

**Long distance literacies:** Developing academic engagement and equality of provision for remote learners.

or

**“Skills in Sync”**

Katharine Stapleford - Online Learning Tutor

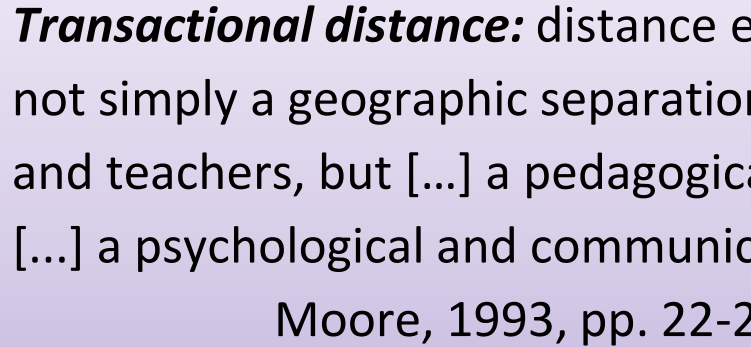
Lyn Farrell - Online Learning Tutor

Maria Kulas - Academic Librarian

Funded by CLT Curriculum Innovation funding



# Background & rationale



***Transactional distance:*** distance education is not simply a geographic separation of learners and teachers, but [...] a pedagogical concept [...] a psychological and communications space  
Moore, 1993, pp. 22-23

one of the biggest problems of DL programmes is the limitation of **communication** between tutor and students, and also limitation of **dialogue** amongst students themselves

Haghighi & Tous, 2014, p.57

# The challenge

1. Improve the academic engagement of distance learners.



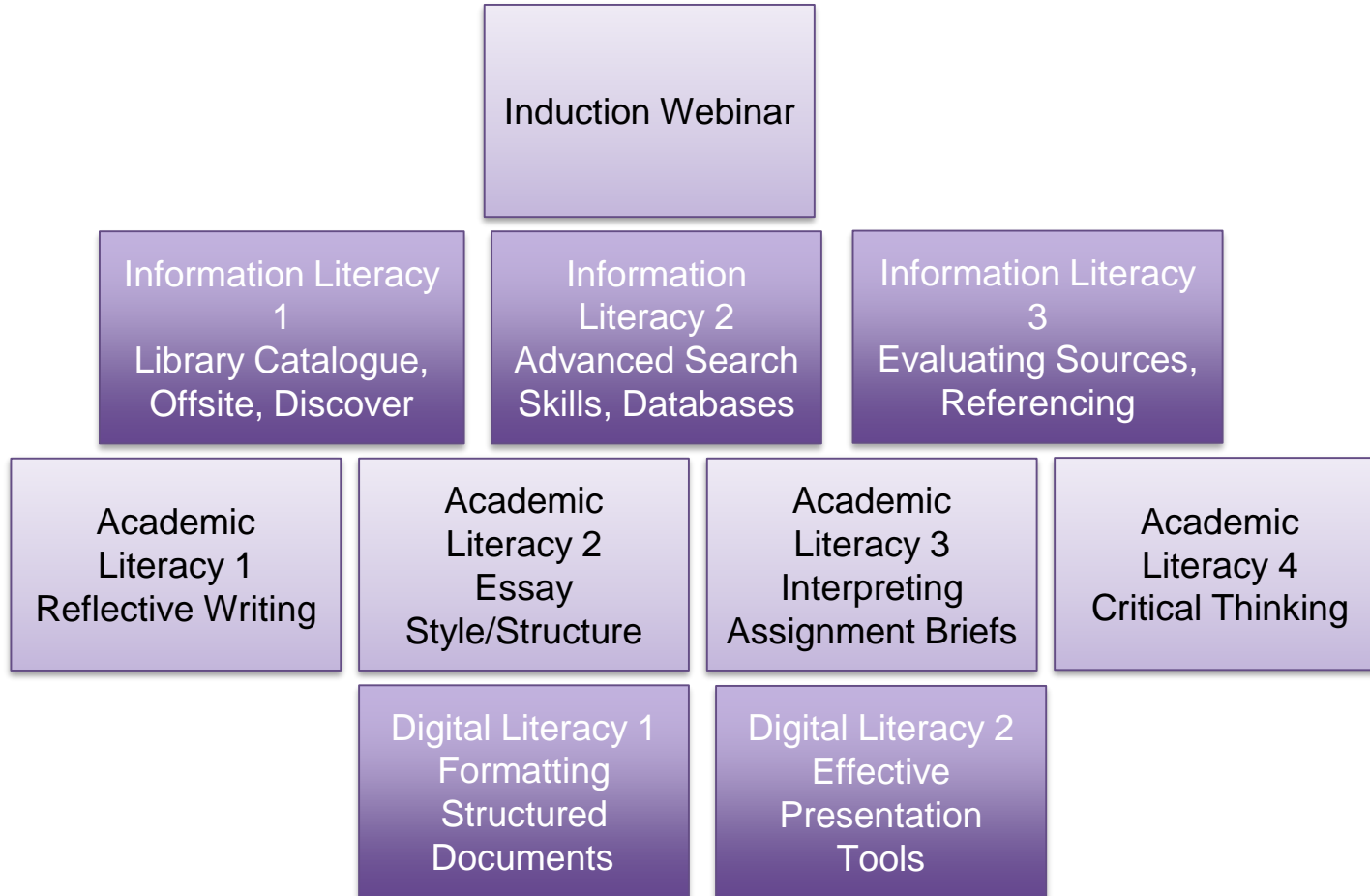
2. Reduce transactional distance and increase motivation.

