

Pianta, Mashburn, Downer, Hamre, and Justice (2008) compared the effects of two conditions for improving the interactions and instruction of prekindergarten teachers. Teachers were randomly assigned to one of two PD approaches: a Web-based resource system with videos on teacher interactions and instruction or a Web-based resource system *combined* with online consultation in which teachers were provided with feedback from coaches about their instruction. The researchers found that teachers who had access to the Web-based resource system *combined* with online consultation showed greater improvement in the quality of their interactions with students in the classroom than teachers who accessed the Web-based system only.

Later studies investigated the effects of PD for preschool teachers that included a case-based hypermedia resource (HR) coupled with literacy coaching (Powell, Diamond, Burchinal, & Koehler, 2010; Powell, Diamond, & Koehler, 2010; Powell, Steed, & Diamond, 2010).² In the Powell, Diamond, and Koehler (2010) study, HR was used with two different coaching conditions. In one approach, teachers were able to access HR and then received virtual feedback on videotapes of their literacy instruction. In the other approach, coaches observed teachers in classrooms and provided individual feedback to each teacher. There were positive effects of the interventions on several classroom practices related to literacy instruction. In addition, there were no differential effects between the onsite versus remote delivery of coaching. These studies were conducted with teachers at the early childhood level who traditionally have less experience and teacher education, especially with teaching literacy. Thus, the success in this study of using technology in combination with consultation to improve teacher practices may have implications for work in developing countries where teachers may be underprepared to teach literacy to young children.

Although technology use in coaching is limited in developing countries due to lack of access, systematic efforts to use such resources are underway. For example, as part of the Primary Math and Reading Initiative (PRIMR) in Kenya, selected zones in Kisumu County participated in a randomized controlled trial of three ICT-based literacy interventions. These interventions included tablets for coaching teachers through the Teachers' Advisory Centre (TAC); tablets for teachers to use in the classroom; and e-readers that students used to practice reading. Improvements were noticeable in reading outcomes after six months for all three treatment groups, but the most cost-effective approach was to provide tablets to coaches (USAID, 2013).

The IFADEM initiative started in 2012 in Madagascar (Orange, n.d.) has a teacher training component for the overall goal of providing a quality basic education for all. To improve skills of teachers in primary grades and to support the development of lifelong learning strategies, distance education is being used. Mobile phones have been provided to 500 teachers to support teacher training. Teachers have access to a toll-free number through which they can ask questions by SMS or by leaving voice mails. Teachers can then receive responses from instructional advisors. Agence universitaire de la Francophonie (Francophone University Association) leads this initiative in partnership with Orange Labs, Orange Madagascar, Agence Française de Développement (French Development Agency), and Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique.

Another example of technology in a coaching initiative is the Global Literacy Professional Development Network (GLPDN), implemented in Bangladesh and Indonesia and funded by the International Reading Association, Nokia, and Pearson. In Bangladesh, each school is given a mobile phone to receive self-study tasks and download supporting self-study videos. Teachers interact with mentors via email and phone. The hybrid model implemented in Indonesia uses phones and in-person meetings to support teachers.

2. Hypermedia is an extension of hypertext; graphics, audio, video, plain text and hyperlinks combined create a non-linear medium of information (e.g., PowerPoint presentations with links, images, or other multimedia, interactive smart boards).

Examples of Coaching Activities with Teachers³

Group Activities

- Developing, locating, or sharing resources with teachers
- Meeting with grade-level or subject area teams to discuss and analyze assessment, instruction, curriculum, student work, teacher assignments, and so forth
- Leading committee work (e.g., developing curriculum, preparing materials)
- Leading or participating in study groups or book clubs to discuss specific materials read by the group
- Leading or participating in more traditional types of PD workshops
- Leading formal lesson study with groups of teachers
- Assisting teachers with online PD
- Coaching on the fly (COTF) – impromptu meetings with groups of teachers to discuss students, scheduling, or other issues related to literacy instruction and assessment
- Working with teachers to develop partnership programs with parents and the community

Individual Activities

- Helping teachers assess students' literacy learning
- Co-planning lessons
- Having problem-solving conversations about specific students, instructional issues, assessment results, and so forth
- Modeling
- Co-teaching
- Observing and providing feedback
- Combination – coaches may combine modeling, co-teaching, and observing while working with teachers in the classroom (coach is generally in the classroom for a certain amount of time)
- COTF – impromptu meeting with a teacher to discuss an important topic (e.g., a specific student, test scores)

3. Adapted from Bean, 2009.

CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVE COACHING

Multiple factors affect the success of coaching in a school or district. These factors can be divided into three broad areas: context, content, and the preparation, skills, knowledge, and dispositions of coaches (Bean, 2009).

