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| Interviewer | Before we started with the project, when you arrived here in January / February, what was your experience at that point in terms of using apps for anything- whether it was for pleasure or for help in searching for certain stuff, or even in thinking about what you can do in the classroom? How did you experience technology and apps at that point, before we started? |
| Participant A | To me, I only used apps for Social Media and then the Blackboard app- I used that quite a lot. If an app doesn’t work better than a website, then I delete the app. |
| Interviewer | Okay. Can you explain that a little bit to us? |
| Participant A | So for example the library app- if you use the website, it is just as good, so I don’t use the app as much. I would rather go on my laptop and use the website because I prefer working on a computer. |
| Interviewer | Okay, that is interesting. I actually agree with that. I think when we plan activities for students in the classrooms, even though we might use the activity on a mobile device, you set it up on the computer. So that makes absolute sense.  So that’s one way for you of evaluating in an informal manner what is useable and what is not useable.  Okay- and Participant B? |
| Participant B | I also generally just use apps for social media and I also use the Blackboard app, but further than that I hadn’t ever thought about using apps in the classroom- or anything other than the stock standard PowerPoint / computer lab sort of applications in the classroom. |
| Interviewer | Would you say that your expertise in using those apps, even if you only use one for social media, that you were quite good at it? Or were you still learning? Would you say you are a beginner, would you say you are an intermediate, would you say you are an advanced? |
| Participant B | I think I am quite proficient in the apps that I use regularly. |
| Interviewer | Okay.  If at any moment you would like to speak Afrikaans, you are more than welcome. We will translate everything. I know it is sometimes easier to say more in your home language, and we don’t want to miss information as a result of you maybe not feeling comfortable. |
| Participant A | Thank you. |
| Interviewer | Any follow-up questions for you on this topic?  Okay, so, would you then say that your level of proficiency in the beginning of the project and what you used apps for generally- do you think that it stayed the same throughout the project, or have you now changed the way that you use apps or changed the way you thought about apps? Has anything changed for you? |
| Participant B | I definitely do more research now when I am looking at downloading an app. I don’t just download it because I have heard about it and it sounded interesting, I actually do go and read what it is actually about. And if there is a webpage linked to the app then I do just go and peruse to see if it is actually something that would work for me. |
| Interviewer | Okay, that’s interesting… |
| Participant C | I just think the awareness... |
| Interviewer | …being aware of where to look for what. |
| Participant C | Yes, just keeping it in mind more than you would have… |
| Participant A | I also used to download a bunch of apps and waste a lot of time to time to open every app and see if it would work for me or not, and now I know where to go and search and read all the reviews. The reviews say quite a bit about the app. I am also, now, more prone to go and look if there is an app for something to make my life easier. |
| Interviewer | Okay, can you give me an example? So you are looking for something to do in class, and now you think there might be an app- how do you go about searching for it? |
| Participant A | I have searched because at the moment I am teaching drama- I know it’s not languages- but I searched for theatre games to play with the children. There are a lot of websites that can give you theatre games, but I thought there might be a cool app for them instead. Unfortunately there weren’t any, but I did go looking for one. |
| Interviewer | Okay. So what is the next step now? Because [name] - that is exactly what you said and this is so interesting. [Name] is working with Languages and for us, for English, there is so much available that you are actually overwhelmed and the evaluation process is so much more rigorous because there is so much available. But for [name] in the African languages, there was nothing. So what she is actually now doing, is she is writing her own app- she is using her content and designing her own apps which I think is brilliant. It is fantastic!  So is that something that you would consider- or would you approach someone to help you? Or is it just a question of “I looked for something, it would have been cool, but now I don’t find anything”, so what do I do now? |
| Participant A | Yes, I think it was more a thing of just looking for it. I do think it could be a good concept, but I think I actually only looked for something in that moment. There are already so many theatre games in books and available on the websites, and so... |
| Participant C | May I add there? I had this conversation this morning. In the light of what we were talking about; that we are going to work with the multiliteracies as a conceptual framework and also the related concept of trans-language; do you have to use an Afrikaans app in the Afrikaans classroom? Or could you, why don’t you take advantage of the fact that so many Afrikaans learners are so fluent in English? And Sepedi learners as well? So to use an English app wouldn’t be like “volksmoord” now you know- And just to recognise when we were speaking about it, then immediately more opportunities opened up and then you can really do anything. Just like in the way you use the generic apps like *kahoot!* and so on, you can then basically do- I don’t know, what is language specific? No, wait, there still won’t be any language specific Afrikaans apps… |
