

BOOK REVIEW



Review of *Video enhanced observation for language teaching: Reflection and professional development*

Pelin Irgin, TED University

Video enhanced observation for language teaching: Reflection and professional development

Seedhouse, P. (Ed.)

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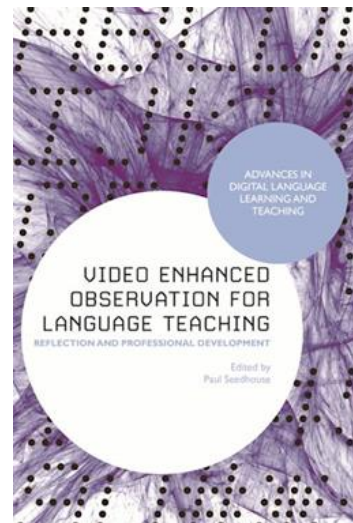
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In the unprecedented times of emergency remote teaching caused by the COVID-19 global pandemic, the use of innovative resources became indispensable for teachers (Bao, 2020). Teachers all around the world have been faced with the challenge of selecting and implementing digital tools during this global health crisis. To meet remote teaching demands during and post COVID-19, teachers need to be provided with training for the use of various technological tools and resources. As one of such resources, video technology enables teachers to implement distance learning and to support reflective experiences in teacher education. Yet there is still a lot to discover about how to empower language teachers and researchers to integrate video-enhanced observation in language teacher education (Hockly, 2018; Schwab, 2020). Responding to this need, *Video Enhanced Observation for Language Teaching: Reflection and Professional Development* edited by Paul Seedhouse aims to explain how to “use the latest digital technology to record the spoken interaction in [the] professional setting; tag, analyse and evaluate the talk; and use it as the basis for reflection and professional development” (p. 3). The book includes eight case studies describing the use of video-enhanced observation (VEO) as a teaching practice and the use of an app, also named *VEO*, in different linguistic and geographic contexts (i.e, five languages and seven countries). Specifically, the case studies illustrate how VEO can be leveraged to record L2 learners’ monologic and dialogic speech in L2 learning settings and to evaluate and provide written and oral feedback on learners’ performance. In addition, the studies demonstrate the use of the VEO app for language educators’ professional development purposes. The book also proposes six theoretical models that guide different applications of the VEO app for teacher education and language learning.

Structurally, the book is comprised of 14 chapters organized into three main parts: *Background to Video Enhanced Observation* (Part I, Chapters 1–4), *Video Enhanced Observation in Practice: Case Studies* (Part II, Chapters 5–12), and *Making the Most of Video Enhanced Observation* (Part III, Chapters 13–14). This edited volume starts with a brief introductory chapter by Seedhouse who describes the purpose of the book and provides an overview of its key structural elements. The chapter also offers an overview of the funded

projects that underlie this volume and the aims to improve teaching and learning quality via the VEO app. In Chapter 2, Morales introduces the existing research on computer-assisted language learning (CALL) and teacher education in technology, and then focuses on the reflective practice and the use of digital video for the professional development of pre-and in-service teachers. Chapters 3 and 4 are written by Miller and Haines, the VEO Group co-founders and VEO app designers, who provide readers with background information about how they brought together their ideas to create the VEO app, and how it grew to become a useful app in language teaching and learning environments. In Chapter 3, Haines and Miller introduce four small case studies showcasing examples of how the use of VEO has been deployed in diverse teaching and learning settings. In Chapter 4, they present a practical guide for using the VEO system and its associated apps and describe the basic elements that generate VEO's key features and processes for deploying the VEO's learning system. This chapter explains how the features of the VEO system can be utilized for reflection and professional development purposes by readers who have no actual experience with this system. The chapter is divided into sections replete with screenshots, examples, and process outlines to aid readers in understanding how the VEO app's learning system works.

Part II introduces eight case studies demonstrating video enhanced observation in practice. Chapter 5, the first chapter of Part II written by Schwab and Oesterle, draws attention to the integration of the VEO app in a German teacher education program. Schwab and Oesterle focus on how the VEO app serves as an innovative instrument and scaffolds the process of reflection among students in a foreign language teacher education program. The authors present two scenarios for using VEO: (a) using VEO in teaching practice groups and (b) using VEO for student research projects. Both scenarios illustrate two possible models for the use of the VEO app in teacher education, which can be helpful for practitioners and researchers conducting research in Germany. In Chapter 6, K  rkk  , Kyr  -  mm  l  , and Turunen discuss (a) their case study designed as a VEO trial carried out in a primary teacher education program in Finland, (b) how two student teachers leveraged VEO as a reflection tool during their practicum, and (c) how this app contributed to teachers' professional development by providing opportunities for both individual and collaborative reflection. In this chapter, the authors explicitly highlight the need for preparing a guidebook or a manual for teacher candidates on how to use the VEO app in their teaching practice. In Chapter 7, Bozbiyik, Sert, and Bacanak explore how a Turkish pre-service teacher changed her interactional and pedagogical practices when it was informed by VEO-integrated IMDAT pedagogy, "a classroom interaction-driven, technology-enhanced, and reflective teacher education framework" (p. 202). Chapter 8, written by Batlle and Seedhouse, demonstrates the integration of the VEO app into peer observation feedback interaction among in-service Spanish as a Foreign Language teachers.

