GRBA ICT Project Report 2019-2020

The Project Team

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Introduction

At Gordon Robertson Beauty Academy, most of the competencies taught are hands-on. The teacher demonstrates, and the learners try to reproduce or mirror the action. Explanation of the theory behind the techniques, and opportunities for the learners to develop their own techniques are provided. The integration of information and communications technology (ICT) was timid despite the availability of interactive whiteboards, computers, laptops, G-Suite for Education, and different software. This timid integration was due to the teachers' attachment to more traditional teaching methods and roles, their pedagogical beliefs and attitudes toward ICT, and the limited training offered to teachers on ICT digital skills and the pedagogy of ICT integration.

The project was intended to increase ICT integration into the learning process to enhance, deepen and transform the learning, to empower the learners through active engagement, to provide immediate feedback, and to address diverse learners.

The project went as planned. The Centre provided us with the pint of view (POV) eyeglasses cameras, laptops, headphones, software licenses, USB drive, and other IT material needed for the project completion. The PDIG grant allowed teachers to participate in the training and work sessions to create digital content and activities. The teachers were extremely motivated and dedicated to learning and collaboratively creating competency-based interactive learning material. They built on each other's strengths and talents. They have dared and moved out of their comfort zone, learned, and created.

The students, including those who were intimidated by the use of technology in the classroom, expressed that the digital interactive material created helped them to be more engaged and self-directed in their learning by having increased and as-needed access to the material.

Project Goals

The GRBA ICT project had quantitative and qualitative goals. The quantitative goals were to create a minimum of 6-8 Point of view (POV) videos and 8-10 interactive learning activities.
The qualitative goals were:

- o To provide teachers with professional development on the pedagogy of ICT – active and blended learning approach; self-directed learning approach; timely and specific feedback for differentiation; the Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, and Redefinition (SAMR) and Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) frameworks; as well as, Bloom's digital taxonomy.
- o To develop the teachers' ICT digital skills through trainings on G Suite for Education, point of view recording, video editing, recording voice over videos, and creating interactive learning material using different online platforms.
- o To promote collaborative work among teachers.
- o To build capacity.

Outcome and Deliverables

The team created:

- o 15 instructional videos (10 using POV cameras and 4 using mobile phones cameras)
- o 14 interactive learning and assessment activities using Playposit and H5P platforms.

The teachers, during their presence time, took the initiative and used the acquired skills to created material beyond the project deliverables. To date, the ICT Project library has in addition to the 23 videos and interactive material mentioned above:

- o 25 Google Forms and 20 Kahoots,
- o 15 master competency plans in Google Classroom, most of which contain competency outline, macro and micro plans, assignments, activities in support of learning, glossary, and resources.

One teacher started to broadcast live demonstrations of techniques onto the SMART Board in different competencies she taught so that students could clearly view the demonstrations all at the same time. She has also recorded these demonstrations to make them available for the students.

Some teachers worked from home on their own time to practice the new skills, edit POV videos recorded at school, record more POV videos using their equipment, and tailor YouTube videos to competencies taught by trimming and editing them. All the material is accessible to the whole teaching team at GRBA.

The professional development, digital skills training, self-learning, practice, and collaborative teamwork made teachers feel empowered by coming out of their comfort zone and learning how to transform their classroom. The teachers also noticed that students were more active in their learning using technologies, and their classrooms became more engaging and equitable for learning.

Journal Synthesis – What Went Well and Challenges

The safe and collegial environment during the digital skills training sessions was conducive to learning. It helped the teachers from the different departments become a team that collaborated, cooperated, and fed on each other's ideas and strengths.

Although some teachers have felt frustrations during the learning curve of using technology, they really appreciated the impact of the pedagogically integrated technologies into the learning process in their classrooms.

The teachers were excited to produce interactive videos in support of learning. The learning of and working on the open-source and free-version platforms online was a bit challenging. The limited services offered for free have restricted our production.

Recording POV videos needed planning and was performed in teams at times. The learning curve was different amongst teachers. The challenges while recoding POV videos were: finding the right angle, having the proper lighting, controlling head movement while recording, the limited battery life on the eyeglasses cameras, and the recoding function turning off unexpectedly, hence not recording.

