#EDCI-339 – Final Reflection

As quickly as this course has flown by, I am left with a few realizations that are very important to me; passing along information to my students using the internet whether it be through an open or distributed format as well as the idea of “synchronous” and “asynchronous” timelines.

First, let me clarify that I do make use of the internet in my classroom but up to now, it has been used in a very “sterile or clinical” manner. I have asked my students to find information, create something and share it with me. Save for the brief “quarantine” time where I was teaching from home, I had not shared my lessons through the use of an open or distributed learning platform. Because I teach middle school, I inherently chose to use a more “*distributed*” model of teaching as I invited the students (and their guardians) into my classroom. Only they could have access to the information being shared. I believe that this is a much safer way to protect the privacy issues that may present themselves using an online platform. While I understand the benefits of the “open” learning where anyone is able to access the information, I think its use as a platform is more suitable to an older audience such as adult education or otherwise. Another consideration of Open Learning is the concept of the “*Knowledge Commons*” I her book, “A guide to Making Open Textbooks with Students”, DeRosa writes that “using tools for learning that enable students to shape the public knowledge commons of which they are a part.” This was a very important factor for me I have always believed that if a student feels attached to the content they are learning, they are able to acheive a much deeper understanding of the material. Wickey and Hilton (2018) also brought forth the point I referred to in my Topic #3 post around the 5 r’s. “Retaining, reusing, revising, remixing and redistributing” all allow for a much deeper and more personal experience for the students.

The second piece of information I found most impactful was the concept of synchronous and asynchronous timelines. In 2011, Murphy et al. describe Asynchronous online teaching (AOT) and Synchronous online teaching (SOT) as “AOT involves students working with online curricular materials on their own time, under the guidance of a teacher. Whereas in the SOT classroom are located in a remote location, and connected by videoconferencing, audio conferencing or both. SOT is ‘more like classroom instruction’ however, the participants are temporally dependent.” Just as there are pros and cons to the open versus distributed models of teaching, so are there when comparing synchronous and asynchronous learning environments. For the average middles school learner, there is no doubt that the synchronous model will allow them to achieve a higher level of success. SOT allows the students to interact with their teacher as well as complete the work on their own time. This is an important factor when considering which learning environment is best. The asynchronous platform demands a lot of self-motivation and self-control on the part of each individual student. If the learner is not able to demonstrate an appropriate level of regulation then success will be hard to come by.

In conclusion, while reflecting on a 4 week course in 200 words is a daunting task, I am extremely pleased with the information I was able to collect and share with my learning pod during the course. Since I didn’t have a base of knowledge in the “Distributed an Open Learning” methods, my understanding of the concept has improved dramatically. While I understand I have much to learn, I am looking forward to putting into practice some of the concepts covered in EDCI-339.

References :

DeRosa, Robin “[A Guide to making Open Textbooks with Students](https://press.rebus.community/makingopentextbookswithstudents)”

Murphy, E., Rodríguez-Manzanares, M. & Barbour, M. (2011) “Asynchronous and synchronous online teaching”, British Journal of Educational Technology Vol 42 No 4

Wiley, D. & Hilton, J. (2018). [Defining OER-enabled Pedagogy](http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/3601). International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning, 19(4).