AAUSC Issues in Language Program Direction 2011

Educating the Future Foreign Language Professoriate for the 21st Century

Heather Willis Allen
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Editors

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Editors

Publisher: Beth Kramer

Editorial Assistant: Laura Kramer

Media Editor: Morgen Murphy

Marketing Program Manager: Caitlin Green

Manufacturing Planner: Betsy Donaghey

Rights Acquisition Specialist: Mandy Groszko

Design and Production Services: PreMediaGlobal

Library of Congress Control Number: 2011938980

ISBN-13: 978-1-133-31278-9

ISBN-10: 1-133-31278-0

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Boston, MA 02210
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Printed in the United States of America
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 15 14 13 12 11

Chapter 11

Video Reflection in Foreign Language Teacher Development

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Introduction

Traditional approaches to the preparation of foreign language (FL) teachers have consisted of methods courses or training programs that had as their goal the mastery of practical teaching skills, routines, and behaviors as well as content knowledge. To develop expertise, student teachers engaged in activities such as the observation of expert teachers and practice of new skills in artificial settings, like simulations and microteaching. In this paradigm, rooted in the behaviorist view of learning, the relationship between trainer and trainee was generally one of expert–apprentice, creating the potential for "learned helplessness" by making the responsibility for change the trainer's and not the trainee's, by perceiving learning as the one-way transfer of knowledge and formulas, and by closing off pathways to autonomy and reflection (Wajnryb, 1992, p. 11). Recognition that this traditional approach is problematic has brought about a rethinking of the role of education and of the student–teacher relationship, in teacher education as well as in other fields. In higher education, Barr & Tagg (1995) called for a shift from an instruction paradigm to a learning paradigm, and Fink (2003) appealed for a change from a content-centered approach to a learning-centered approach (for similar calls, see Swaffar, Arens, & Byrnes [1991] in FL teaching and Freeman & Johnson [1998] in language teacher education). Wesch called his own approach "anti-teaching" and for him "focusing on the quality of *learning* rather than the quality of *teaching* transforms the entire educational agenda" (2008, p. 5).

The Modern Language Association, in its 2007 Report, urged similar changes within the area of collegiate FL education as well as in the professional preparation of future FL faculty, calling for "substantive training in language teaching and in the use of new technologies" (p. 7) to meet the curricular needs of language departments. As in higher education, there is a paradigm shift in FL teacher education from *training* to *development,* emphasizing the nature of teacher learning, as informed by the fields of sociocultural theory and teacher cognition, as well as different views on the knowledge base of teaching (Johnson, 2009; Richards, 2008). In educating the future FL professoriate, it is our responsibility to provide graduate student instructors (GSIs) with opportunities to challenge and reconceptualize paradigms of teaching in preparation for their academic careers.

How can we do this? First, by adopting a learner-centered paradigm in our FL teacher education courses and professional development activities, we provide a structure that will serve as a model for GSIs' own emerging understandings about teaching and learning. Second, by designing opportunities for teacher reflection, research, and collaboration, GSIs will acquire the critical reflective skills necessary for future contexts of teaching and, in particular, for confronting the curricular challenges put forth by the 2007 MLA Report—a rethinking of the dominant two-tiered configuration and a redefining of FL learning goals including "translingual and transcultural competence" (p. 3). This curricular transformation may have a better chance of actual realization in FL departments if its seed is planted in the teacher education course, by prompting GSIs to question preexisting models of teaching and learning that do not work and to imagine and construct new paradigms. When teachers are engaged in reflective teaching activities and self-directed inquiry-based research, they become agents for change not just within their own classrooms but also in the larger context of the professional community, i.e., department, program, or institution (Allen, 2011).

The FL teacher education course should be a learner-centered experience that supports GSIs in becoming autonomous teachers and self-directed researchers who are prepared to engage in a career-long process of professional development. Inquiry-based approaches promote teacher development through reflective examinations of their teaching practices and student learning, and may include peer observation, self-observation, individual and social reflection, action research, and collaboration. Although many teacher education courses include processes to foster reflection, researchers and teacher educators have noted that novice teachers oftentimes fail to arrive at levels of reflection that are beyond descriptive and superficial, due to a lack of experience or support; many new teachers focus only on mechanical or technical aspects of their teaching, survival concerns, and teacher actions, rather than on student ideas and learning (Gebhard, 1999). Davis labels this *unproductive reflection* because novice teachers "…do not consistently provide evidence for their claims, generate alternatives to their decisions, or question their assumptions…Furthermore, their reflection may lack focus and be judgmental rather than evaluative" (2006, p. 282). For Davis, *productive reflection* involves questioning assumptions and having a more complex way of viewing teaching, which is more likely to result in teacher learning. In our current study, we endeavor to understand how to address these challenges with teacher reflection—how might we modify our course activities to foster deeper levels of reflection and engagement beyond simple description.

