



Teacher expertise research: Learning from the global South

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Plan for today

- **15 mins** **Basic details of project** background, justification, 'expertise', methodology
- **10 mins** **Key findings** commonalities, differences, outputs of project
- **5-10 mins** **Implications** teacher education, international development, Southern theory
- **10 mins** **Questions, comments, critique**



Personal and project background

- I'm a teacher educator from UK, c. 30 years in education, 20+ as teacher educator, much in Global South (esp. sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia), incl. for UNICEF, British Council, national ministries, etc.
- Only recently completed PhD, thanks to ESRC (UK) funding.
- PhD completed 2021. Postdoc 2021-22. Both Uni. of Warwick, UK.
- Methodology: Participatory, comparative case-study.
- Thesis: Anderson, J. (2021). Eight expert Indian teachers of English: A participatory, comparative case study of teacher expertise in the Global South <http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/159940/>
- **Why a study on teacher 'expertise' in the global South?**

Justification for study 1: personal perspective

“...the understanding of the world by far exceeds the Western understanding of the world.”

(Santos, 2014, p. viii)

This includes understandings of education/learning:
The *pedagogies* of the world by far exceed Western *pedagogies* / understandings of *pedagogy*.

E.g., Matiewas
Ghebrechristos ↓

I've seen this time and again in Eritrea, Rwanda, Kenya, Malawi, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Egypt, Thailand, South Africa, China and now India.



Justification for study 2: educational ‘development’ perspective

- Clear need for research into **good/effective** pedagogy in global South/low income countries (e.g., Alexander, 2015; Muralidharan, 2017; Pryor et al., 2012):

Much research has concentrated on the deficiencies of teaching in low income countries and we therefore have accounts of poor practice and pupil failure. What **we do not have** are detailed descriptions of teachers’ **good practice** in contexts that are challenging. There is a need for research to seek out examples, to theorise them and to make them available as a resource for teacher education and policymaking. (Pryor et al., 2012, p. 498)

- Consistent evidence that challenges of Global South (GS) necessitate different pedagogic practices to Global North (e.g., Canagarajah, 1999; Holliday, 1994; Westbrook et al., 2013).
- Evidence of ‘outstanding’ teachers in Southern contexts (e.g., Global Teacher Prize – 4 of 8 winners to date).

Justification for study 3: 'Expertise' perspective

- Teacher expertise research is highly biased towards high- and upper-middle income* national contexts: 59% of all studies conducted in USA; 15% in W. Europe; 14% in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan (Anderson & Taner, 2023).
- Only 1 prior study conducted in a low- or lower-middle* income country (Toraskar, 2015).
- Half the world is missing from the teacher expertise literature.



*income levels as per World Bank 2021 statistics.

Why 'expertise' as a measure of quality?

Expertise is a better measure of pedagogical 'quality' than...

- 'effectiveness': only measures effect on students' achievement (Brophy & Good, 1986; Muijs et al., 2005; UNESCO, 2017) *too narrow*
- 'experience': no clear relationship to quality (Day et al., 2006; Hattie, 2003). *too broad*

Expertise recognises experience, but doesn't limit quality to achievement impact.

It can also recognise other elements of teacher/teaching quality (e.g., pastoral support, social and emotional learning, role in institution, peer support, etc.).

Teacher expertise research design

- Started in the 1980s in the USA: Gaea Leinhardt and David Berliner were early researchers (see Berliner, 2004)
- Simple research design:

Find expert teachers



Study aspects of their cognition, teaching, development or professionalism



Share findings for teacher education, policy and curriculum development



Recommendations based on expertise studies are feasible, appropriate and sustainable



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But what do you mean by 'expert teachers'?



Possible ways to find expert teachers

Prerequisite criteria (e.g....)

1. Sufficient basic (local) qualification (e.g. BEd.)
2. Enough time for expertise to develop (over 5 years)

Potential indicators of expertise (e.g....)

