REFLECTION AND PERSONAL THEORIES IN PRESERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION

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CONTENTS

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ABSTRACT

 The present study explores the development of preservice teachers´ skill of reflection and the development of their personal theories over a period of one year.

The subjects of this study are a group of 12 prospective teachers in the final year of a three-year teacher education course. The research questions the study seeks to investigate are as follows:

1. What changes are identifiable in student teachers´ ability to reflect on their lessons within one academic year?
2. How do students perceive reflection?
3. In there a mismatch between how student teachers reflect on themselves and how their school teachers reflect on them?
4. In what way do student teachers´ personal theories develop over a period of one year?

The study used three investigative methods of data collection:
- teaching practice portfolios
- questionnaires
- interviews
The data was analysed by means of content analysis.

With reference to the skill of reflection the findings indicate that once student teachers have established a habit of reflection, they are able to learn from experience and their skill of reflection gradually develops in two ways:
- They are able to perceive reflection as an important tool that can provide them with valuable information.
- Their comments on lessons become more analytic since they are able to identify and analyse real causes of problems and successes they come across while teaching.

The findings also provide insights into student teachers' personalities. It seems that in the hierarchy of student teachers' values the feeling of confidence is placed very high and is valued more than improvements in the form of more refined technical rationality. Also the issue of trust in people providing assistance to preservice teachers seems to play an important role.

The claims which are made are highly tentative because the findings are based only on a small group of students. They support research that reveals progress in the students' ability to reflect on lessons even though their comments do not go beyond the boundaries of the classroom in the condition that the comments change over time in terms of understanding the classroom procedures more deeply.

The findings also provide some evidence that student teachers' personal theories develop over a period of time. Since student teachers usually remember the period when they were learners very well, they have a clear idea what good teaching, for example, involves. Therefore the development is represented not by adding some new concepts, but by enriching the core concepts with issues connected with learners and their new role of teachers. The classroom proves to be the biggest challenge to novice teachers' personal theories.

The study also suggests that several issues would need further research, it is especially the issue of confidence, trust and collaborative learning.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In the Czech Republic teaching foreign languages is part of the national curriculum. The first foreign language is compulsory for pupils from the age of ten, the second is added in secondary schools when pupils are fourteen or fifteen years old. There are also some specialised schools which start with foreign languages earlier.

Up till 1989 the first foreign language was automatically Russian. The Velvet Revolution changed the situation dramatically. Learning a foreign language became a matter of pupils´ or rather parents´ choice, which meant that everybody wanted to learn English. In the whole country there was a shortage of qualified teachers of English. This fact led to the enlargement of already existing places with teacher education programmes focusing on English and to the establishment of numerous new Pedagogical Faculties with English departments preparing prospective English teachers. The Pedagogical Faculty in Liberec was one of them. It was founded in 1990 as the third Faculty of the Technical University of Liberec which had already had Faculties of Textile and Mechanical Engineering for almost 40 years.

The English department as part of the Pedagogical Faculty immediately started preparing a teacher education programme intended for teachers who would teach children between the ages of 10 - 15. In September 1990 after successful completion of the requirements of entrance exams the first group of prospective English teachers started studying a four-year teacher education course. Besides English students had to study one more subject because Czech teachers are usually qualified for teaching two subjects.

Since the situation in schools was almost critical due to the lack of qualified English teachers, a speeded-up version of a teacher education programme was established in 1992. Prospective teachers studied English only and the study took three years.

The present study examined a group of students enrolled in the 3-year programme. An academic year was divided into two 16-week semesters. Students had on average twenty-two hours of input per week and they studied different subjects. In the first year they had study skills, throughout the programme they were exposed to various linguistic disciplines (phonology, morphology, lexicology, syntax), history and culture of the English speaking countries, English and American literature, etc. Since our prime concern was to produce good classroom practitioners, we stressed mainly language improvement, methodology and teaching practice. Methodology and teaching practice were included in the curriculum in years 2 and 3 and were always closely interlinked. They were considered two fundamental aspects of the programme. As we were involved in an initial teacher education programme, we knew that what mattered most was what our graduates would do in classrooms as teachers. Therefore we asked ourselves questions:

- Do we provide enough assistance to our students to help them become good classroom practitioners?

- Do we promote their development?

- Are our students aware of who they are, what they are doing and whether they are changing?

Since these questions are connected with reflection and personal theories, this study focused on these two issues. Chapter 1 discusses literature dealing with reflection and personal theories. It also raises four research questions which this study investigated. Chapter 2 describes the research method, analyses the data collected for each research question and discusses findings. Chapter 3 compares the findings of this study with other research. It also pinpoints the limitations of the present study and suggests some

recommendations for the future. Chapter 4 summarises the main findings and raises some issues for future research.

CHAPTER 1

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Initial teacher education

A great deal has been written about initial teacher education programmes. Since the present study focuses on reflection and personal theories, it has been necessary to be rather selective in terms of choosing only relevant material.

Initial teacher education programmes prepare students - often called novices - who want to become teachers. LaBoskey (1993:23) points out "...novices do not enter teacher education programmes as blank slates." They come as individuals who in their life stories have gone through different experiences which - since every individual is different - have had a different impact on them. During the teacher education course they are exposed to various aspects of their prospective profession they have to cope with. Calderhead & Robson (1991:1) summarise them:

> One of the essential aims of teacher education is to enable student
> teachers to develop their knowledge and understanding of subject
> matter, children, teaching strategies, and the school curriculum,
> and to help them draw upon this knowledge in the shaping of their
> classroom practice.

All this is made possible through theoretical input in lectures and practical experience in seminars and classroom experience which includes classroom observations and students' teaching .

1.1.1 The role of theoretical input

The role of theoretical input lies mainly in making student-teachers aware of what is available in the field. As Roberts (1996:Ch2:26-27) suggests, due to the cognitive

revolution in the sixties which in fact rejected behaviourist "grand theory", the development of the teacher education programmes has led to the current view of seeing a prospective teacher as a constructivist who is not supposed to accept the input as a model to be imitated, but merely as an "experience which each teacher will select from and then represent internally in personal ways." It means that the input can be modified and further developed but at the same time makes entry to teaching easier. Learning is seen as a cycle with the following characteristic features: (Roberts, 1996:Ch2:26)

- the person filters new information according to her expectations
  and existing knowledge of the world
- s/he constructs the meaning of the "input"
- this meaning is matched with current internal representation relevant to the input
- the match confirms or disconfirms existing representations
- if there is a match then she maintains the meaning as presently constructed
  (i.e. it fits our expectations); if there is not a match, she may revise
  her representation of the input.

The important point the constructivist learning cycle suggests is change. The theoretical input the group of student teachers was exposed to consisted of regular reading home assignments which were followed by classroom discussions and various activities related to a given topic. Reading passages were carefully selected by the methodology teacher so that they would gradually cover a variety of areas dealing with the teaching/learning process. Core passages were obligatory for everybody to read. It was believed that such a kind of input could trigger off the process of constructing the meaning of it and consequently the process of revising.

1.1.2 The role of practical experience

An important role in every ITE programme is played by teaching practice. Student teachers go to schools, observe classes and start teaching. That involves many issues they have to deal with. The most important are:

- planning lessons
- teaching them
- coming into contact with pupils
- coming into contact with school culture from the position of a teacher which is different from what they remember as pupils
- testing their hypotheses about teaching

They gradually build up their new role as teachers. Roberts (1996:Ch4:3) notes:

> Much of the teacher's classroom performance becomes skilled behaviour, built from the feedback obtained on the effects of one's actions. It follows that the main providers of feedback are learners.

In other words novice teachers have to consider and reconsider whether what they bring to the process is sufficient and works. If they think it works, they have a tendency to repeat it, which in the long run may become a routine. It is therefore highly important that student teachers set up decent bases for developing desirable routines from the very beginning of their career as teachers.

To give the students investigated in this study time to be ready to get feedback from real learners, they went through several developmental stages. At first they observed classes at different schools in which they always fulfilled a concrete observation task focusing on various aspects of class management. At the same time they regularly prepared short (5 - 10 minutes) micro-teaching presentations for their peers which aimed at skills development. Those were followed by a classroom discussion in which not much criticism was allowed. After that they proceeded to micro-teaching presentations taught to real learners and finally to teaching whole classes.

Feedback provided by learners if it is to be effective and lead to setting up bases of desirable routines must be perceived. One of the ways enabling this goes through reflecting upon what is happening in the classroom.

1.2 Reflection

1.2.1 What is reflection?

The notion of reflection introduced by Dewey as early as the first half of this century became fully applied, valued and further elaborated in teacher education much later.

Dewey (1909:72) distinguishes five distinct steps in reflection:

(i) a felt difficulty; (ii) location and definition; (iii) suggestion of possible solution; (iv) development by reasoning of the bearings of the suggestion; (v) further observation and experiment leading to its acceptance or rejection; that is, the conclusion of belief or disbelief.

It means that when we come across a problem, at first we try to name it. This is considered a very important step. Dewey (1909:74) stresses: "Where sufficient pains to locate the difficulty are not taken, suggestions for its resolution must be more or less random". Next step - suggestion of possible solution - leads us "from what is present to something absent" (p.75) and it is at this stage that we formulate our "hypothesis" relating to how our problem could be solved. The hypothesis is then scrutinised from different angles against further observation and/or public theories, which may lead us to an experiment that will either confirm or disconfirm our hypothesis. Dewey's reflective cycle not only puts theory and practice together, but also takes into account that the reflective steps can happen during an action or after an action. Schon enriched this area by his concepts of "reflection-in-action" and "reflection-on-action" which have become widely used with reference to reflection. He (1987:26) clarifies that our reflection can happen during an action (in action), which may lead us to change or reshape what we are doing on the spot or we may reflect after an action (on action) retrospectively, which may reshape our future action.

There is an important difference between Dewey and Schon. While Dewey considered both theory and practice important, Schon (1991:49) probably in a reaction to the positivist approach to professional knowledge prevalent in the 1980's criticises the technical rationality or theory as insufficient to solve unique problems of practitioners

and instead emphasises the role of practice. He argues that if we are presented with theory only, we are not equipped enough to solve complex and unique problems we encounter in real-life situations.

As Grimmett (1988), Eraut (1994) and others state, Schon's theory has been highly influential in teacher education. However, there are some critics who have significant reservations about Schon's theory. Gore & Zeichner (1991:119) state that Schon does not count for "what it is that teachers ought to be reflecting about, the kinds of criteria that should come into play during the process of reflection (e.g., what distinguishes good from unacceptable educational practice),...". Eraut (1994:145) claims that "Schon fails to sufficiently clarify what is entailed in the reflection process itself". Gilliss (1988:48) raises a question referring to whether the examples he gives that are mainly taken from schools of art are applicable in teacher education programmes. By considering the difference between schools of art where those accepted to the programme are already highly competent in "their discipline to be in a position to experiment with various solutions to unique problems of performance" (p.51) and schools of education where entrance is "mainly based on academic performance in disciplines other than teaching" (ibid), she argues that for prospective teachers both theory and practice are equally important. She goes on to point out that Schon's overemphasis on reflection and "discovery learning" (p.49) may even delay the process of development because novice teachers may find a solution to many problems more quickly in a book or by asking a colleague than through reflecting. Nevertheless, the terms of "reflection-in-action" and "reflection-on-action" have become widely used in teacher education programmes.

There are other divisions of different levels of reflection which seem to prove what Gore & Zeichner (1991:119) state, namely that

> In some extreme cases, the impression is given that as long as teachers
> reflect about something, in some manner, whatever they decide to do is
> acceptable, since they have reflected about it.

Griffiths & Tann´s (1992) division, for example, adds two more levels besides reflection in action and reflection on action. Both of them go beyond the boundaries of the classroom. One leads to research when we reflect on wider issues after collecting and analysing some data over a period of time and is usually referred to as action research. The other takes even longer and includes reflection leading to abstract theorising and comparing and contrasting public and personal theories.

Van Manen (1977:226) distinguishes three levels of reflection. Only the 1st level remains entirely in the classroom and deals with "the technical application of educational knowledge". The other two consider wider issues going to focusing "on an interpretive understanding both of the nature and quality of educational experience" in level two and to critically reflecting on moral and ethical issues connected with education in level three.

As the previous discussion suggests, the term reflection includes a considerable diversity of conceptual variations. That leads to a subsequent diversity of implications for teacher education programmes. Calderhead (1989:45) summarises it as follows:

...reflection has been incorporated into teacher education courses as
divergent as those employing a behavioural skills approach, in which
 reflection is viewed as a means to the achievement of certain prescribed
practices, to those committed to a critical science approach in which
reflection is seen as a means towards emancipation and professional autonomy.

For the purpose of this study Thatcher´s (1990:283) definition seems to be the best:
...the process by which each of us starts to think about, to question,
to sort out and to clarify the main events of the Concrete Experience.
By concrete experience we understand a particular lesson student teachers taught and their comment on it.

Thatcher uses Kolb´s experimental learning cycle that emphasises learning from experience. The cycle has four stages: (Thatcher,1990:283) "Concrete experience,

reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation". In our programme the cycle was roughly implemented too. The theoretical input and practical experience were given equal importance. Student teachers had a concrete classroom experience and were asked to evaluate it in terms of what they intended to do, what they actually did and then act upon their conceptualised reflection by making some decisions for the future.

1.2.2 Why is reflection important?

As has already been stated, for the purpose of this study the notion of reflection has been narrowed down to student-teachers' classroom experience. However, even if applied only to classroom experience, the characteristic features of reflection remain the same as can be seen from the following citations each of which focuses on a slightly different aspect.

Calderhead (1993:1):

It is frequently presumed that reflection is an intrinsically good and
desirable aspect of teaching and teacher education, and that teachers,
in becoming more reflective, will in some sense be better teachers...

However, he also adds (ibid) "...though such claims have rarely been subjected to detailed scrutiny".

Dewey (1909:78):

The trained mind is the one that best grasps the degree of observation,
forming of ideas, reasoning, and experimental testing required in any
special case, and that profits the most, in future thinking, by mistakes
made in the past. What is important is that the mind should be sensitive
to problems and skilled in methods of attack and solution.
Thatcher (1990:285):

However it must be obvious that a vital element of this process of
reflection is talk and discussions, the time when we use words.

He further elaborates: (p.287)

We develop meanings for words by a process of sorting, classifying,
ordering, excluding and including which refines our meaning, and,
for most of the words which we use, this process continues throughout our lives.

Four important issues coming out of the above-mentioned citations can be summarised
as follows:
1. Through reflection we may become better teachers (even though it has not been
scientifically proved).
2. We realise mistakes made in the past, which may significantly help us avoid
making them in the future.
3. We become trained not only to recognise a problem worth focusing on, but also
skilled enough to solve it.
4. We use words which develops our ability to give meanings to them and share our
view with others on condition we communicate effectively so that others know what
we are talking about.

Basically, reflection asks student teachers to use words either in a written or an oral
form to name things happening to them. It is believed that it develops their ability of
reasoning and encourages the process of reshaping or reinforcing depending on
whether what they came across was in accordance with or in contradiction to their
view. As Dewey points out (1938:74): ".....there is no intellectual growth without
some reconstruction". McIntyre (1993:44) closes the picture of the importance of
reflection by finding two significant purposes of reflection. One is "immediate" which
focuses on issues, problems and needs of a particular moment with the necessity of
looking for possible solutions in literature, one's own or somebody else's experience.
The other is "long-term" which aims at developing the necessity of continuing with

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reflection once student teachers have got used to it, thus classifying reflection as a ongoing process.

Even though we hoped for the development of all the areas indicated above, our prime concern when asking students to reflect on their lessons was very simple. To develop a habit of learning from experience in students during the initial training so that they can continue with it in the future.

1.2.3 What can serve as evidence that students' skill of reflection develops?

Studies focusing on the development of the skill of reflection are predominantly small-scale, probably due to the demanding character of data analysis, and vary in terms of what they regard as progress or lack of progress. It depends mainly on what levels of reflection they search for.

Calderhead (1987a) studied 10 prospective primary school teachers through a one year-training course. Students were interviewed at the beginning of the course and their classes were observed four times. Field notes taken during observations formed the basis of post-lesson interviews. Observers could see progress in students' teaching, in their relationships with pupils, etc. However, their written comments remained superficial. When directly asked about the origin of some improvements (e.g. monitoring children's work or using colourful material), students did not seem to realise that the former was important for quieting pupils down, helping weak pupils, etc., and the latter for arousing motivation. The observers had a feeling that students did not include these elements in lessons as a result of previous reflection, but simply because they wanted to impress the observer to get credit in their assessment. They thought it was expected of them. Calderhead (1987:277) suggests that it may be due to the lack of assistance from their supervising teachers. After students gain enough "confidence and competence" in teaching, their reflective skills can develop on condition they are encouraged and given assistance to do it.

Gore & Zeichner (1991) evaluated journals and reports of 18 student teachers over the period of two semesters according to three levels of reflection inspired by van Manen mentioned above. Students were given topics of action research projects, e.g. Creating the best learning environment for our students or Helping shy/loner children, in short topics which were supposed to inspire some higher level reflection connected with educational, moral and ethical issues. Gore & Zeichner did not want to impose any rules on students in terms of how to do it because they were convinced that it should be left up to them. Their findings were disappointing. Most students focused only on what happened in the classroom. Even if they started somewhere else, they ended up in the classroom and were not able to consider broader contexts.

Griffiths & Tann (1992) in their research see evidence proving the development of student-teachers' skill of reflection when students in their reflective comments are able to indicate that there are different kinds of theories behind their evaluative remarks, e.g. the theory of motivation when pupils enjoy doing something. In that respect their research was disappointing. They analysed comments of a group of pre-service students who went to schools one day a week for five weeks and were asked to reflect on their lessons. Most of the comments had to be included to the reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action category and none of them referred to a public theory.

Tann (1993) studied 32 students during their teaching practice lasting four weeks. Students were asked to keep files with lesson plans and their evaluations. Tann found a number of changes:
- Shifts in reflective perspectives - students' comments were at first superficial, but they soon contained examples of improved reasoning, learning from experience, future planning, etc.
- Shifts in reasoning processes: Students included alternative explanations, ranges of hypotheses, their comments became more analytic. Their ability to recognise why lessons went wrong developed too. They made many survival, procedural and critical resolutions referring to their work. Even though students' reflective comments remained mostly in the reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action category, Tann found many clues indicating improvement.

Since the aim of this study is rather exploratory, the structure of students' comments was left open. Due to analysing the comments over a period of one year, it was believed it could reveal shifts in whatever direction.

1.2.4. What is the content of students' reflective comments?

The reflective comments student teachers provide can offer some valuable insights into their personalities. Dewey (1909:84)develops:

 Just what is suggested to a person in a given situation depends upon
 his native constitution (his originality, his genius), temperament,
 the prevalent direction of his interest, his early environment, the general
 tenor of his past experience.

Analysing students' comments with reference to what they focus on can reveal students' main concerns in a particular stage of their development. Some researchers speak in favour of the so-called stage theories. For example, Kagan (1992:155) summarising 27 studies focusing on novice teachers distinguishes three stages of development which are common to novice teachers and appear to be sequential. At first novices are more preoccupied with themselves than with their pupils. She states: "The initial focus on self appears to be a necessary and crucial element in the first stage of teacher development." When the initial stage is sorted out, novices proceed to fully realise what is actually going on in the class in terms of class management, discipline and instruction. And only after that can they concentrate more on pupil learning. There are, however, some others who think that such a view simplifies the whole process. Roberts (1996:Ch3:9) notes that

 ...stage theories are now seen as too inflexible to account for processes   of
learning to teach. It is not as compartmentalised as a stage theory suggests.

