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Reflective Teaching in the Context of a Video Club: Nurturing Professional Relationships and Building a Learner Community

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine how four teachers used the seven processes of videotape analysis to develop an analytic approach and reflective thinking towards their teaching. The study was organized within video clubs and was used to describe the interactions among four teachers about their experiences at a language institute. Data were gathered through videotaped recordings of lessons, observations, interviews, transcripts, and questionnaires. Results showed that the seven processes helped these participants develop an analytic approach to their teaching as well as develop their reflective thinking strategies about their practice. These processes created a framework that helped teachers investigate their methods as well as improve their skills to engage in reflective thinking skills. In addition, it was found that the role of the researcher as a facilitator enhanced the participants' learning.

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1. Introduction

Providing teachers with opportunities to actually practice teaching while at the helm of a class as a means of reflecting on the development of their own pedagogic skills, and to observe the work of other colleagues is the central component of teacher education programs (Baumgartner, Koerner, & Rust, 2002). Teacher educators and researchers have supported the inclusion of experience in order to provide teachers with opportunities to merge theory and practice and create dynamic learning experiences (Baumgartner et al., 2002). Developing skills programs for teachers that include pragmatic and dynamic experiences is a significant motive to consider. Teachers need to develop and incorporate strategies and experiences during their classes in order to create significant teaching opportunities for themselves that may aid them in the development of skills related to critical thinking, collaboration, and reflection. The preparation of teachers involves reflection that helps them think about teaching and learning. According to Schon (1987, cited in Akcan, 2010), teachers need to think about their practice during and after instruction as a way to make sense of uncertain situations and events. Teachers should engage in reflection, yet they may need assistance in developing the skills to actively think-in action and think-on-action as well as opportunities to practice these skills.

For Hatton and Smith (1995, p. 35), reflection is “deliberate thinking about action with a view to its improvement”. It allows educators to recognize multiple perspectives, explain the motivations and logic in constructing and assessing decisions, identify the restrictions of personal biases, examine their practice, and build theories (Donahue, 2005). In recent years, reflective teaching has become the focus of efforts in teacher education to bridge the gap between theory and practice and to make use of insider knowledge about teaching (Bailey et al., 1998). Kyriacou (1994, p.10),

for example, asserts that teachers are “the main agents of change of their own professional growth in that teachers who regularly think of their own teaching are more likely to develop and improve their classroom practice”. However, others argue that this information seldom replicates the teachers’ classroom experiences or contributes to their practical theory of teaching (Eylon, 2000; Freeman & Johnson, 1998). Eylon (2000) defines this practical theory as an integrated theory for teaching that evolves from day to day experiences of teaching and being in the classroom.

A number of studies have reported how video clubs encourage reflective thinking (Sherin & Han, 2004; Sherin & van Es, 2005; Tochon, 1999; van Es & Sherin, 2008). Participation in reflection makes teachers better understand their profession and apply this information to future choices. The ability of teachers to ask questions about their teaching in order to investigate their practice can be illustrated through the benefits of video clubs. Meeting in video clubs helps teachers examine students’ ideas closely and interpret their thinking. As Sherin (2003) argues, these new insights enable teachers to make choices based on the students’ remarks and actions instead of relying solely on standard assessments to determine students’ comprehension.

Evidence of the effectiveness of video clubs has been the product of studies that demonstrate how they foster the development of a community of learners (Sherin, 2003; Sherin & Han, 2004; Thomas et al., 1998; Tochon, 1999) and provide a space for teachers to gather in order to examine, discuss, and reflect upon their teaching (Sherin, 2003; Sherin & Han, 2004; Tochon, 1999).

This study aimed at showing how watching video-taped recordings of teacher-in-class activity may help develop a reflective approach to teaching. Video recordings were used to replace live classroom observations

without regard to how the latter might present other viewpoints not possible to detect during video-taped observations. The major goal of this study was to provide evidence of classroom events, enabling teachers to view and review a particular portion of a lesson in order to analyze a specific moment more closely through the help of video.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Reflective Teaching

Teachers engage in various forms of reflective activities for different goals. As argued by Nadler (1989), the origins of these goals can be traced to the works and philosophies of Descartes, Dewey, and Schon. Descartes asserts that the purpose of reflection is self-awareness. Dewey contends that reflective thinking is a form of inquiry into one's practice (1933, as cited in Rich & Hannafin, 2008), and Schon sees reflection as practice-based and artistic, involving reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action (1983, as cited in Akbari, 2007; also see Beck & Kosnik, 2001).

Reflective teaching involves teachers' self-evaluation of their practical theory by means of which they subject their personal beliefs about teaching and learning to critical analysis. The mainstay of reflective teaching is teachers themselves who initiate systematic research into their beliefs and practices, accumulate evidence, identify and make the changes needed, and finally, evaluate and make decisions about the consequences of changes. Information from reflective teaching directly informs teachers of not only what is happening in their own classroom but also who they are as teachers (Richards & Lockhart, 1994). This is necessary practice as teaching often happens so quickly and intuitively that "much of what happens in the classroom is unknown to the teacher" (Richards & Lockhart, 1994, p. 3). Zeichner and Liston (1996) argue that reflection professionalizes teachers who draw

upon accumulated experience and knowledge and justify its use in the classroom practice.

