[Book Review]

Video Enhanced Observation for Language Teaching: Reflection and Professional Development

Tri Minh Nguyen (tringuyen.eling@gmail.com)
PTG TESOL; Ho Chi Minh University of Education

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Introduction

The book entitled *Video enhanced observation for language teaching: Reflection and professional development* in a series named *Advances in digital language learning and teaching* published by Bloomsbury in 2021 demonstrates the fundamental utilisation of Video Enhanced Observation (VEO) in the second language classroom to analyse, evaluate, and generate effective teaching practises in the presence of evidence-based case studies. The book consists of core constructs of technology applications to propose the foundations for teachers' self-regulation and self-improvement, which are part of professional development in language education. The book chapters also recommend certain principles and procedures in technological enhancement. They are divided into three main domains of content. These domains are presented throughout fourteen chapters. The content within these chapters ranges from theoretical background to practical application of VEO. This organizational scheme is provided in hopes of optimizing teaching effectiveness.

The General Review of the Book Content

The book functions as the theoretical framework of digital application utilisation in the language classroom. The theoretical framework presented refers to the role models, principles, and procedures employed in applications that capture videos, talks, or conversations in a language classroom setting. The intent is to provide an opportunity for growth by the reader through reflection upon and improvisation of teaching activities (Seedhouse, 2021a). Theoretically

facilitating higher levels of efficiency and efficacy. The book is structured in three parts. In the first part of the book, the first four chapters represent the background and key concepts needed to explore the construct of VEO. It also details the chronological development of this paradigm as it has been employed in educational settings. Chapter 1 of this book is a brief introduction to the organisational schema of the books. It then provides information about funding sources (Seedhouse, 2021b). Chapter 2 by Morale (2021) provides a thorough review of the literature regarding the application of VEO in an academic context. This chapter provides insights into previous studies and practises employing technological tools for professional development among pre-and in-service teachers. It is fundamental for teachers' development to reflect on personal strengths and weaknesses to better adapt and cope with the existing era. In chapter 3, Haines and Miller (2021) illustrate the progression of VEO development and its significance in language education. Their illustration is the amalgam of their perspectives and insights. This chapter also analyses four case studies based on actual teacher experiences with VEO applications in real-life contexts. These real-life examples help to synthesise the improvement among learners, teacher self-reflection, innovative pedagogical implementation of technology, and assessment. The findings of this study demonstrate the effectiveness of VOE at enhancing interaction and connectedness among learners while also reducing barriers to learning. Following the aforementioned case studies, a section of general guidance is provided by the authors on the procedures and principles to be followed when applying VEO in a classroom context. Chapter 4 (2021) consists of step-by-step instructions for users to optimise the role of VEO in observing and analysing classroom situations.

Part II of this book contains different practical case studies on the implementation of VEO. In chapter 5, Schwab and Oesterle (2021) analyse two teaching scenarios with foreign language teachers at the University of Education Karlsruhe, Germany to explore the impact of VEO in fostering self-reflection among pre-service teachers. They were also concerned with the importance of VEO as a research instrument for teachers to observe and assess learners' interactions at primary school. It is shown that the effectiveness of VEO depends on the conceptualisation of the classroom practice. The evidence collected from the video is crucial to generate systematic observation for both qualitative and quantitative research data. Chapter 6 is the development of Körkkö's (2020) doctoral thesis, from which Kyrö-Ämmälä and Turunen (2021) illustrate the findings of a moderately sized group utilising VEO. The study was of the practice of twenty student teachers and eleven supervisors exploring the role of VEO through the use of mobile applications. The purposive sampling procedure was conducted to choose two student teachers to gain insights into their personal experience of VEO. Specifically, the use of it as a reflection tool and the facilitation of this tool for their professional development. The outcomes showed that VEO could allow users to obtain meaning-oriented reflection and develop effective theoretical teaching and learning activities as the fundamentals of their professional practice.

Chapter 7 presents the Bozbıyık et al. (2021) analysis of integration regarding VEO and IMDAT teacher education framework in a Turkish university. The conversation analysis was applied for both video-recorded data and written reflective feedback. This was done with the intent to prove that the integration could generate a positive effect on teachers' transformation in student questioning practises. Teachers' awareness could be enhanced regarding student participation in classroom activities and engagement; hence, they could diversify their questioning techniques.

In Chapter 8, Rodriguez and Seedhouse (2021) examine the impact of a VEO app on peer observation feedback interaction. The study focused on the use of VEO in post-lesson peer feedback to strengthen personal strategic reflection with the intent of developing professional

practice to a higher level. Teachers employed multimodal speech exchange in response to the peer feedback so they could maximise the changes from reflection to practice. However, there is a need for urgent alignment between the perceptions of both observers and observees concerning the construct of peer feedback.

