

Final reflections of participants in ‘Teachers Research!’, at the end of the day (1. Highlights; 2. What have you learned? 3. What are you going to do from now?)

I’ve learnt about the different areas and ways in which teachers research can be carried out. This session has also allowed me to realise about different ways of sharing information related to projects of teacher research. I’d summarise my experience on this phrase “All teaching is research but not every research is teaching”.

1) Highlights

- I love listening to the posters’ presentations. It was very diverse and interesting.
- I liked this idea of more informal/ less-structured organisation of the day.
- I liked that throughout the day interaction and discussion were encouraged more than one person talking and the rest of the group listening.

2) What have we learned?

- I learned different ways of doing action research and different insights of ways of fostering teacher research like exploratory practice and reflective practice.
- I learned that research can be simpler than I thought and still be meaningful.

3) What are you going to do with what you learned today?

- I would try to think all these ideas over and try to see how I can incorporate them into my PhD project.

The highlights for me were two particularly inspiring poster presentations on engaging teachers in action research in Cameroon and Chile. These provided insights into means of supporting teachers in such contexts. I will use these insights as I seek to develop research projects in other countries.

- 1) TR doesn't have to look like an academic paper or dissertation highlights.
- 2) Talking to people who have done some research and having an opportunity to ask them questions. A variety of research projects!
- 3) Find out how to ask yourself exploratory questions for classroom research and collect the data answering those questions. I need to know what methods exist!!!

Highlights: Two poster presentations about teaching presentations. General discussions. Panel discussions.

I now feel more confident about doing action research in my classroom and letting my peer teachers know about it and encouraging them to do it in class as well.

I'll carry out some action research I've been keeping in mind and see what the results reveal.

Highlights?

- The poster presentations – how effective posters can be as a way to 'present' research and the creative aspect.
- The variety of research themes – very interesting!

Learned?

- The concept of 'publication' – my own understanding has changed and the PCE has triggered my imagination, re genres.
- Others share my concern that T's need more opps to 'share' what's happening in their classrooms appropriate vehicles for conveying this.

Where going?

- To learn/ read more about exploratory practice.
 - To explore and discuss/ continue debate on 'publication' and 'genre'.
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1) What are the highlights of the day for you?

- Talks on improving oral presentation.
- Exploring grouping in a writing class.
- Choice of feedback methods.
- Dick Allwright explaining the concept of EP.
- Free-flow exchange with Anne Burns on AR.

2) What've you learnt?

- A LOT about research, the role of research in teaching; I liked the definition of research as deconstruction of a particular typically practiced research activities. It is a way of teaching – doing something we regularly do.
- Gained (hopefully) a deeper understanding of the concept of exploratory practice and teaching research and particular research methods and techniques and how they can be incorporated into the teaching process.

3) Where are you going from here?

- Going to brush up my knowledge of

Highlights:

- Participants' presentations are of good quality
- Focus on 'genuine' issues largely and have come with 'genuine' outcomes/ learning for all of us.
- What have we learnt in say the last 20 years? We are discussing the same issue (eg what is action research) in the same way.

My learning:

- Learners' views have to inform the way we think of teaching – focus on learners.
- Teacher research should more and more trust on learning.
- How to make attractive, informative posters.

- How to present your work in 3 minutes.

What will I do now:

- We need to collect our learning together – if practitioner research is valuable and central to an understanding of teaching and learning, what have we learnt? And where do we go from here? What else do we need to do? I want to ask these questions.
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Highlights:

- Experiencing open space learning – great variety!
- Having so many competent AR-ers to listen to and discuss with.
- Spending the whole day on AR.

Learnt:

- More about AR & EP
- That there are many teachers also interested in AR.
- That there's quite a lot of support for teachers wanting to start AR.

Future:

- Sort out differences between AR & EP.
 - Reflect on my teaching/ tutoring to find an area to research.
 - Discuss #2 with colleagues.
 - Start AR.
 - Enjoy the outcomes.
 - Reflect further to repeat the cycle #2-5 as many times as possible...until retirement.
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Highlights of the day:

- The Q&A session and the free-flow interaction.
- The debate on how research should be showed and made public.

