Synchronous Online Tutoring for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students: An Analysis of Observed Functions

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SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE TUTORING FOR DEAF AND HARD-OF-HEARING STUDENTS: AN ANALYSIS OF OBSERVED FUNCTIONS
Acknowledgements

• Support for the Deaf STEM Community Alliance from NSF, HRD-1127955

• DHHVAC Students & Tutors

• Student Research Assistants: James Brunner, Amy Johnson, Jonathan MacDonald, Carson Pursifull, Kaycee Sommers, Annette Tavernese, & Darius Toney
Objectives

• Rationale for DHHVAC Synchronous Tutoring
• Other Synchronous Tutoring for DHH students
• Finkelstein’s model of synchronous tutoring
• Discuss findings from analysis of tutoring videos

• Q & A
DHHVAC Model
Barriers & Strategies

**Student Preparation**
- Remote Tutoring
- Remote Mentoring
  - Using G+ Hangouts, Zoom

**Socialization**
- Remote Mentoring
  - Peer-to-Peer Interaction
    - Using G+ Private Community, Facebook Secret Group

**Accessible Media**
- Accessible STEM Information
  - Using Website, G+ Private Community, & G+ Public Page
Online Tutoring Defined

• Synchronous or real-time
  – Still face-to-face (like traditional office hours or tutoring), but mediated by the computer

• Asynchronous (delayed time)
  – Email or other exchanges that do not occur at the same time
  – Supplemental videos
Other Online Tutoring Projects for D/HH Students

• Brown (2010)
  – High school students
  – Science classes

• Bryant (2011)
  – NTID
  – Writing course

• NRSC (2017-18)
  – High school students @ AIDB
  – Math classes
Faculty and Student Responses to Online Learning

• Faculty
  – Concerns about rapport and communication
  – Concerns about technology issues and support

• Students
  – Increased convenience
  – Ability to save notes for later use
DHHVAC Tutoring Experience

• At least 170 synchronous tutoring sessions between February 2012-present:
  – 16 different tutors
  – 42 different students (73% RIT, 27% Camden/Cornell)
  – 10 different STEM course domains:
    • Anatomy & Physiology, Biology, Calculus, Chemistry, Elementary Math, Geometry, Physics, Pre-Calculus, Psychology, Math Research
Methods

• Sample: 585 segments from 17 videos
• Courses:
  – Biochemistry (344 segments)
  – Math (12)
  – Physics (92)
• 3 tutors
• 4 students
Analysis

- Conversation Analysis (Sidnell, 2012)
  - Timestamp segments (between 1-50 seconds)
- Ratings by team of 2-6 coders
  - Tutoring experience
  - Student experience as a tutee
  - All ASL fluent
- Interrater reliability using Fleiss’ Kappa (Landis & Koch, 1977):
  - $K = .61-.73, p=0.000$ (substantial agreement)
Analysis

• Learner-initiated and Tutor-initiated
• 24 codes (based on Bryant, 2011)
  – Communication Strategies (e.g., ASL, SimComm, facial expressions)
  – Interactions (e.g., asking questions, responding to questions, expressing understanding)
  – Materials (e.g., online resources, hardcopy materials, physical or virtual tools, text chat)
  – Technology
    • Conversations about platform features
    • Problems with technology
The “Finkelstein Five”
Synchronous Online Learning Functions

- Instruction
- Collaboration
- Socialization & Informal Exchange
- Support
- Extended Outreach
Finklestein Five-Instruction

- Instruction = Active construction of knowledge by learners through process of real-time give-and-take
Collaboration

- Collaboration = A key element to the success of an online learning environment. Interactions tend to be more egalitarian in nature...
Finkelstein Five-Support

• Support=A crucial element for retaining and motivating learners...personalized, live exchange with the right person...
Finkelstein Five-
Socialization & Informal Exchange

• Socialization & informal exchange=Help to build community and create a friendly and safe environment in which people can feel like people.
Finkelstein Five-Extended Outreach

Extended outreach = Institution’s connection to the world beyond its gates.

27% of students who received tutoring were from partner schools.
Discussion

• Evolving project!
  – Continue refining coding scheme
  – Adding more videos

• Emphasis is on instruction and support

• With appropriate training, minimal technology problems
Concluding Thoughts

“[A common misconception about] Synchronous interaction is that [it is] too difficult to learn and is hard to facilitate—Nothing is too difficult to learn, especially for people who make their careers out of educating others. The best way to learn how to teach with a synchronous tool is to learn with one.”

(Finkelstein, 2006, pp.138-139).
Culturally Responsive Communities of Practice
AAAS Annual Meeting, Washington DC,
February 17, 2019

Deaf STEM Community Alliance
& the
Deaf and Hard of Hearing Virtual Academic Community (DHHVAC)
Lisa B. Elliot, Rochester Institute of Technology
DHHVAC - Introduction

• Sponsored by NSF
  • HRD-1127955,
  • HRD-1834978

• Students, Faculty & Mentors
  • RIT
  • Camden County College
  • Cornell University
  • Closed Membership
    • 20 (2011-12) – 64 (2017-18)
    • 82 (2016-17)
DHHVAC – Cultural Responsiveness

• For participants who are D/deaf or hard of hearing!
• Varied communication preferences need to be represented:
  • Audio
  • Sign
  • Text
  • Video
• Variety of STEM topics need to be covered
• Multigenerational and multiple roles (students, faculty, professionals)
DHHVAC – Lesson(s) Learned

Patience

Flexibility
How do we best define *member engagement*?