

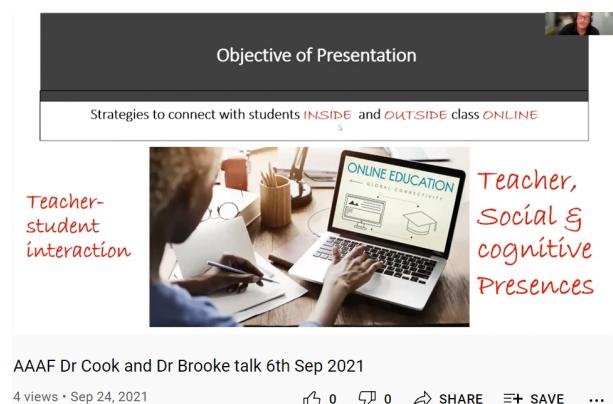
## Australia-ASEAN Academics Forum: Online Education during COVID-19 and Beyond

AAAF Dr Cook and Dr Brooke talk 6th Sep 2021

Transcript

**Dr Mark Brooke**

Well thank you, Vinh To, for the introductions and thank you to all of the experts at UTAS who have given sessions and I'm sure that everyone who's attended them has found that we've learned some essential knowledge that's required for online learning. My name is Mark as you've just said and my colleague's name is Misty and we're both from the CELC at the National University of Singapore and this is the title of our talk today. So, effective teaching practices in supporting students in and beyond class time in an online academic literacy module.



Objective of Presentation

Strategies to connect with students **INSIDE** and **OUTSIDE** class **ONLINE**

Teacher-student interaction

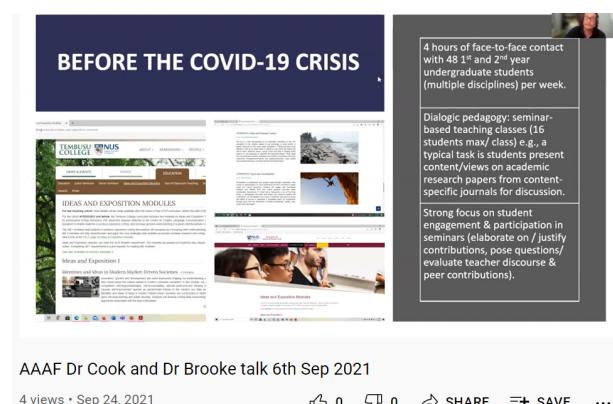
Teacher, Social & cognitive Presences

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Our objective is to really discuss the importance of strategies to connect with students inside and outside the classroom through online means. And so we're really focusing on how we've tried to effectively develop teacher-student interaction and how our understanding of teaching in relation to social and cognitive presences has informed us.



BEFORE THE COVID-19 CRISIS

4 hours of face-to-face contact with 48 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year undergraduate students (multiple disciplines) per week.

Dialogic pedagogy: seminar-based teaching classes (16 students max./class) e.g., a typical task is students present content/views on academic research papers from content-specific journals for discussion.

Strong focus on student engagement & participation in seminars (elaborate on / justify contributions, pose questions/ evaluate teacher discourse & peer contributions).

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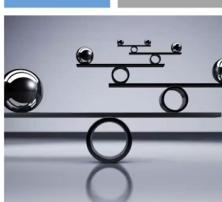
Both Misty and I are part of a program called the ideas and exposition modules and it's normally a classroom program, so we normally have seminar-based classrooms where we have 16 maximum in the room and there's a strong focus on a dialogic pedagogy. We have four hours a week with the students, so 48 hours in all over the semester, and the idea is really to have a seminar-based room

where we can have a lot of academic discussion about topics of interest. My topic relates to sports sociology; Misty's topic relates to psychology and skills for the workplace and for social purposes. And we do try to get students to elaborate on discussions, to justify contributions, to pose questions and to evaluate both our discourses and our students' discourses. And very often, a typical task is students presenting an academic paper and presenting their views on it.

**COVID-19 CRISIS**

- Reaction to COVID 19: Emergency remote teaching (ERT), defined as "a temporary shift of instructional delivery to an alternate delivery mode due to crisis circumstances" (Hodges et al., 2020).
- Home-based instructional support through online means.