Recognizing the scarcity of existing research on the effect of video technology on the professional development of FL GSIs, we sought to improve teacher reflection and learning in our course through the integration of video technologies based on research conducted in K–12 teacher education. The primary research question we sought to answer was: (1) How can video technologies address the challenges faced by teacher educators in teaching reflection to student teachers? The subquestions that emerged were: (2) In what ways does video technology scaffold teacher reflection? and (3) How does video-based reflection interact with other types of pedagogical tools for reflection such as journaling, peer classroom observations, action research, and the portfolio method

of self-assessment? The following section situates our study on research on FL teacher reflection and the integration of technology to support teacher learning and development.

Research Design

Theoretical Framework

Teacher Reflection Reflective practice can support teacher development because "…when teachers inquire into their experiences, the intellectual tools of inquiry enable them to confront the taken-for-granted assumptions about what is and is not possible within the context in which they teach, to systematically problematize their own everyday practices, and to regularly ask the broader questions of not just whether their practices work, but for whom, in what ways, and why." (Johnson, 2009, p. 122)

Two early influences on the idea of reflection in teaching are Dewey (1933) and Schön (1983, 1987). Dewey defined reflection as "active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends" (Dewey, 1933, p. 9). Reflection arises out of a problem or question regarding teaching or learning and involves purposeful inquiry such as observation, data collection, and experimentation, with the goal of finding solutions to the problem. Dewey identified three attitudes necessary for reflection: *open mindedness (seeking alternatives)*, *responsibility (recognizing consequences)*, and *wholeheartedness (continual self-examination)*.

For Schön, teachers construct knowledge through *reflection-in-action* (at the moment of teaching) and *reflection-on-action* (action planned before or after teaching). Through their existing repertoire of values, beliefs, and practices (their practical knowledge), teachers frame their experiences, identify specific problems to address, reframe the situation from a new perspective, propose actions to solve the problem, and test and evaluate the solution. This process is cyclical in nature, for the teacher discovers new questions that call for reframing and reflection. This is in line with the new paradigm on teacher learning which "is characterized as a long-term, cyclical process of dialogic mediation in which learners' everyday concepts are made explicit and reflected upon, and scientific concepts are introduced, experimented with, and used in various meaningful and purposeful activities, with the goal of advancing learners' cognitive abilities so that they can accomplish goals or solve problems on their own" (Johnson, 2009, p. 63).

Technology and Teacher Education Video technologies have been adopted into teacher education as early as the 1960s, but primarily in K–12 teacher education and considerably less so in higher education contexts. As a tool to promote reflection and reflective teaching, video has been used to model best practices, to show video-based cases, to record microteaching sessions, in video clubs, and for self-analysis.

What are the benefits of video integration in teacher education? First, in a complex teaching event, teachers cannot attend to everything at once during the act of teaching; video provides a permanent record that is re-playable and which

allows viewing with a different focus each time. Sherin states, "[V]ideo affords the opportunity to develop a different kind of knowledge for teaching—knowledge not of 'what to do next,' but rather, knowledge of how to interpret and reflect on classroom practices" (2004, p. 14). Viewing teaching on video allows teachers time to interpret and analyze classroom events without the need for immediate action, paying special attention to student ideas, progress, and understanding. Video can also be edited, collected, and reorganized in different ways and together with other media and artifacts, used to create digital libraries or archives that allow for random access by users. These multiple resources can challenge FL GSIs to explore the interconnections and complexities of teaching decisions related to a particular teaching situation or issue. Video can also become a permanent record of one's teaching and professional development over time that allows for collaboration with other teachers, opening up new instructional possibilities and exposing teachers to different teaching contexts.

Recent research in K–12 teacher education looks at the effects of digital video editing and annotation tools on teacher learning in preservice and in-service courses. Student teachers videotape their own teaching in authentic contexts and use editing tools to view and clip significant segments of the teaching event. These video clips then serve as the basis for reflection (see Bryan & Recesso, 2006; Calandra et al., 2006; Calandra et al., 2008; Preston et al., 2005; Rich & Hannafin, 2008; Rosaen et al., 2008; Sherin & van Es, 2002; Yerrick et al., 2005). Video clips prompt individual and social reflection through video cases (Hewitt et al., 2003), in video clubs (Sherin & van Es, 2009), and in models of best practices (Dhonau & McAlpine, 2002). In these studies, the goal of the application of video tools is to foster teacher reflection, to help student teachers understand the effects of their pedagogical decisions and actions, and to make more salient the connection between expert and experiential knowledge. In the context of higher education research, studies examine the integration of online technologies (CMC, SNS, discussion, blogs, wikis) to support FL teacher reflection and GSI development (for example, Arnold et al., 2005; Arnold et al., 2009; Arnold & Ducate, 2006; Arnold & Paulus, 2010; Lord & Lomicka, 2007), but few focus specifically on the effect of video technologies to support these goals (see Geyer, 2008). We seek to fill this gap by extending the investigation of technology and FL teacher education to the use of video, in the context of a university-level FL teacher education course.

