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A Lesson Study Case of the Learning of Student Teachers in a Measurement and Evaluation Course in Their Pre-service Programme

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It is important for student teachers to develop competencies in the planning, administration and evaluation of their learners' performance and achievements. In addition to traditional tools of assessment such as essay tests, short-answer exams, true-false exams, multiple choice exams, mapping exams, oral exams, homework, student teachers needed to be exposed to complementary ways of assessments like observation, interview, performance evaluation, student product files, research papers, research projects, peer evaluation, self-evaluation, behavior scales. A course on measurement and evaluation which was practice-oriented based on lesson study protocols was designed to meet this need and student teachers met for 3 hours each week for 14 weeks and they were also working with cooperating teachers in schools to implement the assessments they have designed in authentic settings.

The lesson study was carried out by the course instructor and two instructors from different universities who were also PhD students. Each of the four lesson study cases were designed using the Backward Design model which consists of 3 stages. The lesson study enabled the instructors of the course to spot the disconnected points in student teacher learning and carry out additional feedback sessions when necessary. Preliminary findings revealed that practice-based course via a) lesson study changed student teachers' perception of planning, designing, administering and evaluating measurement and evaluation process completely; b) the reflexive process enabled them to understand that despite being presented via various courses they actually complement one another like dominos and c) finally and less positively the feedback received at the end of the semester showed that they were facing a dilemma. They enjoyed the course being practice-oriented but they were not sure about the practice effect of the classroom activities on their performance in the standardized exams that they were going to take at the end of their programme. These student teachers could be appointed as teachers only when they are successful in a standardized exam at the end of the pre-service programme.

How Can Dialogue-based Review Sessions of Mock Lessons Deepen Reflection?

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Reflecting on lessons has been said to be important for teachers' professional development. Lesson study is one of the devices for promoting it. In the review sessions of lesson study, talking based on what occurred in a lesson is considered important. Even so, reflection in the review session can sometimes be superficial.

The similar problem holds true for the case of mock lessons. Mock lessons are lessons where participants take the role of a teacher or a student and a teacher-role person does the teaching to student-role persons. Mock lessons and review sessions are commonly used in teacher training courses in universities. It is usual that in the review session participants judge the performance of a teacher-role person and give advice to him or her. However, this type of review session brings only shallow reflection because exploring the meaning behind a lesson's process is necessary for deep reflection as Korthagen's ALACT model shows.

On the other hand, mock lessons have merit in bringing deep reflection. In the review sessions of mock lessons, contrary to the ones of real lessons, student-role persons can convey directly to the teacher-role person their thoughts and feelings that they experienced during the mock lessons. The gap between teacher-role person's thoughts and feelings and student-role persons' thoughts and feelings emerges in the review session. This gap is a clue to exploring the meaning behind a lesson's process.

Little attention has been paid to this potential of mock lessons and review sessions. The author and colleagues in the university developed a type of review session which can bring deep reflection using this potential. It is called dialogue-based review sessions of mock lessons. The author and the colleague launched a teacher education program centering on this. Students experience dialogue-based review sessions of mock lessons repeatedly and learn how to reflect on lessons. The quality of conversation in the review session change as the program progresses. This potential of mock lessons and review sessions can be utilized not only in pre-service training but also in in-service training at school.