Reflective teaching is, however, complex and vague (Chant et al., 2004; Lee, 2007; Zeichner & Liston, 1996). Zeichner and Liston (1996, p. 48) list five key elements of reflective teaching:

- (1) posing and solving classroom-based problems;
- (2) an awareness of beliefs and assumptions;
- (3) an awareness of the context of teaching;
- (4) involvement in whole school and curriculum issues; and
- (5) personal responsibility for professional development.

Amobi (2006) sees reflective teaching as a theory generating mechanism whereby teachers use critical reflection to create their own personal theories. What links these different conceptualizations is the role of meaning making at a personal level as well as a sense of reformulating and personalizing assumptions, beliefs and theories based on experience.

2.2. Video as a Tool for Education

The presence of video in society serves several purposes and creates opportunities for new possibilities and beneficial efforts. Video can be used for entertainment, communication, and education. Video recordings can be used to analyze and reanalyze in order to give an insight and reflect specific features to aid in understanding and development (Jones, 1999). The use of video in the teaching profession also serves many purposes: (a) to control behavior and train teachers (Allen & Eve, 1968; Sherin, 2004); (b) to study teacher thinking (Berliner, 1986; Sherin & Han, 2004; Sherin & van Es, 2005; van Es & Sherin, 2008); (c) to help teachers reflect on their practice (Harford & MacRuairc, 2008; Sherin, 2004); (d) to analyze and discuss teaching (Rich & Hannafin, 2008; Sherin & Han, 2004; Sherin & van Es, 2005; van Es & Sherin,

2008); and (e) to provide examples of exemplary and poor teaching practices (Copeland & Decker, 1996; Fong & Woodruff, 2003). The studies under consideration are significant to this research because they provide information about the various applications and intentions of video in teacher education.

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, researchers and teacher educators focused on teacher thinking instead of teacher behavior and moved away from behaviorist approaches to teaching (Berliner, 1986; Sherin, 2004; Tochon, 1999) which brought about the notion that by analyzing the teaching of expert teachers, pre-service and future teachers could learn many useful things. Video cases, taped lessons taught by teachers in natural settings and viewed later by other teachers, were produced and used in teacher education programs to help teachers become accustomed to reflecting on their practice and provide them with teaching models (Chaney-Cullen & Duffy, 1999).

Video cases serve different purposes based on their varying interpretations in teacher education (Copeland & Decker, 1996). Video cases may (a) act as a tool to encourage analysis and promote the development of the teachers' construction of educational knowledge (Boling, 2007), (b) help teachers analyze and interpret student thinking (Bulgar, 2007), and (c) serve as a foundation for professional development and reflection (Fong & Woodruff, 2003; Sherin, 2004).

One possible way to deal with the existing beliefs and attitudes of teachers is through the observation, analysis, inquiry, and investigation of one's own teaching (Harford & MacRuaric 2008; Rich & Hannafin, 2008; Sherin & van Es, 2005). These four skills create an awareness of what teachers are doing, how they carry out a task, and why they act and how they react in various situations. These complex decisions and negotiations take place

simultaneously in the teaching process. One complex process is the ability to analyze and dissect this sequence of events (Sherin & Han, 2004; Sherin & van Es, 2005; van Es & Sherin, 2008). Implementing another type of observation, that is examining their own activity on video, may afford teachers an even more valuable and influential kind of observation.

The purpose of video cases, microteaching, peer videos, video clubs, and software applications is to provide future and practicing teachers with a valuable developmental pattern that will inform their teaching, promote lifelong learning, and foster collaboration (Benton-Kupper, 2001; Boling, 2007; Rosaen et al., 2008; Sherin, 2000; Sherin & Han, 2004; Sherin & van Es, 2005; van Es & Sherin, 2008). Teachers who participate in videotape analysis may improve their ability to notice, explain, and develop teaching and learning practices by joining colleagues in critical debates about their profession and their everyday practice (Harford & MacRuaric, 2008; Sherin & Han, 2004; van Es & Sherin, 2008). Developing and nurturing professional relationships with colleagues helps build a community of learners, tear down walls of isolation, and open pathways to analysis, discussion, reflection, and learning (Bulgar, 2007; Harford & MacRuaric, 2008; Sherin & Han, 2004; van Es & Sherin, 2008).

Researchers and educators have learned to consider the usefulness of video and to create and test various uses in hope of helping future and practicing educators think critically and deeply about their practice. The present study examined teachers who viewed their own videotaped lessons in order to develop the necessary skills to learn how to identify significant classroom events, carry out inquiry into their own practice, and reflect on their teaching in order to enhance their practice. The initial development of these skills may occur during teaching experiences in college, but they require enhancement throughout the

teaching career at institutes. Teachers who participate in videotape analysis during their initial years of teaching at institutes may develop an awareness for and appreciation of the need for continual inquiry of their teaching in order to improve their practice.