CONTEXT FOR COACHING

In the United States and other countries, educational, political, economic, and social structures affect how coaching is implemented and its effectiveness (Camburn, Kimball, & Lowenhaupt, 2008; Lewis-Spector, Richardson, & Janusheva, 2001). Consideration must be given to how these complex contextual factors – at the regional, district, and school levels – can be addressed. For example, if a district or region is primarily focused on a non-coaching initiative or has multiple initiatives leading to ambiguity and confusion about priorities for schools, there may be a trickle-down effect that reduces coaching effectiveness (Camburn et al., 2008). Lewis-Spector et al. (2001), in their commentary about the difficulties in implementing a literacy initiative in Macedonia, discussed the need for involving many different agencies in initial implementation efforts (i.e., the Ministry of Education, teacher preparation institutions, community leaders, and businesses). They described the importance of early involvement of the Ministry of Education to promote sustainability, given that school changes affect expectations about how teachers teach and how they are evaluated. The researchers recommended that Ministry of Education personnel be included in any initial workshops to inform leaders and enhance partnerships in facilitating school change efforts.

Another important contextual factor is the lead administrator or principal's understanding of and support for the initiative and its implementation (Bean, 2011; Fixsen, Naoom, Blasé, Friedman, & Wallace, 2006; Joyce & Showers, 2002; Wanless, Patton, Rimm-Kaufman, & Deutsch, 2013). A study of the principal's role found that the frequency with which teachers talked with coaches and even the frequency of coach observations in the classrooms were linked with the quality of principal leadership (Matsumara, Sartoris, DiPrima Bickel, & Garnier, 2009). Interviews with leaders of coaching initiatives in developing countries also indicated the importance of support from administrators and suggested that any programmatic initiative should include preparation for school leaders to help them gain a better understanding of the reading initiative and coaching.

Likewise, teacher support for and understanding of the initiative is important. In some contexts, teachers are not comfortable with coaching, feeling as though coaches are monitors or evaluators. However, as reported by researchers, when coaching focuses on supporting teacher efforts in improving student learning, teachers tend to value and support the presence of coaches (Matsumura et al., 2012; Salas, 2013; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010). Fixsen and colleagues (2006) discussed the importance of teacher "readiness" for an initiative and described factors such as knowledge of the content to be implemented, motivation to implement, and structures that need to be in place to enhance implementation. Overall, when coaching is implemented effectively, there appears to be strong teacher support for the presence of coaches.

Another factor is the climate or culture that exists in the school, or "internal social capital," defined as the interactions and relationships among teachers and administrators in a school that promotes a common and shared vision for students (Leana & Pil, 2006). For example, differences in the frequency of coaching activities were found in one study (Atteberry, Bryk, Walker, & Biancarosa, 2008). Coaches tended to work more with teachers who were proactively engaged with their colleagues and who had a strong commitment to the school and to students. Coaching initiatives in developing countries generally include some focus on group coaching to transmit knowledge and promote group work as a means of teacher learning.

Sun, Penuel, Frank, Gallagher, and Youngs (2013) concluded in their study that effective PD had both direct and spillover effects. Not only did teachers who participated in effective PD improve, but, via collegial interactions, they had an impact on fellow teachers. Teachers who attended effective PD sessions were seen as having key knowledge about writing instruction and served as informal coaches for their colleagues. The authors highlighted the importance of school administrators in identifying teachers to serve as coaches based on their subject matter expertise and ability to share. They suggested that schools design PD that promotes positive changes both in participants' instruction and in their ability to help others, that is, develop "go-to" teachers who are willing to share their expertise. These participants are seen as potential teacher leaders (i.e., coaches or mentors). Too often, it is difficult to recruit or locate individuals to serve as coaches in developing countries; developing such "go-to" teacher leaders in schools may help address this problem. Over time, coaches might be encouraged to identify potential teacher leaders in the schools they serve.