He explains that at every moment there are always a few things involved and it is therefore impossible to focus only on one.

While at first sight these two interpretations seemingly go against each other, they do not have to necessarily exclude each other. It is not clear, for example, whether the proponents of stage theories claim that besides the factor students are preoccupied with nothing else exists for them. They seem to suggest that at a particular moment one factor prevails over the other, which, however, does not seem to indicate that it completely excludes the other. Student teachers when preparing a lesson know who the lesson is intended for and try to adjust their preparation accordingly. Stated otherwise, they may be preoccupied with themselves, but when preparing a lesson, they have to take learners into account. And they prepare a lesson which they believe could work. In the course of presenting it there have to be some reactions from pupils. Thus student teachers have to face some moments they could not prepare for in advance which they have to react to somehow and then comment on them. If further developed both their prepared and spontaneous actions are certainly intended to move a particular lesson forward using their experience and what they believe could help the dynamics of a particular lesson. At every moment in the classroom all the factors - the teacher, learners, aspects of classroom management, classroom environment, etc. - are present. At a particular moment students may miss many things in one way or the other, but they are there and all of them create a whole. It is only natural that different things have varying importance at different times without the necessity of excluding the rest of them completely.

The group of students in this study was asked to focus their reflective comments on things they considered important. It was assumed that by studying their comments it would be possible to infer what it was the students were preoccupied with at a given time. Moreover, since students prepared lessons they believed could work, their beliefs played an important role, too.

Tann (1993:56) states: "if it is assumed that beliefs underpin action, then beliefs are clearly an important means to understand how and why people act the way they do." Since beliefs and concerns form a significant part of personal theories, the next section will be devoted to personal theories.

1.3 Personal Theories

1.3.1 Definition

The problem of personal theories is opposite to that of reflection. In terms of reflection one finds a number of conceptual variations referring to the same term; with reference to personal theories there is a diversity of terms referring to the same concept. Sendan (1995:39) mentions teacher constructs, metaphors, implicit theories, teachers' conceptions, teacher perspectives, schemata, subjective theories, routines, teachers' theories, personal theories, etc. Tann (1993:55) offers the following definition of personal theories which will be applied in this study:

> ...a person's set of beliefs, values, understandings, assumptions -
> the way of thinking about the teaching profession.

All the researchers dealing with personal theories and the ways student teachers think seem to point out the importance of eliciting student teachers' personal theories. They propose numerous reasons for it. Most of the reasons they state refer to students.

1. Even though the input in a teacher education programme is the same for the whole group, the impact on each individual is different because pre-existing beliefs/images play the central role "in filtering the content of educational course work" (Kagan:1992:140).

2. Student teachers try to apply what they remember from the past without even realising it. Denicolo & Pope (1990:156) state:

> ...we note continued comparisons of what they (students) do and what
> they seek to achieve as teachers with their previous experience...
> Frequently they evidence their choice of method, for instance,
> by reference to a formative experience of their own, whether it be
> a positive one which they seek to emulate for their students or
> a negative one which they strive to avoid reiterating for others.

3. Students must be made to make their beliefs explicit, to try to articulate them. While doing that they must use words. Tann(1993:55) notes that "Personal theory usually exists at an implicit level and may therefore be difficult to articulate...". Eraut (1994:15) points out that "...people do not know what they know". It is therefore necessary at least to try to articulate one's personal theory even though the first attempts might be awkward and inaccurate. It makes students at least think about it.

4. Without knowing where they are, student teachers cannot make progress. As Griffiths & Tann (1992:71) suggest:

Personal theories need to be revealed so that they can be scrutinised, challenged, compared to public theories, and then confirmed and reconstructed.

Finally not only student teachers can benefit from knowing their personal theories. Calderhead & Robson (1991:7) state that it is also very important for providers of teacher education programmes to be aware of what kind of prior beliefs and images student teachers bring with them so that they can assist student teachers effectively in the process of their professional development.

The reason why an attempt was made to elicit student teachers´ personal theories in this study was very simple. To obtain some information about students and at the same time help students reveal something about them.

1.3.2. Are student teachers' personal theories static or dynamic?

As has already been stated at the beginning of this chapter, a teacher is currently seen as a constructivist. The idea of constructivism goes back to Kelly's constructive alternativism. Kelly's two essential claims quoted by Fransella (1995) are as follows:

We assume that all of our present interpretations of the universe are subject to revision or replacement. (p.42)
So, no one has direct access to the truth. (p.43)

The claims suggest two important ideas:

1. Our interpretations of the world change with time.

2. Different people interpret the same reality in different ways.

Pope (1993:20) develops how these two claims relate to teacher education.

- the world is real but individuals vary in their perception of it

- an individual's conception of the real world has integrity for that individual

- teachers use personally pre-existing theories to explain and plan their teaching

- teachers test these theories for fruitfulness and modify them in the light of
  such testing.

A personal theory is dynamic if it changes. For change to happen the integrity of an individual's conception must be attacked. Various researchers refer to this process with different names. Constructive alternativism works with constructs and periods of loosening and tightening of these constructs. According to Kelly (Bannister & Fransella, 1980:63-64) periods of tightening are characterised by tight links between constructs and no change is possible. Change starts when our constructs are linked loosely and we are open to new ideas or to new structuring of the existing constructs. Kelly considers both periods as equally important. Eliciting student teachers' personal theories reveals the phase of tightening. It shows where students are at a given moment. If their personal theories change over time, it means that they must have gone through a period of loosening which resulted in a new kind of tightening. In other words one kind of integrity of an individual's conception of the world has been replaced by new integrity.

Studies - again mainly small-scale - focusing on monitoring change in student teachers' personal theories split up into 3 groups.

1. Studies monitoring no change

2. Studies showing very limited change

3. Studies monitoring more significant change

1. Studies monitoring no change

Kagan (1992), in her review of 27 studies dealing with pre-service teachers, repeatedly mentions that student teachers' beliefs and images remained the same over time.

Calderhead & Robson (1991) observed a group of 12 novices throughout one year of a pre-service teacher education programme. Novices were examined through three different methods of investigation.

- During interviews which took place four times they were asked a set of questions focusing on their knowledge of teaching and learning. One of the questions encouraged them to articulate their images of self as teachers.
- They watched video lessons and were asked to comment on them.
- They prepared a script of a lesson they would like to teach.

The researchers managed to get all the information from seven students only. The findings showed that students' images were to a large extent influenced by their positive or negative experience as learners and remained the same throughout the year. They proved very influential when students commented on video lessons or on lessons taught by their supervising teachers. Their images also became a leading issue during a 3-week block teaching practice. In the script of a lesson they would like to teach, they focused mainly on what they as teachers would do and very little on pupils' possible reactions. When they actually taught these lessons in schools, they did not make any changes to their original lesson plans. Calderhead & Robson come to a conclusion that students' personal theories were not challenged and that students did not come across anything that would encourage them to try alternative procedures.

2. Studies showing very limited change

Tabachnik & Zeichner (1984) followed a group of 13 student teachers for a period of one semester lasting 15 weeks which students spent mainly in schools. Students were interviewed five times and observed while teaching three times. Their supervising teachers and university teachers were also interviewed. To get a basis of each student's perspectives, students had to sort out 18 dilemmas related to the teacher's role, teacher-pupil relationship, knowledge and curriculum and student diversity. The teaching practice did not significantly change students' personal theories. They perceived teaching and self as teachers more realistically and became more confident

in applying their own teaching style. Their personal theories in the end were more elaborated versions of the original ones without any significant change. Tabachnik & Zeichner conclude that what students bring to the process is highly influential but does not completely direct their further growth.

3. Studies monitoring more significant change

Shapiro (1991) studied changes in personal theories of 23 novice teachers who were exposed to a 7-week university input followed by a 4-week block teaching practice. She followed the principles of Kelly's personal construct theory. At first personal constructs in the form of dilemmas were elicited from participants. The constructs became bases of categories. Each participant was interviewed before, during and after the period of 11 weeks to clarify their dilemmas, explain possible moves towards opposite poles and set up new dilemmas. Nine researchers conducted interviews and processed the data. Finally, five main groups of changes were identified.
- Students sorted out their dilemmas or recognised their incorrect beliefs.
- They acquired a new technical skill.
- Students evaluated their experience in a new way.
- They perceived self as teachers better.
- They construed new dilemmas.

Shapiro thinks that it was possible to identify so many changes because the discussions with students were not general but rather focused due to eliciting personal constructs from individual students at the beginning of the research. She considers helping students to realise changes in their personal beliefs as a highly important task for course providers. Student teachers were able to realise that the changes in their personal theories were evoked by their classroom experience.

Sendan (1995) and Sendan & Roberts (1995) tried to reveal changes in student teachers' personal theories over time using Kelly's Repertory Test. The test works with triads, which means groups of three constructs, that are either elicited from or supplied to participants. Participants are then asked to articulate in which way two constructs are similar and at the same time different from the third. Sendan & Roberts argue that this technique seems to be able to sensitively monitor changes in student

teachers' personal theories. By using bi-polar constructs it enables researchers to see structural changes in student teachers' personal theories even if the content remains the same. Significant changes in students' theories can happen by simply reorganising links between the same amount of constructs, which a researcher seeking for new additional ideas might miss.

1.3.3 What causes change in student teachers' personal theories?

Griffiths (1977), Griffiths & Tann (1992) and others suggest that personal theories are tested against experience. Zeichner, Tabachnik & Densmore (1987:31) distinguish three levels of experience each teacher must go through. The lowest level is the classroom represented by pupils and class environment. Then school, colleagues and school environment follow. The third level is represented by "institutional characteristics of schools". Thinking about student teachers and the amount of time during teaching practice devoted to the three levels of experience mentioned above, it seems natural and logical that what they are able to perceive most at the beginning of their career is the classroom. And it is in the classroom where their initial personal theories have a chance to be challenged.

Kagan (1992:142) notes: "Student teachers approach the classroom with a critical lack of knowledge about pupils." She and others state that student teachers' assumptions are often idealised, simplistic and naive. Only through classroom experience can they realise that their prior beliefs were incorrect. This process takes a different amount of time in different individuals and to a large extent depends on novices' personalities and experiences "whether he or she has reached a point in life where dysfunctional beliefs can be acknowledged and altered" (p.142). As Griffiths (1977:194) points out, student teachers' "conceptual schemata show a high degree of stability" and it is therefore possible to expect only "gradual change".

The main concern of the present study is monitoring change or lack of change in student teachers' reflective perspectives and personal theories over a period of one year. The results obtained in this study will be compared to the results of studies

focusing on similar issues which have been briefly discussed above. Since there are no results of this kind of research available in the Czech Republic, the findings of this study will be compared to research carried out mainly in Britain and the USA. The prime purpose of this initial investigation is to map the situation and try to find possible implications for future organisation of the initial teacher education programme at the Technical University of Liberec, the Czech Republic.

The questions this investigation seeks to answer are as follows:
1. What changes are identifiable in student teachers' ability to reflect on their lessons within one academic year?

2. How do student teachers perceive reflection?

3. Is there a mismatch between how student teachers reflect on themselves and how their school teachers reflect on them?

4. In what way do student teachers´ personal theories develop within one academic year?

The issues connected with the research questions will be discussed and analysed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS OF ENQUIRY

2.1 Participants

The subjects of this study were a group of 12 student teachers (10 girls and 2 boys) in the final year of a three-year teacher education course. No selective criteria were applied. All the students belonging to the group were included in the research. All of them were enrolled in the programme after successfully fulfilling the requirements of the entrance exam which was mainly based on examining their knowledge of English. No prior teaching experience was required. 10 students entered the programme immediately after finishing secondary school, 2 had a year break between secondary school and university studies which they spent in an English speaking country as au-pair girls. One girl started studying a year before the others, completed two years, interrupted her study for one year and joined the group in the 3rd year. It means that all the student teachers were 20 or 21 years old.

2.2 Teaching Practice Context

As stated in the introduction teaching practice is included in the curriculum in years 2 and 3. From year 2 onwards a 16-week semester is divided into a period spent at university and a block teaching practice in schools. Prior to this study student teachers' school experience consisted of two weeks in the winter semester of year 2 devoted to observations and three weeks in the summer semester of year 2 spent on microteaching when they in pairs had to collaboratively plan and teach 45-minute classes. In the course of the study - in year 3 - only the winter semester lasted sixteen weeks. Twelve weeks were spent at university, four weeks in schools. The summer semester in year 3 was shorter due to the final exams and took thirteen weeks. It started with a 5-week block teaching practice followed by eight weeks of university input. Throughout year 3 student teachers were supposed to teach whole classes.

Block teaching practice was chosen on the following grounds:

1. Calderhead (1988:60) points out that student teachers are often asked to prepare classes before their teaching practice and when they then come to schools, they realise that the lessons they prepared do not work. Our students were asked to prepare a rough plan, too. They knew the age of children their lessons were intended for, the textbook used in a particular class and also the units from the textbook they were likely to cover. However, at the beginning of their teaching practice they were always given two or three days when they only observed classes, could get used to a particular group or groups of children and adjust their lesson plans accordingly.

2. Since student teachers always stayed in one school (each time a different one) for a few weeks, they could also see whether what they had presented actually worked because they were there not only in the lesson in which they presented something, but also in the following one. This made students think more about properly delivering their lesson plans.

In the course of each teaching practice they were in regular contact with their university teacher. During weekly tutorials we tried to find solutions to their problems, refined their lesson plans and discussed issues they considered important. During the teaching practice each of them was also observed once by the university teacher.

2.3. Data collection

The study used three investigative methods of data collection which were in the given context chosen as being suitable for this research: teaching practice portfolios, questionnaires and interviews. Since the study adopted a more holistic and exploratory stance, in terms of the three investigative methods an attempt was made to elicit as much as possible from student teachers by giving them enough space to express their own ideas.

2.3.1. Teaching practice portfolios

(henceforth often referred to as TP portfolios)

Teaching practice portfolios were required of the student teachers as part of their course assignments after each teaching practice. Student teachers submitted their portfolios three times: in May 1995, December 1995 and April 1996. The structure of reporting was left open. Students were given only overall guidelines. They were asked to reflect on issues they considered important, especially what went well in a particular stage of a lesson, what they had to change, what they would do differently and why. For the purpose of this study three complete sets of TP portfolios were collected.

2.3.2. Questionnaires

2 kinds of questionnaires were used:
1. Questionnaires completed by student teachers
2. Questionnaires completed by student teachers' school teachers (mentors)

Students´ questionnaires (henceforth often referred to as SQN)

The first version of students´ questionnaires used a combination of closed and open-ended questions. (see Appendix 1). The questionnaire was tried out on two colleagues for clarity and ambiguity and no changes were made. The analysis of responses revealed that it was not consistent with the open and exploratory aim of the study. As a result in questionnaires 2 and 3 (see Appendix 2) most of the closed questions were replaced by open-ended ones. Only two questions remained closed; one dealing with students' proficiency in reflection, the other with students' view of reflection. In both questions students selected one of the options on a scale. Student teachers completed questionnaires three times. At the beginning of the winter semester - in early October 95 - and after finishing each of the two blocks of teaching practice - in mid January 96 and early April 96. To encourage frank responses they were not asked to sign the questionnaires. The first questionnaire was completed during a class. Eleven out of twelve students were present, the response rate is thus 92%. With reference to the

other two which were filled in on a voluntary basis the response rate was lower as can be seen in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1

DATE OF SUBMISSION	RESPONSE RATE
October 95	92%
January 96	83%
April 96	58%

Teachers´ questionnaires (henceforth often referred to as TQN)

School teachers were given questionnaires towards the end of the final teaching practice in March 96. The open-ended questions (see Appendix 3) contained in the teachers´ questionnaires were the same as or similar to some of the questions in the students´ questionnaire. The aim was to compare the similarity or difference between how student teachers reflected on themselves and how their school teachers reflected on them. The response rate was 91%.

2.3.3. Interviews (henceforth often referred to as INT)

A semi-structured interview was conducted with each student teacher during the final teaching practice in March 96. The interviews lasted 2O - 25 minutes. The interviewees were asked a set of eight questions (see Appendix 4), each time in the same order. However, it was up to them to develop ideas of their own. The interviewer did not make any evaluative remarks. The language during the interviews was a matter of the students´ choice. All of them chose Czech. The interviews were recorded, key ideas at first written down in Czech and then translated into English.

Portfolios, questionnaires and interviews belong to self-report data which " are not entirely reliable and when possible should be verified by other sources of information"(Weir & Roberts, 1994:136). Since owing to the nature of the study only

self-report data were available, for the purpose of validity the data obtained from the three investigative methods were triangulated where possible to explore each issue through more than one source of data and thus check the data for logical consistency. The procedure applied in each case will be discussed in detail in sections 2.5. - 2.8. in which research questions raised in Chapter 1 will be dealt with in turn. When students' comments are included in the course of the discussion, they are always used in the original forms. Mistakes are not indicated because in some cases it would have meant to reformulate the whole sentences. It is believed that it will be clear to the reader what students wanted to say.

2.4. Research method

The data collected in this study consisted of typed or hand-written comments on lessons, written answers to questions raised in questionnaires and tape recordings of interviews. Stated otherwise, it was necessary to process the content of a huge number of words. Miles & Huberman (1994:56) state:

> A chronic problem of qualitative research is that it is done chiefly
> with words, not with numbers. Words are fatter than numbers and
> usually have multiple meanings. This makes them harder to move
> around and work with.

They further elaborate: (ibid)

> We argue that although words may be more unwieldy than numbers,
> they render more meaning than numbers alone and should be hung
> on to throughout data analysis.

For analysing diaries, interviews, questionnaires, etc. they recommend content analysis based on codes and define codes as ....."tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study. Codes usually are attached to "chunks" of varying size - words, sentences, or whole paragraphs ...(p.56)

2.4.1. Creating codes

With reference to creating codes or categories Miles & Huberman (1994:58) recommend two ways of doing it. One uses a "start list" we prepare in advance and then go through the data to find out how they fit. It is usually necessary to revise some provisional codes and create new ones. The other way, which was finally adopted for this study, does not use any precoding system. Codes are created, revised and refined inductively while reading field notes. The analysis is then "more open-minded and more context-sensitive". Miles & Huberman (1994:63) point out the necessity of making up clear definitions so that if the same or another coder analyses the same data again, they put them into the same categories. Haggarty (1995: 185) quoting Holsti adds two more important issues. The categories must be "exhaustive", so that everything important for the study can be included and "mutually exclusive", which means that each item of a particular text can be put into one category only.

2.5. Research question 1

What changes are identifiable in student teachers' ability to reflect on their lessons within one academic year?

source of data ⟩ TP portfolio

2.5.1. Analysis

As already mentioned for the purpose of this study three complete sets of TP portfolios were collected. The number of classes student teachers were asked to include in the portfolios is shown in Table 2.2. With reference to the teaching practice in the summer semester 1996 students had to teach eight lessons per week. Due to students' complaints about the excessive length of teaching practice portfolios, instead of writing comments on forty lessons they were asked to include in their portfolios only eight lessons depending on their choice. Besides classes they taught they also had to observe a certain amount of classes taught by their school teachers and peers. Students' comments on observations were also included in the TP portfolios, but they were not the focus of the investigation. Only the parts of the TP portfolios containing comments on the lessons student teachers taught were analysed. Each lesson had

several stages depending on the character of the lesson, on average four. The estimated number of comments depending on the number of students, number of lessons students had to comment on and average number of comments can be seen in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2.