Participants and Their Teaching Context

This project was integrated into a FL teacher education course for GSIs that met for two 75-minute sessions per week during a 15-week semester. GSIs are required to take this course during their first semester teaching in our department. The participants were thirteen GSIs (nine women and four men) enrolled in the course, and their ages ranged from 22 to 38. Ten were American and the other three were from Peru, Venezuela, and Italy. Of the 13, 12 were M.A. students and one was a Ph.D. student. All were teaching either beginning or intermediate language courses—10 in Spanish and 3 in Italian. They had varying levels of teaching experience: Most had none, three had taught FL courses at the college level, one at the secondary school level, and three had taught their native language abroad.

The primary goal of the course is to provide novice GSIs with opportunities to observe and apply new ideas and teaching principles through reflective exercises and to develop their own personal theories of FL teaching through decision making, planning, experimentation, and self-analysis, to guide them to become autonomous self-directed professionals. Course content includes an overview of approaches and methods for teaching FL to college-level learners, learner diversity, lesson composition, and content, while course activities include in-class discussion, microteaching, observation, reflective essays, an action research paper, research presentations, and a teaching portfolio.

The Tool

The *E-folio* is an experimental course management system (CMS) developed at the University of Virginia. It is designed primarily to handle document-based exchanges among instructors, GSIs, and students, but it has three additional features which are not typically found in CMSs: (1) It lets users manage individual as well as shared video archives, and makes it fairly easy for them to embed streamed video clips from the archives into their exchanged documents; (2) it facilitates peer interaction among users by allowing for commenting and discussion spaces to be generated around any of the documents exchanged; and, (3) it allows students to generate and export individual portfolios of their work while archiving maintains a "course portfolio" (made up of the students' portfolios) as part of an exportable record of the course.

The design of the *E-folio* and the goals of the FL teacher education course match well. *E-folio* afforded us the opportunity to examine the impact of video technology in tandem with a pedagogy based on reflection. The individual teaching portfolios fostered reflection and ownership of work by the GSIs, while the course portfolio and the archive fostered parallel reflection and active research by educators and researchers interested (like us) in the scholarship of teaching. In effect, the *E-folio* was an appropriate tool not just for collecting data on GSI reflection but for focusing assessment of the impact of a specific reflective technology (video) on the process as a whole.

One of the issues we faced was whether the GSIs' facility with the technology was going to affect our results. We provided GSIs with two training sessions and also made ourselves available for individual support throughout the semester. Several GSIs needed individual attention and made use of the extra help we offered. The primary exposure the teachers had to the video technology as well as the *E-folio*'s portfolio capabilities was through the two training sessions.

In the first training held during the third week of the semester, we demonstrated how to access the tool (through our institutional CMS) to complete written assignments (reflective essays and action research paper). GSIs learned how to view and clip videos, and how to embed video clips into their written work. This training taught GSIs to access the video archive and to view and respond to the videos through focused reflective assignments (best practices activity). We also introduced the commenting and discussion tools they would use to respond to each other's work as peer reviewers and observers (self/peer observation activity). In addition, GSIs learned how to set up and operate the FlipCams for

self-videotaping of their classroom teaching. The second training session, which took place in week 13 of the semester, showed GSIs how to construct a teaching portfolio online; in *E-folio,* documents are selected for inclusion, together with a final essay or cover letter, and *E-folio* pulls these together into an exportable portfolio. Once the portfolios were collected, we used the search and retrieval features in the *E-folio* to organize the data by assignment and by GSI in preparation for data analysis.

Course Activities: Reflection Through Video

The activities of the course are designed to help GSIs appropriate reflection as a tool for ongoing teacher learning and professional development. In particular, this study looks at the effects of video technologies on reflection in various course activities and specifically the promotion of deeper levels of reflection and engagement as a result of using video in each course activity. We integrated video technologies in three types of reflective activities described below. Peer review was an important component of this work; GSIs each chose a partner with whom they worked throughout the semester, reviewing each other's videos and written work on *E-folio* to provide feedback using the commenting feature online.

