

ONLINE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL TEACHER DEVELOPMENT(PTD): A TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE AND EXPERIENCE



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INTRODUCTION

Professional Teacher development (PTD) can mean different things to individual teachers and take various forms, formally and informally. There is a shift of Teacher development programmes towards a reflective and co-learning approach (Laurillard, 2016) highlighting the importance of learning through connecting with educators - exchanging ideas, sharing resources and **teaching practices**, peer reviewing work, collaborating).

"When professional development opportunities [start] with teachers' practice, [it] invites teachers into the conversation and opens them up to critique, to learning, and to expanding their repertoire" (Lieberman & Mace, 2010, p 86)

Focus of my presentation:

- My perspective of PTD and my learning experience of joining online networks and communities and taking online courses which involve co-learning and collaboration with educators from all around the world.

I illustrate this with examples of :

a) Joining online communities, negotiating and launching online and other projects between my classes and classes abroad via the **Global ePals community**.

b) taking online courses, i.e. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and webinars which facilitate a sense of community through synchronous and asynchronous communication such as live online sessions, online chats, discussion forums to name but a few.

My perspective of **Teacher Development** is reflected in the following quotes:

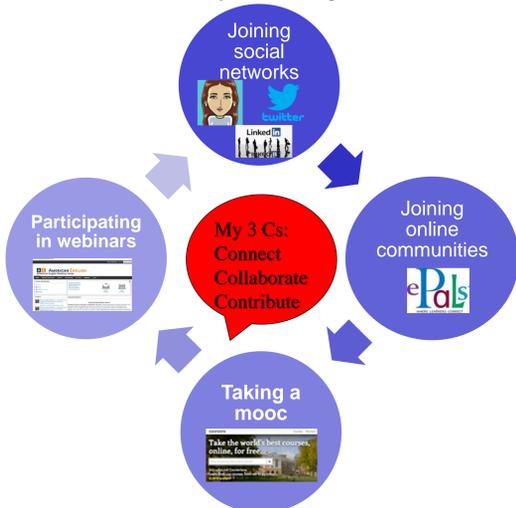
"You can train me and you can educate me, but you can't develop me. I develop"

"An ongoing process that promotes professional growth" (Darsh John, 2007)

"The best route out of teacher burnout is to re-engage with teacher development activities" (Harmer, 2012:172).

MAIN TEXT AND MATERIALS

Teacher development: Doing with others



Connecting with educators via **Twitter, Linked in**: build a community, comment, seek and give advice, share useful links, materials, exchange ideas



Joining online communities to connect with educators around the world: connecting classes for online projects eg **ePals community**



MAIN TEXT AND MATERIALS

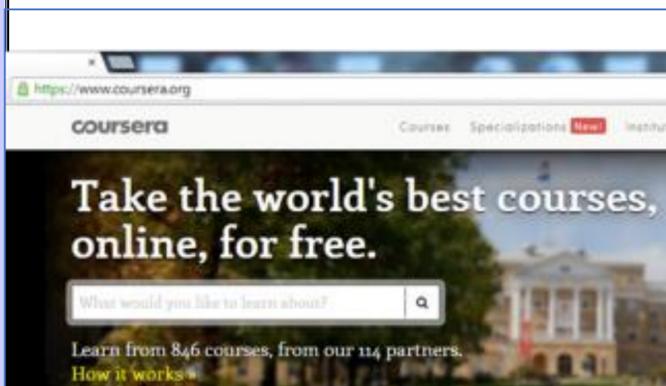
Projects completed:

- "The Way We Are"
- Culture Box exchange
- Traditional games around the world
- Post Card exchange

All project work is hosted at:

www.connectwithictandmedia.pbworks.com

TAKING A MOOC eg Coursera course



My courses:

Coaching teachers: Promoting changes that stick (free):

5 week course

Assessment:

- readings, watching videos, a quiz per week and final quiz on videos and readings, discussion forum posts, peer reviewed assignment