1. Recommendation by others (e.g. inspectors, head teachers, etc.)
2. Teacher educator/trainer status (alongside permanent job)
3. Receipt of teaching award(s)
4. Commitment to own professional development
5. High student achievement (e.g. exam scores)

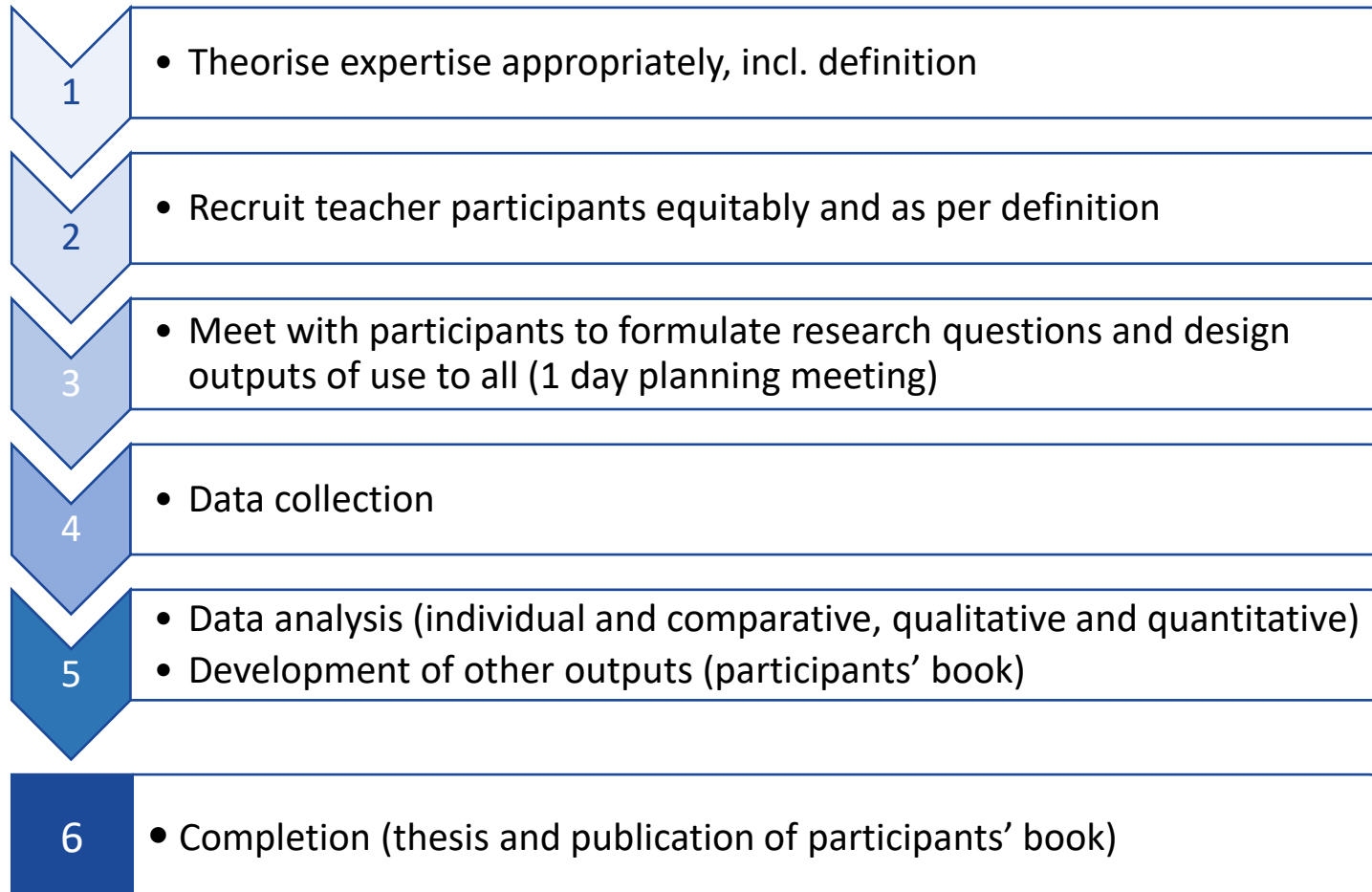
(Anderson, 2023c; Palmer et al., 2005)

A context-responsive definition of expertise

- Danger of importing Northern/Western notions of ‘best practice’
- Need to develop a definition of expertise that can be context-sensitive:
 - “Teacher expertise is an enacted amalgam of learnt, context-specific competencies (i.e., embodied knowledge, skills and awareness) that is valued within an educational community as a source of appropriate practice for others to learn from.”

(Anderson, 2021, p. 44; 2023c, p. 29)

Study design



Thanks to the AINET teacher association and EFL University, Hyderabad in India, who were both happy to support the study.



