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e-Teacher Professional Development Course in Oral Communication for Senior High School English Teachers

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Abstract

The study aimed to construct, validate, and revise an e-teacher professional development course for senior high school English teachers in teaching Oral Communication in Context with the use of selected technological tools that helped them design supplemental materials for their learners. Following the stages of the ASSURE model by Heinrich and Molenda (1999), this study identified the needs of the senior high school English teachers; designed an e-TPD course for the participants; applied experts' evaluation of the course; and determined the mean performance of the participants in using the e-TPD course. The study's findings reveal that the senior high school English teachers wanted to learn different types of easy-to-use technological tools in creating video lessons, printed materials, audio recordings, and online platforms. In addition, they identified the need for both teachers and students to be exposed to frequent use of technology, more gadgets, better internet connections, and learn appropriate technological skills in learning. The experts agreed that the e-TPD course meets the criteria in terms of its content quality, instructional design, technical quality, overall course design, and other findings. The findings of this study imply that integrating technology-focused professional development courses can significantly enhance teachers' ability to create diverse and engaging learning materials, addressing the evolving needs of 21st-century learners.

Keywords: e-TPD course, FGD, learning journals, technological tools, technology-based instruction

1. Introduction

E-teacher professional development (e-TPD) courses have gained ground in research and development as the rapid change in technology compels the need for the training and retraining of teachers to capacitate them in using technologies both inside and outside the classroom. As influential agents in facilitating changes in the teaching and learning process, the teachers could either advance or impede the potential of technology-based instruction depending on their skills, knowledge, and experience.

The importance of e-TPD courses specifically focused on technology-based instruction was highlighted by previous researchers as a contributing factor not only in an educational institution's continuing strive for teaching and academic excellence (Kennedy & Ferdig, 2018) but also in adherence to public health preventive measures (Hartshorne et al., 2020; Lay, et al., 2020). These e-TPD courses on technology-based instruction may not be a panacea to all the teacher's problems in the classroom. Still, it is a new pedagogical dimension that could somehow address the current needs in teaching strategies (Kalman et al., 2022). The increased pressure among teachers to ensure catching up in this global pandemic and beyond requires them to access the right technology as well as make use of these technologies in line with the country's standard curriculum (Morgan, 2020; Tomaro & Mutiarin, 2018). Yet, despite the exponential growth of research on technology-based instruction in recent years, few scholars have designed an online course for educators to use technology in a specific subject.

The study of Medenilla (2018), for example, created BLAST as an online course in oral communication for senior high school students, while Saglam (2021) explored the perspectives of teachers when provided with supplementary materials in developing oral communication skills. With these previous studies in online courses, the researcher identified an apparent knowledge gap concerning an online course for teachers on the strategies of teaching of Oral Communication in Context, a core

subject in senior high school, using appropriate technology. Additionally, the centralized one-size-fits-all policy of the Department of Education for culturally-diverse contexts does not necessarily resonate with the specific needs of the classrooms (Bautista, et al., 2010).

With the knowledge gap found, this paper aimed to be different from the rest by explicitly focusing on how to teach and what specific technologies can be used to teach a particular subject, which is Oral Communication in Context in senior high school. The e-Teacher Professional Development Course activities could easily be used or tweaked by the teacher participants as they are already aligned with the subject competencies set by the Department of Education.

Objectives

This study aimed to attain the following research objectives:

1. Identify the needs of the senior high school English teachers in teaching Oral Communication in Context;
2. Design a training course to respond to the needs of the English teachers;
3. Determine the experts' evaluation of the e-TPD course;
4. Determine the feedback of the participants in the e-TPD course; and
5. Formulate an e-TPD model for online courses.

2. Methods

This study used instructional design as the primary research design, following the steps of the ASSURE model. Instructional design is a discipline that focuses on creating learning experiences and materials for the acquisition of knowledge and skills. It particularly highlights the development, implementation, evaluation, and maintenance of products and experiences (Singh, 2023). Within the scope of the research, semi-structured interview, was used to obtain qualitative data on the teacher participants' views and suggestions of their pedagogical and technological needs in teaching oral communication in context as a subject in senior high school. Moreover, simple statistics such as mean and percentage were used on the quantitative data, such as the panel of experts' rating of the e-TPD course.

