Proposing a Framework to Study Students Active Participation in Synchronous Virtual Classrooms

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Abstract – Students' active classroom participation [ACP] has been argued to be an intrinsic component of successful learning. Having had to resort to various forms of e-learning due to the existing pandemic situation, ensuring such active participation in virtual classrooms has become a primary challenge for educators. The objective of this paper is to propose a framework to study ACP in synchronous virtual classrooms [SVCs]. A systematic desk review of 20 journal articles on ACP in Synchronous and Asynchronous virtualand physical learning settings was done and a framework was developed focusing on both lower-order and higher-order conception of what ACP in SVCs entails. It was determined that ACP is essentially visible through *interaction*. This interaction may happen in three modes; A)spoken, B)written (messages in the chat etc.) and C)other (such as emoji reactions, answering to polls etc.). Furthermore, interaction may happen with A)the peers, B)the educator or C)the learning experiences/ activities. Further, such interaction may happen A)voluntarily or B)upon request by the educator. To quantitatively measure such forms of interaction, frequency counts may be utilized. However, merely quantifying the *frequency* of interaction will not provide an insight into if such participation is in fact 'active' or not. To determine that, the *quality* of the interaction should also be studied. Accordingly, an interaction may be classified as either A)substantive or B)non-substantive. Thus, studying a virtual learning setting using the proposed framework will provide a balanced perception of students' ACP, the knowledge of which could be used to improve students' learning experiences.

Keywords: Active classroom participation, Synchronous virtual classroom, online learning

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