

## NAVIGATING COMMUNICATION GLITCHES: CHALLENGES FOR TEACHERS IN ONLINE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

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As online learning becomes increasingly prevalent, educators are empowered to adapt to a myriad of challenges, particularly in communicating with learners. While digital platforms offer unparalleled flexibility and accessibility, they also introduce a host of glitches that can impede effective interaction between teachers and students. This article explores these communication challenges and their impact on the educational experience, emphasizing the crucial role of educators' adaptability.

One significant issue is the inconsistency of real-time communication tools. Platforms like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meet are integral for virtual classes, yet they have flaws. Teachers often need help with audio and video quality, which can disrupt the flow of lectures and make it hard for students to follow along (Kebritchi, 2020). For instance, lagging video or choppy audio can hinder teachers' ability to engage students effectively and respond to their questions promptly.

Another challenge is the need for non-verbal cues crucial in traditional classroom settings. Online platforms typically limit or entirely omit facial expressions, body language, and other non-verbal signals that help convey tone and intent (Mabrito, 2021). This absence can lead to misunderstandings and misinterpretations, making it harder for teachers to gauge student reactions or provide nuanced feedback.

Furthermore, text-based communication in online forums and email often needs more immediacy and clarity than face-to-face interactions. Miscommunications can arise more readily in written formats due to the absence of verbal inflection and instant

clarification (Rosenberg & Waugh, 2022). For example, a teacher's written feedback might be perceived as harsh or unclear, even if that was not the intent.

Technological issues also play a critical role. Network instability, software bugs, and compatibility problems can disrupt online classes and impede communication. Teachers may need help accessing course materials, which can prevent them from providing timely responses to student queries (Bower, 2021).

In addition to these technical and communicative barriers, there is also the issue of digital literacy. Students and teachers may need help with the complexities of new platforms, leading to miscommunication or errors in using the tools effectively. Teachers must often spend additional time troubleshooting and guiding students through these platforms, which can detract from instructional time (Hollis, 2022).

Educators can employ several strategies to mitigate these glitches. Regular training and professional development in using online tools effectively can enhance teachers' and students' digital skills. Additionally, incorporating multiple forms of communication, such as video messages, discussion boards, and real-time chats, can help bridge the gap left by the absence of face-to-face interaction (Smith & Jones, 2023).

In conclusion, while online learning platforms offer flexibility and accessibility, they also introduce several communication challenges. Teachers must navigate issues related to real-time communication tools, non-verbal cues, text-based interactions, technological glitches, and digital literacy. By addressing these challenges through training and varied communication methods, educators can enhance their ability to connect with students and provide a more effective online learning experience, fostering a sense of optimism and potential for growth.

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