In developing the e-TPD course for technology-based instruction in the teaching of oral communication as a subject, the study followed the stages of ASSURE model. The model which is commonly used in instructional designs that involve the use of technology is an acronym that stands for the various steps, namely: analyze learners; state standards and objectives; select strategies, technology, media, and materials; utilize technology, media, and materials; require learner participation, and evaluate and revise. ASSURE model was developed by Heinrich and Molenda in 1999 to make instructions more efficient, effective, and relevant.

Participants in this study were selected through purposive sampling, that is, teachers were identified based on specific criteria- they are all English teachers in senior high school in the same division of the Department of Education. A purposive selection of participants was used as these participants fit the study's general profile, an e-TPD course using technology in teaching oral communication as a subject in senior high school. Out of the 25 identified senior high school English teachers, only 21 committed to participate in the study.

Ten of these teachers have been in the Department of Education for more than three years but less than six years as junior high school teachers, while others have been teaching for more than six years already. All of them have experienced teaching in different private schools before being hired by the Department of Education, and three of them started as job orders before becoming regular teachers. Regarding their technological skills, only two identified themselves as beginners when it comes to the use of technology, while the rest said they had intermediate technological skills.

3. Results

Needs Analyses

The first step in the ASSURE model was identifying the needs of the senior high school English teachers teaching Oral Communication in Context that was conducted through a one-on-one interview. Analyzing and identifying teacher professional

development needs is critical for any teacher professional development program. According to Parsons et al. (2019), it is the starting point of the process when a teacher reflects and becomes aware of the areas in their field of practice that require work. It also serves as the foundation and basis for the objectives, content, learning projections, learning styles and preferences, and modality for a training program's effective and systematic implementation.

Table 1 presents the technological tools that the participants wanted to learn or use in their classrooms to design different types of supplemental materials for teaching Oral Communication.

Table 1
Technological Tools Needed by the Participants

Types of Technological tools	F	percentage
Easy-to-use tools for video lesson presentation	14	66%
Easy-to-use tools in recording speeches	12	57%
Easy-to-navigate platform	12	57%
Easy-to-use tools to design printed materials	10	48%
Any technological tools to teach Oral Communication	7	33%

It can be noted that the majority of the participants identified their need to learn an easy-to-use tool in designing video lesson presentations as they feel that the purely printed modules were not enough to encapsulate important concepts of oral communication. They think recording their lesson presentations in video format could help elaborate and provide better examples when discussing topics. Second, on the list is any easy-to-use tool for recording speeches which the participants described as important for those students who do not have the gadgets to watch video presentations.

In addition, the participants also mentioned the possibility of letting the students record their speeches for practice or create podcasts using audio recording tools that are easy to manipulate and, if possible, can be accessed without the use of the internet. Third on the list is an easy-to-navigate platform they could use in their class. The fourth type of technological tool identified by the participants was any easy-to-use tool to design captivating printed materials. Since most of the schools where the participants from use printed modular modalities, they felt the need to supplement their current modules with printed sheets that were appealing and captivating to their learners. Lastly, English teacher participants mentioned that they were willing to learn any technological tools that could aid them in teaching oral communication as long as they were easy to learn and useful in their context.

Frame 1 presents some of the comments given by the teachers with regard to their needs to learn different technological tools in teaching Oral Communication.

> *"I hope to learn a technology that is easy to use in creating a podcast. As much as possible those that can be used offline."*
>
> *"Any tool will do as long as it does not require a lot of preparation and an expertise in I.T"*
>
> *"Looking forward to learn an easy-to-use apps in designing concise and appealing printed materials"*
>
> *"I would like to explore the use of*

Frame 1 Participants' Answers

The teachers' observations in frame 2 corroborate with Guiamalon and Camsa's (2021) and Beteille's (2020) findings that using modules alone to deliver lessons is insufficient, particularly in remote areas of the country where the majority of parents are unable to explain the module in place of the teachers. For this reason, participants saw the

necessity of using other media and designing different contextualized supplemental materials to optimize learning.

Training Course Designed for the English Teachers

In response to the senior high school English teachers' needs to learn different types of technological tools and their needs and challenges in the use of technology in teaching oral communication, an e-TPD course following the steps of the ASSURE model was created. Frame 2 presents the first part of the task analysis chart that served as the blueprint for creating the e-TPD course for senior high school English teachers in learning the types of technological tools they identified.