What have I learned:

- I learn how research is important in many ways and how it can help me as a teacher.
- I learn about the importance of involving learners in my research.
- I learn many different ways of making my research public.
- As a teacher newly engaged in research, this session inspires me a lot.

Where do I go from here:

- Continue developing my research skills.
- Get my research out in the public – share it with others.
- Get my learners to be more involved in my research practices.
- Learn more about action research and explanatory research/practice.

Highlights:

- Variety of posters – meeting their creators.
- Informal conversation

Learned:

- More about EP.

Do:

- Think more about the unique role of English as content and means of communication – with respect to a) creating a transnational community, b) diffusion.
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1) Highlights

- T research can start with one single teacher and a group involvement is possible.
- TR doesn't necessarily mention the previous research on the topic.
- Through research T can learn a lot about their class, students and their own teaching.
- T should publish their work to share it and provide sample about the points they are researching.

2) – I've learned that without research and references I can talk about my class research.

- Classroom research and EP (exploratory research) both possible for teachers.

3) I wanna continue my classroom research with my students.

- I'd like to continue to be part of IATEFL research SIG and join the meetings and hear more about teachers doing research, publishing and sharing their own research.
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Excellent day. Thank you for organising it. I think that it would have been more useful in the afternoon to hear the 3 min presentations and let people wonder round (like this morning) bit getting into discussion groups. (there was too much to do in that space). Also the q&a's for Ann, Donald, Dick should have been after the 3 min presentations so that there could have been a more informed chance to think of q's. It would be useful for presenters to see the 3 min timer whilst doing the presentation. Lastly, no point in telling us to write q's in the morning if you are not going to use them in the afternoon. Aim of that activity is confusing.

Debanjan Chakrabarti

Highlights:

- Diverse perspectives in AR/ TR from all over the world.
- Networking

Learning - Identified two inter-related problematic issues:

- Creating a hierarchy of "research" with AR which teachers do and real academic research that is carried on by HE academics.
- Related to, and inherent in, the above hierarchy is the notion that teaching happens in schools and research happens in HE institutions (and academic researchers don't have to teach).

What next?

- Seek policy level mitigation of the above problem.
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Highlights?

- Talking with presenters.
- Hearing about teachers' experiences.

Learned?

- That the “what do other people/ researchers think” can be done at the end! (of the research). I.e. the notion of academic and teacher genres.

What will I do now?

- Reconsider my whole approach to gathering knowledge!

Highlight?

A real opportunity for thought-provoking discussion on AR/EP. The interactive approach was great.

Learned?

How much enthusiasm there is for research done by teachers. There is much to do to make the case for teacher research and to support it – also to ensure it does not get simplified and co-opted a mechanistic way so that the richness that it particularly has for better long teaching and learning is not impeded.

What next?

To do even more AR and to promote it more and more – but also to argue against the co-option. I hope the ReSIG can organise more such events.

- Hearing that others are as distracted as I about the dichotomy between academics and teachers/ teacher researchers.
- 2) **Learning outcome**
 - Learning that it all starts with students and then modifying.
 - 3) **Future task**
 - Choose a modification so tiny that the analysis will be very quick and I will have performed one complete cycle.
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- 1) I learnt about the value of classroom research: to focus our attention on a problem, thus making it more real; also, research helps us bond with the class in question.
 - 2) I will continue researching my problem in more detail, say by introducing a new cycle. Also, supplying an exploratory practice dimension to my research might help, i.e. getting my students to approach their own data first before (and if) I do.
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Highlights:

- Sharing each other's research through poster presentations.

What I learnt:

- There are just so many tricky problems we teachers come across every day in our teachings. We need to think about the problem and either investigate with students or think of ways as teachers to implement things to make changes, make observations and self-reflect on the findings.