Course Activity One: Supporting Access to Best Practices Through Video

The first type of activity contained three assignments and involved the integration of a video archive of experienced FL teachers in action as models of best practices as a means to bridge teaching theory and practice and to generate reflection (Scida & Firdyiwek, 2008). We videotaped 15 classes in our department taught by GSIs, lecturers, and professors. We selected short clips that related to course topics, and these were uploaded and archived onto our course *E-folio* Web site. GSIs viewed preselected video clips outside of class and wrote reflective essays guided by prompts. They also edited and embedded (directly into their reflective essays) video clips they selected from our online video archive as additional examples of good teaching practices. These reflective essays were posted and shared on our course *E-folio* Web site and became the basis for online peer reflection and in-class discussions.

In the first assignment completed in week four, GSIs reflected in two stages, engaging with video clips in both a passive and an active way. In the first stage, they watched two preselected video clips that represented best practices in giving effective instructions and wrote a reflective essay making connections to course readings. In the second (active) stage of the assignment, they watched other videotaped lessons from our online video archive and selected, edited, and embedded a clip of another teacher that for them represented good teaching practice in instruction giving, justifying their clip choice in a short reflective essay. The second assignment (week nine) had only one stage of reflection (passive), where GSIs watched preselected video clips representing best practices in teaching grammar and wrote a reflective essay connecting theory and practice, but they did not edit or embed a selected clip themselves. The third assignment (in week 10) paralleled the first one—teachers watched two preselected video clips that represented best practices in error correction and wrote a reflection making connections to course readings. In the second (active) stage of the assignment, they watched other videotaped

lessons from our online archive, and they selected, edited, and embedded a clip of another teacher that for them represented good teaching practice in error correction, justifying their video choice in a short reflective essay. These three assignments were spread out during the semester to coincide with coverage of particular topics on the syllabus.

Course Activity Two: Supporting Self-Observation and Peer Observation Through Video In the second type of activity, completed in week six, GSIs self-videotaped their classroom teaching using a FlipCam and wrote a reflective essay in two stages—first based on memory alone and then after viewing their videotaped lesson. Their videos were uploaded onto our course *E-folio* Web site, where they could view the entire teaching event and select and edit short clips that demonstrated significant teaching or learning moments for them. GSIs shared these clips in our online archive and embedded selected clips directly into their online reflective essays, as visual evidence for the arguments made in their writing. As a final step, they set tasks or posed questions for their peer reviewer as he viewed the clips and read the reflective essay, after which the peer reviewer responded to the task or questions in the online comment box.

Course Activity Three: Supporting Action Research Through Video In the third type of activity, GSIs engaged in a semester-long project in which they investigated a concern in their own teaching, read current research on the topic, designed and implemented an experiment, collected and analyzed data, and reflected on the results. As part of the project, GSIs videotaped their own teaching at least once and edited and embedded selected video clips directly into their papers as supporting evidence for arguments made. The peer reviewer viewed the clips, read the paper, and offered comments. Research results were shared during in-class presentations.

Data Collection and Analysis

The primary data sources were essays and projects collected from the three reflective activities previously described for the 13 participants. We used the search and retrieval features in the *E-folio* to organize the data by assignment and by participant in preparation for data analysis. Secondary data included the following: (1) an online anonymous survey distributed at the end of the semester, (2) a videotaped group feedback session on the last day of the course which was later transcribed, (3) the final reflective essay included in each teacher's teaching portfolio, and (4) final online course evaluations.

We examined the primary data to analyze levels of reflection, having decided to use Hatton and Smith's (1995) criteria for levels of reflection for coding (see Table 11.1): *descriptive reflection, dialogic reflection, critical reflection,* and *contextualized reflection*. Each researcher read through the data and coded reflective statements made by GSIs using these criteria. This stage of examining and coding the data was performed twice. We analyzed the secondary data for teacher statements on their learning through reflection and on the effect of the use of video tools on their development, as well as their reactions to the technology itself.

