Effective teacher collaboration to enhance online teaching pedagogy for ELICOS teachers

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A radical change has been witnessed in the English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) sector since COVID-19 appeared. Against this background, this study investigated teachers' perceptions of their collaboration in an online educational platform. The English teachers at our college exploited collaborative online activities using a rostered lesson planning process. Through this process, the teachers took turns to prepare a lesson plan fortnightly for other teachers to use. This time-efficient practice resulted in teachers' strong sense of confidence in the virtual educational environment, a reduced workload, effective classroom delivery, and a sense of uniformity. These findings were derived from eight semi-structured teacher interviews, which were subsequently transcribed and then coded in NVIVO 12. The data was analysed based on Shakenova's (2017) teacher collaboration framework. The findings led to the design of a collaborative practice model that can be used by ELICOS teachers and educators.

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic, while posing challenges, has provided opportunities for increased collaboration among teachers at our college. Moving from low-level collaboration (sharing teaching ideas) to joint creation (preparing lessons and/or co-teaching) supported our transition from face-to-face delivery to teaching to an online environment. The literature on English learning and teaching does not contain much on teachers' online collaboration, especially teacher collaboration in rostered lesson planning (explained in more detail in the context section). This is somewhat surprising given that effective collaboration is likely to result in reduced pressure on teachers in virtual classrooms. The present study, therefore, examined teachers' perception of factors that facilitate and/or hinder teacher collaboration when moving

to an online educational platform; and it subsequently proposes an innovative model to improve online collaboration of teachers working in ELICOS programs.

Collaboration in English language teaching

By definition, collaboration refers to working together in ways of exchanging genuine and mutual help which positively affects both the quality and quantity of work (Erickson, 1989). Collaboration, therefore, means sharing common values and obligations and involves teachers in decision making about shared teaching practice (Hord, 1986; Kruse, 1999). Compelling evidence from previous research demonstrates that collaborative practice is essential for teaching excellence and an essential condition for successful professional practice by teachers (Goddard et al., 2007; Meirink et al., 2010; Moolenaar et al., 2012). It is argued by Burns (1999) that collaboration promotes and develops group processes and discussions that enable teachers to think and subsequently adapt their teaching practices. Burns (1999, 2010) highlights that the benefits of collaboration that teachers gain go beyond what could be achieved through their individual action and self-reflection. Dikilitaş (2015) and Dikilitaş and Wyatt (2018) echo Burns (1999, 2010) by further emphasising that collaboration benefits teachers educationally, professionally, and psychologically; it encourages interaction on teaching content of mutual interest, enhances teachers' self-efficacy, and builds a strong sense of professional community.

Teacher collaboration takes various forms. According to Hargreaves (1994), three forms of teacher collaboration exist: (1) fully functioning collaboration, (2) comfortable collaboration, and (3) contrived collegiality. *Fully functioning collaboration* is based on mutual acceptance, trust, support, and recognition. In this type of collaboration, teachers voluntarily work together to develop and implement their initiatives, something that tends to be rarely practised. *Comfortable collaboration* focuses on immediate issues and short-term initiatives. *Contrived collegiality* is regulated and compulsory collaboration that often requires teachers to meet and work together.

While Hargreaves (1994) distinguishes between different forms of teacher collaboration based on the scope and depth of the collaboration, Little's (1990) classification is based on the level of interdependence among teachers. According to Little (1990), there are three levels of teacher collaboration: (1) low, (2) intermediate, and (3) high-level collaboration. Low-level collaboration is a mutual exchange between teachers including "telling stories", and "scanning for ideas and resources" (Little, 1990, p. 132). Intermediate level collaboration includes activities such as giving and receiving aid and assistance, as well as sharing ideas and materials. The highest level of collaboration entails "joint work" in which teachers work closely together and share a collective teaching responsibility (Little, 1990, p. 132). These levels of

collaboration are relevant to this study since it examined factors that potentially influenced teachers' collaboration of online lesson planning at our college.