| Interviewer | No, not in terms of language, but maybe in literature.. |
| Participant C | …I mean for arguments sake if you could do a song- a lyric- It needn’t be something Afrikaans, it can be a Bob Dylan a song and you can translate it.  I just think that opens up a whole new spectrum of not being afraid or exclusive in terms of ‘we have to have a Sepedi’ or ‘we have to have an Afrikaans app’. |
| Interviewer | I think it is that idea of being a language purist- I think the times for that have passed.  So as an Afrikaans teacher, would you be comfortable to maybe use an English app for some purpose in your Afrikaans classroom? |
| Participant A | I have not yet had such an opportunity, but it can definitely be done. |
| Participant B | I am just thinking in terms of language specifically- I think it’s great if you have a home language class that can easily distinguish between the two languages- then I think using an app in a second language is great. But I think specifically for first additional students, it is better to look for an app that is for that language. You obviously want them to learn the language, you don’t want them to read something in Afrikaans and then just translate it into English and do the work in English. So I think just that home language vs FAL balance… |
| Interviewer | Yes, because you’re actually then including another barrier- for fluent learning to take place you are now introducing another challenge before they get to the end point. But I think it is what [name] says; we don’t have to think exclusively about these things, we’ve got to keep an open mind. |
| Participant C | And you know, the curriculum so clearly states that we have to do the multi-languages. We were talking this morning and [name] said one of the things she did was when she did the concept of “leenwoorde”, she started off the lesson by talking Tswana and three other languages that she knows. She also knows German- four languages the learners in the class did not understand. She just gave a few words, and then they said “we don’t understand” and then she started to take the words which she wrote on the board out and said “but you understand this”, “oh this is probably from that English word, and this is from there” and in the end she used that so that the learners can see that they do understand a little bit of Sepedi and they do understand a little bit of German. She then linked it to the concept of “leenwoorde”. In that sense, it is actually fabulous. More languages- that is what we actually should do. |
| Interviewer | And that goes to respecting everybody in the class’ language- giving everybody a space where they feel they belong. |
| Participant A | I must say, when I still had Setswana as a subject or as a module, I was looking for an app because sometimes you just want to know one word and you want to know how to pronounce it and you don’t want to go to the lecturer for that. I don’t know anyone who speaks Setswana, so then I wanted to type the word in English into the app so that the app can give me the word in Setswana with the correct pronunciation- but there is also a lack for that. I think for any language that would be a very good app. |
| Participant C | That would be so fantastic to have, and I mean that is what you have in English. For instance, a friend told me about an English app that gives you a specific accent; exactly what you said, but in English. So if you were an Indian learner, it would give you Indian English so it is much easier for the kids to learn because there is no barrier at all- it is their language. |
| Participant D | You know for us, we found that we couldn’t find anything in Sepedi, because we needed something we could add content to. There were only two apps that we found, but we couldn’t add content; just for simple reading out one to ten and simple names of the objects. Quite basic for grade 1 or preschool. What we did is we tried to find anything that we can manipulate and just add the Sepedi content to. Just to give an example; *kahoot!*, you can manipulate that one, then we add the content and also try to avoid a section where they have to write their own words, because in Sepedi you have got some other letters, as you know the “s” with the ^; you cannot do that. So we just do the multiple choice, you can do some quizzes and things like that, but because I am doing this with the [name of module] students and then the other thing they discovered was some offline apps like QR Code scanner where you can just scan a barcode. You can even use that one at home with no internet, because I have mentioned the fact that they need to take into consideration the fact it is not all the schools that have wifi and also at home, it is not every house that has access to data or wif, but the learners have to do some work. So anyway, the teacher will just put up all the questions and give them a barcode. So if you give them just this barcode and somebody loses that, what about the student next door? She can pick it up and access that, so now they were forced to get another app where the learners have to sign up, so now the teacher has got control of his or her own class and even if somebody picks that one up, they don’t have access to the class. So that is what we are still working on. |