Need for a 'partially participatory' study design

- Most 'participatory' research in education is teacher-led – not possible for multi-site PhD study.
- I drew upon research in community development literature where degrees of participation are recognised (e.g., Arnstein, 1969; Pretty, 1995)
- Two key criteria for study to be participatory: 1. both sides must benefit; 2. meaningful interaction at design stage:

The most important distinctions centre on how and by whom the research question is formulated and by and for whom research findings are used. (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995, p. 1668)

- See Anderson (2023a) for further details.

The participants

- 8 participant teachers; 3 states (Maharashtra, Telangana, West Bengal)
- All volunteered via AINET teacher association
- Each met ≥ 5 indicators of expertise (e.g., teacher educator, high learner achievement, teaching awards, curriculum development adviser, scholarship winner)
- Government-sponsored secondary (high) schools
- Learners 73% disadvantaged (as per Indian designations)
- After rigorous participant validation all chose **not** to be anonymised



Research questions

1. What are the features of the pedagogic and professional practice, related cognition and beliefs of eight expert teachers working in Indian state-sponsored secondary education?
2. What commonalities and differences can be identified when comparing these features?
3. To what extent are the commonalities identified consistent with those of expert teachers in other researched contexts?



Data collection

Name	Days spent at school	Participant lessons observed	Participant teacher interviews	Interviews of other stakeholders	Other teacher observations
1. Raju (pilot)	13	21	7	7	3
2. Vinay	21	32	10	6	5
3. Shekhar	20	27	10	4	9
4. Gajanan	21	38	10	6	7
5. Dipika	25	34	9	7	4
6. Nurjahan	21	32	7	5	4
7. Manjusha	20	30	7	4	4
8. Kuheli	24	28	7	5	4
Total	165	242	67	44	40

Key findings – commonalities

- **Cognition:** Well developed integrated knowledge base, incl. PCK esp. of learners; high levels of English language proficiency; extensive reflection.
- **Beliefs (in):** Building learner self-confidence; engaging learners; ensuring understanding of lesson content; constructivism; balancing learning needs with exam preparation; teaching multilingually.
- **Interpersonal:** Positive relationships of trust and respect; creating safe, inclusive, supportive learning environments; high learner engagement → low levels of off-task behaviour.
- **Pedagogy:** Balanced between learner-independent and teacher-led activities; whole-class interactive teaching; regular collaborative learning and individual seatwork; active monitoring; differentiated support; language-inclusive, translingual practices.
- **Personal attributes:** Passion for profession; enjoyment of work; care for learners; self-confident; autonomous; resilient
- **Professionalism...**

Professionalism of expert Indian teachers

- Dedication and hard work
- Continuously striving to improve (lifelong learning)
- Interest in CPD and higher qualifications
- Collaborate frequently and widely with colleagues (e.g. through teacher associations)
- Help others, as mentor, teacher educator, local CoP leader
- Challenge oneself (e.g. experimenting, trying out new ideas)
- Reflect critically on one's own practice
- Seek feedback from others
- Underpinned by 'care' for their learners as primary evaluators



*cf. Fullan's
"collaborative
professionalism"
(2016)*

Key findings – analysis of difference (within group)

Biggest areas of difference: teaching and language use practices:

- Participants' teaching practices varied clinically with regard to two key “explanatory” factors: **Conception of Subject** (what “English” is) and **Degree of Control** (of behaviour, schemes of work, and discourse) comparable to Bernstein's *classification* and *framing* respectively (e.g., 2000).
- Participants' use of learners' other languages in English classroom (L1) varied from 11% to 85%, but all translanguaged and were inclusive of learners' languages (see Anderson, 2022a).



Comparison to prior studies of teacher expertise

- Strong support found from this study for many “robust” findings of prior empirical studies of expert teachers’ practices/cognition
- Strong agreement with prior research into “effective teaching” in developing countries / Global South (e.g., Westbrook et al., 2013)
- Several important differences: In my study...
 - participants prioritized inclusion and confidence-building over setting high standards
 - complex multilingual practices - translanguaging (Anderson, 2022a)
 - prioritization of learner understanding (a LOTS) over higher-order thinking skills (HOTS)
 - varied strategies for helping learners assimilate content from highly ambitious curricula

Participants' publication

- See Gode et al. (2021), available online:
- <https://www.theainet.net/connecting-eight-effective-elt-classrooms.pdf>
- Participants decided on title, chapter structure (incl. advice for less experienced colleagues)
- Peer-reviewed each other's chapters
- Offers 'voice' to participants and opportunities for *emic triangulation* of my findings