A number of studies have investigated how teachers may benefit from participating in videotape analysis in the form of a video club (Dymond & Bentz, 2006; Frederiksen, Sipusic, Sherin, & Wofle, 1998; Sherin, 2003; Sherin & Han, 2004; Sherin & van Es, 2005). At present, very little research exists on how to pave the way for reflective teaching in specific instructional settings. Video-taping can help teachers evaluate their own as well as their colleagues teaching methodology and provide them with opportunities to reflect on their own teaching. Unfortunately, teachers hardly acquire the opportunities to encounter their own problems and the challenges students face as an observers because such activities are time consuming and teachers pay less attention to their students and their own method of teaching.

The purpose of this study is thus to investigate how the seven processes (being videotaped, watching one's teaching, selecting clips, providing rationales, asking questions, meeting in the form of a video club, and responding to exit slips) of videotape analysis make teachers develop an inquiry-oriented approach and reflective thinking in relation to their teaching. More specifically, the following questions will direct the current study: How do the seven processes pertaining to videotape analysis contribute, if at all, to the teachers' ability to develop:

- (a) an inquiry-oriented approach to teaching and learning?
- (b) reflective thinking pertaining to their teaching and learning?

2. 3. Reflective Teaching through Videotape Cases

Researchers in the field of teacher education suggest various frameworks for guiding teachers to self reflect on their teaching performance. Even though these guiding frameworks vary in scope and focus, they all aim for teachers to undertake self reflection on teaching performance, with particular attention to the issues about deciding pedagogical contents and teaching activities, selecting learning resources and assessment methods, addressing learning diversity and classroom interaction, and making reflective practice and professional development.

The work by Cook and Duquette (1999) is the most typical guiding framework for four reasons: it is developed by teaching professionals in the field of teacher education; it targets all teachers regardless of specialty areas; it has a balanced content covering all the key areas of teaching competence and it has a systematic and precise classification of dimensions for self reflection. This guiding framework directs teachers to self reflect on their teaching performance in terms of four dimensions of planning and evaluation, classroom instruction, classroom management, and professional knowledge of lesson preparation.

In addition to the provision of a guiding framework for self reflection, the opportunity to use video based technology is also considered to be constructive for teachers to undertake quality self reflection (Dymond & Bentz, 2006). Researchers such as Robinson and Kelley (2007) and Sherin and van Es (2005) consider that videos taken during lessons in teaching practice are trustworthy data for teachers to make a post-lesson self reflection that is grounded in the actual recordings rather than uncertain recollections. The studies by these researchers also find that teachers show significant growth in the levels of reflective thoughts about their teaching,

under a guiding framework for self reflection, after browsing video recordings of lessons in teaching practices. The use of videos is thus considered to be helpful in enhancing the depth and quality of self reflection by teachers.

3. Methodology

The purpose of this study is to investigate how the processes pertaining to videotape analysis assist teachers to develop their teaching abilities and their reflective thinking. The study is a qualitative analysis to determine how the seven processes (i.e., being videotaped, watching one's teaching, selecting clips, providing rationales, asking questions, meeting in the form of a video club, and responding to questionnaires) pertaining to videotape analysis contribute, if at all, to the ability of teachers to develop an analysis to their teaching. The research was developed to explore context and setting and search for a more profound understanding of the participants' live experiences of the phenomenon under consideration. The exploratory nature of the design of this study promotes further investigation and potentially provides an in-depth description of a specific practice to enhance understanding and use of the practice. The cases in this study were English language teachers engaged in videotape analysis (a particular activity). The case study approach has become increasingly more common in the field of educational research because it moves "in the direction of having teachers give voice to their experiences in the institutes and, so, honor them and their connection with in-college courses" (Munby, Russell, & Martin, 2001, p. 896).

3. 1. Participants

The participants in this study were four female Iranian English teachers holding MA degrees in English Language Teaching, teaching at Baran Institute in Shiraz. All four teachers participated voluntarily and had no more than two years of experience in conducting English

classes at the time of data collection. In order to mask their identity, we used hypothetical names and addressed them in the study as Mahsa, Mehrnaz, Helma, and Pegah.

3. 2. Instrument

In order to collect various types of qualitative data over a period of 18 weeks several types of instruments were used. They included questionnaires, interviews, and videotapes of teachers teaching their lessons.

3. 3. Procedure

The purpose of this study was to implement videotape analysis by forming a video club for teachers. The analysis involves recording teachers during the teaching of a lesson, followed by review, reflection, and critical discussions of the lesson with colleagues in the context of a video club. The incorporation of videotape analysis may provide teachers with an interactive activity that encourages reflection and collaboration.

We selected participants and conducted initial interviews with them (see Appendix A for interview questions). One of the researchers met with the participants for an observation session to discuss and practice viewing one video-recorded lesson. The purpose of this observation session was to provide an opportunity for the participants to develop observation and questioning skills by viewing a video case. The participants observed a 10-minute clip from an experienced teacher's lesson and discussed their observations. The researcher, acting as a guide, modeled how to observe and develop questions pertaining to the teaching they had viewed. The participants responded to some predetermined questions (See Appendix B) at the end of the session, the purpose of which was to see if the observation session enhanced their observation skills.

