María Paola Sviatschi **(Polly Argentina)**

[2:12] I work directly for the British Council who works for Plan Ceibal

SM: How long have you been involved in this project?

[4:20] I am the local coordinator. I manage a team of 25 teachers. We have 5 classrooms, equipments and have been working for the project since 2013 which is when the pilot was coming to an end.

[5:40] the primary school project is divided in level 1,2 & 3. We teach 4th, 5th and 6th graders. The project started in level 1 and then we started piloting level 2 and 3

SM: so, if you got 5 classrooms, how many teachers are you working with?

[6:26] we are 25 managing 150 classes per week

[6:40] I manage the team, make sure if all classes are delivered on time.

SM: are you in charge of training the teachers?

[8:21] we have combined trainings- some are delivered by Ceibal and some by the British Council. Ceibal trains on the project in general and the BC manages the quality of the courses. I train my staff on delivering lessons different from the Philippines or Buenos Aires.

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1    IE:  we have many many classes which we need to adapt
2         because there are some rural schools in the
3         project. there are multigrade schools. so
4         basically the project provides a sample lesson plan
5         for each class in each level but many times we need
6         to adapt that to the reality of the classroom and
7         the location of the town that we are teaching.
8    IV:  are you responsible for the training of the
9         teachers the new teachers when they you got 25
10        teachers so presumably some of those are new every
11        year.
12   IE:  exactly.
13   IV:  do you do the training
14   IE:  we have been organising this with ceibal and
15        british council and now we have like combined
16        trainings. some of them are delivered by ceibal
17        and some of them are delivered by the british
18        council. ceibal mainly delivers the courses that
19        has to do with the project in general and then
20        british council manages the courses that has to do
21        with the quality management and the topics that we
22        face right. what i do is to train my staff in
23        cordoba to deal with this reality of being
24        delivering a remote lesson from cordoba which is
25        different than from the philippines or from buenos
26        aires. we have like a impronta from the institute
27        right
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SM: Why is it different to deliver lessons if you are using similar equipment?

[9:31] cultural difference. There is a coordination between the remote teacher and classroom teachers. This team work was a success to the project. It makes the project unique. The c. room teachers don't know English so they are learning with the students. So the coordination b/n them and the remote teacher is key.

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31        IE:  the cultural issue is really different because
32        we are closer to uruguay but its not our country
33        so we have cultural differences. not the language
34        we share the language but we are supposed to be
35        using english most of the times. and then we have
36        a coordination with the classroom teachers to
37        project the week okay the week work because we
38        deliver what is called class a and the classroom
39        teachers deliver two classes during the weeks that
40        are called classes b and c. and the remote teacher
41        has to coordinate that work with the classroom
42        teacher. and that is what
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SM: what do you think have the new teachers find difficult about this way of teaching?

[11:30] I think the video conference is the hardest part.

[12:35] to find out how to do the collaborative work, I started working with a psychologist 2 years ago since we didn't know how to manage that. We found out respect and tolerance to be very crucial.

[13:51] the schools are far away from cities under difficult circumstances. The teacher lives in the school with them so they are very lonely and they enjoy having an adult to talk to.

[15:28] communication is key. We need to be connected with the c. room teacher

[16:14] the teachers use Spanish during their communication in advance to classes. That why I think it is different in the Philippines.

[17:18] the classroom teachers feel at ease when they can share something with the remote teacher.

SM: how do you use videos in trainings? Do you have recordings?

[18:30] I do have some recordings. The best thing we do is let teachers observe classes in action. They have the chance to talk to experienced remote teacher and we talk about the observation.

[19:28] we give training on the use of remote control and equipment. The training is mostly observation of classes.

[20:14] I record coordination sessions. But not things have changed. Teachers prefer to do the coordination through what's up now. We use video conference. Teachers stay after class, or get together at lunch time.

SM: Are the recordings you have in the old style? You haven't got recordings of the what's up or a screen capture of that?

[21:25] No, I have samples of screen shots. Sometimes they send audios to me when they have problems asking for advice. It is not easy to get the recordings of the what's up.

SM: tell me a little bit about the research that you have done with the psychologist you mentioned earlier.