The teachers broadcasting live demonstrations found that the students grasped the techniques better, and the practice of the techniques went much smoother. The challenges with the POV live demonstration were the same challenges faced during POV recoding. Moreover, we had only one of the three POV eyeglasses cameras that have a mobile app and the ability to transmit Wi-Fi to a mobile phone wired to the SmartBoard TV. Broadcasting had delays and the camera was shutting down frequently; consequently, a teacher started to broadcast the demonstrations using the camera on her mobile phone. The impact on learning was very good.
Since our aim was to broadcast the teachers' point of view while they demonstrate, we purchased a new iPad and an Apple TV (early in March) to better connect POV eyeglasses camera to SMART Board TV, but due to the schools' closure, we could not move forward.

This project had instilled a culture of collaboration, sharing material, and daring to move out of the comfort zone.

Reinvestment

The ICT project team became agents of multiplication, and they began training their colleagues on certain ICT skills before the global pandemic. Teachers who were not part of the project were seeing the learning activities that were being created and began to show interest and to ask to do some teamwork and learn. After the global pandemic began and the Centre shut down, the ICT team was able to train the rest of the teaching team at GRBA on G Suite for education online; thereafter, the teaching team at GRBA was able to launch an online program successfully with the least amount of kinks.

We are ready and planning to share our acquired expertise, experience, and material created with the English Educational Community through the delivery of workshops at provincial conferences (for example, AAESQ; PROCEDE; QACVE, CCI, etc.) and at different vocational centres. We have sent a presentation proposal to the AAESQ Spring Conference 2020; unfortunately, the conference was canceled due to the pandemic.

The process is transferable to all domains within the vocational sector, specifically in programs where targeted demonstration videos are a need. We highly recommend that other centres carry out similar projects. We have also applied for the PDIG grant for 2020-2021 for GRBA ICT Project Phase 2, with new teachers to join the team, and more digital interactive learning material to be produced.

For more information about the project and access to material from our digital library, please contact Samar Abboud at sabboud@lbpsb.qc.ca or at (514) 422-3000, Ext 31532.

Thank you

ICT digital skills training
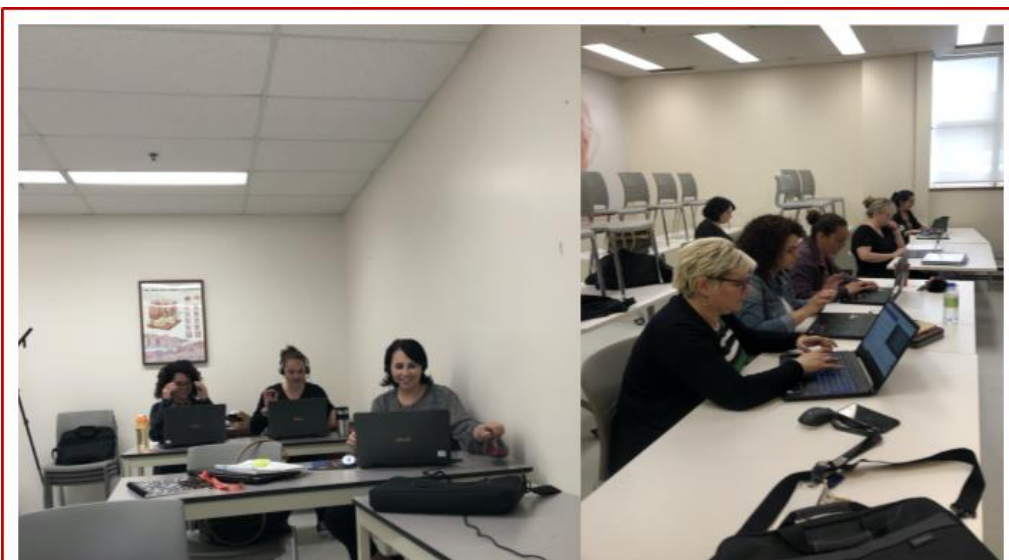
Trying to find the right angle

POV recording

Broadcasting live demonstration