

Introduction

Synchronous or [asynchronous online learning](#) has become the new normal for [English language teaching](#) since the outbreak of COVID-19. The virus has had a disruptive and profound impact on English [language teaching](#).

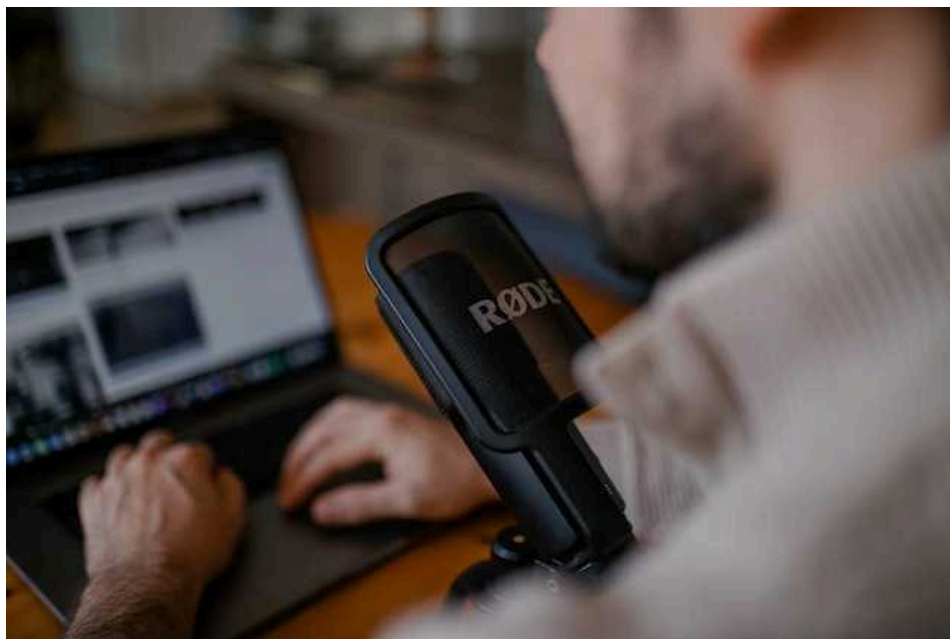
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A new semester is just around the corner and many English teachers want to streamline their, **asynchronous**, English online teaching classes for [language learning](#), to have zero or very little engagement with their students. In other words, they want to produce videos and course materials, find a platform to host the materials and videos, and then let the students use online educational technology tools to go through the course on their own. If done properly, this way of [online learning](#) gives a lot of free time to teachers and allows them to do other things during the semester, while at the same time providing students with quality lessons.

When making video lessons for asynchronous teaching (the opposite of synchronous teaching), attention to detail is important. Quality learning of online instructions (i.e. recorded video) must be very close to the quality of face-to-face learning in traditional education. A teacher should predict all the steps for the lesson to run seamlessly, and integrate those steps in a logical order. The future of education and training is in **VR (Virtual Reality) and AR (Augmented Reality)**, so making a few video lessons can only help you boost your skills and career.



Also, when creating an engaging online course for [ESL](#) students, there are a few key elements to keep in mind. First and foremost, the content of the course should be interesting, engaging, and adequate for the level. A good way to achieve this is to select topics that are relevant to students' lives and experiences. Topics may be sourced from some of the major ELT publishers as they tend to keep up with the times. In addition, the course should be interactive and allow for plenty of practice opportunities. Incorporating games, quizzes, and other activities throughout the course usually promotes [active learning](#) and makes the experience more enjoyable for students. Finally, it is important to provide clear and concise instructions in videos so that students can easily follow along. Templates for the same types of lessons may help with streamlining video lesson creation, and students with what to expect.

Use a variety of teaching methods to keep students engaged

When teaching asynchronously online, it is important to mix up the methods to keep students engaged. If a course is primarily lecture-based, students can quickly become bored and disengaged. On the other hand, if a course is too interactive, students may feel overwhelmed. The best solution is to find a balance between the two extremes. Incorporating a variety of teaching methods into online courses usually helps to keep students engaged and motivated.

Teachers should keep two things in mind. First is that students are familiar with using online tools and they have the necessary digital skills in mind that online instruction and online lectures

For instance, a lesson may run as follows: video lesson > discussions > assignments

Video Lessons

Lectures are recorded video lessons. All the info needed to run a lesson smoothly, without the teacher's presence, should be put in the video in a clear, logical, and organized way. For instance, in a recorded lesson overview of the material is provided given background information on the topic

(i.e. 5-6 pages in the textbook), and all necessary instructions for each section and/or a task, including time allocated for a task/exercise. For example, a target language is presented, in a proper form, and modeled. Also, examples and questions are provided to be used by students in the discussion part of the lesson.



Students should watch videos in pairs and groups only, simultaneously, and not alone, via a video conferencing platform (i.e. Zoom). Students should do plenty of student-to-student interaction on their own (more on this in section #3) with the examples and questions provided in the video lecture. The length of the video should reflect the ratio of **Student Talking Time (70-80%) and Teacher Talking Time (20-30%)**. So, for a lesson of 60 min, a video should be 12 - 18 min long. But this is up to the teacher to decide.

Discussions and Assignments



In addition to video conferencing, Google Classroom may be used where students can interact. Students are instructed on what to interact about, how often, and to what extent. Encourage students to share their thoughts and ideas on the class assignments. This can be done through forums, chat rooms, or video conferencing. Some of the assigned tasks students would do alone (i.e. writing comments), and some in pairs (i.e. discussion questions).

There should be an adequate number of opportunities for students to apply what they have learned. This could include writing papers, completing projects/ [presentations](#), taking quizzes, etc. Some integrate [gamification](#) applications through their platform to reward progress (more about gamification later).

