THE COMBINATION OF GROUP-WORKING DESIGNS AND TRADITIONAL LECTURES IN AN ON-LINE ENGLISH CLASSROOM

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There has been a global crisis starting from the end of 2019, and this is supposed to remain for any length of time as the COVID-19 pandemic has not been profoundly contained worldwide. The spread of coronavirus throughout the country of Vietnam has been judiciously controlled for the past several months, yet the national fear does still exist. This fear leads to changes in abundant fields, and the field of education is not an exception. In addition, instructors from different educational institutions, especially in higher education whereby students' autonomy is highly recommended, witness the brand new appearance of these changes. As a result, on-line instruction as well as virtual assignments have arrived in profuse numbers amid the pandemic; this is a good omen of long-lasting changes in the ways that higher education instructors will make for years to come. In Internet-based classrooms, some teachers are delivering lectures in traditional ways precisely like those used in off-line classrooms, and this matter sometimes entails the distraction, then the inefficiency in students' knowledge acquisition. This article is analysing how traditional lecture deliveries affect students knowledge acquisition and suggesting group-working designs as a way to enhance students participation during on-line class meetings.

Research on using traditional ways to give lectures in class has been widely and well conducted by a plethora of authors all around the globe. According to Munyoro from Chinhoyi University of Technology, traditional lectures are most "commonly used" in higher education (Munyoro, 2014, p.1), especially when university teachers intend to give further explanation. The author Munyoro also said that these kinds of lectures were given by so-called active lecturers and so-called passive knowledge recipients. When the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak happened, two successive weeks-off caused the abundance of knowledge, and the important thing was that teachers could not alter their ready-made lectures promptly to suit the new teaching scenario. Therefore, many had to apply the previously designed lectures usually used in traditional classroom settings to the new on-line classroom settings. Together with another reason of a tight dealine, they did not dare to make any sufficient change. When it comes to the cyberspace classrooms, students are likely to be more distracted than ever by a raft of factors in

their surrounding environs. Suffice it to say, it is challenging for lecturers to maintain student engagement on the spot; now lecturers are finding it is even more difficult to perform well in lecturing and getting student attention through the monitor at the same time.

In Asian territories, lecturing in physical classrooms has been dominated by "teacher-centered methods" (Adib-Hajbaghery, 2011, p.2), and this type of approach had a "long and distinguished history" as a prominent teaching method in higher education (Murphy, R. & Sharma, N., 2010, p.1). Moreover, providing lessons in this way was also confirmed as a "mainstream" by some Chinese researchers when they analyzed the combination of traditional teaching method and seminar teaching method in the year of 2013. These authors being indigenous to China proved that this inveterate usage was still following the "inheritance knowledge – accept knowledge" model (Wang, X. et al, 2013, p. 1). In other words, the conventional teaching and learning process happening between teachers and students was only a one-way process. This means teachers are normally respected as vital knowledge transporters on one side, and on the other side of the class, their students are acting as assiduous knowledge recipients. Sometimes, teachers are not giving sufficient care for their own students on how they obtain pieces of information from their lessons in terms of quantity and quality. When going on-line, this care from the teachers is unlikely taken by learners; consequently, the knowledge will probably fail to reach the target receivers both in quantity and quality.

A humble amount of instructors did try to transfigure the ways they traditionally addressed knowledge; however, some had to refer back to the previously used ways because freer and more student-centered discussions were ineffective. Then regular lecturing denoted another problem to students – note-taking skills. In 2014, in the article called: "Enhancing lectures with handouts", Christopher Johnson argued that this was another "weakness" from students (Austin, 2002, as cited in Johnson, C., 2014, p. 2); this led to the fact that students only got approximately "less than 50% of the critical points" which their teachers wanted (Austin, 2002, as cited in Johnson, C., 2014, p. 2). In actual classrooms at university, students are not working solely; they are inhabiting areas with their peers and especially their instructors. Instructors will monitor while their classmates are trying to work with them which means assistance is all around. At their dwellings, by exposing themselves to the computer screen, students lack support; for this reason they lack confidence. For some teachers, lecturing on-line

does not mean providing recordings of their lectures; they eschew recording their performance or providing lessons slides for students. In some Asian cultures, students often have invisible fear; thus, they renounce to let their pals or teachers know their depression, or difficulties.

These related research painted a gloomy picture of using traditional lectures both on on-line and off-line platforms for it possesses buckets of demerits. Some other authors also labelled this passive teaching method an "outmoded form of instruction which dates back to the medieval origins of university education in the days before the invention of the printing press" (Murphy, R. et al, 2010, p.1). The customary teaching method likely contains a myriad of weak points, and it might effect the quality of the teaching and learning in higher education altogether. The offered criticism might call for novel lessons or teachers' performance design and innovation, and this has often been snubbed or delayed by many "knowledge transporters". Global citizens have been struggling to miraculously survive the pandemic; almost every aspect of life requires alterations, and the lecturers might need to reckon that they are taking advantage of coronavirus to transform old ways of lecturing into new ways which may be heretofore unknown ones.

To serve the purpose of deactivating the traditional teaching method and cultivating students' learning ability since it embedded itself in a variety of drawbacks, some experts have been pursuing studies in order to find out best techniques for mitigating any harm caused by traditional instruction when it appears in great quantities, and one of these is using other types of methods interactively. Interactive lectures are able to come in different shapes and sizes. A study in 2017 showed that "interactive lectures" could lead to the "formation of certain positive personal traits" together with "development of collaboration skills" (Yukhimenko, A. et al, 2017, p. 4). Interestingly, in Russia, there was also another study which claimed that "cooperative methods of training" were considered as the ones which were "widely used" (Kutbiddinova, R. et al, 2016, p. 12). The "cooperative methods of training" can help participants develop their skills to work with their peers in class, and if the class meetings take place on the Internet, students are even expected to try their best to overcome technological as well as geographical barriers to complete their tasks. In Ken Richardson's research, learners can work in groups, but they "very seldom" work as groups; this determines that on-line assignments can contribute to their group-working practice journey. According to William Glasser's study, "we remember 10% of what we read, 20% of what we hear, 30% of what we see, and 50% of what is discussed in groups". If classroom teachers can combine

the aforementioned percentages, they will definitely bring a significant impact to students' learning out-comes. In the face-to-face classrooms, teachers can easily assess their learners' skills to deal with groups' tasks in both linguistic and knowledgeable aspects, but if learning and teaching process is conducted using on-line tools, teachers cannot. However, teachers can indirectly aid learners in developing their abilities when learners allocate their group's human and knowledge resources to fulfil the duties appointed by their teachers-in-charge.

Group-working designs require countless preparation from instructors, and it might be overwhelming but certainly rewarding. This can render problematic inasmuch as some teachers were trained to deliver their lectures by using didactic methods during their schooling in the past, yet this can be judged as a potential solution to get a higher level of involvement to students. The workload in reaching the lesson targets might be heavy for students, so teachers can "chop" the knowledge of a lesson into smaller pieces; for example, handouts or extra tiny activities together with lecture's slides may work. Teachers can actively and interactively use these suggestions in the shape of group-works-where students are thrown into the lesson-based situations with adequate instructions from teachers, and they have to "work collaboratively" with their group members to find out the best way to perform their tasks well. This is the very first step in a challenging series of things that teachers have to do in order to attain a bigger goal of preying on greater students' learning outcomes.

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