The researcher then videotaped three of each teacher's class sessions. All four teachers held intermediate classes, teaching New Interchange

2 (Richards et al., 1997). In the first step after videotaping, the teacher was met to view the lesson. The researcher asked the teacher what she noticed about the lesson and what questions she had about the lesson. The teacher developed questions about a particular portion of the lesson, and the selected clip(s) conformed to those questions. The teacher brought the list of notes and questions to the video club meeting.

The researcher met all four participants every week in a classroom at the institute for approximately one hour, in sessions we call a video club. In the second step, the researcher met with the teachers in pairs to view the lesson. At these sessions, teachers gave feedback to each other and got prepared to participate in meetings with all four participants. In the third step, the researcher met all four participants together in five video club sessions. At this stage, in each session one teacher chose her clips; after the clips had been viewed, the teacher whose lesson was under consideration restated her questions and all engaged in a discussion pertaining to those questions. During the last session, the teachers talked more about those parts of their lessons which were more challenging to them and provided some context as well as the questions they had about their teaching.

After each session, the participants were emailed a questionnaire in which they were asked questions about the video club session (see Appendixes C-H). The researcher conducted individual interviews with all 4 participants after all the sessions of the video club were completed (see Appendix I for all questions).

3. 4. Data Analysis

As a point of departure for data analysis, we listened to and transcribed all the interviews and video club sessions. Following Strauss and Corbin's (1998) recommendations, we asked the following questions: What is going on

here? What problems, issues, or happenings are being handled through action/interaction, and what forms does it take? What conditions combine to create the context in which the action/interaction is located? Why is the action/interaction staying the same? Why and how is it changing? How do the consequences of one set of actions/interactions play into the next sequence of action/interactions to either alter the actions/interactions or allow them to stay the same? These questions were used during the data analysis process in order to ensure that all pieces of data were carefully scrutinized and considered. Findings were based on the evidence discovered during the analysis and were compiled and reported.

We read and reread the transcribed information, categorized it into topics, taking notes of evidence and descriptions of these topics. We also used constant comparative analysis, whereby we read, reread, coded, and categorized major themes and insights. Then we started to critically challenge the very patterns that seemed so apparent. This allowed us to seek and consider additional reasons for these themes and the associations between them, which required justifying their validity.

4. Results

In an attempt to answer the first research question, the teachers' abilities to develop an analytic approach to their teaching were identified. It was maintained that inquiry starts with a question, followed by attempts to seek solutions and create an awareness of actions. A teacher who uses this problem-based approach to teaching and learning needs to notice classroom events, discover moments of uncertainty in one's teaching, form questions about one's practice, reflect on one's teaching, and seek solutions to the queries at hand. The first finding pertains to how the seven predetermined processes (i.e., being videotaped, viewing one's video, selecting a clip, providing a rationale, asking questions about one's teaching, meeting in the video

club, and responding to questionnaires) the participants engaged in helped them investigate their methods.

The second finding pertains to the participants' ability to develop their reflective thinking strategies (second question). Data analysis revealed that the participants' involvement in the seven processes prompted them to partake in different reflective thinking forms and purposes. The next finding highlights the interconnection between reflection and investigation; participants engaged in reflective thinking to help them investigate their teaching while experiencing the seven different processes of videotape analysis.

Moreover, in answering the research questions, two additional findings were discussed. These findings are important because they contributed to the participants' ability to reflect on and develop an analysis to their teaching. The first of these findings pertains to the act of noticing classroom events and the second finding concerns the processes the participants claimed were most helpful in promoting their development of this approach.

4. 1. Analysis of the Observation Session

The observation session at the beginning of the study was important because it helped prepare the participants for their future investigations. The observation session was conducted to help participants enhance their ability to notice different classroom facets (sequence of events during a lesson, student-student interactions, teacher-student interactions, classroom environment, etc.). The participants were provided with copies of their responses to a question from their initial interviews, which was "What do you do when you are asked to observe a lesson?" to provide them with a visual reminder of their answers. Results from the individual initial interviews indicated that the participants believed their primary focus during observations should be on the teacher.

Other focal points, such as subject matter, activities, student thinking, student comprehension, and classroom environment were not mentioned. The participants' general responses suggested a lack of knowledge with regard to exactly what was to be done when observing a lesson.

During this observation session, the participants were instructed to look for and note specific evidence to support their observations while viewing the video clip. This supporting evidence could be used to add context and clarity to their observations. When Helma stated that she noticed "the teacher was respectful of the students", the researcher asked her to talk more about her noticing to probe for evidence to support her statement. Helma replied, "She praised them on their strengths and expressed her opinion on their responses. She is sitting among them in the circle, open to them, and taking part in the discussion".

Mahsa added her own evidence to the same event by commenting, "She showed respect with the one student who was hesitant to give an answer, because she said to him "You know what? I think you're good at giving opinions and then said why giving your opinion is important". Learning to record supporting evidence during an observation was deemed important by Mehrnaz because she said "it gives us a clearer picture of what took place... and when I look for specific details I'm able to talk more and ask more questions about what I saw".