In Chapter 9, Tasdemir and Seedhouse (2021) observe the construction of classroom discipline and management skills among pre-service teachers via VEO in an educational context in Turkey. The tag features were acknowledged as functional for reflection and the pre-service teachers could adopt video annotation to organise and manage the class more effectively. In Chapter 10, Hidson (2021) emphasises the application of VEO for the shift from classroom performance to continuous teacher development at a UK school. Hidson (2021) reaffirmed the role of VEO for lesson observations as a part of teacher development. The approach to CPD is also fostered from the reflective practice of VEO. Chapter 11 by Walsh (2021) reports the research project SETTVEO from the British Council to provide teachers with tools to allow them to reflect and utilise VEO via the SETT (Self Evaluation of Teacher Talk) tag set. The understanding of teaching and learning activities is elevated via the insights found through the observation of classroom interactions exploring the modes and strategies learners adopt to absorb language. The VEO and SETT tag sets were valued in interactional data that showed an increase in the engagement of learners.

In chapter 12, Seedhouse and Whelan (2021) provide instruction on creating an individualised VEO tag set to customise teacher corrective practice during an in-service teacher training course in the UK. The findings reveal that tag customisation could facilitate skills assessment in professional developments of teachers via theory-based tag set design. The study employed various research instruments to affirm VEO significance to bridge the gap between theory and practice, as it allowed trainees to modify the app for better feedback and coaching ability.

Part III of this book provides readers with the models and frameworks to optimise the effectiveness of VEO for the professional development of teachers in different educational settings. In chapter 13, Seedhouse et al. (2021b) summarise distinctive models and frameworks from various educational settings, which are presented in previous chapters, and propose a simplified framework for teachers to apply VEO with the highest possible outcomes. The concluding chapter 14 of Seedhouse et al. (2021a) summarise the significant findings from previous studies to affirm the quality of VEO apps in the domains of flexibility, wide-ranging benefits, and teacher professional development.

Audience

This book is undeniably beneficial for different groups of readers who show interest in CALL in general and VEO in particular. Pre-service teachers can employ this book as a constructive guideline to understand the process of development and the importance of VEO in second language acquisition. And assist them to develop their preparedness before practical experience in the labour market. Moreover, in-service teachers can compare traditional written observation with video-enhanced observation to understand the significance of VEO apps in language education classrooms. And these insights provide various perspectives of self-reflection and peer feedback. In addition, policymakers can refer to this book to cite the impact of VEO on teacher professional development and to justify the implementation of suitable policies that allow teachers better coping mechanisms and professional development concerning VEO application.

Benefits

This book provides readers with various implications for professional development in language education. This book is a combination of both theory and practice in the application of VEO in language education. It illustrates the conceptual backgrounds for the key constructs of technology-enhanced learning and evidence-based analysis to demonstrate the positive impact of VEO. The perspectives towards VEO application were collected from different professional stakeholders, such as pre-service teachers, in-service teachers, and app producers, to offer a more objective consideration of VEO usage. It is important to mention that the scope of the book covers many aspects of the language classroom, such as classroom management, discipline, or interaction. This is done so that teachers in other educational contexts can utilise VEO to foster personal reflections stimulated through the observation of learners' acquisition and interactions, hopefully, resulting in the adoption of better strategies for professional development. The context of different regional backgrounds allows readers to compare the feasibility of applying VEO in the classroom of their distinctive settings. Part II of this book plays the most significant role as it provides a scaffolding for different models of implementations using VEO. It is done so while providing raw data to be used as evidence and as a reference source for other teachers in future professional practice. Moreover, the book outlines the procedures, principles, frameworks, and models for teachers to merge into their teaching profession. As the nature of an edited book, the contribution of different authors can propose the diversity of perceptions and practices of VEO application. Such collaboration facilitates the ability to maximise the potential and minimise the possible risk from previous studies. The price is also reasonable for potential readers and special discounts are available to help students and professionals gain access to this book.

Drawbacks

Despite the aforementioned value, this book still contains certain limitations. In terms of the organisation of this book, although the general outline progresses reasonably from theory to practice, the editors should have organised the case studies into themes for better acquisition. More perspectives from other stakeholders are supposed to be taken into consideration, such as policymakers or learner experiences, to generate a comprehensive understanding of VEO feasibility. It is recommended that more experimental studies should have been added to this book to compare and contrast the changes experienced by teachers and learners in the presence of VEO implementation.

Conclusion

Video enhanced observation for language teaching: Reflection and professional development is valuable to potential readers to prove the effectiveness of VEO applications in language education. The book provides the framework and evidence-based analysis of the case studies to foster teacher reflection and professional development in using VEO to explore classroom talk and interaction. Various perspectives have been taken into consideration by different authors, each with different educational backgrounds, to generate a more objective understanding of VEO.

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