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But of course, all of that changed very significantly with COVID and really tipped the balance away from it being a face-to-face, seminar-based instructional environment to one that was, first of all, a bit difficult to deal with because it was really emergency remote teaching. So we really had to shift from one day to the next, from 100% classroom to 100% online. And we're in our third iteration now of the whole semester being online. The first iteration was half-half. We had to suddenly shift. And so everyone's been working from home and trying to update our home accessories to deal with it. But yes we were hit quite badly and we haven't gone back to class yet either.

**POTENTIAL ISSUES WITH  
EMERGENCY REMOTE TEACHING  
(ERT)**





Emotional distance creates difficulty for students to express themselves (interest, doubt or worry) in online educational environments (Moore & Kearsley, 2012).

Teachers are less able to notice and resolve student problems in the online environment (Hara & Kling, 2000; Therpic, 2002).

Students may feel isolation and anonymity online (Sharma & Maleyeff, 2003).

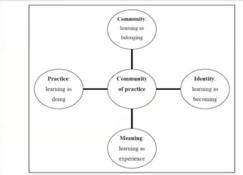
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And so of course, there are many issues that come with 100 percent online teaching, especially in an environment where there is fear, there is, it was a pandemic, still is. And so we have to be aware of the kinds of shifts in mentality that this may cause students. So, the emotional distance might be an issue, students might feel difficulty expressing themselves, their worries, their concerns. Teachers might not be able to view student issues as easily as they can in the classroom. And there may be feelings of isolation and anonymity produced by the remote teaching.

## WENGER'S (1998) FOUR MAIN COMPONENTS OF A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE



- ‘Community’ refers to online collaborative and social learning.
- ‘Identity’ means that learners must feel ownership for the online content of the forum and its development.
- ‘Practice’ refers to the notion that participants must be actively discussing domain-related practices and material online.
- ‘Meaning’ refers to the notion that there should be moments of thinking about why things are done online and evaluating their significance for future practice.

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And so, it's important to have conceptual understanding of what an online environment does. And the kind of research that's been done to show effective online environments, and of course Wenger's COP model is essential, I think. And this is me learning, and me showing you how I've learned, what are the essential characteristics of the fully online environment. And so, I feel that these four concepts need to be present and ongoing throughout: community, identity, practice and meaning. And some of the findings that I'm going to share with you from my practice involved two of these.

## ACTION RESEARCH PROCESS (SPIRAL OF LEARNING)



3 semesters  
(iterations)  
x48 hours

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So, what we're sharing with you is really spirals of action research, so teaching and learning from innovation, learning from testing and investigating, refining. And as I said, we've already had three, two and a half semesters and this is the third full semester. So we're seeing some reiterations of action research projects. And I would say that openness, responsibility and wholeheartedness are essential for this kind of research. The idea that you have to be open to try new things, you have to be responsible for your acts as a teacher and you need to really want to make change. So these three concepts are always present.

MARK'S RESEARCH



• Does the use of asynchronous discussion forums encourage an inclusive environment?

• Can Zoom be used effectively to provide an inclusive educational environment?

• Can teacher corrective feedback be more dialogic? To what extent might more dialogic feedback increase students' feelings of inclusion?

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So, for my research there are really three main questions that I wanted to ask. Does the use of an asynchronous discussion forum encourage an inclusive environment? Can zoom be used effectively to provide an inclusive educational environment? And can teacher corrective feedback be more dialogic? And to what extent might it increase students' feelings of inclusion?

Analysis (AR1): Asynchronous virtual learning platform

Why have you not been using the discussion forum?

Weekly forums eliciting discussion on subject matter

Average number of views for each forum: 25

Low number of posts

Average: 5/forum

"I haven't had the time to do it"  
"Doesn't come to mind much/busy with other commitments".  
"No idea for any inputs so far".  
"Less priority compared to graded work in other modules".  
"Been busy with other academic stuff, however, I have been meaning to use the forum!"  
"Haven't had many questions".  
"We use telegram".  
"I didn't feel the need to".  
"I have nothing else to say on that topic so far".  
"Not needed".

