Self-Impact and My-Impact: Teacher professional learning through social media

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One-shot workshops as part of school based professional development do not suit all teachers and do not leverage teachers to transfer what is presented to their classrooms. When professional development is differentiated and personalised bounded by classroom context, when teachers direct and action their own learning through collaboration, reflection and inquiry, professional learning can occur. Through the use of social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, and or resource repositories such as Pinterest and TeachersPayTeachers, teachers are taking action into their own hands to self-learn.

Little is currently known about the process of professional learning using online technologies and how knowledge is considered and actioned in these spaces. Data drawn for this paper is part of a larger research project examining expert ICT teachers’ approaches to their ongoing professional learning and how and if the knowledge, skills and even ideas gained online through teachers’ professional learning networks are transfer to the classroom and make impact on student learning. Semi-structured interviews of fifteen ICT-expert teachers from Australia, Europe and USA are the main data source. The findings presented in this paper focus on how these expert ICT teachers conceive of their professional learning and the affordances associated with learning in the social media context, described here as Self-Impact or My-Impact. Implications for compliance measures and professional development design are presented.