Promoting Student Teachers’ Reflections in an English Teaching Practicum: An Analysis of After-class Supervisory Conferences in the Netherlands

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Abstract
The trend in educating teachers in the Netherlands has shifted toward an experience-based approach with the student teachers continuously reflecting on their development. In this context, the role of coaches in a practicum is more focused on how to promote the effective reflection of the student teachers. This paper analyzes dialogues between student teachers and their coaches by using the framework of Heron’s Six Categories of Intervention (Heron, 2001; Randall and Thornton, 2001). It was found that the use of prescriptive and catalytic interventions characterize the differences between the coaches. Some example cases were extracted in order to discuss how different types of interventions functioned in the dialogues. It was concluded that student teachers were more actively involved in dialogues when facilitative interventions preceded or were combined with authoritative ones.

1. Introduction
There is no doubt that practicum is an essential part of initial teacher training program. In order for student teachers to successfully start their professional development, the roles of coaches are important since they are expected to help student teachers learn from their own experience in an effective way. The philosophical concept of learning from experience goes back to the classical work of Dewey, who emphasized the importance of reflection in the learning process. Subsequently, the role of reflection in the process of professional development is further clarified in the work of Schön (1983), with the use of the term, “reflective practitioner.” In the theoretical development of experiential learning, Kolb (1984) proposed a cyclical model in which concrete experience is conceptualized through reflective observation, leading to better actions. Such development influenced the curriculum reform of teacher education throughout the world.

In the Netherlands, initial teacher education is provided in two streams. One is a four-year bachelor program at University of Applied Sciences (Hogeschool or HBO) and the other is a one-year postgraduate program at Teacher Training Institute of Research University. During the late 1980s and 1990s, experience-based teacher education took shape in a program developed by IVLOS Institute of Education, Utrecht University. According to Korthagen, Kessels, Koster, Lagerwerf, and Wubbels (2001), “practice and...”
theory, or better practical experiences at placement schools and activities at the institute, have an equal place and alternate during the one-year program” with “a frequent commuting from experiences to reflection on those experiences” (p.37). Nowadays, the development of reflection skills is formalized in the assessment criteria required for teacher qualification.

As a method of effective reflection, Korthagen (1985) and Korthagen et al. (2001) proposed the ALACT model, which has been developed from Kolb’s model, emphasizing on the role of coaches supporting the cycle of experience and reflection of student teachers. The ALACT model is a five-phase reflection model, which consists of (1) Action, (2) Looking back on the action, (3) Awareness of essential aspects, (4) Creating alternative methods of action, and (5) Trial. Korthagen et al. (2001) explains that “a need for more theoretical elements can come up in phase (3) and these can be brought in by a supervisor, but they are tailored to the specific needs and concerns of the teacher and the situation under reflection” (p.44). Student teachers tend to create alternative methods without being aware of essential aspects. Thus, coaches need to ask student teachers various questions so that they can reflect not only on their behavior (doing) but also on thinking, feeling, and wanting, from the perspectives of both teachers and pupils. Student teachers, through dialogues with their coaches, are encouraged to notice their unconscious behavior or its disagreement with their own thinking, feeling, and wanting, which helps them find better alternative actions by themselves.

On the other hand, such reflections tend to focus on negative aspects in which they usually identify the problems and seek solutions, which could be demotivating for student teachers. To cope with such imbalance, Korthagen and Vasalos (2005) integrated the concept of “core reflection” with the ALACT model and put less emphasis on extensive analysis of problematic situations. He called the goodness of student teachers “core quality” and encouraged reflections on the levels of identity (Who am I in my work?) or mission (What inspires me?). This widened the levels of reflection from “what to do/how to do it?” to “how am I as a teacher?” It is meaningful for student teachers to have a clearer vision of the teaching profession in harmony with their personal strengths.

Recently, the concept of core reflection was put in practice in various scenes of teacher education (e.g., Korthagen, Kim, & Greene, 2013; Evelein & Korthagen, 2015). This means that core reflection brings about the third perspective, which is “person,” as student teachers themselves are an agent for connecting “practice” and “theory.” Korthagen (2017) states that “[it is] crucial that such an approach builds on the concerns and gestalts of the teacher, and not on a pre-conceived idea of what this teacher should learn” (p.399). In this context, the role of a coach is to help student teachers verbalize and be aware of the cognitive, affective, and motivational aspects of their own reflection.