Teaching practice	Number of students	Number of lessons in portfolios per student	Average number of comments in 1 lesson	Estimated number of comments
May 95	11	12	4	528
December95	12	16	4	768
April 96	12	8	4	384

Since the total number of comments was too large, it was necessary to reduce it. Miles & Huberman (1994:11) consider data reduction a natural part of qualitative data analysis. To avoid distorting the picture of the data, the following criteria were applied. In each set of TP portfolios only four lessons per student were analysed. In sets 1 and 2 those were lessons 2, 5, 8 and 11, in set 3 lessons 1, 2, 5 and 6. The estimated number of reduced comments is shown in Table 2.3. As has already been mentioned, since the number of stages in individual lessons varied, it means that even though in each set four lessons per student were analysed, the total number of comments in each set is not identical.

Table 2.3.

Teaching practice	Estimated number of original comments	Estimated number of reduced comments
May 95	528	176
December 95	768	192
April 96	384	192

The first set of portfolios submitted in May 95 was roughly analysed and tentative categories/codes were created. When all the three sets of TP portfolios were collected, the comments were analysed as follows. At first one lesson per student from each set was analysed. While doing it categories were created and their number grew. They were named, defined and the abbreviations of the category names were written above the chunk of words or sentences in the text they referred to. The problems I encountered during the analysis are demonstrated in the following comments. The abbreviations (see Table 2.4) show which category/categories the comments were finally put into.

Table 2.4

ABBREVIATION	CATEGORY IT STANDS FOR
TLI	Teacher-learner interaction
T	Teacher
L	Learner
P/GW	Pair/group work
OE	Overall evaluation
EC	Error analysis and/or correction
LM	Lesson management
LPC	Lesson procedure changes
MOT	Motivation
MGA	More general advice
CA	Class atmosphere
SRP	Suggestion of repeated procedures
SMC	Student-mentor co-operation

Some comments were mainly descriptive:

TLI

e.g. My partner directed students to look at the picture of the body and asked which parts they know. She gave a model sentence first. Students labelled 4 items. (e.g. Number four is a hand). Students quickly stated the known words.   .

Some comments were more analytic. They tried to analyse a certain situation by theorising about possible cause-consequence patterns, other alternatives applicable in a given context, etc.

    LM

  e.g. I think Filip did the right thing when he asked pupils to look at the
       text beforehand and that he did not graded them afterwards.
       Pupils felt less stressed and more safe when they wrote it. It was
       important for them to check their spelling.

Since the value of both kinds of comments is so different because the inclusion of analytic chunks showed students´ effort to interpret a given situation, it was very important to separate them from each other. Moreover, the comments varied in terms of length and complexity. Some focused on one issue only:

    TLI

  e.g. I wanted pupils to say as much as possible about the picture.
       Pupils answered quickly and also the translation was good
       because they knew all the words.

However, they often included more issues:

    T

  e.g. At the beginning of this lesson I introduced myself and I
       walked around the class and asked every pupil about their names.

                              CA

       I decided to shake hands with each of them. They were surprised
       but it immediately changed the atmosphere in the class positively.

       LM   EC

       Therefore, I think it was a good start. During the game - I am thinking
       about - I had to correct the question "Is it a blue?" I answered:
       "No, it is not blue."

The first idea of trying to find one main point in each comment was not feasible and was soon replaced by trying to catch all possible ideas it offered because by following

the one-main-point strategy the overall picture could be distorted. Since one comment often consisted of both descriptive and analytic parts, while reading students´ comments it was often necessary to go back and read again the chunks of words put into a certain category to find out whether the new item fit. That was often a reason why a new category had to be created or an existing one redefined.

Creating a new category

    TA

  e.g. My partner had problems with reversing the tape and she
      decided to read out the text herself than to spend too much
      time on looking for the text on the tape.

This comment initiated a new category called Use of teaching aids (TA). After finishing the analysis this category was cancelled due to rare occurrence. There were only two comments in the whole corpus dealing with it. They were put into the category of Lesson management.

Redefining an existing category

    MOT

  e.g. Those students got frustrated and stopped paying attention
      to what they heard.

After reading this comment the category of motivation was extended. It included both motivation and demotivation.

Counting the frequency of occurrence

Haggarty (1995,189) quoting Holsti raises a question of "the system of enumeration" which should be consistently applied throughout the study. In that respect it was

decided that no matter how many times a certain category occurs within one comment, it will be counted only once.

Reliability

The first 65 comments containing 105 categories were check-coded using coded copies several days after the first coding and some inconsistencies in definitions were revealed. It was especially necessary to clearly distinguish descriptive categories from analytic ones. For example, comments focusing on pair/group work, teacher-learner interaction, teacher, and learner could be either only descriptive or only analytic or both descriptive and analytic. It was therefore decided that the categories of pair/group work, teacher-learner interaction, teacher and learner will deal only with descriptive issues while analytic remarks within the comments will be put into other categories which will be redefined accordingly. The process will be demonstrated on the comments dealing with pair/group work:

Pair/group work only descriptive:

    P/GW

  e.g. Students worked in pairs.

Only analytic:

    LM

  e.g. Appointing the weakest students as speakers proved to be
      useful as the faster students had to help the weak students
      because they wanted to get a point as a group.

Both descriptive and analytic:

    P/GW

  e.g. I divided pupils into groups of 4 by using cards with names of
      different members of a family. (e.g. Mr Brown, Mrs Brown,

                LM

      Alice Brown, John Brown. This was a positive element. Pupils
      got roles and sometimes it was funny because a boy got a female
      role.

The categories were again redefined. The process was repeated two days later, this time using uncoded copies. Miles & Huberman recommend the following formula for counting reliability:

$$\text{reliability} = \frac{\text{number of agreements}}{\text{total number of agreements} + \text{disagreements}}$$

The intra-coder reliability was 94% and there was one chunk of words in the set of uncoded copies which was put into the "Lesson management" category and had not been coded during previous coding. I was the only coder to do it and I always coded everything twice. Two more times - chosen at random in the course of processing the data - I used uncoded copies with a smaller number of comments. Reliability achieved was 100% and 84%.

To summarise: While analysing students´ comments an effort was made to distinguish descriptive issues from analytic ones and state it clearly in category definitions. Furthermore, if one comment covered more areas, it was carefully considered and particular chunks of words were put into different categories. Finally, no matter how many times a certain category appeared within one comment, it was counted only once.

2.5.2 Definitions

The final version of category definitions is as follows. The examples introduced after each category definition always present the whole comment. The abbreviations show which category/categories different parts of comments were put into. It is believed that it can give the reader a clear idea of how the analysis was done.

1. Teacher-learner interaction (TLI) - descriptive

This includes comments dealing with a simple action-reaction pattern. The teacher initiates an activity, pupils react somehow. If students' comments only state that it went well, pupils knew what to do, it still remains in this category. If, however, there are remarks dealing with managerial problems, e.g. students' involvement, timing. etc. or if there is an indication of an analysis, why things worked or did not work or an attempt to solve a problem somehow , these bits go to other categories, mainly to the category of LM.

> TLI
>
> e.g. I asked them questions. Students answered the questions
>   without difficulties. In this stage I played each chunk once
>   and then elicited what it was about. Students demanded
>   playing each chunk once more, so that they could
>   concentrate more on details they overheard.

2. Teacher (T) - descriptive

Remarks focusing exclusively on the teacher relating to what they did while presenting or practising something . In many cases part of the TLI where the students mentioned only what the teacher did. If an attempt to justify why the teacher did certain things or an attempt to explain the feelings, it goes to other categories.

> T
>
> e.g. I asked some questions using the structure WAS. My questions
>   were mainly about previous projects. A also asked the pupils to
>   write some of their answers into their exercise books. Then I had
>   them to read some of the answers aloud and I wrote three examples
>   on the blackboard underlining the verb WAS. Then I checked
>
> LM
>
>   understanding by asking for translations. This went well because
>   students were familiar with the previous work and with the new structure.

3. Learner (L) - descriptive

Includes descriptive remarks focusing exclusively on learners. "Pupils knew what to do" stays within this category. If an attempt to explain the feelings or other issues appeared, those parts of comments went into other categories.

> L
>
> e.g. Pupils were good at spelling, so this went well and quickly. The secret
>   was "Don't be late". Pupils knew the meaning and some of them
>
> > LPC
>
>   even the phrase I'm sorry, I'm late. I decided to drill it to ensure that
>   all the pupils know the phrases.

4. Pair/group work (P/GW) - descriptive

Includes descriptive comments focusing on including pair/group work into a lesson or the way the teacher paired or grouped students. Any analytic or evaluative remarks go to other categories.

> P/GW
>
> e.g. I asked the pupils to sit in groups of four and they were immediately
>   pleased to work with their friends. Pupils guessed the names of
>
> > LM
>
>   things shown in their books. While they were doing this, I
>   monitored their work by walking around the class. This avoided
>   possible confusions and prevented the pupils from being noisy.
>   This activity went well because the pupils worked in groups
>   with attractive visual material and they were also prepared
>   for this from the previous activity.

5. Overall evaluation (OE) - analytic

Remarks referring to the lesson as a whole. Specific remarks if not mentioned before go to some other categories.

OE

e.g. I think this lesson was satisfactory as students did not seem

to be puzzled or demotivated and they did not have problems

LPC

with structures of indirect speech. The only thing I would change

was the last step "Simon says". It is a game for younger children.

These adolescents feel embarrassed when they do so many

physical movements in front of the eyes of their class-mates.

6. Error analysis and/or correction. (EC) - analytic

In this category those parts of the comments that only mention that pupils made or did not make mistakes as part of TLI, P/GW, etc. are not included. The category includes only the remarks about mistakes which are further elaborated in terms of what kind of mistake it was or what happened afterwards. Whether and/or why the student teachers corrected it themselves or elicited peer correction, self-correction, etc.

L   EC

e.g. During practising the time pupils worked quite well. I used peer

correction by asking other students "Was it correct?". I find this way

of correction very effective because pupils try to find mistakes their

L

class-mates made. They also managed finding the right word

MOT

in the crossword. They enjoyed the activity and had a lot of fun.

7. Lesson management (LM) - analytic

Includes analytic and evaluative remarks dealing with organisational aspects, time management, making learning easier for learners, checking understanding, individual attention given to pupils, class control, pupils' involvement, clear explanation, etc. If remarks are only descriptive, they go to TLI, T, L or P/GW.

LM

e.g. I think it was useful to have short brainstorming before writing
the stories because it helped pupils with describing the particular
pictures and they could embody the pictures into their stories
more easily.

8. Lesson procedure changes (LPC) - analytic

Remarks included in this group focus on things which were, could be or could have
changed. They deal with a particular stage in a particular lesson and often start with
"Next time..." or "I should have ..." or student teachers mention that for a particular
reason they did something differently from what they had planned.

P/GW

e.g. I divided pupils into the Project groups, explained the activity
and asked them to do a similar classroom survey as they had.
While they were doing it, I checked their work by walking

LM

around and helping them. Some problems occurred when

LPC

boys refused to work in groups with girls. Not to lose time

LM

I rearranged the groups and the activity went on. I also
noticed that pupils had tendencies to use Czech instead of
English. Getting rid of this problem was quite difficult because
there were four groups and I couldn't check all of them at the

MOT

same time. When pupils finished the survey, they wrote five
sentences about it and reported to the class. This didn't
go well because students didn't like the Project groupwork.

9. Motivation (MOT) - analytic

Includes remarks noticing that learners were de/motivated or un/willing to do something, that their motivation was de/increased and possibly stating what contributed to it. The comments mention that pupils´ attention was attracted, pupils enjoyed doing something, etc.

    LM

e.g. In this stage I wanted everybody to get involved in the examination.

    MOT

I think pupils liked the idea that they were asked by their friends and, on the other hand, that they could pretend they were teachers.

    CA

I wanted to create such an atmosphere that each student would feel that his/her contribution was really important and necessary

              MOT

for the successful course of the activity. I consider it a good way of motivating also shy pupils to contribute in the lesson.

10. More general advice (MGA) - analytic

Includes comments going beyond a particular class dealing with issues which are applicable in wider contexts.

    T

e.g. If students were uncertain about the command, I pointed at the subjects involved (feet, table, map, student) or used

              LM

gestures to indicate directions (up, down ...). Again gestures were very helpful because all the pupils did successfully what

    MGA

I wanted. Adding paralinguistic information to speech is extremely helpful because it is real. In normal life we usually

learn important facts not only from words we hear.

11. Class atmosphere (CA) - analytic
Parts of comments suggesting that student teachers perceived particular feelings or
mood in the class and were possibly aware of what contributed to it or deliberately
worked on improving the class atmosphere.

    MOT

e.g. This stage went smoothly and well. The pupils were
     spontaneously talking about the sports they liked probably
     because I had told them what I liked and disliked in terms

        CA

     of sports. Boys were also quite inventive as they stated
     that their favourite sports were sleeping and "coaching".
     This made the rest of the class laugh, so there was included
     an element of fun which brought an even more relaxed
     atmosphere into the class.

12. Suggestion of repeated procedures (SRP) - analytic
Parts of comments indicating that student teachers had good experience with a certain
procedure in a lesson and make it explicit that they want to repeat it.

    OE

e.g. This lesson went well I think because it was a revision lesson.

                   SRP

     Students worked quickly and almost without mistakes. Writing
     each number on the blackboard during the game "Parts of the
     body" is something I will do again as it prevented the whole

                  MGA

     class from confusion and the game went smoothly. Giving
     students a time limit to give each other instructions made them
     use quickly correct instructions that were drilled.

Only one pair was creative and thought of different and

LPC

funny instructions. Next time I will use more echo correction

to reinforce students´ correct knowledge of using articles.

13. Student - mentor co-operation (SMC)

Any indication of possible communication (positive/negative) between mentors and student teachers , influence of mentors on students, their advice, etc.

L

e.g. It worked as I thought it would be. Students answered

LM

or did exercises as they sat at their desks. It was convenient

SMC

for me because I still did not know their names. The supervising

teacher then told me that this way might be dangerous because

some students could work out easily which sentence was theirs.

They could only prepare that sentence and would not have to pay

attention to the rest.

What was excluded?

The last section of a lesson comment was in many cases a conclusion. If it generally evaluated the lesson, it was put into the "Overall evaluation" category. Sometimes it even brought a new illuminating issue. However, student teachers often only repeated what had already been stated in previous comments. This was carefully considered to avoid distorting the overall picture by counting the same point twice.

OE

e.g. We think this lesson was OK because of lots of activities,

especially the crossword and the competition which students

Already mentioned

liked. Students didn't take the crossword as a quick revision

OE

and the competition as practising q/a sets. This also got them

SRP

to use actively lots of new word and phrases. Encouraging
other students to correct their colleagues when they aren't
able to correct themselves is something we would do again and
oftener as this makes students to think more and

LPC

pay attention to colleagues' utterances. Next time we'd make
the q/a game again but shorter and then we'd let students start
their written homework at school.

For more examples of the analysis of students' comments see Appendix 5 which
presents the comments on one lesson from each set of the three sets of the TP
portfolios. Each lesson is from a different student.

2.5.3 Discussion of findings

Since the study adopted an exploratory stance, in terms of comments student teachers
were given space to focus on what they considered important. Their comments did not
go beyond the boundaries of classroom experience and concentrated mainly on
immediate concerns, problems and successes connected with delivering a particular
lesson they had prepared. The only category considering a wider context called More
general advice represents a negligible, tiny, little section among the others. Table 2.5
displays the frequency of occurrence of each category within the three sets of
portfolios. Since the numbers of categories found in each set are not equal, to
facilitate comparisons between groups, the numbers are converted into percentages.
Each set represents 100%.

Table 2.5

CATEGORY	SET 1		SET 2		SET 3	
	Numbers	%	Numbers	%	Numbers	%
Teacher-learner inter.	98	20.3	60	14.3	35	9.1
Teacher	42	8.7	36	8.6	17	4.4
Learner	39	8.1	60	14.3	81	21.1
Pair/group work	23	4.8	7	1.6	7	1.8
Overall evaluation	38	7.9	2	0.5	9	2.3
Error correction	27	5.6	27	6.4	24	6.2
Lesson management	92	19.1	128	30.5	116	30.1
Lesson procedure changes	47	9.8	40	9.5	32	8.3
Motivation	50	10.4	37	8.8	42	10.9
More general advice	10	2.1	10	2.4	6	1.6
Class atmosphere	3	0.6	2	0.5	6	1.6
Suggestion of repeated procedures	5	1	1	0.2	5	1.3
Student mentor co-operation	8	1.6	10	2.4	5	1.3
TOTAL	482	100%	420	100%	385	100%

At first sight it is obvious that as regards the frequency of occurrence there are great differences between categories. e.g. In set 2 the category of Suggestion of repeated procedures appears only once, the category of Lesson management 128 times.

The order of individual categories and also the proportions among them vary from set to set. This is illustrated in Figure 2.1. The comparison of the most frequent categories speaks in favour of the category of Teacher-learner interaction in set 1 which is replaced by a large predominance of the category of Lesson management in sets 2 and 3. In other words the most frequent category in set 1 was descriptive, in sets 2 and 3 analytic. The Categories of More general advice, Suggestion of repeated procedures, Class atmosphere and Student-mentor co-operation represent only very minor issues in all the three sets. With reference to the categories of More general advice, Suggestion of repeated procedures and Class atmosphere it looks promising

because they rank among analytic categories which are together with the other analytic categories present in a considerable proportion of comments. The presence of these comments, however small, testifies that student teachers were able to perceive more subtle areas after the basic survival issues had been sorted out. It is a pity that such comments represent a very low and more or less the same proportion in all the three sets and it is, therefore, impossible to talk about any kind of progress or development. The small proportion of the category of Student-mentor co-operation is, on the other hand, rather disappointing. Since student teachers were in regular, direct contact with their supervising teachers for a relatively long period of time, I would have expected a more profound influence of the supervising teachers on them. As the structure of students´ comments was left open, it is believed that in their comments students mentioned what they considered significant at a given moment. However, remarks suggesting any kind of communication or co-operation with their supervising teachers occur very rarely.

Figure 2.2 follows the order and proportions of descriptive comments within individual sets. The percentages of the categories of Teacher-learner interaction and Teacher go down rather rapidly while the category of Learner shows a remarkable growth.