Theoretical framework

This study is underpinned by a theoretical framework proposed by Shakenova (2017) to enhance teacher collaboration. Using this framework enabled us to identify and interpret factors that influenced teacher collaboration at our college. As shown in Figure 1, the framework implies that both structural conditions and interpersonal dynamics lead to the promotion of teacher collaboration.
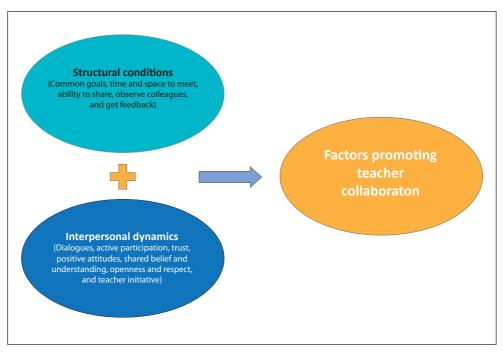

Figure 1. Promoting teacher collaboration (adapted from Shakenova, 2017)

Within the structural conditions, the model shows that common goals decided by the whole group facilitate the effectiveness of group collaboration. Also, time and space to meet may include both formal and informal time which are called *arbitrary vs teacher-directed* time (Shakenova, 2017). *Ability to share* refers to the expertise of teachers and opportunities for novice teachers to learn from more experienced ones. That is, through observations, teachers learn from each other and create a collaborative culture. Under the second aspect *interpersonal dynamics*, dialogue and active participation is considered a means of professional learning, and a contributing factor to enhancing collaboration. While trust and effective communication are vital in collaborative practice, a positive attitude also plays a crucial role in cooperation. In

addition, a shared belief or vision and understanding of students and of organisations creates a willingness to share among group members. Other factors important for collaboration include openness (to innovation), respect (for other teachers' ideas), and teacher initiative (willingness to take responsibility and take risks). This particular theoretical framework (Shakenova, 2017) informed the design, implementation, and analysis of teacher collaborative activities in the current study.

Research context

Our college is one of the largest in Australia and has been a preferred pathway to university for international students for over 20 years. The college offers foundation study programs and English language courses, diplomas, pathway courses, and professional experience programs. The English language courses cover general English courses, introductory academic programs, and English bridging courses. While the general English course is offered to students who have not met the English requirements for Foundation Year, the introductory academic program focuses on developing students' confidence in study skills and critical thinking skills. The English bridging courses help students achieve the English language requirements to gain direct entry into a university degree or college diploma. The study duration depends on the initial level of students' English language skills, and thus it may take 10, 15, or 20 weeks to complete the program. Full-time students are required to attend 20 class hours and complete approximately 15 hours of extra study per week. The class limit is set to 18 students to maximise students' use of English in the classroom.

Impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, like other ELICOS providers in Australia, the teaching and learning environment at the college changed overnight in early 2020. Within a week, teachers had to transition from face-to-face to virtual classroom teaching. While the English courses were already well-developed with resources that supported a blended online learning environment, a great deal of adaptation was still required in order to provide a supportive and engaging online learning environment for both teachers and students.

In order to respond to these challenges, a shift from a low level (e.g., sharing ideas and resources), to a high-level collaboration (e.g., joint work) (see Little, 1990) was implemented at the college. Moving to a higher level of teacher collaboration was undertaken with the aim of resolving immediate issues and challenges, and helped us focus on the short-term needs of teachers and students.

Our research project (the essence of this paper) was conducted in the 10-week English Bridging for Diplomas course, with the move to online teaching taking place in the first week of the course in April 2020. This transition was particularly problematic because four teachers joining the team were not familiar with the course syllabus. To

address this challenge, a group of 10 teachers (three of us were also the researchers in this project) and a group leader initiated the idea of online collaboration. In the first two weeks, each teacher was rostered to prepare a lesson plan for one entire day, which was then shared with the group via email. In the second week, the group leader sent out a Google Doc, and teachers were invited to put their name in for the day they wished to create a lesson plan and share with others for the following eight weeks via a shared Google Drive.

Besides the lesson plans, the group also shared other ideas for collaboration throughout the course, including daily phone conversations in which teachers collaborated on weekly lesson plans, weekly small group meetings (three to five teachers), and syllabus briefings via Google Hangouts. These activities took place alongside the fortnightly rostered lesson planning done on Google Drive (e.g., sharing PPTs and learning materials).