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And so, the first full semesters that I did online, I did some research and I'm going to give you examples of some of those issues related to the questions. So first of all, in the first action research project, in the first full online teaching that I did about a year ago now, I asked the students why haven't you been using our asynchronous discussion forum? And I noticed that there were very few views, 25 max, and very few posts. And so, this is the kind of feedback I got from students. I haven't had time, I don't see the need for it, it doesn't come to mind, haven't had any questions.

ANALYSIS (AR2/AR3): ASYNCHRONOUS VIRTUAL LEARNING PLATFORM

"Meaning" refers to the notion that there should be moments of thinking about why things are done online and evaluating their significance for future practice (Wenger, 1998)

I have collated the guiding questions for each forum to be used during the module and provide them here so that if you want to devise a discussion with your classmates, and with me, you can" (Mark to St).

These forum tasks are essential for assignment 1 because..." (Mark to St).

The Zoom session recording is now available on our VLE" (Mark to St).

• Weekly forums eliciting discussion on subject matter.  
• Average number of views for each forum is high.  
• Number of students who have posted:

- 40/47 -> introductions
- 10/47 -> questions about the course assignments
- 13/47 -> comments on sport related subjects (average 13 posts)

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So, clearly, I thought to myself, all right, well there's an issue here. And this brings up meaning by Wenger. So the idea that we should spend moments thinking about why things are done online and

evaluating their significance. And so, this second and third iteration, I've been sending students emails saying I've collected the conversations, I've collected the questions. I'm sending them here for you. These forum tasks are important because... I've also been uploading the zoom session recordings and I've been noticing a very big increase in the number of posts, the number of views. So that's one reflection. It needs to be ongoing and thought well, an asynchronous discussion forum.

**Analysis (AR1): Synchronous virtual learning platform**

**What do you like about Zoom sessions?**

- "The presentations that are conducted every week helps to engage students".
- "The efforts to engage through the presentations have been interesting". "Use of breakout rooms has been helpful too".
- "Convenient".
- "Many various interesting topics are mentioned that are engaging".
- "We are able to have meaningful discussions".
- "Able to see each other's faces without masks, more time/comfort in our rooms".
- "The engagements that happen during our Zoom sessions make it better".
- "Easier to engage in discussions".
- "Easy to speak up".

**What do you not like about the Zoom sessions?**

- "Zoom fatigue".
- "Sometimes it gets hard to focus".
- "Don't get to meet classmates".
- "It's not easy to talk in class".
- "Internet connection can result in occasional disconnections".
- "Lack of in person interaction".
- "Harder to spot non-verbal cues".
- "Easier to disengage especially when it comes to presentations".

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The second thing I've been working with is zoom, in the synchronous virtual learning platform. The first time I did it, I was getting mixed views. Some students were enjoying it as you can see on this left-hand side. Some were saying it's not easy, I'm missing the person-to-person interaction.

**ANALYSIS (AR2/AR3): SYNCHRONOUS VIRTUAL LEARNING PLATFORM**

**Cloud of responses:**

- "Paper presentations tend to take a lot of time from our classes."
- "Cannot record breakout room discussions."
- "If you prefer, please record your paper presentations so that we have ample time in our sessions to discuss the topics that we explore" (Mark to Ss).
- "Please use our google docs page to note down the main points from your breakout room discussion" (Mark to Ss).

**Theoretical reflections:**

- 'Identity' means that learners must have ownership for the online content of the forum and its development (Wenger, 1998).
- 'Practice' refers to the notion that participants must be actively discussing domain-related practices and material online (Wenger, 1998).
- Reflection: Students are happier to have more time for discussion and to hear peers' views on issues.
- Reflection: Providing some written teacher feedback via email on all recorded presentations increases motivation of peer review => increased learner engagement.
- Reflection: Use google docs for breakout room tasks enables sharing of discussion as whole class.

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And although this is still existing, what I am finding is that there are a couple of things I can bring in to help that. So for example, instead of getting students to present all the papers on zoom, I'm giving them the option to record it. I'm also using google docs when they go into breakout rooms because you can't record the breakout room discussions on zoom. So this gives us a text to use as a group, as a whole group, after the discussions. And I think that this relates well to identity and practice from Wenger. So, the idea that learners have some control on the content and that they're discussing the materials online effectively. So they're happier now with more time, and also it gives me the chance to evaluate their presentations and give them feedback. So this is a much more effective use of zoom.

