

Creating a Hybrid Oral Skills Course for IGTAs

TESOL 2010

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http://www.deborahhealey.com/tesol2010/hybrid_igta_course.html



Why a hybrid course

- ◆ Course is a requirement for IGTAs who score below 60 on the SPEAK
- ◆ Perennial problems with timing and attendance
 - ◆ TAs are busy – many obligations in departments
 - ◆ They don't see the point in the course
 - ◆ 12-step pronunciation program - [website](#)
- ◆ Couldn't be any worse! ..



Approach

- ◆ Blackboard platform
- ◆ Initial in-class meeting
- ◆ Online activities and discussions
- ◆ Two other face-to-face presentations
- ◆ Two self-filmed presentations
- ◆ Final presentations in class
- ◆ [Calendar](#) (online on the presentation website) ..



Blackboard components

- ◆ Readings
- ◆ Exercises
- ◆ Limited discussions
- ◆ Pros and cons with the platform



Initial response

- ◆ Students seemed pleased with the flexibility
- ◆ Good initial response to in-class and online activities
- ◆ Some students MIA from the beginning
 - ◆ As usual with this class



Self-filming options

- ◆ Their own computer + webcam
- ◆ Their own video camera
- ◆ Using the webcam in the Learning Center with a friend
- ◆ Setting a time for an assistant to film them in the Learning Center

Positive elements

- ◆ Flexibility in time
- ◆ Recordings
 - ◆ Revised self-recordings
 - ◆ No time constraints on recording
 - ◆ More focused feedback on recordings
- ◆ Anytime, anywhere access to online resources



Perennial issues

- ◆ Students not taking the course seriously
- ◆ One student with severe problems that needed speech therapy, not an IGTA class
- ◆ Not enough time to make a real difference



Hybrid course issues: Self-recordings

- ◆ Self-recordings didn't get peer feedback effectively
 - ◆ Videos weren't viewed by other students
- ◆ Webcams didn't show body language beyond the face
- ◆ Hard to juggle visual aids and a webcam
- ◆ Some issues with saving and emailing large recordings



Hybrid course issues: Time on task

- ◆ Students could work anytime, but didn't
- ◆ Fewer real deadlines provided less incentive to do the work
- ◆ Not enough Q & A practice – just in the in-class presentations



Lessons learned

Still a good concept, but...

- ◆ Use FlipVideos or other small cameras
- ◆ Require weekly videotaping and peer review by a designated partner
- ◆ Have sessions that are just Q & A practice in class
- ◆ Have more individual meetings with students to work on their specific pronunciation issues
 - ◆ Online or offline

Overall

- ◆ Much more time needed to make this work right
- ◆ Systematic issues with IGTA training remain
 - ◆ Sponsoring faculty
 - ◆ Self-perception
 - ◆ Lack of consequences
- ◆ Flexibility is very valuable – worth trying again



Q & A

- ◆ See handouts and other information on my website:
- ◆ http://www.deborahhealey.com/tesol2010/hybrid_igta_course.html
- ◆ Email: dhealey@uoregon.edu