What I'll do after:

- Find another problem in my classroom and think about two action research questions I could investigate.
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Highlights:

- Research poster presentations in the morning. Gaining a wider view of teacher research in the ELT context of its similarities to and divergences from more traditional research. Discussion with 'the experts' in the final part of the day was a lovely "mixer".

Learnt:

- As above, deeper understanding. Awareness of different contexts and applications of teacher research and different ways to apply it (research methods).

From here?

- Develop a more cooperative and manageable action research project and programme. Get researching!
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Highlights:

- Informal discussions with other t's really motivating and inspiring.
- Seeing 'normal' teachers getting excited about things they have discovered about their classrooms.

What I learned:

- That there is a discussion about terminology – but that what we call it is not important/ interesting to me.

- That academic-style publications are not the most appropriate for researching on wide audience of teachers.

Where do I go from here:

- Look for more practical ways to share my findings.
 - A blog post about my today and some of the most interesting discussion Q's.
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- The highlights were different views and presentations and the organization of the event.
 - I learned there are different perspectives on research and defining it while all of them are true as Judith mentioned can co-exist happily and we need to figure out where we are standing on the spectrum.
 - I would like to read more on action and practitioner's research and teacher research and carry out one in my context and I would really like to share it with others. I CONTINUE
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1) Highlights

- Finding colleagues doing similar work.
- Able to share and have your work appreciated.

2) That teacher research is just as important – collaboration.

3) Keep researching

- The format of the PCE! I find the poster presentations and the open discussions as very innovative and interesting! It is a good way to share ideas!
 - Bridging important between academic and practical world.
 - Teacher research will definitely be part of my teaching.
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- 1) Meeting like-minded teacher researchers! Learning about different research projects. Having the opportunity to speak face to face with 'specialists'.
 - 2) A lot
 - 3) Maybe a third cycle and definitely share my presentation with my co-workers.
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Highlights:

- Listening and speaking to teacher/ researchers about understanding teaching and learning.
- Also, having the ideas of Dick, Anne and Donald.

What/ learned?

- Greater understanding of the similarities/ differences between practitioner research/ action research and EP.
- The scope of the issues that are of interest to teacher/ researchers.

Where from here?

- More thinking and reading.
- Speak to colleagues about the day.

Becky Steven – English Australia Action – Research 2013 programme

Highlights:

Giving our poster presentation and having other teachers come and talk to us. Hearing their perspectives in reaction to our project was great. Also, hearing the other presentations!

What I learned:

The extent of teacher research around the world. I wasn't aware just how much is 'out there'. I was most interested in the different problems that teachers and professional development programmes around the world have had in getting their projects had off the ground. How the Chilean project had to be modified to meet local cultural context was a highlight for me. I also learned a lot from the different perspectives about when/ how/ if to 'publish'/ 'report'.

What's next:

Having given a poster presentation, it would be great to give a longer talk at a large conference such as IATEFL in future. When I return to Australia I'm looking forward to sharing this SIG workshop with my colleagues. I'd like to encourage them and I think telling them about how their own research if they choose to do it doesn't have to be so 'formal'. I think several teachers at our centre were a bit scared off by the amount of writing we had to do. If I tell them about the Chilean project I think they'd be more interested. I have no idea what it'll be yet but after the dust on this project (2013) settles, I'll definitely take on another project. Will it be 'explorative', will it be 'action research', will it be a hybrid, a PhD? Who knows!

1) Highlights

- Well-organised day – really thought it worked well. Seeing so many people involved in TR/ some brilliant posters.

2) So many things to think about!

3) Look at ways of disseminating learner understandings.

- I've learnt that there are many teachers from all over the world who value research and their own contribution to it. This consolidates my belief that in my own country we have to find a way of creating a culture of teacher research.
 - The way forward is to publish an article based on my poster in something like the *ELT journal*. This would ideally be co-authored with the teachers we were supporting in their research.
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1) Highlights

- The ongoing debates led by Donald, Dick and Anne. They served as anchors to points raised during the presentations and exchanges within the smaller groups.