Table 11.1. Levels of Reflection (based on Hatton & Smith 1995)

Category of reflection	Definition	Example
Descriptive Reflection	Reflective, not only a description of events but some attempt to provide reason/justification for events or actions but in a reportive or descriptive way; Recognition of *alternate* viewpoints in the research and literature which are reported.	"I personally liked C's technique because calling attention to it and yet allowing the student to responsibly and actively correct the problem makes it more likely that he/she will remember the error and rectify it."
Dialogic Reflection	Demonstrates a "stepping back" from the events/actions leading to a different level of mulling about, discourse with self and exploring the experience, events and actions using qualities of judgment and possible alternatives for explaining and hypothesizing.	"Though it is clear that the students gave their answers an acceptable amount of thought and consideration, the one thing that I took away from watching the particular clip is that because I was trying to walk around and participate in the discussions of every pair as well as trying to involve too many skills in the activity, I let the activity drag on for far too long. I was far too involved in correcting the students during their discussions and tried to work in writing practice when I should have just focused on the theme of the *lectura*."
Critical Reflection	Demonstrates an awareness that actions and events are not only located in, and explicable by, reference to multiple perspectives but are located in, and influenced by, multiple historical, and sociopolitical contexts.	"A consequence of this supposition is that language too must be directly related to the society and culture of its speakers. My hypothesis is built upon the understanding of language as essentially and directly related to the physical bodies, societies, and the cultures of its speakers. Given this understanding of language, it is clear that the form in which a foreign language appears in a typical language class is a far-removed, highly artificial, and unnatural form of language."
Contextualized Reflection	Dealing with on-the-spot professional problems as they arise (thinking can be recalled and then shared with others later); reflection-in-action.	"Upon watching the video, I found that their silence made me uncomfortable. I quickly rephrased the question and asked a couple questions in quick succession, not giving the students enough time to think of the answers."

Results and Discussion

In this section, we summarize the main findings of our data analysis, looking at the effect that the technologies had on reflection in the course activities and whether the use of video pushed FL GSIs to deeper levels of reflection. We look at the quantity of reflection and the type of reflection in each course activity as well as the different ways the technology was used in each, presenting results in these categories in Tables 11.2 through 11.6. Our study reveals other positive effects on teacher development that were not the primary focus of this study, such as a sense of professional identity and positive self-image, and different uses of video for teacher research.

Quantity of Reflection by FL GSIs

The different course activities resulted in different quantities of reflection. In Table 11.2, we show the total number of instances of reflection in each activity and in each category of reflection. Within each type of reflection and activity, Table 11.2 indicates not only the total number of reflective comments but also how many were triggered by the use of video and how many were not video-based. Of the three types of reflective activities, the action research resulted in the greatest amount of reflection, with 87 reflective comments compared to 29 in the best practices activity and 36 in the self/peer observation activity. This is perhaps not surprising given the length, depth, and timing of the action research paper as compared to the other essays. The action research yielded the fewest number of reflective comments sparked by the use of the video technologies, with only 8, while the other two activities generated roughly the same number—29 in best practices and 25 in the self/peer observation. In terms of the type of reflection produced among the different activities, action research generated the greatest amount of dialogic reflection and of critical reflection. The number of reflective

Table 11.2. Total Reflective Comments

Reflection type Video nonvideo	Descriptive reflection	Dialogic reflection	Critical reflection	Contextualized reflection	Total
Nonvideo-based	BP: 0	BP: 0	BP: 0	BP: 0	0
	SPO: 5	SPO: 6	SPO: 0	SPO: 0	11
	AR: 26	AR: 38	AR: 15	AR: 0	79
Video-based	BP: 11	BP: 18	BP: 0	BP: 0	29
	SPO: 5	SPO: 18	SPO: 0	SPO: 2	25
	AR: 3	AR: 4	AR: 0	AR: 1	8
Total	BP: 11	BP: 18	BP: 0	BP: 0	
	SPO: 10	SPO: 24	SPO: 0	SPO: 2	
	AR: 29	AR: 42	AR: 15	AR: 1	

BP = Best Practice SPO = Self/Peer-Observation AR = Action Research

comments that were categorized as critical or contextualized reflection was quite low in general. This may be a result of the nature of the activities themselves, which did not require teachers to consider historical or sociopolitical contexts nor to focus on reflection-in-action.

Quality of Reflection by FL GSIs

To understand better the type of reflection in each category, we took the raw numbers from Table 11.2 and converted them into percentages, as shown in Table 11.3. The highest percentage of reflection throughout fell into the category of dialogic reflection, with 66 percent in the self/peer observation activity, 62 percent in the best practices, and 48 percent in the action research project. The best practices activity generated the largest percentage of descriptive reflections, with 38 percent, while descriptive reflection made up roughly one-third of the total in the other activities. While the percentages were low, there was some evidence of critical and contextualized reflection in the action research and self/peer observation activities but none in the best practices. We believe that the type of reflective activity fosters different types and ranges of reflection. There may be few opportunities for teachers to engage in contextualized reflection or "actions as they are taking place" (Hatton & Smith, 1995, p. 23), also categorized as "reflection-in-action" (Schön, 1983, 1987), in the types of activities studied here; not surprisingly, the only occurrences appear in the self/peer observation and action research, where teachers were investigating their own teaching practices rather than those of others (best practices). Critical reflection occurred in the one activity that had the most depth of investigation and greatest duration of time (semester-long)—the action research activity.

