

# Dialogue, Feedback and Rehearsal in Pre-Service Teacher Education: An Interactional Ethnography

Susan M. Bridges, Monaliza M. Chian, Kennedy K.H. Chan, Annie K. L. Chan, Carol KK Chan, Diana P.L.

Lee, Arthur M.S. Lee

sbridges@hku.hk, mchian@hku.hk, kennedyckh@hku.hk, annieckl@hku.hk, ckkchan@hku.hk,  
leediana@hku.hk, amslee@hku.hk

The University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** This Interactional Ethnography of video-recorded dialogic feedback aims to unpack the nature of Assessment for Learning (AfL) interactions in a one-year pre-service teacher education program in Hong Kong. A telling case study traces the talk and actions of one novice teacher, her peers and teacher educators from in-class rehearsals to her group's public 'Capstone' poster presentations. Pellegrino's (2018) concept of 'evidentiary reasoning' supported analysis of the consequential impact of these dialogues on pre-service teacher learning.

## Issues addressed and significance

In the field of initial teacher education, Lampert et al.'s (2013) approach to 'rehearsal' provides novice teachers the opportunity to unfold their pedagogical decisions when they are enacting certain practices in controlled settings. For this study, we adapted the 'rehearsal' model for an Assessment for Learning (AfL) context and explored the consequential nature of expert and peer feedback in the reflection-assessment-feedback-response loop central to AfL dialogic processes (Ghousseini, 2017).

## Theoretical and methodological approaches

The orienting framework for the study is theoretically grounded in sociocultural understandings of the dialogic relationship between social activity and collective-individual cognitive development (Mercer & Howe, 2012). An Interactional Ethnography (IE) examined the consequential nature of AfL as it was socially-situated and discursively constructed across times, events and configurations of actors and artifacts (Green & Bridges, 2018). Context

The iteration of the Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) program enacted in this study was the outcome of a major reform instituted in the 2016-17 academic year (Bridges et al, 2018). The Capstone Assessment is a compulsory pass/fail hurdle assessment where students make public how their understandings of educational theories informed their developing practice. Poster presentations in a conference-style event were grouped according to a common experiential learning element and shared reflection (Harfitt & Chow, 2019).

### Analytic approach

The video-based Interactional Ethnography (IE) provided a logic-of-inquiry and principled approach to examine the (co)construction of the local knowledges, cultural practices, and situated processes by members within a social group through their daily discursive and social interactions (Green & Bridges, 2018). Micro-ethnographic discourse analysis aimed to address the question, *How do Assessment for Learning (AfL) interactions in 'rehearsal' sessions support pre-service teachers' learning in performance-based assessment?* Telling case study analysis of six video recordings of in-class rehearsals and final presentations for one disciplinary group identified rich points associated with feedback and 'evidentiary reasoning' traced from rehearsals to performance (Pellegrino, 2018).

## Preliminary results

The initial tracing of the discourse and associated actions for one telling case focuses on Student A14 (Fig. 2). We traced her video recorded interactions and audio recorded reflections across the events and evolving actors to illustrate how the process of rehearsal with dialogic feedback supported A14's deeper reflection on growth across the program. Her initial presentation focused on her learnings regarding the *relationship between scaffolding and constructivism* where she proposed that *they cannot exist together* and were *contradictory* (Event 1). Feedback from one rehearsal teacher (T1) explored this tension in praxis with '*I want to ask you to think a bit more. So students don't have enough prior knowledge. Does it mean then, that we cannot ask them to do more inquiry or what other things can we do to adjust these prior knowledge gaps?*' This in-class rehearsal feedback then drew wider discussion between A14 and her peers in the presence of the co-teacher (T2) (Event 2). This open dialogue is one instance in the videos where we see assessment as the vehicle for pre-service teacher learning. Following

the final Capstone performance, A14 retained her discussion of this issue with a new audience (Event 3). In the final Q&A, a teacher in the audience (T3,) who was not a class teacher, also picked up on this conceptual thread and commented, *This tension between scaffolding and constructivism. Do you want to elaborate on this some more?*” Student A14 and her co-presenters then elaborated and exemplified through sharing various accounts from their teaching practice proposing that their adoption of several strategies for scaffolding *tried to strike a balance so that they* (scaffolding and constructivist approaches) *can be beneficial to each other.*





<b><u>In-class Rehearsal</u></b> <b><u>(30/04/2019)</u></b>		<b><u>Capstone Event</u></b> <b><u>(10/05/2019)</u></b>	
<b>Event 1</b> Student (A14) Rehearsal Presentation & Teacher (T1) inquiry	<b>Event 2</b> Teachers (T1 & T2), peer and student (A14) dialogic feedback	<b>Event 3</b> Capstone Performance (A14)	<b>Event 4</b> Capstone Q&A (A14, group peers & T3)
			

Figure 1. Tracing student A14 across rehearsal and performance events.

## Preliminary findings, conclusions and implications

This IE analysis adopted Pellegrino’s (2018) concept of ‘evidentiary reasoning’ as a process of observation, cognition and interpretation to make visible how the dialogic formative feedback in the rehearsal session (Events 1-2) was consequential to this student’s autonomous revision as enacted in the reformulated Capstone performance (Events 3-4). By tracing A14’s evidentiary reasoning across events and interactants, this preliminary video-based analysis indicates that the use of rehearsal for AfL designs can not only support pre-service teacher cognition through representing knowledge about pedagogy, but also facilitate reflexive re-interpretations based on expert and peer feedback on observations. In following the principles of Assessment for Learning (AfL), the design of this Capstone task adopted a novel approach to pre-service teacher ‘rehearsal’ in order to promote dialogic reflection over time and across events. The above analysis indicates that this design may bring initial teacher education a step closer to Shulman’s (1987) early vision of “teaching as comprehension and reasoning, as transformation and reflection” (p. 13).

## References

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