

Research question

How and why do educators in West Africa, in Mali in particular, appropriate information and communication technologies (ICT) for teaching and learning, and with what effects?

Concepts

Appropriation is not mastery (Lund, 2009) of a new technology; **it is making newness part and parcel of self and society** (Bakhtin, 1981; Hountondji, 2002), mobilizing it strategically to meet contextualized objectives, often in resistance to the status quo.

We related to **learning as a sociocultural process** and to **ICT as cultural innovations**. This theoretical approach accounts for human ingenuity in confronting complexities and contradictions, and in negotiating local and global hierarchies, and for the non-linearity of constantly adapting the new to achieve contextualized needs and aspirations.

Methodology

Qualitative research methods and **interpretive approaches** using thick description (Geertz, 1973) revealed meanings educators give to their reality and experiences. Interviews were conducted with 31 persons: 23 primary and high school teachers, 6 university professors, and 2 administrators.

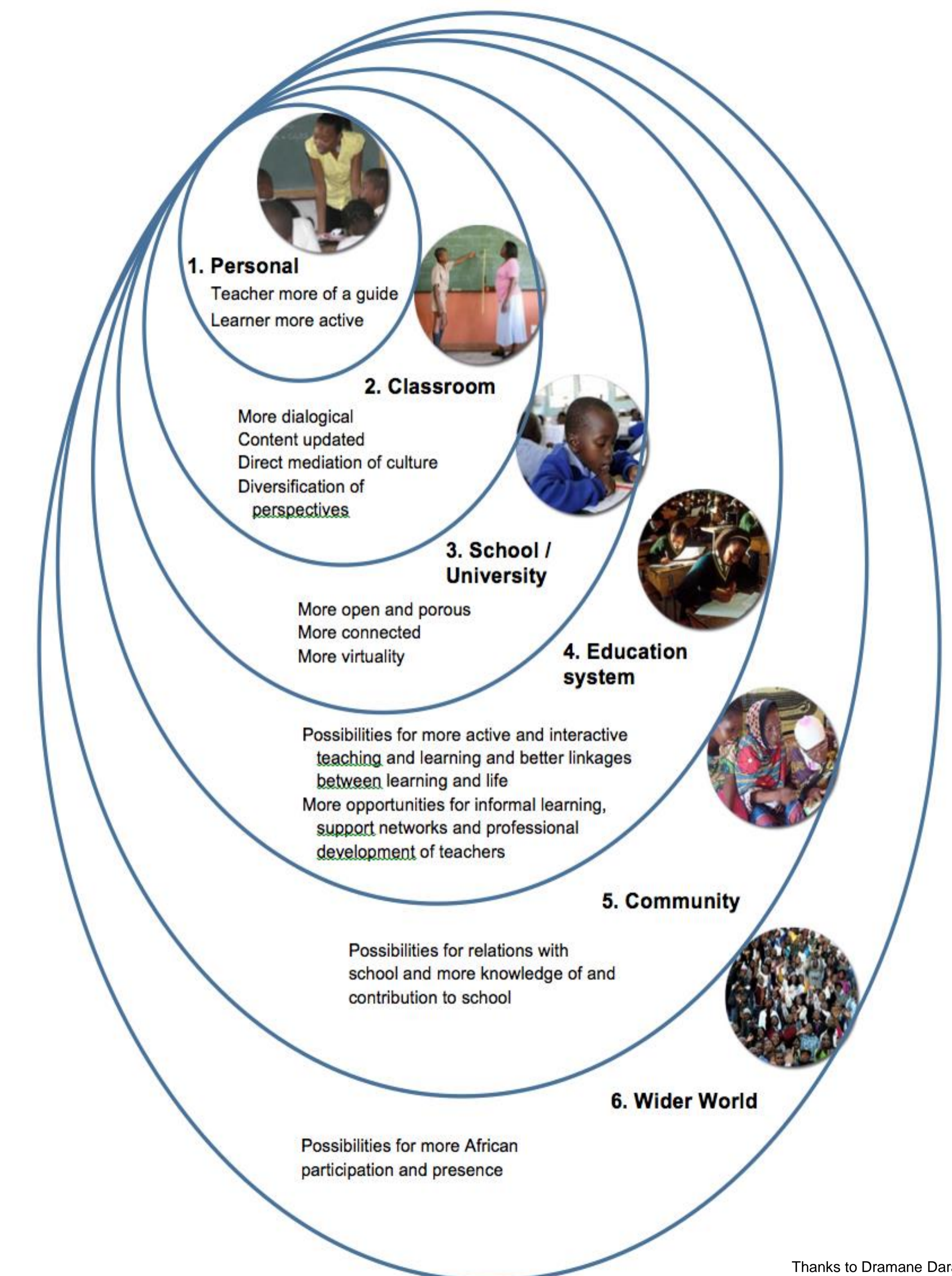
Results

- As educators digested ICT, it **became part and parcel of their beings and everyday lives**. As they adapted it to their milieus, **teachers worked as cultural agents**, mediating between ICT and society. They exerted their agency and invested their beliefs and values in the appropriation process, which also shaped them.
- The professors in particular expressed **desires to use ICT to facilitate and enhance African participation in global debates and scholarly production and to transform how Africa and Africans are projected and perceived**.
- Educators harnessed ICT for its transformative possibilities. Changes apparent in student-teacher relations (more interactive) and classrooms (more dialogical) suggest that **ICT can be a catalyst for pedagogical change**, including in document-poor contexts and ones weighed down by legacies of colonialism.

See figure →

The appropriation process involved **conversation** (Ela, 2006; Hassoun & Wong, 2012), **creative combinations** (Dei, 2002a; Fonlon, 2010, 2012; Nyamnjoh, Durham, & Fokwang, 2002), **border crossing** (Akkerman & Bakker, 2011; Giroux, 1992, 2005), **socio-constructive teaching and learning** (Bruner, 1996; Obanya, 2012a, 2014), and **cultural work** (Appadurai, 2013; Ki-Zerbo, 2010a&b; Niane, 1974; Wexler, 1981; Zakhartchouk, 2005).

Changes and possibilities of change evident at multiple levels with the pedagogical appropriation of ICT



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