European Toolkit for Schools

Teacher Scheme for Educational Dialogue Analysis (T-SEDA)

Date: January 2022

WHEN WAS THE APPROACH FIRST STARTED?

2014

WHAT WERE THE CONDITIONS AND STEPS TAKEN THAT HAVE CONTRIBUTED MOST TO THE SUCCESS OF THE APPROACH?

Teacher-SEDA supports teachers in **systematically** examining and developing their own classroom practices related to educational dialogue. The approach is based on **teacher-led inquiry.** Materials include a very extensive, **research-informed** resource pack and online material including editable templates. These include a coding scheme for categorising classroom interaction that highlights the dialogic elements, helping teachers to go well beyond informal impressions and **pinpointing areas for development.**

A **flexible inquiry-based approach** to using the tools allows for **customisation** according to teachers' experiences, understandings, needs and purposes. Inquiry purposes vary considerably, commonly including a generic objective of improving the quality of classroom dialogue and often focusing particularly on improving student participation. Practitioners may also extend their inquiries over longer periods of time to evaluate the impact of dialogue on students' learning (e.g., reading, writing, subject knowledge and understanding, etc.).

The T-SEDA resources were designed for **adaptation in local contexts without researcher involvement to support professional agency and ensure sustainable change**. Success is maximised through **coordination and input from a local peer facilitator**, **promoting scalability as well as local ownership**. Evaluation of these tools showed that **practitioners' critical reflection, dialogue and inquiry with peers and the close connection to daily practice through trialing and refining approaches and ideas were pivotal.**

T-SEDA materials are **openly and freely accessible** on a university website: http://bit.ly/T-SEDA. They are **available in four languages** – English, Spanish, French, Chinese (both simplified and traditional versions) – and a Japanese translation is almost complete too. This increases **reach**.

WHICH STAKEHOLDERS WERE INVOLVED IN IDENTIFYING NEEDS AND IN THE PLANNING AND DESIGN OF THE MEASURE?

- teachers involved in developing the original T-SEDA resource (England/Mexico);

- teachers internationally involved in trialing the resources and giving feedback to help improve it (impact study) – in England, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Israel, Spain, Mexico and Pakistan;
- local facilitators interviewed during development period, offering feedback and advice
- researchers collaboratively involved in development and implementation; also leading to further research on teacher agency, impact, etc.

WHO WAS INVOLVED IN IMPLEMENTING THE MEASURE? WHO HAS KEY RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION?

Varied uses of the T-SEDA resources so far mainly include professional learning through reflective classroom inquiry by individuals and groups of teachers or school networks.
Key responsibility for implementing T-SEDA inquiries is held at different levels:

- teachers directly in their classroom inquiries;
- local facilitators supporting groups of practitioners conducting inquiries their own settings.
- senior school leaders by supporting teachers' dialogic inquiries and creating opportunities for whole-school development in the light of the inquiry findings.

Some users have also adapted the materials to develop specific instruments for other projects that involve evaluations of dialogic talk. Potential future uses lie in pre-service teacher education, and in systematic observation of peers by teachers or students for professional development and other purposes.

HOW ARE THE DIFFERENT PEOPLE INVOLVED IN IMPLEMENTATION BEING SUPPORTED (E.G. DO THEY RECEIVE SPECIFIC TRAINING?)

- The research team offers an initial workshop or provides materials for teachers and local facilitators;
- A collection of short videos (https://bit.ly/TSEDAvideos) introduces the T-SEDA resources, including underlying dialogic principles and inquiry techniques, enabling teacher-led, self-paced and customised learning. These can supplement workshops/courses or support a more autonomous model';
- The resources form the basis of an accredited, short Masters-level practitioner professional development course is also available annually from our host institution, the Faculty of Education at University of Cambridge;
- Three recently developed MOOCS, for facilitators and for practitioners planning their own inquiries or interested in the fundamentals of dialogue, are available (https://mbrugha.github.io/course-in-a-box/) and a facilitator version of the T-SEDA pack is planned too.

WHAT HAVE BEEN THE OBSTACLES TO INTRODUCING THE MEASURE? HOW HAVE THEY BEEN ADDRESSED?

Common obstacles to introducing and sustaining T-SEDA inquiry include:

- staffing changes;
- time pressures – for individuals and schools;
- changes in school priorities for development and research;
- high expectations and needs for more prescription and personal support;
- appropriateness for different age groups and school contexts;
- initially limited familiarity with dialogic principles and practices.

These are addressed by:

1. emphasising that the T–SEDA resources are intended to support practitioners in using the materials for their own purposes, meshing with their own professional interests and wider school or other contextual concerns;
2. encouraging adaptation of the T–SEDA materials to apply in different contexts;
3. explaining and promoting the value of working with local facilitators;
4. adding new elements in response to emerging concerns, e.g. specific adaptations for early years teaching contexts;
5. translating to other languages;
6. developing the T–SEDA materials to be more informative and presented in 'user–friendly' ways, including the underlying dialogic principles (e.g. significant changes in Version 8).

IS THERE A MONITORING/EVALUATION SYSTEM IN PLACE? WHAT IS MONITORED?