Connecting Eight Effective ELT Classrooms *Contexts, Challenges & Solutions*

Dipika Gode • Shekhar Khomne

Raju Lingala • Kuheli Mukherjee

Nurjahan Naik Khwaja • Vinayadhar Raju Prathikantam

Manjusha Sagrolikar • Gajanan Tayade

With a preface by Dr Amol Padwad





8. Bringing the best out of our learners

Kuheli Mukherjee

1. My context and challenges

My Context

'Creeng-creeng-creeng!' the phone goes on ringing. I open my eyes and pick up the phone. A happy and childish voice says 'Ma'am I just submitted my assignment. Have you received it?' Oh, what time is it? A look at the bedside watch confirms it is just 6 a.m. in the morning and yes, that is how most of my days start during Covid induced lockdown... This was one of my 7th graders completing the task I had assigned on a social media group of my school students the evening before. Well, I have been teaching English as a second language (ESL) in a well-known government run Higher Secondary school in Kolkata for around three decades. My school, with a history of

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Kuheli Mukherjee

development but the fact remains that even as researcher I find it difficult to record my reflections regularly and systematically due to time constraints. Still I do scribble thoughts or reflective notes in a diary on a regular basis.

2. My Teaching

My Beliefs

My own experience of learning English has played a vital role in developing my beliefs about learning a second or a foreign language. Studying in a vernacular medium school, my interest in English grew because of the attitude of my English teacher. She was always encouraging us to use English notwithstanding the mistakes we made. She would be recasting my sentences with an affectionate smile that was reassuring and confidence boosting. So from the first day as a teacher I felt I should try to make my class interesting to my learners and try to be someone whom learners are not afraid of. Secondly, I always believed that learning a language means being able to use that language in speaking as well as writing. So enabling my learners to use English in their practical life was my objective. Since childhood I was a voracious reader of literature in Bangla, my mother tongue, and English also. I would always keep a dictionary handy to understand difficult words while reading anything in English. I strongly believed in the effectiveness of such extensive reading on the language learning of my students. Later, my training in TESOL along with my long experience as a teacher and in-service teacher trainer helped me realize that these beliefs have played a significant role in making me the teacher I am.

Curriculum coverage and my planning

The mandatory pre-service teacher education course taught me how to plan lessons to facilitate language learning. However, while teaching in school I hardly have time for meticulous planning. Nevertheless, I have realized that if I did not have overall planning to cover the syllabus, it would be difficult to achieve curriculum objectives for my students. Since we have to follow a prescribed syllabus for each grade, at the beginning of the term I make a plan for how much of the syllabus I would cover and what learning outcomes I should be targeting. I do not believe in merely covering the syllabus, but in attaining expected learning outcomes of my learners. So it might happen that I do not complete teaching all the lessons in the prescribed text with equal emphasis. Rather, I would focus on developing skill-specific language

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Some publications from the project

Anderson, J. (2020). The effective teacher of English: An exploratory qualitative study of Indian English teachers' beliefs. *ELTED Journal*, 23, 10-20.

Anderson, J. (2021). *Eight expert Indian teachers of English: A participatory comparative case study of teacher expertise in the Global South*. [Doctoral diss., University of Warwick]. WRAP. <http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/159940/>

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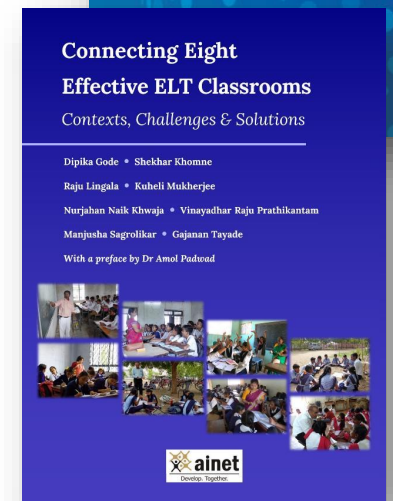
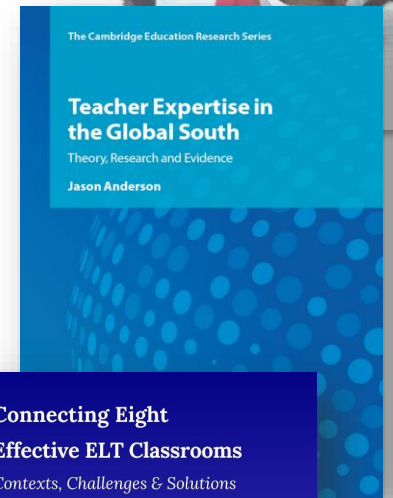
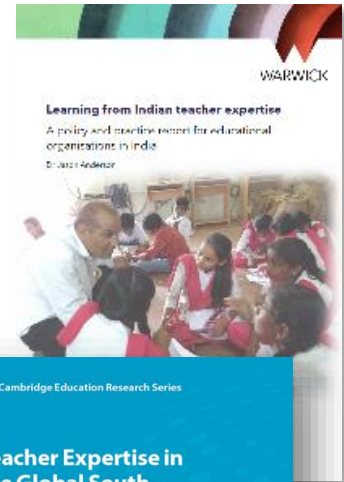
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Other collaborative outputs (online & hybrid)

