



Call for contributions Special Issue

Title & Scope:

Hybridity in Learning and Instruction: Challenges and Opportunities of Here and There Instruction

Learning and Instruction is soliciting submissions for a special issue focusing on hybridity in Learning and Instruction and more specifically on synchronous hybrid education. In this educational model, learners simultaneously attend instruction, yet, they can be located at different locations, either 'here' or 'there' creating a differentiation in presence. However, in this educational context, the teacher is expected to manage both 'here' and 'there' students impacting teacher orchestration. We invite contributions giving insight into both the opportunities and the challenges of synchronous hybrid education from different perspectives, including the teacher, the student, and the institutional perspective.

Guest Editors:

Prof. dr. Annelies Raes
KU Leuven, Belgium

Prof. dr. Gaëlle Molinari
University of Geneva, Switzerland

Prof. dr. Alejandra Martínez-Monés
Universidad de Valladolid, Spain

Dr. Ishari Amarasinghe
National Education Lab AI, Radboud University, Netherlands

Special Issue Information

The landscape of learning and instruction is rapidly evolving, with hybridity emerging as a key paradigm (Nørgård, 2021). Overall, prior work on hybrid education highlights a shift in the structure of education, as well as in teaching and learning towards connectivity, networks, and collaborations. Hybridity in education is manifested in the combination of prior dichotomies, i.e. online versus offline, physical versus remote, synchronous versus asynchronous, formal versus informal learning, ... (Gil et al., 2022). While the urgency for this blend was heightened by the constraints of Covid-19 to ensure continuity of learning, the true driving force behind transcending these traditional dichotomies is the integration of digital technologies into education. Hybridity in education has been explored across various dimensions, yet this special issue delves deeply into synchronous hybrid education, an innovative approach where students, whether present onsite or connected remotely, engage simultaneously in the same educational activities. This method aims to foster a unified learning experience, effectively overcoming geographical barriers and ensuring an inclusive educational environment for all participants (Raes et al., 2020).

While synchronous hybrid education became common and essential during the pandemic to reduce the number of people in class and allow ill individuals to continue their studies remotely, this teaching modality has continued to attract many educational institutions after the pandemic, given its benefits. For example, from the students' perspective, they value the flexibility and autonomy it can provide, and research brings empirical results on the benefits



that this hybrid approach can have on learning, particularly enhancing educational accessibility and equity among students (Badiozaman et al., 2023).

Despite the benefits, the hybridization of learning spaces also presents challenges. For example, for students participating online in a course delivered by the teacher in a face-to-face setting, this can affect their feelings of presence, belonging and connectedness to the class, their engagement both cognitively and emotionally, and even their academic performance and well-being, which requires special attention (McKellar, & Wang, 2023; Raes, 2022; Rasheed et al., 2020). Regarding teachers, research indicates that they may face difficulties in distributing their attention and managing online and onsite participants in real-time and simultaneously, which can increase their orchestration load (Amarasinghe et al., 2021; Bülow, 2022; Prieto et al., 2018).

This special issue aims to connect perspectives and theories within our field to address the gap on synchronous hybrid education within the literature on Learning & Instruction. We invite scholars to contribute their research and insights on the following guiding questions:

Conceptual & methodological:

- What constitutes synchronous hybridity in the context of learning and instruction?
- What different variations and operationalizations of synchronous hybrid learning exist around the globe and how are they employed across various educational contexts?
- What are the methodological challenges related to investigating learning and instruction in a synchronous hybrid learning environment?

Learning perspective:

- How does the presence (physical or remote) influence several learning variables at the cognitive, metacognitive and affective level (i.e. students performance, engagement, participation, well-being, social belonging, ...).
- What new competencies do students need to develop to cope with synchronous hybrid learning, such as self-regulated learning (SRL) and metacognitive skills?
- How could the flow of communication and interaction between remote and onsite participants be supported?
- What strategies could be employed to foster collaboration between remote and onsite participants?
- How to help collaboration between remote and onsite participants in synchronous hybrid learning environments?

Teaching and instructional design perspective:

- How does hybridity affect teaching, considering factors such as orchestration, orchestration load and technostress?
- What are the new skills and competencies teachers need to acquire (e.g., when designing for hybridity and when handling new tools and technologies that are useful in hybrid learning situations etc.)?
- What is the role of guidance and mentorship in synchronous hybrid learning and who should take up this role (e.g. opportunities of peer tutoring and AI support)?
- What are strategies to ensure the seamless continuity of educational processes over spatial settings, supporting a sense of presence and community?
- How to design hybrid learning environments to enhance student engagement, self-direction, and persistence, while being adaptable to a wide range of learner preferences, circumstances, and needs?

Future Prospects for Research, Policy, and Practice:

- Reflect on the implications of hybridity for future research endeavors.
- Propose recommendations for policy development and practical applications in educational settings.



Abstract and Manuscript Submission Information

In our special issue, we aim to focus on the narrow sense of hybridity referring to the intermix of physical and virtual spaces at the same time, also conceptualized as **synchronous hybrid education** in which both onsite and remote students are simultaneously following education (Raes et al., 2020). We focus on this form of hybridity to complement earlier research on blended learning combining online and onsite learning in an asynchronous manner (see e.g. Boelens et al., 2017) ensuring continuity of educational processes over various temporal settings. This special issue focuses on **learning and instruction over various spatial settings at the same time**. We welcome submissions focussing on all kinds of learning activities (group learning and individual learning) and age groups as long as the study includes a combination of synchronous remote and onsite learning supported by technology. Submissions can include asynchronous learning, as long as interrelatedness with the synchronous hybrid activity is clear. This special issue aims to delve into the multifaceted aspects of synchronous hybrid education, welcoming both conceptual, methodological and empirical papers examining synchronous hybrid education from both the student and teacher perspective.

Interested authors are asked to submit **the following by June 1, 2024**

- a 100 - 250-word abstract for each submission
- an extended summary of 600-1000 words, detailing the aims, methodology, findings, and theoretical and educational significance of the research.

Abstracts will be reviewed, and selected authors will be invited to submit a full manuscript for consideration for inclusion in the special issue. The notification of acceptance of abstract is foreseen on July 1, 2024.

The deadline for **full manuscript Submission** is **November 15, 2024**

For additional questions about the appropriateness of contributions, please contact Prof. dr. Annelies Raes, annelies.raes@kuleuven.be.

Origin of the special issue proposal

The current proposal originates from two prior symposia and one conference workshop (co-)organized by the guest editors. The first symposium “How to promote optimal individual and collaborative learning in remote and hybrid environments? A focus on motivational and emotional factors.” took place at the ISLS 2022 conference in Tokyo. Next, a workshop was organized at the ISLS 2023 conference focusing on “Orchestrating Hybrid Learning Scenarios: Challenges and Opportunities”. Finally, In August 2023, the most recent symposium was presented at the EARLI conference entitled “How to improve social presence and decrease orchestration load in hybrid learning environments?” During these three events we expressed the desire to dedicate a special issue on the several issues discussed during both symposia and the workshop

Information of the review process

Each paper will have at least two reviewers; one from another paper that was submitted to the SI and one or two external reviewers, based on their expertise with the content of the paper.



Selected references

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Keywords

synchronous hybrid education, flexibility, presence, engagement, teacher orchestration, technological literacy/competency, student-centered pedagogical beliefs, instructional design