| Participant C | That is fantastic- the barcode. I see in [name of school] schools, they have got this barcode with A, B, C, D. The teacher asks something and then she just scans with her phone. |
| Participant E | Plickers is what they call it. |
| Participant C | That’s the one! We’ve come so far- I remember the first time I used *Kahoot!,* I asked the questions to my Afrikaans class in English because I thought you were bound to use English. And then only later on I realised you can do it in Afrikaans. So you grow as you go on with it. |
| Participant D | It gives the student an opportunity to explore more and to learn more. With *kahoot!,* one of the students said she is going to give her marks irrespective of the time as long as you got it right, then you get full marks. |
| Participant C | Otherwise it is a time test. |
| Participant D | So she is going to disregard that, but of course if you are timed out, it won’t give a mark. |
| Interviewer | So how did the learners react to the apps that you used? Did they say anything or did they react differently than to an ordinary, normal lesson? |
| Participant A | To me, not really, because I have used it; “beter Afrikaans” and *kahoot!* as one, so they didn’t actually know about “beter Afrikaans”. I told them that they can do stuff, but for them it was too advanced and they didn’t have time or motivation to do “beter Afrikaans” lessons. The questions were good questions to put into *kahoot*, and it became very competitive for them to know the answer, when in a normal test they would be very negative. But with the *kahoot* is fine. |
| Participant D | For which grade was that? |
| Participant A | Grade 10 |
| Participant E | If you say the app was too advanced for them, in what sense was it too advanced? |
| Participant A | Well, the content was too advanced. |
| Participant C | There is not a first additional language in “beter Afrikaans”, is there? |
| Participant A | No, I had to use my own discretion and take out the easy ones. And even with the student I am tutoring- I use it with her as well, but she is doing first additional language and her Afrikaans is not good at all so I had to take the easiest questions. |
| Interviewer | That is fantastic, because now you have adapted the app. You saw what the possibilities were and what the challenges were and you adapted it for a particular use. To me is very valuable. So don’t blindly follow the app, because then what happen is what happened to some other students; they find the app and they start using the app and the fourth or the fifth time they come across a mistake and then they say they can’t use this app. Then what do you do? Do you throw it out or do you adapt the app, do you improve on it, do you have an exercise for your learners to find mistakes? So those are the things we need to think about and I think the more we start to use technology, the more we are going to think about the other issues because they say in the literature- every article I read, someone makes a statement that technology use is ubiquitous. And it is of course. But our attitude and our inclination is not that straightforward and solidly behind the technology, it is still something we need to find plan for and think about. It is not a natural instinct or thing we do all the time, and if we can get to that point it might become interesting. |
| Participant C | I have read this book yesterday and I came across this sentence; it is about the future and how the future is going to be with this technology impeding on our future. Everything is going to change so dramatically and we’re going to destroy ourselves. If only we can get away to stop exploiting human kind and start benefitting from the technology, then we won’t go that devastating route. |
| Interviewer | The problem is human nature, because that is the argument around artificial intelligence and robotics. Because of power and greed, it will be used to our decrement and that is why we are going to have a war. The third world war.  Would you like to ask any questions or shall we just continue? |
| Participant D | I just want to comment on this one- what I do with my students is that I always say to them I need to identify the purpose and not find that they are over-using the apps unnecessarily. There must be a purpose. For example, you can use it for a baseline assessment or maybe when you consolidate your lesson, but everything has to be used for a purpose. I remember the other time I went to a school in [area] to go and access a student, she wanted to incorporate technology but the school has got the smartboard and wifi and the learners have got the tablets. She just said to them “ok, please take out your tablet, go to Google”, I don’t recall what they were supposed to search and then they did that from there. The lesson continued, she was teaching about something completely different. I didn’t know why, and I asked her what was the purpose of this? She answered “you said we need to integrate technology”, then I said “see, that is the problem, it must be with a purpose”. |
| Interviewer | Our presentation at the learning day, we said it is not about the technology, it is about the pedagogy. If you don’t work with your learning outcomes in mind, then the technology becomes more than just a tool and it is actually just a tool- it is another form of learning and teaching.  Okay, to move on from that question- which apps were you more inclined to use? An app for an activity? To practice something? An app for an assessment in your lesson? What type of app did you look for most often? |