2. Method

2.1 Research Questions

The overall aim of this research is to explore how coaches in the Netherlands are involved in student teachers’ reflection in a practicum. In order to describe the features of
coaching and reflections of student teachers, the following research questions are proposed.

RQ1: What types of intervention do coaches make in after-class supervisory conferences?
RQ2: How do coaches help student teachers’ reflection in dialogues?

2.2 Participants and Data Collection

In March 2018 and March 2019, the author visited primary and secondary schools in the Netherlands to collect data. The contents and method of data collection is accredited by the Research Ethic Committee of Yamaguchi University. The author asked the participants to sign on the consent form after explaining the research aim and how the collected data was to be treated. A total of 11 students and 7 coaches agreed to provide data on after-class supervisory conferences, which were conducted one-on-one and were recorded by a voice recorder. In order to have a good understanding of dialogues between coaches and student teachers, the author observed the classes taught by the student teachers. Some classes were taught in a bilingual or international school, where they integrated subject contents and the target language. The conferences were conducted in English, which is not the native language of the student teachers. Nonetheless, their English proficiency was good enough to have reflective talks comfortably. The recorded data was transcribed by a transcription service for the use of analysis. The dialogues presented in this paper were modified to make it readable as long as it didn’t change the meaning of utterances.

2.3 Analytic Framework

Heron’s Six Categories of Intervention (Heron, 2001) were adopted to analyze the dialogues. This model was initially published in 1975 but has since expanded from the field of counseling to a wide range of professions concerning human development, including teacher education. Randall and Thornton (2001) adapted the categories to the field of teacher education and described the following features (see Table 1). Hyland and Lo (2006) used the six categories to analyze the dialogues of after-class supervisory conferences conducted by 6 student teachers and 4 coaches in Hong Kong. Based on the dialogue analysis and pre-post interview, it revealed that the percentage share of the six categories differed depending on the coaches’ beliefs about the aims of the feedback, their preconceptions of the roles that participants would play, their prior knowledge of particular student teachers, and so on, which indicated that the types of intervention by coaches would be influenced by various factors in context. It is interesting to note that “most of the coaches allowed students to give their view at the beginning of the consultation, but after that, very few chances were given for them to express their feelings or return to the points that were not on the coach’s agenda” (Hyland & Lo, 2006, p.182). This tendency brings about an important question—How can coaches balance authoritative and facilitative intervention in dialogues without preventing student teachers’ reflection based on their own experience?
Table 1  Six Categories of Intervention (Randall and Thornton, 2001, pp.78-79)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authoritative</th>
<th>Facilitative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prescriptive:</strong> Refers to interventions in which the advisor tries to directly tell the teacher what they should do, how to improve or modify the way they teach.</td>
<td><strong>Cathartic:</strong> This type of intervention seeks to allow a client to discharge their emotions and feelings, particularly painful feelings of grief, fear and anger.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Informative:</strong> The advisor gives the teacher information or knowledge about the situation on which to base a new awareness and to facilitate personal growth.</td>
<td><strong>Catalytic:</strong> This type of intervention from the advisor encourages self-discovery by the teacher by questioning on critical areas and by bridging knowledge and information to the surface.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Confronting:</strong> The advisor tries to raise the teacher’s consciousness about certain aspects of teaching by sharing perception of the teacher’s behavior and challenging the teacher on areas which are seen as problematic and through this confrontation to improve their teaching skills.</td>
<td><strong>Supportive:</strong> In a supportive intervention, the advisor affirms the worth of the teacher, primarily by praising and valuing what has been done.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 What Types of Intervention Do Coaches Make in After-class Supervisory Conferences?