The authors of this paper were inspired by the collaboration idea; therefore, we decided to pursue this research with the goal of sharing their experiences with other ELICOS teachers. For this reason, the three of us were teachers and researchers at the same time. The rationale for including three teacher-researchers in this project related to our perceptions of a need "for ownership, professionalisation and change" (Burns, 2013, p. 91). Through this project, we could "gain greater agency in the enactment of the curriculum", research skills and motivation for "teacher-driven changes" in classroom pedagogy (Burns, 2013, p.91). In this project, three of us became investigators, or explorers, and at the same time participants; therefore, it did not raise any potential conflict of interest.

In light of this context, the present research project aimed to investigate teacher perceptions of collaboration when faced with a sudden and unexpected move from face-to-face practice to virtual online teaching. The study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What factors were perceived by teachers as contributing to the success of the online collaborative activities?

2. What factors were perceived as hindering the teachers' participation in the online collaborative activities?

Methodology

Data collection and analysis

The action research project was qualitative in nature, using a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of teachers' perceptions of online collaboration. By definition, action research involves "a self-reflective, systematic and critical approach

to inquiry by participants who are at the same time members of the research community" (Burns, 2013, p.90). Action research, therefore, provides teachers with the opportunity to focus on specific issues, which in our case was a rapid move to online delivery. Focusing on an issue in this way, action research empowers teachers to improve their teaching practice (James, Milenkiewicz & Bucknam, 2008). Guided by our research questions and based on the action research approach, our study combined two related forms of activity: (1) action — the research team, including us (three teacher-researchers) involved in enacting and embedding plans into virtual class practices, and (2) research — the research team observing and reflecting on the impact of the collaborative activities. Kemmis and McTaggart's (1998, cited in Burns, 2009, p. 290) model was applied in this project. The model entails four main steps: develop a plan, act to implement the plan, observe the effects, and reflect on the effects.

Data was obtained via eight individual semi-structured teacher interviews (with seven teachers and one group leader) that were conducted in the last week of the 10-week course. The interviewees provided their verbal consent before participating in the interviews. Approval for this research project was granted by the ethics team of the college. Each interview lasted between 30 and 40 minutes, and was carried out via Zoom (see Appendix A for interview questions). The recorded data was subsequently transcribed, coded in NVIVO 12 by the three researchers, and the transcripts were cross-checked by the head researcher for accuracy. Emerging themes and topics were categorised and analysed in light of Shakenova's (2017) theoretical framework. The recordings and the transcripts were stored in a Google Drive which was shared among the three researchers to ensure the security of data.

Participants

The teacher participants, all aged between 30 and 50, were experienced practitioners who had been at the college for more than five years. However, their teaching experiences on this 10-week English diploma course varied: four had been teaching the course for five years, while the other three were new to the course. Seven of the teachers were new to an online teaching environment, and when interviewed, had been working in this new online setting for approximately two months. The other participant was the program leader who had as little experience in online learning and teaching as the teachers, but provided insights from a leadership perspective. Pseudonyms and participant codes (TI1-TI8) were used to ensure the participants' anonymity (TI stands for 'Teacher Interview').

Findings and discussion

Shakenova's (2017) theoretical framework suggests that structural conditions and interpersonal dynamics of a team enhance or hinder teacher collaboration. In the following section, we will look at these two aspects and answer the two research questions.

Factors contributing to online teacher collaboration: structural conditions

According to the framework, the structural conditions of a team or group include common goals, time and space to meet, ability to share, and observe and get feedback from colleagues. As such, the interview data revealed that common goals and an ability to share ideas were most evident in the teachers' collaboration.

Common goals

A common goal of the group was to share ideas and lesson activities so that teachers could save time in planning lessons for online classes. These plans were then uploaded every fortnight into the shared Google Drive. After attempting a variety of lesson plan formats, including Google Docs, MS Word, and Google slides or MS PPT, the group uniformly chose the Google slides/PPT format for the shared lesson plans. PPT was considered effective because it "is an efficient way of supplementing Zoom, and you can also have the students in the gallery view mode while the PPT is being presented, so everyone can still see each other" (T16).