The task analysis chart (attached as Appendix A) contained the title, rationale, overall expected outcomes, and the specific features of the e-TPD course plan. The expected outcomes or the general objectives of the e-TPD course were formulated following the ABCD format, which stands for the audience (or the target learners), behavior (the action to be accomplished), condition (constraints in performing the action), and the degree (criteria of the action). This study finds the ABCD format of objective not only clear in terms of its alignment to the activities, assessment, and content, but it also encapsulates the idea of a heutagogical learning environment's aim of developing adult learners' capability and capacity as explained by Hayes and Kenyon (2013).

The task analysis chart was also divided into five columns: the content, which contains the topics or the technological tool introduced; the weekly intended learning outcomes or objectives; the tasks/activities/strategies employed in presenting the topics; the material/applications/websites; and finally, the time frame, which refers to the estimated time that the participants could finish all the tasks for the week.

The content or weekly topic was based on the top five types of technological tools that the participants wanted to learn. These were the: easy-to-use tools in creating video lessons, easy-to-use tools in recording speeches, easy-to-navigate platforms, easy-to-use tools in designing printed materials; and any technological tools to teach oral communication. In terms of an easy-to-use tool for creating a video lesson presentation, this study introduced Loom for its easy features. At the same time, it was the specific application mentioned by other participants. For the tool for recording speeches, Audacity was used as it can be operated offline with also easy-to-remember toolbars and can be used to create podcasts as some participants mentioned they wanted to try in their classes. To determine an easily navigable platform, this study compared three options but ultimately chose Google Classroom because it was referenced by other participants, implying that familiarity is already there. Additionally, it is a free platform that has all of the necessary features and components for a teacher or student. Then, to introduce participants to an easy-to-use tool for producing printed materials, this study chose to present Canva and Lucidchart.

In terms of the tasks, activities, and strategies used in the delivery of the topics, they were divided into five sections. The first one was the *Boot-Up*, which refers to all the preliminary activities such as the pre-tests and the warm-up activities. The second part was called *Coding*, which refers to the discussion of the topic for the week that was presented in a video, printed media, and or audio. It was also during the Coding part that the facilitator conducted a virtual discussion on those topics which the participants were having difficulty learning by themselves. The third part of the weekly activities was called *Up the App* which was the application of their learning. This was the part where the participants needed to design and create supplemental material for their learners following a specific rubric. The fourth part was called *Webservation* that was a form of assessment of their outputs that could be a self or peer assessment. The last part of the weekly tasks was called *Recaptivate* that included the writing of their weekly learning journal and answering the post-test.

The fourth column of the TAC contains all the materials, applications, and websites used in the e-TPD course that were chosen following specific

considerations. The variety of materials used supports the claim of Ralph (2020) that the selection of multimedia materials can influence the amount of learning that occurs. At the same time, the concept of a self-paced e-TPD course was also grounded on heutagogy's principle of autonomous and self-directed adult learners (Blaschke, 2020) and connectivism's principle of openness in accessing the course (Siemens, 2012).

Experts' Evaluation of the e-TPD course

Evaluation is an important aspect of any course development as Martin et al. (2021) and Quality Matters (2020) see it as an act of checking the overall alignment between objectives, materials, activities, technologies, and assessments to create a total package. In evaluating the e-TPD course of this study, the panel of experts used the Rating Sheet for Non-Print Materials (appendix I) adapted from the Department of Education's Learning Resource Management System (LRMDS). Since the Department of Education does not have a rating sheet for an online course, this study decided to adapt its rating sheet for non-print materials and added some criteria to fit in an e-TPD course. Table 2 presents the results of the experts' evaluation of the e-TPD course for senior high school English teachers in the use of technology in teaching oral communication.