SET 1

SET 2

45
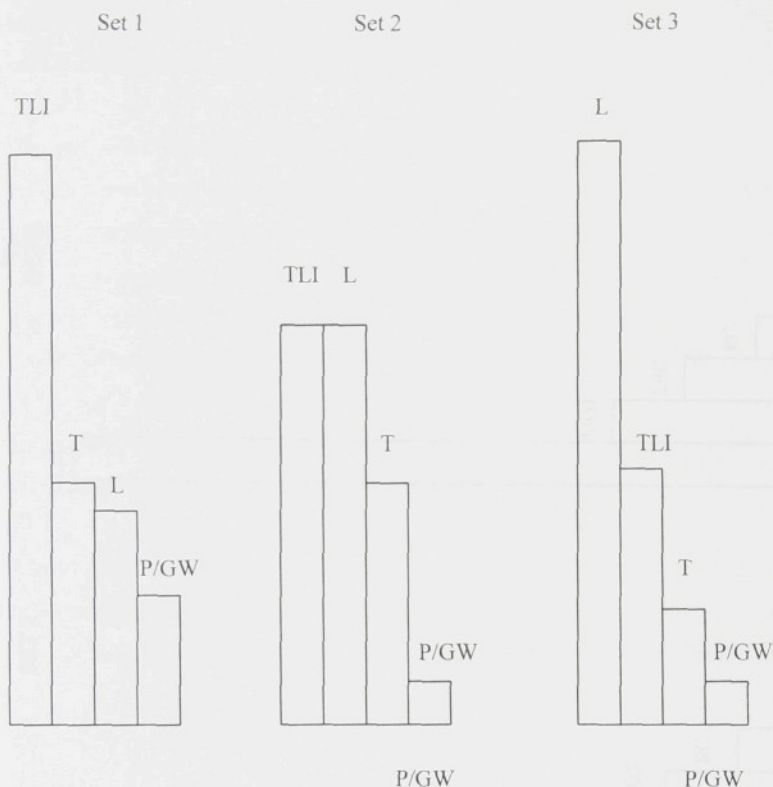
Figure 2.2

Figure 2.3 displays the order and proportions of analytic comments within individual sets. Here the category of Class management always remains in the first place with a considerable increase in set 2 and almost the same amount in set 3. Besides Lesson management two more important analytic categories are the categories of Lesson procedure changes and Motivation. They always occupy 2nd and 3rd places. The presence of these categories proves student teachers' ability to theorise about other alternatives applicable in a given context and to perceive what it is that leads to in/decreasing motivation. In that respect no progress has been notified. The percentages of comments dealing with these issues are more or less the same in all the three sets.
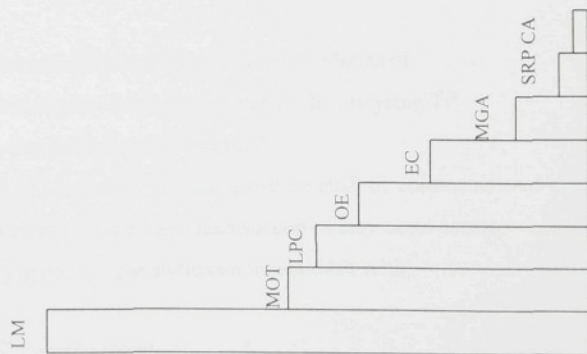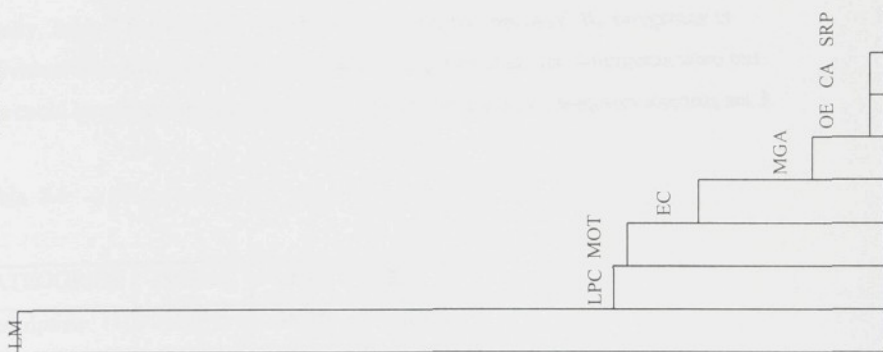
FIGURE 2.3   SET 1   SET 2   SET 3
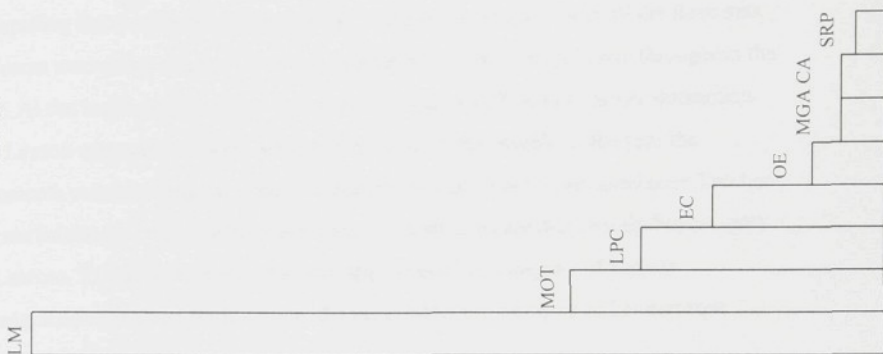
The category of Student-mentor co-operation included all kinds of comments dealing with student-mentor communication. Since it was only a minor category, the comments were not further subdivided into descriptive and analytic. That is the reason why this category was excluded in Figures 2.2 and 2.3.

Comparing the most powerful descriptive and analytic categories in all the three sets indicates interesting changes in student teachers´ reflective perspective throughout the year. At the beginning students´ comments dealing with Teacher-learner interaction and Lesson management were almost in balance. In the middle of the year the comments concentrating on Lesson management significantly prevailed over Teacher-learner interaction which was of the same importance as another descriptive category of Learner. Towards the end of the year the value of the category of Lesson management remained more or less the same while the category of Learner rose remarkably.

Finally, Table 2.6 shows the ratio between descriptive and analytic categories in individual sets. Always more than a half of categories students´ comments were put into could be called analytic with a slight growth of analytic categories towards set 3.

Table 2.6

CATEGORIES	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3
Descriptive	41.9%	38.8%	36.4%
Analytic	56.5%	58.8%	62.3%

To summarise:
The vast majority of students´ comments did not go beyond the boundaries of classroom experience and focused mainly on immediate concerns. In analysing TP portfolios throughout the year two particular features emerged:
1. A shift towards better reasoning which resulted in offering more analytic comments in which students tried to find causes of problems and also successes they came across while teaching. The overwhelming majority of analytic comments dealt with

classroom management. With reference to the other analytic categories no significant change was notified.

2. A shift in the focus of descriptive comments. When student teachers described what happened during a lesson, towards the end of the year their comments became predominantly learner-oriented.

2.6. Research question 2

How do student teachers perceive reflection?

SQN —⟨ source of data ⟩— INT
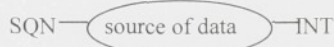
Student teachers´ perception of reflection was examined from 2 different angles dealing with
1/ their view of reflection
2/ the perception of their proficiency in reflection

For an overview of how the data referring to this research question was triangulated see Appendix 6.

2.6.1 Student teachers´ view of reflection
SQN 1, 2, 3: You were asked to reflect on your and your colleagues´ teaching. Indicate by a tick which of the following would best express your view of reflection. Please give a reason for your answer.
a/ essential b/ not very important c/ unimportant d/ do not know
INT: Give your opinion about reflection.
For comments see Appendix 7.

2.6.1.1 Discussion of findings
Except for one student in questionnaire 3 who ticked the answer "not very important"

and gave a reason "..in the way we were asked to reflect on lessons", all the others considered reflection essential. In questionnaire 1 the reasons named could be put into three main groups as can be seen in Figure 2.4 in which the student teacher is the only person to benefit from it.

Figure 2.4

1/other peoples reflection

↓

student teacher

2/reflecting on oneself　　　　*3/reflecting on others*
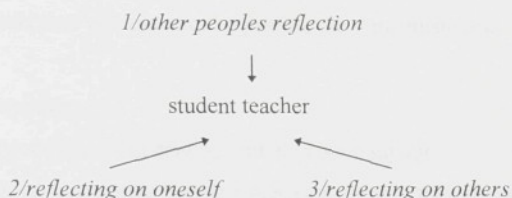
The following examples of students' comments illustrate ideas student teachers came up with in individual groups.
1/ Other people's reflection
They realised the usefulness of being observed by somebody else.

  e.g. Nobody is able to evaluate him/herself objectively. We need to have
      opinions of other colleagues.

The person observing them may serve as a source of new ideas.

  e.g. ...sometimes she gave me ideas how to do things in a better
      way next time.

2/ Reflecting on oneself
Reflection assured students of their ability to teach

  e.g. Reflection helped me to realise that I could teach. I never
      believed I could do it.

and they noticed how important it was to analyse their own lessons.

> e.g. ...It made me think about my lessons again and see
> the problems I had or the mistakes I did .

> ...It's useful to look back and see mistakes one has
> done: next time one can avoid repeating the same mistakes.

3/ Reflecting on others
There was only one comment dealing with this issue saying
> It was good to see other people's mistakes because they are easier to spot.

The analysis of questionnaire 2 brought some new ideas relating to groups 1 and 3
mentioned above.
1/ other people's reflection
The comments showed that student teachers became aware of the fact that reflection is
to a large extent subjective.

> e.g. It is important to know the view of the others. In some cases,
> however, what some people consider to be negative, others
> consider to be positive.

3/ reflecting on others
Student teachers realised that what others do in lessons can be used as a source of
ideas and we can learn from other people's mistakes.

> e.g. It is important to observe colleagues because I'm learning
> from their mistakes and they also provide me with some good
> ideas what to do and how to do it with my pupils.

The reasons mentioned in questionnaire 2 also revealed one new dimension as can be
seen in Figure 2.5 The relationship between the student teachers and reflecting on
others works in both ways. In other words it can be mutually beneficial.

Figure 2.5

student teacher

3/ reflecting on others
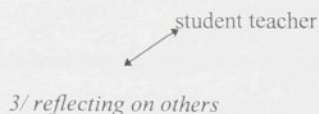
e.g. ...the person observed can benefit from our comments, too.

Since the response rate in questionnaire 3 was rather low, the analysis did not bring any illuminating data. However, it coincided with the interview which all the students voluntarily took part in. Student teachers´ comments confirmed that they found reflection important and some other ideas overlapped too. Most students expressed a decision to continue with reflection and spread it among their future colleagues if those are interested. Most of them also complained about having to write such detailed portfolios. With regard to reflection some new ideas emerged.

The atmosphere of trust is important

e.g. You must have courage because it can be unpleasant.
    You must admit that you are not perfect that you make
    mistakes. Nobody likes criticism. It is a good thing to
    observe colleagues´ classes or to have colleagues observing
    yours. It can't be based on "somebody thinks I want to
    criticise him/her."

Reflection is important mainly for beginners

e.g. I don't know whether e.g. in five years reflection will still
    be necessary. It is absolutely necessary for beginners.
    When something becomes a routine, you do it automatically
    and if it is bad, it is difficult to unlearn. Experienced teachers
    do not need it so much.

The fact that we use words can cause trouble

e.g. If it is necessary to use words, it must be distorted.

It is very difficult, however, to formulate ideas on a
piece of paper to explain them to somebody.

Reflection as soon as possible after a lesson

e.g. Reflection is useful if you do it immediately. After some
time it is difficult to remember details. Feelings fade away quickly.

Reflection would have happened even without university training.

e.g. Reflection is an absolutely essential thing. I would have done
it even if you had not told us.

2.6.2 Student teachers´ perception of their proficiency in reflection

SQN ——— (source of data) ——INT
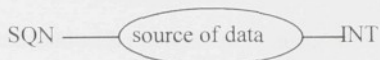
SQN : How would you rate your proficiency in reflection?
a/ excellent b/ very good c/ good d/ poor e/ very poor
Please explain your answer.
INT: Discussions with peers and supervising teachers - did they reveal anything you
did not know?
For comments see Appendix 7

2.6.2.1 Discussion of findings
In all the 3 questionnaires the majority of students rated their proficiency in reflection

as "good" and explained their choice by some concrete reservations referring to the way they were able to reflect on lessons.

The status quo of their ability to reflect has its limitations

e.g. For myself it was good enough. However, sometimes I felt
I repeated the same phrases all the time because there usually
was the same problem.

..I can only suggest minor modifications of the lesson stages
but this all is narrow viewed. I think I can't reflect on wider units...

The quality of reflection grows with experience

e.g. ...sometimes I didn't catch all the factors which were important.
I think that the best reflection can be written only by somebody
very experienced.

I wasn't bad, but I hope next time it'll be much better.

Some ideas mentioned with reference to students´ view of reflection occurred again.

Reflecting on others is relatively easy

e.g. ...In my opinion it is easy to evaluate other people's work
but difficult to do the same with myself even though I tried
to see myself from a distance.

Reflection as soon as possible after a lesson

e.g. ...However, I have problems with writing it (my reflection)
down because some ideas were instant and I didn't remember them.

During interviews all the students confirmed that their discussions with peers and supervising teachers really revealed issues they were not aware of in lessons and gave concrete examples.

> e.g. ...I thought students understood everything, the supervising
>   teacher told me they had not.
>   ...I did not have a feeling I spoke Czech so much.

Moreover, students theorised about the effect of being observed by somebody else. The ideas confirmed what has already been mentioned with reference to other people's reflection discussed above, namely that

It is useful to be observed by somebody else

> e.g. ...I can't perceive everything fully. The person sitting at
>   the back perceives what is happening. I have to consider
>   what happened, is happening and will happen. I am glad
>   when somebody comments on my lessons.

The person observing a class may serve as a source of new ideas

> e.g. ...In the discussions I learnt a lot of methodological advice,
>   what a lesson should look like.

Reflection is to a large extent subjective

> e.g. ...The supervising teacher should, however, understand
>   that we have our own style and shouldn't compare it with his or hers.

Students' comments also extended some issues connected with other people's reflection.

Reflection must be concrete

e.g. ...If I don't learn anything concrete, it is not very useful.

The presence of somebody observing a class has a different impact on pupils

e.g. ...On the other hand it disturbs the lesson. Pupils behaviour is different.

...When the supervising teacher observed a class, pupils
were more disciplined.

The nature of reflection has an impact on student teachers

e.g. ...However, it can't be only criticism. It is discouraging.

or confirmed ideas mentioned above

The atmosphere of trust is important

e.g. ...I also have to trust the supervising teacher...

To summarise: Student teachers accepted reflection as an integral part of teaching and were gradually able to articulate and specify some important advantages and also pitfalls connected with it. They realised that the status quo of their ability to reflect had its limitations and that the quality of reflection grew with experience. They pointed out important issues connected with reflection, such as the atmosphere of trust, the importance of reflection especially for beginners, the necessity of reflecting on lessons as soon as possible because time works against memory and also the problem of using words and giving meaning to them. Besides dealing with reflection as such the comments split up into those focusing on other people's reflection, reflecting on others and reflecting on oneself. With reference to other people's reflection student teachers realised the usefulness of being observed by somebody else on condition that

they learnt something concrete even though they were aware of the subjectivity of the observer's comments. Comparing the difficulty of reflecting on others and reflecting on oneself spoke in favour of reflecting on others which student teachers considered easier. However, they took reflecting on oneself as equally important. Finally, the initial situation in which student teachers saw themselves as the only people to benefit from reflecting on others gradually changed and they came to a conclusion that it might be mutually beneficial.

2.7. Research question 3

Is there a mismatch between how student teachers reflect on themselves and how their school teachers reflect on them?

SQN

TQN — source of data — INT

(different combinations)
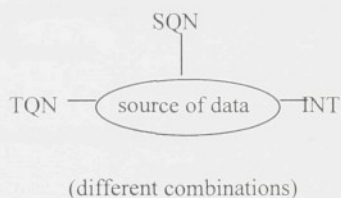
The purpose of this research question was to ask the students and their supervising teachers the same or similar questions and try to find the degree of agreement or disagreement between their answers. For an overview of how the data referring to this research question was triangulated see Appendix 9. The questions covered four areas:

1. Students' feelings during each of the teaching practices
2. Students' concerns, problems, main weaknesses, successes, and main strengths
3. The communication between students and their supervising teachers in case of disagreement
4. Change in teaching observed

The above mentioned areas will now be dealt with in turn.

2.7.1. Student teachers´ feelings

SQN ——————(source of data)——————— TQN
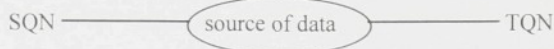
SQN 1: How did you feel during the teaching practice?

     a/ like a student b/ like a teacher c/ it varied

SQN 2 and 3: How did you feel during the teaching practice?

TQN: How did our student behave in the classroom? More like a teacher or a student?

     Did your pupils take our student seriously?

For comments see Appendix 10.

2.7.1.1 Discussion of findings

Two students in each of the 3 questionnaires answered they felt like teachers. Except for one comment in qn 2 which could be marked as neutral because it said „not very confident, sometimes speaking too much", all the other comments were either absolutely optimistic

    e.g. I felt surprisingly secure, sure of what I was doing.

      Quite comfortable, better than during the previous practice.

or indicated student teachers´ mixed feelings, but on the whole still sounded rather optimistic

    e.g. At the beginning I felt like a newcomer, but I tried to hide
      it in front of the pupils. At the end it was OK.

      At the beginning I didn't feel good at all. I couldn't concentrate
      and I didn't feel any relationship with or interest among my pupils.
      Later it changed and I felt quite happy. However, I was sometimes
      desperate because of making many trivial mistakes in the class and

handouts for pupils. I also didn't feel good when pupils asked me

about some vocabulary and I didn't know.

In the teachers´ questionnaire the results were similar. Only two out of eleven comments expressed some reservations.

e.g. She sometimes seemed to be an accomplished teacher, but some

lessons were less prepared and then she lost her confidence and

behaved more like a student.

The answers to the 2nd question were positive with a slight exception stated in one comment

Generally yes, but their attitude to me is different.

2.7.2. Concerns, problems, main weaknesses, successes and main strengths

The data collected for each of the above mentioned issues was analysed as follows. Categories were formed according to key words in comments. The same or similar answers were put into the same category. Since the response rate in terms of students´ questionnaire 3 was low and the interviews were conducted at approximately the same time, if the interview represented one source of data, the information was added to students´ questionnaire 3. For each of the above mentioned issues there is a table available in the Appendix having four columns (SQN 1, SQN 2, SQN 3 plus in some cases interviews, TQN). Each table indicates what was put together within one set of data (e.g. one questionnaire) and across all the sets of data. The reader will be cross-referenced to a particular Appendix when appropriate. As for individual sets it has not been counted how many times the same or similar item appeared within one set of answers to one questionnaire. What mattered was whether it appeared at all within one set of answers. Since the responses offered a great variety of different items, with reference to the main body of this study a criterion was set up to focus only on

those items that appeared in the teachers' questionnaire and at least 2 out of 3 students' questionnaires, it means at least 3 times.

Concerns

```
                        SQN
                         |
                         |
   TQN ──────( source of data )────── INT
```
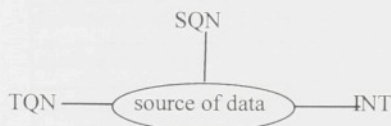
SQN 1: What were you mainly concerned about in the classroom?

a/ myself b/ class management c/ pupil learning d/ others (please specify)

SQN 2 and 3: What were you mainly concerned about in the classroom?

TQN: What was he/she mainly concerned about in the classroom?

INT: Was there anything you worried about before/during lessons?

For comments see Appendix 11.

There were two main drawbacks referring to concerns. Firstly, since SQN1 offered four choices, students often ticked one without further elaborating on it. It happened that they ticked class management seven times. In SQN2 and 3 they had to make up their answers which proved more useful. They came up with various aspects of class management thus showing that the category of class management was too broad. It was also one of the reasons why the question was changed in SQN2 and 3. Secondly, three answers in TQN could not be used at all because the supervising teachers mistakenly understood "concern about" as "concentrate on". Since the questionnaire was piloted on colleagues and not on supervising teachers, it did not reveal this shortcoming. The results are shown in Table 2.7.

Table 2.7

CONCERNS

clear explanation
time management
involving pupils
motivating pupils
keeping pupils´ attention

The category of clear explanation includes students´ concerns about both giving clear instructions while setting up activities and explaining new language clearly because sometimes they mentioned them both, sometimes it was not clear what they meant.