# A solution

Synchronous tools can promote “togetherness” and participation (Sharma, 2006), enable collaboration (Garrison & Anderson, 2003) and dialogue (Patillo, 2007); improve instructor immediacy and presence (Baker, 2010) and increase motivation (Hrastinski, 2008b).



# Webinar topics and timetable





# Format and presentation consistency in Adobe Connect

## Format

- Pre sessional tasks
- Welcome tasks
- Tutor led teaching
- Interactive tasks\*
  - Group tasks
  - Discussions
- Resources and post sessional tasks

## Consistency

- Presenter and moderator
- Templates used for presentation slides
- Welcome 'lobby'
- Start and End poll evaluations
- Used same Adobe tool bank

# Reflective Writing Webinar



Welcome to the reflective writing webinar with Lyn Farrell. We will start at 19.00 prompt.

While you're waiting, you should be able to hear some music playing. Please use the audio set up wizard to set up your audio. You can download the audio guide from the bottom right of the screen. If you cannot hear the music, please check your audio settings.

Also, please introduce yourself using the chat facility in the top right of the screen. Type a short message into the chat bar and click the send icon or hit the enter key on your keyboard.



## Attendees (1)



Active Speakers

Hosts (1)

Lyn Farrell

Presenters (0)

Participants (0)

### Downloads and links

Session Booklet

Audio Guide

Browse To

Chat (Everyone)

Everyone

Lobby

Start Polls

PowerPoint

Discuss...

Breakouts

End poll

### How familiar are you with reflective writing ?



View Votes

Edit

Reopen

This Poll is closed for voting. To allow participants to vote, ...

#### How familiar are you with reflective writing (2)

- Very familiar  0%
- Familiar  0%
- A little familiar  0%
- Not very familiar  0%
- Not familiar at all  0%
- No Vote

Broadcast Results

### How confident are you with reflective writing?



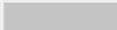
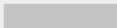

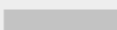
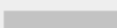
View Votes

Edit

Reopen

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#### How confident are you with reflective writing?

- Very confident  0%
- Confident  0%
- A little confident  0%
- Not very confident  0%
- Not confident at all  0%
- No Vote

Broadcast Results

### Chat (Everyone)

Session Evaluation

Evaluation form

Browse To <https://docs.google.com/forms/>

Everyone



# Reflective writing and reflection

## Reflective Practice...

'A deliberate pause to examine beliefs, goals or practices in order to gain a new or deeper understanding that leads to actions that improve learning' (York-Barr et al.(2005)

**But what does that mean?**

## Activity

- 1.Why do you teach the way you do?
- 2.How do you know that the way you teach is effective?



## Why do you teach the way you do? (Everyone)

- I am fitting in with the routines of my school.
- Following the example of those I've observed
- By observing
- Taken examples of my own previous school teachers
- Thinking about how I enjoyed learning whilst at school
- But trying to put my own personality in so it still feels real
- Using newly learned strategies
- : Im cherry picking from those ive observed, but just starting out.
- watching others and using the methods I like
- What would I find fun and engaging
- bserving the teacher and impulse
- Through observing other teachers and then making your own adaptions
- responding to students and what they seem to have enjoyed and not enjoyed
- picking best bits from many different observations
- : Because I have taken the 'best bits' from all the great teachers I have been taught by, observed and worked with. But putting my own twist on them.

