Analysing uses of computers in schools, Australia & Austria
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During my visit to Graz I am collecting information for a comparative study of the histories and possible futures of the computerisation of the (school) classroom. In my research I use a loose variation on actor network theory, to follow the processes by which computers and their users are joined together in extended alliances, all seeking to enrol the other in order to achieve different but overlapping objectives. In Graz I am contacting and speaking with school directors, educationalists and representatives of local policy institutions, in order to make an initial assessment of the similarities and differences between Australian and Austrian contexts. At the Fellows meeting I will summarise some elements of the Australian school system, briefly summarise my achievements in Graz so far, and seek your advice on how to proceed further. I will also table a question which I think expresses a central dilemma for policy making in this domain: how can states use their capacity to shape innovation in education, in order to achieve both socially progressive but also entrepreneurial ends? Does one inevitably `spoil´ the other? What kinds of actors are likely to transform some initially good intentions? What outcomes are likely?