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Publications

Profweb Editorial Team, & Legault, A. (2020, September 27). Video tutorials for teachers for the inclusive use of smartphones. Profweb. <https://www.profweb.ca/en/publications/articles/video-tutorials-for-teachers-for-the-inclusive-use-of-smartphones>

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ARTICLES

Published September 27, 2020 | Multidisciplinary

Video Tutorials for Teachers for the Inclusive Use of Smartphones



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Teachers are sometimes reluctant to use smartphones as a tool for teaching and learning since they can be viewed as a source of distraction in the classroom. The [Adaptech Research Network \(https://adaptech.org/\)](https://adaptech.org/), which performs research on accessible technologies, spearheaded an Entente-Canada-Québec (ECQ) project to share approaches to integrating these omnipresent devices into teaching and learning. In September 2020, Profweb spoke to Anick Legault, a Psychology teacher and Adaptech Research Network Research Associate at Dawson who developed a series of video tutorials within the ECQ project designed to inspire teachers to use smartphones as part of their teaching practice.

Profweb previously reported on an [earlier phase of Adaptech's ECQ research project \(https://www.profweb.ca/en/publications/articles/exploring-pedagogically-sound-practices-for-the-use-of-smartphones\)](https://www.profweb.ca/en/publications/articles/exploring-pedagogically-sound-practices-for-the-use-of-smartphones) where they observed Anick Legault's use of smartphones with her students in class. In the current ECQ project phase, Adaptech developed a [variety of documents and videos \(https://adaptech.org/research/smartphones-a-neglected-pedagogical-tool/\)](https://adaptech.org/research/smartphones-a-neglected-pedagogical-tool/) to share [useful apps \(https://adaptech.org/publications/comprehensive-list-of-apps-related-to-the-academic-performance-of-post-secondary-students-with-adhd/\)](https://adaptech.org/publications/comprehensive-list-of-apps-related-to-the-academic-performance-of-post-secondary-students-with-adhd/) and best practices for the use of smartphones in class.

Q. Why is research on accessibility of ICT tools important?

Anick Legault (AL): We have different clientele in the classroom, and we are not always aware of their needs, especially in terms of accessibility. For me, accessibility is about inclusion, and I ask myself “how can we have a more inclusive approach for our teaching?”

Prior research by the Adaptech team revealed that not all students have access to a tablet or laptop, but everyone seems to have a smartphone. And for my students, the smartphone is like an extension of their arm! Smartphones create an opportunity for all of the students to participate in activities and have a voice. They can increase student involvement. It would be impossible for me to have 42 students answer questions individually during class discussions.

By answering polls with smartphones, it increases student participation since more of them participate. I will often get 40 students out of 40 to answer, rather than 5 or 6. It also deepens their involvement in the class, since they also get to participate for each question, as opposed to occasionally putting their hands up to answer a question. Since they answer anonymously, they don't feel shy to answer what they really think!

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The following media is not accessible for the web according to current standards.

The Classics of Polling Using Smartphones



The Classics of Polling Using Smartphones.

Q. Can you describe the objectives of the ECQ project?

AL: I worked with [Laura King](https://www.profweb.ca/en/search?utf8=%E2%9C%93&q=laura+king) from Cégep André-Laurendeau, who was the project leader for the ECQ project and her colleagues from the Adaptech Team, which included Alice Havel, Mary Jorgensen, Alex Lussier, Christine Vo and Catherine Fichten. My portion of the project involved creating videos for teachers to show them how to use students' smartphones as part of classroom activities. When the global pandemic was announced in March 2020, we had to re-evaluate the project deliverables in order to create videos for activities that could either be organized in-person or on-line.

Smartphones can be useful tools for all students if they are used appropriately in the classroom, but they can be particularly useful to students with learning or functional disabilities who may use a variety of [apps for accessibility](https://adaptech.org/publications/comprehensive-list-of-apps-related-to-the-academic-performance-of-post-secondary-students-with-adhd/) (<https://adaptech.org/publications/comprehensive-list-of-apps-related-to-the-academic-performance-of-post-secondary-students-with-adhd/>).

The following media is not accessible for the web according to current standards.

Logistics of Using Smartphones in the Classroom



Logistics of Using Smartphones in the Classroom.

Q. Can you talk to us about your workflow for the creation of the videos?

AL: A number of Zoom meetings with Adaptech members were scheduled to brainstorm on topics.

Initially, we wanted to involve students in the production of the videos, but we had to change our approach after the pandemic was announced.

We decided to keep things simple. We created videos from PowerPoint presentations that used animation and we embedded simulation videos within the PowerPoint. I would propose images and narration scripts to the Adaptech team. Alice Havel often reminded me to ensure that the videos had instructions that were easy to follow and accessible. The guiding principle was to put ourselves in the shoes of the teachers and students.

For the simulations in the videos, we used screen recordings created on an iPhone. Apple's iOS system includes a screen recorder. Christine Vo, the technology specialist at Adaptech verified that the proper technical language was used in the narration scripts for the simulations and edited the captured video for these simulations. She would then provide me with the edited recordings, which I would then integrate into the PowerPoint presentation.

The next step was to narrate the videos using the "Record presentation" function within the "Slide Show" tab in PowerPoint. When you have all of your content and narration recorded, you have the option to export the presentation to MP4 video format in PowerPoints "File" menu.

The following media is not accessible for the web according to current standards.

Screen Recording Tutorial ECQ



A smartphone screen recording tutorial for Apple iOS.

Q. Did the Adaptech network have any specific instructions for the visuals or audio of the video capsules you developed?

AL: Adaptech team member Mary Jorgensen would upload the completed MP4 videos to YouTube and make sure that the captions in the closed captioning were working well. After my first video, the team asked me to slow down the pace of my narration a bit, but the advantage of hosting on YouTube is that you have controls to slow down or speed up the video, as desired.

We tried to limit all the videos to 15 minutes or less. These days, people consume media that is quick and to the point, and 40 minutes would have been too much!

For the Adaptech team, the captions were very important. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, we did not have access to professionals to record descriptive video cues for the videos, but we tried to be as descriptive as possible with our existing narration. It was a challenge to make the videos accessible for every potential audience.

Q. What are your hopes for the videos and the documentary resources from the project?

AL: We have now launched the videos and we are trying to spread the word so that more people will access and use the resources we developed in this project.

The videos we created for this project required a lot of effort to prepare, but we believe what we have developed will be helpful and inspiring to teachers. It's easy for teachers to use smartphones as a tool for learning once they get the hang of it!

The following media is not accessible for the web according to current standards.

Using Moodle App on Smartphones for Assessment



Using the Moodle App on Smartphones for Assessment.

Editor's Note:

To consult the list of documents and videos prepared by the Adaptech team during their ECQ project, please visit this [article on their website \(https://adaptech.org/research/smartphones-a-neglected-pedagogical-tool/\)](https://adaptech.org/research/smartphones-a-neglected-pedagogical-tool/)

About the Author

Anick Legault She has been working as a Psychology teacher at Dawson College since 2010. She has done educational research both here in Québec and in the United States. While her doctoral research centered on Effective Teaching Methods, her true passion is teaching using Information and Communication Technologies in an inclusive way, and more particularly using smartphones in the classroom as a pedagogical tool.

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