Internet-based collaborative work groups to foster teacher reflexivity in a joint, international, pre-service language teacher education program

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CONFORME
Project rationale

(cognitions, education, mediations)

Emotions and cognition scaffold all human actions (Damasio, 2006)

Pre-service language teachers’ education in France = knowledge acquisition > personal/professional development (Abendroth-Timmer & Aguilar, 2014; Aguilar, 2013)

Pre-service language teachers (PLT) => emotions about/in/for language teaching & learning

PLTs' emotions <=> learners' emotions <=> affordances (Swain, 2013)

PLTs' emotional (self-)analysis as education (Macazaga López et al., 2013)
CONFORME
Project set up

54 international, applied linguistics masters students in Paris 3 (n1= 43) and Siegen (n2= 11)

Phases #1 to #4: pre-interviews & tasks design (#1), tasks implementation (#2-#3), data collection & analysis (#4)

Hybrid environment (web 2.0 tools + classroom-based)

French as lingua franca, 4-5 students groups

Tasks:

(1) Collaborative writing of two synthesis:
   1) What is the ideal learner in your opinion?
   2) Did you experience teachers that you can think of in a positive or rather negative manner? Why? What was special about them?

(2) Composition of an analysis grid for classroom observation

(3) (individual) composition of a reflective report
You need to act differently (in a new manner):
“Development task” requires a reflective dimension:

Transformation or maintenance of opinions and knowledge on the basis of “Experiences of contingency or contradiction.” (Hericks, 2008: 64-66)

Function of emotion is:
“to evaluate perceived changes in the environment for their significance to the subject's concerns and to motivate adaptive responding to the situation.” (Salmela, 2014: 3)

**Reflex** – description of the “objects of experience”

**Refle-ct-ion** – Self-reference as well as interaction with the “object of perception and cognition”

**Refle-x-ive approach** – Analysis of the context of your own cognitive processes (Müller, 2010)
Research questions & methods

Which dimensions of reflexivity are initiated by the interlocking of theoretical knowledge and practical experience?

Are there any emotions involved?

Theory-driven analysis of seven reflective reports in MAXQDA (exemplarily)

Inter-rater reliability: coding by two raters (coders)
“The fact that we have worked in a different way to what we are used to has allowed me to consider the advantages of using ICT. It has also helped me understand its limits. I will use all of this as a benchmark for the implementation of future teaching units based on these tools.” (John, RB 15)
“As regards practical skills, the design of the observation grid has helped me a lot because I intend to improve it in the upcoming sessions of CONFORME as well as to use it during my internship in order to analyse the teaching practice of the pre-service teachers. The critical perspective that I have developed and reinforced as a participant in CONFORME will help me have an opinion about the pre-service teachers’ practice.” (Léo, RB 34)
Practical experiences in the project + theory → prospective own professional “acting competence”

“Theoretical materials and the methodological reflexes that have been made available within this working frame have made us aware of the challenges of working at a distance. As we have had to meet some difficulties, we have had to think about how we organize and implement strategies that we can use again when we take charge of a class.” (Zoé, RB)
Theory → Learning experiences → Theoretical insights

“The theory helps confirm our previous impressions and that is how the theory may come in handy. Without the light shed by the theory, I may not have been able to take into account today the emotional factors that influenced my past learning experience, namely as a language learner.” (Tom, RB, 8)
“This reflexive report was an opportunity to sum up and translate into words my feelings related to the project. Thanks to the report I realized how much theoretical and practical knowledge I have acquired in the field of teaching [...]” (Léo, RB 36)
Projection of professional “acting competence”

Theoretical insights

Theoretical discussion (CONFORME)

Practical experiences (CONFORME)

Former teaching experience

Former learning experience (school, ...)

Reflex

Reflexive approach

Development

Subject

Task

Peers
Limits and findings

Limits

- No actual form of PSLTs’ classroom-based observation
- One may wonder about

Findings

- Reflexivity depends on the kind of interaction and contexts
- Only a vague concept of the actual performative behaviour with regard to the future role as teachers
- Recognizable individual forms with regard to the interrelationship of theory and praxis
- Reflexivity depends on the formulation of the task (specifics of written “insight-description’’
References


