the area you have identified to reflect upon. For example, you might ask your colleague to focus on which students contribute most in the lesson, what different patterns of interaction occur or how you deal with errors.



### Recording lessons

Video or audio recordings of lessons can provide very useful information for reflection. You may do things in class you are not aware of or there may be things happening in the class that as the teacher you do not normally see.

- ✱ Audio recordings can be useful for considering aspects of teacher talk.
  - How much do you talk?
  - What about?
  - Are instructions and explanations clear?
  - How much time do you allocate to student talk?
  - How do you respond to student talk?
- ✱ Video recordings can be useful in showing you aspects of your own behaviour.
  - Where do you stand?
  - Who do you speak to?
  - How do you come across to the students?

### Student feedback

You can also ask your students what they think about what goes on in the classroom. Their opinions and perceptions can add a different and valuable perspective. This can be done with simple questionnaires or learning diaries for example.

### What to do next

Once you have some information recorded about what goes on in your classroom, what do you do?

### Think

You may have noticed patterns occurring in your teaching through your observation. You may also have noticed things that you were previously unaware of. You may have been surprised by some of your students' feedback. You may already have ideas for changes to implement.

### Talk

Just by talking about what you have discovered - to a supportive colleague or even a friend - you may be able to come up with some ideas for how to do things differently.

- If you have colleagues who also wish to develop their teaching using reflection as a tool, you can meet to discuss issues. Discussion can be based around scenarios from your own classes.

- Using a list of statements about teaching beliefs (for example, pair work is a valuable activity in the
- language class or lexis is more important than grammar) you can discuss which ones you agree or disagree with, and which ones are reflected in your own teaching giving evidence from your self-observation.

### Read

You may decide that you need to find out more about a certain area. There are plenty of websites for teachers of English now where you can find useful teaching ideas, or more academic articles. There are also magazines for teachers where you can find articles on a wide range of topics. Or if you have access to a library or bookshop, there are plenty of books for English language teachers.

### Ask

Pose questions to websites or magazines to get ideas from other teachers. Or if you have a focal teachers' association or other opportunities for in-service training, ask for a session on an area that interests you.

### Conclusion

Reflective teaching is a cyclical process, because once you start to implement changes, then the reflective and evaluative cycle begins again.

- What are you doing?
- Why are you doing it?
- How effective is it?
- How are the students responding?
- How can you do it better?

As a result of your reflection you may decide to do something in a different way, or you may just decide that what you are doing is the best way. And that is what professional development is all about.

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