Mobile Technology and Early Math Learning: A Design-Based Implementation Research Approach

3/12/15
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Introductions

• Dr. Pamela J. Buffington
  Education Development Center, Inc.

• Dr. William Penuel
  University of Colorado - Boulder
Research + Practice Collaboratory

• Effort to bridge gap in research + practice in science, technology, engineering, & math education

• Collaboration of practitioners, researchers, formal and informal STEM partners (Education Development Center, U Colorado-Boulder, Exploratorium, U Washington - Seattle, Inverness Research, SRI)

• Create contexts & mechanisms R+P cultural exchange, collaboration, & adaptation

• Create supporting products and resources
Maine Adaptation Site Work

- Local, deep collaborations of researchers and practitioners engaged in educational improvement efforts (Math & Technology)

Interactive Technology Inquiry Group

- Inquiry Groups provide opportunities for small groups of practitioners and researchers/experts to discuss persistent problems in education in and to engage with related research and practice (Interactive Technologies/Math)
Design-Based Implementation Research: Inspiration and Principles

William R. Penuel

University of Colorado Boulder
Scaling and Sustainability in Mathematics Education

**Mary Kay Stein:** Task Design vs. Task Enactment

**James P. Spillane:** Advice giving, distributed leadership

**Cynthia Coburn:** Depth of Interaction
Translational Model

• Type I Translation
  – From basic science to interventions developed under carefully controlled conditions (e.g., lab)
  – Examples of STEM Interventions: Curricula, Afterschool Programs, Mentoring Programs, Professional Development Programs

• Type II Translation
  – From interventions to the field

• Development of compelling evidence from rigorous research determines trajectory of an intervention
Translational Model

Type I Translation
- Design and Development

Type II Translation
- Efficacy Trials
- Effectiveness & Scale Up Studies

Involvement of R&D Team

Involvement of Evaluators & Practitioners
DBIR: An Approach for RPPs

• Works within ongoing *research-practice partnerships*
• Engages teams in *design across levels and settings*
• Uses *implementation theory and research* to inform improvements to design
• Engages in *systematic study* of interventions along the way
## Translation vs. Partnership

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<th>Translation Metaphor</th>
<th>Research-Practice Partnerships</th>
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<td>The aim is to move an efficacious intervention <em>from</em> research <em>to</em> practice (<em>from</em> “bench” <em>to</em> “bedside”)</td>
<td>The aim is to produce usable, effective, and sustainable innovations through <em>joint work</em></td>
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<td>Goal is to promote adherence to an implementation model (<em>an aspect of fidelity</em>)</td>
<td>Goal is to support productive adaptation and use creative adaptations to inform design.</td>
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<td>Programs are judged to be effective when they work in systems as they are now.</td>
<td>Researchers and practitioners create changes in systems that are needed to make programs work.</td>
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<td>Researchers and practitioners operate in distinct spheres; researchers aim to “hand off” programs to practitioners.</td>
<td>Researchers and practitioners create opportunities for ongoing exchange, including to support spread and sustainability.</td>
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A Family of Approaches

…for relating research to practice
…for developing evidence related to innovations
…for bringing innovations to scale

“improvement science”

“problem-solving research, development, and implementation”

“designing for improvement at scale”
Four Principles of DBIR

1. Teams form around a focus on persistent problems of practice from multiple stakeholders’ perspectives.
2. To improve practice, teams commit to iterative, collaborative design.
3. To promote quality in the research and development process, teams develop theory related to both classroom learning and implementation through systematic inquiry.
4. Design-based implementation research is concerned with developing capacity for sustaining change in systems.
Two Problematic Ideas about DBIR

• **Problematic Idea #1:** All DBIR projects involve large-scale efforts where innovations have already been developed.
  - Smaller-scale DBIR projects can be undertaken with small (but multidisciplinary) teams of researchers and educators.