As a result, the shared PPT in the rostered lesson planning helped the teachers, particularly those who were new to the course, to save time by avoiding "reinventing the wheel" (TI7). All teachers claimed that it took them substantially more time to prepare for an online lesson than for a face-to-face one because "the online lesson plan has to be more rigorous" (TI6) and thus teachers "have to write every single instruction clearly and we try to make it easier for the students" (TI2). The rostered PPT lesson plans helped them save a significant amount of preparation time. The experienced teachers were believed to have a "bigger bank of lesson plans because they have taught the course many times"; while "new teachers often bring in new ideas that they have taught elsewhere, and it really helps to share the expertise among the team" (TI7).

Another common goal shared in the group was to create high-quality lessons to meet learner needs. One teacher asserted that "we want to be creating lessons that are really effective for our students, and we are taking information out from the textbook or from Moodle and making it a lot more collaborative, interactive, and interesting" (TI8). Overall, it was evident that all group members "tried to produce materials that support the students" (TI4). With the shared PPT lessons, teachers had more time to be able to "focus on the daily activities and actually meet the individual needs of the students" by spending more time on individual consultations (TI7).

Ability to share ideas

All of the teachers mentioned that the group possessed a strong ability to share ideas with each other. One of the teachers claimed that the group members were all "professional, respectful, and very competent", and had a good understanding of the course as well as students' needs. In their opinion, "everyone works with that in mind, so it brings itself to a very good result" (TI4). Elaborating on this point, another teacher pointed out that:

> The fact that we are very experienced teachers makes it easy to communicate. Because we have been teaching this course for a long time, it was easy to communicate with other teachers, and also with our co-teachers, it was really easy to understand what the problem is, or what part of the class we are talking about. (TI2)

In addition, the collaborative activities "were very well received by the teachers" (TI7) because they were "very good at sharing activities that they found, lesson plans that they created, and their teaching experience" (TI2). Teachers were keen to learn from each other in the weekly meetings when they shared teaching ideas and PPT lessons. The sharing times were perceived as "good to see what other teachers would do; some ideas, even coming down with the idea of how they are organising breakout rooms and other things" (TI8).

Factors contributing to online teacher collaboration: Interpersonal dynamics

The second aspect of the theoretical framework – interpersonal dynamics of a team – is concerned with dialogues and active participation, trust and positive attitudes, shared belief and understanding, openness and respect, and teacher initiative. The teacher interview data revealed that all of these factors noticeably enhanced teacher collaboration.

Dialogues

Dialogues within the group and encouragement by the program leader facilitated online collaboration. Firstly, dialogues occurred in the weekly briefing when the syllabus content was discussed and teachers' ideas were welcomed. Additionally, clear and specific expectations were set and agreed on, which in turn created an open environment for collaboration. Secondly, communication was generated through a shared Google Drive for teacher-created resources. Via this shared Drive, a planning schedule where teachers could "put their name down on a certain day" (TI3) was created. This schedule "shows which teacher [prepares] the lesson plan for each day specifically" (TI2). This document was believed to be:

> ...useful. Because it was a live document, we are able to see when a teacher has added something. I actually opened that document and I saw that this

teacher would be preparing a lesson plan for Monday week 7, so I will prepare for Tuesday, and another teacher jumped in to prepare for Wednesday, and lesson plans for the whole week were there. (TI2)

The use of a shared Google Drive made it easier for teachers to communicate with each other, and to create and add ideas and materials.

In addition, the program support teacher "drove the collaboration meetings, provided a weekly focus, and reminded teachers of when planning was due to keep the whole thing running" (TI7). Although the collaboration meeting was not compulsory, most teachers joined this session, as they believed "it was effective as I was able to hear what was planned and ideas for that plan" (TI8).