The main focus of Chapter 9, co-authored by Tasdemir and Seedhouse, is a Turkish pre-service teacher's practicum practice in which VEO is incorporated into two lessons of the practicum process. In particular, this chapter points out how pre-service teachers can improve their classroom management skills by using VEO in their practicum reflections. In Chapter 10, Hidson provides a case study of a pilot project governed by a UK school and shows how three different groups of teachers changed their perspective by moving from teacher performance management, which is regarded as a mandatory appraisal process in this UK school, to continuous teacher development enhanced by the VEO app. Walsh in Chapter 11 examines two main constructs (i.e., classroom interaction and dialogic reflection) and reports how English language teachers working at universities in Spain, Turkey, Chile, and Thailand reflect on their teaching and improve it through the use of the VEO app with the SETT tag set. In the final chapter of Part II, Chapter 12, Seedhouse and Whelan unveil a case study in which an instructor teaching English to adult learners at a language center in the UK has an individualized VEO tag set designed to aid her teaching practice. With this longitudinal study, both researchers provide a good example of using a customized VEO tag set for continuous teacher development. To summarize, Part II presents an array of informative case studies analyzing and evaluating practical applications of VEO in various settings. While the studies in Part II demonstrate how the VEO app and system can be effective for improving the performance of teachers and students in language teacher education programs, some of the studies also report a few technical problems with the VEO app; for instance, there were problems related to the quality of video and audio, zooming,

blurring of the faces in the video, and categorizing the visual cues with the help of tags. A new version of the VEO app can be expected to be more user-friendly if the VEO team finds solutions to the issues with functionality and design.

Part III, the last part of the book, includes Chapters 13 and 14, both of which are written by Seedhouse, Miller, and Haines. Chapter 13 draws readers' attention to professional development and reflective practice of teacher candidates and teachers by putting together all previously-mentioned six models for integrating VEO into continuous teacher development. As these models are currently highlighted in professional practices, they can be adapted by researchers interested in teacher training, distance learning, language assessment, and evaluation. The final chapter of the book summarizes how the VEO app can be integrated into research with a variety of methodological and theoretical approaches for professional development in real-world environments. The authors conclude Chapter 14 with a discussion of limitations, legacy issues of the VEO app, and the future of VEO-based professional development programs.

Overall, this edited volume offers a very comprehensive introduction to using the latest digital technology for recording spoken interaction in teaching and learning environments by tagging, analyzing, and evaluating oral discourse. It also provides a basis for using video-enhanced observation in reflection and professional development. The inclusion of six models and eight illustrative case studies is one of the biggest strengths of this volume. Individual chapters provide models and flowcharts illustrating how readers can apply VEO in their instructional setting. Readers of this book can benefit significantly from the in-depth description of how to adapt digital video technology to the professional environment and from the consistent level of detail throughout the chapters. By providing a framework for using the VEO app, the book enables readers to create their own VEO-based professional development programs. Additionally, this book has two companion websites with complementary resources: (a) the [VEO Europa website](#), which contains a wide range of resources such as teacher education resources and VEO Europa training materials produced by the VEO Europa project, and (b) the [VEO website](#), which provides access to the VEO app, contact information about the VEO company, and sample case studies. Resources shared on these two websites are produced by the project partners and authors of this book, and each module presented there is tested with trainees and/or teachers across Europe. Additionally, the availability of the resources on the above-mentioned websites and in this volume is an asset to the target audience and offers powerful research design for further studies in different teaching and learning environments throughout the world.

This volume is a timely contribution to the fields of teacher education, educational technology, and applied linguistics. The book successfully shows the uniqueness of each context and the importance of digitalization in teacher education based on the curriculum and the needs of both teachers and learners. I highly recommend this informative edited volume to a wide audience ranging from graduate students to language teachers, pre-service teachers in language teacher education programs, and researchers who are interested in exploring teaching and learning via the VEO app to support initial teacher training and professional development. The book can also be recommended to professionals, practitioners, and researchers who would like to conduct rigorous research on reflective practices with the help of video-enhanced observation and the VEO app as a tool for continued professional development.

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About the Author

Pelin Irgin is an Assistant Professor of English Language Education at TED University. She has led several research projects in the field of second language education, exploring teaching and learning in a range of different contexts. Her research interests include second language listening, self-regulation, and L2 writing.

E-mail: pelin.irgin@tedu.edu.tr