

# Handbook of Research on Emerging Priorities and Trends in Distance Education:

## Communication, Pedagogy, and Technology

T. Volkan Yuzer  
*Anadolu University, Turkey*

Gulsun Eby  
*Anadolu University, Turkey*

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## Chapter 5

# Meeting Emerging Needs of Online Coaching in Teacher Education: Communication, Pedagogy, Technology, and Reflection

**Kim H. Song**

*University of Missouri – St. Louis, USA*

### **ABSTRACT**

*The chapter examines emerging priorities and trends in virtual or online teacher education courses using empirical research findings on online courses. The benefits and challenges of the online practicum course are explored, as well as the efficacy of online coaching if it impacts on participants' teaching practice. The uniqueness of this online course is that it uses synchronous one-on-one coaching as an innovative way of leading them to the next level of inquiry. This virtual course facilitates mutual and progressive improvement through synchronous and asynchronous communication tools. The results include the procedure of the interactive and effective online course development, benefits and challenges of taking well-designed online courses, and impact of guided and reflective virtual coaching as well as future direction.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Online learning has become a popular delivery method for teaching and learning in higher education settings (Koh & Hill, 2009), and its growth is hard to ignore. Survey responses from over 2,200 U.S. colleges and universities have shown

that almost 3.2 million students were enrolled in at least one full online course in 2005, an increase of almost one million students from the previous academic year (Allen & Seaman, 2006). Many universities continue to use online classes as a long-term strategy to handle growing student enrollment and shrinking space and budgets (Thompson, 2004 in Clark-Ibanez & Scott, 2008). It is not the exception in teacher education pro-

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grams that the demand of developing and offering online courses increases.

It takes time, skills, and attitude to excel at effective online teaching (Rose, 2012). Effective online courses need to use a student-centered and constructivist approach where the instructor facilitates student learning. Successful online teaching needs to demonstrate the deep comprehension of the academic content, critical pedagogies of teaching and learning, inquiry and problem solving, cultural understanding, and reflection (Stigler, & Stevenson, 1991; Darling-Hammond, & McLaughlin, 1995). Ongoing modifications regarding teaching strategies are essential for online instructors depending on learning styles, technology skills and cognitive thinking capability. Students' comments from anonymous reflection could convey their perspectives on strengths and challenges while they are taking online courses. Developing an online class is possible with early planning and an awareness of how to engage students with an online course designer (Clark-Ibáñez & Scott, 2008). In developing teacher education online courses, practicum course development is most challenging because virtual or online supervision is required. Most of the times the students upload their teaching videos, and the instructors provide the feedback.

The specific objectives of this chapter are:

1. To share how on-line teacher education courses were developed to enhance active inquiry-based learning and teaching pedagogy;
2. To report on how the participants perceived benefits and challenges of the online practicum course; and
3. To demonstrate reflective teaching practice using online coaching as a supervision tool at the online practicum course.

For Objective 1, the author shares research-based strategies for designing an effective online course and draws upon prior experiences in teach-

ing online TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) courses. For Objective 2, the author uses the participants' reflection on benefits and challenges of one online TESOL practicum course to explore if the current research supports them. Objective 3 is a case study to determine the effectiveness of online supervision that uses a three step guided coaching plan.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Efficacy of Online Course**

When carefully crafted to ensure student engagement, online courses can provide a dynamic learning environment (Clark-Ibáñez & Scott, 2008). Online courses provide new means to interact with experts and colleagues, and students can experience new forms of teaching and learning (Kleiman, 2004). The basic tenet of online teaching and learning is that student learning should come first, followed by technology. Another tenet is that learning happens not only through readings or recorded instructor-centered lectures, but also through interaction and active participation (Clark-Ibáñez & Scott, 2008).

Online group work is another significant area that contains dimensions of mastering tasks or course objectives, developing social relationship and improving technological skills (Carabajal, Lapointe, & Gunawardena, 2003). Group work can be used to develop students' critical thinking and reflection skills through sharing their ideas and forming academic learning communities to trigger deeper understanding of concepts (Conrad & Donaldson, 2004; Palloff & Pratt, 1999). The important aspect of group work is the level of interaction and engagement experienced within the group. Increasingly, researchers view a group as a social system. According to Forsyth (1996), groups are systems of interacting individuals within a dynamic environment; their development is affected by many different elements. To gain insight into

online group development, online course developers need to understand how the different elements influence each other and, in turn, how they impact the interaction and learning of group members.