ANALYSIS (AR1): ASYNCHRONOUS WRITTEN COMMUNICATION (Awe)

SAMPLE STUDENT TEXT	IMPERATIVES	MODALITY
<p>Introduction (886-900)</p> <p>Intrinsic popularity of Experts has been seen as a cognitive authority in the United States of America (Gebhard &amp; Accurso, 2020). In contrast, in Australia, the term 'Expert' is often used in the media and in academic departments and the 'Spelling' acknowledge the Experts' attitudes (Lewin, 2005). This research aims to investigate the attitudes of Singaporean students towards the Experts' attitudes and the influence of the Experts' attitudes on the students' learning. This research also aims to investigate the students' attitudes towards the Experts' attitudes and the influence of the Experts' attitudes on the students' learning. This research also aims to investigate the students' attitudes towards the Experts' attitudes and the influence of the Experts' attitudes on the students' learning. Thus, this research investigates how Experts' varying attitudes influence their performance in the United States of America and Singapore.</p> <p>Conclusion (901-902)</p> <p>Students have tried to explore the results of a different communication methods on students' performance (Gebhard, 2020; Lewin, 1997; Miller &amp; Korn, 2003; Van Zandt et al., 2010; Wilson, 2000). Students' attitudes towards the Experts' attitudes are influenced by a number of researches (Gebhard &amp; Accurso, 2020; Sankar &amp; Fischer, 2019; Van Zandt et al., 2010). This research also aims to investigate the students' attitudes towards the Experts' attitudes and the influence of the Experts' attitudes on the students' learning. This research also aims to investigate the students' attitudes towards the Experts' attitudes and the influence of the Experts' attitudes on the students' learning. This research also aims to investigate the students' attitudes towards the Experts' attitudes and the influence of the Experts' attitudes on the students' learning. Thus, this research investigates how Experts' varying attitudes influence their performance in the United States of America and Singapore.</p>	<p>● <b>Author:</b> Friday ● <b>Topic:</b> Feedback ● <b>Text:</b>                                             &lt;img alt="Red circular icon with a question mark" data-bbox="305 6235 31</p>	

kind of reflection, haha, warmest regards, which shows a little bit of trust, I think, and confidence. And in the feedback, talking about me caring for them comes through all the time. So I think that this helps, being mindful of teacher voice and being mindful of the different acts that we use.

**ANALYSIS  
(AR2/AR3):  
ASYNCHRONOUS  
WRITTEN  
COMMUNICATION  
(AWC)**



Fifty texts comprising approximately 2000 words.

'Encourage' appears to be by far the most common move.

Precedes other moves (softening):

- Example teacher feedback: "Good synthesis – glad you remembered to start the literature review in that way (encourage) but try not to repeat terms e.g., "eSports fandom" like this in a sentence (Instruct).

Encouragement can help to build student confidence and trust (Curzon-Hobson, 2002).

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And then finally, for my, I'm doing some corpus research now on these moves. And I do find that encourage moves appear a lot and they're part of a softening before the actual instruct move very often. So here's an example. Good synthesis, so to encourage. But try not to repeat. So I'm finding that this encouragement is affecting some good confidence and trust building with students.



**AR1 & AR2: CONCLUDING REMARKS**

Does the use of asynchronous discussion forums encourage an inclusive environment?  
Scaffold interaction using guiding questions  
Reiterate the learning function of the forums  
Collate student responses on forums and refer to these to students to engage dialogue  
Recording and sharing all sessions on the VLE helps to build community of practice

Can Zoom be used effectively to provide an inclusive educational environment?  
Vary interaction patterns by promoting presentation recording options out of class time thereby facilitating more free discussion  
Providing feedback on recordings develops peer review of group presentations  
Encourage breakout room discussion  
Use google docs as support for breakout room tasks

Can teacher corrective feedback be more dialogic? To what extent might more dialogic feedback increase students' feelings of inclusion?  
Promote interpersonal relations in text-based communication  
Use a taxonomy to guide choice of communicative acts  
'Encourage' seems an effective move for building an inclusive environment

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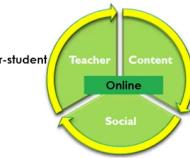
Thank you. So, to just to sum up, for the asynchronous discussion forums, using guided questions, relating the learning functions of the forums, sending the students the question, sending the students a week of dialogue as a package to help them to keep up with what's going on, and recording the sessions can be very useful. And they can see those. And then for zoom, patterns need to be varied, feedback can be given on recordings, breakout room discussions should be accompanied with a google doc. And then for corrective feedback, try to be as interpersonal as you can and try to encourage as much as possible. Thank you.