Table 2

Experts' Rating of the e-TPD Course

Criteria	Expert 1	Expert 2	Expert 3	Remarks
*Content quality	28	29	30	Passed
*Instructional design	29	28	29	Passed
*Technical quality	28	28	29	Passed
*Overall course design	29	28	29	Passed
**Other findings	12	12	12	Passed

The resource must score **at least 20 points out of a maximum of **30 points** to pass this criterion.*
*** The resource must score **at least 9 points** out of a maximum of **12 points** to **pass** this criterion.*

As reflected in table 2, all three experts agreed that the e-TPD course meets the criteria in terms of its content quality, instructional design, technical quality, overall course design, and other findings. The other findings as a criterion looked at the possible conceptual inaccuracies, factual inaccuracies, grammatical and typographical errors, etc., that the e-TPD course designer might have overlooked. In terms of its content quality, the experts found the online materials to have achieved the course's objectives, including the depth of information presented and the alignment of the contents to the learning competencies of Oral Communication in Context. The result reflected the fact that the materials were selected according to the needs of the participants. Parsons et al. (2019) pointed out that instructional materials in e-TPDs should always be chosen based on the teachers' needs and level of appropriateness. In addition, logical arrangement and organization, appropriateness of tasks and language used, and promotion of critical thinking were aspects of content quality that the raters had to examine. The progression of the topic from the easiest to the most difficult was commended by the researchers. Ko and Rassen (2017) found that both young and adults prefer online course contents that are structured and well organized; thus, they advised chunking contents into manageable segments. These considerations in the content quality of the e-TPD course were also grounded on learner engagement as a paradigm of cybergogy, which Mehta (2021) believed should cover a wide palette of resources.

When it comes to the instructional design, all experts agreed that the e-TPD course created a learning experience for the teachers by making sure that: the difficulty was appropriate for their level; the materials were stimulating, challenging, and engaging; materials stimulate creativity; and, the graphics/colors/sounds were used for appropriate instructional reasons. These things account for what Curtis (2018) explained as the why and how of

an e-TPD course which has changed over time since it becomes more contextualized to the participants' profiles. It also supports the findings of Baldwin (2019) that strategies and activities in online instructions should be planned well to promote creativity that is appropriate to the level of the learners. In the same way that the theory of heutagogy foregrounds the importance of instructional design appropriate to self-determined and capable learners.

In the area of technical quality, the panel of experts agreed that the e-TPD course provided users ease of convenience in accessing the platform and the materials. Furthermore, the audio of the online materials was found to enhance understanding of concepts; the choice of music and sound effects was appropriate; visuals do not distract but sustain interest and provide an accurate representation of the concept discussed, and the materials can be accessed using minimum system requirement. Technical quality is an important factor contributing to learners' engagement in an online world as glitches and difficulties in accessing the tools could contribute to what Bowman (2019) termed "innovation fatigue", which may disrupt the learning process. Similarly, Siemens (2012) explained that for transformative learning to occur, in the point of view of connectivism, a learner should have a deep cognitive engagement with the technology, which may not be attained when technical problems arise.

On the other hand, the panel of experts stated that the e-TPD course was adequately arranged into sections and lessons, fosters independent learning, combines diverse methods of learning a concept, is easy to navigate, promotes academic integrity, and incorporates information literacy and communication skills. The overall course design that refers to the total package of how everything in the e-TPD course was put together for the optimal learning experience, is a critical aspect of instructional design. It aligns with Martin et al.'s (2021) findings that construct such as the overview, content presentation, interaction and communication, assessment and evaluation, and learner support should be present in e-TPD courses to be effective and wholistic. All of these constructs and more are present in this e-TPD course for senior high school English teachers. In addition, Andriotis' (2018) concept of an e-TPD includes a process of continuous improvement and evaluation, and Gonzales et al.'s (2019) teaching-learning system that is comprehensive, integrated, and harmonized can all be observed in this study's e-TPD course.

Lastly, on the other findings, all three members of the panel of experts agreed that the e-TPD course and its materials do not have conceptual inaccuracies, factual errors, and other errors. It was a great help that all the materials were evaluated by the panel of experts one by one before it was uploaded to the platform as inaccuracies and errors were avoided. It is crucial considering that the participants of the e-TPD course are all professionals; thus, inaccuracies and errors must be avoided.

Participants' Feedback on the e-TPD

The last and final step of the ASSURE model was the evaluation of the e-TPD course based on the data gathered from the participants' Learning Journals and FGD sessions. In examining the Learning Journals and FGD transcripts, this study looked into the participants' challenges, suggestions, and recommendations for improving the e-TPD course. One notable suggestion given by the participants in the first week was to include a guide on how to create a Tiktok video, as many of the participants were not familiar with the application. The situation served as a reminder to instructional designers and training designers not to make assumptions about learners' technological abilities, especially given that at least two participants disclosed that their technological abilities were regarded as beginner-level.