**Katharine Stapleford:** what may work for some may not work for your students

- The students look forward to your lesson! Enter and leave the room smiling!
- Oops wrong box >>>
- f they enjoy it and retain it
- get to know your children and play to their strengths
- to be memorable

## How do you know that your teaching is effective? (Everyone)

- if the children have produced work that show that they have understood the lesson
- Children want to keep learning
- f children show an understanding of what you've told them and the learning objective was met
- if children have enjoyed the lesson
- : progress
- : Using white boards to survey

**Katharine Stapleford:** what does progress look like?

- Checking for understanding and progress
- Through assessment and feedback from observations.
- : Light bulb moments
- : Results of assessments
- displaying an understanding through assessment and questioning
- When I see engagemant and progress

**Katharine Stapleford:** does teaching always result in learning?

**Katharine Stapleford:** "effective teaching

- . If a kid can recall something from a lesson they did ages ago you know you did it well
- students are able to apply what i have taught in the lesson correctly which shows progression in subject knowledge
- f your teaching has been effective then surely learning will be effective and noticeable

**Katharine Stapleford:** is it always possible to measure/quantify learning?

- Both!!
- i know my teaching is effective when they are pushing their own limits and are still trying to learn outside of their comfort zone

## Case Study 1 – what makes this a strong reflective piece?

The notion of inclusion and behaviour management is reflected in Teacher Standard 7 to 'manage a class effectively, using approaches which are appropriate to pupils' needs in order to involve and motivate them'. Gardner (2002) suggests that a main feature of an inclusive classroom is collaborative learning whereby pupils share knowledge to develop learning. This reflects Vygotsky (1978) and Bandura's (1977) theories of social learning. It can be implied that these theories suggest that because children are in the same environment they should react similarly to positive behaviour management. However, through observation it was evident that positive behaviour management was not effective with all children in the classroom which was disappointing. This observation is supported by Dweck (2012) who suggests that people think differently and act differently.

Thus, as a teacher I need to be aware that children who do not engage may lack self-esteem and have less developed social and interpersonal skills (Corrie, 2002). I need to ensure inclusion and one way is to offer encouragement for all accomplishments in class, which Rogers (1998) argues will increase self-esteem and interaction.

Jodrell-Gregson, E (2015) DLPGE






 Active Speakers 



End Breakouts  




▶ Main Meeting (0)

▼ Breakout 1 (4) 

 Lyn Farrell

 Student 1  

 Student 2  

 Student 3  

▶ Breakout 2 (0) 

▶ Breakout 3 (0) 

▶ Breakout 4 (0) 

▶ Breakout 5 (0) 

Breakout 1 Chat - Breakout 1 (Everyone) 

## Familiar (end)



Multiple Choice ▾

Open

### Question

How familiar are you with reflective writing (end)

### Answers (One per line)

Very familiar  
Familiar  
A little familiar  
Not very familiar  
Not familiar at all

## Confidence (end)

Multiple Choice ▾

### Question

How Confident are you with reflective writing (end)

### Answers (One per line)

Very confident  
Confident  
A little confident  
Not very confident  
Not confident at all

### Evaluation

Evaluation Form

Browse To

# Data collection & analysis

Have academic skills improved as a result of the synchronous learning?

Has the synchronous learning helped to reduce transactional distance?