As summarized in Mourshed, Chijioko, and Barber (2010), both low- and high-performing education systems can make learning gains, but the structure, resources, and processes essential for producing such gains, including developing the instructional skills and capabilities of teachers; need to be provided. One of their major conclusions is that context does not determine *what* needs to be done, but determines *how* something is done. What this means for coaching is that although coaching can be implemented in schools, careful consideration must be given to resources available to support the initiative as well as the cultural context and its influences on how the program is structured.

CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVE COACHING: CONTEXT – SUMMARY OF BEST PRACTICES

- Coaching can be more effective when there is both top-down and bottom-up support. Support should come from the Ministries of Education, district or regional levels, and teachers who recognize that coaching can help them grow professionally, enhance instructional practices, and increase students' learning.
- Each stakeholder is responsible for developing a cohesive coaching program. Regional and school leaders must provide the structural support needed by coaches. Specifically, coaches need time to meet with teachers, encourage teachers to work with coaches, and provide incentives for teacher-coach collaboration. Coaches must exhibit the skills, knowledge, and dispositions that display credibility and enable the development of a trusting relationship with teachers. Even if the coaching model is based on working primarily with individual teachers, there must be some effort at building a school culture that recognizes the importance of learning as a social activity and provides opportunities for school staff to work together to share information, build a collective vision for students, and develop a community of trust.
- Those responsible for directing coaching programs can assist school leaders in developing conditions conducive to coaching by explaining that coaching is a non-evaluative, nonjudgmental process and suggesting ways that leaders can help teachers understand the value of coaching. Administrators can be invited to attend workshops so that they understand the literacy program and the coaching that accompanies it. The goal is to ensure that coaches have a positive presence in the school, one that can lead to improvements in instruction and increases in student literacy.
- Coaches can play a major role in developing a school culture that promotes teachers as leaders who can support the work of their peers.

CONTENT OF COACHING

Content also affects the impact that coaching has on teacher practices and student learning. The quality of the program chosen matters for implementation, teaching practices, and student outcomes. Research indicates that when instructional goals and content are established in advance – or as Walpole and McKenna (2013) describe it, “front-loaded” – coaching is more likely to have an impact on teacher practices and student learning. Content can be routine or scripted, that is, designed so that teachers can easily implement the strategy being suggested. However, teachers can also learn how to implement a more complex literacy strategy if it is well defined and they are given opportunities to see it in action, implement it themselves, and obtain feedback about their performance from a knowledgeable observer. For example, Matsumara et al. (2012) found that teachers learned to implement a complex set of strategies designed to improve reading comprehension and enhance classroom discussions of the texts students were reading.

Research on coaching indicates that purely content-focused coaching may not be enough; teachers may need assistance with classroom management and differentiated instruction, especially if they are working with large classes with low-performing students, as may be the case in schools in developing countries.⁴ Other topics that coaches may need to address include student motivation and engagement, classroom and school environment, and instructional strategies (Bean, 2009; Walpole & McKenna, 2013).

Targeting coaching support to teachers based on assessment results is particularly important (Bean & Lillenstein, 2012; Elish-Piper & L’Allier, 2007; Grierson, 2011; Walpole, Justice, & Invernizzi, 2004). When coaches use assessment results as the center of their work with teachers, the attention is focused on students, rather than on teachers, and the assessment becomes an important basis for making decisions about what needs to be done in the classrooms to enhance student learning. Assessment results that include multiple measures, such as standardized test scores, samples of student work, and numbers of books read, provide the evidence and talking points that enable teachers to gain insights into students’ efforts and to make decisions about instructional practice. Coaches can often promote the use of assessment data by assisting teachers in measuring students’ achievements.

CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVE COACHING: CONTENT – SUMMARY OF BEST PRACTICES

- Assessment results provide an important basis for effective coaching. Teachers and coaches can assess students, discuss the results, and use those results to make decisions about changes needed in individual classrooms and to support collegial discussions in grade-level teams or in a school. Assessment results should come from multiple measures that reflect not only standardized test scores but also examples of student work.
- To implement content appropriately, teachers may need classroom management support and ideas about how to group students so that students are actively engaged and excited about learning to read.
- Sharing defined and specific content information with teachers increases the likelihood that teachers will be able to successfully implement the initiative. Coaches can introduce teachers to content by providing strategies that are explicit and easy to implement, leading to successful implementation and motivation to change current practice. Coaches can use teacher reflections to make decisions about what coaching activities and knowledge teachers need to better

4. Differentiated instruction refers to teaching strategies that provide individual students with different avenues and mediums of learning to promote effective learning of all students in a classroom, regardless of differences in ability.

implement the intervention (e.g., additional knowledge, modeling, co-teaching). Such reflection opportunities also empower teachers by recognizing and valuing what they bring to the conversation.