The observation session allowed the participants to be guided through the process of viewing, participating in a discussion, and then the developing of questions based on observations. It also established a foundation for future classroom observations because the participants acquired knowledge of what to observe. The participants became aware of the importance of noticing events and features pertaining to the teacher, the students, the

content, and the classroom, not just the teacher alone (Santaga et al., 2007). In addition, they began to recognize the importance of collecting specific evidence in order to support their noticings because it allowed them to more clearly explain and interpret what they saw as well as elicit conversation. Also, the participants found the opportunity to develop questions based on their observations and subsequent conversations as a way to understand how to investigate their own teaching methods. We found that the participants began to develop the ability to (a) display an increased awareness of different classroom events and features, (b) support their observations with evidence, (c) discuss their observations, and (d) craft questions based on the observations that established a foundation for future observations.

4. 2. The Processes of Videotape Analysis

Following the observation session, the participants experienced seven predetermined processes of videotape analysis: (a) being videotaped, (b) viewing one's video, (c) selecting video clips, (d) providing rationales for clip selections (e) formulating questions pertaining to the clips, (f) meeting in the form of a video club, and (g) responding to questions. They engaged in these processes to help themselves develop the ability to investigate their practice while they learned how to teach.

4. 2. 1. Being Videotaped

Two of the four participants had been videotaped before this study by the principal of the institute in a classroom before they began teaching. The other two participants expressed unease about being videotaped during the initial interviews. For example, Mahsa commented, "I'm not so liking for being videotaped, watching myself on TV, and listening to myself. It's not the worst thing but it's just not my favorite". Pegah also expressed her anxiety about being videotaped yet stated,

"I think it's a great learning opportunity because it may be one way for me to feel more confidence in myself in the classroom by seeing what I'm actually doing".

We found that both Helma and Mehrnaz displayed the Cartesian meaning of reflection when they drew upon their prior experiences with being videotaped in order to relate to their current situation. Mahsa and Pegah also recognized how being videotaped may help them enhance their practice because it allows them to study their teaching. Simply talking about being videotaped enabled the participants to demonstrate both the ability to engage in reflective thinking about teaching and learning as well as appreciating the importance of examining their methods in order to improve though the participants had yet to be videotaped at this point in the study.

It was found that the major purpose for videotaping participants' lessons during their class experience was to visually capture the lessons. The videos acted as visual aids for the participants to study and reflect upon their practice. For example, Mahsa commented that being videotaped was beneficial because it provided her with a unique tool to develop her practice. Mahsa continued:

It actually helped me knowing that you were going to videotape me, knowing that I would be able to watch and analyze what I did. I think I put more time into planning and thinking about my lessons and students because I knew they were going to be taped. That was a good thing for me. I realized I could learn by watching and analyzing what I was doing.

4. 2. 2. Viewing one's Lesson

Viewing one's practice, the second process, enabled the participants to rely on their teaching experiences, rather than rely on memory or verbal feedback. This is important

because one's recollections of events may not accurately show what took place while oral communication may be misunderstood or misinterpreted. Researchers have asserted that analysis and self-observation of one's own teaching practices are beneficial activities (Harford & MacRuairc 2008; Rich & Hannafin, 2008; Sherin & Han, 2004; Sherin & van Es, 2005; van Es & Sherin, 2008; Wang & Hartley, 2003).

The researcher found that her participation as a guide as well as sharing her observations during the first and second video viewings was helpful to the participants. For example, Mahsa only listed four observations after viewing her first lesson. The researcher shared her observations with her after she had talked about what she had noticed. At one point during our discussion of the researcher's observations, Mahsa replied, "Hmm, I didn't even pay attention to these events when I watched the video". The researcher's sharing of different observations helped Mahsa become more aware of different classroom events during her second and third viewings where she recorded six and eight observations, respectively.

Viewing one's lesson had a profound impact on each of the participants for three reasons. All four participants stated that having the opportunity to watch the videotaped lesson on their own prior to viewing it with others was helpful in developing an analytic approach because (a) they were able to remember the lesson easily; (b) it enhanced their ability to be open-minded during subsequent video club meetings, and (c) it enhanced their ability to notice classroom events.

Viewing one's own lesson immediately following the videotaping was beneficial to participants because they were able to clearly recall the lesson they had just taught. Helma stated:

I think it was the most beneficial just because it's fresh in your mind. I don't think I'd recall the details clearly if I had to wait four days; it was helpful to sit down and watch it immediately after because you knew exactly how the lesson was supposed to go.

Watching their own lesson prepared them for when others would view their lesson during the video club meetings. Mahsa commented, "I liked watching myself because I could even see what I was doing first, so I would rather prepare myself for what other people might notice because other peoples' opinions are beneficial".

The participants received immediate, visual feedback by viewing their own lesson. They were able to record their noticings which helped them enhance their observation skills. Mehrnaz noted the importance of watching her own lesson by stating, "I'm able to notice things while I'm teaching but then I'm able to notice many different things that I couldn't have been able to while I was teaching".