Table 2 shows the basic data of participants and the percentage share of the dialogues. There were huge differences in the number of words and the shared percentage between student teachers and their coaches. In total, student teachers shared 45.5% and coaches shared 54.5% of the dialogues, but the student teachers talked more than the coaches in Case 7 and 8 while the coach is quite dominant in Case 10. The result shows that the Dutch student teachers in this study shared more parts of the dialogues, as compared to the result of Hyland and Lo (2006), which reported that the percentage share of student teachers in the total dialogue was 26.7%.

Table 3 shows the percentage share of the intervention types. Authoritative interventions are a rather traditional approach of coaching, where knowledge and information is directly provided to the student teachers. Many of the authoritative interventions are informative, and are followed by prescriptive interventions, while confronting interventions appeared less. This result is understandable because confronting intervention is the most threatening and should be carefully used so as not to discourage student teachers' motivation.

In this paper, the main focus is more on facilitative intervention, especially catalytic intervention, which mainly consists of a series of questions given by coaches to elicit student teachers’ views and encourage their self-discovery. This plays a key role in supporting student teachers’ reflection, and facilitates transition of the phases in the ALaCt model. There were noticeable differences in the percentages of catalytic intervention. It is interesting to note that coaches of the teacher training college (C1, C2,
and C3 in Cases 1-6), who have deep knowledge of Korthagen’s approach, tend to use more catalytic interventions. One coach (C4 in Cases 7-9) who also made many catalytic interventions, did not have working experience at a teacher training college, but had actively attended university seminars on coaching while the other coaches (C5, C6, and C7 in Cases 10-12) did not have such training.