- AINET Conference Symposium: Effective teaching - Stories from experience (9 Jan 2022)
- British Council India English Connects Workshop: Turning experience into expertise: How can we continue developing as English language teachers? (online soon) (11 May 2022)
- AINET Stories of Effective Teaching Workshop Series:
 - Pairwork and groupwork (16 Apr 2022)
 - Project work (28 May 2022)
 - Working with texts (18 Jun 2022)
 - Balancing between languages (23 Jul 2022)
 - Working with TLMs (20 Aug 2022)
- POET Workshop series: Activities for increasing learner engagement with texts (19 Nov 2021)



(Some) implications for teacher education (TEd)

- Teacher expertise studies have high ecological validity. By definition the practices documented are:
 - feasible (e.g., practically, logistically)
 - appropriate (e.g., culturally, systemically)
 - sustainable (e.g., cost-wise, support-wise)

...for the context in question, able to inform TEd realistically.
- Participant teachers can serve as appropriate role models for pre-service and novice teacher identity development (see Kagan, 1992)
- Can shed important light onto TEd curriculum development both for pre-service teacher education and in-service support (e.g., ‘how exactly’ to do **X** effectively here).
- Also offers useful feedback on national curricula (e.g., How do expert teachers modify/adapt/reject curriculum elements and why?) and educational policy (e.g., appropriate multilingual practices)

(Some) implications for international development

- Extensive prior evidence of inappropriacy, inefficacy and neo-imperialism/colonialism of ‘North→South’ interventions in international development sector (e.g., Tabulawa, 2003; Vavrus & Bartlett, 2012).
- This study offers an alternative: A means to build locally appropriate, context-sensitive notions of good practice – based on what *already* ‘works’
- It sheds light into what is frequently characterised as the ‘black box’ of the classroom in larger scale quantitative/ econometric research (e.g., Aslam & Rawal, 2015; World Bank, 2016; see Alexander, 2015)
- It demonstrates the feasibility and potential utility of expertise studies in diverse contexts as a contributor to wider localised research initiatives. Such studies could be centrally-commissioned or conducted by independent PhD students (see Anderson, 2023b).

(Some) implications for Southern theory

“...the understanding of the world by far exceeds the Western understanding of the world.” (Santos, 2014, p. viii)

- The development of Southern theory is led, if not dominated, by academia (itself a Northern creation) (e.g., Connell, 2007; Gale, 2009)
- There is a need for ***Southern theory*** that emerges and theorises ***from*** Southern practice: ***practical Southern theory*** (Anderson, 2023c)
- **Example 1:** Translanguaging – much research and initial theorisation has emerged from marginalised and disadvantaged communities in the North (i.e., the South in the North). Relatively little research and almost no theory on translanguaging emerging from historically multilingual/translingual communities in Africa, Asia, Australasia and Latin America.
- **Example 2:** Elicited choral completion – frequently documented, but undertheorised from a range of GS contexts: ‘oral cloze’ (Martin, 1996); ‘safe talk’ (Chick, 1996); ‘teaching device’ (Sarangapani, 2003).

Some (of many) limitations

- My background, identity (British, white, male, ‘native-speaker’) and socialisation – how have they influenced the findings and framed the study – neo-colonial implications
- The methodology involved was Northern, as was the wider epistemological framework (i.e., what counts as knowledge, pedagogy, quality).
- Sample size (8 teachers) and sampling strategy (self-nomination, through teacher association)
- Linguistic and cultural challenges

Slides and References



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Available at: www.jasonanderson.org.uk/talks.htm

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