4. 2. 3. Selecting Video Clips, Providing Rationales, and Formulating Questions

The processes of selecting video clips, providing rationales, and crafting questions occurred after the participants viewed their videos. The participants were instructed to begin by selecting a clip, providing a rationale for selecting the clip, and then formulating a question pertaining to the clip. However, these processes did not always occur in the same sequence. For example, the researcher guided Pegah through the processes and began by selecting clips after viewing her first videotaped session. She then proceeded to explain why she selected those clips and then she crafted her questions. After Pegah viewed her second lesson, she began by stating her questions, selecting clips that illustrated her questions, and then explaining why she wanted

to examine those particular moments of her teaching.

The researcher also found that these processes encouraged the participants to engage in reflection-on-action and reflection in order to investigate teaching. The participants engaged in reflection-on-action when they reminisced and talked about their prior teaching activities. Discussing these previous teaching experiences helped them remember moments of uncertainty as well as instances of success. Furthermore, reflection-on-action encouraged the participants to engage in discussions about their methods. They discussed uncertainties and crafting questions about problems related to their methods. They used this problem-based approach in order to study and to enhance their methods. Mahsa, Mehrnaz, Helma, and Pegah each expressed uncertainty about some parts of their teaching after they viewed their videotaped lesson. They selected the clips that showed uncertainties in order to collaborate with their colleagues and think more deeply about their doubts. This uncertainty also encouraged them to create a question about that particular moment and thus became part of their investigation into their own teaching. Helma chose clips that showed her instruction of the topics and subsequent directions for a follow-up activity. Helma selected the clips because she admitted, “I don’t feel my directions were clear enough and I’d like to learn how I can improve on this. I selected a part that I thought needed improvement”.

In choosing what portion of their lesson to share, it was found that the participants offered four reasons to support their selections. These four intentions were classified for selecting clips into the categories of (a) weak points, (b) good teaching, (c) directions, and (d) growth. The first intention, *weak point*, belongs to instances where participants selected clips in order to receive feedback and assistance from their colleagues regarding specific moments of their teaching experience. The second

intention, *good teaching*, refers to selections made so as to share moments of good teaching with other teachers. The third intention, *directions*, applies to clips selected with the aim of receiving feedback on their ability to give directions. The fourth intention, *growth*, indicates a clip selected to show personal growth from one lesson to another. For example, part of Mehrnaz’s first videotaped lesson included a whole class read-aloud section. She sat in front of the room and followed along in her book during the entire read aloud section; she never looked up from her book, and she remained seated the entire time. She did not select any clips from her lesson that illustrated these actions; however, after her first video clip selection session we discussed how she sat in front of the room and failed to monitor students. Her second lesson also included a brief read-aloud section, and she selected a video clip of the read-aloud section because she said, “I liked the way that I looked up as we read together. I found that I was more able to see that they were at least looking at their books while we read aloud”. She continued, “I want students to see that I don’t sit there all the time, with my nose in my book”. It was important for Mehrnaz to illustrate that she had taken what we discussed previously and applied it to subsequent teaching; of equal importance was that she shared this with her colleagues. It was found that the participants’ different rationales for selecting clips played a role in studying their teaching because it determined the focus for their investigation and helped them recognize, describe, and reflect on their moments of uncertainty.

4. 2. 4. Meetings in the Video Clubs

The participants and the researcher met every week in a video club in order to view videotaped lessons and discuss their observations, seek solutions to questions, and reflect on their practice. In addition, participants also responded to questionnaires immediately after meetings. Subsequently, the

questionnaires were sent via email the day after the video club meetings. Video club meetings contributed to the participants' ability to develop an analytic approach to their teaching as well as encourage reflective thinking in different ways.

Data analysis revealed that it took a few weeks for the participants to feel comfortable and build trust to mention noticings that pointed to other participants' weaknesses or mistakes in their teaching. However, the participants developed trusting relationships throughout the study period that enabled them to feel more at ease when sharing observations and discussing the teaching methods of others. For example, Pegah commented, "At the beginning, it was definitely harder to say anything or criticize each other because we didn't really know each other and we were not really sure how others will take it, so that was challengeable". Pegah went on to say, "I felt more comfortable over some weeks because we get to know each other better".

In addition, the participants began to recognize the benefits and importance of collaborating with their colleagues. For example, Pegah explained, "I really appreciate being able to notice about a lesson and then brainstorm ideas of how to improve upon specific concerns. Listening to what others say gives you new ideas and opens you up to things that you never thought about on your own", while Mahsa claimed, "I think working with these three colleagues was helpful because I saw they were doing things that I would want to do". Over time, the four teachers developed an appreciation for the benefits of collaboration that helped them build relationships with their colleagues in the video club.

The participants' ability to notice and discuss a larger variety of classroom events developed over the course of the seven meetings. During the first two meetings, the researcher needed to model the procedure by providing her observations and probing questions. The

remaining five meetings required less guidance because the participants noticed more of what was occurring in the classroom and became more proficient at discussing these observations by suggesting possible solutions with little or no prompting by the researcher.