> e.g. Pupils´ reactions when they do not understand what I am explaining.
> I sometimes use too complicated language.

The other categories are hopefully self-explanatory.

There is one important difference between students´ concerns on one hand and their problems, weaknesses, successes and strengths on the other hand. Student teachers´ concerns were topical before lessons, or before certain moments during lessons. They reflect worries students had in mind while preparing lesson plans mainly in terms of pupils´ reactions which they owing to their limited teaching experience could not satisfactorily predict. They were never sure enough whether what they would present or explain would be understood, whether pupils would be willing to co-operate, whether they would manage to do what they had planned and whether they would succeed in arousing and keeping pupils´ attention the whole lesson. One student wrote:

> I worry about pupils´ moods. If I manage to attract their attention to be willing
> to co-operate with me. It happened to me that they did not want to co-operate. I
> do not know how to make them co-operate. I do not want to give them bad
> marks.

Students´ problems, weaknesses, successes and strengths reflect what they really experienced while implementing their lesson plans. The exact questions with reference to various sources of data were as follows.

Problems

SQN——(source of data)——TQN
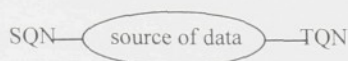
SQN 1: How did you feel about dealing with problems of practical classroom teaching?

> a/ prepared b/ unprepared   Please give an example.
> Note: What students stated here as being unprepared for was analysed here.
> What they expressed as being prepared for was added to the chart dealing with
> successes.

SQN 2 and 3: Did you have any problems with practical teaching, classroom management, etc.? Please specify.

TQN: Did he/she have any problems with practical teaching, classroom management, etc.? Please specify.

For comments see Appendix 12.

Weaknesses

SQN
|
TQN —— (sources of data)—— INT
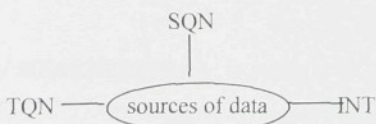
SQN: What would you say was your main weakness?

INT: What are your limitations as a teacher at present ? What would you like to improve in terms of language teaching?

TQN: What would you say was his/her main weakness?

For comments see Appendix 13.

Successes

SQN ——— (source of data) ——— TQN
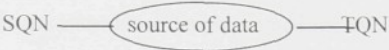
SQN 1: See SQN 1 dealing with problems
SQN 2 and 3: Did you have any successes? Please specify.
TQN: Did he/she have any successes? Please specify.
For comments see Appendix 14.

Strengths

SQN ——— (source of data) ——— TQN
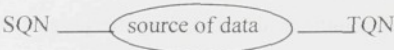
SQN: What would you say was your main strength as a teachers?
TQN: What would you say was his/her main strength as a teacher?
For comments see Appendix 15.

In analysing students' problems, weaknesses, successes and strengths the following
procedure was adopted. Problems and weaknesses were put in one group and
successes and strengths in another group since the former represent negative aspects of
classroom experience, the latter positive ones. The results are demonstrated in Figure
2.6.

Figure 2.6

PROBLEMS / WEAKNESSES   SUCCESSES / STRENGTHS

time management   patience
clear explanation   good contact with pupils
discipline   English   well-prepared lessons
lack of confidence   strategies
lack of flexibility   motivation
                                         involving pupils
                                         feedback
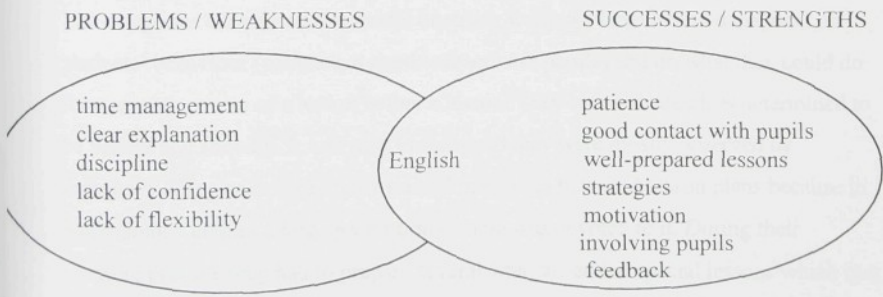
Some comments were very brief, they stated just e.g. time management, discipline, lack of confidence on the negative side, well-prepared lessons, motivation on the positive side. Students simply used words which later became the names of individual categories. In other comments students or their supervising teachers made an effort to explain a particular issue more deeply, sometimes even giving a concrete example. That is the reason why the ideas mentioned in individual categories will be reported in summary form.

2.7.2.1 Discussion of findings

The categories marked as problematic include mainly issues connected with pupils´ reactions and the personality of the student teacher. As regards time management students were sometimes not able to guess what could be covered in a 45-minute lesson or that activities they had planned might take longer. With reference to explaining new language or giving clear instructions, they sometimes switched to Czech when it would have been appropriate to use English or they used English when it was too complicated for pupils. They also did not check pupils´ understanding consistently and so it happened that they were surprised that after explanation pupils did not know what to do. Their lack of experience was obvious in treating disruptive pupils and sorting out discipline problems. Students´ lack of confidence was caused by the exposure to classroom experience with unexpected situations. The fact that they could not predict everything made them feel uncertain and nervous. Lack of confidence led to lack of flexibility which showed itself in students´ inability to improvise and move to unknown areas. They had a tendency to stick to what they had prepared irrespective of reality.

The categories considered successful or strong were to a large extent dependent on students´ behaviour (patience, a good contact with pupils) and on what they could do for a smooth course of a lesson before a lesson. They came to the class determined to be patient and friendly. It was new to them and they were mostly observed by somebody. They were also highly trained in making balanced lesson plans because in methodology classes a large proportion of time was devoted to it. During their teaching practice they had to prepare several what we called special lessons which in a

64

way extended the textbooks they used as all activities they did had to be taken from other sources. As they were really trained in it, they enjoyed doing it and the results they achieved were rather impressive. Also their repertoire of strategies was extensive. Consequently their lessons were versatile and in many cases different from what pupils were used to. It seems to explain why they had no problems to arouse pupils' interest and why they got positive feedback from pupils. It was probably due to all these factors that "involving pupils" appeared among successes and strengths even though it depended to a large extent on pupils' reactions too. The category of students' proficiency in English occurring both in the problematic and successful sections seems to indicate that it was highly individual. Language drawbacks stated in comments included mainly pronunciation, spelling, phonetic transcription, vocabulary and grammar.

The comparison of students' concerns before or during lessons with their actual problems/weaknesses and successes/strengths experienced in lessons can be seen in Table 2.8.

Table 2.8

CONCERNS	PROBLEMS / WEAKNESSES	SUCCESSES / STRENGTHS
time management	time management	
clear explanation	clear explan. clear explan.	
keeping ps´attention		
involving pupils		involving ps
motivating pupils		motivating ps motivation ps

Students' concerns about time management and clear explanation proved right, their concerns about involving pupils and motivating them proved wrong. According to their and their supervising teachers' comments they were successful enough in making pupils take part in lessons actively and arousing their interest. As for keeping pupils' attention the comments did not bring enough information.

To summarise:

As has already been stated, owing to a great variety of different issues covered in students´ and their supervising teachers´ comments (see Appendices 12 - 15) a criterion was set up to include in the body of the dissertation only those issues which occurred both in the teachers´ questionnaire and at least 2 out of 3 students´ questionnaires, it means only issues showing a high degree of agreement between the opinion of students and that of their supervising teachers. The findings indicate that students suffered from significant unnecessary concerns which were caused by the fact that they could not entirely predict and prepare pupils´ reactions. Their concerns - even though only some of them proved right - probably increased their lack of confidence and flexibility. If this is true, the areas of concerns and confidence should be properly addressed in initial teacher education programmes. If students knew their real weaknesses, they could invest more energy in overcoming them.

2.7.3 The communication between students and their supervising teachers in case of disagreement

SQN ⎯⎯⎯ (source of data) ⎯⎯⎯ TQN
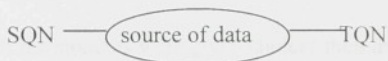
SQN 1: When you did not agree with your supervising teacher, did you

a) accept her idea because she is more experienced

b) pretend that you accepted her idea but in fact were not convinced of it

c) try to defend your point of view

Please comment on the item you have chosen by giving an example.

SQN 2 and 3: When you did not agree with your supervising teacher, what did you do?

TQN: When the student did not agree with you, what did he/she do?

For comments see Appendix 16.

2.7.3.1 Discussion of findings

The answers to this question split up into 5 categories.

1. There was no disagreement between the students and supervising teachers.

2. The students accepted the supervising teachers' ideas.

3. The students defended their point of view.

4. A mixture of 2 and 3 above

5. Others

The results are displayed in Table 2.9. The numbers on the left in each section represent the actual number of comments, the numbers on the right are corresponding percentages within one set.

Table 2.9

	SQN 1		SQN 2		SQN3		TQN	
1.	4	36.4%	9	90%	4	57.1%	6	55%
2.	1	9%	1	10%	1	14.3%	2	18%
3.					1	14.3%	2	18%
4.	4	36.4%						
5.	2	18.2%			1	14.3%	1	9%

In SQN 1 in which the students were given choices their answers show the greatest variety. When the answers were left up to students and their supervising teachers, the most common answer was that the situation of disagreement simply did not happen. That sounds unlikely. The truth is that as regards the supervising teachers, we could not be very selective. There is a shortage of teachers who are willing to do it. Some students respected their supervising teachers, which they explicitly stated in their comments. The problem was that the comments were usually very brief. One of the longer ones said:

I always respected her and agreed with her as she was really experienced and professional.

On the other hand the supervising teachers probably did not expect any disagreement and treated students accordingly. Let us read 2 comments included in the category of others.

Student's comment:

I can't comment on it as my supervising teacher wasn't used to discussing my teaching. She just said what she liked and didn't like.

Teacher's comment:

Mostly, they did not tell me.

Such comments were very rare and focusing on them could be qualified as an attempt to distort the data. However, they may also shed more realistic light on the situation which seems rather too ideal.

2.7.4 Change in teaching observed

$$\text{TQN} \longrightarrow \overbrace{\text{source of data}} \longrightarrow \text{INT}$$
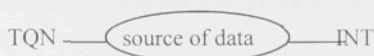
INT: Can you name any change in teaching you observed in yourself?
TQN: Can you name any change our student has made in his/her own teaching, in his/her approach to teaching?
For comments see Appendix 17.

2.7.4.1 Discussion of findings

The ideas the comments presented could be split up into 3 main categories:

Concrete issues
Student's comment e.g.:

I've changed the way I speak. I speak loudly now.

Teacher's comment e.g.:

He improved writing on the blackboard.

She started to introduce more revision activities.

Flexibility

Student's comment e.g.

> Now I perceive pupils more. I am able to adjust a lesson plan flexibly to
> pupils' needs. I used to rigidly stick to a lesson plan.

Teacher's comment e.g.:

> She managed to recognise what was demanding to children when it was
> necessary to devote more time to a particular language item. She focused
> on quality, not quantity.

Students' feelings

Student's comment e.g.:

> I feel more certain, not so much nervous.

The only teacher's comment:

> At the end of the teaching practice she wasn't so shy...

The order of the number of ideas is shown in Table 2.10.

Table 2.10

STUDENT TEACHERS	SUPERVISING TEACHERS
feelings	concrete issues
concrete issues	flexibility
flexibility	feelings (1 remark)

As can be seen in Table 2.10., there was a high degree of disagreement between the students and supervising teachers. Only one supervising teacher's comment contained a remark focusing on feelings. They mentioned mainly concrete issues relating to a smooth course of a lesson. Ten out of twelve students' comments, on the other hand, mentioned feelings. Owing to the number of remarks referring to students' feelings, it appears that students valued most change in their feelings during teaching in terms of

feeling more confident, more certain, experienced, etc. It is an interesting issue which is worth thinking about. We as supervising teachers and teacher trainers probably have a tendency to see a trainee as a flexible object which must be gradually shaped and we conscientiously try to identify what should still be added to reach a desired model - a technically perfect deliverer of - in this case - English. We often keep forgetting that our trainees are first of all human beings whose prime concern at the beginning of their career is to gain confidence.

To summarise:

The analysis of the data referring to this research question revealed that students suffered from significant unnecessary concerns and that they valued their gaining confidence more than technical improvements connected with delivering a lesson. The analysis of comments dealing with the communication between students and supervising teachers in case of disagreement seemed to provide evidence that there was no disagreement between students and their supervising teachers. All these claims are only tentative and would need further investigation.

2.8. Research question 4

In what ways do student teachers' personal theories develop within one academic year?

There are numerous ways of eliciting student teachers´ personal theories. Griffiths and Tann (1992,71) name e.g. plain words, video, metaphors, Pope (1993,25) adds repertory grids and methods focusing on a person´s autobiography such as snakes and concept mapping. This study finally adopted the plain words approach which seemed the most feasible owing to the inexperience of both the researcher and participants. Also the scope of the study played a rather decisive role in favour of the plain words approach. Since it aimed at eliciting ideas referring not only to students´ personal theories, but also to their perception of reflection and the degree of

dis/agreement between their ideas and those of their supervising teachers it, appeared more economical to prepare a questionnaire with open-ended questions focusing on all these areas.

Student teachers´ personal theories were investigated as follows. Students were repeatedly (three times in questionnaires and once in interviews) asked the same questions. The data obtained in interviews were again added to SQN 3 because of low response rate. The questions touched three main areas:
1. The area of what students considered good teaching
2. The area of prior beliefs challenged by the teaching practice
3. The area of what students regarded as a source of their ideas of good teaching

For an overview of how the data referring to this research question was triangulated see Appendix 18.

2.8.1 Good teaching
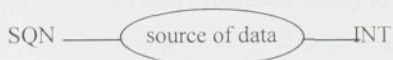
SQN ——(source of data)——INT

SQN: Give a definition of good teaching
INT: What is your philosophy of teaching? What do you believe in?
For comments see Appendix 19.

The items student teachers came up with offered a great variety. e.g. In SQN 1 there appeared a metaphor

> Good teaching is like a game. All are motivated thinking only how
> to win. There is a motto: Glory to winners, honour to the defeated.

There was even a rather pompous definition which would fit perfectly in the socialist ideology prevalent in the Czech Republic before 1989.

71

Human interaction between the teacher and pupils with the goal
of reaching a better person.

During the interview one of the students characterised good teaching as

A contract between the teacher and pupils. You will have fun with
me if you fulfil your duties.
Such comments were interesting but rare and did not shed much light on this area.
Most often, however, students combined a few brief expressions, isolated adjectives
and nouns. In most comments they assimilated the process and the individual and took
good teaching as a synonym for a good teacher. The categories were again formed
according to key words in individual comments. It proved impossible to put a
comment into a single category because it usually offered a variety of different issues.
As a result almost each comment was put into several different categories. The whole
procedure will be demonstrated on one of the definitions of good teaching:

Positive approach to children (teenagers), ability to keep discipline
without terror, ability to explain things clearly, creativity, proper preparation.

The above mentioned comment was finally put into the following categories:

STUDENT'S COMMENT	CATEGORY
positive approach to children (teenagers)	appropriate relationship with pupils
ability to keep discipline without terror	ability to maintain discipline
ability to explain things clearly	ability to explain clearly
creativity	transmission of knowledge in an interesting way
proper preparation	adequate preparation

2.8.1.1 Discussion of findings

Ten categories occurred in all the three sets (SQN 1, SQN 2, SQN 3 + INT) thus
forming the core of the definition of good teaching created by the group which
remained the same throughout the whole year. In addition there was always somebody
in all the three sets who said that they did not know how to define good teaching.
During the year the definition gradually extended. At first sight it seemed that the new
issues represented new ideas and consequently new categories. However, by studying
them more thoroughly it was revealed that the new issues illuminated the already
existing categories and could be thus added to them. Table 2.11 displays what student
teachers thought good teaching involved.

Table 2.11

	SQN 1	SQN 2	SQN 3
1.		TEACHER'S GOOD KNOWLEDGE OF ENGLISH	
		most important person	
		calmness	
		liveliness	
		confidence	
		sense of humour	
2.		ABILITY TO MAINTAIN DISCIPLINE	
3.		MOTIVATION OF PUPILS	
		challenging pupils	
			encouraging pupils
			praising weak pupils
			stress avoidance
4.		TRANSMISSION OF KNOWLEDGE IN AN INTERESTING WAY	
			learning and fun in balance
5.		ABILITY TO EXPLAIN CLEARLY	
			enough revision
			error correction
6.		FLEXIBILITY	
7.		ESTABLISHMENT OF PRAGMATIC GOALS	
8.		ADEQUATE PREPARATION	
			setting realistic aims
9.		ADMISSION OF ONE'S OWN ERRORS	
10.		APROPRIATE RELATIONSHIP WITH PUPILS	
		fairness	fairness
		tolerance	tolerance
			consistency

The idea of good teaching created at the beginning of the year included important aspects of the teaching/learning process. With reference to what was added to some categories, however, the original definition of good teaching appeared rather general. The issues which extended the definition came into being as a result of direct classroom experience and made the definition more specific, e.g. students realised that good knowledge of English was not enough and the teacher must also have some other qualities, such as calmness, liveliness and confidence. Some newly added issues within a particular category represented a dichotomy, e.g. challenging pupils and stress avoidance within the category of motivation or tolerance and consistency within the category of appropriate relationship with pupils. The category of the transmission of knowledge in an interesting way was enlarged by "learning and fun must be in balance", which may be taken as evidence that student teachers realised that their first idea that they will always be nice was too simplistic and idealistic. And finally putting some categories into practice in the classroom led to the rise of issues which clearly prove that in the relation of TEACHER - LEARNER the student teachers gradually focused more on the learner, e.g. "enough revision" and "error correction" within the category of "ability to explain clearly" and "setting realistic aims" within the category of "proper preparation".

To summarise:

The issues student teachers came up with in the first questionnaire were divided into 10 categories that created the core of the definition which remained the same throughout the year. The core definition was rather general and was to a large extent influenced by what student teachers remembered as learners. During the year depending upon gaining more concrete classroom experience, the students´ definition and also their personal theories became more specified. The new issues did not lead to creating new categories but enriched the already existing categories mainly by perceiving the learner and the classroom experience more realistically.

2.8.2 Prior beliefs challenged by the teaching practice

$$SQN \quad \text{—} \quad \text{source of data} \quad \text{—INT}$$
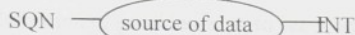
SQN 1: Did any of your prior beliefs change as a result of the teaching practice?

    a) yes   2) no

    Please specify

SQN 2 and 3: Name one or more prior beliefs which changed during the teaching practice

        Name one or more prior beliefs which did not change during the teaching practice.

INT: During the teaching practice did you discover anything new about teaching?

The data received in interviews was again added to SQN 3 because of low response rate.

For comments see Appendix 20

2.8.2.1 Discussion of findings

Since in SQN 1 student teachers could choose one of two possibilities, it happened that they specified only the chosen answer or just ticked yes or no without further elaborating on it. That was the reason why in SQN 2 and 3 they were asked two separate questions without any choice. As a result, however, the amount of data in SQN 1 is rather low.