**Quantitative**

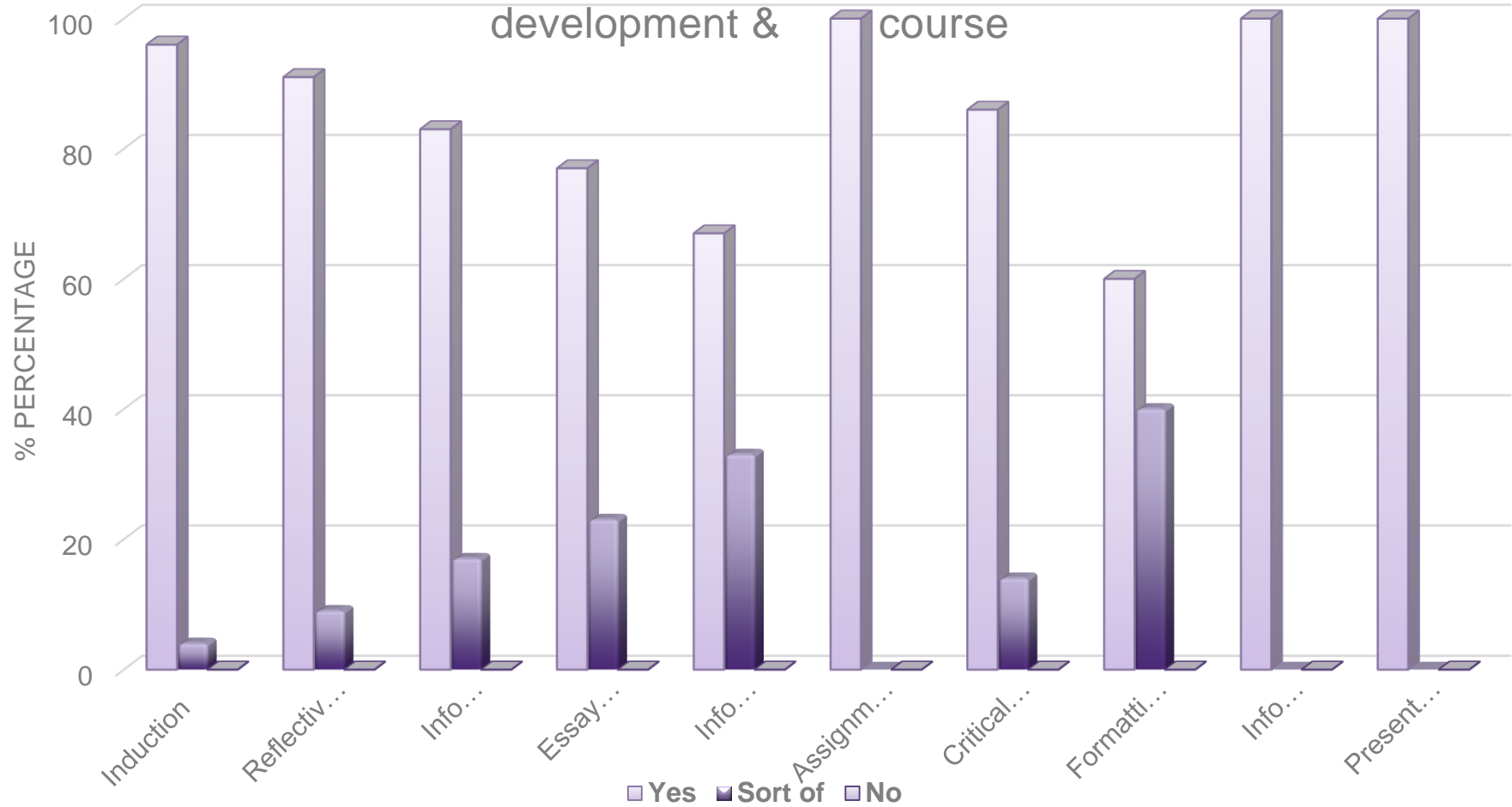
**Qualitative**

Self-assessment polls

Evaluation questionnaires

Focus groups

# Session Objectives useful & relevant to academic skills development & course



# Focus groups on the other hand..



**They liked the concept and thought it was a good idea but...**

- They were inconvenient times
- They were too long
- They were too general: they would have preferred them to be more assignment/module content focussed

**However...**

- They liked the group work
- They felt they were interactive

Has the synchronous learning helped to reduce transactional distance?

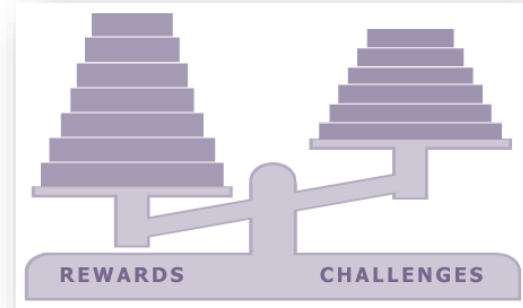
# Benefits and challenges

## Benefits

- Induction session (general questions)
- Our development:
  - Adobe Connect
  - Consistency (webinar design; belongingness/identity)
  - Practice runs
- Technical difficulties: not as bad as feared
- Role of moderator

## Challenges

- Learning to use Adobe Connect
- Variable interaction
- “Radio silence”
- Different experience on different devices
- Timing/attendance/duration
- Staff availability





# Moving forward



- Synchronous course inductions for distance learners we support
- Roll out webinar to other programmes
- Clearer technical instructions/requirements (cable; audio)
- Tutor webcams
- More focussed content (little and often); less is more

# Questions and discussion

- What's your current experience of presenting or participating in webinars?
- How do you feel about them?
- What support do DL students get at your institution?



# References

Baker, C. (2010) The Impact of Instructor Immediacy and Presence for Online Student Affective Learning, Cognition, and Motivation. *Journal of Educators Online*, 7(1), pp. 1-30.

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