Instructional Framework for Competency-Based Curriculum Implementation

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Introduction

In this series of webinars, we discussed the constructive alignment of the CBC components at course (subject) level. Constructive alignment means aligning the predetermined competencies, the learning and teaching activities, and the assessment types (Ghent University, 2021). We indicated that the constructive concept has four main elements: (1) competence(s) and its subsequent outcomes (objectives), (2) the concepts and skills (these two are parts of the content covered in the course), (3) the teaching strategies and formative assessment and (4) the summative assessment as evidence that learners have achieved the established competences. We already highlighted the basic concept of competences and the other components of the constructive alignment of the CBC in the paper that we called “Unpack the Constructive Alignment at Course Level” and in this paper, we mainly focus on the instructional framework, which includes the teaching strategies. Formative and summative assessments are well-covered in Webinar 3.

Instructional Framework

In this section, we will talk briefly about the four main instructional approaches in the contemporary pedagogies and these are (1) instructional models, (2) instructional strategies, (3) instructional methods and (4) Instructional skills.

The fundamental question to start with this topic is: “Is there a difference between teaching and learning?” Some thinkers will tell you that the difference between the two concepts depends on which side the person thinking about this question is located. In front of a class with an audience listening, the person may be busy teaching and the audience busy learning. If the same person now is sitting within the audience, he/she will be learning while another person in front talking, may be busy teaching.

Fundamentally, there is a difference between teaching and learning:

**What does teaching mean?**

Teaching is a very old word and it came from the old English word “tæcan” and pst tense tæhte, which has multiple meanings “to show, point out, declare, demonstrate," also "to give instruction, train, assign, direct; warn; persuade; etc.\(^1\)

In fact, teaching is an act of communicating ideas, expressing emotions, imparting information and knowledge to learners. Teachers emphasise on learners’ experiences and facilitate situations and opportunities to ensure learning is taking place. In order to teach, you need learners and the truth is that in order for a teacher to teach effectively, he/she needs willing learners. You may fail in your teaching task if the learners are not willing to learn. There are in principles two forms of teaching:

**Formal**

This teaching approach is ideally happening in the classroom and facilitated by qualified people with licenses to teach. It is governed by national or international systems that have to follow prescribed curricula, class hours, and related standards and competencies. With the advancement of technology, this type of teaching can take place in a virtual classroom as well and it is now a reality since the advent of COVID-19 pandemic.

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\(^1\) Extracted from [https://www.etymonline.com/word/teach](https://www.etymonline.com/word/teach)
Informal

Teaching that happens beyond the regulations of the classroom (physical or virtual) and does not, in principle, require licensing to operate. Some examples of these informal teaching setups are home-based or outside-school tutorials, MOOCs in the form of micro-learning, etc.

What is learning?

Similarly to teaching, learning is an old English word “leornian”, which is translated as “to get knowledge” or “to think about”. In fact, people learn by getting new information that is transformed into knowledge when they make sense of it from their own perspective. In addition, learning is regarded as the acquisition of new information or the alteration of existing knowledge, preferences, expertise, and other aspects of behaviour based on newly received information.

The fact is that learning happens when a learner is busy doing something towards the newly received information during the learning process; this represents the active learning approach, very much required in the competency-based education. When the teacher is the one performing all the time and the learners are only passively watching, we can say with certainty that learning is not taking place. Teachers should do their best to engage learners all the time where they shall be reflecting on the newly received information, get group discussions, presenting, debating, etc. When teachers focus more lecturing (teacher-centred approach), learners will learn little even though their teachers have covered everything about the topic at hand with detailed explanations. However, if learners are given opportunities to present in class, such as teaching through demonstration for example to other learners, this will be the highest level of learning. The learning pyramid shows the moment where the knowledge retention rates are the highest or lowest.

For more information on the learning pyramid, go to: https://tracyharringtonatkinson.com/the-learning-pyramid/
**Question:** From these definitions of teaching and learning, what is the difference between the two?

The above question is an assignment for all participants to thinking about.

**Difference between Teaching and Instruction**

Teaching is **explaining** how something is done while instruction is **telling** how something is done. These two go hand in hand together but are oftentimes confusing since they're almost similar in meaning.

Teaching is more complex in nature. When we talk about teaching, we are dealing with different techniques, strategies, and approaches that will facilitate learning. Teachers have to come up with varied instructional materials and must use the right strategies in teaching their lessons.

On the other hand, instruction is not as complex as teaching. Instruction is simply giving direction. You instruct someone on what to do and how to do it. For instance, in school you're given instructions by your teachers on how to answer a test or how to perform an experiment. After which, you're simply left to do your work on your own.

Instruction makes learners dependent on the teacher. You're told what to do and oftentimes, there are steps you need to follow. Instructions must be understood and followed strictly in order to accomplish a particular task. Once you fail to do so, you won't be able to finish the task correctly.

