

The problem:

The development of good educational practice is complex. Video technology for teacher training has been in use for over 40 years. With an increase in use in recent years, this research asks how might video best support the development of good practice? When reflecting, the teacher's recall of activity may be inaccurate and prone to bias. With video, the teacher can view the actual footage away from the 'heat' of the action. However, the extent to which revisiting video footage enables reflection that leads to teachers' professional learning is not well understood. According to Tripp and Rich (2012), the effect of reflection on developing practice is unclear. Literature in the field suggests that development of practice requires time, support, co-operation, collaborative effort and collective development.

Literature Review

Dunne (1993) argues that practice is complex and it is acquired and developed cumulatively and co-operatively over time by its insiders. Teachers are considered a primary source of generating knowledge about teaching and learning for themselves and others. (Tenenbergh, 2016; Stenhouse, 1975; Lytle et al., 1992). However, factors influencing the transfer of good practice are time-consuming and involve mutual agreement in a joint endeavor, according to Fielding et al. (2005). Video is an authentic artefact that enables viewing of actual classroom practice. However, teachers do not necessarily gain new insights about their practice simply from watching classroom video. Brophy (2004) and Harford et al. (2008) argue that the use of video has to have a clear purpose. Fevre (2004) cited in Brophy (2004) suggests that development of good educational practice requires co-operating teachers to have safe and collaborative ways of relating to and working with the teacher trying to improve their practice through the use of videos of their practice.

Methodology

This small-scale, qualitative research study adopts constructivist-interpretive methodological positions based upon accounts of experience. Methods include audio recorded interviews; case studies collected in five sites of adult learning and ethnography. These are used to capture the complexities of real-life situations, so that specific concepts and phenomena can be studied in greater levels of depth.

A Clearer View of the Classroom

*"It is not enough that teachers' work
should be studied: they need to study it
themselves."*

Lawrence Stenhouse (1975 p.143)

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Key Findings

- Watching oneself in action may not be enough to develop the critical reflection skills needed for professional learning.
- Building strong collegial relationships through encouraging non-hierarchical informal contact may enable teaching staff to safely view content and create genuine dialogue on practice as well as creation of and ownership of development areas.
- Through mutual agreement, having others to provide an additional view of the events may provide a springboard for collegial dialogue.
- Those with hierarchical power may restrict teacher learning by providing their view of the teaching activity observed. Observers may be conflicted about their own agency.
- Time for practitioners to view and reflect prior to dialogue may help to draw out musings, reduce fear or embarrassment of sharing.
- Allowing for privacy and ownership of video content fosters trust. Whereas, video recording for sharing may invite fear and performance anxiety.
- Developing the 'noticing' skills and pedagogical knowledge of practitioners may be important, so that they move quickly beyond surface-level information to focus on important aspects of teaching.
- Video content showing learner impact appears essential and practitioner footage appears less important but still valuable.
- Video appears to increase the teacher's capacity to think about their own practice and own it, and view content as an observer.
- Peers may find providing honest feedback challenging.

Conclusions & Recommendations

- Develop a common framework for reflective discussion based on a dialogic approach through non-hierarchical collegial collaboration.
- Develop mentoring and coaching to enhance teachers' ability to collaboratively reflect.
- Develop the 'noticing' skills and pedagogical knowledge of teachers so as to interpret significant features in a classroom: moving from surface-level detail to meaningful critical reflection.