Active participation

The team's active participation was another contributing factor to the group's collaboration. Once the expectations were explicitly discussed in the group meetings, and the planning procedure was understood within the group, "we had the whole team buy into the idea, and [had] teachers [who] want[ed] to produce something that is very effective" (TI8). The fact was that teachers were willing to share their resources, and "take lesson plans from other teachers, which is not an easy thing to be able to read someone else's design for. It helped everybody to keep to the deadlines" (TI7). As a result, one of the teachers said:

> Teachers fell in rhythm with each other and I did my lesson on Monday, and I think somebody else did Tuesday, so everyone started to do their day, so there was a sense of rhythm that developed. That was really useful, so you can prepare ahead, and sometimes people would add supplemental materials so you could choose that or not. (TI3)

Also, the group actively participated in collaboration meetings as the following statement shows: "The collaboration activities were well attended by teachers, generally very positive comments from the team overall" (TI7). One teacher stated that "teachers were all coming, sharing, and getting new ideas, particularly for online because there are different apps, different links, and videos" (TI8). That teacher also added that "as an individual you cannot find so many, but if you have a team of teachers who all are contributing, I think that is really helpful". As a result, "the team benefits because they become stronger; because they share, and it really enhances the work" (TI7).

Trust and positive attitudes

Trust and positive attitudes towards teaching and collaboration were also evident in the group. It was widely believed that "all teachers did a good job" (TI2), and one of

the teachers further emphasised that "when I saw other teachers' PPT slides, their lesson plans, most of the time I said 'Oh! That is really the best way of delivering it'!" (TI2). Despite the fact that breakout rooms seemed to be difficult to manage, most teachers expressed their positive attitudes towards utilising this activity. One teacher compared the differences between online and face-to-face class management:

> Whereas in class, it is so much easier to just look and organise new pairs, and people sit in the circle and in the middle, and people standing outside, people rotate, you know things like that are much easier in person than it is using technology. But I am sure we all think of ways to do it. (TI2)

Shared beliefs and understandings
The group shared a common belief in the value of supporting each other in teaching online. Because the virtual educational platform was "an entirely new learning and teaching experience" (TI4), teachers perceived that they needed to support each other when "teaching online was so much more [a] solitary experience" (TI4). A remark made by TI5 highlights the need for supporting each other further:

> I would say that most of us would not be able to plan in such a way without the support of each other because the planning of a lesson takes a while, and the fact that we are taking turns sharing, that definitely takes the load off the teachers.

Furthermore, the rostered lesson planning process enhanced the teachers' sense of belonging and boosted their spirit of learning and sharing newly gained understandings. It created a sense of uniformity among the team "because we are basically delivering more or less the same thing as is actually happening in the course" (TI6). In addition, according to TI6, "it is very individual teaching from home, so it brings us together. So, I think you need to see what other teachers are doing if you are teaching the same class. Otherwise, we would be completely isolated."

Openness and respect
Another important factor we identified was an open, inclusive, and flexible learning environment. One teacher explained that "it is a very positive group dynamic, and we are all willing to speak up and say 'oh I don't know how to do this', and there are the other teachers who are willing to give support and help" (TI5). Four other teachers confirmed that this approach was flexible and inclusive, and it "gave teachers the freedom to adapt a lesson that other teachers have made because we all have our different styles" (TI8). In the same vein, TI4 said, "you do not have to use the materials that have been developed, and people understand that it is a very good environment that exists in our team. I think it is great." Importantly, flexibility was

emphasised as contributing to the group feeling open and respectful. "Flexibility is always there. I think that is important. So, everyone works with that in mind, so it brings itself to a very good result" (TI4).

Teacher initiative

The idea of collaborative activities was first initiated by teachers and then applied and practised by the whole group successfully. It was a common agreement among the interviewees that the most popular and effective collaboration method was the rostered lesson planning activity, which was considered to be "an exceptional success" (TI8) for the team when moving online. In this way, all the interviewees strongly believed that the team worked well together by communicating, sharing ideas, and collaborating effectively (TI4). The following quote captures the teacher participants' perceptions:

> I found it really useful; it saved us a lot of time, it was engaging, stimulating, we could share ideas, different warmers, different activities, different things, … I gained so much…. really effective use of time. (TI3)

Therefore, the rostered PPT lesson planning was perceived as a substantial achievement and a beneficial process because of its time efficiency.

Factors hindering online teacher collaboration

In the interviews, the teachers pointed out two factors that hindered their group's collaboration. Both of these factors belonged to the structural conditions of the group: (1) time and space to meet, and (2) observation of colleagues and feedback.

