

Problems and Solutions: Interactivity in Online Teaching

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Since the advent of distance education and online courses, much research has focused on the problems associated with these educational delivery systems. One frequently cited problem with electronically mediated instructional systems is interactivity between teachers and students. Previous research findings indicate that successfully creating interaction in online environments is essential to student learning, and that the quality of distance education is dependent upon the level of participation and interaction of the learners. Interaction has also been shown to be an important component of student satisfaction in online or distance learning. Based upon previous research findings, this round table discussion focuses on the problem of facilitating interaction in the online learning environment by presenting several solutions to overcome the effects. This discussion is a "must" for any instructor or professor endeavoring to teach in electronically mediated environments. A quick (but not exhaustive) list of solutions presented for discussion during the session includes (includes annotated bibliography):

- Clearly stated course materials and instructor expectations
- Clearly stated procedures for dealing with technology failures
- Alternative pedagogical approaches to socialization and interaction in an online environment (e.g. experiential learning paradigms)
- Building expectations for bidirectional feedback
- Self-study tools for students