Table 2  Data of Participants and Percentage Share of the Dialogues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>ID of student teacher (study year)</th>
<th>ID of coach (years of service)</th>
<th>School type</th>
<th>Student teacher (%)</th>
<th>Coach (%)</th>
<th>Total number of words (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case 1</td>
<td>ST1 (1st)</td>
<td>C1 (12*+18**)</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>542 (24.8)</td>
<td>1,646 (75.2)</td>
<td>2,188 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 2</td>
<td>ST2 (1st)</td>
<td>C2 (24*+8**)</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1,171 (45.2)</td>
<td>1,419 (54.8)</td>
<td>2,590 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 3</td>
<td>ST3 (4th)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>558 (40.0)</td>
<td>838 (60.0)</td>
<td>1,396 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 4</td>
<td>ST4 (3rd)</td>
<td>C3 (40*+25**)</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>1,534 (49.3)</td>
<td>1,576 (50.7)</td>
<td>3,110 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 5</td>
<td>ST5 (3rd)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>1,465 (63.2)</td>
<td>853 (36.8)</td>
<td>2,318 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 6</td>
<td>ST6 (4th)</td>
<td>C4 (12*)</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>2,286 (55.0)</td>
<td>1,871 (45.0)</td>
<td>4,157 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 7</td>
<td>ST7 (4th+)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>2,337 (45.9)</td>
<td>2,750 (54.1)</td>
<td>5,087 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 8</td>
<td>ST8 (4th)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>231 (19.3)</td>
<td>969 (80.7)</td>
<td>1,200 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 9</td>
<td>ST9 (2nd)</td>
<td>C5 (37*)</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>499 (35.5)</td>
<td>905 (64.5)</td>
<td>1,404 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 10</td>
<td>ST10 (post-graduate)</td>
<td>C6 (26*)</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>1,090 (41.6)</td>
<td>1,528 (58.4)</td>
<td>2,618 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 11</td>
<td>ST11 (4th)</td>
<td>C7 (unknown)</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>13,945 (45.5)</td>
<td>16,714 (54.5)</td>
<td>30,659 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Years of service at school  ** Years of service at teacher training college
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Prescriptive (%)</th>
<th>Informative (%)</th>
<th>Confronting (%)</th>
<th>Total authoritive (%)</th>
<th>Cathartic (%)</th>
<th>Catalytic (%)</th>
<th>Supportive (%)</th>
<th>Total facilitative (%)</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case 1</td>
<td>4 (12.5)</td>
<td>10 (31.3)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>14 (43.8)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>11 (34.4)</td>
<td>7 (21.9)</td>
<td>18 (56.3)</td>
<td>32 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 2</td>
<td>4 (10.0)</td>
<td>8 (20.0)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>12 (30.0)</td>
<td>2 (5.0)</td>
<td>18 (45.0)</td>
<td>8 (20.0)</td>
<td>28 (70.0)</td>
<td>40 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 3</td>
<td>2 (8.3)</td>
<td>8 (33.3)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>10 (41.7)</td>
<td>1 (4.2)</td>
<td>8 (33.3)</td>
<td>5 (20.8)</td>
<td>14 (58.3)</td>
<td>24 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 4</td>
<td>4 (18.2)</td>
<td>6 (27.3)</td>
<td>1 (4.5)</td>
<td>11 (50.0)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>11 (50.0)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>11 (50.0)</td>
<td>22 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 5</td>
<td>1 (3.6)</td>
<td>7 (25.0)</td>
<td>1 (3.6)</td>
<td>9 (32.1)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>17 (60.7)</td>
<td>2 (7.1)</td>
<td>19 (67.9)</td>
<td>28 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 6</td>
<td>4 (10.3)</td>
<td>13 (33.3)</td>
<td>2 (5.1)</td>
<td>19 (48.7)</td>
<td>5 (12.8)</td>
<td>9 (23.1)</td>
<td>6 (15.4)</td>
<td>20 (51.3)</td>
<td>39 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 7</td>
<td>1 (4.2)</td>
<td>8 (33.3)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>9 (37.5)</td>
<td>5 (20.8)</td>
<td>7 (29.2)</td>
<td>3 (12.5)</td>
<td>15 (62.5)</td>
<td>24 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 8</td>
<td>3 (5.6)</td>
<td>16 (29.6)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>19 (35.2)</td>
<td>6 (11.1)</td>
<td>25 (46.3)</td>
<td>4 (7.4)</td>
<td>35 (64.8)</td>
<td>54 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 9</td>
<td>13 (18.3)</td>
<td>24 (33.8)</td>
<td>1 (1.4)</td>
<td>38 (53.5)</td>
<td>2 (2.8)</td>
<td>21 (29.6)</td>
<td>10 (14.1)</td>
<td>33 (46.5)</td>
<td>71 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 10</td>
<td>12 (35.3)</td>
<td>13 (38.2)</td>
<td>6 (17.6)</td>
<td>31 (91.2)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>2 (5.9)</td>
<td>1 (2.9)</td>
<td>3 (8.8)</td>
<td>34 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 11</td>
<td>7 (29.2)</td>
<td>8 (33.3)</td>
<td>1 (4.2)</td>
<td>16 (66.7)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>1 (4.2)</td>
<td>7 (29.2)</td>
<td>8 (33.3)</td>
<td>24 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 12</td>
<td>13 (38.2)</td>
<td>7 (20.6)</td>
<td>2 (5.9)</td>
<td>22 (64.7)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>6 (17.6)</td>
<td>6 (17.6)</td>
<td>12 (35.3)</td>
<td>34 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>68 (16.0)</td>
<td>128 (30.0)</td>
<td>14 (3.3)</td>
<td>210 (49.3)</td>
<td>21 (4.9)</td>
<td>136 (31.9)</td>
<td>59 (13.8)</td>
<td>216 (50.7)</td>
<td>426 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The result shows that the specialized training and experience of coaching influences their types of intervention. The percentage of catalytic intervention is higher than the result of Hyland and Lo (2006), which reported that the percentage of total catalytic intervention of coaches was 19.7%. Interestingly, there was a tendency of coaches who made less catalytic interventions to make more prescriptive ones. It is worth mentioning that the coaches familiar with Korthagen’s approach made less prescriptive interventions. The amount of supportive interventions differed among coaches, and they were occasionally used so student teachers were aware of their core quality (strengths) that could be integrated in their teaching, and build their confidence to enhance their motivation. Cathartic intervention is necessary for student teachers to effectively balance thinking, feeling, and wanting in the process of their reflection, but not many cathartic interventions appeared in these cases. A possible reason for this is that the coaches and student teachers may have felt reluctant to express emotional comments—especially painful feelings of grief, fear, and anger—due to the presence of the researcher.