- Protocols that provide guidance for observing and talking with teachers are important for focusing the work of coaches and teachers.

PREPARING COACHES: SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, AND DISPOSITIONS

Research in the United States is mixed on whether a specific certification (e.g., reading specialist, literacy coach) is associated with coach effectiveness as measured by teacher satisfaction, changes in teacher practices, or student outcomes (Bean et al., 2010; L’Allier & Elish-Piper, 2006; Scott et al., 2012). However, evidence exists that coaching programs are more successful when coaches have content and pedagogical knowledge of both literacy assessment and instruction and the specific program being implemented (L’Allier & Elish-Piper, 2006; Scott et al., 2012). The International Reading Association (2004, 2010) recommends that coaches have the following qualifications: teaching experience at the level at which they are to coach; knowledge of literacy development, instruction, and assessment; and understanding of adult learning theory.⁵ It is also important for coaches to work in a non-evaluative, positive way with teachers. Coaches must be able to communicate effectively, using language that is descriptive rather than judgmental or evaluative. Effective preparation programs for coaches include experiences that assist with developing these interpersonal, communication, and leadership skills. Frost and Bean (2006) provide competencies that describe their view of the “Gold Standard” for literacy coaches.

However, preparing coaches for their positions is not enough. In a recent national study of reading specialists and literacy coaches (Bean et al., 2013), respondents mentioned most frequently the need for more opportunities to continue learning. Study participants recommended the following sources of support: workshops on coaching and on topics that build content and pedagogical knowledge, opportunities to network with other coaches and to shadow peers, and working with a mentor or lead coach who can serve as a source of support or provide feedback on performance. The notion of a network of coaches or a mentor who guides and supports the work of coaches is especially important in developing countries, where coaches may have little knowledge of literacy instruction or be unfamiliar with the process of coaching.

Coaches must have a deep understanding of the content they are responsible for coaching teachers on, in this instance, reading in primary grades. Experiences that help coaches learn how to coach are also important. Such experiences might include the use of vignettes or scenarios of possible coaching situations (e.g., working with an experienced teacher who believes she *knows* how to implement the content even though the observation does not reflect this knowledge). Other examples include role-plays, observation and discussion of video clips, and interactive experiences with other coaches. Initial preparation is not enough, however. Just as teachers need ongoing support, coaches too improve with ongoing support and feedback from mentor coaches or from working with a network of peers (Bean et al., 2013). Coaches change in how they function as they gain experience with coaching and develop positive relationships with teachers (Bean & Zigmond, 2007). Atteberry and Bryk (2011) indicate that coaches move from survival mode to gaining craft knowledge (i.e., “I know how to model for teachers”) to being able to differentiate or adjust their coaching style based on teachers’ needs.

5. For further reading, refer to Lucas, 2008; Rothwell, 2008; and Biech, 2010.

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APPENDIX A: PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING THE ANALYTIC STUDY

The following procedures were followed in conducting this analytic study and preparing this report.

1. Search of various data sources, including ERIC and PsychINFO, focusing especially on empirical studies conducted from 2008 to 2013 and searching specifically for reports of coaching studies conducted in developing countries or reports describing coaching in these countries
2. Search and review of references cited in studies selected from the initial search
3. Review and analysis of articles that were pertinent to this report (e.g., focus on coaching in primary grades, description of best practices of coaching, factors influencing effective coaching)
4. Development of a protocol for interviewing individuals involved in coaching in developing countries (see Appendix B)
5. Interviews of leaders of coaching initiatives via Skype or telephone
6. Development of a protocol that enabled coaches working in initiatives in developing countries to respond to questions about their experiences (see Appendix C)
7. Development of a decision tree that provides guidance for those involved in developing, implementing, or evaluating coaching initiatives in developing countries

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Background: I have been asked by USAID to develop a paper on coaching that summarizes the current research and literature, not only from the U.S. but in countries around the world, and especially in developing countries. This paper will serve as a resource for those undertaking projects to promote early grade literacy of the students in their country. Below are some initial questions to guide our conversation. Please feel free to add any issues or topics that you think are important for understanding your work with coaching.

