

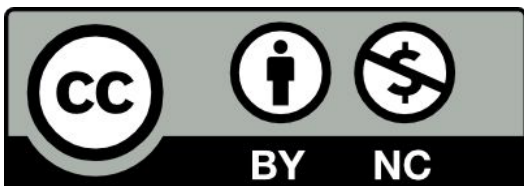


Improving Rural Interpreter Skills

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Module 10: Facilitation in Practice



Module content developed in part by [UNC-IRIS Project](#) & [UNC-Project CLIMB](#)
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Overview & Objectives

Overview: This module explores the facilitation techniques needed for online learning in both synchronous and asynchronous environments. Participants will revisit their emerging facilitation approaches via reflection of their activities and assignments over the course of this program.

Learning Outcomes and Objectives

Upon Completion of this module participants will be able to:

1. Review previously submitted assignments to evaluate overall engagement effectiveness.
2. Incorporate newly learned approaches to online asynchronous dialogic engagement.
3. Summarize one's own facilitation strategies utilized during a synchronous session.
4. Identify areas of growth as an online facilitator.

Revisiting How We Engage

Reflecting . . .

Over the course of this program, you have had the opportunity to engage with your COL in various ways. You have been developing and refining the skills needed as a facilitator while learning about core tasks, the art of asking questions, and various discussion techniques.

In these next three activities, we will visit your growth in these areas and identify opportunities for further development.

Let's get started!



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Facilitator Presence

What is facilitator presence?

A key component of a successful community of learning (COL) online environment is facilitator presence. Facilitator presence is *regularly* engaging within the course and with participants. It is being present online to support learning in order to maintain participant interest, motivation, and engagement. The facilitator is both the steady foundation and swift momentum in the COL. A strong facilitator presence shows participants that you are attentive and care about their learning journey. Participants will work harder for a person than they will for a list of assignments.

Four key activities of facilitator presence (Proffitt, 2016):

1. **Posting a welcome message:** Start your COL off with a great introduction and welcome message from you, so they know who you are and what you stand for. This is your chance to make a first impression with participants and you want that impression to be positive. Posting in both ASL and English is ideal.
2. **Create clear channels of communication:** Make it very obvious how/when you intend to communicate and how/when you expect participants to communicate with you. Being clear on this from the start will save time all around.
3. **Responsiveness on assignments:** This is a huge part of facilitator presence. Participants need timely responses to their postings to know if they are on track and what points they may be missing. A facilitator asking a question can further a participant's connection to the material that they would not have otherwise got there on their own.
4. **Foster open communication:** Encourage participants to connect with one another via both asynchronous and synchronous means. Learning is about getting it out, not putting it in.



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Discussion: Facilitator Presence



NOTE: You have to log into Canvas to complete this assignment

Original post directions:

Based on your understanding of facilitator presence and experience in an online learning environment (here in IRIS or in another program), respond to the following questions.

Of the four key facilitator presence activities:

1. Which one(s) have you experienced that led to further interest and motivation as a participant? Be as specific as possible.
2. Which one(s) do you think would be easily attainable for yourself as a facilitator?
3. Which one(s) do you think would require greater practice?

Response post directions:

Review your colleague's posts. Are there any clarifying, adjoining, elevating, or funneling questions you could ask? If so, respond to one of your colleagues with an additional question to keep the conversation going.

Discussion: Practice with Asking Questions, Part I



NOTE: You have to log into Canvas to complete this assignment

Original post directions:

Go back to the discussions in *Module 4: Role-Space Applied* and identify places within the discussions where the four question types were used effectively by the course facilitator or a peer.

1. Create an original post including the following: (1) the type of questions you see being utilized, (2) the reason you think that type of question was used, and (3) the evidence you see that the goal behind asking the question was either met or not met?
2. Make sure you note the name of the discussion that you are referencing and the specific comment.

Response post directions:

1. Respond to the post of one of your colleagues by asking clarifying questions, seeking additional information, or expressing an idea that encourages critical thinking and moves the conversation forward.

Discussion: Practice with Asking Questions, Part II



NOTE: You have to log into Canvas to complete this assignment

Original post directions:

Go back to *Module 4: Role-Space Applied* again and this time identify places where the four question types were not used but could have been.

1. When you identify these places go ahead and add to the discussion by using some of those questions within that discussion to maximize the discussion's effectiveness.

Response post directions:

1. Go back to *Module 4: Role-Space Applied* and respond to any questions asked of you by your colleagues in this activity.



