A Beginning Elementary Teacher’s Technology Integration Practice in a Technology-Rich School

“Stories are less about facts and more about meanings” (McAdams, 1993, p. 28).

Ya-Huei Lu
Ph.D. candidate
Instructional Systems
Technology
Indiana University Bloomington
Technology-rich schools:

- Changed teacher practices, increased student engagement and achievement, and students’ research skills (Bebell & Kay, 2010)

- 1:1 iPads are popular in early childhood
  - Incorporate into different subject areas and multisensory activities (Blackwell, 2014; Couse & Chen, 2010; Hutchison & Beschorner, 2014; Neumann, 2014).
Background

★ Beginning teachers
  ○ use technology in daily lives (Slaouti & Barton, 2007)
  ○ technology training during their teacher education programs
    (Gronseth et. al., 2010; Kleiner, Thomas, & Lewis, 2007; Starkey, 2010)
  ○ BUT experience and knowledge does not necessarily translate into effective edtech practices

★ Beginning teachers’ lack willingness to integrate technology into the classroom (Clausen, 2007)
  ○ Due to…
    ■ survival stage (Katz, 1972)
    ■ the teachers’ challenges with time and classroom management
First-year Teacher

First year challenges (e.g. survival stage, reality shock)

Technology-rich environment

Communications with parents

Principle expectation on new teachers
Study Purpose

★ Portray the development of a beginning 1st grade teacher’s development in her first year of teaching.

★ Gain understanding of how the beginning elementary teacher understands and creates meaning from her experiences.
Research Questions

1. What are technology integration practices of a beginning elementary teacher during her first year teaching in a technology-rich school?

2. How do personal and contextual factors afford/limit the teacher’s use of technology in the classroom during her first year teaching in a technology-rich school?
Literature

★★ Technology integration in early childhood education
  ○ Tablets in early childhood education
  ○ Developmentally appropriate use of technology
  ○ Factors influence teachers’ uses of technology

★★ Beginning teachers
  ○ Survival stages and reality shock
  ○ Theories of beginning teacher development
  ○ Beginning teachers’ uses of technology
Method

★ A case study with life story research approach
★ Participant- Lily

★ 1st grade teacher who is beginning her first-year teaching in the fall 2015.
★ “Well-prepared-to-use-technology” teacher
  ■ Has taken a basic technology integration course at IU
  ■ Worked as the course undergraduate lab assistant for three semesters
  ■ Student teaching in the same school district
  ■ Has positive attitude toward using technology in the classroom
Context

★ The school

- High Tech Classroom Project (2010)
- 1:1 computing (2012-2013 school year): 28 classrooms (15 iPad classrooms, 13 laptop classrooms)
- Summer Workshop Series for teachers professional development
- Teachers use electronic gradebooks in grades K-12.

★ Lily’s classroom

- First grade class
- 23 students (11 boys and 12 girls)
- More than half of the students didn’t go to the same elementary school or didn’t go to kindergarten.

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Data Collection Plan

Interviews (primary source)
1. Life story interviews (n=2): face to face | 1-1.5 hour
2. Classroom observation interview and monthly interviews (n=9):
   online or face to face | 10-30 minutes

Classroom Observations (n=6) : field notes | one to three days
Documents : Lily’s lesson plans, class materials, the school website, photos

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Lily’s First Year
Chapters

1. The Phonecall
2. The Rush
3. The First 30 days
4. Getting the hang of things
5. Finally taking a break
6. The second half begins
7. Planning for the end
( after Spring break )
8. The final month
9. Done at last!
Phases of First Year Teachers’ Attitudes Towards Teaching

Anticipation

Help! Survival

Disillusionment

Rejuvenation

Reflection

Yes! I Can!

Anticipation

I’m ready!

August September October November December January February March April May June July

Winter Break!
Sink or Swim?

It all started when she got the phone call 5 days before the school year started…

“The principal called around 11 or noon and she said, "Well, whenever you want to come, you get your own key. Go ahead!" So I got ready and left. When I got my key, I already got started. So I pretty much just drove there after the phone. I hung up, told my mom and then I left. Because I knew it’s only 5 days left and it’s coming. So it was SO rush. I immediately got there and got my key, looked at my room. I was OMG there was nothing in here. What am I gonna do this? How am I going to make this look good in a few days?…”
Problems encountered when using iPads

“As for the sharing iPads, I wish I had my own charging station in my room. It’s just such a hassle to walk them down the hallway and get them the next morning. I only did that once a week and if I forget, I usually would do that on Wednesdays…… But some of them may be dying. You will have to tell them (students): if it’s 10%, you don’t have to tell me. Kids were like “It’s 10% and it’s dying!”. “You don’t need to tell me. Just put it away and do something else…” So…iPad batteries dying is kind of annoying.
Examples of Lily using technology
Preliminary Findings

★ Teacher-directed practices - Lily’s uses of technology
★ iPads were mainly used in stations everyday

★ Factors afford Lily’s technology uses:
  ○ Contextual: Resources and the principal’s support.
  ○ Personal: Lily’s past experiences of using technology during her teacher education and student teaching.

★ Factors limit Lily’s technology uses:
  ○ Contextual: Classroom management and behavior issues, Classroom setting, and the school policies.
  ○ Personal: Not having enough time and the survival stage.
What teacher programs could do for preparing first year teacher?

“It’s just so hard to fully prepare for anyone because each student is gonna go (to different schools) and we are so different in grade level and different environment. It’s just so hard. I felt like first grade students’ behavior procedures are probably so different than the fourth grade behavior procedures. So I just don’t know how you could really fully prepare them. It think it is good that they just stress the importance for setting up those procedures early on. I don’t think we do amount of field experiences. I think it is really important to see what a good classroom environment looks like, so you know what you should be striving for…”
Think...

• What makes a novice teacher’s first year more difficult than a novice doctor/lawyer’s first year?

• What could we, as teacher educators and school administrators, do to prepare and support beginning teachers’ integration of technology into their classrooms?
THANK YOU!

◎ Ya-Huei Lu  
Ph.D. Candidate  
Instructional Systems Technology  
Indiana University Bloomington  
yahlu@indiana.edu

◎ Dr. Anne Ottenbreit-Leftwich  
Associate Professor  
Instructional Systems Technology  
Indiana University Bloomington  
left@indiana.edu

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