

Vanessa Komiliades Interview Summary (SM)

SM outlines project.

[01:55] More recent background: 4 years in Burma with British Council EfECT, now project director. Interesting time politically in Myanmar, but also huge leaps and bounds in technology. Project started in 2014, co-funded with DFID, working closely with ministry of education in Burma, following request from former prime minister. Work in all 23 education colleges and two universities of education, which are responsible for pre service training for the entire population of basic education primary schoolteachers. Started with 50 teacher trainers from British Council and VSO, working with teacher educators in colleges. Originally started on English language, then with range of subjects. Basic theory and then practice, trying to make classes a bit more interactive within constraints of large classes and low resources, working on planning with learning outcomes and moving away from teacher-centred delivery. Now reaching the end of this phase of the project.

[09:08] SM: Any sharing of materials? VK: material designed by BC/VSO used amongst all teacher educators; in terms of smaller scale – lesson plans, resources – more and more shared. Now 95% teacher educators have a smartphone and are using WhatsApp and Viva to share various materials. Huge change seen, as connectivity has dramatically changed. Happened organically.

1 VK: but the material that I guess they receive input
2 and training on from our british council and vso
3 trainers thats material that we designed this
4 foundation and teaching course. that was used
5 amongst all of the teacher educators. in terms
6 of on a smaller scale in their own lesson
7 planning and the various teaching aids and
8 resources that theyve created. more and more so
9 now. if we go back to three years ago when we
10 started there was barely even mobile phone signal
11 in a lot of the locations were working in whereas
12 now id say 95% of teacher educators do have a
13 smartphone and theyre using things like whatsapp
14 and viber to share various materials that theyve
15 made share lesson plans amongst their communities
16 in their region or within their education
17 colleges as well. its been quite a huge change
18 that weve seen and quite a huge change in what
19 weve been able to introduce and do as well as
20 connectivity has dramatically changed in a very
21 short period of time.

22 SM: so just in really simple terms theres been a lot
23 of change just in terms of the technology and
24 them having smartphones but also in them
25 sharing ideas or sharing materials or its just
26 exchanging reflections on whatsapp and viber and
27 things like that.

28 VK: yes and thats very much happened organically
29 rather than being a part of the designated
30 programme because obviously back at the beginning
31 when we were writing the project aims that

ViLTE Resource

32 wouldnt have been possible. thats happened
33 organically amongst the teacher educators
34 themselves creating these communities and also
35 our trainers making suggestions that theyve had
36 as more and more of the teacher educators have
37 had access to the internet and access to
38 technology to be able to share other things.

[11:36] Very little of original BC/VSO course had video content. Sent out some CD ROMS for trainers to use but couldn't rely on connectivity/infrastructure when they were designing materials. Then in second year started to see potential and commissioned videos of their own, filming teacher educators demonstrating techniques they had learned on EfECT and demonstrating that they could work in the context, so helping to overcome resistance. Then built these more into the course, adding worksheets etc.

39 SM: turning more specifically to video if the
40 original course that you designed the bcvso
41 generic course how much was video a part of that.
42 VK: very little to be honest. we had a couple of the
43 units referenced. we were able to send out on
44 cd-roms for our trainers to use some video some
45 motivating learning and various other resources
46 but we really couldnt rely on that back at the
47 beginning when we were designing the material.
48 connectivity issues also just basic
49 infrastructure like having electricity in the
50 colleges has improved considerably in recent
51 years as well. then we started to see potential
52 for it more and into the second year of the
53 project we actually commissioned some of our own
54 videos. we filmed teacher educators in their
55 classes demonstrating the techniques that theyd
56 been learning on effect and demonstrating that
57 they could work. and a lot of the resistance to
58 try new things is often teacher educators saying
59 oh but we cant do that with a class of 60
60 trainees or we cant do that without the
61 resources. we actually videoed teacher educators
62 that were able to use these techniques and these
63 methods in large classes to prove to other
64 teachers and other educators that it is possible
65 that there are ways of adapting things to the
66 context. i think that was the first real use of
67 video that we had when we commissioned these
68 videos ourselves and then built them into later
69 stages of the course where its worked as it
70 went along with them and things like that.

[13:17] Changed again in third year. Initially trainers delivered workshops to teacher educators, then teacher educators wanted to use the videos as material to use with their own teachers. Now teacher educators with smartphones have started using

video as part of reflective cycle – filming themselves teaching and then reflecting. Video has more impact on teacher training.

[15:19] Don't keep bank of videos – purely for teacher educators themselves. Teacher educators will record and watch with a small group or with their trainer, or by themselves and answer some reflective questions. At the moment still ad hoc. VK believes that for future project they would definitely build it in and it would become more systematic.

[17:12] BC/VSO videos edited professionally, 7-10 minutes long and matched with 8 modules of foundation and teaching course (e.g. questioning, using pair and group work, staging). Don't show full lesson, just parts where techniques used, with short interview clips with the teacher educators about why/where/how they used it. Not freely available on internet but can find a way to send them.

72 SM: can you tell me a little bit about those videos
73 about how long they are are they edited.
74 VK: yes theyre edited. it was a professional team
75 that came over to make the series. theyre fairly
76 short clips. id say theyre probably seven to ten
77 minutes individual and they match with our
78 foundation in teaching course covers eight
79 modules of six units. they match with each of
80 those modules eg on questioning on using pair
81 work and groupwork on various different on
82 looking at staging of lesson planning. and they
83 dont show the full lesson theyre edited they show
84 parts of the teacher educators lesson where
85 theyve been implementing various techniques that
86 we introduce in the course and thats edited with
87 also short interview clips of the teacher
88 educators talking through either what they were
89 doing at that point in the classroom or why they
90 were doing it or how they adapted things to work
91 with their group of students or the context that
92 they were in in their college. its quite
93 difficult to upload the videos and things. theyre
94 not freely available on the internet but im sure
95 we could find a way that I could send you at
96 least one or two of them if you wanted to take a
97 look.