Limited time and space to meet

Time constraint was one of the factors that hindered collaboration among teachers. As one teacher recalled, "One of the challenges may be time. Probably, you could have done more collaboration" (TI3). Another one revealed that she was teaching in two different programs, so it was hard for her to manage time to collaborate with her colleagues or to share her lessons (TI8). Sharing a similar view, a third teacher emphasised that "we need provision of time in which to discuss what we learnt to share ideas" and suggested that they needed more time to collaborate with their co-teachers (TI1). TI4 also mentioned that "it would be good to have a full half an hour on the co-planning rather than 10 or 5 minutes when we got time."

In terms of space, teachers recalled missing the staffroom where they used to collaborate and discuss ideas with their colleagues. One participant explained that online collaboration is "so different [to] a teachers' room where we are just sitting around each other and we just talk." (TI3) Another teacher shared this feeling:

We missed that teacher room when you can come over and ask a colleague or you just can easily share ideas in one minute. It is much clumsier, and you need to be so much more organised about some of the formal things you have to do online. (TI1)

Difficulties in observing and getting feedback from colleagues
The workload was perceived to be excessive in this course, and therefore teachers found it challenging to observe each other. As TI1 explained, "teachers were under time pressure, when you are teaching online, when the days feel a lot longer than the days you are working on campus." Class observations were, therefore, not conducted, resulting in limited feedback on class teaching from colleagues.

The only source of feedback was on the shared lesson plans, generated in a Google Doc. In this way, teachers were encouraged to share their feedback on the lessons in which they used the shared PPTs. While the program leader thought that the feedback document was helpful as it "made sure [there were] opportunities for feedback from teachers about the process," (TI7), teachers did not have opportunities to discuss and learn from each other's feedback. One teacher recommended that "we probably need a little more time in the beginning of the week just to talk about what worked" (TI5).

In summary, the two factors that hindered collaboration belonged to the structural conditions of the group: Time and space to share, and observation and feedback. Recommendations for utilising the promoting factors and dealing with the hindering ones will be made in the following section.

Recommendations

The findings suggested that several factors contributed to and/or hindered teacher collaboration in an online ELICOS course. The findings complement Johnson's (2003) proposition that teachers find working with colleagues together emotionally and psychologically beneficial, because collaboration gives them a chance to learn from each other. In addition, this research implies the importance of collaborative experiences for teachers to share their ideas (Achinstein, 2002; Chan & Pang, 2006; Clement & Vandenberghe, 2000).

Derived from the findings of this research project, we propose a seven-step 'joint work' model with a rostered lesson-planning schedule to enhance the structural conditions and interpersonal dynamics in online teacher collaboration. The model is presented in Figure 2.
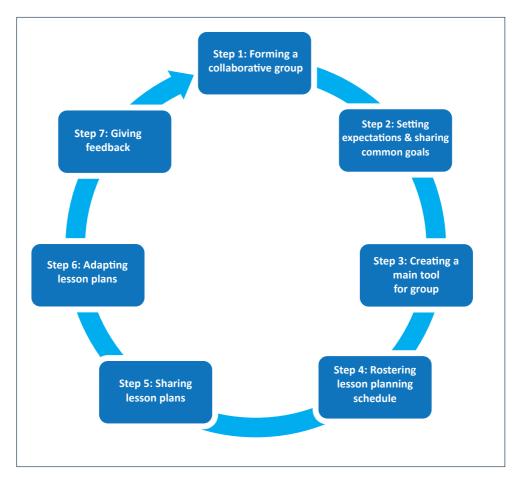
Figure 2. The seven-step 'joint work' teacher collaboration model

Step 1: Forming a collaboration group. Findings from the project showed that a group of five to ten teachers is ideal for group discussions and lesson plan rostering. It is advisable to start with teachers willing to collaborate, learn, and share ideas, forming the foundation for active participation and trust in the group.

Step 2: Setting expectations and sharing common goals by group members to form firm structural conditions. The study showed that shared common goals and beliefs were crucial factors in facilitating collaboration. It is, therefore, necessary to establish a trustworthy, open, sharing, and learning environment in which any contribution is appreciated.