1. I understand that you have a coaching initiative in the schools in your country. Could you provide a brief description?
 - a. What do coaches do?
 - b. How do you recruit coaches?
 - c. How are they prepared?
 - d. How many teachers/ schools do coaches work with?
 - e. How long has this initiative been in operation?
2. What has been the reaction of teachers to this type of PD? In what ways have you helped teachers to understand and value this type of professional development?
3. What benefits have you seen from coaching? Changes in teacher practices? Student achievement? Do you have any written documents that you can share about the initiative? Evidence that coaching is effective?
4. What attributes of the coaching initiative do you think are critical to its success?
5. How do you describe your coaching model (e.g., directive versus responsive; individual versus group?) How do you address the issue of evaluation; how difficult is it to maintain the coaches' role as one of "supporting" teachers rather than evaluating them?
6. Any protocols or forms that have been useful?
7. What challenges have you faced in implementing coaching?
8. What are your future plans for coaching? Any expansion? Possible changes?
9. Is there anyone else that you suggest I talk with? Again, any documents that you are willing to share?
10. What else would you want to share with me?

Many thanks for participating in this interview. I would appreciate receiving contact information for publication in an appendix in the final paper; include your name, title, and affiliation, as well as email address. This information will ensure that I have accurate and complete information about the individuals whom I have interviewed.

APPENDIX C: QUESTIONS FOR COACHES

1. What do you think are the most important skills, knowledge, or attributes of a coach? What do you need as an educator to be successful in your position?
2. What are the major challenges that you face in your position? (What problems do you have to overcome)?
3. What are the responses of teachers to coaching? Are they receptive as a whole? Hesitant? etc. How can you convince them that coaches are there to support them?
4. Can you provide some examples of the changes you have seen in teacher practices? (example of instructional changes , e.g., more work with small groups, etc.)
5. Finally, can you provide some basic information such as:
 - a. Numbers of teachers/schools that you serve?
 - b. How do you spend most of your time (e.g., observing teachers, talking with teachers, working with groups etc.)?

APPENDIX D: EXAMPLE OF PROTOCOL USED FOR PROVIDING FEEDBACK TO TEACHERS⁶

Coaches Feedback Protocol Date _____ Coach _____ Teacher _____
 Class Stream _____ School _____ District _____
 Zone _____ Cluster _____ Start Time: _____ End Time _____

I Number of students in the literacy class today: **Female** _____ **Male** _____

Environment:

- | | | | | |
|----------|--|-----|------|------|
| 2 | Students can clearly see print on board | All | Some | None |
| 3 | Students face the teacher while teaching | All | Some | None |
| 4 | Students have books | All | Some | None |
| 5 | Students use books during lesson | All | Some | None |

Instruction:

- | | | | |
|----------|--|-----------|-----------|
| 6 | What lesson is the teacher on today? | Set _____ | Day _____ |
| 7 | Class is 1 week or more behind | Yes | No |

If YES, why? _____

Support: _____

- | | | | | |
|----------|---|-----|------|------|
| 8 | Students are engaged | All | Some | None |
| 9 | Students respond when appropriate | All | Some | None |

If none why? _____

- | | | | | |
|-----------|---|-----|------|------|
| 10 | Students respond in unison/chorally | All | Some | None |
|-----------|---|-----|------|------|

If some or none, why? _____

Support: _____

11 Teacher teaches routine:

- | | | | |
|--|-----|------|------|
| Phonological Awareness (no text) | All | Part | None |
| Alphabetic Principal (with text) | All | Part | None |
| Fluency | All | Part | None |
| Vocabulary | All | Part | None |
| Comprehension | All | Part | None |
| Day 5/Assessment Day | Yes | No | |

- | | | | | | |
|---|--------|-------|-----------|-----------|-------|
| 12 Teacher uses appropriate pacing | Always | Often | Sometimes | Not Often | Never |
|---|--------|-------|-----------|-----------|-------|

Positive Comments: _____

Support: _____

- | | | | | | |
|--|--------|-------|-----------|-----------|-------|
| 13 Students respond with correct answer | Always | Often | Sometimes | Not Often | Never |
|--|--------|-------|-----------|-----------|-------|

Positive Comments: _____

Support: _____

6. From Malawi Coaching Manual (July 2011). USAID Funded Malawi Teaching Professional Development Support (MPDS) Program. Reading Intervention Programme Coaching Manual. Malawi: Author, pp. 13 – 14.