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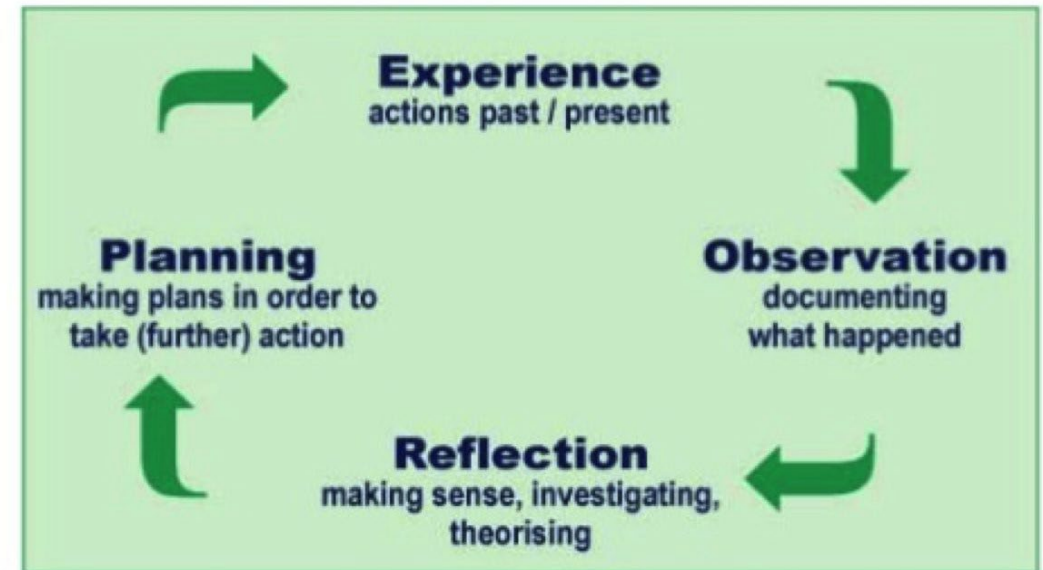
Reflective Practice, Part I

Reflection is an active process of observing one's own experience in order to examine it more closely, give meaning to it, and learn from it.

Reflective practice is the application of the skill of reflection to practice in order to improve performance. It involves creating a habit, structure, or routine around reflecting on experiences.

Kolb's reflective learning cycle as illustrated in the diagram shows how taking time to document and make sense of our present (or past) experiences can lead to improvement when deliberate plans for practice in our work take place.

Kolb's reflective learning cycle





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Reflective Practice, Part II

Throughout a learning experience, opportunities to reflect must be built into the sequence of activities to maximize learning. The diagram below illustrates several benefits of taking time for reflection. Providing time for reflection can happen in a structured activity but it also can happen in more subtle ways through the artful and purposeful way asking of questions during discussions, as we have just seen.



Reflecting on Synchronous Session Facilitation, Part I

In Reflection . . .

In the Orientation module at the beginning of this course, you identified a synchronous session to facilitate. Over the course of this program, each of you have had the opportunity to experience what facilitating is like over video with a COL in the IRIS Project.

As you begin your reflective practice on your facilitation overall, focus on that synchronous session in which you were a facilitator. If needed, review the recording of that session to refresh your memory. As you reflect and/or watch the session embrace the following considerations outlined on the next slide.

✓ Note: If you are facilitating the synchronous session for this module, complete that first prior to responding to the next activity.



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Reflecting on Synchronous Session Facilitation, Part II

The IRIS curriculum is designed as a dialogic learning experience. Part of that dialogue is asynchronous via assignments and any other communication tools your COL may be using (i.e. group text, video messaging, etc...). The other part is synchronous. These meetings allow the COL to come together in real-time to discuss content-related topics and assignments. **Synchronous sessions make for robust communities of learning (COL).**

Frequent sessions give participants the tools needed to continue the work asynchronously, resulting in the motivation to engage in each subsequent synchronous session. These meetings are a valuable part of the learning experience both for the participants *and* facilitators. Below are **considerations for a facilitator** when incorporating synchronous learning sessions in the COL:

- **Check-in:** This may get the conversation going if facilitators establish a check-in. Ask participants to share one word about how they are feeling at the beginning of each synchronous session and one word at the end.
- **Recognition of turn-taking:** Is this participant-driven or facilitator-driven? Is there a primary moderator for turn-taking? If so, is it the COL facilitator or a participant? If not, does the last participant call on the next?
- **Balanced space:** Who is holding the floor? Are there a small number of people who primarily hold the floor? If so, how is there space for others to get in?
- **Embrace the lull:** As the conversation winds down, are we tempted to fill the space? When participants are engaging in internal self-reflection, does the lull hold the floor? What does the quiet tell us?
- **Cultural undertones:** Is this the first time participants are in a shared space (COL) with colleagues with various lived experiences? Do these meetings predominantly follow one set of cultural norms? If so, how do this power and privilege appear in the group? As ASL is the exclusive language in these meetings, how does it shape the group?



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Discussion: Reflecting on Facilitation



NOTE: You have to log into Canvas to complete this assignment

Original post directions:

Upon reflecting on your experience as a synchronous session facilitator, respond to the following two questions:

1. After recalling this experience and reviewing the considerations on the previous page, what facilitation strategies did you utilize during your time facilitating a RIPPLE synchronous session?
2. What is one thing you would like to work on during your next experience as a synchronous session facilitator?

Response post directions:

Using the discussion board respond directly to the post of one of your colleagues. You can do this by asking clarifying questions, seeking additional information, or expressing an idea that encourages critical thinking and moves the conversation forward.



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Post-Test

NOTE: You have to log into Canvas to complete this post-test

1. What does being a reflective practitioner mean to you?
2. Facilitator presence is _____.



Correct responses: 1. Answers will vary., 2. Facilitator presence is *regularly* engaging within the course and with participants. It is being present online to support learning in order to maintain participant interest, motivation, and engagement.



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