Video-Based Reflection

Turning now to the reflections that were triggered by the use of video (see Table 11.4), we find that the video component in self/peer observation was successful in pushing teachers to reflect beyond mere description. Here we find 69 percent of all reflective comments were sparked from the video use. The lowest percentage resides in the action research project where only 9 percent of all reflective comments came out of the video. The best practices activity was based completely on viewing, selecting, and editing video, so all comments were coded as video-based. While video was a central component of the best practices and

Table 11.3. Percentage of Reflection Types by Activity

Reflection type Activity type	Descriptive	Dialogic	Critical	Contextualized
Best practice	38%	62%	0%	0%
Self/Peer observation	27%	66%	0%	5%
Action research	33%	48%	17%	1%

Table 11.4. Percentage of Nonvideo- and Video-Based Reflections by Activity

Reflection Type Activity Type	Nonvideo-based	Video-based
Best practice	0%	100%
Self/Peer observation	31%	69%
Action research	91%	9%

Table 11.5. Percentage of Reflection Types in Video-Based Reflection Only

Reflection type Activity type	Descriptive	Dialogic	Critical	Contextualized
Best practice	38%	62%	0%	0%
Self/Peer observation	20%	72%	0%	8%
Action research	38%	50%	0%	12%

self/peer observation activities, in the action research paper it served primarily as supporting evidence.

Within the category of video-based reflections, Table 11.5 shows how many were coded as descriptive, dialogic, and contextualized reflections. The best practices activity generated 38 percent descriptive and 62 percent dialogic reflection. In the action research activity, with the lowest total number of instances, the video-based reflective comments were dispersed such that 38 percent were coded as descriptive, 50 percent as dialogic, and 12 percent as contextualized. Of the video-based reflections that emerged from the self/peer observation activity, a large percentage (72 percent) was coded as dialogic while 20 percent of the reflections were descriptive and 8 percent were contextualized.

There may be several possible explanations for this striking distribution. First, in the self/peer observation activity, GSIs were reflecting on their own teaching practice as evidenced from a videotaped session. Second, they were actively engaged in video research by viewing, editing, and embedding clips that they selected as significant moments from their teaching into their essays. Research (Geyer, 2008; Yerrick et al., 2005) suggests that student teachers achieve greater levels of specificity and reflection when engaged in the process of video editing of their own videotaped lessons. And, since GSIs engaged in peer review online, they had a specific audience and purpose to the activity, which may have prompted more focused reflections. This is in line with other studies (Hatton & Smith, 1995; Lord & Lomicka, 2007) that found that teachers working in pairs engage in more frequent and deeper levels of reflection, and, in fact, Shoffner (2008) states that "knowledge of audience can, in turn, positively affect the individual's engagement with and attention to the act of writing" (129). These factors may account for the high percentage of dialogic reflective comments in the self/peer observation activity.

Table 11.6. Percentage of Reflection Types in Nonvideo-Based Reflection Only

Reflection type Activity type	Descriptive	Dialogic	Critical	Contextualized
Best practice	0%	0%	0%	0%
Self/Peer observation	45%	55%	0%	0%
Action research	33%	48%	19%	0%

As a point of comparison, we offer the percentage of reflective comments and types of reflection in nonvideo-based reflection in Table 11.6. Nonvideo-based reflection in the self/peer observation activity was nearly equally dispersed between descriptive (45 percent) and dialogic (55 percent) types, while the percentages of descriptive and dialogic reflection for the action research activity were nearly the same in video-based and in nonvideo-based reflection. No reflective comments were coded as contextualized in these nonvideo-based reflections, perhaps due to the lack of specificity sometimes generated by reflection based on memory alone.

Secondary Data: GSI Perspectives

An examination of data from the anonymous online survey, videotaped group feedback session transcription, final reflective essay, and final course evaluations confirms the results described above from analysis of the primary data and offers interesting insights on the perspectives of the GSIs on the reflective activities and use of the video technologies. Comments from teachers speak to the perceived learning benefits of having engaged in reflection, the advantages of self-observation through video, problems related to the technology itself, and their use of the video.

We sought to understand how GSIs in the course perceived the effects of reflection on their learning and development as teachers. Their comments spoke to the benefits of constant self-assessment throughout the semester, which encouraged teachers to confront and reconstruct their beliefs, values, and knowledge about FL teaching and learning. As one GSI noted, "Integral to this growth has been the continual process of reflection and self-evaluation that is documented in this portfolio. This process has allowed me to examine my motivations and values as an educator in order to make more informed decisions in the classroom." Another, noting the effect of reflection on her reaction to problems, writes: "Doing the reflective assignments helped me not dwell on things that did not work. Instead, they got me thinking about how to address any problems that developed."