There are numerous benefits to teaching online which in some cases leads to improved learning: Some examples are intense participation, increased opportunities for learning, flexibility for instructor and student, and increased access to instructional resources and the assignments (Clark-Ibáñez & Scott, 2008). Online courses can provide expertise and resources to locations where they would not be available, otherwise (Kleiman, 2004). Jones and Johnson (2005) report that 22 percent of faculty in their study believes the quality of the learning has improved in online courses, and 19 percent believe it has worsened. One-third of college faculty surveyed believe students' writing quality has improved with the introduction of the Internet, with only six percent feeling it has worsened. Since reading and writing make up a large part of the Internet experience (Jones & Johnson-Yale, 2005), developing online courses is another way to enhance students' writing and reading. The asynchronous environment allows students to read messages, reflect on them, and write carefully about their ideas over time (Petrides, 2002; Vonderwell, 2003). Then, students take time and contribute ideas when they are ready, and they are more reflective in their written online comments than what might occur in the synchronous environment (Spicer, 2002; Treacy, Kleiman, & Peterson, 2002).

There are also challenges to teaching online. First, it is not easy to develop engaging, active online courses. It is also not easy for the students to take them with success. Students need to know that online classes take more time than expected. Online course instructors need to let their students know what online classes are like beforehand. Instructors need to establish ongoing contact to check in with students before they are overwhelmed. Instructors also need to ensure that students are technologically ready. Christ (2007)

explains that today's students are savvy about games and social networking tools, but most are not equipped with the academic skills to do well in online classes. It is important to let the students know that they should not spend too much time in troubleshooting when they have difficulty in technology. The instructor needs to provide a hotline for solving any technological difficulties. It is also important to allow for students' complaints, especially to vent frustrations about technology; in fact, complaints are a sign of a healthy online community (Collison et al., 2000).

For the instructor, online teaching is labor intensive and can create overloads that lead to burnout if he/she is not proactive, and responsive to the students. First, instructors must build the course before they begin teaching it. If they are teaching a new online course and developing it at the same time, the instructors are likely to be faced with a number of challenging issues. There will be dozens of anxious daily emails from the students and enormous amounts of grading and reading as part of the workload, especially the first semester. Instructors should not decide to teach online because they think it will be easier than teaching face-to-face. One research study finds that online classes are 40 percent more work for the instructor than face-to-face classes (Bender, 2003).

Some researchers have found that more meaningful discourse arises only when instructors request students to analyze, compare and reflect upon concrete situations (Nemirovsky & Galvis, 2004). Online instructors also play an important role in eliciting the contributions of less active students, managing those who may dominate discussions, and creating a comfortable and social environment (Anderson, et al, 2001). The online course instructors could be most effective when they play content experts as well as facilitators (Anderson, et al., 2001). Furthermore, the presence of a knowledgeable online instructor can help participants synthesize course materials and progress beyond the initial stages of idea discovery and exploration (Garrison & Cleveland-Innes, 2005).

One most significant challenge for online courses is lack of a sense of community (Song, et al., 2004; Vonderwell, 2003). Online learning participants indicate a lack of connection with faculty and other learners, which may have a negative impact on their overall class experience. A lack of connection can also have a negative impact on group work in online environments. Another key barrier is difficulty of communication among online students because of learners' time zone differences and the absence of face-to-face meetings (Kim, Liu, & Bonk, 2005). In Vonderwell's (2003) study, some students worry about communication problems they might encounter since they do not see each other face-to-face. These problems included delayed responses and unfamiliarity with classmates.

### **Guided Online Coaching and Cognitive Coaching**

Guided online coaching is another element that may provide the evidence of effective and reflective online teacher education courses. In teacher education courses, the students need to perform their teaching, and provide evidence that supports their improvement of teaching. It is not possible for the teacher education students to demonstrate their teaching improvement without having reflective feedback from well-trained supervisors. It is also required from the State that the teachers-to-be should take at least one practicum course in the subject they want to be certified (e.g., TESOL endorsement). Most of the online practicum courses require the students to send the videotaped teachings to the instructors or stream them, which takes enormous time. Then, the instructors provide the feedback at the discussion boards. Online coaching may provide the guided, but interactive and reflective feedback to the students to improve their teaching.