The main topics discussed in the dialogue were enhancing learner involvement, dealing with learner differences, giving effective directions, ensuring the achievement of targets, managing teaching time, and so on. The following section describes how the coaches made interventions in some of these topics.

3.2 How Do Coaches Help Student Teachers’ Reflection in Dialogues?

3.2.1 Cases That Promote Student Teachers’ Reflections
(Scene from Case 1)

In this class, the student teacher was telling pupils (age 4-5) the story of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. Most pupils followed the activity well in the beginning, but some of them stood up and started fidgeting while she was reading aloud.

C1: You asked me to pay attention to your responses to unwanted behavior. What do you think I observed? [catalytic]
ST1: I told some children to sit down but didn’t say anything to the others as they were just standing.
C1: Why didn’t you say anything? [catalytic]
ST1: That’s a good question.
C1: If you want to improve on how you managed the situation, what would you do differently? Do you have any idea? [catalytic]
ST1: I could ask the class teacher how she would deal with this, and how she reacts to such incidents during her lesson—what she accepts and doesn’t accept. I could also go through my school books and research this.
C1: Yes. The important elements here are your school books, mentor, and my feedback, but the most important is *you*. So, you have to answer the question, “Why do I not react to the two children standing while I keep the ones who are close to me seated all the time?” [catalytic]
In the first part of this scene, the coach questioned the student teacher to make her look back on her teaching behavior. When the coach asked the reason for her behavior, she could not answer immediately, and said she would take practical tips from the mentor or find theoretical solutions in her books. Then, the coach encouraged her to explain her intentions to make her aware of the importance of her own intentional choices as well as of the knowledge she receives from various resources, to enhance her reflection skills.

(Scene from Case 5)

In the next scene, the coach helped the student teacher look back on her way of giving directions. The student teacher conducted a Number Bingo game, but found it difficult to control the pupils (age 6-7) who made much noise and interrupted her when she was reading out numbers during the game. As a result, many pupils could not concentrate on the game, while the student teacher had to frequently warn some pupils during the class activity.

C2: You asked a lot of questions to the whole class, such as, “Is everyone ready?” “Who doesn’t understand?” or “Why do you make so much noise?” They’re very general questions. Did they work for you? [catalytic]

ST5: My question “Why are you so loud?” could have been more individual. But questions like, “Is everyone ready?” or “Who doesn’t understand?” was general. I praise them for answering, to show them that if they don’t understand something, it’s okay to ask and that they don’t have to feel bad.

C2: Okay. Then my next question is, what do you expect them to answer? Because you’re asking, “Why are you making so much noise?” How do you expect them to answer that? [catalytic]

ST5: I don’t know the word in English but it’s a rhetorical question. I say, “Why are you making so much noise?” so they think about their own actions. But I don’t really expect an answer.

C2: That would be in my tip, because concluding this, it would seem a good thing. “Would you like to do it again?” Were you aware of that kind of questions that we’re asking? [catalytic]

ST5: No. I don’t think so. I know I asked a rhetorical question, but I noticed while we are talking that it was not what I wanted to say.

C2: That’s interesting. What would you have liked to say? [catalytic]

ST5: I would have liked to say, “Could you please stop making so much noise? I can’t talk or continue the game like this.”

C2: And what’s the difference between that question and the former one? [catalytic]

ST5: The difference is I’m using “I” in the sentence and telling the children why I can’t do anything.

In response to the coach’s first question, the student teacher was drifting away from the topic of discussion, so the coach asked further questions in order to guide the student
teacher’s reflection. This coach used a series of questions to make the student teacher realize the importance of clear and focused directions. The student teacher successfully understood why she needed to change her behavior, with the coach’s intervention.

(Scene from Case 8)

The class included a 40 minute lesson comprising two activities: (1) a listening exercise to choose future expressions used in the text; (2) a team competition using the online vocabulary game, Quizlet. However, the listening exercise took more time as the pupils asked many questions, and were restless and noisy. As a result, the student teacher could not spare time for the team competition.