• **Problematic Idea #2:** Capacity building should focus on the capacity of educators.
  - The target of capacity building is the partnership’s capacity to *improve improvement*. 
Building Capacity for DBIR

- Graduate education
  - Within educational leadership programs
  - Within teacher education programs
  - Within learning sciences programs

- Building practical “tools of the trade” for research-practice partnerships
  - Organizing collaborative design
  - Developing and using implementation evidence
Questions & Answers
Adaptation Site

- Involving sustained partnerships between research + practice
- Existing educational improvement efforts (iPads K-3)
- On the ground Design Based Implementation Research (DBIR) Projects
District Benefits of Participation

• Access to STEM content expertise in support of current improvement efforts
• Access to STEM researchers to assist in research design and analysis
• Opportunity to build local capacity and knowledge through collaborative research efforts
• Opportunity to contribute to education theory & practice through ongoing inquiry & documentation
Collaboratory Benefits of Participation

• Access to rich STEM learning context (Advantage 2014)
• Access to a community of practice with deep practitioner knowledge
• Opportunity to connect Inquiry Group topic (Interactive Technologies) to Adaptation Site work
• Opportunity to work in Opportunity to learn in an authentic education setting
Identify & Convene Key Stakeholders

- **District**
  - Administrators (Superintendent, Asst. Superintendent, Curriculum Director, Principals)
  - Teachers & Specialists (Math Content Specialist, Technology Integrator, Special Educators, Elementary Teachers)
  - District Design Team (School Board, Parents, Teachers, Admin)

- **Higher Education**
  - Mathematics Education Faculty/Researchers – 2 Local Universities

- **Education Development Center Staff**
  - Math & Technology Experts & Researchers
Problem Identification

• Engage in a collaborative process to identify 2-3 highest priority areas of difficulty (i.e. persistent problems) for students in mathematics in technology rich PK-2 classrooms

• Identify evidence associated with areas of difficulty/persistent problems

• Prioritize persistent problems based on levels of evidence and opportunity to intervene

Auburn School Department & Education Development Center with partners supporting researcher & practitioner collaboration as part NSF funded R&P Collaboratory.
Reflect on Learning & Challenges

As you have been working to improve the math achievement of early learners by leveraging iPads and their apps ...

– What have you learned?
– What are the successes?
– What are the persisting challenges or problems?
– What do you want to understand more deeply?
Identified Problems of Practice

• There is not a clear vision of effective practice for the learning & teaching of mathematics in technology rich primary (PK-3) classrooms
• There are persistent difficulties in the area of numeracy
• There are persistent difficulties in the area of numbers & operations
Targeted Focus - Mathematical Practices

- Focus in on 3 practices
  - **MP3.** Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others
  - **MP4.** Model with mathematics
  - **MP5.** Use appropriate tools strategically
Establish Shared Vision

- Clarify Adaptation Site Goals (operationalize)
- Engage in Hands-on Activities
- Investigate Evidence Related to Identified Problems of Practice
  - Numeracy/Number & Operations
  - Mathematics Practices (MP3, MP4, MP5)
- Explore Research – Practice Collaboration
- Describe Potential Research – Practice Tools (Briefs / Snapshots of practice)
Early Math Learning Trajectories

- Research – Practice Briefs
- Inform mathematics learning & teaching practices
- 4 Briefs
- Bridge Research + Practice

PRACTICE BRIEF
Composition of Number, Place Value, and Multidigit Addition and Subtraction

This brief, derived from a chapter from Learning and Teaching Early Math: The Learning Trajectories Approach (Clements & Sarama, 2009), provides a summary of key ideas and a developmental progression related to Composition of Number, Place Value, and Multidigit Addition and Subtraction. The chapter was abridged, maintaining the authors’ original language except for clarification and abbreviation purposes, with the goal of highlighting research and illustrations that may help familiarize educators with learning trajectories and their underlying concepts. It is part of a collection of briefs on early math learning trajectories, produced by the Research+Practice Collaboratory (researchandpractice.org), a project funded by the National Science Foundation to build stronger bridges between the worlds of educational research and practice.

This brief addresses three topics involving increasingly sophisticated composition of number: arithmetic combinations (“facts”), place value, and multidigit addition and subtraction.

Composing Number: Composing and decomposing numbers is an approach to addition and subtraction, one that is often used alongside with counting strategies (e.g., the “doubles-plus-one” strategy of making 15 where a student might compose the number 14 by putting together 2 sevens, then add 1 using counting).