The goal of the guided coaching is not to evaluate teachers' teaching performance, but to facilitate and support their reflective teaching practice just

like in cognitive coaching (Echevarria & Short, 2010; Costa & Garmston, 2002). Coaching can be understood as an intentional and conscious process between two people, in which exploration, critique, and reflection transform practice (Sherris, Bauder & Hillyard, 2007). There are three steps in the cognitive coaching; 1) preconference, 2) observation, and 3) postconference (Costa & Garmston, 2002).

Before the three-step process occurs, coaches and students or teachers-to-be need to arrange conferences and observations that work for both parties, agreeing on a convenient time for pre/post-conferences and observations. The coaches and the students identify ways to communicate, whether they meet physically, on the phone, or through e-mail.

The three-step cognitive teaching process is briefly described. Step 1 is planning/pre-conference. In this step, teachers and coaches develop nonjudgmental conversation about practice (e.g., links between one lesson part and another to meet students' needs and curriculum). They decide on goals and select specific components and features of effective teaching (Author & Eur, 2010). They also raise questions that engage students but may not have easy answers, and develop a sense of inquiry, curiosity, and creativity. The teachers submit lesson plans that include language and content objectives, and assessment strategies. They discuss the intangibles of the lesson, such as teacher feelings, teacher perceptions of classroom climate, teacher belief, and teacher intuition (Sherris, et al., 2007; Costa & Garmston, 2002).

Step 2 is observation. The coaches observe the planned teaching from Step 1 with meaningful activities and supplementary materials, and may videotape the lesson. The videotaped lesson, if used, is given to the teacher, and the teacher views the videotape and self-assesses the teaching and reflects on their own teaching (Costa & Garmston, 2002).

Step 3 is reflection through post-conference. The coaches and teachers meet after the obser-

vation with the data, (i.e., instructor's feedback and self-feedbacks on their own teaching). These data are used to generate conversation that focuses on the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching, such as why a particular part of a lesson is strong or weak. The data is also used to deconstruct the underlying assumptions about teaching and learning (e.g., identify bias, scripts, frames, perspectives, habits of mind, and routines of practice), and to ask if these assumptions are hindering or facilitating the implementation of the instruction (Sherris, et al., 2007). They use the conversation from their co-constructed exploration and critique to set new implementation goals. The coaches and teachers discuss whether all aspects of this conference have met the needs of both parties in order to stay trustworthy. The coaches identify ways to increase professional self-reflection in future conferences, advancing toward a new schemata, by discussing aspects of the new schema and identifying other possible ways to organize the next conference (Sherris, et al., 2007; Taggart, & Wilson, 2005).

The guided coaching process needs to be "open, shared, conversational, and explicit" (Sherris, et al., 2007, p. 10). With videotapes, for instance, coaches can stimulate recall in which teachers are asked to reconstruct their thinking (Author & Catapano, 2007) about the Sheltered Instruction of Observation Protocol (SIOP) features as they watch themselves teach. The coaches initiate follow-up e-mails to discuss the teaching behaviors based on assessment evidence such as SIOP survey data previously done by the coaches and the teachers (Author & Eur, 2010). Guided coaching also provides conceptual language for a deep exploration of lesson design and implementation. In the coaching process, each teacher's personal teaching philosophy may not change, but an instructional philosophy that the teacher is not aware of might be brought into their consciousness (Costa & Garmston, 2002).

## **MAIN FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER: METHODS AND RESULTS**

The three main focal points or objectives of the chapter are: 1) the procedure of the online course development, 2) participants' perception of benefits and challenges of the online courses, and 2) a qualitative case study of online coaching. Each of the objectives is described with the results in this section.

### **Methods and Results of Objective One**

How on-line teacher education courses are developed to enhance active inquiry-based learning and teaching. The procedure of the course design and the delivery of the course activities are ethno-graphed.