One of the course objectives is that GSIs apply the process of reflection beyond the boundaries of the course. In the following comments, teachers point to the application of reflection while teaching (reflection-in-action): "Continuing the spirit of these assignments, I reflect on my teaching, which informs my approaches while lesson planning and allows me to change my

methods and strategies even while conducting class." Or the desire to engage in reflection in future teaching contexts: "I am incredibly grateful for this process of self-reflection; I feel it has produced tremendous growth in me as a teacher and I will continue to benefit from this process in the future as I strive to continuously reevaluate my teaching values and experiment with my methods."

The process of reflection should help GSIs recognize the effects that teacher decisions and actions have on student learning outcomes, and some comments referred to this. For example, "I think that both of these assignments as well as the many others included in my portfolio have improved classroom instruction for my students. The changes I am making in my classroom set students up for success and promote student learning." These and other comments illustrate how GSIs perceived the effects of reflection beyond the boundaries of the course.

Central to this study is an understanding of how FL GSIs perceive the use of video to support reflection and professional development. Teachers remarked that self-observation through video "raised my awareness as a teacher tenfold" and brought to light both weaknesses and strengths in their teaching, e.g.,"By watching yourself on videotape, you can take a step back and really analyze what is happening in your classroom." Video afforded them the unique opportunity to see their classroom through their students' eyes and also allowed them to focus both on student actions and behaviors and on their own teaching practices. As a result, many teachers commented on the effect that changes in their teaching practices had on their students. Self-observation through video gave teachers a chance to more accurately recall and reflect on their teaching as opposed to relying only on their memory of the experience: "Looking at my class before and after the videotaping was an illuminating experience, because I noticed how my perception as a teacher can sometimes be misleading." While memory-based reflections tended to be general and descriptive, video-based reflections were more detailed and specific.

An unexpected outcome of video self-reflection was the positive effect on affect and on GSIs' development of self-identity as professionals. Shoffner (2008) recognized the importance of the affective domain in her research on the effect of blogs on teacher reflection in her course and wrote, "Teaching is an emotional undertaking, drawing on the interpersonal and intrapersonal as well as the pedagogical. Reflection, too, assumes a degree of emotional labor, as it requires individuals to engage and question personal beliefs and actions" (p. 126). Several GSIs commented that viewing and reflecting on their videotaped lessons was both scary and validating, inspiring them with confidence in their abilities. For example, one wrote,

> Although the process of taping and viewing myself teach was incredibly uncomfortable, I welcomed the discomfort with open arms, because that feeling meant that I was pushing and examining my own boundaries. That first videotape allowed me to not only notice errors in my teaching style, it also gave me confidence.

> Viewing that tape helped me to validate myself as a teacher, and gave me confidence to improve upon my methods.

The fact that the video-based reflections resulted in a perceived improvement in teaching as well as a perceived improvement in affect and attitude was an important discovery. Another wrote, "The reflective assignments helped me become a more thorough, methodical, and confident teacher."

GSI perceptions of the technology itself included awe at its potential as well as frustration. Some experienced problems with uploading videotaped lessons onto the course site and with learning the clipping and embedding processes. As a result, they suggested that technology training be scheduled later in the semester to coincide with the first videotaping of their teaching. Also, when GSIs set up the FlipCam themselves to videotape their classes, they captured a static and limited view of classroom events, so it was suggested that in the future a peer might operate the FlipCam for a more comprehensive capture. One GSI remarked that a disadvantage of the use of video was that "observations in person helped catch things a FlipCam could not, since the FlipCam has a limited field of vision." This is in line with observations made by researchers such as Sherin (2004) regarding the possible limitations of video for teacher observation.

With the video technologies, we sought to understand what range of use were applied toward teacher reflection and learning. We had adopted video in three course activities because of its unique capabilities to help GSIs engage in self-observation and notice things about their classrooms that they otherwise might not. In other words, we expected that video would function as a trigger for noticing, reflection, and teacher learning, and we did find this to be the case. The act of viewing, editing, and embedding clips from their videotaped lessons promoted a new awareness of strengths and weaknesses in their teaching and resulted in more focused and thoughtful reflections by GSIs. In the following three examples, GSIs remark in their reflective essays on insights they gleaned from viewing their videos:

> After watching this video, I am aware that I spent far too much time drilling in the repetition of verb forms.