2) Learnt

- It is crucial to consider the concept of 'action research' on a continuum and explain 'it' or discuss 'it' in relation to the context of every classroom situation.

3) Way forward?

- Empower teachers with the tools to conduct action research. Work on boosting their confidence. One of the many benefits of AR is the effect it has on teachers' self-confidence and their realisation that 'how' they teach 'matters'.
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Dick

Highlights:

- Good serious discussion throughout.

What I have learned:

- Avoid lung infections, especially my own.
- AR is beginning to look different in a positive way, but we still seem (EP-AR) to be coming from dramatically opposed angles.

What next?

- Back to bed!
 - Keep up the struggle to successfully differentiate EP & AR, but don't waste time on it.
 - Try to get a more up to date view in AR currently practiced, to inform future discussions.
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Annamaria

Learnt:

- EP = whole and Action research is tension. Poster styles!

Highlights:

- Interacting with 'new' people.
- Hearing that there is a lot of common ground in the group but also important differences in views.

Where do you go from here?

- Pub?
 - Learners invited to next conference?
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Highlights: the variety of the posters; the enthusiasm, motivation and commitment of the presenters; the open, free format which allowed for much interaction and sharing; meeting a number of lovely people!

What I learned: Reminded me of the wealth of ideas circulating "out there" and that building a "personal synthesis" of some of the ideas is a challenge for me to meet... for the benefit of my students and their learners.

Where from here?: Like I just said, designing a relevant, effective curriculum for the research methodology courses then perhaps networking a bit more in order to make headway and increase my motivation.

- 1) The difference between 'action research' and 'exploratory practice; teacher's research; Ana Ines presentation; the discussions conducted by Dick, Anne and Donald.

- 2) Action research starts from a problematic issue while exploratory practice works with puzzles. AR wants to find solutions and to provoke social changes. EP on the other hand, desires to understand the puzzle; we may get to a solution or not, because this is not the most important. EP focuses on quality of life, what can lead to change or not.
 - 3) Keep working with EP and its principles.
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- 1) That teacher research is quietly advancing.
 - 2) The extent to which learners are involved in the research processes presented on the posters. This came as a pleasant surprise because it's been missing so far.
 - 3) Help my colleagues engage with teacher research.
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PCE Event

Highlights of the day:

- 1a) To be able to address different perspectives to teacher research in an agreeable and productive way.
- 1b) Gain deeper understandings of the need to share and/ or make public teacher research through various modes/ genres.
- 1c) Tell the difficulties of sharing EP w/ others who are not as familiar w/ the ideas and to discuss EP issues w/ researchers who share deep ethical concerns.

2) To discuss important teacher research issues.

3) Share EP around the world!

Highlights:

- Bushra's poster presentation.
- Comments on posters and action research.

Learnings:

- How different interpretation ideas of what a poster is.
- How creative people can be.
- The importance of action research in English – Teacher education.

Q's the head of the English – Teacher program. I'll ask my colleagues to think of action research.

1) Highlight – engaging with multiple perspectives.

2) Learned – There is a real desire to develop teachers voices with a practical and philosophical awareness that there are choices based on values, stages of teacher development. There are many valid experiences that are somewhat tangential and overlapping, sharing in community helps us recognise the commonalities and diversity.

3) Continue to work on the dialoguing...

- 1) Highlights: New ideas on posters.
- 2) Learned: Alternatives of assessing combined with student involvement in their learning process.
- 3) Where from here? I'm encouraged to go and experiment again/more in my classes and find ways of sharing any insights.

1) Fantastic range of posters – very interesting to see all the different possibilities for putting a poster together and really good to be part of such an engaged and enthusiastic group of teachers.

2) Importance of setting small goals and not seeing research as something that is enormous, lengthy and requiring a great deal of preparation (i.e. with Lit Rev, setting up appropriate methodology etc.) But, documentation is clearly essential.

3) It would be great to have short written accounts of everyone's posters and research (with pictures if possible!) – it would be a really useful resource and an encouragement to carry something forward in our own institutions. Maybe some kind of networking afterwards?