First, the procedure of the course design and the delivery of the course activities will be described. "I" will be used for the instructor and course developer in this section. It took three years to develop six TESOL courses with a university system grant received in 2009. The online course design technology experts and the content expert worked together to enhance the online course delivery.

Developing the first course was very challenging because the instructor had to change from face to face instruction/communication to explaining detailed processes in writing using asynchronous tools, Blackboard 9.1, VoiceThread, and WIMBA. All course content is pre-developed and posted to the course web software, Blackboard, before the semester begins. Course materials include, but are not limited to: the syllabus, 8 learning modules, multiple assessment rubrics, tutorials for using software (e.g., VoiceThread, WIMBA, course shells, and etc.), prewritten reflective items for 16 weeks at Discussion Board with assessment rubrics, hotlines for technological difficulty, grade criteria, all of the reading materials if not using text books, and pre-videotaped mini-lessons on



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certain concepts. It took more than two months to develop these content materials for virtual delivery. I went to a number of professional development workshops on online course development in addition to attending one-on-one meetings with the online course design team.

There are many elements that the online instructor/developer needs to prepare before the semester starts, and among them I have chosen the two most significant tasks. The one that took most of my time was the development of learning modules, which included academic content and directions. There were 8 learning modules, each with two different concepts or topics. I designed the modules to cover both 8-week summer and grant-based courses and regular 16-week semester courses. Each module included outcome-based learning objectives, assessments, specific deadlines (e.g., 10PM on June 13, 2013) and step-by-step directions for submitting weekly assignments. The students would find the reading materials, the PowerPoint (PPT) presentations, YouTube videos, PDF articles, pre-videotaped mini-lessons, and online quizzes to measure content mastery in these modules.

The other significant area in which I spent a lot of time was in writing 16 weeks of reflective items for use on the Discussion Board (DB). I wrote the reflective items that focused on the essential concepts that students needed to know. These reflective items were balanced between content knowledge items (e.g., define dimensions of cross-cultural communication variances with examples) and application items (e.g., create a project that supports the cross-cultural communication norms with data collected from your ethnic partners). I wrote 3 to 5 items for weekly reflection, not more than five. These items needed to demonstrate students' mastery of essential concepts, and of critical thinking and reflective thinking skills, but not too overwhelming.

When the semester started, the first thing I did was to schedule a physical meeting during the first week of the semester. I encouraged

everybody to attend, but because this was an online course, attendance was optional. Ten of 13 students came to the physical meeting. The entire session of the physical meeting was archived at WIMBA and was available to those who were not able to attend. Of those not attending, one had to work, and two were taking the course from out of state (one in a different state and one overseas). The same evening after the person-to-person tutorial was offered, I also had a synchronous virtual meeting, for those not attending the physical meeting. Then, everybody had to take an online quiz on the content covered at the tutorial meeting, the physical or virtual one.

There were several essential elements in this online course. Group DB was one of them, and it was mainly used for posting students' reflection on content knowledge and application to the reflective items posted by me, and the group members had to respond to other members' postings. The grade center was another essential element that students had to check weekly since I posted the grades weekly with the comment and justification based on the reflective writing rubrics. The third essential element the students needed to check weekly is Announcement. I posted announcement at least once a week to give 1) the feedback on each week's assignment, interaction among group members and some areas of concern if needed, and 2) reminder of the next week's assignments. Another successful indicator was a synchronous virtual office. Every Tuesday evening from 8PM to 10PM, there was a "virtual office" meeting. This meeting was not a requirement, but open for any student who had questions, and/or comments. I created this as a forum to teach mini-lessons synchronously if there were difficult concepts that needed additional explanation, and archived them for those who did not make it to the virtual office. When the projects were due, the virtual office was busy for those who would like to have more clarification and samples.



## Methods and Results of Objective Two

“How the participants perceive benefits and challenges of the online course.” The reflective writings of the 13 participants were used as data to answer Objective Two. Strengths of the online courses were codified and triangulated in terms of the three areas, 1) relationship development, 2) learning about effective teaching theories and practice, and 3) informational technology skills.

