The pedagogy of teacher educators: revealing practical wisdom through explicit modelling

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Goal of this research

To learn more about 'explicit modelling':
A pedagogy in teacher education

Congruent teacher education

The education of (student) teachers (curriculum and practice of teacher educators) is in line with the principles that are preached

Swennen, Korthagen & Lunenberg, 2004, p. 17
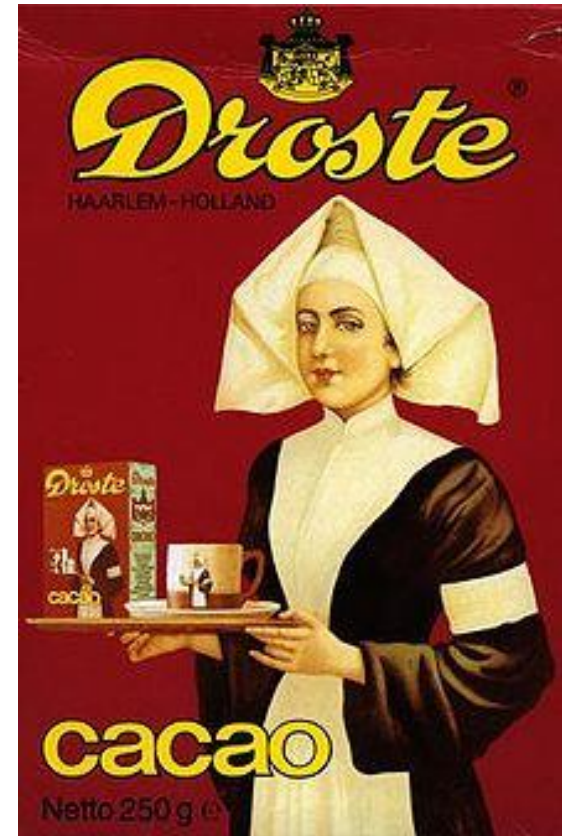
Explicit modelling

Two levels:

- "Doing" in practice that which TEors expect students to do

- Offer students access to the pedagogical reasoning, feelings, thoughts and action accompanying the practice of teacher educators

Loughran & Berry, 2004, p. 194

Definition for this research

Explicit modelling:

a pedagogy whereby

the teacher educator unpacks

her practice and the related reasoning

for the benefit of

student teachers or peers

Why use modelling?

- Moral obligation

- Professional responsibility for improving teaching

- Experiencing teaching complexity in our own practice

(Zeichner, 2012)

CAN ADULTS LEARN?
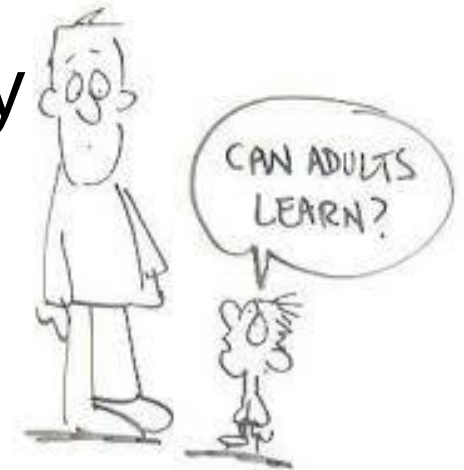
A model for explicit modelling

LEVEL 1: Implicit modelling: exemplary teaching as teacher educator without explaining

LEVEL 2: Explicit modelling by critical reflection on practice

LEVEL 2a: Building from explicit modelling, the teacher educator considers how their practical wisdom relates to public knowledge

LEVEL 2b: Building from explicit modelling, the teacher educator encourages reconstruction by student teachers

Participants and context

Jane secondary education - part of University of Applied Sciences - subject Dutch

Mary: primary education - part of University of Applied Sciences - subject visual arts

Martin: primary education - post 1992 university - subject mathematics

Gary: primary education - post 1992 university - special needs and inclusion

All between 10 and 20 years of experience as teacher and at least 8 years experience working in higher education

Method

Videotaping teacher education taught sessions

Video process recall interviews with the teacher educator as they view and select incidents or themes from the video of their session

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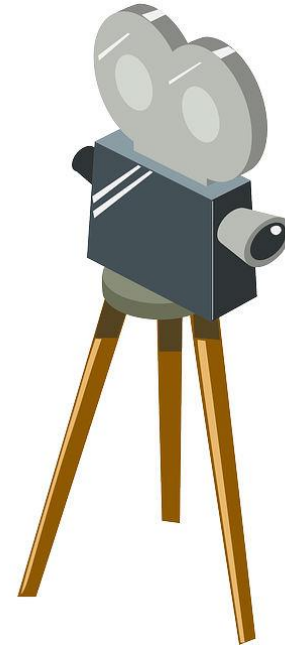
Differences between the teacher educators

Apparent role

Jane: subject teacher

Martin: teacher educator and subject teacher

Mary and Gary: subject teacher and teacher educator

Addressing their students

Jane: as experienced teachers lacking subject knowledge

Gary as student teachers who need to develop specific aspects of their practice

Mary and Martin: as novice teachers lacking pedagogical knowledge and subject knowledge

Using school practice during classes

Jane: emphasis on what pupils must learn

Mary: emphasis on how pupils may learn

Martin and Gary: emphasis shared between what and how pupils may learn

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LEVEL 1: implicit modelling using congruent teaching

Jane: playing out examples, addressing students perceived needs, practice during class, teaching to the test.

Mary: pedagogical model as lesson content explained with the help of examples from practice. Process aspects are emphasised complementing school's attention on products. Methods used are also useful at school.

Martin: students complete and discuss learning activities also used in school classrooms

Gary: seems alert to the impact his own teaching behaviours can have in shaping and influencing his student teachers

LEVEL 2: explicit modelling of critical reflection on practice

Jane: hardly at all, insights during interview

Mary: explaining and some deliberate reflection on lesson enactment. Explicit modelling mainly in individual or small group conversations. Expert knowledge from outside is deliberately brought into the classroom

Martin: no evidence in this session of explicit modelling but claims to have explained the approach to student teachers at start of module

Gary: is seeking to model good teaching but holds back from critically reflecting on his own teaching

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Results

Teacher educators often use congruent teaching but in varied and complex ways...

Teacher educators have varied and often restricted views and practices of explicit modelling...

The quality assurance context of teacher educators may influence their modelling...

Discussion questions

- Is it feasible and useful to differentiate between congruent teaching and explicit modelling in research and in practice?

- To what extent are *teacher educators* able to model the processes, thoughts and knowledge of experienced *teachers*?

- How might we develop our research project most usefully from this initial stage?

References

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