As we stated earlier, the instructional framework is made of 4 main instructional approaches as shown by the illustration below. Take note that these instructional models represent the teaching modalities to consider every time teachers start preparing their lessons:
1. **Instructional Models**

According to Gayla S. Keesee (2014), models represent the broadest level of instructional practices and present a philosophical orientation to instruction. Models are used to select and to structure teaching strategies, methods, skills, and student activities for a particular instructional emphasis. Instructional models are related to theories about how we learn. Some examples include: behaviourism, cognitivism, constructivism, and connectivism. Various learning theories fit within these general categories, i.e., adult learning theory, transformative learning, social interaction, motivation theory, etc. Instructional models can boost higher levels of teacher self-efficacy that leads to more innovative instruction due to increased levels of effort and persistence in producing successful outcomes and mastery experiences for learners (Bandura, A., 1997). The instructional models are:

- Information processing
- Behavioural
- Social Interaction
- Personal

You can access more information about these models in the resource named “**Models of Teaching**” already uploaded in Kopano under the “Files” module found at [http://kopano.unam.edu.na/ecollaboration/artefact/file/groupfiles.php?group=841](http://kopano.unam.edu.na/ecollaboration/artefact/file/groupfiles.php?group=841)

2. **Instructional Strategies**

Within each model, several strategies can be used. Strategies determine the approach a teacher may take to achieve learning objectives. Strategies can be classed as direct, indirect, interactive, experiential, or independent.

- In addition, Gayla S. Keesee (2014) stresses that **direct instruction strategy** is highly teacher-directed and is among the most commonly used. This strategy includes methods such as lecture, didactic questioning, explicit teaching, practice and drill, and demonstrations. The direct instruction strategy is effective for providing information or developing step-by-step skills. This strategy also works well for introducing other teaching methods, or actively involving students in knowledge construction.
- Inquiry, induction, problem solving, decision making, and discovery are terms that are sometimes used interchangeably to describe indirect instruction. In contrast to the direct instruction strategy, indirect instruction is mainly student-centred, although the two strategies can complement each other. Examples of indirect instruction methods include reflective discussion, concept formation, concept attainment, cloze procedure, problem solving, and guided inquiry.
- Interactive instruction relies heavily on discussion and sharing among participants. The interactive instruction strategy allows for a range of groupings and interactive methods. These may include

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2 Instructional approaches: [http://teachinglearningresources.pbworks.com/w/page/19919560/Instructional%20Approaches](http://teachinglearningresources.pbworks.com/w/page/19919560/Instructional%20Approaches)
total class discussions, small group discussions or projects, or student pairs or triads working on assignments together.

- Experiential learning is inductive, learner centred, and activity oriented. The emphasis in experiential learning is on the process of learning and not on the product. Personalized reflection about an experience and the formulation of plans to apply learnings to other contexts are critical factors in effective experiential learning. Experiential learning greatly increases understanding and retention in comparison to methods that solely involve listening, reading, or even viewing (McNeil & Wiles, 1990). Students are usually more motivated when they actively participate and teach one another by describing what they are doing.

- Independent study refers to the range of instructional methods which are purposefully provided to foster the development of individual student initiative, self-reliance, and self-improvement. Independent study can also include learning in partnership with another individual or as part of a small group. It is important that the instructor make sure that learners have the necessary skills in order to accomplish the task. Independent study is very flexible. It can be used as the major instructional strategy with the whole class, in combination with other strategies, or it can be used with one or more individuals while another strategy is used with the rest of the class.

3. **Instructional Methods**

Methods are processes used by teachers to establish learning settings that specify the nature of the activity both teacher and learner will be tasked to perform during the lesson (face-to-face or virtually). In addition, models and sets of teaching methods are guides for designing educational activities, environments and experiences. They help to specify methods of teaching and patterns for these methods. Instructional strategies, or teaching methods, depend on a number of factors such as the developmental level of students, goals, intent and objectives of the teacher, content, and environment including time, physical setting and resources.

4. **Instructional Skills**

Skills are the most specific instructional behaviours. These include techniques and tactics, such as questioning, discussing, direction-giving, explaining, and demonstrating. They also include such actions as planning, structuring, focusing, and managing. The new trend in classroom facilitation (face-to-face or virtual) is to ensure a set of elements of the instructional skills represent also the method a teacher can utilise when facilitate learning in a physical or virtual classroom. The method to facilitate learning may contain the following elements named **BOPPPS**, which stand for **Bridge-in**, **Learning Objectives**, **Pre-Assessment**, **Participatory Learning**, **Post-Assessment** and **Summary**:

**Bridge-in**: This element of the instructional skills starts the learning cycle, gains learner attention, builds motivation, and explains why the lesson is important. Sometimes known as the "motivational statement" or "hook", the bridge-in helps the learners focus on what is about to happen in the lesson. Bridge-ins are usually short. Some simple strategies include: Providing reasons for learning this topic; explaining why this topic is important and how it may be useful in other situations; describing how it is a transferable skill. The following may be done during the bridge-in activity:

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• Telling a story connected with the lesson topic
• Referring to something in the learners' realm of experience
• posing a provocative question linked to a current topic or the learners' personal lives
• Offering a startling statement or unusual fact
• Linking current topic to material already studied or to future learning

