

“Digital Community of inquiry”

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So far, we have come from “digital citizenship” (using the internet and social media in a responsible and ethical way) to “Digital leadership” (find a passion and start influencing others to make a positive change!) such as TED Talks which are designed for one-way or monologue influence! The question becomes, then, what’s the next evolution in digital world and how it can serve the educational world specially teacher education?

This paper presents a co-coaching model in teacher education based on philosophical pedagogy in digital environment. The purpose of this co-coaching model is to teach and cultivate “reflective thinking” including critical, creative and caring thinking along with higher-order discussion skills among experienced and novice Thinking/P4C teachers in Iran. Combining the face-to-face “Community of Inquiry” framework during the workshops and “Digital Community of Inquiry” afterwards as an ongoing experience among Thinking/P4C teachers during the last eight years since 2008, is designed to help volunteer teachers in learning reflective thinking and overcome their problems as a reflective thinker in their Thinking/P4C classrooms.

This experience with elements of the co-coaching model has resulted in a unique guide for coaching interventions and teachers’ model of learning in Thinking/P4C education. The digital environment includes different social media such as mobile Apps, emailing lists, Face book groups, which provide both synchronous and asynchronous chats among novice and experienced teachers who had or had not Thinking/P4C classes during the past 17 years.

This model is based on learning by doing approach and the teachers are supposed to learn reflective thinking by applying it not only on their own practice but on other colleagues’ practices as well. This co-coaching is based on sharing the “reflection on practice” by volunteer teachers and then an ongoing “reflection on colleague practice” by the other volunteer teachers. Therefore, there is an opportunity for both silent and cooperative teachers to improve their performance in a voluntary reflective and advising relationship that promotes action, learning, and accountability.

As the result of the team experience, to avoid psychological and cultural conflicts and uneasiness, we came to the idea of “**anonymity**” in order to warrant the “safety” of community and encourage and motivate all the teachers to actively participate in the “community of inquiry” framework. Anonymity is a key factor in reflective teacher education through a digital environment otherwise we have to admit the presence of silence and inactive people in the community or untruthful, biased reflections as well as selective reports rather than reflections at all.

On the other hand, the idea of “**anonymity**” is also an “ideal speech parameter” for the communicative ideal of social democracy because it acknowledges the democratic citizens as reflective citizens. Citizens who do not rely on and even need the name of the author/speaker in order to judge the content and solutions. Meanwhile, it will prevent using the influence the name in providing unjustified and not evidence based information and conclusions by them.