Create/Source fun and interesting activities for students to do

“Class chemistry” is important for interaction and ultimately the success of EFL/ESL classes. A recorded video message may not be enough for a teacher to create good class chemistry. One of the ways to help create good chemistry in class is to choose fun and interesting activities. One of the best sources for fun and engaging activities is the language games books by [Peter Watcyn-Jones](#).

When creating online ESL courses, it’s important to include a mix of fun and interesting activities to keep students engaged. A variety of activities helps to keep things fresh and provides opportunities for students to practice different skills. Some interesting activities that can be included in online ESL courses are:

-Role-playing games: These are great for practicing speaking and [listening skills](#). Students can be assigned different roles and given scenarios to act out.

-Puzzles and brainteasers: These help to engage students' minds and get them thinking critically. They can also be used to practice vocabulary and grammar.

- Polls, quizzes, and surveys: These are a fun way for students to see how much they've learned and test their knowledge. They can also be used as a review tool before exams or tests.

****Some teachers ask some of their "successful" classes to record their asynchronous lessons (i.e. doing activities in the textbook while watching the video lesson in pairs/groups, role-plays) and with students' permission make them a part of their "how-to" instructional videos.**

It's important to pay attention to what activity to do at what lesson stage. If the activities fit the context, complement the materials covered, and can be done through Zoom or Skype, then it should work well. But students must be assigned to these activities in pairs or groups and preferably record the interaction (i.e. Zoom) as a part of their assignment, or project. This can be fun, engaging, and more importantly a great learning experience for students.

By providing a variety of activities, students will have opportunities to practice different skills and stay interested in the course.

Encourage student-to-student interaction (intermediate, advanced students)

Student-to-student interaction should be embedded in every element of an asynchronous online course. Students need to know that progress cannot be made without student-to-student interaction at every stage of the course (Note* extensive student-to-student interaction mostly applies to intermediate and advanced students. Beginners may need more teacher presence). Every time students (i.e. pairs or groups) should watch a lesson video at the same time, and go through the lesson together.

Probably the most important challenge to overcome in teaching an online class is encouraging student-to-student interaction. This is important because interaction among classmates helps keep students engaged and motivated with [more STT and less TTT](#). Frequent pair/group activities for discussions/projects are opportunities for students to stay engaged, motivated, and eager to return to their class.

To encourage class interaction, the teacher can create opportunities for students to work together on class assignments or projects (i.e. give instructions to students on what task in the book to do. Tell students to pause the video and complete a speaking task with their partner/group). This could involve forming small groups and having each group share their work with the class. Another way to encourage interaction is by giving students time to discuss topics in class through video conferencing or discussion forums. Finally, the teacher can integrate opportunities for social interaction by incorporating icebreaker activities or games into the class.

Make use of multimedia resources

When teaching asynchronously online ESL courses, [multimedia resources](#) can be a great way to keep students engaged. By incorporating multimedia resources into lessons, teachers can provide students with a more varied and interesting learning experience. Additionally, multimedia resources can help to break up the monotony of traditional text-based lessons.

Multimedia resources that are commonly used in online classes include images, videos, and audio files. To make use of these resources, teachers need to be familiar with how to find and incorporate them into their lessons.

Additionally, it is important to make sure that multimedia resources are appropriate for the students' level of English. Using multimedia resources that are too difficult for students will only serve to frustrate them and hinder their learning. On the other hand, if multimedia resources are too easy, students will quickly become bored. Finding the right balance is essential for keeping students engaged in online classes.

Use gamification to keep track of student progress, reward students for their hard work, and provide feedback

When creating online ESL courses, using gamification may help to keep track of [student progress](#) reward students for their work, and provide feedback. This tells students that even though the lessons are all asynchronous, the teacher's presence is felt through rewards.

Gamification is a great way to keep track of student progress, reward students for their hard work, and provide feedback when creating online ESL courses. Gamification can help teachers keep track of student progress by providing badges or points for tasks that are completed.

In addition, teachers can use gamification to reward students for their hard work by giving them prizes or unlocking new content. Finally, gamification can help teachers to provide feedback by giving students access to leaderboards or providing feedback on their progress. This will help keep students engaged and motivated.

Pedagogy

Pedagogy for teachers is personal. Each educator has a unique style that they bring to the classroom. It's hard for people to change the way they teach as beliefs about teaching and learning tend to be very personal and because teachers found their pedagogy through a lot of success and failure. But, teachers are great at adding small little techniques to their lessons, to make them better for their students.

Conclusion

For asynchronous teaching, lessons should be planned to the smallest detail, with clear instructions, logical progression, a well-defined grading system, and feedback structure, and a focus on

engagement and interaction. Students should be given opportunities to interact with the material, each other, and the teacher. Additionally, multimedia resources can be used to keep students engaged and Gamification can help track progress, reward work, and provide feedback. Also, for most English skills classes, a minimum number of two students would be appropriate, students should be adults and be at the same or similar proficiency level. If done adequately, video lessons for asynchronous teaching can save a lot of time, while providing their students with high-quality materials.

We live in the world of online learning, [blended learning](#), the use of [online education](#) technology, the use of various technological tools for distance education and online student presentations, and recorded lectures, where learning strategies, learning processes, and learning outcomes should promote students learning, student satisfaction, that deliver outcomes that are at least the same as those of traditional methods. Foreign language learning requires specific learning management systems where students interact and where students learn the same they would in a traditional learning environment. For lifelong learning, online learning, and [online language learning](#), especially in higher education (post-secondary education), allow higher education institutions to provide and deliver university education to learners all over the world.

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