

Teresa MacKinnon Interview Summary

[00:41] (*Background*) In language education teacher in secondary for 15 years and HE for 18 years. Initial teacher training, taught, became head of French in secondary, then head of languages, later moved to business language trainer, then officer organising business language training, more recently qualified as a professional learning technologist under CMALT scheme (NB early adopter as a teacher). Current role: embedding and supporting effective use of technologies in language teaching.

[2:00] (*Priorities and beliefs*) Always looking for opportunities to increase user agency, whether teacher or learner; creativity and video very useful for this. Strategic priorities: sustainability of resources, avoiding teacher burnout, and continued learning. Video is evolving very quickly, so support required to keep up with demanding pace of technological change. Important: return of investment of time, re-usability of resources, open standards, so not tied to specific platforms/ways of doing things. Underlying belief that our intellectual property is important, so also looking at licensing and things like Creative Commons.

1 TM: and you know try to avoid teacher burnout. and
2 try to ensure that people actually spent their
3 time as usefully as possible. and also continued
4 learning. and i think video and engagement in video
5 particularly as video itself digital video is
6 evolving so quickly at the moment. it does require
7 support. you know multiple people helping you.
8 so many things are changing and the pace of
9 technological change is particularly demanding.
10 and sometimes can just be too much. and can mean
11 that some of these sort of creative activities go
12 by the wayside. so and particularly i think thats
13 particularly important that we pay attention to
14 the sustainability of what we do and the impact
15 that it has. the return on our investment if you
16 like in terms of our time. the reusability of what
17 we create. so im particularly interested from a as
18 a learning technologist in the aspect of open
19 standards in video. so that we dont get tied into
20 specific platforms or particular ways of doing
21 things. and i suppose that underlying all of that
22 is a belief that actually it is our intellectual
23 property is important. so thats also got me
24 looking very closely at things like creative
25 commons licensing and looking at licensing
26 generally as an aspect to take into account when
27 were creating and sharing video.

[04:25] Use of video in professional or personal context has enabled TMK to encounter lots of barriers that have made her think about underlying technologies and changed ways of working – video is particularly complex, zips up a lot of video and audio information that can make making video technically demanding. Big revolution: success of platforms such as YouTube, which make it very easy to make

and upload video. Educators have seen that they are very useful, even if rough and ready: ways to allow people to see very quickly what's going on and engage in different contexts, whether social justice, or e.g. life hacks (of interest to learners learning that language).

28 TH: really interesting. very important. okay. so can
29 you cast your mind back to any particular videos
30 that either you made or that you used that you
31 think were helpful in your own development? or have
32 helped develop other teachers?
33 TM: yes. i think for me use of video either in a
34 personal or a professional context has enabled me
35 to encounter lots and lots of little barriers that
36 have made me think more deeply about the underlying
37 technologies. and perhaps change ways of working.
38 video is particularly complex. video sort of zips
39 up a lot of information. so visual information
40 audio information that has to be then reencoded
41 when its played back. and that can make making
42 video quite technically demanding. i think one of
43 the big sort of revolutions that weve seen in
44 recent years of video is the success of platforms
45 like youtube. where its actually become very quick
46 and easy to make videos on your phone and upload
47 and share them. and i guess as educators we would
48 perhaps think well you know just how useful are
49 these things? but what weve seen is that they are
50 extremely useful even if theyre rough and ready.
51 they really provide ways for people to very quickly
52 see whats going on in different places. and to
53 engage in all sorts of different contexts.

[06:23] TMK has her own YouTube and Vimeo channels. First YouTube was personal, for family, to share extracts of life – private. Once TMK found how useful and easy it was, started WarwickLanguage YouTube channel to upload and share tutorials, e.g. co-workers asking how to do things. Engaging and useful, quicker to make a screencast and share than take someone through a process, also can be revisited later and shared with someone else. Same sort of idea with Vimeo, though these tend to be more conceptual than factual.

[08:15] Lots of experimentation with software/platform etc., things have had to change, as infrastructure of the web has changed - some software no longer exists. Key tool: screen capture – of late has used [Kaltura CaptureSpace](#). (TH: Why prefer this over others?) Used many; CaptureSpace was video management software used in in Language Centre at the time as part of Languages @Warwick VLE, so readily accessible, but also, as a company, supportive of open standards, so easy to export the files and know that they will play and encoding etc. taken care of at the back end. Waste of time converting – resources sometimes locked away in a format you cannot access, so this is also future proofing. Also in hardware prefers readily available – not Mac user, prefers Android, because cheaper, easier and more accessible – this is high on her checklist and relates to important values.

[11:35] (*Re what do trainees do and ethical issues*) Uses a mixture of self-made video and teaching activities, e.g. online intercultural exchange students create videos that are exchanged e.g. between French and English classrooms. Ensuring element of agency for the learner and individual engagement. Was involved in Video for All project, where there were examples of individuals who did not want to be on video (TMK also not keen) - discusses alternative practices included in the project, e.g. voicing actors, puppets, Sim.