### Relationship Development

Thirteen of 13 participants (100%) responded that they have developed authentic professional relationship with the group members. Four of 13 participants responded that they have developed personal relationship with group members because of common interests discovered during interactions at DB and VT, and during meetings that happened outside of the online course. Some excerpts from their responses are:

*I feel that I have interacted with fellow students on DB and VT's in an authentic way. We have provided not only superficial feedback to one another but also deep, practical and critical feedback throughout the semester on the VT presentations.*

*We have also asked questions of one another and elaborated on responses on the DB. With a couple students (I had them in previous classes with) I have kept in touch via phone/text to ask and answer questions about class assignments, double check deadlines and provide suggestions.*

*I think the first meeting we had, which was face-to-face, helped to connect us with one another. The weekly WIMBA virtual office hours also helped create real time interactions and develop relationships.*

*I feel that I came to this class with an open mind, ready to expand it and learn from the professor and the other students in the class. I always tried to leave as much feedback as possible and I tried to focus to point out the positive and good side of the group members' postings and VT's. I can name one person whom I developed the personal relationship because I got to meet in person. We exchanged our experiences and ideas on what we could/ should do, we encouraged each other many times.*

### Learning About Effective Teaching Theories and Practices

All of the participants (n =13) reflected that they have learned a lot about teaching theories, strategies and pedagogies. Four of 13 responded that they learned more through the online course; 7 of 13 responded that they have learned theories and pedagogies in the online course as much as they would in the physical class; and 2 of 13 would still prefer the physical classes even though they thought they learned as much (Table 1).

Some excerpts in relation to learning about pedagogies and strategies through the online course are:

*The largest knowledge increased for me was the focus on the four language domains during the planning process. As a mainstream teacher I took these domains for granted in the past when planning and instructing. By emphasizing on the four domains in the various lessons and activities throughout the semester, it allowed me to create more effective lesson not only for ELL students, but for mainstream learners as well.*

*I think that WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment) is definitely one of the strategies that I made the most improvement with in this class. After writing WIDA for a few les-*

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Table 1. Perception of benefits and weaknesses of online course and/or online coaching

Characteristics	Student Responses	Percentage
Participants: Had professional relationship development with group members	13/13	100%
Had personal/social relationship development through DB and/or Voicethread	4/13	31%
Increased learning via online format	4/13	31%
Had knowledge acquisition via online format equal to physical class format	7/13	54%
Preferred physical class to online format	2/13	15%
Improved technology skills via online course format	13/13	100%
Met the objectives of the lesson via online coaching	12/13	92%
Applied coping strategies using WIDA via online coaching	10/13	77%
Would adopt peer coaching at their schools after online coaching	12/13	92%

*sons and getting feedback from my professor and classmates, I began to understand how to write the coping strategies better.*

*I have definitely learned a lot through this course, not only because we had great literature, but also because we had ongoing process of learning from each other through DB and from instructor's feedback. I like how people have shared their experience throughout the semester at DB and VT. Before this class, I did not know almost anything about SIOP, WIDA, CCSS, but now I feel so confident and so ready to show what I know.*

### Improvement of Informational Technology

Thirteen (100%) participants reported that they have improved their technology skills. These skills included navigating the course pages (i.e., Blackboard 9.1), using VoiceThread and WIMBA software and PPT. Most reported improvement in using Voicethread (Table 1). Some excerpts are:

*I learned how to make a video lesson that is a very interesting part of the class. I faced a technical difficulty in uploading my video to the voice thread in the beginning of the semester, but at the end, I found myself knowing more about voice*

*thread including making PPT, videotaping my own teaching, uploading them to VoiceThread, and providing the feedback at VoiceThread.*

*Using WIMBA to visit the virtual office and archive rooms is actually much easier than uploading video to VoiceThread. In general, I have developed the confidence in technology due to this class.*

*VoiceThread is a great tool to use with each other in different schools and districts as professional development. At first, I was very frustrated with VT because it takes a long time to upload videos but after some practice and updates to my computer, it became much easier.*

*Using VT, I will be able to create videos for my students and put them on a site that is easy to access! The videos could be created for anything- it will be a chance to take videos of things that my students would not be able to see otherwise.*

### Methods and Results of Objective Three

“how the participants demonstrate reflective teaching practice using online coaching.” With caution, I selected online coaching as a tool to supervise the students in the online practicum