Students´ comments were again put into more than one category if they offered more ideas. The number of students who claimed that none of their prior beliefs had changed was as follows:

    questionnaire 1   3 out of 11

    questionnaire 2   3 out of 10

    question. 3 + int.   1 out of 12

It is clear that in all the 3 sets the majority of students admitted some change in their prior beliefs. It became even more obvious in the 3rd set with only 1 student denying any change in prior beliefs. I tried to put students' comments to the categories created while analysing the definition of good teaching to see whether change or no change was consistent with the development of the idea of good teaching. Students' comments shed more light on the categories of

teacher's good knowledge of English

motivation

adequate preparation

appropriate relationship with pupils.

Moreover, they brought some really illuminating data with reference to learners and the teacher.

Teacher's good knowledge of English

In the definition of good teaching issues indicating that within the personality of the teacher good knowledge is not enough appeared in SQN 2 and 3. Some comments dealing with prior beliefs which changed in SQN 1 suggested that students had already been aware of this at the beginning of the year. Categorising the comments also revealed that a similar comment appeared both as a prior belief which changed and a prior belief which did not change. The comment dealt with the necessity of taking the profession of a teacher as an ongoing process.

A belief which changed:

        The teacher must study the whole life.

A belief which did not change:

        If the teacher wants to be good, he must study the whole life.

Motivation

In terms of motivation the ideas occurred in all the three sets and expressed three important issues:
- some students are motivated to learn if they are to be tested
- some students do not need the threat of being tested to be motivated
- to motivate pupils is one of the teachers´ important roles
The issues revealed aspects not mentioned in the definition of good teaching. They showed some other features of students´ personal theories which were most probably evoked by concrete classroom experiences. All the three of them appeared both as prior belief which changed and which did not change which proves that it was individual.

Adequate preparation

The ideas students came up with in this category brought 2 issues indicating change in prior beliefs. They raise doubts about the possibility of adequate preparation by stating that "improvisation cannot be avoided" and that changes to a lesson plan are unavoidable if the same stuff is used in a parallel class. These aspects did not occur in the definition of good teaching and were again evoked by classroom experience.

Appropriate relationship with pupils

Comments underpinning prior beliefs that did not change stressed the importance of "good, positive, friendly, tolerant relationship with pupils", which further confirmed the positive side of the category of appropriate relationship with pupils in the definition of good teaching. Comments focusing on prior beliefs which changed within this category pointed out the other side of the coin, namely that it is sometimes impossible.
In SQN 1 there was a comment saying: "I wanted to treat students as equals, but it didn't work."

In SQN 3 „There are limits of tolerance. The teacher must be consistent."
The definition of the idea of good teaching suggested this shift as late as in 3rd set of answers. If we put the area of prior beliefs and the definition of good teaching together, it again seems that students were already aware of it at the beginning of the year. If it is true, in this respect the assumption of the development indicated in the definition of good teaching in Table 2.11 was wrong. These claims are only tentative because I followed the group as a whole and not individually. Moreover, the amount of data was too low to allow a definite conclusion to be drawn.

Other issues included in students´ comments referred mainly to learners and the teacher. They bring evidence that classroom experience had a strong impact on students and challenged their prior beliefs. The comments both confirmed students´ prior beliefs and indicated change even though those indicating change were more numerous and became more specific mainly in SQN 3 when students had more experience.

Learners

As regards learners the comments designating change became more mature with time. Note the following comments.

SQN 1: I expected that the majority of pupils would be
      interested in English.

SQN 2: Now I believe that even weak pupils taken as
      lost are able to work hard and learn quite a lot.

SQN 3: I always thought that when pupils volunteered
      they were ready to answer. Sometimes it may be
      confusing. They volunteer to make a good
      impression on the teacher. They do not know the
      answer.

Smaller pupils are more enthusiastic, grateful and
manageable than older pupils.
Smaller pupils appreciate more than older pupils
when the teacher tries to arouse their interest.

Teacher

Comments referring to the teacher appeared in all the 3 sets of comments too. In SQN
1 students´ ideas occurred only in the set of prior beliefs which changed and expressed
their excitement about the fact that they managed to teach.

e.g. Before the teaching practice I never believed I could
do it. Now I do.
Only one thing changed. I am able to do it.

In SQN 2 the ideas appeared only among prior beliefs which did not change. They
expressed mainly how demanding a job of a teacher was.

e.g. To teach I need more energy than I sometimes have.
It is possible to make lessons entertaining, but it's demanding.
Teachers are psychologically affected by their profession.
SQN 3 brought ideas in the area of prior beliefs which changed. They provided
evidence of the growing and perceived influence of direct classroom experience on
students´ personal theories.

e.g. It is difficult not to have favourite pupils.

It is difficult to evaluate pupils. From the position of
a student it seemed easier.

To summarise:

The ideas occurring among prior beliefs which changed and did not change were where possible compared with the categories created while analysing the definition of good teaching because they could shed some light on the development of student teachers´ personal theories. The comparison indicated that with reference to teacher's good knowledge of English and appropriate relationship with pupils what seemed as change in the definition of good teaching students had already been aware of at the beginning of the year. The category of motivation and adequate preparation were slightly enlarged. The most striking seems to be change in the view of learners and themselves as teachers. The comments gradually became more mature and specific. Student teachers were able to realise that learners´ behaviour could be misleading that there was a lot they could do for weak pupils. They experienced that smaller children were more manageable than bigger ones. With reference to the teacher after the initial excitement students gradually became aware of what was involved in their role as teachers, namely that being a teacher was a demanding job and included things they had not realised or considered much easier as pupils.

These results are only tentative because the commentary is based on what the group as a whole provided in comments. It is very likely that some students made more changes in their personal theories than others or even that some students made no changes at all. However, the fact that all of them were exposed to classroom experience for a relatively long time and were inevitably made to test their theories and also the fact that at the end of the year 11 out of 12 students admitted some change in their personal theories seems to indicate that their personal theories did not remain absolutely the same.

2.8.3 Source of ideas of good teaching

SQN ———(source of data)—INT
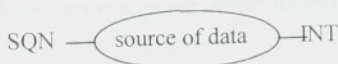
SQN: When was your idea of good teaching formed?

INT: What is the source of your idea of good teaching?

For comments see Appendix 21.

2.8.3.1 Discussion of findings

Students´ comments split up into 4 categories. Table 2.12 shows the number of students whose comments were put in a particular category in each set.

Table 2.12

	SQN 1	SQN 2	SQN 3 + INT
prior to university	5	1	
prior to university + at university	2	1	7
at university	3	7	4
source not clear	1	1	

The results displayed in Table 2.12 show that the most prevalent answer was different in each of the three sets. It spoke in favour of "prior to university" in SQN 1, shifted to "at university" in SQN 2 and ended with a mixture of "prior to university and at university" in SQN 3. In questionnaire 1 students usually remembered a concrete teacher who served as their model. In questionnaire 2 students´ decisions were decisively influenced by the teaching practice and it seemed to most of them that besides university there was no other strong source of their personal theories. In that respect the interviews the results of which were added to students´ questionnaire 3 provided valuable insights into the sources of students´ personal theories. Those who stated that the source of their idea of good teaching was university input and teaching practice explained that before entering university their ideas were only vague.

e.g. Before university I had only a vague idea. I did not know

whether I wanted to teach. But when you come somewhere
where they want to make a teacher from you, it is difficult
to resist. Now I am seriously thinking about becoming a teacher.

The comments of those who claimed that their present personal theory was a product
of a mixture of university input and prior to university experience split up into two
groups which represented different combinations of what students had brought from
primary or secondary schools and what was added at university:
1) A model of a teacher prior to university - how to teach at university

    e.g. Methodology of teaching English here. I had a model of the role
       of the teacher in secondary school. It is still the same. The teacher must
       like his subject. It can be transferred to pupils.

2) The idea of good teaching dramatically changed at university

    e.g. My idea of good teaching developed on the basis of what I
       experienced in secondary school. A classic authoritative,
       teacher-centred approach. Here I found out it could be done
       in a different way which suits me better.

 There was even an example of a double change experienced by one student.

My idea of good teaching has changed a lot. After 1989 I thought
we should be only friendly to pupils. Teaching practice changed this
approach because I found out that it did not work. It is better to proceed
from a strict teacher to a more lenient one. Not the other way round.

To summarise:
During the year the analysis showed different sources of students´ ideas of good
teaching. Towards the end of the year students were able to realise that it was neither
only university input and teaching practice nor only prior to university experience that

were real sources of their personal theories but a mixture of both. It seems that when students are repeatedly asked to think about the source of their personal theories, the real source becomes clearer to them and they are able to articulate it more precisely.

The development of student teachers´ personal theories about teaching can be summarised as follows. In terms of new concepts there was only limited change. Students remembered the classroom situation from the period when they were learners very well. In terms of elaborating and enriching the core concepts we can speak about significant changes caused by the fact that students were in the classroom not as learners but as teachers. Their new role made them test their hypotheses about teaching, the role of the teacher and learners. Concrete classroom experience was the most important challenge to everything they had ever gone through. It made them not change their personal theories but significantly modify them and deepen them.

In the following chapter the findings of this study will be discussed in a wider context.

CHAPTER 3

FINDINGS OF THIS STUDY VERSUS OTHER RESEARCH

This chapter is divided into three sections. Sections 1 and 2 put reflection and personal theories into a wider context. Section 3 discusses limitations of this study and recommendations for the future. It should be pointed out that the findings are based on a small group of twelve students and all the claims are therefore highly tentative.

3.1 Reflection

With reference to the development of the ability of student teachers to reflect on their lessons the findings are more or less consistent with what Tann (1993) revealed in her study. They show a gradual, non-significant shift towards understanding the teaching/learning experience better. The comments are predominantly practical, stay in the classroom and they do not refer to public theories. In that respect the findings are compatible with those of Griffiths & Tann (1992). However, I would argue that, even though student teachers do not make it explicit what kinds of theories are behind their remarks, the fact that they make an effort to analyse a given situation in terms of positive and negative aspects and suggest alternative procedures indicates that there are some theories behind their remarks.

Since the structure of students´ comments was left open, it was assumed that students would reflect on what they considered important. No comments referred to the political and moral issues which Gore & Zeichner looked for and did not find in their research. Even though I agree that "Political and moral issues are not separate from classrooms" (Gore & Zeichner, 1991:132), the findings of this study underpin what Gore & Zeichner disagree with, namely that

...preservice teachers cannot take on critical issues because they are not ready

or because their focus is narrowly and understandably on the classroom in which they are placed... (Gore & Zeichner, 1991:132)

With reference to novice teachers to encourage higher levels of reflection when the lower levels have not been mastered yet could easily become counterproductive. Student teachers could theorise at higher levels of reflection to the detriment of observing themselves, the classroom and learners in detail and with awareness. It is certainly highly individual and some preservice students may be able to do both. If not, however, reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action should be prioritised. Kagan (1992:162) notes:

Novices may engage in technical rationality rather than other levels of reflection, because that is where their developmental needs lie: in understanding what works and why it works.

As the number of analytic comments answering the "why it works" question gradually increased with time, it testifies that student teachers improved in making sense of the reality they encountered even though their comments did not go beyond the boundaries of the classroom. The findings revealed that towards the end of the year the number of analytic comments gradually increased and displayed a shift towards better reasoning. The overwhelming majority of analytic comments dealt with classroom management. At the same time descriptive comments became predominantly learner-oriented. These findings could be interpreted so that they speak both in favour of the so-called stage theories and against them. In Set 3 the ratio of comments focusing on lesson management and the learner was 30.1 : 21.1 (see Table 2.5). The proponents of stage theories could say that student teachers reached the stage in their career when they focused mainly on class management and issues connected with it. However, Kagan (1992) in her review comparing studies focusing on similar issues found some inconsistencies caused by "differences in the ways investigators defined or measured key variables" (p.156). Since the comments in this study were divided into analytic and descriptive, at the same time there were two winning categories in Set 3 (see Figures 2.2 and 2.3). Even though the category of class management prevailed over

the category of the learner in absolute numbers, it seems impossible to claim that student teachers were preoccupied with one aspect of the classroom and entirely excluded the rest. Student teachers were able to focus on class management and at the same time perceived the learner more profoundly.

Comparing the findings of this study to what literature says about reflection, there is some evidence in our data to give further support to the view that once student teachers get used to reflection, they realise not only advantages connected with it in terms of avoiding making the same mistakes in the future, being able to analyse a particular problem, find a real cause and also a solution to it, but also pitfalls such as using words and giving meaning to them.

There is also some data in our study underpinning immediate as well as long-term concerns related to reflection raised by McIntyre (1993:44). In that respect most students considered reflection essential and were ready to continue with it in the future. They were able to distinguish that we can reflect on ourselves, on other people or receive other people's reflection. The initial stance that the student is the only person to benefit from it was replaced by a more mature stance that reflecting on others is mutually beneficial. Students gradually managed to specify when they were able to accept other people's reflection, namely in an atmosphere of trust and when they learnt something concrete. Moreover, students repeatedly expressed their opinion about the importance of reflection mainly for beginners. This to a certain extent contradicts some literature (McIntyre, 1993) which claims that reflection is important mainly for experienced teachers because they can make full use of it. The findings of this study are valuable because they provide evidence that students´ attitude towards reflection was positive. The amount of useful aspects they were able to connect with it grew over the year.

There is not enough data in this study to evaluate the role of supervising teachers who may have a great impact on students as regards helping them develop the skill of reflection.(Berliner 1987, Calderhead 1987, Kagan 1992). This area would need some further investigation.

This study also brought some interesting findings with reference to the comparison of the data obtained from the students and their supervising teachers on the same issues. The comments of both groups testified that students remained fully or rather optimistic in their attitude to teaching and their role as teachers. Students took their new roles very seriously. However, the data also revealed that students were very uncertain and suffered from significant concerns. Their limited classroom experience made them feel afraid of moments in which they needed some response or reaction from pupils (involving ps, motivating ps, keeping pupils´ attention, clear explanation, time management). Since in this particular group the classroom experience confirmed only their concerns about time management and clear explanation , it indicates that the classroom is the only place where student teachers can get rid of unnecessary concerns because the source of their concerns is not based on reality or where they can adopt some strategies to overcome them. The only way to gain more classroom confidence is through getting more classroom experience.

The fact that the lack of confidence is something this group of students was preoccupied with became obvious towards the end of the year when students were asked to name change in teaching they observed in themselves and the supervising teachers in students´ teaching. While the supervising teachers named mainly issues related to more refined technical rationality (e.g. He improved writing on the blackboard.), the vast majority of students stated that they felt more confident, not so nervous, etc. This indicates that in the hierarchy of students´ values the feeling of confidence is placed very high. If it is true, it should be properly addressed in preservice programmes in terms of helping prospective teachers nurture their growing confidence. It may significantly speed up their growth.

3.2 Personal theories

As regards the development of student teachers´ personal theories within one academic year the findings of this study indicate that there was very little change in terms of new concepts. Student teachers were familiar with the classroom environment

very well. The years they spent in the classroom as learners enabled them to define good teaching and things they believed in without problems. Since they were repeatedly asked the same questions, the comparison of their ideas revealed that even though the core concepts remained the same, in the end they seemed rather general because the ideas that were added significantly enriched them and testified that student teachers could see the whole process much more deeply and from different angles.

There were two main causes that triggered off some change: their new role as teachers and their contact with learners. Kagan (1992:142) states:

Student teachers approach the classroom with a critical lack of knowledge about pupils. To acquire useful knowledge of pupils, direct experience appears to be crucial... It is a novice's growing knowledge of pupils that must be used to challenge, mitigate and reconstruct prior beliefs and images.

Student teachers therefore need as much classroom experience as possible to be able to recognise that their personal theories need to be altered. Kagan (1992:142) suggests that novices should "study pupils in systematic ways". This could be made possible through "structured research assignments" in which they would have to focus exclusively on pupils and thus get to know them better. This seems to be an interesting idea that might be worth investigating.

There is good evidence in our data to contradict research which claims that student teachers´ personal theories remain the same over time. Towards the end of the year all but one student admitted some change. The findings of this study are to some extent compatible with Tabachnik & Zeichner (1984) in the sense that students did not significantly change their personal theories, but perceived themselves and classroom procedures more realistically. Since the findings show more than that, they could be tentatively compared to the results of Shapiro´s research. However, the method applied was not sensitive enough to allow to draw some conclusions as regards loosening and tightening of constructs, which is made possible through the Repertory Test done by Sendan (1995) and Sendan & Roberts (1995).

The findings contradict literature which states that students constantly use past experience as a source of their personal theories. The majority of students in this study - when repeatedly asked about it - admitted that the source of their personal theories was a mixture of past experience, university input and the impact of teaching practice. It seems that the exposure to long classroom experience together with theoretical input at university mitigates the effects of students´ past experience.

3.3 Limitations of this study and recommendations for the future

As Figueroa (1981:30) notes "All studies are limited and all have shortcomings." With reference to qualitative research Merriam (1991:37) states:

> ...the investigator as a human instrument is limited by being human - that is, mistakes are made, opportunities are missed, personal biases interfere.

The main shortcomings of the present study are as follows:

1. Since the study adopted an exploratory, open-ended stance, it used an open form of elicitation. As a result, what can be expected is only general data. As an initial sort of information the data obtained are very useful. But now that an overall picture is outlined, it would be interesting to investigate some areas in greater depth. Especially the areas of confidence and trust seem to need further examination.

2. The method applied - content analysis - processes words which have multiple meanings and as it is necessary to put words into categories, it is possible that another coder would put some words or chunks of words into different categories. Therefore next time it would be desirable to have a second coder.

3. To encourage as frank responses as possible, the researcher in this study did not ask students to sign the questionnaires and that is why she could not consult the interpretation of words with them. It is possible that in some cases they meant

something else than was understood. As Pope (1993:23) points out, for the purpose of validity and reliability participants should agree with the interpretation of the data they provided.

4. The problem of the form of elicitation of student teachers´ personal theories has already been mentioned. Since the study aimed at getting an overall picture of the preparation of prospective teachers, this issue was not investigated in depth. In that respect the Repertory Grid technique eliciting constructs from participants looks very promising.

5. Finally, throughout the study the group of students and the data obtained from them were taken as a whole. Guillaune & Rudney (1993:78) suggest that this kind of research is desirable if we want to "identify patterns of development which seem to generalise across many student teachers." That was certainly the case in this study because it was an initial investigation and the results obtained are valuable even though they are general. Nevertheless, they might also be misleading. What the group of students in this study came up with is in many cases more than satisfactory. However, insights into individuals´ growth are missing. While on one hand it would definitely be interesting to follow individuals´ growth, on the other hand when investigating the whole group again, in might prove challenging to introduce collaborative learning.
Francis (1995:240) states:

Articulating to others helps shape and clarify ideas. The group has more resources to call on than do individuals. This can stimulate reconstruction of existing beliefs, and, when trust and mutual support are held at a premium, preservice teachers are more likely to risk expressing partly formed ideas, questions, lack of understanding and challenge to fellow learners (including lecturers) in the small group context. Sharing develops confidence in self as learner...

By introducing feedback sessions with the whole group after analysing a set of questionnaires, interviews, etc., students could share opinions and benefit from each other's ideas. Also the issues of trust and confidence so often raised in the present study might be thus addressed.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to explore the development of student teachers´ skill of reflection and the development of their personal theories over a period of one year. Reflection was investigated through

- analysing student teachers´ teaching practice portfolios
- asking students questions about their view of reflection and perception of their proficiency in reflection
- comparing ideas of students and their supervising teachers about students´ concerns, problems, weaknesses, successes, strengths, communication with supervising teachers and change observed.

Personal theories were investigated through eliciting students teachers´

- definition of good teaching
- beliefs which changed and did not change
- source of ideas of good teaching.