54 making sure that theres an element of agency
55 that goes right down to the learner and
56 engages people individually. i was involved in
57 the video for all project. so that was a european
58 project creating examples of teaching practice
59 with video. and some of the practices there when
60 we cross when we added metadata to them to make
61 them findable included examples of where perhaps
62 the individuals didnt want to be on the video.
63 and we felt that was very important. i personally
64 dont im not very keen on being recorded or
65 photographed or being on video. so giving examples
66 of things like making perhaps voicing actors. Or
67 making puppets and using those in video. using sim
68 so using second life or other simulated platforms
69 as the actors if you like to create video as well.
70 so theres a whole area of activity in computer
71 assisted language learning that looks at machinima
72 and the creation of video within simulated
73 environments. so weve included that as one of
74 the practices that we demonstrate. its about
75 choices i think really isnt it? people finding
76 things that work within their classroom and within
77 the environment that they have available.
78 without investing a certain amount of money. then
79 the barriers to access get higher. and i think we
80 have to keep an eye on that. weve also seen in the
81 name of government security demands to close down
82 aspects of the internet. and those sort of demands
83 are very difficult to resist because people do feel
84 anxious about around security issues. but i think
85 its very important that we dont over emphasise the
86 very upsetting video content that sometimes is
87 uploaded. and by terrorist groups or groups that
88 we really would rather not have available. that we
89 dont let those things actually prevent us get on
90 with our normal day to day lives. they are an
91 aspect of life unfortunately. and we have to
92 seriously question whether governments or
93 politicians should have the right to make decisions
94 as to who can say or do what on the internet.
95
96 TH: its tricky isnt it? censorship.
97 TM: its very difficult.

[14:07] (*re feedback and evaluation*) Does a lot of online webinars, which are interactive. Likes to conceptualise these as co-development rather than teacher training – open channels of feedback and useful dialogue (tries to work in the same way face-to-face). Webinars for language teaching and for open education (area of particular interest to TMK) all captured and available either through links within websites or through social sharing, using hashtags, so all open, contributory and participatory – very important.

[16:26] Most of the recent webinars have used [Blackboard Collaborate](#) as platform, ultra version and classic version for open education. Captures all the interaction, including text chat and emoticons etc. (NB settings at the back enable this.)

[17:35] (*What would you like to do, in an ideal world?*) Reality check needed with any complex technology – costs money, requires research budget, video files are big, require processing and converting. All this can be distracting. In an ideal world, you'd be able to afford the best of the best – but sometimes not necessary. We're fortunate - a full range of rapidly developing tools for video available. Recently TMK has been experimenting with free open access tool called [Lumen5](#) - powered by artificial intelligence, will turn a link to a blog post into video made of series of images using the text. Very quick, very easy to use, exports file so nothing locked into system, don't have to surrender lots of data. Uses creative commons images, or allows you to upload your own. Very visually appealing 2-3 minute topic introductions, etc. Lots you can do with free technology now. Need to think about quality, re-use, play back on different machines, how it renders. Kaltura have done good work on video quizzing, where you can upload a video and interrupt it with questions to answer and then be directed to next part. A lot already, many more things coming all the time.

[20:35] TMK has found a very useful European community of practice, Media in Learning, based in Brussels, which runs some excellent webinars. Things moving very quickly, so having a community bringing together practitioners, learning technologists, tech specialists is really helpful, as can be challenging. Spending a lot of time on creating something that is not used or not very satisfactory can put people off.

[21:44] Happy to share examples – pretty much everything TMK does is shared openly. Mentions Manchester Met organisation Film in Language Teaching Association ([FILTA](#)), which brings together international community of language educators around film – i.e. film other than self-created media. An interesting area of practice for TMK – has co-authored (with Sarah Pasfield-Neofitou from Monash University) a paper on video policy, particularly around copyright. Discusses and voices concerns re future net neutrality and preservation of democratic, free, open Internet – a space for creativity and sharing.

[25:10] Would always come back to the idea that the focus needs to be on the learner, rather than getting hung up on shiny tech, focus on impact on learning. (TH:

Most impact from your webinars?) A human thing – connections with people across borders.

98 TH: its a big area. but i think thats great for what
99 were looking at today. thats fine. are there any
100 other anything else that you think is pertinent
101 to video language teaching education?
102 TM: i think the one thing i would do is come back to
103 is that the focus needs to be on the learning.
104 so we can get very hung up on the technology the
105 tools the fancy things. we have to look out for
106 the sort of shiny shiny that sort of attracts us
107 as magpies. and make sure that were actually
108 getting a great impact on learning in terms of what
109 were doing. make sure that that is understood. that
110 the first priority is that learning is coming out
111 of this.
112 TH: and putting you on the spot a little bit but maybe
113 can you think of what do you think has been had
114 the most impact out of the webinars or the screen
115 casting that youve done? you know?
116 TM: i think for me its a very human thing funnily
117 enough. it seems silly because obviously it is
118 all technological. but the people that we connect
119 with and they are often people at great distance.
120 we serendipitously make relationships form
121 relationships from those conversations. and i
122 think you now coming back to my very early days
123 in teaching the things that mattered most were the
124 people that you had those conversations with. they
125 were the people that helped you on the next step
126 of your understanding of your learning and your
127 professional development. so being able to make
128 those connections across borders and literally
129 sort of at great distance. so people ive
130 collaborated with are on the other side of the
131 world. but there are great advantages in writing
132 with somebody whos on the totally opposite time
133 frame to yourself. in that you get things written
134 quite quickly because it carries on overnight.
135 theres kind of the most important thing that you
136 can do with the technology is to connect to people.
137 and have real conversations and learn from and with
138 them.