Action Research: An Approach to Developing Technology-Using Field Placement Sites

Abstract
Through Project ConTExT, a PT3 grant, Bank Street College helped teachers develop and implement action-research projects in their classrooms to look closely at how technology can support diverse learners. Two years later, Bank Street teacher candidates can see technology used in classrooms in support of progressive, inclusive pedagogy during their fieldwork and discuss technology choices with their cooperating teachers.

Roundtable Proposal
Between 2003 and 2005, two cohorts equaling 36 Bank Street cooperating teachers went through a series of workshops to develop ideas about how to integrate technology into curriculum to support learning for a range of students. These workshops allowed these experienced teachers explore technology tools and consider their students’ needs and their own classroom curriculum plans and activities. This series consisted of 4 three-hour workshops at Bank Street College.

With Bank Street educational technologists and research faculty, they then designed and implemented action-research projects in their classrooms based on their own curiosities and hunches about how technology might impact student learning. This planning process began in the context of the workshops as the teachers used supporting documents to clarify their thinking and refine their ideas. It continued back at the schools where Bank Street’s Educational Technologists spent one full day each week through the entire school year to support the work and other technology explorations. Each teacher posed a research question, designed a method for data collection and analysis and wrote a paper to describe their findings and the implications for their teaching and their work with student teachers.

Two years later, Bank Street teacher candidates can see technology used in classrooms in support of progressive, inclusive pedagogy during their fieldwork and discuss technology choices with their cooperating teachers. During this final year of the project, we will be implementing new student-teacher protocols to document their use of technology in the classroom, guide them through a critical reflection process and include Bank Street faculty advisors in the conversation.

Our objectives for this Roundtable session are:
I. To share examples of teachers' work and research findings
   We will hand out documents summarizing the teachers' research and findings. We will have laptops available so that participants can see examples of children's work.
II. To share an approach to an in-service technology workshop
   We will discuss the outline for the workshops as well as the changes that we have made between years 1 and 2 of the grant.
III. To share documents used to support teachers as researchers
   We will hand out and discuss the documents we used to support the action research process.
IV. To share newly developed student-teacher protocols for documenting technology use during fieldwork.
We will hand out at solicit feedback about these three options that we offering student teachers this year.

Supporting Research:


Presenter Background & Qualifications:

Andrea Brothman's background is in elementary education, educational publishing, and youth media program development. Her belief that technologies, when thoughtfully integrated, can support children's needs and strengths has deepened due to her current work supporting K-8 teachers’ action-research on the impacts of technology on student learning. She co-designed and teaches Integrating Technology into K-8 Curriculum to Support Student Learning and Inquiry an introductory course for teacher candidates. She is currently co-developing Math for All, a series of video case studies that focus on inclusive math teaching and learning.

Kira Kingren helps to design and implement large grant-funded projects, including 2 PT3 grants, that facilitate the infusion of technology into teacher preparation. This year, she will implement and oversee current grant-funded activities as Interim Director of Instructional Technology at Bank Street. She co-designed and teaches Integrating Technology into K-8 Curriculum to Support Student Learning and Inquiry, an introductory course for teacher candidates. As an Educational Technologist, she has created three professional development workshop series through which she has worked with 45 faculty members to integrate technology into teacher preparation, and has supported approximately twenty faculty-led technology projects in K-8 classrooms.