With reference to reflection the findings indicate that students´ gradually offered more analytic comments in which they tried to find causes of problems and also successes they came across while teaching. The comments dealt mainly with classroom management. Their descriptive comments became predominantly learner-oriented. Even though no progress towards higher levels of reflection was found in students´ comments, we argued that it was mainly the classroom where students spent most of the time. Since comments proved, they understood the classroom procedures, learners and self as teachers better, at their stage of development it should be considered satisfactory.

In terms of reflection as such the findings suggest that once a habit of reflection is established, students can learn from experience. They are able to find numerous useful aspects coming from reflecting on others and on oneself. They are also able to accept other people's reflection on condition they can trust the people who make the comments and if they learn something concrete.

One of the major findings of this study seems to be that novices suffer from significant, unnecessary concerns which are mainly caused by the fact that they cannot predict pupils´ reactions fully. We therefore suggested that it should be addressed in teacher education programmes by helping student teachers reveal real concerns and nurture their growing confidence. Since the only place where novices can reveal their real concerns is the classroom, they should be exposed to as much classroom experience as possible.

As regards their personal theories, they did not remain the same, but gradually became more mature and refined. Students showed that they were able to understand the needs of pupils, pupils´ behaviour and self as teachers better. The biggest challenge to novice teachers´ personal theories proves to be classroom experience.

There are several areas which seem to be worth investigating in greater depth:
- the area of student teachers´ trust in people who want to help them
- student teachers´ growing confidence
- the area of collaborative learning when students can gain experience and confidence by sharing ideas with their peers
- communication between students and their supervising teachers

Let us conclude this study with what Johnson (1994) considers as important aspects teacher education programmes should address because they more or less summarise ideas this study wanted to convey. She notes (p.451):

...teacher education programs must provide a safe environment in which preservice teachers can come to terms with who they are, what they believe, and how they make sense of what they do... More importantly, however, second language teacher education programs must create opportunities for preservice teachers to have successful encounters with alternative images of second language teachers, and to test their emerging beliefs ...

APPENDICES

Students' questionnaire 1

1. How did you feel during the teaching practice?
   a) Like a student   b) Like a teacher   c) It varied

2. What were you mainly concerned about in the classroom?
   a) Myself   b) Class management   c) Pupil learning   d) Others (please specify)

3. How did you feel about dealing with problems of practical classroom teaching?
   a) Prepared   b) Unprepared
   Please give an example

4. What would you say was your main strength as a teacher?

5. What would you say was your main weakness?

6. When you did not agree with your supervising teacher, did you
   a) accept her idea because she is more experienced?
   b) pretend that you accepted her idea but in fact were not convinced of it?
   c) try to defend your point of view?
   Please comment on the item you have chosen by giving an example.

7. Did any of your prior beliefs change as a result of the teaching practice?
   a) Yes b) No
   Please specify.

8. Give a definition of good teaching.

9. When was your idea of good teaching formed?

10. You were asked to reflect on your and your colleagues' teaching. Indicate by
    a tick which of the following would best express your view of reflection.
    a) Essential for further professional growth b) Not very important
    c) Unimportant d) Do not know
    Please give a reason for your answer.

11. How would you rate your proficiency in reflection? Please indicate by a tick one
    of the following.
    a) Excellent b)Very good c) Good d) Poor e) Very poor
    Please explain your answer.

Students´ questionnaire 2,3

1. How did you feel during the teaching practice?

2. What were you mainly concerned about in the classroom?

3. Did you have any problems with practical teaching, classroom management, etc.? Please specify.

4. Did you have any successes? Please specify.

5. What would you say was your main strength as a teacher?

6. What would you say was your main weakness?

7. When you did not agree with your supervising teacher, what did you do?

8. Name one or more prior beliefs which changed during the teaching practice.

9. Name one or more important prior beliefs which did not change.

10. Give a definition of good teaching.

11. When was your idea of good teaching formed?

12. You were asked to reflect on your and your colleagues´ teaching. Indicate by a tick which of the following would best express your view of reflection.
a) Essential for further professional growth b) Not very important
c) Unimportant d) Do not know
Please give a reason for your answer.

13. How would you rate your proficiency in reflection? Please indicate by a tick one of the following.
a) Excellent b) Very good c) Good d) Poor e) Very poor
Please explain your answer.

Teachers´ questionnaire

1. How did our student behave in the classroom? More like a teacher or like a student?

2. Did your pupils take our student seriously?

3. What was he/she mainly concerned about in the classroom?

4. Did he/she have any problems with practical teaching, classroom management, etc.?
   Please specify.

5. Did he/she have any successes? Please specify.

6. What would you say was his/her main strength as a teacher?

7. What would you say was his/her main weakness?

8. When the student did not agree with you, what did he/she do?

9. Can you name any change our student has made in his/her own teaching, in his/her approach to teaching?

Interviews

1. What is your philosophy of teaching? What do you believe in?

2. What is the source of your idea of good teaching?

3. Was there anything you worried about before/during lessons?

4. During the teaching practice did you discover anything new about teaching?

5. What are your limitations as a teacher at present? What would you like to improve in terms of language teaching?

6. Can you name any change in teaching you observed in yourself?

7. Give your opinion about reflection.

8. Discussions with peers and supervising teachers - did they reveal anything you did not know?

APPENDIX 5
COMMENTS ON LESSONS

Key to abbreviations:

TLI	-	Teacher-learner interaction
T	-	Teacher
L	-	Learner
P/GW	-	Pair/group work
OE	-	Overall evaluation
EC	-	Error analysis and/or correction
LM	-	Lesson management
LPC	-	Lesson procedure changes
MOT	-	Motivation
MGA	-	More general advice
CA	-	Class atmosphere
SRP	-	Suggestion of repeated procedures
SMC	-	Student-mentor co-operation

Note: The brackets indicate that the category was not counted as it occurred more than once within one comment.

SET 1

1. Checking homework

T   EC

I asked pupils to read their invitation cards and shopping lists for their party. They made some

           MOT

pronunciation mistakes so I corrected them. I think they liked this kind of homework because they had

           L

free choice in what to write. It was individual work. There was a couple of pupils who did not understand the task and therefore their homework was completely wrong.

2. Working with the article At the Supermarket

   TLI

a. I asked pupils some comprehension questions about the article but the pupils were not able to give satisfying answers. So I played the tape again.

    (TLI)

b. I played the tape and asked pupils to follow the text in their textbooks. They understood it better.

    (TLI)

c. I asked some pupils to come to the blackboard and read the text in pairs. Unfortunately I chose one dyslectic boy who found it rather difficult to read in front of the others. He made many mistakes.

LPC   MOT

Next time I should be always aware who is and is not dyslectic. Other pupils seemed to enjoy this activity because they were keen on reading the dialogues. They kept raising hands because they wanted to be selected.

   LM

d. I finished this section by asking some comprehension questions to check whether pupils understood. They seemed to understand much more than during the last lesson because they gave satisfying answers.

3. Matching exercise

LM

I prepared this exercise beforehand so I did not have to spend any time putting the pictures on the magnetic board. This kind of exercise enlightened the lesson and made it more interesting.

L

Pupils were participating well and were giving me only correct answers, which showed they understood the meaning and usage of those partitives.

4. Revision of count./uncount. nouns

L

a. Students did not have any big problems recognising count. nouns from uncountable noun (except for *fish, work)*

TLI

b. I gave them a short, simple test with count./uncount. nouns. They did it quickly. Only one of them got a bad grade.

Conclusion

OE

This lesson went better than the previous one. I got to know my students a bit better and I knew more what to expect from the. I also did not have a big problem naming them as they had their names written on name cards. Many students showed they were able to remember most of the vocabulary from the previous lesson. Also using partitives and count./uncount. nouns did not make any problems.

LPC

Although they remembered a lot from the previous lesson, their speaking skill could be improved in many ways. They were not able to talk about any specific topic - in this case shopping. They gave only short answers to my questions. I think I should do more activities which would enhance their speaking

LM

skills. Another problem was the high number of pupils in the class. It was impossible to give much

SMC

individual attention to individual pupils who needed it. Students liked the matching exercise. The supervising teacher suggested that I should use this kind of exercise in following lessons.

SET 2

1. Introduction

LM

Pupils did not have wide knowledge of vocabulary. They knew just basic verbs and verb forms. So I

MOT

had to choose very simple language according to their level of English. In this stage I just wanted to

(LM)

warm pupils up and to motivate them to talk English. I tried to make those pupils speak who were not

SMC

so good. As the supervising teacher said, they had a bit problems with learning.

2. Practising questions

LM   MGA

We started with a q/a drill to remind pupils of some vocabulary. I found out that it is very important to have pupils make also questions not just answers. Teachers are usually those who make questions. But pupils need it too mainly when they are beginners.

3. Revision

LM

Talking about the pictures was one of the topics of the previous lesson so I just wanted to fix pupils' knowledge of the rules. I realised that pupils had still problems with SOME and ANY and also with

SMC

articles. I mentioned it to my supervising teacher and she decided to practise it in the next lesson which I was not going to teach.

4. Game

MOT   LM

Pupils were used to play this game and they enjoyed it very much. They were made to remember many words and they also had to think about much more vocabulary than in the exercises from the textbook. We played it three times round the class so that each pupil had to pay attention during the whole game.

SET 3

Stage 1
LM
The checking went without problems because the pupils only read the reports they had prepared at home. As they had already their homework prepared, there were no mistakes in their texts and they read it quickly.

Stage 2
MOT
This stage went smoothly as well. The pupils were spontaneously talking about the sports they liked
                                                                                    CA
probably because I had told them what I liked and disliked in terms of sports. Boys were also quite inventive as they stated that their favourite sports were sleeping and "coaching". This made the rest of the class laugh, so there was included an element of fun which brought an even more relaxed atmosphere into the class.

Stage 3
LM
a. I wanted the pupils to discover the meaning of comparatives and superlatives from the context in their textbooks. They quickly managed to do this because with the help of the pictures in their
                                    TLI
textbooks it was quite easy. The pupils translated the forms into Czech. I wrote examples of graded adjectives on the blackboard and introduced the basic rules -er, the -est.
   (LM)
b. The pupils had some problems with spelling of the comparatives and superlatives, but as they had to grade adjectives with different kinds of spelling, it was quite natural and I expected this to happen. However, they were always trying to add the endings - er and the -est, so they understood the basic
                            EC
rules of gradation. I corrected spelling mistakes and asked the pupils to discover the rules of spelling. (LM)
As the four adjectives in their comparative and superlative forms were written on the blackboard, the
                                            (TLI)
pupils had a clear tool and identified the rules quickly. When I added four examples of adjectives, they matched them with the right group.
   L
c. The pupils quickly understood that they must learn the gradation of irregular adjectives by heart, so this sub-stage went quickly and well.

Stage 4
MOT
I decided to use a competition in order to make the practice of gradation more   interesting and enjoyable. The pupils were keen on this competition and each group was trying to win, so they did not
                            L
take it as a practice but as a game. In order to get a point the pupils were thinking about their answers
                    LM
and they made only one mistake. However, they enjoyed the competition too much, so the groups almost started to fight and I had to stop the activity.

Stage 5   L
LM
This activity helped to cool down the hot pupils´ heads and made them work again. The pupils did not
                                                            (LM)
have problems with using comparatives and superlatives in sentences as they had a long list of

                                    (L)
adjectives from the competition and were able to use them in sentences. As the bell stopped the lesson, they finished their comparisons at home.

Conclusion
Already mentioned
In this lesson I especially wanted the pupils to discover the grammar rules themselves and to practise
them in a more interesting activity. With the help of the context provided by their books the pupils were
able to identify all the rules correctly. They also liked the idea of a competition, so they did not

LPC

take it as a grammar practice. Next time I will try to discourage the pupils to compete so much.

APPENDIX 6

How do students perceive reflection?

SQN	INT
You were asked to reflect on your and your colleagues´ teaching. Indicate by a tick which of the following would best express your view of reflection. a) Essential for further professional growth b) Not very important c) Unimportant d) Do not know Please give a reason for your answer.	Your opinion about reflection.
How would you rate your proficiency in reflection? Indicate by a tick one of the following a) Excellent b) Very good c) Good d) Poor e) Very poor Please explain your answer.	Discussions with peers and supervising teachers - did they reveal anything you did not know?

Key: SQN = students´ questionnaires   TQN = teachers´ questionnaire

APPENDIX 7

Questionnaire
You were asked to reflect on your and your colleagues' teaching. Indicate by a tick which of the following would best express your view of reflection. Please give a reason for your answer.
a) Essential b) Not very important c) Unimportant d) Do not know

Results: QN1   11   -   -   -
         QN2   10   -   -   -
         QN3   6   1   -   -

The comments were put into the following categories:

0) general
1) other people's reflection
2) reflecting on oneself
3) reflecting on others
4) negative

The number/s at the beginning of each comment show which category/categories a particular comment was put into.

QN1

1. Nobody is able to evaluate himself/herself objectively. We need to have opinions of other colleagues either to make better lessons or to strengthen our confidence.

2. Reflection helped me to realise that I could teach. I never believed I could do it. Now I do.

3. It was good to see other people's mistakes because they are easier to spot.

2. Even though I considered it sometimes boring, I could see its positive aspects. It made me think about my lessons again and see the problems I had or mistakes I did (sic).

1. It was important for me to hear my colleagues' comments on the lessons because I could not objectively evaluate myself and I could not detect some of the errors I did (sic) unconsciously. Sometimes they gave me ideas how to do things in a better way next time.

2. I would not say essential but useful. It is useful to look back and see mistakes one has done (sic). Next time one can avoid repeating the same mistakes.

2. It is important to see one's own mistakes or weaknesses and to work on them. There is no growth without criticising.

1. 2. It is important to think about the lesson also from another side. To think about somebody's advice. But the most important thing is one's own experience.

2. We should be always aware of mistakes we make.

2. It is important to distinguish good and bad points so that we could use good ones more often and avoid bad ones.

2. An old proverb says that people learn from their mistakes.

QN2

1. I could learn about my own mistakes and collect ideas from other people.

1. It is important to know the view of the others. In some case, however, what some people consider to be negative, others consider to be positive.

2. 1. 1 thing (sic) it is important to thing (sic) back about what happened in the lesson and to compare different impressions of different people.

3. It is a good source of new ideas while observing someone else: the person observed can benefit from our comments, too.

3. It is important to observe colleagues because I am learning from their mistakes and they also provide me with some good ideas what to do and how to do it with my pupils.

2. It makes me think about teaching strategies and helps me form my ideas about teaching.

2. I can look back and see what worked and did not work. It helps me to avoid doing (sic) the same mistakes in the future. On the other hand I prefer objective supervising teachers criticism on my teaching.

1. Reflections have positive influence even if they are critical as they show positive and negative aspects and make the teacher improve him/herself.

3. It is easier to realise someone else's mistakes and you can learn new things.

3. It is good for correcting your own mistakes. It is a good source of new ideas.

2. I could learn from „thinking" back which activities were useless, unimportant and thus avoid doing them next time.

QN3
0. I think that all work needs evaluation because it helps in the future when preparing for next lessons.

2. I can learn from my mistakes so that in the future I can avoid repeating the same mistakes.

0. No reflection means no growth.

2. It makes me think about lesson-procedures I used and about what did not go well and why; what I could possible (sic) change next time.

2. When I think about a lesson I taught again it helps me to improve myself.

4. Not very important in the way we were asked to reflect on it.

Interviews
Your opinion about reflection - individual students' comments

- It was annoying to have to write about every stage in every lesson. I liked when we could focus on 1 thing (e.g. error correction). Reflection as such important. I will continue with it. Teachers should observe each other's classes.

- After some time you will get used to reflection and it comes automatically. On one hand it was useful because it taught us to think about why things happened. On the other hand it was difficult to formulate ideas. On the whole it is good and I will continue with it. I will ask my colleagues to observe my classes. I do not know whether e.g. in 5 years reflection will still be necessary. It is absolutely necessary for beginners. When something becomes a routine, you do it automatically and if it is bad, it is difficult to unlearn. Experienced teachers do not need it so much.

- It is useful if your class is observed by somebody who understands it, e.g. by a supervising teacher. She can help with reflection very much. For inexperienced teachers it is very important. Reflection would be useful if I could do it just for myself. To write portfolios is annoying.

- Everybody has an internal discussion with themselves after a lesson. It is very difficult, however, to formulate ideas on a piece of paper, to explain them to somebody. Reflection is useful if you do it immediately. After some time it is difficult to remember details. Feelings fade away quickly. I would like to continue with reflection. Perhaps only for myself. I do not know what my future colleagues will think about it.

- Reflection is good. Portfolios are bad. When we could focus on problems, it was better. It was very boring when we had to reflect on the whole lesson. If you reflect on your lesson immediately after the lesson, it is good. It helps when you teach the same thing again and you want to do it better. I stick my remarks to my lesson plan not to forget them. I will definitely continue with it.

- It would have happened even if we had not been asked for it. When you are trained, however, you know what to focus on. There is a tendency to look at each lesson as a whole. To look at it stage by stage is useful. It will better reveal when a mistake was made. I do not know whether I will spread it among my future colleagues.

- Reflection in a spoken form is better because you speak about things you consider important. When you write a portfolio, you have to reflect on everything. It is very time-consuming. I will continue with it because it is natural. I would have done it even if we had not been trained at university. I do not know whether I will spread it among my future colleagues. If I see, they are interested, I will invite them to my lessons and I will be pleased to observe theirs.

- It is not pleasant to have to write portfolios. But with time it becomes part of common life. The most important thing is not reflection on a piece of paper but inside us. The fact that we had to write portfolios caused that we focused on each lesson in detail. If I had not had to write portfolios, my notes would have been different. I would have concentrated on essential parts only, not on the whole lesson. Reflection as such is very useful. I got used to it. If it is necessary to use words, it must be distorted. If somebody observes my class, it is a disturbing element. However, it reveals important things. That is why it should be done regularly.

- It is important. You must have courage because it can be unpleasant. You must admit that you are not perfect, that you make mistakes. Nobody likes criticism. It is a good thing to observe colleagues´ classes or to have colleagues observing yours. It cannot be based on „somebody thinks I want to criticise him/her." I will continue.

- Reflection is an absolutely essential thing. I would have done it even if you had not told us. The most difficult thing was to write portfolios where we had to put everything together, describe everything in detail in English. I did not like when we had to concentrate on one thing only (e.g. calling on students). I like more when I can focus on a lesson as a whole, but not tell lengthy stories about it. I will continue with it. Even more when a lesson is not successful.

- It is useful. Nothing can be applied generally and for every class. I will not spread it among my future colleagues because most teachers do it. I have a problem to see a lesson as a whole. For the time being I am in a stage to stage phase.

- Very important. It made me think about lessons. At the beginning we did not like it at all. It is very demanding even now, but very useful especially when I have parallel classes. I will continue with it. It is absolutely essential for beginners. It is important for experienced teachers too, but they know better what to do with pupils. Especially when a lesson was a failure, it was interesting to find out why. e.g. I know now that during group work it is necessary to explain everything first before children split up into groups. I do not know whether I will spread it further. It depends on my future colleagues.

APPENDIX 8

Questionnaire: How would you rate your proficiency in reflection? Indicate by a tick one of the following:
1) excellent b) very good c) good d) poor e) very poor
Please explain your answer.

	excellent	very good	good	poor	very poor	no choice
QN 1			9	1		1
QN 2		1	5	2		2
QN 3			6	1		

QN 1
- I was not bad, but I hope next time it will be much better.