| Participant B | I looked at both kinds of apps- more for assessment and ones for content, but I found the content apps were just way too wordy. It was just not concise enough, and the ones that were super concise were too concise and didn’t give enough information. So I felt, myself, more inclined to use apps for assessment or activity purposes rather than for content specific. |
| Interviewer | Very interesting, too wordy.. |
| Participant E | So do you mean by that, it is an app that you open and it is like a textbook? |
| Participant B | Yes, so there were apps like textbooks and there were apps that just gave too much unnecessary information- didn’t get to the point quick enough. I felt that if the learners were to start using it, they would start and then get bored and then just move on. So not concise enough to get to the point to teach what it needed to teach. |
| Interviewer | Was that just your feeling or did you find similar comments in the reviews of the apps? |
| Participant B | I didn’t go back and look at the reviews of the apps again after playing with them, but I will go back and check. |
| Interviewer | Participant A, did you notice the same? |
| Participant A | I only used apps for assessment. There aren’t really too many applications for Afrikaans learners. There is “Viva Afrikaans”, that is a nice app for generic stuff. |
| Interviewer | Where in the lesson was your assessment? Was it always at the end of the lesson or was it during? |
| Participant B | Normally at the end. |
| Participant E | If I may ask- the assessment apps that you used, was it always *kahoot!*, or were there other apps? |
| Participant B | I mostly used “Beter Afrikaans” in *Kahoot* form. |
| Participant C | Can I just mention- there is a fantastic Afrikaans reader, probably not only Afrikaans; Cameo reader. I don’t know if you have heard about it? It is a reading program. You have to buy it but is not very expensive. You have to have a license, but it is simply fantastic. It works say for instance on vocabulary and it picks up with what are you actually struggling with, for instance in a certain field and then it will automatically, by default, go there and make it easier examples until you have managed that basic level and then it will go back. I have seen it and thought that it’s fantastic. |
| Interviewer | You can ask the school to pay for the licence so that all of the teachers can use it- always something to think about. |
| Participant C | You get it in other subjects as well. |
| Interviewer | I made a few copies, but I don’t know what I did with them so if you would share- I don’t know if you remember, we spoke about this in class, I just want to focus a little on communicative competence. You know that I said often in class that the main aim of teaching a language is for communicative competence. So if you think of the four aspects of communicative competence- let’s start with the basic one, the linguistic competence in terms of vocabulary and grammar and pronunciation and sentence structure. Did you use any apps to practice that particular skill of CC, can you remember? You do it in Afrikaans too- it consists of vocabulary extension, sentence construction, pronunciation and intination and pitch? |
| Participant B | I didn’t use the actual apps in the lessons, but I took information from them and made them into worksheets. Just in my previous prac, my mentor teacher is very anti-technology, so I ended up doing everything on paper. I used information I found from the apps to put them into worksheets, and there were a couple of them that dealt specifically with grammar rules and those were really nice to do a little worksheet for kids using that. |
| Interviewer | You see, this is exactly the problem. I spoke to so many students now in the last couple of weeks and they all say the schools have a policy where phones and laptops and iPads are banned from class- they can’t even bring them into class. I have asked a few of my students, “so have you negotiated with the principal or the HOD to have access for a particular period where you are going to use technology?”. “No, we cannot, because it is against the policy”, and then it is that barrier and for various reasons, it is not just someone who is against technology or who that teacher was, but it is about safety and about discipline. I know there are many issues involved and one student said she actually did go and ask special permission to give a technology integrated lesson and then there was another problem- there was a policy in place about language use. It’s a political issue, and I support it fully- it’s when no person at a school may force any other person to not use their language, so in the English classroom, if you want to say to the teacher or the student teacher, you must ensure during group work that they use the language that they speak in English. The policy says they can’t force them, so now they are speaking in four or five different languages and they are not practicing the target language because of a political policy. So there are so many challenges and I don’t know when we are going to convince society that there are good pedagogical reasons for integrating technology in an effective way for learning and not just for the sake of “it is there, I have got to use it”. I don’t know how you feel about that and what you think the answers may be? |
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