[19:10] Also visually quite nice to watch. Main reason to commission them was to actually see Myanmar teachers - peers - using newly introduced teaching methods and this working. Rationale provided for this very specific context (rather than international materials); helped with engagement. Value of local teachers as role models now more recognised. English language proficiency in Myanmar is generally very low and some videos filmed in Myanmar language (so another value). Varies – some done mainly in English, others mainly in Myanmar. Have started to subtitle them both ways.

ViLTE Resource

98 SM: it would be great to have a look at. im quite
99 interested in that mix of how when you do get a
100 professional team in for this kind of big project
101 what it is that youve got eight modules that are
102 about seven to ten minutes but youre also saying
103 that its important to have a few talking heads
104 and context around those sorts of classroom
105 incidents or those examples of good practice.
106 VK: yes and I think theyre visually quite nice
107 to watch as well as obviously the pedagogy behind
108 them and the training value.

[23:33] Did look for guidance as to how to make them. Initially the motivation to make them was probably more promotional; as they started to put together storyboards and talking to teacher educators and when they got a professional crew in from Hong Kong, their portfolio included fantastic educational videos – they weer inspired by what they'd seen the crew had been able to produce.

110 VK: we did look for guidance and to be honest i think
111 what they evolved into isnt necessarily what we
112 started. i think initially to be completely
113 honest probably the aim of making them was more
114 promotional for the project and then as
115 SM: oh interesting.
116 VK: we started along the process (xxxx).
117 SM: how did that happen. at what did something
118 promotional (xxxx).
119 VK: (xxxx) just purely (xxxx).
120 SM: I think we broke up a little bit there. can you
121 just say again how did it shift from a more
122 promotional view of video to realising that hey
123 there could be some value in actually producing
124 eight modules worth of video content here.
125 VK: I think as we started to put together almost like
126 storyboards into the videos and trying to work
127 out actually what we were going to show in them
128 talking to the teacher educators finding the
129 eight teacher educators that we wanted to film.
130 and then I think we were very lucky because we
131 put it out to tender and we actually got a film
132 crew in from hong kong and some of the material
133 from their portfolio that they showed us had been
134 fantastic. there were a couple of fantastic
135 educational videos that theyd made about
136 developing critical thinking skills in the
137 classroom eg. i think it was inspired by what wed
138 seen and they were able to produce as well.

[25:22] Feedback: people like local context, seeing things are possible.

139 SM: what sort of feedback have you had on these
140 videos from teachers if you could give me a
141 couple of examples of specific things that people
142 like.

143 VK: i think definitely everything we were saying
144 about it the local context seeing our teachers in
145 an education college in a context that they could
146 very much recognise and relate to. and just
147 really seeing that things are possible i think it
148 really helped a lot of the teachers that perhaps
149 had done the input but when it came to practice
150 were a little bit nervous had a bit of
151 trepidation about actually trying something that
152 they saw to be quite new or quite different. they
153 were quite worried about how learners would
154 respond to that as well as more logistical things
155 about how it might work in the classroom. seeing
156 that it did work that teachers were talking about
157 the (xxxx) that are used the different techniques
158 and methods as well and the value in that.
159 section four starts here.

[26:58] SM: Is there any evidence that teachers themselves are then more likely to use video in their classrooms? VK: potentially yes, but a bit early for that causal link. The teacher educators definitely are. But thinking about them going on to even more remote and less resourced places, there is less of a clear link. In the future, though, following wider educational reforms; they are having some of the videos they've been using with the teacher educators endorsed by the MoE and used as part of the pre service teacher education curriculum.

[28:50] More/other video content is not yet in the curriculum – the syllabus is very prescriptive. But there are reforms: a new teacher educator competency framework and teacher education curriculum for colleges are coming together at the moment, so there is a lot more potential for video to be included.

[29:56] Another aspect of the new pre service teacher education curriculum: there will be a greater focus on teaching practice blocs, where trainees will be able to practice, with teacher educators to mentor them at various points. At the moment there is very little practicum, but teacher educators seeing the value of videoing for reflective practice are likely to be encouraging trainees.

160 VK: i think another aspect of that new preservice
161 teacher education curriculum is that there'll be a
162 greater focus on teaching practice blocks where
163 the preservice trainees are able to practise with
164 a teacher educator to mentor them at various
165 points throughout their studies. thinking of the
166 more informal things that teacher educators have
167 been doing in terms of reflective practice if
168 they were mentoring trainees as they were doing
169 their preservice teaching practice i think its
170 more likely that that would be able to come in.
171 at the moment theres very little practicum for
172 the preservice trainees but as that changes i
173 think teacher educators themselves seeing the
174 value of using their phones to video themselves

ViLTE Resource

175 for later reflection would be encouraging
176 trainees to do that.

[31:50] VK not certain about the future in Myanmar but hopeful for next phases of the project. Will have a think about best way of sharing the videos.

SM will send an update on the project. Hopefully will end up with a community of practice with teacher trainers interested in using video.

[34:50] SM: Published on this? VK: Have agreed on final draft to put forward to Teacher Education Journal - focused on measuring behaviour change through using competency frameworks.