Teacher Development in Digital Spaces: An Invitation to Explore the Ethics of Online Research with a New Lens

Speaker: Dr. Anna Bartosik

Anna Bartosik will discuss the results of a mixed-methods study examining self-directed language teacher (ELT) development in digital spaces and delve into the ethics of conducting online educational research, with a focus on netnography[1] and posthumanism. The study was a netnographic examination focusing on descriptive statistics, social network analysis, discourse analysis, and semi-structured interviews. It explored English language teacher Twitter chats over a period of three months and examined how self-directed teacher development takes place on Twitter, whether the development differs for influencers and lurkers, and how self-directed professional development impacts English language teachers in their practice. The results of the study unveiled trends which indicate that ELTs benefit from opportunities to connect with other teachers globally on topics which are immediate, relevant to a teaching context, and are not offered in traditional professional development contexts. The study also revealed the benefits of learning anonymously in the open.

A significant finding which has an impact on how online research is conceptualized was the agency of the nonhuman in engagement, how information is shared and understood, and how less active participants benefit less from affordances than those who are visibly active in online environments. In the literature on professional development learning networks, the sociocultural aspect of learning is overwhelmingly emphasized. However, this study is part of a growing body of research which aims to demonstrate that human agency in learning is not as central as a sociocultural perspective may present. This has implications for how research in education and learning needs to be examined apart from a humanist perspective, and include “people, objects, technologies, spaces, and knowledge of education” (Knox, 2016, p. 25) in a new conceptualization of education research.

[1] Netnography, as defined by Kozinets, is different from ethnography in three ways: how participants engage and how they observed is different from face-to-face interactions; gathering data is different; and finally, ethics of conducting online research is also defined differently.
Suggested Readings:


ANNA BARTOSIK (SHE/ONA/ELLE)

Dr. Anna Bartosik’s work includes language learning and professional development research, teacher training/facilitation, instructional design, and teaching. She is a graduate from OISE in LLE. Anna works at George Brown College as a faculty member and is on secondment with the Teaching and Learning Exchange to facilitate and promote faculty development.

Find out more about Anna on the CERLL website or on. Twitter @ambarotisk, TikTok, Wordpress and LinkedIn! Find Anna’s CERLL profile here.

DATE
April 12, 2023

TIME
4pm-5pm

PLACE
Online via Zoom
Register here

Can’t join us live? Head over to https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/cerll to watch the replay. Would you like to present your research? Contact lisa.lackner@mail.utoronto.ca to find out how!