**Dr Misty Cook**

STRATEGIES: PROMOTING INTERACTIONS IN AN ONLINE LEARNING COMMUNITY

My part sharing: literature + what I did + results what students thought

Conducive online learning environment: instructor presence + cognitive presence + social presence



Garrison et al., 2000 Garrison & Arbaugh, 2007; Garrison & Cleveland-Innes, 2005

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Okay, so let me start. So, carrying on from what Mark was saying about building a community of practice, even when the education is done online it's critical for us to strike a good balance between showing our students that we are there to support the students inside and outside the classroom. So for my part, I'm going to show you what I have done in my course that is similar to Mark's in that we both teach academic literacy. So we teach our students how to do writing but using content in psychology to help them learn academic literacies. So for my part, I'm going to be talking about building a community using a good balance between teacher and student presence as well as cognitive presence, that is reported in the literature. So I will give you a quick review of what the literature is, what I did to implement it, and what the students thought about the way I adopted this pedagogy.

STRATEGIES: TEACHER AND STUDENT INTERACTIONS

Teacher presence:

- Instructors should be **RESPONSIBLE** present & providing a positive education experience for students.
- Instructors should **organise and present the course content, and facilitate** student learning by **scaffolding content** using multiple learning activities and assessments.

Social presence:

- Instructors should be approachable.
- Instructors should **create space for peer interactions/support**.
- Instructors should support students in **peer interactions so as to develop higher-order and critical thinking** skills.

Cognitive presence:

- Instructors should also teach students **how to critically analyse information and construct meaning** through communication.

(Garrison et al.,

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Okay, so just to give you a quick overview of what the literature cites. So, the definition of teacher presence is that even when it's an online education course, instructors should responsibly present the content and facilitate the teaching so that the students have a good experience. And this extends to facilitating the content inside the classroom and outside. So, scaffolding inside the classroom and then, as you just heard from Mark as well, scaffolding for the students with feedback outside the classroom, so that students have multiple opportunities to learn. In terms of the social presence, it's really just to say that beyond the students needing the instructors to be there, students also need to feel connected in the sense that they feel they have the peer support as well as instructor support. Because with these two supports, these two types of support, then the students are able to develop more critical thinking and higher order thinking as a result of the instructors helping them and discussions amongst their peers. So, both are important, outside and inside the classroom. And of course, very importantly too, the cognitive presence, which is to, in short, just like with any face-to-face learning, to engage with students with content that they can relate to, that they can find relevance with.

## STRATEGIES: TEACHER AND STUDENT INTERACTIONS

Conducive online learning environment =  
sufficient instructor presence + cognitive presence + social presence  
(Garrison et al., 2000; Garrison & Arbogast, 2007; Garrison & Cleveland-Innes 2004)

Research has substantiated the criticality of instructors' role in a learning community of inquiry.



[Anderson et al., 1999; Omen-Eddy & Murphy, 2009; Roddy, 2017]

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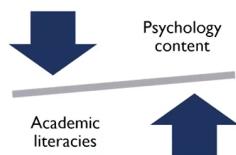
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Okay, So just to give you, to end the quick literature review, just to show you that there's substantial literature online, to show you the benefits of having the balance between teacher and social presence with the students as well as connecting with them cognitively. So, the research shows that when the instructors are present, they're able to engage the students in interactive learning inside and outside the classroom. Because students will feel a sense of belonging to a community of practice that Mark was referring to. And so, with that, researchers have found that students have increased engagement and it's less likely that they will drop out in the online education courses.

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE:

Content and Language Integrate Learning (CLIL): in a 13-week module



(Sato et al. 2017; Zhong et al. 2019)

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Okay, so as Mark introduced earlier, we teach a 13-week content and language integrated learning. And Mark used sports whereas I use psychology to teach our students a range of academic literacy skills.