> In watching the clip of this lesson, you can see that I am doing the majority of the talking. This is not a good thing for any type of instruction, but it seems especially bad when teaching speaking.

> Videotaping classes that I taught opened my eyes to things I had not noticed before, such as my action zone in the classroom and fluctuations in learner motivation.

While strengths and weaknesses could also be identified by a supervisor or peer through traditional in-class observations, we maintain that self-observation through video may promote a certain level of autonomy, agency, and self-awareness through self-directed inquiry of one's own teaching practice.

For GSIs, the video editing process allowed them to provide visual evidence for assertions and arguments made in their reflective essays and in the action

research paper. Teachers clipped and embedded short video segments directly into their writing, and these short clips served as examples and supporting evidence, as in the following description from an action research paper: "In the first clip, you find an example of a display question that arose during the lessons prior to my research. In this clip, I am asking for answers to fill in the blank questions. My wait time is less than one second. I respond to his answer by repeating it and then ask another question." We believe that this use of video has the potential to address a problem frequently cited in the research on teacher reflection (e.g., Davis, 2006; Rosaen et al., 2008), that is to say, the problem that student teachers do not provide evidence for claims made in their reflective writings. The video editing process forces the teacher to focus on and pinpoint a specific area, helping them to identify visual support for their ideas and fostering greater specificity and depth in reflection.

Although we did not require this, one GSI used video as a research tool for her action research project. She videotaped her teaching in two cycles—first to gather data on her current practices, and she reports:

> The method in which I accomplish this is through videotaping my classes. I began my study videotaping an average class. I wanted to see if I already included referential questions in my current teaching. I also wanted to see how many display questions I asked. Finally, I took a look at the wait time I gave students between question and response.

And then to gather data on her experiment:

> After filming this lesson, I carefully constructed a new lesson which was discussion based, using as many referential questions as I could. Once I had implemented and filmed these discussion-based lessons, I used them to gather data on questions and wait time and student response to compare with my original lessons.

The integration of technologies and of collaborative reflective activities has played an important role in the professional development of FL GSIs in our department. The course activities have helped GSIs appropriate reflection as a tool for ongoing teacher inquiry and professional development, while the integration of video in these activities has served as a model for continued self-observation and self-assessment as well as for peer learning. Engaging in self-reflection prompts GSIs to confront and reconstruct existing paradigms about teaching and learning, helps them become comfortable doing so in future contexts and to value continued self-analysis and professional development, effecting change not only in their own classroom but also within the larger professional community.

Conclusion

The research on technology use, especially video technology, to support professional development of FL graduate students in higher education contexts is severely lacking. Addressing a recommendation put forth by the 2007 MLA Report

(p. 7) that "graduate studies should provide substantive training in language teaching and in the use of new technologies" and made by others (e.g., Allen & Negueruela-Azarola, 2010; Lord & Lomicka, 2007; Scott, 1998), our FL teacher education course aims to prepare GSIs to engage in ongoing professional development by providing them with the appropriate tools and resources to apply in their own foreign language classrooms. In this study, we sought to understand how the integration of video technologies into a FL teacher education course might support improved outcomes in teacher reflection and found that the active use of video technologies compels GSIs to make specific and accurate observations about their teaching and to back these up with concrete visual evidence, resulting in reflections that are more focused and less superficial. Analysis of data indicates that the quantity and quality of reflection achieved depends on factors such as the timing of assignments, the nature of the activity, the focus on self or other in the teaching clip, and the intended audience of the reflective activities. The study also indicates that the integration of video technologies, by supporting significant levels of teacher reflection and teacher learning, contributes broadly to the development of professional identity and the creation of a community of practitioners among FL GSIs.

Based on what we have learned from this study, our next steps will be to incorporate refinements to the sequence of activities used to reinforce gains made on subsequent assignments. We will also plan to address inherent limitations of video technology such as restricted field of view by combining the process with standard in-person observations. Additionally, we intend to take advantage of the "course portfolio" archive created in *E-folio* as a way to introduce to future GSIs what other GSIs had done and said about the course in the past. This iterative process will not only help us introduce the course to new GSIs, but itself serve as a record of the changes we make to the course and assist us in further research.

We believe that these and other technologies can and should be harnessed to facilitate FL GSI professional development through ongoing reflection and collaboration within and outside the boundaries of the methods course. Future research may take a longitudinal approach to understand fully the effects of particular reflective practices and tools on GSI development. As the 2007 MLA Report advocates for alliances between K–12 educators and university-level teachers (p. 8), we see a clear benefit to learning from and extending the research conducted in K–12 teacher education to our own contexts, particularly the wealth of research on the effect of technologies on teacher development.

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