Personalised professional learning: A holistic approach using tablets and OER

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Global problem of practice

School Classrooms:
• Little attention paid to children’s experiences and a lack of confidence in their own creative abilities and capacity to construct knowledge out of their experiences
• Few instances of teacher autonomy leading to experimentation and change

Teacher Education programmes:
• Isolation of disciplinary knowledge from professional training in pedagogy
• Lack of primary classroom expertise amongst teacher educators because elementary education is often not understood as distinct community of practice
• Little relevance to current classrooms.
• No encouragement for reflection.
TESS-India / TESSA : a new architecture for teacher education

Aims to support trajectories of professional competence which bring specified policy aims into practice, into the enacted and experienced curriculum in classrooms and lecture halls (sites of learning).

Sustainable change is argued to occur through the mutual development of teacher educators’ and teachers’ practice

Tools for change are sets of Open Educational Resources (OER)

Movement in practice of teachers and teacher educators arises from enactment of the pedagogy modelled in the OER with their learners

Aiming for embedded OER use in daily practice with teacher educators in colleges; local teacher educators/ advisers; school headteachers and teachers
The OER (TESS-India & TESSA)
OER (text and video)

OER are the means to enable teachers to engage in a dialogue within practice involving:

- planning learning activities
- enacting out learning activities
- observation and reflection on these activities

Leading to a discourse about pedagogy and learning in and beyond the curriculum topics exemplified in the OER.

Access -> Participation -> Innovation

OER (including video) accessed through SD-cards on mobile phones and tablets allows
- easy consultation of the resources for ideas and problem solving
- regular consultation of the resources and adoption in classroom teaching and learning
New learning spaces to connect academic and school based knowledge for learning: MOOC
TESS-India MOOC in Hindi

- **NEW TO MOOCs**: 93%
- **TOTAL ENROLLED**: 33,845
- **99% FROM INDIA**
- **59% MEN, 41% WOMEN**
- **53% COMPLETION RATE**
- **60% WORKING IN A RURAL AREA**
- **TEACHER EDUCATORS, TEACHERS OR Trainee Teachers**: 94%
MOOC participant support

Online peer and expert dialogue within the MOOC platform

Facilitated face-to-face contact classes

Participant or facilitator created and led support offerings including social media groups
Incorporating OER in Teacher Education

Integration into D El Ed (District Institutes of Education and Training and private Teachers’ Colleges)
Integration into Diploma programmes (Sub Saharan Africa)
Integration into B Ed provision at universities
Thematic modules for CDP OER
Integration into local initiatives (eg Shaala Siddhi in India)
Local teacher educators mentoring of primary teachers on use of OER in their classrooms, using tablets (Odisha/ Nigeria/ Ghana)
Mentoring with tablets: Nigeria/ Ghana/ Odisha

Teacher mentoring undertaken through the academic support structure.

Tablet provides:
- evidence of practice to use in dialogue with teachers (video + photos + audio)
- access to the TESSA / TESS-India OER (large repositories of localised resources)
- evidence of the mentoring dialogue (for research)

Mentor reviews lesson plan, observes lesson (records segments) + undertakes post observation discussion (using video recording and OER as prompts)

Contact between observation visits by SMS /voice/ short visit

Complemented by discussion at regular local meetings

Support for mentors from teacher educators (DIETs / NTI etc)
Tablets to support classroom mentoring: learning across the projects

Tablet use not constrained by prior level of skills and competence with digital technologies

Greater focus on practice through requiring mentor to capture specific moments of the teacher’s lesson to inform the post-lesson feedback

Tablet lesson data provides evidence for discussion and negotiation of meaning - disrupting the previously dominate summative judgement on observed practice

Increased formative feedback on how to improve practice and emphasis on ‘active learning strategies’ drawing on OER for exemplification of practice issues

Interaction allows two-way learning process with both teacher and mentor developing their practice
Teacher change

“I am using group work more, because this helps me to involve children who were not keen to learn. With group work I can make each child get involved. Apart from this transformation – I see a transformation within me as a teacher. I did not enjoy my work as much as I do now. I enjoy my teaching much more.”

“This method makes me think about children….. I use this method in my classes since I was exposed to this way of teaching and to the materials that is since October 2016. I discuss what happens with my peer group and share everything with them.”
“This systematic approach was mutually rewarding to both the mentor and the mentee. I have learnt so much about what teachers’ find difficult to do like involving each and every child in activities, handling the weaker children and those who were regularly absent, assessing the progress of children and using appropriate TLM for different tasks’”

“I work with an English language teacher. I discuss the lesson plans she develops, observe her classroom transaction and provide feedback to improve the teaching – learning activities and processes more. Mentoring under TI was an interesting experience as I realized that ideas in one set of OER can used successfully across other subjects too. The Key Resources and AV have helped me in supporting teachers in doing things which they never thought they could be able to do.”
However, we also see

a tendency to focus on ‘deficits’ in teachers’ practice and limited acknowledgement of a problem in the practice of teacher educators

adoption of ‘techniques’ eg group work, to engage all children but limited consideration of how the activity enables cognitive participation for all children

*But the process is motivating teachers, teacher educators and trainee teachers to create videos of innovative practices in their own classrooms and to share these through WhatsApp and Facebook*

*And social media platforms are enabling teachers and some teacher educators to share and collaborate around the OER in new, locally relevant and productive ways.*
Emerging principles from our work

**Sustainable system change through**
- Paying attention to existing structures and relationships
- Practice focussed learning related to professional needs
- Technology as a tool, working through locally owned devices
- Blended models of learning support
- Open features

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