**Learning Objectives:** Clarifies and specifies the learning intention: clarifies what the learner should know, think, value or do by the end of the lesson, under what conditions and how well. While a course may have a few broad general goals and a limited number of learning outcomes, individual lessons usually focus on one or more specific learning objectives to reach those goals or outcomes. Generally, an objective is written as one sentence that includes:

• Who (always the learner or student)
• Will do what (performance)
• Under what conditions
• How well (to what standard or criteria)

**Pre-Assessment:** Answers the question, "What does the learner already know about the subject of the lesson?" Pre-assessment helps teachers to identify the learners’ prior knowledge before the lesson starts. This element of instructional skills can:

• Reveal learners' interests
• Identify learners who can be resources within the class
• Allow learners to express their needs for review or clarification
• Focus attention and signal the purpose of the lesson
• Help the instructor adjust the lesson for depth and pace to better fit a particular group of learners
• Enable the instructor to respond to individual strengths and weaknesses

**Participatory Learning:** This is the body of the lesson, where learners are involved as actively in the learning process as possible. There is an intentional sequence of activities or learning events that will help the learner achieve the specified objective or desired outcome. The lesson may include the use of media. Some ways to encourage active participation using the formative assessment approach include:

• Small group discussion around a specific question or problem arising from the course material
• Pauses in lectures for individual student reflection through writing or discussion, question development or short application tasks like solving an equation or a small problem
• Critical discussions of the main point of the lesson by the learners-perhaps through a think-pair-share strategy
• Prediction or forecasting (usually at the beginning of a concept or unit)
• Individual tasks/presentations
• Students working on a problem, then evaluating each other's work
• Role plays, case studies, scenarios, simulations
• Posing a "thought" question, one that is not answered until later in the activity
Post-Assessment: Before the lesson ends, it is critical to establish evidence that learners have learned something. Formally or informally demonstrates if the learner has indeed learned and is linked directly with the objective or outcome set at the beginning of the lesson. The post-assessment answers two questions:

- What did the learners learn?
- Were the desired objectives accomplished?

Basic knowledge and thinking (knowledge recall and comprehension) can be assessed by:

- multiple choice
- true/false
- matching
- completion
- short written answer
- short verbal answer (if testing through oral or interview format)

Higher order thinking (application, analysis, evaluation and creating) can be assessed by:

- problem solving tasks
- essays, critiques
- creating a novel theory or interpretation
- analysis of a scenario

Skill (doing) can be assessed by:

- checklists
- rating scales
- products or examples of production using the skill(s)
- performance or demonstration

Attitudes (values) can be assessed by:

- attitude scales
- performance
- essays
- journals and other personal reflection pieces
- artefacts

Summary: Provides an opportunity for learners to reflect briefly and integrate the learning during the closing of the learning cycle. In this component, it is recommended to link the next lesson to help learners make a connection between lessons. The summary may include:

- content review (either instructor or learners briefly recap main points)
- group process (time for learners to discuss their group process)
- feedback
- recognition (acknowledgment of effort and achievement)
- application (how to use this later; create a personal action plan)
- individual voice (quick round-table for each person to have a "last word")

**Teaching Models**

A model of teaching is a plan or pattern that can be used to shape curriculums (long-term courses of studies), to design instructional materials, and to guide instruction in the classroom and other settings based on Joyce and Weil (1980).

**Functions of Teaching Models**

- Provide guidance to planners & teachers to enable them to plan & carry out the teaching process effectively.
- As basic guidance for teachers for reflection during the feedback session.
- Enable teachers to analyse & evaluate its strengths & weaknesses so as to plan & implement appropriate follow-up actions.
- Formulate a complete & perfect teaching scheme.

For more details about teaching models, [click here to download](#) the document providing the details of the concept. The name of the document is “Models of Teaching”.

**Teaching Strategies**

[Click here to download](#) a resource providing 100 instructional strategies that you can employ in your teaching.

**Teaching Methods**

Teaching is a complex profession and it requires teachers to possess the passion of teaching and the love of the profession. Whether you’re a longtime educator, preparing to start your first teaching job or mapping out your dream of a career in the classroom, the topic of teaching methods is one that means many different things to different people. [Click here to access an article](#) written by Joseph Lathan from the University of San Diego, detailing a big range of teaching methods that you can employ in your own class.

**Conclusion**

In this paper, we tried to touch on most important aspects of teaching to ensure that when teachers start the implementation of CBC, they can make the right decision on the teaching models, strategies and methods that will respond to the learners’ needs and that will guide them to develop the set competences. The information presented in this paper requires further research on every specific teaching aspect. It is particularly paramount to facilitate learning during the classroom or virtual teaching using the instructional skills as presented in this paper. Doing so, learners will appreciate the importance of newly received information and they will make the required attempts to develop the competences’ attributes, namely the knowledge, skills, and ability. As we indicated in the introduction of this paper, the aim was to address the different components of the constructive alignment at course level and this paper looked at the teaching strategies and beyond. The formative and summative assessments are covered in the Webinar 3 resource pack.
References

Joseph Lathan, PhD. The Complete List of Teaching Methods. Extracted from https://onlinedegrees.sandiego.edu/complete-list-teaching-methods/