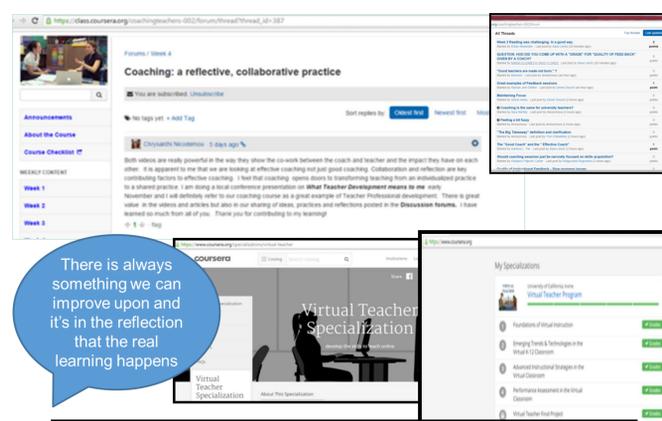
Virtual Teacher Specialization (low cost):

4 courses of 5 weeks each & a final Capstone project

Assessment:

- video viewing, readings, discussion forum posts, quizzes, peer reviewed assignment per course (completing the assignment and reviewing at least 3 other students' assignments)

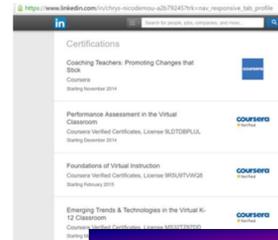
Examples of MOOC work



Reply by Chrys Nicodemou on February 17, 2016 at 12:34pm

Well, virtual /online teaching and learning is a great challenge for both students and teachers. One of the most difficult things to have in an online environment is to build community as they students and teacher don't have physical contact, thus, it is imperative that students connect with others via sharing work, peer assessment/feedback, doing projects collaboratively. All 4 statements are important but in order to strengthen participation and engagement, I strongly feel that No 4 "Learners are able to see and comment on each other's work". I haven't done online teaching but I have taken online courses, one of the greatest being the Coursera org "Virtual Teacher Specialization". I have designed online lessons and saw how LMS systems work. I had to find ways to build interaction/student participation; I created discussion forums, blogs, collaborative projects. All that experience made me realize that in our ordinary classrooms, we, teachers, have the great advantage to know our students and we should make the most of this in terms of maximizing the learning and using multiple assessment methods so as to be fair and give our students equal opportunities for learning.

Verification codes of each course certificate provided in my **Linked in**



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Participating in webinars eg *American English Webinar series*



Each course comprises **6 webinars** (one every fortnight for the set period) and includes:

- Forums:** Pre-webinar questions and post webinar discussion

- Pre-readings and resources**

eg TED talks google doc at

<https://spreadsheets.google.com/pub?key=pjGIYH-8AK8fDa6o2bYIXg>

- Participation in Synchronous presentations – **Courses 13, 14, 15 ...**

Hosted at: americanenglishwebinars.com

RESULTS

- Learning from connecting online with educators:** expansion of my notion of who my colleagues are, sharing practices/materials and/resources, doing joint projects, giving and receiving feedback and reflecting on the work.

- Further development of my ICT skills**, mainly due to needs which have risen naturally in circumstances such as staying connected with others and performing various tasks: providing instruction and guidance to my students on using email accounts in the ePals community for the email exchange projects, having access to all students' email exchange, using web2.0 (wikis, blogs, glogs, video software etc)

- Increased knowledge of the pedagogy of using online tools and social networks** for student learning and the benefits but also challenges of full online learning or blended learning. My MOOCs have advanced me in:

- designing a fully or blended online course, unit, balanced assessment (various methods - quizzes, assignment, forum posts, reviewing assignment(s) opting for a fair distribution of points)
- seeing the importance and effectiveness of peer reviewed work using a rubric and writing comments, opportunity to retake quizzes up to three times, all of which lead to student involvement in their own assessment and Assessment As learning (AsL)

- Forum discussions in MOOCs and webinars** have contributed immensely to my learning via engaging in conversations with educators on good coaching and teaching practices, coming across other perspectives on specific educational issues and teaching practices, learning about new tools that assist learning, visiting websites and blogs

- I am grateful to all those educators who generously share their teaching practice, resources etc and provide good examples to follow. It is through seeing how other teachers share their work online that I have made my practice "Public" via uploading it and posting it on wikis, blogs, my website but also some of which is on the ePals community and our project partners' websites, blogs etc.

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