Step 3: Creating a main tool for group communication. This provides the platform for group members to share their ideas, lesson plans, and reflections; therefore, it is important to ensure all group members know how to get access and share their work there. As was the case in our group, Google Drive can provide teachers with a

useful and interactive tool to initiate dialogue, communicate, and share ideas. This tool helps teachers save time and thus addresses such issues as time constraints and a lack of space to meet in the online classroom.

Step 4: Rostering lesson planning schedule for each week. As the findings illustrate, shared Google Docs for the rostered lesson planning should be created by the group leader, and shared among the team members. Teachers should be allowed freedom and autonomy to choose when and what to contribute. The role of the group leader is then to facilitate the roster and remind teachers of their deadlines.

Step 5: Sharing lesson plans. Lesson plans can be shared via email or/and the shared Google Drive. The lesson needs to be shared prior to the class time, which gives group members sufficient time to adjust and modify it to suit their class needs.

Step 6: Adapting lesson plans. Teachers adjust and modify the shared lesson plan to suit their teaching style and student needs.

Step 7: Giving feedback on the shared lessons and reflecting on their own teaching. Teacher feedback for each shared lesson plan should be encouraged in the Google Docs and group meetings. Reflection may focus on what has and has not been done well, paving the way to open discussions, and a dynamic sharing environment among the group. Video recordings of online classroom teaching could be an effective method for peer observations and feedback provision.

It is our hope that the application of our model in an ELICOS program serves to enhance online teacher collaboration, teaching effectiveness, and online teaching practices. Based on the findings of our study, we believe that the model is likely to improve interpersonal dynamics and structural conditions within a group of teachers. It may also resolve time constraints and limited meeting space that teachers have faced in our study.

Conclusion

The value of this research project is that it captured the contributing as well as hindering factors in ELICOS teachers' online collaboration. The study's generalisability is, of course, limited, as it only investigated teacher collaboration in one college, with a relatively small number of participants. Nonetheless, the proposed teacher collaboration model has been applied and multiplied at our college; consequently, we now have a rich bank of lesson plans that can be used for different English courses. Further, we believe that our project and this paper provide some valuable insights that teachers could implement into their online teaching practices. Indeed, the study maintains its relevance as it is based on an experience that has been impacting

teachers at different levels on a global scale — a sudden shift from traditional face-to-face education to virtual instructions.

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1. What collaborative activities did you participate in in your MEB DIP group in terms 3 & 4, 2020? Co-teacher collaboration, collaborative planning (sharing PPT), collaboration meetings, feedback and comments in shared collaborative planning documents?

3. How often and how much time did you spend on these activities?

4. What do you think about the original idea for these collaborative activities?

5. What is your general opinion about collaborative lesson planning in our group?

6. To what extent do you think collaborative lesson planning in your MEB DIP team is a success/or a failure? Can you elaborate on the reasons for your answer?

7. What do you perceive as the contributory factors to the success of the collaborative lesson planning?

8. What do you perceive as the challenges or constraints that teachers may have faced when participating in these collaborative activities?

9. What would you suggest to improve the collaboration among DIP teachers in the future?

Questions for the group leader:

1. What collaborative activities did you hear or know about among MEB Dip teachers throughout terms 3 & 4, 2020? Co-teacher collaboration, collaborative planning (sharing PPT), collaboration meetings, feedback and comments in shared collaborative planning documents?

2. Do you know of or have any feedback on these activities?

3. What do you think about the original idea for these collaborative activities?

4. What is your general opinion about collaborative lesson planning by teachers?

5. To what extent do you think collaborative lesson planning in your MEB DIP team is a success/ or a failure? Can you elaborate on the reasons for your answer?

6. What do you perceive as the contributory factors to the success of the collaborative lesson planning?

7. What do you perceive as the challenges or constraints that teachers may have faced when participating in these collaborative activities?

8. What would you suggest to improve the collaboration among DIP teachers in the future?

9. Would you suggest collaborative planning to other cohorts of teachers or encourage MEB DIP teachers to continue it in the future? If yes, how?

10. What do you think is the role of managers and group leaders in collaborative planning among teachers?