[22:19] I was curious to find out the skills a remote teacher needs to have in this position. I am in charge of hiring people for my team and I started to find it very difficult. At first, I considered teachers teaching experience, proficiency in English and technology friendliness but then we needed more skills that teachers didn't have since it is a very specific job. So, we started creating trainings for those lacks. That's why we hired this organizational psychologist to work particularly in my team.

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48    IE:   i was very curious and we sort of think that it
49          was really necessary to think about the skills that
50          a remote teacher needed to have for this position
51          because im in charge of hiring the people for my
52          team and i started to find it really difficult.
53          because at the beginning of course i said i want a
54          teacher who is really proficient in english and
55          has experience in teaching primary school students
56          and a teacher who likes technology of course to be
57          able to work with these video conference equipment.
58          but then at the time we needed more skills in this
59          teacher and we needed skills that teachers didnt
60          have because this is a very specific job. so we
61          started creating trainings for those lacks lets
62          say. we sort of did that with ceibal and british
63          council (xxxx) we have a lot of (xxxx) yes
64          coordinators and quality managers and the team has
65          expanded in ceibal and in british council to have
66          different quality managers and different
67          assistants to the project. as the project grew we
68          needed more people and more we thought more about
69          all the areas. and this is what now we started i
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[24:48] for this project team work is important.

[25:35] we don't have English in primary school. It is not compulsory. So, I don't have people who teach English in state schools. so, I needed to train these teachers to be part of the project.

SM: have you published anything about that research?

[26:52] No, we started last year. There was a conference organised by Ceibal. We presented a paper there.

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69          all the areas. and this is what now we started i
70          mean last year there was a conference organised by
71          ceibal in uruguay that was called encuentro. it
72          was just a gettogether and we presented a paper
73          with this psychologist. we went to the encuentro
74          and it was really nice to share this with
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75          colleagues. they found that this role that the
76          psychologist had in our (xxxx) and they havent
77          thought about that before. it was something really
78          interesting to share with the rest of the
79          institutes in the project.
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[34:43] we have a platform called (??) which is like Moodle have similar interface with Facebook. This year they have added an app on this platform. It's a microphone and you can share recordings with students. We use this as a means of communication with schools when classes are cancelled or when the schools don't have the video conferencing equipment ready to start. The teachers can record themselves to greet students or send them homework.

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80          IV:  great okay. just finally is there something
81               that we havent talked about connected with video
82               or the teacher education side of things that might
83               be interesting for me
84     IE:  we have like a i dont know if you are familiar with
85               the platform that we use that is called crea2. its
86               similar to moodle platform. this year they have
87               added an app to the platform that is like a
88               microphone that it gives us the possibility the
89               interface of the platform is very similar to
90               facebook. but there is one app in the wall lets
91               say that its a microphone and you can share
92               recordings with the students. we have been starting
93               to use that because sometimes when a class is
94               cancelled for some technical issue or something we
95               have at the beginning of the year some schools that
96               didnt have the video conference equipment ready to
97               start. so we used that as a means of communication.
98               its not in real time because youll record yourself
99               but the teachers could record themselves to greet
100              the students to send them homework and they can
101              see you because
102    IV:  yes.
103    IE:  and its audio and (xxxx)
104    IV:  audio and image so its something
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SM: sounds like you are using this to compensate technical difficulties. Are you thinking about using it as an additional tool?

[30:20] the idea was that. I am also part of Ceibal project for secondary school. They record conversation classes and they are delivered by a native speaker which helps the children to communicate in English. So, the written homework was not ideal for conversation class, so we use the app as a means of communication with the children. We started using this in Primary as well. This helps with many things and mostly it helps with shy students. The interaction is humanized

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105    IE:  project for secondary school in which i mean they
106              are called conversation classes and they are
107              delivered by a native speaker. and the outcome from
108              that or those classes is for the children to be
109              able to communicate in english. so the written
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110        homework was not the ideal thing for a conversation
111        class so we used that app in (xxxx) in secondary
112        school as a means of communication with the
113        children. but we started using in primary as well
114        because its nice. they do have their laptops so
115        they can do it (xxxx). if they dont have a laptop
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