A REFLECTION OF USING VIDEOS OF INTERACTIONS BETWEEN EXPERT AND NOVICE PRACTITIONERS

An in-depth exploration of the experience of expert and novice teachers

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This project uses video collaboration software to facilitate mentoring discussions between novice and expert teachers. The software, IRIS Connect, was also used by initial teacher training students to co-create teaching resources and aid the development of student teachers' skills, knowledge and understanding of teaching. This poster focuses on the experience of one expert-novice pairing in the project and outlines emerging findings.

IRIS Connect

This project is built around IRIS Connect - a video collaboration and professional development tool which can be used in teaching. It provides teachers with the opportunity to record classroom-based teaching and learning or capture online teaching. Teachers can reflect on teaching and learning, analyse practice, add time-stamped comments, edit their videos and share with colleagues or leaders for feedback (Davis et al., 2017, p.4).

IRIS Connect is only one example of such tools; the concept of remote or video-supported mentoring is one that serves two key purposes

- (1) to help teachers reflect upon, and identify, areas for improvement within their practice;
- (2) to encourage teachers to feel comfortable in sharing and discussing their practice with others.

Aims

To analyse interactions between novice and expert teachers in their discussions around their practices

To explore the potential for IRIS Connect to be used with ITT students as a pedagogic tool

To support ITT students to develop a set of video resources that can be used with students and school-based partners

Methodology

The research uses a case study methodology, which explores the experience of one novice and expert pairing in the project (Cohen et al., 2018, p.297). Data was gathered from the reflective discussion between expert and novice teachers, which was recorded and transcribed using Otter.ai.

The teachers used a series of discussion prompts to structure their reflections. The prompts included questions such as, why the teacher chose to record the lesson, their rationale for their pedagogical decisions and how the teaching could be improved, as well as an evaluation of a video-supported approach to mentoring.

Data analysis

Once transcribed, the data was independently analysed by two members of the research team. The data was analysed using a deductive approach, where the codes were based on the features of an expert teacher (Whewell, 2019), adapted from Tsui (2009).

The features of an expert teacher can be segmented into three main codes, each with two sub-codes within them.

1 **Integrating aspects of teacher knowledge**
- Establishment of classroom work and learning
- Organisation of learning and the object of learning

2 **Relating contexts of work and exploiting situated possibilities**
- Perceiving and exploiting possibilities for learning
- Maximising available resources for learning

3 **Reflective practice**
- Theorising practical knowledge
- Practicalising theoretical knowledge

Expert Teachers

Literature suggests expert teachers are characterized by traits such as excellent teaching skills, strong subject knowledge (Romar and Frisk, 2017) and pedagogical expertise (Tsui, 2009, p.421), The role of an expert teacher is to provide [preservice] teachers with constructive and critical feedback on their planning, instruction and assessment of pupils (Fletcher, 2012, p.92). The critical difference between expert and novices lies in the way they complete tasks, or the types of tasks, they take on (Tsui, 2009, pp.422-423).

Although the roles of expert teacher and mentor have many similarities, Schatz-Oppenheimer (2017) asserts that there are distinct differences between the two. Reflection, application to context, and integrating classroom knowledge are three dimensions deemed to be significant for the role of a mentor (Whewell, 2019). Whewell (2019) warns that it should not be assumed a very good teacher will become a very good mentor.

Findings

Below are a selection of quotes from the expert and novice teachers.

> We can identify specific pedagogies within the lesson because teaching is not just one, it usually combines multiple approaches. **(1)**

> We both have got something to add - I'm not trying to teach you anything, we're trying to develop each other.

> People don't realise how wordy maths is, if you understand the language, you can quite often pick up what to do. **(2)**

> I ask questions that try to elicit certain answers. Sometimes the answer isn't correct but is a building block and it's important to encourage the attempt. **(3)**

> A lot of things that we've commented on are the same thing, but from slightly different viewpoints.

> I felt [nerves] slightly but not to the same degree as I have done with actual people observing me.

> There are issues around safeguarding to be mindful of with remote mentoring.

> You can watch the video and see exactly what happened rather than hearing someone else's description of it.

> You could video you teaching and then that could be used as a resource for wider CPD anytime.

Discussion

During the tagging process, both expert and novice teachers found they often identified similar pedagogical approaches. Both novice and expert were able to theorise practical knowledge during and reflect upon how further theories could be applied in practice. The teachers reflected upon the use of resources and potential opportunities to further develop learning. It was noted that the expert teacher's comments were more subjective as they referred to the rationale for their pedagogical decisions, where as the novice teacher offered a more objective perspective. Both teachers concluded the process was beneficial for their individual and joint professional development.

Conclusion

IRIS Connect facilitated discussions around the features of an expert teacher; this dialogue facilitated reflection and recommendation between both the expert and novice teacher. Emerging data identifies benefits to this approach to mentoring; the editing and pause feature facilitated a more in-depth discussion related to practice. Watching their own practice was deemed beneficial for reflecting on behaviours and mannerisms and elicited feed-forward suggestions from both novice and expert. Additionally, it affords more flexibility for teachers to reflect upon their practice and to produce video resources which can be used to support CPD.

References

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