The participants were able to state and discuss their observations independently during the third and fourth video club meetings. Thus, the researcher's role became one of facilitator and guide instead of leading the discussion. For example, after watching Helma's video clips, Mahsa stated, "I noticed that you used the board many times. I think that was helpful because you modeled the process and asked the students to make grammatical sentences, and when it came time to write their sentences on their own, the students could see it; and it helped those students who were having trouble getting their thoughts on paper". Mahsa continued by mentioning the types of questions Helma had asked (what do you think? why? why not? how do you know?) during the clips. Mehrnaz and Pegah joined the discussion by describing their observations regarding how Helma modeled the process of evaluations and comparisons. Mahsa's observations about Mehrnaz's clips generated a discussion about the sequence of events that took place during her lesson in the fourth video club meeting.

It was found that discussions during video club sessions helped the participants' ability to ask additional questions about their practice which had not been formulated prior to the video club meeting. These questions emerged during conversations in the first four meetings. The researcher helped the participants identify their questions during the initial two meetings; however, the participants developed and displayed an ability to recognize independently, ask their own questions, provide examples of situations that exemplified these questions, and state possible solutions during the remaining meetings. These questions surfaced during

discussions as opposed to the questions the participants formed prior to the meetings.

Data analysis revealed that video club meetings also prompted students to engage in reflection by recalling high school experiences as a way to relate to their current teaching dilemmas. The participants used this knowledge about themselves to offer insights into their existing teaching questions. For example, Helma was reminded of a past experience as a student while the participants discussed the importance of the sequence of events in a lesson during the third video club meeting.

Data analysis revealed that the participants engaged in reflection-on-action and reflection to investigate their practice during discussions in video club meetings. In addition, it was found that all of these forms of reflection took place during a discussion at one video club meeting. For example, Pegah shared clips about a lesson that focused on ethnic dishes. One of Pegah's clips focused on the part of the lesson where she gave the students directions for their project. She began the lesson by writing some grammatical structures on the board and she gave the students directions. She then led the students in a brainstorming activity to help them begin the assignment. All participants engaged in reflection to investigate because they were discussing and asking questions about what they noticed from Pegah's lesson. Pegah took part in reflection-on-action when she talked about the brainstorming part of the lesson. In addition, she disclosed how she engaged in reflection-in-action during the teaching of her lesson.

The video club meetings gave participants the chance to develop the ability to investigate their practice and engage in reflective thinking because it gave the participants the chance to share observations, engage in discussions about their teaching, share ideas about their practice, ask questions, receive feedback, and seek solutions to their teaching.

4. 2. 5. Responding to Questionnaires

The purpose of the questionnaires was to ask the participants to reflect upon their experiences. While the participants engaged in several processes that required them to interact with others, the questionnaires were completed individually. We found that the questionnaires helped the participants articulate their thoughts about what they had noticed, the questions they were having, and how their experience with videotape analysis and the video club aided in their developing an analytic approach to teaching. Responding to questions and statements on the questionnaires gave the participants time and encouraged them to critically think about their practice. Both Pegah and Mahsa wrote about teaching experiences that exemplified their ability to engage in reflection-in-action. This is important because the participants demonstrated their ability to recognize a problem, analyze options, and enact solutions while they were teaching. Further, both participants revealed their experiences while engaging in reflection-on-action. This finding demonstrates that the participating in one form of reflection (reflection-on-action) helped teachers become more aware of their use of a different kind of reflection (reflection-in-action). This is significant because it may help them continue to recognize the importance of engaging in reflection as a way to enhance their teaching.

It was found that responding to the questionnaires also helped the participants engage in reflection-on-action. For example, the participants were asked to talk about the wait-time from one video club meeting. Mahsa responded by writing:

The noticing that started to get me thinking during this meeting was that you have to be prepared and organized. There was a lot of time at the beginning of the lesson that was spent writing things on the board. Even though this was a short amount

of time, it was significant for me to notice that the students were losing focus and interest. It is just a small thing that I noticed.

Responding to the questionnaires did encourage these participants to engage in both reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. In addition, it provided the participants with opportunities to express and share their thoughts about their teaching and learning independently rather than collaboratively.

5. Discussion

This study aimed to implement videotape analysis in the content of language school classes as a way for instructors to develop an analytic approach to teaching. This experience gave teachers an opportunity to view their own teaching methods in order to improve it. Most teachers will most likely enter this experience with preconceived notions and beliefs about its purpose and structure—both positive and negative. Thus, teachers need to be exposed to new theories and practices about teaching in order to expand and enhance their pedagogic activities. Viewing one's teaching methods may enable teachers to more easily link theory and practice, investigate their teaching, collaborate with colleagues, reflect on their teaching, and improve their pedagogy.

The use of video in this study was a powerful tool because it assisted in the participants' ability to develop essential skills of observing, collaborating, reflecting, and inquiring while learning to teach. Video alone did not generate the development of these skills; rather, modeling and guidance as well as engaging in the seven processes of videotape analysis provided the participants with a framework in which to develop their ability to use an analytic approach as well as reflective thinking to improve their teaching.