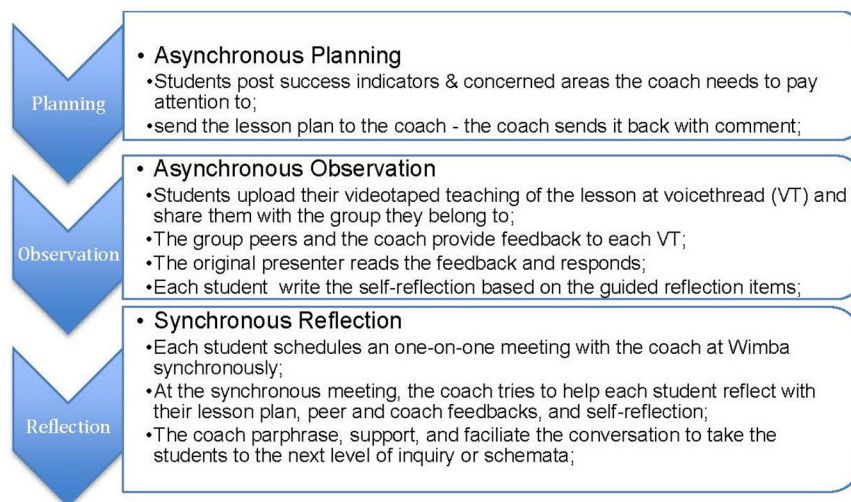
course. I have used cognitive coaching (Costa, & Garmston, 2002) and SIOP coaching (Sheris, et al., 2007) as the theoretical frameworks for a guided online coaching process with some modification. Because this was the first time that I applied the guided coaching virtually, I was not sure about what the results would be. However, the feedbacks and reflections about this online coaching were rather positive.

First, the procedure of guided online coaching will be shared. Among the six TESOL courses, the practicum course that was an exit course, utilized the guided coaching. The three steps used were: 1) planning, 2) observation, and 3) reflective post-conference. The planning step was done asynchronously through the DB posting on each student's success indicators and the concerned areas they wanted the coach to pay attention to. Students also sent their lesson plans. The coach responded to their success indicators and the concerned areas with comments on the lesson plans. The second step, observation, was run asynchronously. Each student uploaded the PPT with their objectives, the assessment strategies, activities with resources, and their teaching performance of the lesson using VoiceThread. Then the group members and the coach provided feedback to the uploaded video and

PPT based on the rubrics and the guidelines. The final step, reflection/post-conference, was operated synchronously at the virtual office using WIMBA. The coach scheduled a 10-15 minute session with each student. The coach met each student to reflect about the goal-setting, problem solving, meeting the objectives, and the future lesson (Figure 1).

Second, the reflective writings about the coaching process and the one-on-one post conference transcription were used to determine the impact of the online coaching. The benefits of participating in online coaching are multifaceted. Some testimonials included statements about online coaching as a tool that supports teachers' strengths. One student indicated, "This guided online coaching is a powerful form of professional development because it helps teachers to feel less isolated and more able to affect change in their teaching." About the planning step, one student reflected, "The process of working with a coach to plan helped me because I had to pick three areas for her to focus on and give feedback." Another participant reflected, "When choosing the concerned areas, I had to go through my teaching and find weak areas I have wanted to improve, but never taken action.."

*Figure 1. The three-step guided online coaching*



Through this guided online coaching, the students shared that they have learned to create detailed lesson plans and delivery strategies. “Creating the detailed lesson plan was valuable because it helped me to foresee the lesson’s strengths and weaknesses and to plan scaffolds for each part of lesson.” Virtual feedback from other students and from the instructor was another useful tool for the students to improve their teaching. One sample excerpt indicated, “VoiceThread with feedback was very valuable because it helped me to see myself through coach’s eyes. She, the coach, also reminded me of the bigger picture, which sometimes gets lost in my planning.” Another student said, “Asking what I would do differently if I could teach the lesson again gives me a chance to revisit the lesson in a way that is non-threatening and powerful for future teaching.” In addition, several students mentioned that this kind of coaching really does promote teacher autonomy.