ST7: I really have to pay more attention to time as, sometimes, I get so engrossed in helping all of them that I lose track of time.
C4: You did help a few and you called them “little fires,” and the more timid girls didn’t really know how to ask questions. [informative] What happened after that? [catalytic]
ST7: The ones that did know how to ask questions spoke up more and created a little chaos, drifting off the topic. I had to correct them and steer them towards the lesson again.
C4: How did that feel? [cathartic]
ST7: Not very good.
C4: Is there any solution for this problem? [catalytic]
ST7: If I had given clearer instructions and controlled the ones who were speaking constantly, I think it would have made things easier. Then, the students who were speaking up would have asked questions. Instead of helping them right away, it would have been best to set everyone to work and tell them to be quiet. If everyone is quiet and working, I can check if they have understood what I have said.
C4: What does that mean for the process of your lesson? [catalytic]
ST7: Sorry, what do you mean by “the process”?
C4: I mean, the overall process of the lesson.
ST7: It will be less chaotic and I think they will also learn more.
C4: So, in the end, you’ll be more efficient. Does this mean you could have finished the Quizlet? [informative]
ST7: Yes.

In the first part of this dialogue, the coach tried to understand the class experience of the student teacher, and then elicited ideas by catalytic interventions. After the student teacher proposed alternative actions for improvement, the coach summarized it in the dialogue, asking some more questions to make the student teacher recognize the essential meaning of such actions. This way of intervention ensures that student teachers think and organize their thoughts by themselves with the help of a coach.

3.2.2 Cases That Limit Student Teachers’ Reflections

For the purpose of comparison, we will have a look at other dialogues in which
authoritative intervention dominates.

(Scene from Case 10)

In this example, in which the coach and the student teacher talk about time management in class. The student teacher taught grammar (conditionals, including the difference between the second and third conditional) to students (age 14-15) and made them form sentences using the grammar point. As some students were confused, she had to answer their questions, which took much time. She had planned a reading exercise after the grammar activity, but didn’t get the time to do it. She told the students to do some exercises by themselves, but many students lost interest as the class was restless.

C5: The problem in this lesson was about the use of “if”, which took too long to explain. [confronting]
ST9: Yes, I noticed.
C5: I already explained it to them yesterday and then you started to explain it again as if they didn’t know anything about it. [confronting]
ST9: I realized that as well. I should have done a comparison instead, like what’s the difference between the two.
C5: Yes. Make it shorter as we only have 40 minutes. [prescriptive]
ST9: Yes.
C5: You spent practically the whole lesson time on this. [confronting]
ST9: I know but that wasn’t my intention as I had planned to do a lot more. Then, I had to answer all the students’ questions.
C5: But at a certain point you have to say, “We will come back to it.” or “I will discuss it again, later.” or “There will be another moment to ask your questions.” [prescriptive]
ST9: All right.
C5: So, when there are moments where you feel like you are losing them, you just give in by telling them to start reading the text right now. [confronting]
ST9: No.
C5: Yes, in my view, that’s giving in because you said, “start reading the text” even though there was already a lot of noise, talking, and restlessness all around. [informative]
At that moment, you should have said, “Get back to the lesson, all of you. We will read it together or we will listen to the text.” [prescriptive]
ST9: But we weren’t reading the text.
C5: In the last part you said, “start reading the text” and “start working in pairs”. [informative]
ST9: No, we only did the first and second exercise. I said we won’t be reading the text.
C5: Yes, but you did leave them to do it by themselves. [informative]
ST9: Yes.
C5: Why? [catalytic]
ST9: I did that because the group likes to work in pairs rather than individually.
C5: But I told you that there are moments that you can let them go and there are moments
that you should take them back. [prescriptive]

ST9: Okay.

In this dialogue, the student teacher tried to explain why she had difficulty in managing the lesson time, but the coach immediately gave direct alternative actions to deal with the problem. It sounds as if the student teacher wanted to explain her own view, but finally accepted the coach’s advice. In this dialogue, it is difficult to see the process of the student teacher’s reflection and it is not clear whether she found logical reasons to modify her teaching behavior.

The next example highlights the coach’s initiative of dialogue, and the student teacher’s short answers. They talked about the use of a white board for better directions.

(Scene from Case 12)

C7: I saw information from a page of the textbook on the board but you were checking the homework. [informative]

ST11: Yes, I was.