Monitoring and evaluation is central to the T–SEDA inquiry–based approach which incorporates stages of data analysis, interpretation, action planning and review in response to the initial aims and focused inquiry questions that are set by teachers in their own contexts. These questions commonly relate to the quality of classroom dialogue, levels of student participation and learning outcomes.

In addition, an international impact study of T–SEDA use was conducted in 2018–19 – (see further information under Impact below).

The T–SEDA team also continues to monitor local use by responding to international inquiries and noting new developments (such as the production of local materials for understanding dialogue in specific plurilingual contexts).

WHO MONITORS AND HOW?

1. Local monitoring and evaluation of progress which is intrinsic to the T–SEDA reflective inquiry approach, is undertaken by the practitioners involved.
2. Central monitoring and evaluation is undertaken by the T–SEDA team, creating new versions in response to feedback on use and need (e.g. the addition of an early years observation and coding framework), developing new areas (e.g. focusing on inclusion for diverse and atypical student populations), and publishing further research/impact findings in openly available journals and online.

As a freely available online resource, T–SEDA may also now be used by practitioners who are not in direct contact with the T–SEDA team. These users will be monitoring and evaluating their

inquiries in their own contexts. T-SEDA includes examples and guidance on how this may be done, but we would expect local practitioners to develop their own approaches as required.

ARE FURTHER EVALUATION PLANNED AND WHEN WILL THE RESULTS BE AVAILABLE?

We are currently in the writing phase and papers to date include:

- a report on the approach, focusing on the facilitator role (Hennessy, Kershner et al., 2021: open access journal article);
- a book chapter presenting one case study, co-authored with the participating practitioners (Kershner et al., 2020);
- a forthcoming journal article by Calcagni et al. reporting the impacts of the inquiries in our international trial (see next question too);
- a forthcoming journal article by Calcagni et al. reporting our survey findings concerning teachers' understandings and practices regarding classroom dialogue;
- a forthcoming journal article describing the formal evaluation in Germany of a dialogic teaching scale (included as a downloadable tool in Version 8 of T-SEDA) for self-assessment by teachers and students.

We continue to log interest and use of T-SEDA by practitioners around the world.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE IMPACT OF THE MEASURE?

The T-SEDA work has increasing take-up, spontaneous spread, and promising outcomes. It is being used and adapted by practitioners all over the world: at least 360 educators of students from early years to postgraduate level have actively used T-SEDA to date. A funded trial of 67 teachers over the school year 2018-19 found that the vast majority of teachers demonstrated significant, concrete changes in practice to promote dialogue. An article under review describes how teachers exercised **professional agency,** developed their awareness of dialogue, used more dialogic teaching strategies and created a supportive classroom ethos for dialogue, and disseminated new practices to colleagues. They also reported increases in students' participation in dialogue and some student learning gains. Concrete examples corroborated their accounts.

In Australia, one teacher who spontaneously applied the T-SEDA resources to develop dialogic teaching in the classroom, then created her own resources and wrote a book for other practitioners.

In Israel the pack has been formally embedded in pre-service and in-service courses at Ben Gurion University, plus high school in-service courses, and spontaneously taken up by schools since 2017; over 225 teachers to date have been involved. Evidence includes 60+ teacher-created T-SEDA-based (Hebrew) lesson plans integrating dialogic and subject pedagogy across a range of subjects. Impact in one secondary school where 55 teachers and school leaders participate even includes *revising high-stakes national matriculation examinations* to include teacher and student self-evaluation of dialogic interaction in history, language, arts and citizenship. Master teachers experienced with dialogic teaching through using T-SEDA are commissioned to create, trial and share with peers new models of dialogic alternative assessment in each discipline across Grades 10-12, using principles of T-SEDA.

WHAT RESOURCES ARE INVOLVED (MATERIAL, SPACE, AMOUNT OF FUNDING)?

The materials are freely available, and no other physical resources are needed (other than photocopying observation sheets if desired, etc). Facilitators voluntarily run workshops in their schools or regions. However, in many schools additional time away from teaching may be needed for collaborative discussion and sharing practices, outcomes and issues between colleagues; and for local facilitators to induct groups of teachers. For many this activity may be incorporated into professional development time.

IS THE MEASURE STILL RUNNING? IF NOT, WHY NOT?

Yes, T-SEDA is used all over the world by some of the original practitioners who continue to develop their practice. The approach offers a *sustainable* model (as detailed in an open access publication by Hennessy, Kershner et al., 2021). Schools in Israel and New Zealand have used T-SEDA for 3+ years. In both countries, follow-up interviews 18 months after adoption (and again after 36 months in Israel) showed continuing development of practice with no contact from our team in between.

T-SEDA is being taken up by new teachers too. For instance, a network of interested schools and professional development leaders is rapidly developing in mainland China. Several teacher educators have applied for their own funding to conduct work with T-SEDA. Most recently, a speech-language therapist in New York applied for funding to adapt T-SEDA in addressing the linguistic equity and participation in class of preschool learners from disadvantaged communities.

T-SEDA resources and a community forum will shortly be available via CamTREE, a global teacher research exchange platform enabling practitioners to reflect on their practice, publish their research and obtain support for conducting classroom inquiries. As mentioned above, the materials also form the basis of two MOOCs designed to offer targeted support for both facilitators and teachers.

CONTACT DETAILS

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