

Instructional Immediacy Practices in Asynchronous Learning Environment: Tutors' Perspectives

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Abstract : With the exponential growth of information and communication technologies in higher education, new online teaching strategies have become increasingly important for student engagement and learning. In particular, some institutions depend solely on asynchronous e-learning to provide courses for their students. The major challenge facing these institutions is how to improve the quality of teaching and learning in their asynchronous tools. One of the most important methods that can help e-learner to enhance their social learning and social presence in asynchronous learning setting is immediacy. This study explores tutors perceptions of their instructional immediacy practices as part of their communication actions in online learning environments. It was used a mixed-methods design under the umbrella of pragmatic philosophical assumption. The participants included tutors at an educational institution in a Saudi university. The participants were selected with a purposive sampling approach and chose an institution that offered fully online courses to students. The findings of the quantitative data show the importance of teachers' immediacy practices in an online text-based learning environment. The qualitative data contained three main themes: the tutors' encouragement of student interaction; their promotion of class participation; and their addressing of the needs of the students. The findings from these mixed methods can provide teachers with insights into instructional designs and strategies that they can adopt in order to use e-immediacy in effective ways, thus improving their students' online learning experiences.

Keywords : asynchronous e-learning, higher education, immediacy, tutor

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