As a result of the findings, several topics were explored for further research. All of the

participants believed that their involvement in the video club to the following semester would make them develop their investigation and teaching skills more and more. They also believed that continued participation in videotape analysis would help their growth. Research that examines the prolonged participation of teachers in this type of activity may allow them to further develop their ability to an analytic approach as well as enhance their reflective thinking. It will be beneficial for future researchers to lengthen the participation time in the video club meetings because additional issues can be explored as the participants spend more time in the video clubs. Another consideration for future research would be to examine more deeply the interactions and relationships of the participants. Although the relationships among and between participants will be strengthened over the course of the study, future research might examine how the participants act as teachers to one another throughout the various processes. Research that further explores the processes of videotape analysis may enhance teachers' ability to investigate their teaching. Though replicating some of the processes based on the works of Sherin and Han (2004), Sherin and van Es (2005) and van Es and Sherin (2008), the framework of this study, however, included specific processes, such as having participants form questions and respond to questionnaires, in order to help them investigate their own teaching and to promote reflective thinking. Future researchers may enhance this experience by identifying additional processes or refining current ones. To conclude, future research may examine different purposes for the use of video in teacher improvement. Video has been used in different forms such as software applications, video cases, microteaching, and video clubs. The purposes also vary, such as notice significant classroom events, illustrate exemplary teaching, methods to alter teacher behavior, and assess practice. Therefore, research that seeks to suggest extended forms and purposes of video and technology may benefit teachers.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Initial Interview Questions

- 1) What do you think about participating in the video club?
- 2) What are your expectations from this experience?
- 3) What do you want to learn from participating in video analysis?
- 4) Do you expect your colleagues to provide you with feedback during your experiences? What are the benefits of this information you receive?
- 5) Can you explain about a reflective teacher?
- 7) Do you have any question about your teaching?
- 8) Do you think you will get your answers by participating in this experience?
- 9) What do you do when observing a class?

Appendix B

Some Questions after the Observation Session

- 1) What did you learn about how to observe a teacher?
- 3) What did you learn about what to notice when observing a lesson?
- 4) What questions do you have about observing a teacher?

Appendix C

Questions of 1st Video Club Meetings for Teacher Viewing Own Lesson

- 1) What was noticeable in your own clips? If there was anything noticeable or important say why?
- 2) Could you find any answers of questions about your teaching? If yes, explain what you learned about your own teaching and what remain unanswered for you!
- 3) Will you use the information you attained from viewing your lessons? How?
- 4) Was videotape analysis helpful to you? Describe your reason!

Appendix D

Questions of 2nd Video Club Meeting for Teacher Viewing Lesson of a Colleague

- 1) What was noticeable in your colleagues' clips? If there was anything noticeable or important, say why?
- 2) Did you have any suggestions or advice for your colleagues? If yes, explain them.
- 3) Do you have any questions about your own teaching? If yes, ask your questions.
- 4) Did watching others' videos and discussing their videos with them help you learn about teaching? If yes, in what way?
- 5) Do you think participating in videotape analysis is helpful or not? Why.
- 6) Describe the pauses that occurred during today's meeting.

Appendix E

Questions of 3rd Video Club Meeting for All Teachers

- 1) What did you notice when viewing Helma's lesson?
- 2) Talk about your thoughts about the topic and suggestions you have about your teaching.
- 3) How do you find answers to your questions?
- 4) Talk about the pauses that you made at this session.

Appendix F

Questions of 4th Video Club Meeting for All Teachers

- 1) What did you notice when watching one of Mehrnaz's clips? Why is it important?
- 2) Talk about your thoughts about the topic and suggestions you have about your teaching.

- 3) How do you find answers to your questions?
- 4) Talk about the pauses that you made at this session. (When did it occur? What did you do at that moment?)

Appendix G

Questions of 5th And 6th Video Club Meetings for All Teachers

- 1) What did you notice when watching one of Pega's clips. Why is it important?
- 2) What did you notice when watching one of Mahsa's clips. Why is it important?
- 3) Talk about the pauses that you made at this session. (When did it occur? What did you do at that moment?)
- 4) You participate in the video club after doing a lot of activities such as (being videotaped, watching & selecting a clip, viewing others' clips, recording noticings, discussing noticings, asking questions, and investigating your questions). Talk about how these activities affect your development as a teacher.

Appendix H

Questions of 7th Video Club Meeting for All Teachers

- 1) What did you notice when watching one of Hema's clips? Why is it important?
- 2) What did you notice when watching one of Mehrnaz's clips? Why is it important?
- 3) Several discussions have emerged during our meetings (in regards to calling on students, read alouds, giving directions, etc.). You asked some questions at least about one of these topics; select one of these questions, or any question you have in your mind. Talk about how you've found answers or information about this question. Did you learn anything about these questions or topics?
- 4) Would you recommend this experience (videotaping, viewing, & discussing your teaching) to other teachers? Why or why not? Talk about whether participating in these activities has any benefits for you or not.

Appendix I

Interview Questions after All Video Club Meetings

- 1) Talk about your experience in the video club.
 - a) What was more noticeable when viewing the video clips?
- 2) Discuss engaging in conversations with your colleagues.
 - a) Discuss whether these discussions were beneficial or not? If so, in what ways?
- 3) Talk about the various processes you engaged in during videotape analysis (viewing your video, selecting a clip, crafting questions, viewing your video with colleagues).
 - a) Which parts of these meetings were most helpful to you? Why?
- 4) What did you learn about your own and your colleagues teaching?
- 5) What did you learn about being a reflective teacher?