About the reflection on their own teaching at the practicum course, 12 of 13 students replied that they have met the objectives. About providing coping strategies for the ELLs, 10 of 13 students replied that they incorporated the coping strategies. Most of them used the different levels of the objectives for the ELLs rather than the specific hands-on strategies and resources. However, they did begin to talk about searching for the actual hands-on activities for the ELLs. Among the 13 students who participated in the online coaching, 12 of them said that they would adopt the peer coaching to their own schools. A few students mentioned that the challenges included developing a trusting relationship with a coach, finding time to meet before and after observing, and time to reflect. Incorporating new learning into future lessons is another challenge and/or benefit (Figure 1, Table 1).

Following are some excerpts selected as evidence of students’ growth after the online coaching.

*For me personally, it provided a lot more confidence in my ability as a teacher and I think it was good because everyone else kind of got to express things they were worried or concerned about, not only to the coach but also to each other. I’m confident I could be a peer coach after going thorough this process. Throughout the semester we established a sense of collaboration and trust with each other.*

*I asked my coach to see if my directions were clear enough for my ELLs who are at the intermediate language proficiency levels. Something she suggested for me to do (and I will do in the future) is to write student friendly content and language objectives, more simplified.*

*The most important message of this process is that after I had finished my teaching, I had to think about it- what I have I done, what I could have done differently, how I should change things around next time, and what I would keep.*

## **SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

As it is described in the online course development procedure, it takes a long time to develop interactive online courses that enhance active learning. It also requires an instructor’s extra time and effort to facilitate the active and interactive online courses (Bender, 2003). The students’ responses to their learning demonstrate that most of them have developed professional relationship with the group members authentically, only a few developed personal relationship in the online course (Conrad & Donaldson, 2004; Palloff & Pratt, 1999). The participants also express that they have learned a lot about theories and pedagogies throughout the online course because of the readings and interaction with the instructor and the group members; the process of videotaping the lessons and uploading them with the PowerPoint slides;

and the development of lesson plans based on the SIOP and WIDA coping strategies for English language learners.

Challenges include the time that the instructor has to spend in the online course development and course delivery. Some examples include writing announcements, posting mini-lessons using VoiceThread, responding to all of the postings, grade posting, answering e-mails, running the weekly virtual office, writing all of the rubrics in advance, making weekly online quizzes, and seeking all of the resources. Challenges students have are: 1) the frustration of not meeting the instructor and the class mates to discuss the issues, 2) lack of confidence in using technology, and 3) time they have to spend in reading, posting, responding to the group members, videotaping and uploading the videotaped clips to VoiceThread.

Teacher educators who teach online courses need to redefine effective teaching tools to enhance virtual communication to deliver the content and pedagogy. Developing and implementing online courses is challenging, especially adding synchronous one-on-one coaching for the practicum course. This emerging area, i.e., online coaching/supervising, needs to be explored in depth with more empirical data, and the revision of it should be ongoing with more effective resources, tools and pedagogies.

Based on the results from this study and the research-based effective online courses, I would like to propose the following suggestions:

1. Have a tutorial session before the semester starts to assess whether students are ready for the online courses;
2. Be firm about having the minimum technology skills and a computer that is well equipped for the course activities;
3. Be positive even about students' frustration, patient with their slow learning, and celebrate small successes with the whole class;
4. Have intentional plans for engaging students in activities that develop trust among them-

selves, e.g., have them respond to at least two of the responses from the group members' postings using a minimum of 300 words and give points for each response;

5. Participate in virtual discussions, not as an evaluator, but as a participant;
6. Develop and provide a step-by-step procedure of the online coaching in advance so that students can visualize the process. The instructor can also perform a mock coaching session and upload the videotape for the students before implementing it;
7. Have detailed rubrics and outcome-based assessment strategies (e.g., online quizzes and project rubrics) for every activity;
8. Find a way that students can run their own group discussion, so that the instructor can expend time and energy in other areas needed to make the online course successful. In addition, having to run a discussion group is a great self-directory and inquiry tool for the students;
9. Develop the trust between the students and the instructor, and among the students through interactive activities before implementing online coaching; and
10. Let learning lead the online courses, not technology.

