

**CHANGING THE CONVENTIONAL
UNIVERSITY CLASSROOM**

INNOVATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHING AND LEARNING

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**CHANGING THE CONVENTIONAL
UNIVERSITY CLASSROOM**

EDITED BY

ENAKSHI SENGUPTA

American University of Afghanistan, Afghanistan

and

PATRICK BLESSINGER

St. John's University, USA

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SERIES EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

INNOVATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHING AND LEARNING

The purpose of this series is to publish current research and scholarship on innovative teaching and learning practices in higher education. The series is developed around the premise that teaching and learning is more effective when instructors and students are actively and meaningfully engaged in the teaching–learning process.

The main objectives of this series are to:

1. present how innovative teaching and learning practices are being used in higher education institutions around the world across a wide variety of disciplines and countries;
2. present the latest models, theories, concepts, paradigms, and frameworks that educators should consider when adopting, implementing, assessing, and evaluating innovative teaching and learning practices; and
3. consider the implications of theory and practice on policy, strategy, and leadership.

This series will appeal to anyone in higher education who is involved in the teaching and learning process from any discipline, institutional type, or nationality. The volumes in this series will focus on a variety of authentic case studies and other empirical research that illustrates how educators from around the world are using innovative approaches to create more effective and meaningful learning environments.

Innovation teaching and learning is any approach, strategy, method, practice, or means that has been shown to improve, enhance, or transform the teaching–learning environment. Innovation involves doing things differently or in a novel way in order to improve outcomes. In short, innovation is positive change. With respect to teaching and learning, innovation is the implementation of new or improved educational practices that result in improved educational and learning outcomes. This innovation can be any positive change related to teaching, curriculum, assessment, technology, or other tools, programs, policies, or processes that leads to improved educational and learning outcomes. Innovation can occur in institutional development, program development, professional development, or learning development.

The volumes in this series will not only highlight the benefits and theoretical frameworks of such innovations through authentic case studies and other empirical research but also look at the challenges and contexts associated with implementing and assessing innovative teaching and learning practices. The volumes

represent all disciplines from a wide range of national, cultural and organizational contexts. The volumes in this series will explore a wide variety of teaching and learning topics such as active learning, integrative learning, transformative learning, inquiry-based learning, problem-based learning, meaningful learning, blended learning, creative learning, experiential learning, lifelong and lifewide learning, global learning, learning assessment and analytics, student research, faculty and student learning communities, as well as other topics.

This series brings together distinguished scholars and educational practitioners from around the world to disseminate the latest knowledge on innovative teaching and learning scholarship and practices. The authors offer a range of disciplinary perspectives from different cultural contexts. This series provides a unique and valuable resource for instructors, administrators, and anyone interested in improving and transforming teaching and learning.

Patrick Blessinger
*Founder, Executive Director, and Chief Research Scientist,
International HETL Association*

Enakshi Sengupta
*Director – Centre for Teaching Learning & Associate Professor
Business – American University of Afghanistan*

PART I

ACTIVE LEARNING PRACTICES

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO CHANGING THE CONVENTIONAL CLASSROOM

Enakshi Sengupta and Patrick Blessinger

ABSTRACT

The strictest definition of teaching and learning is no longer what it used to be with innovation becoming an important component of classroom teaching. The fact that classroom teaching has moved beyond the walls and to the homes of students confined to hand-held device or their computer is in itself a rare feat that academics couldn't imagine even a few years ago. Innovation in teaching and learning is bringing qualitative change in higher education along with quantitative expansion. Changes are essential part of teaching and learning as it helps in improving the quality and equity in creating learning opportunities for students. Teaching and learning have been undergoing rapid changes and is never considered to be a change averse sector; however, in certain parts of the world, the acceptance toward change has been very slow and they are lagging behind in adopting technology, improving efficiency, and productivity and the quality standard of education.

The book volume highlights some interesting interventions practiced around the world by higher education instructors who were forced to make necessary changes in the conversion from face-to-face instruction to the use of online and virtual platforms owing to COVID pandemic. Instructors took help of modern technology and used virtual exchange platform to create meaningful classroom discussions and lively interactions between learners and faculty. Quality assurance was a priority with regular monitoring of students' interaction, performance, and involvement in a class. Changes in a conventional way of teaching

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are the need of the hour and technology is expected to bring some radical improvement in this field.

Keywords: Changes; classroom; technology; virtual exchange; pandemic; innovation; quality assurance

INTRODUCTION

Innovation is the key word in today's education sector and developing and nurturing innovation in a classroom context is imperative to address the needs of teaching and learning. Innovation requires mastering of some basic skills like the ability to think critically, creativity, and free flow of imagination and incorporating new curriculum of entrepreneurship and innovative strategies to enable the economy of a country to progress. There has been a steep rise in the use of digital technology toward enhancement of education, and the pandemic has exhibited the need of teaching to lean heavily on the usage of smart technologies and to remain cognizant of the developments in this ever-growing sector. Governments in many countries are encouraging development of innovative strategies and creating the right policy mix to include an innovative friendly classroom and innovation friendly culture.

