

Chapter 22

Making Educator Professional Development More Accessible and Inclusive With Mobile Teacher: A Global Community of Practice Founded in Appreciative Inquiry

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ABSTRACT

This chapter describes how curious and reflective TESOL educators can engage in ongoing appreciative inquiry by participating in a unique global community of practice facilitated through an app called Mobile Teacher that also works offline. With the aim of recognizing and sharing the expertise of non-native English speaker TESOL educators who are primarily BIPOC and women working in the majority world, teachers are encouraged to watch short videos of colleagues' effective teaching practices, try out the practices with their students, and in turn share videos describing or demonstrating their own proven techniques. Through a case study of using Mobile Teacher with teachers in Ecuador, the author provides a self and group reflection guide based on the 4D appreciative inquiry framework to establish a definition and examples of effective teaching practice, and a video script template to complete in preparation for recording and sharing an effective teaching practice.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the inquiry aspect of critical practice in TESOL as it relates to supporting curious and reflective TESOL educators to engage in ongoing inquiry to ensure their instruction is evidence based and culturally sustaining. In this case, teachers are curious about how colleagues worldwide teach

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effectively and, through Mobile Teacher's community of practice or COP (see Terms and Definitions) rooted in social constructivism and reinforcing their own identities (Wenger, 1998; Vygotsky, 1978), they access and watch videos of their colleagues' teaching tips and techniques, then replicate them with their own students. Teachers in the Mobile Teacher COP work in the majority world (see Terms and Definitions) and primarily are individuals who identify as BIPOC (see Terms and Definitions) and as non-native English speaker teachers. Following critical language pedagogy (Freire, 1967, 2004; Godley & Reaser, 2018), the Mobile Teacher app provides them with a unique platform that works offline without Internet to better democratize access to more inclusive, representative, and localized professional development content via their own phones. Additionally, educators are reflective because they create evidence-based working definitions (see Key Terms and Definitions) of what it means for a teaching practice to be effective and use an appreciative inquiry approach (Moore, 2020) that aligns to Kumaravadivelu's (2012) KARDS model for language teacher education for a global society to identify their own localized, culturally sustaining effective practices to share via Mobile Teacher. The author who created Mobile Teacher presents field research with English teachers in Ecuador, and provides a resulting protocol for how TESOL educators can use Mobile Teacher as a COP with the aim to engage in continuous cycles of reflection, appreciative inquiry, and analysis in order to enhance the impact of their own instruction on student learning. The TESOL educator is invited to participate in a self and group guided reflection exercise (see Table 1), follow a template for scripting their own teaching tip video (see Table 2), and post a video to Mobile Teacher's community. Finally, five implications on TESOL praxis of scaling Mobile Teacher are presented for pre- and in-service teachers, rapid training for volunteer organizations, other subjects, and use outside the majority world.

CONCEPT

Mobile Teacher provides a global COP of passionate educators where all teachers can share and leverage best teaching practices to provide quality education to learners without barriers. They do this by submitting short video teaching tips and techniques to the Mobile Teacher app, watching videos submitted by colleagues, and implementing those ideas in their own classrooms with their students. They watch, teach, and share. Mobile Teacher's mission stems from a vision for the future, picturing an inspirational, ideal world: A world where all students benefit from a quality education. This vision is rooted in its three core values, highlighting the strength of teachers globally, the importance of contextualization, and the belief in the possibility of never letting technological barriers limit opportunity.

To this end, Mobile Teacher believes (1) Teachers know best: they can provide context-specific, local best practices and should be recognized for this expertise, (2) Access is a fundamental right: available existing technology can be leveraged to overcome the digital divide and democratize opportunity; (3) There is power in community: learning from each other highlights the importance and values of sharing as one world. To accomplish this, Mobile Teacher uniquely provides a community platform of teachers, curated teacher-generated video tutorials tailored to local context, and offline accessibility. In fact, Mobile Teacher is the only app that works without Internet for teachers in the majority world to share videos of their effective teaching practices (see Terms and Definitions). For participating majority world teachers who are primarily BIPOC, women, and non-native English speakers, Mobile Teacher provides an opportunity to see someone who looks like them, teaching in a context like their own, and recognize that expertise. For example, if an educator teaches Quechua and English to a bilingual class of 100 students

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