Initial Competencies with Part–Whole Relationships: Toddlers learn to recognize part–whole relations in nonverbal, intuitive, perceptual situations and can nonverbally represent parts that make a specific whole (e.g., ● and ● make ● ● ●). Between 4 and 5 years of age, children learn from everyday situations that a whole is made up of smaller parts and thus is bigger than its parts; however, they
Technology Brief

- Used to frame fall trial strategies – using technology tools and applets in the targeted K-2 classrooms
- Used in Leveraging Learning Conference sessions

RESEARCH SUMMARY

Using Technology to Promote Mathematics Learning in the Early Grades

Overarching issues

The availability of a vast array of touch-screen mobile technologies holds promise for more widespread and tailored use of technology for learning in K–12 learning environments, yet questions remain about the best ways to leverage those technologies. Mathematics teachers may endorse the use of technology, yet need guidance on (1) how technology can be used in developmentally appropriate ways to foster mathematics learning, (2) strategies for instructionally sound integration of technology into the classroom, and (3) how to select technology tools that best foster the conceptual learning of mathematics and encourage the use of mathematics practices such as reasoning and problem solving.

Affordances of technology for learning mathematics

Research supports the assertion that developmentally appropriate technology and media-supported instruction can support learning for young children in a variety of content domains, including mathematics (e.g., Clements & Sarama, 2006; Yazgi & Colburn, 2007). The developmentally appropriate use of technology has been endorsed by a number of professional associations, including the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, which states:

“Technology is an essential tool for teaching and learning mathematics effectively; it extends the mathematics that can be taught and enhances students learning.” (NCTM, 2001, p.1)
Co-Design/Co-Investigate

• Teams in each of the participating schools
  – 1 teacher per grade level
  – 1 principal
  – 1 outside researcher (math ed)
• Learning together
• Posing and testing strategies in the classroom
Example Strategies

• Use apps as tools for thinking –
  – Use ‘Number Rack’ in the context a lesson to represent quantities

• Use apps to capture student thinking –
  – Use screen capture of app use
  – Use Explain Everything to capture student motion, representations, and explanations
Sample Lesson Gr.2

• Place Value (4 digit) Haunted House Lesson
• Deepen Mathematical Communication (MP3)
• Use Models (MP4)
• Tools – Number Pieces App, Explain Everything
Representing/Discussing Representation
Refined Research Question

• What are the ways in which mobile tablets (iPads) can be used in early grades mathematics classrooms in order to promote mathematical communication and understanding of numeracy and number and operations?
Outcomes

• Mathematical Communication
  – Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others
  – Accurate and appropriate use of mathematical vocabulary

• Sense-making, in number and operations
  – Use of models and representations during sense making
  – Use appropriate tools strategically
Questions
Looking Ahead

• NCTM & NCSM National Conferences, April 2015

Opening Session, Monday, April 13, 7pm.
Learn how the application of Design-Based Implementation Research (DBIR) in Denver Public Schools is facilitating increased collaboration between researchers, teachers, and district leaders.

William Penuel, Ph.D.  Catherine Martin, Ph.D.
Professor, Educational Psychology & Learning Sciences  Director of Mathematics and Science
University of Colorado, Boulder  Denver Public Schools

Tuesday, April 14, 2015
8:30 AM-9:45 AM

Early mathematics with mobile technology: A research-practice collaboration
Jere Confrey, Michael Muir, Josephine Louie, Pam Buffington and Catherine McCulloch
Discussion Session
Grand Ballroom B (Westin - Boston Waterfront)

2015 NCSM Annual Conference
Tuesday Sessions

245  13:15 AM to 12:15 PM
156 B  General  Regular Presentation
Examining the opportunities and challenges of using technology to support teaching and learning mathematics

Improving Early Mathematics Learning & Teaching in iPad-Infused Classrooms: A Research and Practice Collaboration
This session will explore a model for improvement in which researchers and practitioners collaborate to identify and address persistent challenges related to early mathematics learning and teaching in iPad-infused, K-2 classrooms. Key strategies, learning, benefits, and challenges will be shared.

Lead Speaker: Amber Elinson
Co-Presenter: Pamela Buffington
Co-Presenter: Laura Shaw
Thank You

Contacts:
william.penuel@colorado.edu
Pbuffington@edc.org

On the web:
http://learndbir.org
http://researchandpractice.org

On Twitter:
@LearnDBIR @bpenuel

In print: