An overview of the 2021 Mentoring Teacher-Research Support initiative

Richard Smith

How did we get to today’s event?

1. Background: Mentoring on the Champion Teachers & ARMS programmes (2013 onwards)

The British Council Champion Teachers programme (Chile, Peru, Colombia, Mexico)

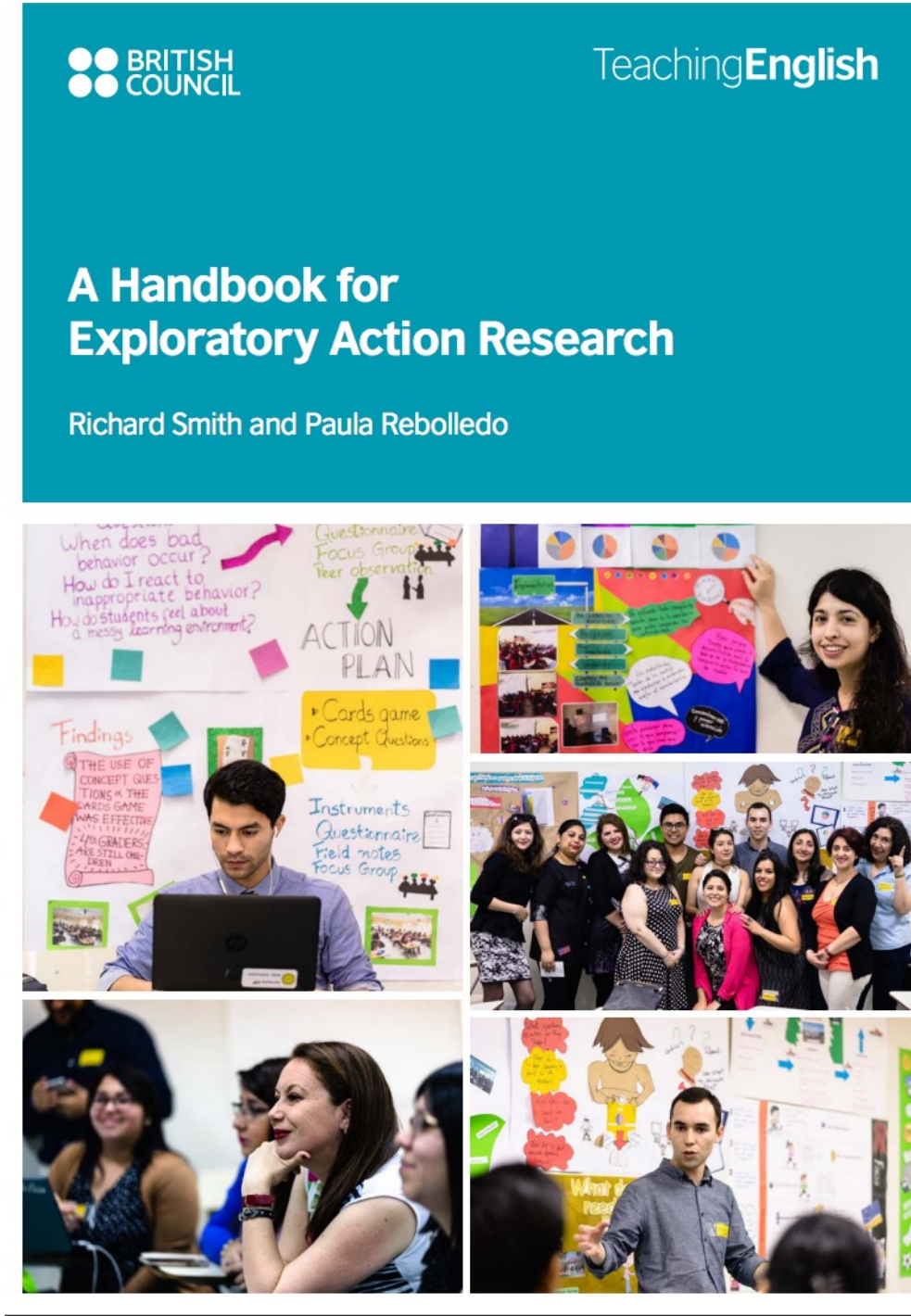
2013–20 (Chile): 164 teachers; 2017–19 (Peru): 94 teachers; 2018–19 (Colombia, Mexico): 119 teachers

Development of *local* mentors becoming a priority

A handbook for *doing* teacher-research (2018)

bit.ly/handbook-EAR

https://warwick.ac.uk/richardcsmith/resources



British Council Action Research Mentoring Scheme (ARMS) in India and Nepal

- Twelve-month mentoring scheme started in 2017
- The aim of the scheme was to empower *mentors* to support teachers to investigate their classrooms
- ARMS in India and Nepal (2017–2020) worked with 70+ mentors who supported 400+ teacher-researchers

https://warwick.ac.uk/richardcsmith/resources

International Festival of Teacher-research 2017

14) 24 January, 2018 – Getting Started with Action Research. IATEFL Research SIG webinar by Emily Edwards.

15) 28 February, 2018 – Exploratory Practice: integrating research and pedagogy in English for Academic Purposes. IATEFL Research SIG webinar by Judith Hanks

16) 11 March, 2018 – Final *mela* of the British Council Aptis Action Research Award Scheme (AARMS), India. Ambedkar University,, Delhi.

17) 24 March 2018 – Final, online presentations by participants in the 2018 Electronic Village Online on Classroom-based Research for Professional Development. Recording available here: http://classroombasedresearch.weebly.com/finally.html

18) 7 April 2018 – Where next for teacher-research? (online panel discussion). The line-up of speakers included Harry Kuchah, Melba Libia Cardenas, Amy Lightfoot, Richard Smith and Daniel Xerri. This panel discussion marked the end of the International Festival of Teacher-research in ELT.

A ONE-DAY PRESENTATION
On
Exploratory Action Research
Presenters : Benu Upreti, Birendra Oli, Durga Bhandari, Kaji Pathak, Kamal Prasad Dhakal, Lokendra Raj Dahal, Matrika Subedi, Medani Prasai, Nagendra Subedi, Yadav Ghimire
Facilitated by
Jeeban Prasad Dhakal
Mentor, Bc-ARMS-2019
Date: 15th February 2020
Supported by
British Council Nepal
and
NELTA Jhapa
Venue
S.P.Cafe
Kanakai-3, surunga

BRITISH COUNCIL
Action Research & Mentoring Scheme
(ARMS) Nepal
An Exploratory Action Research
Final Poster Presentation
21 Jan 2020

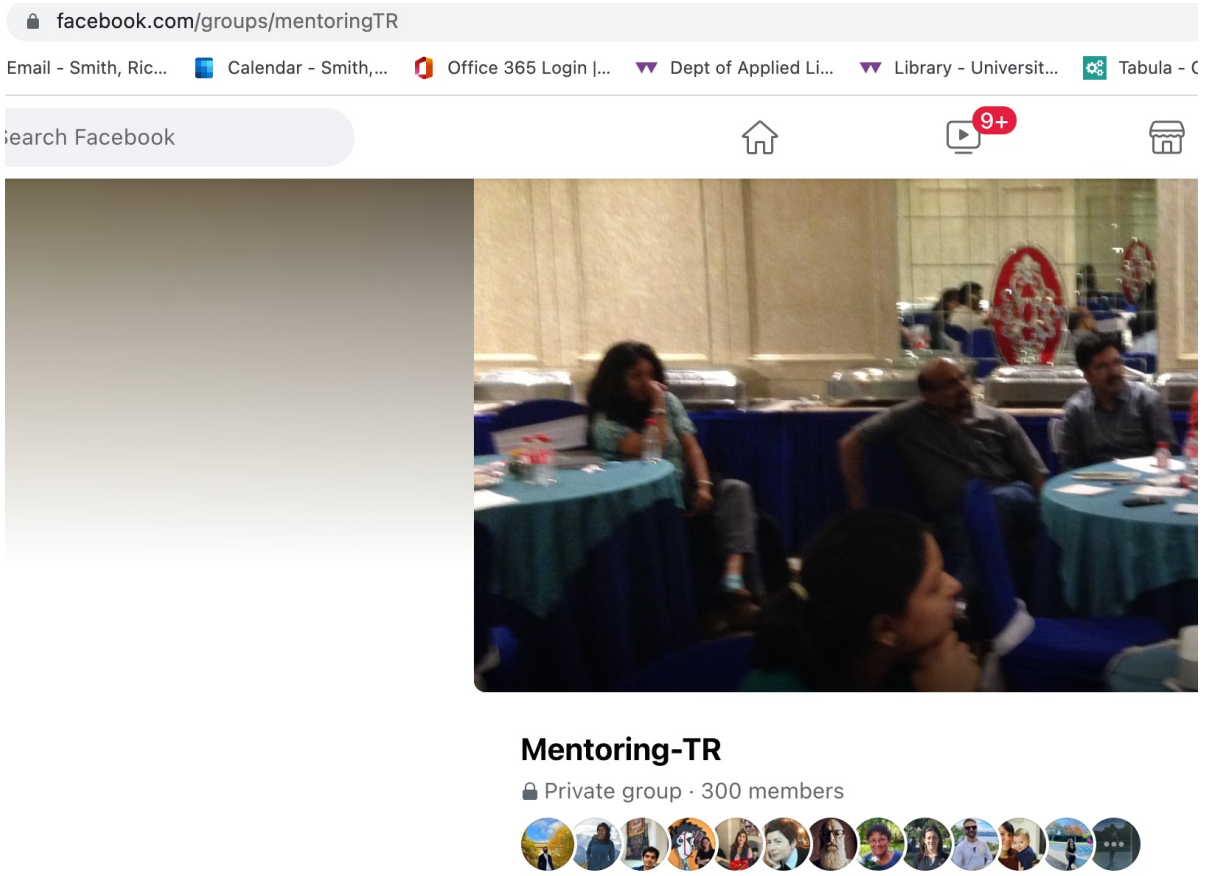
A handbook for *mentoring* teacher-research (2020)

bit.ly/mentoring-TR

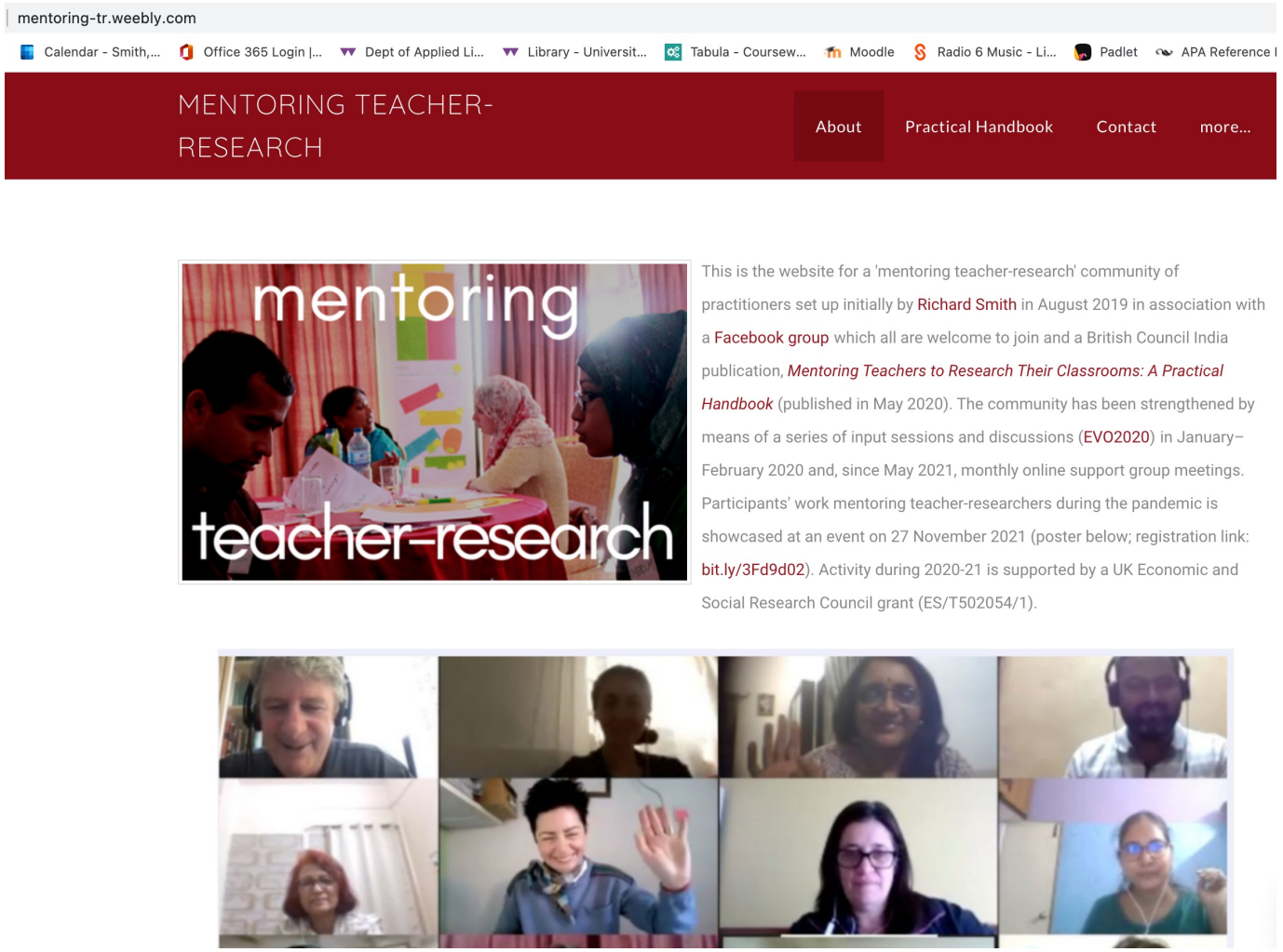
warwick.ac.uk/richardcsmith/resources

2. Building an international community of teacher-research mentors (2019 onwards)

facebook.com/mentoringTR



website: mentoring-tr.weebly.com



Electronic Village Online (EVO) on Mentoring teacher-research, Jan.–Feb. 2020

147 registered

EVO 2020

Introduction

With the support of the TESOL CALL-IS Electronic Village Online (EVO) initiative and IATEFL Research SIG, in January and February 2020 Richard Smith (University of Warwick, UK) and Seden Eraldemir Tuyan (Cağ University, Turkey) hosted a series of weekly input sessions and discussions on how to mentor teacher-research. This ran from January 11th to February 15th.

You can watch a recording of the presentation they gave about this in April 2020, with further details here.

Why this EVO?

Teacher-research can be a powerful process, having a profound impact on teachers and learners. There are now quite a few resources on classroom-based research which are easily available to English language teachers. However, there is a lack of guidance on how to *support* teacher research, particularly as a mentor. Accordingly, this EVO aims to create a community of teacher-research mentors, providing an opportunity to share insights and provide specific guidance to enable mentors and prospective mentors to play what can be a pivotal role in supporting teacher-research.

EVO 2020 follow-up

2020 –Is (Exploratory) Action Research feasible during the pandemic?

Webinars on teaching in difficult circumstances

Enhancement mentoring for teacher-research

2021 – International Festival of teacher-research (for sense of hope)

Aim: organization of Teachers Research: Online 2021 [December 10th-11th]

Mentoring support group – monthly meetings starting in May

2020 – development of ‘enhancement mentoring for teacher-research’

'Enhancement mentoring for teacher-research: a hopeful response to Covid-19'

by Richard Smith, Erzsébet Ágnes Békés, Mariana Serra & Seden Eraldemir Tuyan

16 January 2021

The recording of the webinar can be accessed at rb.gy/6nmgk0
PowerPoint slides (pdf) are here
Mentimeter feedback from the warm-up activity is here

2021 – International Festival of Teacher-research in ELT

Website: trfestival.wordpress.com/2021-events/

Twitter: @trfestiva

2021 – Mentoring teacher-research support initiative

- Monthly meetings advertised for former EVO participants, May – November
- 52 registered, from countries ranging from Peru to Cameroon to Nepal to Japan; ave. attendance 30–40
- Focus on mentoring teachers towards possible presentations at the December 10th–11th Teachers Research! Online 2021 conference

Sessions	Materials to read	Topics to prepare / discuss
May 29th	Chapters 4 & 5	How to get started • Who will you mentor? • Establishing accurate expectations • Building trust and rapport • Building confidence • Planning an initial orientation session Planning a timeline, communications and record-keeping • Providing structure via a shared timeline • Managing your time and supporting teachers to manage theirs • Deciding on channels of communication • Making a communications plan • Keeping records
June 26th	Chapters 7 & 8	Helping teachers to select a topic • Eliciting successes, problems and puzzles • Helping teachers to select one topic from several in their mind

		• Keeping track of progress Guiding teachers to develop research questions • Why research questions – and what kind? • Identifying areas of uncertainty through mentoring dialogue • From areas of uncertainty to exploratory research questions • Different types of exploratory research questions • Effective and ineffective research questions • Keeping track of progress
July 24th	Chapter 9	Preparing teachers to collect data • Building research into normal teaching • Introducing teachers to different types of data • Matching data types to research questions • Gaining necessary permissions • Helping teachers to plan a data collection schedule • Difficulties in data collection • Keeping track of progress
August 28th	Chapter 10	Supporting teachers to analyse and interpret data • Quantitative and qualitative data • Coding and categorising qualitative data • Working with quantitative data • A mentor's role in helping teachers analyse and interpret data • Teacher-learning: an emerging research 'finding'

September 25th	Chapter 11	Supporting teachers to plan and evaluate change • Deciding on next steps following exploration • Sources of appropriate action • Evaluating change • Planning a schedule for action and evaluation • Interpreting findings from the 'action' stage
October 23rd	Chapter 12	Helping teachers to share and reflect on their research • Why should teachers share their research? • Sharing through presenting • What should be in a research presentation or write-up? • Encouraging overall reflection • Sharing through writing • Sharing multimodally online

		• Publishing your own experiences and reflections
November 27th		General discussion and reflection

December 10th–11th Conference: Teachers Research! Online 2021

- Groups.io forum, sharing experiences, questions, etc.

- Monthly (90-min.) meeting format:

Topic and stimulus from handbook ->

Discussion in break-out rooms ->

Reporting back re. issues arising

- Thanks to Abdullah Al-Rawahi and Zening Yang

University of Warwick / ESRC grant (ES/T502054/1)