DELIVERING DISTANCE LEARNING IN EMERGENCIES: DEFINITIONS

DISTANCE LEARNING (OR DISTANCE EDUCATION)[1,2]

Teaching and learning where educators and learners are in separate physical spaces. Distance learning can occur through one of four modalities: audio/radio, video/television, mobile phone, and/or online learning platforms. Printed and digital texts (e.g., teachers' guides and student materials) often accompany these modalities and could be a fifth modality in cases where other technology is not (or cannot be) used for teaching and learning (e.g., correspondence learning). Distance learning can be synchronous or asynchronous, but it is interactive and therefore different from self-study.

ONLINE LEARNING (OR ONLINE EDUCATION)

A distance learning modality that refers to teaching and learning that occurs via the Internet. Online learning (or online education) can be used to supplement in-person education (e.g. students follow along on tablets during a guided reading exercise) or be the primary mode of delivery in distance learning settings (e.g., Google Classroom). Online learning can be asynchronous (where learners control time and pace) or synchronous (where teaching and learning happens simultaneously in real time either in an online space or through a concurrent broadcast).

ONLINE DISTANCE EDUCATION[3]

Occurs fully online (there is no in-person component) with an instructor or facilitator who uses a learning management system (e.g. Blackboard, Moodle, etc.) and Internet-based programs (e.g., screencasting, video conferencing, and chat) for implementing learning activities. Courses can be synchronous, asynchronous, or a combination of the two.

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[1] All icon graphics used in this document by Txiki Txoko, some based on modified icons from The Noun Project.
[2] Some literature differentiates between distance learning and distance education, arguing that distance learning is specifically about acquiring or improving capabilities via distance education. See Frederick B. King, Michael F. Young, Kelly Drivere-Richmond, P. G. Schrader, "Defining distance learning and distance education". *AACE Journal* 9(1), 1-14 https://www.learntechlib.org/p/17786/.
[3] Sarah Guri-Rosenblit, *Distance Education Systems and Institutions in the Online Era: An Identity Crisis*, (2014), https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/55fe/241dfff1491590c160d0981fdf37352b8b1d.pdf; Zawacki-Richter and Terry Anderson, eds., *Online Distance Education: Towards a Research Agenda*, (Edmonton, AB: AU Press, 2014), https://www.aupress.ca/app/uploads/120233_99Z_Zawacki-Richter_Anderson_2014-Online_Distance_Education.pdf.

ASYNCHRONOUS DISTANCE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Occurs at different times AND in different places (e.g., recording lectures and having students respond with questions and comments on a discussion board on their own time).

SYNCHRONOUS DISTANCE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Occurs simultaneously, but not in the same physical space. It often refers to online learning that happens in real time via digital, video, audio, or online forums (e.g., class discussion on Zoom).

BLENDED LEARNING

A pedagogical practice that combines in-person instruction (physical classroom location) and online-learning. An example of a blended learning model is flipped classrooms, where video lectures or other online activities are assigned to learners and are completed before in-person discussion sessions with instructors take place.

E-LEARNING[4]

Any learning that utilizes electronic technologies outside the physical classroom space (e.g., educational app on a mobile phone). While e-learning is often used synonymously with online learning, e-learning incorporates non web-based modalities (e.g., audio/radio, video/television and mobile phone).

HYBRID LEARNING

Occurs synchronously with learners in different places (some learners are in-person and others join from a distance). Hybrid classrooms may use any of the four main distance learning modalities to allow students who are not physically present to participate (e.g., some students are in a classroom with the instructor while other students join via a livestream of the class).

MASSIVE OPEN ONLINE CLASSROOMS (MOOCS)

An online distance education mechanism where teaching and learning is global (e.g., a general class on monitoring and evaluation). Some MOOC providers (e.g., Coursera, Udemy, etc.) offer a certificate or credit for a cost. They can be taught asynchronously, with active teacher monitoring, or be completely automated.

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[4] A.W. (Tony) Bates, "Technology, e-learning and distance learning, 2nd ed," (Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge, 2005); Joi L.Moorea, CamilleDickson-Deaneb, and Krista Galyenb, "e-Learning, online learning, and distance learning environments: Are they the same?," *Internet and Higher Education*, 14(2), 129-135, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iheduc.2010.10.001.