C7: It would be good to write it on the board. [prescriptive]

A number of children were confused as you had one thing on the board and were talking about something else. [confronting]

ST11: I see.

C7: You do have the material to project on the board. [informative]

ST11: Yes, I have got access to it.

C7: So I would have that on the board or nothing at all. [prescriptive]

ST11: Okay.

C7: Just write the exercises on the board. [prescriptive]

ST11: Yes.

C7: This would come in handy for the crossword puzzle. When you were talking about Across and Down, you could have shown it on the board and could have perhaps even filled in the answers on the board or called a student to do it. [prescriptive]

ST11: Yes.

The coach talked for the most part. While the coach was talking about the situation and how to use the board, the student teacher listened quietly to the coach’s advice. This kind of discourse structure is often seen in traditional coaching sessions, in which the role of the coach is to provide student teachers with knowledge of desirable teaching behaviors. While this kind of feedback is useful, there is also the risk of losing opportunities for student teachers to understand their own experience.

4. Conclusion

The ways of intervention greatly differ depending on the coaches. This is characterized by the use of catalytic intervention. In cases where active participation of student teachers in the dialogues were seen, catalytic intervention functioned as the
starting point for student teachers to express their perception of the class they taught and also their wishes and ideas for improvement. In order to make helpful interventions, it is important to understand the experience of student teachers. If we agree that the nature of teacher development is learning from experience, we need to admit that what the coaches observed in the class could be different from what student teachers experienced in the classroom.

Thus, it would be a good strategy to start with facilitative intervention. It is necessary to put aside coaches’ interpretation and try to have student teachers talk about their behavior (doing), thinking, feeling, and wanting. Coaches need to listen to student teachers with empathy and ask them questions through catalytic intervention to reveal the deep meaning of their experience. In this process, cathartic intervention could be used effectively to have student teachers express their conflicts and fear, from which they better understand themselves, and how it affects their teaching behavior. Supportive intervention helps student teachers become aware of their strengths, which would be continuously developed until they built confidence to be able to integrate them in teaching.

Authoritative intervention works better if it is combined with facilitative intervention. If authoritative intervention dominates throughout the dialogue, there is a risk of hindering active participation of student teachers, but it could function when they understand, through discussion with coaches, the essential aspect of certain problems and possible solutions. Prescriptive intervention, without considering student teachers’ intentions, could prevent their professional development. Informative intervention was frequently used when coaches wanted to share something that happened in the class or to give relevant information by summarizing what student teachers said. Such intervention is necessary because sharing a fact provides the basis for discussion and clarifying ideas brings about further actions on the part of student teachers.

It is indicated that some trainings and experiences are necessary for coaches so that they can use different types of interventions effectively. The Dutch Association for Teacher Educators (VELON) support the professional development of teacher educators, and turn out more coaches who can make constructive intervention. In addition, student teachers also need to learn the principles of reflective approach and how it functions in their professional development, which is a part of the teacher training program in the Netherlands. They have the opportunity to reflect on their development with peers in college. Generally speaking, half of the teacher training program consists of practicum and its reflection, and most student teachers in the Netherlands are familiar with self-directed learning from school education, which makes it easier for them to accept the method.

The educational environment and systematic support in the Netherlands give a basis to conduct reflection-based approach in teacher education, but it also provides implications to the practicum in Japan, where student teachers spend incomparably shorter time (officially only a few weeks) in placement school. Authoritative intervention works to have student teachers quickly identify the issues they need to improve and try out during practicum, but facilitative intervention is still needed for them to take the initiative concerning learning from through their own experience.
The cases analyzed in this study are limited to one-on-one dialogues between coaches and student teachers, but group reflection called “intervision” (Bellersen & Kohlmann, 2016) is also an important opportunity for reflection, where participants pose questions to help the case provider clarify the issue and think up alternative actions for improvement. The level of reflection is not limited to skills or behavior but includes beliefs and personal views of the profession. Lastly, the importance of meta-reflection is also an issue, because self-directed teachers are expected to monitor whether their reflection is functioning effectively on professional development.

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