## **CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION**

In summary, this chapter shares a journey from developing an online TESOL program, to implementing guided online coaching. It has been a daunting journey that has allowed me to revisit the priorities of good teaching and learning from the perspectives of the students who live in this virtual era. I have also found that online or virtual learning may be better than person-to-person learning though more empirical data, and more trials would be needed as proof. The students' reflections and responses support their social and academic learning of content and pedagogy as well



as technology throughout the online course. The most fruitful activity was guided online coaching. I, as the instructor, was not sure how it would turn out. There was professional trust developed even though that trust was not on a personal level. This trust became the foundation necessary for the online coaching to be successful. It was amazing to see such authentic and positive feedback from the participating students. The major challenge was time; the students wanted to have more time with the coach. I should have increased one-on-one time synchronously between the coach and the students, and added this synchronous meeting portion to the planning stage as well as in the reflection stage.

I have also learned that we need to start small things with a big picture. In other words, you need to have the goals and objectives, but without the specific teaching and learning activities and hands-on strategies, you may not help your students achieve any learning objective just like in person-to-person classes. Second, learning is what I need to refocus, and technology follows. The students often spend too much time figuring out the technology. I recommend that software be selected by the instructor and teach how to use it before the class actually starts, for example, through the tutorial sessions. Simple and easy technology tools should be chosen. Discussion is the best tool, and it should be at the heart of the class. Seek feedback from students in a variety of formats. Have patience with yourself, the students, and the technology. Don't be surprised if you get to know your online students better than your face-to-face students.

There is lack of empirical research findings on the impact of online courses on the specific academic content theories and pedagogies that are required to be effective teachers-to-be. Most of the researchers on online courses have used participating teachers' perception on how they 'think,' rather than on what they 'demonstrate.' A replication of this study/or replication studies should use data that demonstrates the specific ac-

tions of teaching, in addition to student reflections. With all of the weaknesses, this chapter contributes to more interactive online course development, and a guided virtual online supervision tool, i.e., online coaching, with the three steps.

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## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

**Asynchronous Environment:** Asynchronous environment does not require the simultaneous participation of students and instructors. It utilizes tools such as threaded discussion, listservs, and Voicethread, and it is neither time-bound nor place-bound.

**Discussion Board:** Discussion is a tool for sharing thoughts and ideas about class materials, and it is made up of forums and threads in the course shells in Blackboard.

**IGuided Coaching:** Intentionally-guided coaching is a professional development and supervision methods that provide guided strategies, a way of thinking and a way of working that invite teachers to shape and reshape their thinking and problem solving capacities for the students.

**Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP):** SIOP is a research-based and validated model of sheltered instruction that has been widely and successfully used across the U.S. for Profes-

sional development. The SIOP helps teachers plan and deliver lessons that allow ELLs to acquire academic knowledge as they develop English language proficiency.

**Social Networking Tools:** Social networking tools provide network analysis and connection facilities to allow people to understand the community structure and influence it over time. These tools range from Facebook and Twitter where all the information is provided by people themselves, to tools that silently collect information from a defined population by reading emails.

**Synchronous Environment:** Synchronous environment is what makes possible for real-time communication and collaboration in a “same time-different place” mode. These tools allow people to connect at a single point in time, at the same time. Synchronous tools possess the advantage of being able to engage people instantly and at the same point in time.

**Virtual Office:** Virtual office is a location that exists only in cyberspace. A virtual office setup allows the instructors and students to work from any location by using technology such as laptop computers, cell phones and Internet access. A virtual office can provide significant savings and flexibility compared to having a traditional office

space. Meetings can be conducted via teleconferencing and video conferencing, and documents can be transmitted and archived electronically.

**Voicethread:** Voicethread is Web 2.0 software to upload the PowerPoint and video clips. It is a “group audio blog,” which allows users to have ongoing digital conversations built from text, audio, and/or video comments added by small groups of participants around any content imaginable. Voicethread connects the classes with students across counties, countries, or continents asynchronously.

**World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA):** WIDA is developed to advance academic language development and academic achievement for linguistically diverse students including ELLs through high quality standards, assessments, research, and professional development for educators.

**WIMBA:** WIMBA is a provider of online collaboration solutions in which you can interact with others. Students and educators alike can talk, listen, draw, write and archive using WIMBA services. Other options offered include video, shared whiteboard, shared screen, and editing a single document.