Another notable suggestion of the participants was to include a pdf document guide on how to sign up for a Canva account. It aligns with Carnock (2019) cautions for instructional designers to always consider the learners' heterogeneity and the rigors of learning technology. Furthermore, the participants' differences in technological skills could be viewed as an illustration of the variety that connectivism (Siemens, 2012) views as critical for instructional design.

Lastly, one question in the FGD asked the participants to share their thoughts on what they could possibly change if given a chance in the e-TPD course. The majority of the participants enjoyed the course and found the materials, tasks, and activities to be engaging and relevant in the teaching of Oral Communication in their respective areas of assignment. Although there were a few who mentioned they hoped to study the course in a face-to-face setting.

The Proposed e-TPD Model

Based on the data gathered in the creation and evaluation of an e-TPD course following the ASSURE model, this study proposes an e-TPD model that can be used as a framework for course designers not only in the teaching of language but also in other subject areas.

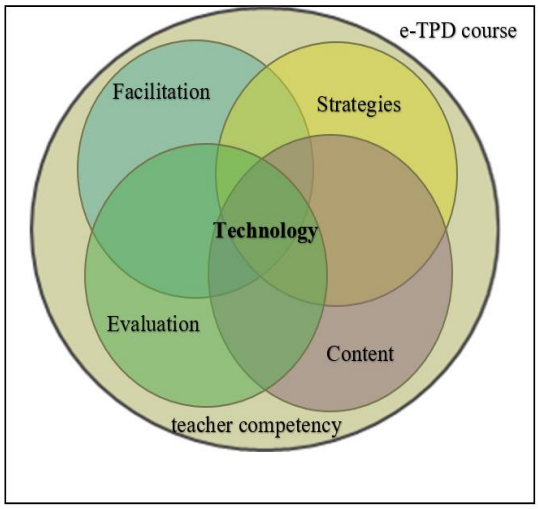

Figure 1 Quaternate Looping Model

Figure 1 presents the model created based on the relevant findings of the study. It can be seen in the model that the four overlapping circles represent the four essential aspects of an e-TPD course that educators and instructional designers should look into and consider. They are overlapping as each one affects the others, and not one is considered superior or more important than the others. Strategies overlap facilitation, evaluation, and content because all the strategies used in the course included facilitation from the researcher, and a variety of evaluations, and were based on the content selected by the participants. Content also overlaps evaluation, facilitation, and strategy because its level of difficulty corresponds to a specific style of facilitation, evaluation, and learning strategy. Evaluation overlaps facilitation, strategies, and content because the variety of evaluations used (self, peer, group) depends largely on the content, strategies used, and even the presence or absence of a facilitator. The amount of facilitation provided by the facilitator depends largely on the difficulty of content, the type of strategy, and the variety of evaluations. Finally, all these four tenets-strategies, content, evaluation, and facilitation are achieved and become more meaningful through the affordances that technology offers, which is why it is located in the center as it serves as the core of the heutagogical development program. The idea is supported by the concept of Cybergogy (Wang and Kang, 2009) which highlights the facilities provided by the virtual world, and the theory of Connectivism (Seimens, 2012) which explains how knowledge and skill acquisition come from networks, connections, and non-human devices.

4. Conclusion

Needs identification is a vital stage in instructional design as it supports a more content-specific, relevant, and responsive e-TPD course. Thus, the creation of e-TPD courses should be based on the needs, skills, and preferences of the participants as they are adult learners who seek to address the problems and challenges of their profession.

e-TPD courses should contain a variety of media, materials, technology, and activities that promote the principles of learner-autonomy, diversity, openness, and interactivity in tapping the participants' cognitive, emotive, and social facets.

Reflective journal writing and focus group discussions could provide authentic data for the improvement of e-TPD courses. Participants' reflection of their learning process and how it could be improved once they replicate it in their different classroom contexts mirror a heutagogical environment.

The participants' skills to learn the different technological tools by themselves and in collaboration with their fellow participants reflect

their competency and capability as heutagogical learners.

The feedback and suggestions of the participants, as the end-users, are integral to the improvement of the e-TPD course.

Finally, the various elements utilized in the creation of an e-TPD course for the use of technology in teaching Oral Communication and the result of the developed competencies of teachers after completing the course led to the design of the Quaternate Looping Model.

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