## STRATEGIES: TEACHER AND STUDENT INTERACTIONS



Instructor's explanations and class scaffolding	20 mins (instructions / recap / overview of reading).
Group tasks (breakout rooms)	20-30 mins (Application of concept)
Student Presentation & Class discussion	30 mins
Instructor's explanations / wrap up	15 mins
	2x5 min breaks in between getting in and out of breakrooms

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So what I did to promote in an online education course in every lesson, to promote the teacher and student interactions, what I did was to ensure that I strike a good balance between my talking, because students need to have that input, recap, for example in, what I did in my class is that

somewhere in the class, whether it's at the beginning or in the middle or at the end, I would do a recap on the content or introduce the content or do a recap of the readings that I assign students to do. But as well as that, I would always make sure that students also have time to complete their group task. Roughly, it's about 20 to 30 minutes. But even if I cannot give them 30 minutes, it will be a short task that requires 20 minutes. And come back, and we would hold most of the class for class discussion. So that's where students may ask questions about what they didn't understand or they present the readings for the lesson. Okay, and then at the end I will do a quick recap, even if we, say, don't have 15 minutes in total, I will make sure that I will spend at least five to 10 minutes during a quick recap and wrap up the lesson just so that the students find a conclusion to the key points that they should learn from the lesson. And also again, a lot of literature, I'm sure you're aware, has shown that online education is important and it's effective. But students will also likely suffer from zoom fatigue. That is cited a lot in online courses. So I make sure that at least the students are given one five-minute break somewhere in the lesson, probably halfway through. So that's how I strike a balance between teacher and student interactions.

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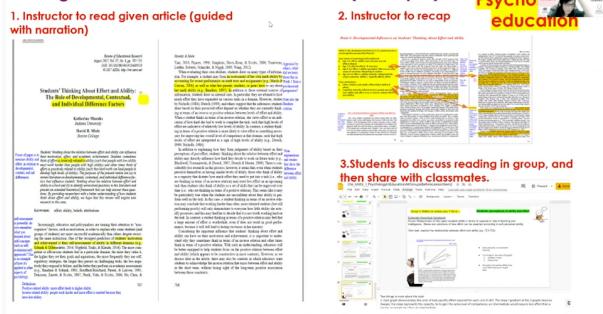
Okay, so the third thing is of course the cognitive presence. So for this, I make sure I choose topics that students will find relevant and hopefully interesting. So, in all the readings that I give the students to scaffold the content, what I did was I chose topics like leadership or psychology in politics that students will find interesting because it revolves, I mean, politics is everywhere. So either we talk about local politics or more global. So in the last year for example, we've been talking about Donald Trump and his leadership on rolling out the vaccines, for example. And so, that is something that students find relevance to in even the theoretical readings that they have to do. So, every lesson or before the lesson, I asked the students to do a reading related to the topic. So here, it would be about psychology and politics. And then the part two is to link it to examples like Nelson Mandela, whatever the students find relevant they can choose. So as being Singapore, of course we talk about the political settings here, whether it's to do with the election or whether it's to do again with the roll-out of the vaccines, how successful or not successful it is. So yeah, that's what we do, linking readings to examples to engage the students cognitively.