Modification and changes in learning method and pedagogy are not a new phenomenon and various authors have defined the concept of learning with adaptation to changes in mindset. Learning can be summarized as a process to modify behavior of the students through experiences, exercises and effort of the mentors as was mentioned way back by [Hurlock \(1942\)](#). He further stressed that learning helps students to acquire competence that enables them to use their inherit hereditary resources. [Hilgard, Atkinson, and Atkinson \(1979\)](#) are of the opinion that learning helps to create a permanent change in behavior coupled with prior experiences. [Murphy \(1968\)](#) stressed the need of learning to modify and alter the behavior of students to the changing environmental needs. The above stated definitions show that academics have advocated a changing classroom scenario and changing pedagogy to adapt to learning needs of students.

While learning entails understanding of the changing environment and adapting to it, teaching is considered as an art ([Gage, 1979](#)) which incorporates both emotional and scientific rationale of it being accurate, capable of being measured and completed with innovative methods of delivering classroom teaching. [Joyce, Weil, and Calhoun \(2009\)](#) explained that models of teaching are in reality models of learning. It is a process to help learners to acquire information, ideas, skills values, ways of thinking, and the process of expressing themselves creatively. The paradigm shift of face-to-face teaching toward technology-based teaching with the help of multimedia-based applications, blended and distance learning and new applications are some of the new dimensions of teaching and learning. [Debevec \(2006\)](#) stated that "the use of computer-based technology in college education has dramatically increased to include emerging technology for visual presentation, simulation, accessing course materials and World Wide Web

resources, and interactivity” (p. 293). Hybrid teaching has become prevalent for classroom teaching which includes both face to face and online mode. Smart gadgets and technology help in designing classroom delivery, question papers, assessment, and evaluation of students. The use of innovative teaching and learning methods motivates and incorporates a spirit of learning. The development in the information and communication technologies (ICTs) allows the development of a knowledge-intensive, interdependent, and internationalized societies exploring and experimenting with opportunities for the design and delivery of education (Sengupta & Blessinger, 2021).

Many educational institutions are not privileged to introduce innovative methods along with technology and they are still limited by conventional teaching methods (Laurillard, 2013). They are continuing with redundant teaching methods that were once prevalent when they were students or even earlier and progress in teaching methods have not been adopted by such faculty members. The reluctance to embrace changes arises from fear or their inadequacies to master the skills needed to understand technology and imbibe them in their daily practices (Chiang, Chapman, & Elder, 2010). Such passive form of learning inhibits learning from using their reasoning ability or creative skills and is based on copying what is narrated in the class or from the board.

Technology comes naturally to learners of this generation as they are digitally natives. Online technology helps them to collaborate and communicate with their peers with the help of learning management systems, social networking sites, and chat rooms. Technology have found to create positive learning experience and have resulted in higher retention rate and high level of participation (Shank, 2005). Multimedia-based learning have enhanced transformation from a learner centered toward a student-centered approach.

Innovation requires the support of higher authorities of the university and from governmental level with a buy in from all stakeholders and their openness to be able to accept the change. Education industry is emergent showcasing wider concerns of productivity and efficiency. However, equality and accessibility in education remain a major cause of concern and huge gaps remain in equality of opportunity and education outcomes between various social groups (OECD, 2013).

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

“Connecting the Pieces: An Active Learning Constructivist Approach to Graduate Online Instruction Through an Online Jigsaw Activity” authored by Angela D. Carter speaks about the COVID-19 pandemic, during which higher education instructors were forced to make necessary changes in the conversion from face-to-face instruction to the use of online and virtual platforms. Even before this shift, scholars have long advocated the introduction of active and constructivist learning practices, and to move away from the traditional lecture as a means to disseminate information in the classroom. This chapter highlights ways in which active learning and constructivist related activities such as motivational

activities, critical-thinking activities, creative-thinking activities, and collaborative learning activities can be employed in the online classroom for successful teaching practice. Also detailed is a case study of the analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation of a Jigsaw activity used in a Master's level human resource development (HRD) course. Human resource development as a field takes well to learner centered instruction, as it is an applied discipline that is deeply concerned with the aspirational development of adults in training, organization change, and careers. Lessons learned from the deployment of active learning and constructivist related activities within the case are adaptable and applicable for online instructors both in and outside of the field of HRD who are interested in building such experiences for students in online programs.

"A Shift to Virtual Exchange + Simulation in Higher Education" by Maria Laura Angelini and Rut Muñiz presents Virtual Exchange and Simulation as a pedagogical strategy to train pre-service teachers. Through Virtual Exchange, students-teachers from geographically distant locations come together with the aim of participating in a simulation. The simulation, in turn, presents a scenario and highlights several educational challenges that pre-service teachers must solve collaboratively. In so doing it, language skills, digital competence, and intercultural competence are developed. This chapter offers an overview of Virtual Exchange + Simulation, presents a complete simulation in case other teachers want to replicate the experience, and presents some of the most relevant findings out of the experience.