**Strategies: Relevance = interest to learn (example)**

1. Instructor to read given article (guided with narration)

2. Instructor to recap

3. Students to discuss reading in group, and then share with classmates.

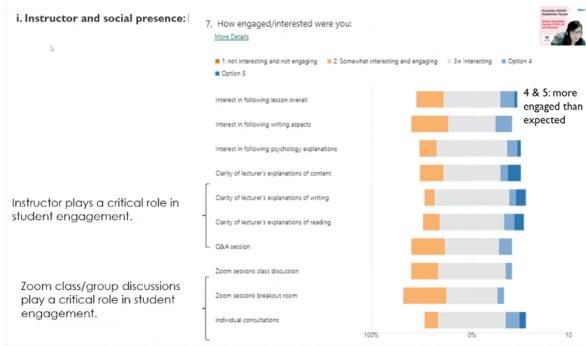


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Okay, just to give you an example too, something that is closer to the students, that they can relate to, still scaffolding the requirements to how to understand a piece of academic text. But here, just to give you another example is about psychology in education. So, what motivates students like themselves in higher education to learn, what might be the individual differences in terms of the way students learn. So, we talk about thesis statements and then the paragraph developments as well as language accuracy. So, using the content in the academic text I would, again, like what I'd shown you in the last slide, just to annotate on the articles because it could be quite content heavy, just to show students where to locate information and what the purpose of a particular chunk of text is as well. And so again, linking it back to real life examples to show how they learn, how could they find relevance in the way the literature says they should learn, and the way they learn. So, a bit of reflection in students' learning habits as well, so that, students should find interesting. So yes, give students reading. Then we do a quick recap and the students do their presentations that extends beyond the reading. Really, is about application of the paper so that students will hopefully find more relevance in that.



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Okay, so this is what I have found. So, in terms of instructor and social presence, that means whether I, I aim to achieve a good balance between teacher and student presence, social presence. So, what I did, based on the model that I showed you before, I asked the students whether I was able to, how engaged they were in learning and whether, even with the limited time that I gave them in explaining, in the 15 minutes or 20 minutes in total in the class, whether I was able to engage them in the learning. So as you can see on the results here, the orange is somewhat interesting, engaging, the grade is interesting, so, better. And option four is the students were more than they had anticipated, more engaging and interesting, than they had anticipated. So that's what they reviewed, so that is a good sign. So I think, this suggests to me that it is important to let the

students have a say, voice up their opinions and give them a chance to demonstrate their understanding before we come in and give them feedback.

Okay, and so the zoom discussion also is interesting. So this is the majority of the lessons where the students reported also here that the lessons were engaging, interesting. And thankfully as well here, the grey and the blue is higher, so not just interesting but they were very engaged in the learning in in the lessons.

ii-a. Cognitive presence: content (Quantitative data)



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Okay, so in terms of the content as well, so the content. So, for us, as we say, I use psychology to teach academic literacy, so I asked the students what topics they were interested in in particular. And so, they found that actually only a very few topics, the theoretical parts is something that they found less interesting. So, what they found most interesting was things that they could relate to. So, what motivates them to learn? The first arrow, reasons for their intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in learning. Leadership was a very popular one and of course the psychology in education. And so, the students reported, although you can see here right down the bottom lines, psychology in business. So we talked about in workplaces what motivates colleagues and leaders to work in a business setting. What makes teamwork successful, perhaps, was more remote for them as was with politics. So they found interesting, a lot, major, large majority, but a few also said that it was of low interest. So definitely topics that students can relate to that they find relevant even if theoretical, they would find more engaging and interesting. So, the cognitive presence is absolutely crucial in engaging the students throughout our online courses.

ii-b. Cognitive presence: language (Quantitative data)



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So, in terms of the academic literacies as well, so at the beginning, a lot of the students in our courses say we have heard your courses, not just mine but Mark's as well, and a range of our colleagues who use content to teach academic literacy, they all say that it's very difficult and they

don't like writing. A large majority of our students don't like writing academic texts, predominantly because they're not familiar with it and they're overwhelmed by the vastness of the task. So a lot of them were afraid of it. But nonetheless, a lot of the students were engaged in the writing as well, which is very, very positive. So, the blue is definitely high interest, so that is a good sign. So, what they found most important and interesting to learn about is the writing the thesis statement, extracting key ideas or using the thesis to signal what the ideas are, and how to use the rest of, to ensure that the rest of their essays are in alignment with the thesis. They recognize that that was interesting and engaging to learn the body text, how to develop an argument throughout their essays in body paragraphs, how to use evidence, and recognize what is credible and non-credible evidence also is important, as well as conclusion, how to sum up an argument, and writing the implications part is crucial for them as well.

ii-c. Cognitive presence: Students' Engagement/interest levels for Assignments

**Assignment 1: Reflective summary**  
Human Behaviour: How do 'I' fit in this Social World? (UTW12016)  
Assignment 1: Summary Reflection (400-600 words) [15%]  
Assignment 1: Can social interactions constitute social cognition? Trends in cognitive science [40%, 441-444].  
Guidelines: Your reflective summary should show your understanding of the analyses of mechanistic and socio-cognitive theories, and how social interactions can further explain how individuals and teams fit into the social world.  
Step 1: Write a summary of the given article. Your summary should include the author's name, main argument of the article, and the evidence used to support the writer's thesis.  
Step 2: Write an argument. Response to one aspect of the assignment. You must agree or disagree with the given article. Your response should include your own claim as to why you agree or disagree with the given article, explanation of your own claim, and evidence to support your claim.  
You can use readings from our discussions in class and/or choose your own articles. Please make sure you do not start Step 2 until you find sources to support your own argument.

**Assignment 2: Comp vs contrast essay**  
Compare and contrast texts related to Assignment 1.  
Assignment 2: Comp & contrast leadership styles of Musk and Schultz [40%, 441-444].  
Guidelines: Your assignment should compare and contrast the leadership styles of Elon Musk and Jeff Bezos. You should include the main argument of each article, and then compare and contrast the two leadership styles. You should also include evidence to support your comparison and contrast.

**Assignment 3: Expository essay**  
Write a 500 word expository essay based on a chosen topic. **Assignment 3: Expository essay**  
Assignment 3: Write an expository essay based on a chosen topic. You may contact a like research problem or question you have in further depth, right, there are as many interesting topics as could be, for example, a social event (there are only so many).  
1. The impact of social media on the development of individual species have a great impact on an individual human or political setting.  
2. The impact that different types of cognitive skills have on our memory in a educational, business, or political setting.  
3. The effects of empathy in communicating as a leader in their role in a educational, business, or political setting.  
Guidelines: Make sure you do a thorough literature review on the idea that you are interested in that are could cause the focus of your topic and develop your own thesis. Remember, you must not be suggest with credible evidence and evidence.

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Okay, so just to show you as well, this particular slide shows you that in our courses we have three assignments. Assignment one should be the easiest assignment because the texts are given to them and they just have to extract key ideas and respond to a key idea. Second assignment is somewhat more applicable because it relates to comparing different leadership styles, but maybe perhaps comparing autocratic versus a democratic leader. But they were compare and contrast essays, so that was very much guided. The third assignment is definitely the most challenging assignment because it was unguided. The students were able to choose a topic of their free will. They can choose whatever we had discussed and extend beyond what we talked about in class and write an expository essay. So for this, they really need to build a strong argument, extract the theories and find the evidence that will support that argument. Okay, so I just want to show you what the students felt about in these three particular assignments.

ii-c. Cognitive presence: Students' Engagement/interest levels for Assignments (Quantitative data)

Students' Engagement/interest levels for Assignments = relevance/application to real life

Topic of assignment 1 (Reflective summary): social interactions vs socio cognitive perspectives	3.3%	30%	46.7%	20%
Topic of assignment 2 (Comp & contrast leadership styles of Musk and Schultz)	23.3%	40%	36.7%	
Topic of assignment 3 (own choice of topic)	6.7%	40%	53.3%	

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Okay so if you look at this you will see that even though the level of difficulty increased over the three assignments, students found that the third assignment, being the most applicable assignment, was most engaging, interesting and most fruitful to learn. So you can see the rate of the orange, which is interest, increased as we went on in the assignments even though it increased in difficulty. So that's also an important sign for me to reflect and learn from as well.



CONCLUSION

1. Instructors must provide sufficient scaffolding: teacher presence, social presence, and cognitive presence.
2. Right balance **instructor-student facilitation + peer-peer interactions**.
3. Instructors should **cognitively engage** students in learning with the **relevant** subject materials and academic literacy skill skills.
4. Academic literacies: **Content knowledge** and academic literacy skills must be co-constructed, and applicable to real-life examples.

Diagram: Two arrows pointing towards each other, labeled 'Academic literacies' and 'Psychology content'.

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Okay, so just to quickly summarize. So, in terms of the scaffolding, having a good balance between teacher, social and cognitive presences are really important to engage the students in learning and motivate them to learn throughout the whole semester. So, we have 48 hours of instructions in total, so it's important for them to maintain that level of interest even though we were not connected face to face. So, having the very importantly, as I say in the second point, the instructor-student facilitation as well as the peer-peer interactions are important. And the third point is that, as I said before, the cognitive engagement is just as important because when students cannot engage in the content, whether it's the content or the academic literacies that we teach them, they would not be able to engage in learning and lose interest at some point, especially as we compete with other courses that are in their core modules. So, just wanted to share that.