"Classroom Mapping: New Perspectives on Capturing Student Engagement in the Classroom" by Laura Cruz and Justine Lindemann writes about making a classroom a space that can become a place of lively discussion and interaction is a goal of many instructors, but it can be challenging to assess the extent to which classroom engagement is resulting in meaningful participation. The use of an assessment tool called classroom mapping provides a way to trace and analyze students' interaction, performance, and involvement in a class. It maps discussions and shows feedback on what is going on; including who is talking, for how long, what subjects and instructional strategies engage which students, and what kinds of connections are being made with the students and the instructors. This chapter considers the broader implications of using technology to elevate classroom mapping from formative assessment to potential learning analytic, with particular attention to the practical, pedagogical and ethical implications of recording and mapping how students engage in their classes.

"Future-Present Learning and Teaching: A Case Study in Smart Learning" authored by Pen Lister examines the teaching practice of the author in the Faculty of Education, University of Malta, taking sessions in smart learning as part of technology-enhanced learning (TEL) study units in Bachelors of Education and Masters in Teaching and Learning degree programmes between 2017 and 2019. The teaching sessions ran concurrently with undertaking separate doctoral research investigating how participants experience "smart learning journeys." Smart learning journeys in the research were conceptualized as real-world journeys, with geo-spatially relevant points of interest forming a journey of locations related to a topic of learning, providing context-aware content via

digital interactions. Research was not connected to teaching practice, though students who took TEL units also participated in the same smart learning journey activity as part of their syllabus. Though teaching sessions were not part of the author's research, the classroom practice modified as a result of emerging research findings, and the teaching benefited as the author gained deeper understanding about smart learning activities and the role of the learner in them. Using dialogic learning methods and techniques inspired from the research interview methodology, class sessions became noticeably more effective as students engaged directly in discovering their own learning from having participated in the smart learning journey.

"The Classroom as a Stage: Commedia dell'Arte as Multilingual Pedagogy for International Business School Students at the University of South Australia" by Corinna Di Niro and Jeanne-Marie Viljoen describes a case study of a multidisciplinary approach to the complex social issue of teaching English to multilingual tertiary students in a pluralistic context. It does this by advancing an innovative multilingual pedagogy combining specific aspects of Commedia dell'Arte (Di Niro) and translanguaging (Viljoen) to cross boundaries between languages and cultures for effectively teaching. This is achieved through an examination of Di Niro's course structure, written reflections and observations of teaching students "English for Business Studies" at the University of South Australia (UniSA). Reflections are arranged and interpreted around three themes: multilingualism, game play, and physicality/embodied learning. Following O'Neill and Viljoen (2021, p. 1), the authors argue that "such reflection is not simply contemplative, but involves dynamic, transforming and reflexive processes of accessing" the lived-experience of language and culture of the teacher and students in an engaged and responsive learning dialogue. Commedia dell'Arte includes multilingualism, improvisation, gesture, role-play, and extending students to develop socio-political dialogue. Translanguaging involves foregrounding and affirming the home language of multilingual students of English while also developing their English. Blending these methodologies and methods enables the authors to simultaneously address practical and theoretical aspects of teaching in a multilingual classroom.

"'When the Boys Come Home': An Authentic and Interdisciplinary Audio Drama Production" written by Daithí McMahon, Chris Ribchester, Mark Randell, Michael Brown and Phil Baggaley explores how a distinctive classroom space – the Multi-Channel Sound Studio – became the focus of a collaborative, interdisciplinary project which simulated the real-world challenges of writing, performing and recording a professional standard radio drama to a tight deadline. Students from six different degree programmes combined to create an original production depicting events in the early stages of World War II. Students had a unique opportunity to work with academics and other students on a live brief project, to exercise their creativity and take the chance to gain vocationally relevant skills. Students learned first-hand the challenges associated with a fast-paced project that had input from multiple voices and a shared responsibility for the success outcome of a piece of work bound for public exhibition. The discussion and lessons learnt from this project are of value to colleagues interested

in pursuing authentic, collaborative and interdisciplinary projects with their students both within and beyond Arts-based disciplines.

“The Pedagogy of the Pedagogical Turn” by Richard Hudson-Miles introduces readers to the educational turn in contemporary art and shows how contemporary artworks and exhibitions can offer educational experiences in themselves. Furthermore, that such artworks constitute a radically expanded or situated form of art teaching. The authors argue that educational turn art issues an important challenge to conventional methods of education which are still rooted in the classroom. The first section of this chapter surveys the art of the educational turn, demonstrating its pedagogic effects and innovations. The second section of this chapter draws on some of the lessons of these artworks, alongside some of the ideas from critical pedagogy (Dewey, 1916; Freire, 1996 [1970]; Rancière, 1991, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2010) which complement them. In conclusion, the authors attempt to synthesize both into the outlines of a pedagogy of the pedagogical turn, based on principles of humanism, institutional critique, and democracy.

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