- I never felt I had a big difficulty reflecting on myself or the others. In my opinion, it is easy to evaluate other people´s work but difficult to do the same with myself even though I tried to see myself from a distance. The comparison of what I wanted to reach with what I actually reached made it easier.

- For myself it was good enough. However, sometimes I felt I repeated the same phrases all the time because there usually was the same problem all the time. This situation remained for two weeks and then the supervising teacher helped us to solve the problem of attention.

- I tried to be objective on my colleagues´ teaching and my own. We usually came to an agreement. We tried to detect some mistakes in our teaching.

- Just good because I am not a very experienced teacher.

- I had several problems but in general I am satisfied . It was easier to reflect on my colleagues´ teaching. I had problems to reflect on mine because I found it difficult to teach and to watch myself at the same time. And after teaching I usually forgot what the reaction of the pupils was in every particular exercise.

QN 2
- I can recall the lesson easily and say what happened and was different from what I had planned. I can also suggest minor modifications of the lesson stages but this all is narrow-viewed. I think I cannot reflect on wider units (e.g. the whole activity was unimportant. This was not an efficient way to explain this.) There I would need teacher´s comments.

- I am not a „scientist", so sometimes I did not catch all the factors which were important. I think that the best reflection can be written only by somebody very experienced.

- With the help of my lesson plan I can recall what stages went went and what did not work. I cannot notice everything that is happening in the classroom, sometimes I can recall some mistakes later, sometimes the mistakes stay unnoticed. Therefore, the supervising teacher´s comments are quite important to me.

- My immediate reflection after the lesson was excellent. I could see what my colleague did right or wrong. I could tell him what I liked and did not like. I could give him some advice or express my ideas. However, I have problems with writing it down because some ideas were instant and I do not remember all of them now.

QN 3
- I reflected on my teaching after each lesson . At least orally in my mind. When I wrote it, It is possible that I did not mentio everything. But I tried to do as well as I could. I pointed out just the main things which I considered important for the next time.

- It is difficult to reflect on my own lessons. It is much more easy (sic) to reflect on other people´s lessons from the position of an observer.

- I am a middle-experienced teacher. Therefore, middle proficiency.

Interview - individual students´ comments
Discussions with peers and supervising teachers - did they reveal anything you did not know?

- Yes. e.g. Techniques of error correction I used. I did not realise that.

- Yes. On the other hand it disturbs the lesson. Pupils´ behaviour is different. However, reflection on a lesson must be concrete - otherwise it is not useful. The supervising teacher should, however, understand that we have our own style and should not compare with his or hers.

- Yes, mostly details.

- Yes. I thought pupils understood everything. The supervising teacher told me thy had not.

- Yes. Not only discussions after lessons. Even during lessons the supervising teacher helped me by using gestures. I cannot see myself. I do not know what I look like. I welcome everybody who comes to my lessons and then tells me something concrete.

- I learnt important things. When somebody sits at the back, it is useful if the lesson is analysed in terms of what went wrong. They were able to tell me why things went wrong. When the supervising teacher observed a class, the pupils were more disciplined.

- Definitely. If discussions are good, if the teacher is able to analyse a lesson, it helps very much. Of course, it revealed things I did not know. (e.g. I did not have a feeling I spoke Czech too much..) The discussion with you revealed a lot of things I did not know. I did not agree with everything, but mostly I did.

- Yes. However, it depends on the supervising teacher. They can give valuable advice. If I do not learn anything concrete, it is not very useful. But when the supervising teacher observes a class, pupils are more disciplined. I learnt the most from my colleagues. I have never learnt a completely new thing. Only details. When somebody observes a class, he/she is a disturbing element. But it reveals interesting things.If it does not happen too often, it is bearable.

- Yes. That is why I think it is important. However, it cannot be only criticism. It is discouraging. Of course, I do things in a different way because I am a different kind of person. I cannot act in the same way as my supervising teacher.

- Yes. I cannot perceive everything fully. The person sitiing at the back perceives what is happening. I have to consider what happened, is happening and will happen. I am glad when somebody comments on my lessons.

- Yes. I perceive the class globally. I do not perceive individual pupils very much. In the discussions I learnt a lot of methodological advice, what a lesson should look like.

- Yes. Sometimes I think the lesson was horrible. The supervising teacher tells me she liked it and the other way round. Sometimes I cannot stand back. I have a lot of problems with myself.

APPENDIX 9

Is there a mismatch between how student teachers reflect on themselves and how their supervising teachers reflect on them?

SQN	TQN	INT
How did you feel during the teaching practice?	How did our student behave during the teaching practice? Did your pupils take our student seriously?	
What were you mainly concerned about in the classroom?	What was he/she mainly concerned about in the classroom?	Was there anything you worried about before/during lessons?
Did you have any problems with practical teaching, classroom management? Please specify.	Did she have any problems with practicel teaching, classroom management? Please specify.	
Did you have any successes? Please specify.	Did she have any successes? Please specify.	
What would you say was your main strength as a teacher?	What would you say was his/her main strength as a teacher?	
What would you say was your main weakness?	What would you say was his/her main weakness?	What are your limitations as a teacher at present? What would you like to improve in terms of language teaching?
When you did not agree with your supervising teacher, what did you do?	When the student did not agree with you, what did he/she do?	
	Can you name any change our student has made in his/her teaching?	Can you name any change in teaching you observed in yourself?

Key: SQN = students' questionnaires
TQN = teachers' questionnaires
INT = interviews

Students´ questionnaire1
How did you feel during the teaching practice?
a) Like a student   b) Like a teacher   c) It varied
-                        2   9

Questionnaire 2,3
How did you feel during the teaching practice?

Individual students´ comments
QN 2
Optimistic
- I felt confident like a teacher.
- It was the first experience I had as a real teacher.
- I did not expect that even though I had a lot of problems I would like it so much.
- Fairly comfortable, but not always 100%.
- I felt surprisingly secure, sure of what I was doing.
- I liked it.
- Totally relaxed.

Mixed feelings
- At the beginning I felt like a newcomer but I tried to cover it in front of the students. In the end it was OK.
- At the beginning I didn't feel good at all. I couldn't concentrate and I didn't feel any relationship with or interest among my students. Later it changed and I felt quite happy. However, I was sometimes desperate because of making many trivial mistakes in the class and in handouts for my students. I also didn't feel good when my students asked me about some vocabulary and I didn't know it.

Neutral
-Not very confident. Sometimes speaking too much.

QN 3
Optimistic
- More like a teacher.
- As a teacher.
- I enjoyed it very much.
- OK.
- Quite comfortable. Better than during the previous practice.

Mixed feelings
- Greenhorn.
- It changed a lot from feeling absolutely down to feeling very excited.

Teachers´ questionnaire
How did our student behave in the classroom? More like a teacher or like a student?

Positive
- More like a teacher.
- Like a teacher. (four times)
- Mostly like a teacher.
- More like a teacher but very friendly to students.
- Very persuasively like a teacher. She was popular among students. She showed the right amount of authority.
- Friendly behaviour with slight distance. Lenka is able to recognise the atmosphere in the class. She does not stress her superiority but she is able to make students respect her.

Some reservations
- At the beginning she was too shy. Her results were better with smaller children.
- She sometimes seemed to be an accomplished teacher, but some lessons were less prepared and then she lost her confidence and behaved more like a pupil.

Did your pupils take our student seriously?
- Yes (nine times)
- Generally yes but their attitude to me is different.
- Mostly yes.

APPENDIX 11 - CONCERNS

CATEGORY	SQN1	SQN2	SQN 3 + INT	TQN
Clear explanation		If ps understand. -Ps understanding.	My clear explanation 3x. -Making ps understand the new target lang.- Ps reactions when they do not understand what I am explaining. I sometimes use too complicated lang.- Understanding the new lang.	Explanation of a new lang. item.- To connect a new lang. item with what ps already know.- Using appropriate vocab (She taught different levels of ps). She gradually improved.
Time management		Time	Sometimes I am afraid I have too few activities or too many and I don't know how to squeeze them into a lesson.	To include what she planned
Involving ps	Having ps to do st. all the time so that they don't get bored.	Giving ps enough space to use the lang.- Ps' involvement 3x.	Ps' participation (involvement).- It is difficult to make older ps participate.	To get all the ps involved (pair work).- She wanted to get all the ps involved and organised group work even when not necessary.
Motivating ps	Having fun and learning at the same time.			To arouse ps' interest.
Keeping ps' attention		Attracting ps' attention 2x. -Whether ps are interested in activities	Ps' interests.	
			I worry about ps' moods. If I manage to attract their attention to be willing to co-operate with me. It happened to me that they didn't want to co-operate. I don't know how to make them coop. I don't want to give them bad marks. -Ps' attention.-Keeping ps' attention -Older ps do not show that they are enjoying themselves.	Drawing ps' attention the whole time.- How to draw ps' attention.
Class management	Class management 8x			Keep control of the lesson 2x.- Sometimes class management but she has improved
Pupil learning	Pupil learning		Pupil learning	
Class atmosphere	Creating friendly atmosphere		Enjoyment of lessons	
Myself	Myself 3x	Myself, later I concentrated on ps		
Lack of flexibility		I was expected to react according to real situations and vary the plan when necessary.	I have a low ability to improvise I must have everything carefully prepared. I don't mind little improvisation.- If a lesson leads me somewhere else. I don't know what to do. I am afraid of unexpected situations. I am not very flexible.	
English		My pronunciation.-My correct English.- My utterances, esp. word order.- My mistakes.	Mistakes that I can do.-I feel embarrassed if I don't know st. Older ps make it clear I should know.	
Error correction		Error correction		
Discipline	Discipline	Discipline		
Technical equipment		Technical equipment		
None			If st. fails, I hope next time it'll be better. You learn from mistakes. If ps realise my mistakes, I don't get frustrated. -Nothing. It is necessary to accept as a fact that a	

Category	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5
Class management	Class management 8x		they didn't *want to co-operate. I don't know how to make them coop. I don't want to give them bad marks.* -Ps attention.-Keeping ps attention.-Older ps do not show that they are enjoying themselves.	Keep control of the lesson 2x.- Sometimes class management but she has improved
Pupil learning	Pupil learning			Pupil learning
Class atmosphere	Creating friendly atmosphere			
Myself	Myself 3x	Myself, later I concentrated on ps		Enjoyment of lessons
Lack of flexibility		I was expected to react according to real situations and vary the plan when necessary.	I have a low ability to improvise. I must have everything carefully prepared. I don't mind little improvisation.- If a lesson leads me somewhere else. I don't know what to do. I am afraid of unexpected situations. I am not very flexible.	
English		My pronunciation.-My correct English.-My utterances, esp. word order.- My mistakes.		
Error correction		Error correction		
Discipline	Discipline	Discipline		
Technical equipment		Technical equipment		
None			Mistakes that I can do.-I feel embarrassed if I don't know st. Older ps make it clear I should know.	
Lack of authority			If st. fails, I hope next time it'll be better. You learn from mistakes. If ps realise my mistakes, I don't get frustrated.-Nothing. It is necessary to accept as a fact that a lesson can be a failure. There is no point in losing heart. I am afraid of hecklers and those who do not take me seriously.-If they take me as a teacher.-The loss of authority. Ps must want to co-operate with you, must trust you, must believe that what you want them to do is meaningful. Before a lesson I usually feel I won't manage.	
Well-prepared lessons			If I prepare a lesson properly, I am not afraid of anything. If I am lazy and don't prepare a lesson properly, then I feel anxious.	
Knowing ps			I feel anxious before I know ps well.	
Doing things for the 1st time			Doing things for the first time. 2x	
Children			Children	
Singing			Singing	
Skills activities			Skills activities	

Key: SQN = students' questionnaires   ps - pupils   lang - language   vocab - vocabulary   st. - something
TQN = teachers' questionnaires
INT = interviews

CATEGORY	SQN 1	SQN 2	SQN 3	TQN
Discipline	We weren't really prepared to deal with difficult(naughty) children. How should we punish them?-I didn't know how to keep discipline in class -I had no problems with ps who were hardworking and behaving themselves. But I would say I'm not prepared for working with ps with low discipline.	I had problems with discipline as there were 2 over-confident ps in the class who make noise and disturbed the others.	Sometimes I had to change seating arrangement to avoid disruption and to keep a smooth flow of the lesson - Disruptive ps.-In 5 B there were 22 disruptive ps. This fact caused many discipline problems.	She sometimes had discipline problems which disturbed a lesson plan.-Lack of experience how to admonish ps for bad behaviour.
clear explanation		Ps were not used to my English instructions.	Presenting new grammar.-Setting up an activity.	She could have used more instructions in E.-For small children it would have been better to use more demonstration, gesture, mime and body lang.- Sometimes when explaining a new lang. or giving instructions, she used inadequate, too complicated lang
class attention	I felt unprepared for dealing with class attention			
Mixed ability	I was unprepared for dealing with mixed ability ps. I didn't know how to manage to teach stronger and weaker ps together -I didn't know how to treat mixed ability ps.	I had problems with a mixed-ability class as ps in this class weren't used to any pair/group work, didn't want to co-operate, were noisy and weren't interested in E. at all	In the 3rd class there were 2 very slow girls. They weren't able to keep up with the rest of the class. Therefore, I had to help them a lot, which meant giving the others some extra work.-I had 1 boy who didn't concentrate on all lesson activities I had to call on him very often to keep his attention.-In one class there was a clever pupil who, however, was very slow while answering in E. I had to be too patient and wait until he finished his utterances.	
Efficiency	I wasn't efficient. I spent too much time on making up different games or on searching for appropriate activities relating to the target lang.			
English	I had problems with phonetic transcription as I am not used to do it and I had to look every word up before the lesson.	My own lang.- esp. indirect questions.		
Time management	I had problems with timing. Sometimes I couldn't do all the activities I'd prepared (e.g. I lost time because I had to repeat st. that wasn't clear or that ps didn't remember well			At the beginning she had problem with timing
Setting up pair/group work	During group work I asked 1 boy to join a girl. He refused and he behaved quite bad.-Some ps refused to work together, especially boys with girls. According to their age (13) it seems to be quite normal.			Sometimes badly planned group work (e.g. according to numbers and nobody knew what number he/she was.
Technical equipment	The TV set didn't work, electricity didn't work, there was no blackboard in the library			Problems with technical equipment e.g. tape recorder

Category				timing
	because I had to repeat st. that wasn't clear or that ps didn't remember well			
Setting up pair/group work	During group work I asked 1 boy to join a girl. He refused and he behaved quite bad - Some ps refused to work together, especially boys with girls. According to their age (13) it seems to be quite normal			Sometimes badly planned group work (e.g. according to numbers and nobody knew what number he/she was.
Technical equipment	The TV set didn't work, electricity didn't work, there was no blackboard in the library			Problems with technical equipment e.g. tape recorder
Lack of consistency		I was not enough (sic) consistent when I should have been.		No serious problems. He was sometimes too tolerant
Lesson management	Mainly at the beginning I had a problem to concentrate on speaking, watching ps, correcting them and following a lesson plan-everything at the same time.			
Involving ps				Getting involved passive ps in the lesson.
Knowing ps	I had problems to remember ps' names as I was teaching in 2 classes. I often forgot to bring name cards, so I had to eye-contact the selected ps or point at a particular pupil or come to him and say: "You, please", which isn't very personal			
Class environment	The size of the classroom was a problem. It was too small. I needed to change the setting for my special lessons and it was quite difficult there.			
None				
Teacher-centredness				None.
				At the beginning her lessons were too much teacher-centred. Later she aimed at learner-centred lessons. It was evident, however, that she had a feeling she was losing control over the class. She soon overcame it.
Testing ps				Generally not, maybe testing. Their tests often ambiguous and they do not know how to test ps orally.
Lack of confidence				At the beginning she was too shy.

Key: SQN = students' questionnaire   ps = pupils   lang = language   E = English
TQN = teachers' questionnaire   esp = especially   st = something   Individual comments are separated by dashes.

APPENDIX 13 - WEAKNESSES

CATEGORY	SQN 1	SQN 2	SQN 3 + INT	TQN
Time management	I was struggling with time -Activities took longer than I planned. -Pace of lessons.	Time management.	I wasn't able to make ps work faster. I gave them too much time for group/pair work.	Time planning in the first lessons. She didn't manage to guess what could be covered in a 45-min lesson. -Sometimes she tried to do too much in one lesson
Clear explanation	I had sometimes problems to explain grammar clearly. -I had problems to explain an activity clearly.	I doubt if I am able to give clear simple explanation of new grammatical forms especially with small children. -I have a monotonous voice and I sometimes talk too much while giving instructions.	Presenting new grammar.- I should improve the way of presenting new lang. items (especially grammar). Ps sometimes do not understand what I am explaining.-I can't guess when I should stop using E. Sometimes ps seem to understand. Later, however, they make a lot of mistakes.	She sometimes confused ps with too complicated lang. when setting up activities which were meant to practise new material.
Lack of confidence	Sometimes I was nervous because it was my 1st teaching contact with ps. It was even difficult for me to give simple instructions. -The lack of confidence.	I wasn't confident. Lack of confidence.		She should be more confident, less nervous. -Too shy.
Lack of flexibility	I followed the textbook too much.		Inability to improvise during lessons.-I should improve the ability to improvise. Try it sometimes.-I want to be able to recognise which ways of presenting grammar and vocab suit individual classes best.	A fear of trying out new approaches.- She needed a lot of encouragement. -He was sometimes tied up to the instructions in the teacher's book too much, not able to invent his own strategy (or lazy).
English	My own problem with grammar and vocab.-Not knowing some vocab my ps knew, e.g. names of animals.-My main weakness is still E: spelling. I felt very uncomfortable when I made mistakes on the bb.-My E.	Not proper pronunciation.-Phonetic transcription.	My pronunciation I get B and Am pronunciation mixed up. Now I want more B pronunciation.-My own language (esp. indirect qs).-My own pronunciation and spelling.-I need to improve my E.-I miss my own improvement in E. I have a feeling that I forget everything. I forget common words because the vocab of children I teach is rather limited	Language mastery. - Teaching incorrect structures, making mistakes in phonetic transcription, pronunciation.
Discipline	Managing class discipline.	Discipline. I should have been more strict.	I should improve on solving discipline problems.-I don't know how to treat undisciplined ps, so that they do not disturb the course of a lesson	
Mixed ability	Not knowing how to deal with a mixed ability class. 3/4 of the class were hyperactive, dyslectic, etc., and only 1/4 were stronger ps.			
Ps involvement	I am not sure whether I gave my ps enough...		How to keep the attention of the rest of	

...re stronger ps.			
Ps' involvement	I am not sure whether I gave my ps enough space to talk during lessons -I tended to talk more than necessary. My lessons were mainly teacher-centred.	How to keep the attention of the rest of the class when e.g. pairs perform dialogues or I examine sb. I tried to involve ps while examining vocab. by asking them to give their classmate different words and then co-decide with me about a mark. It worked, but I would like to know some other techniques.	
Seating arrangement		I would like to try out different seating arrangements.	
Writing on the bb			He has to improve writing on the bb
Lack of experience	I haven't got much experience in teaching.	I think on the whole I need more experience in teaching -Lack of experience 2x	
Technical equipment		Using technical equipment -Work with video 2x.	
Lack of consistency		Lack of consistency (e.g. Sb didn't bring homework. I didn't check in the following lesson if he/she had brought it.	Inconsistency, not enough checking - inconsistencies in revising lang. in subsequent lessons.
T-L relationship		I need to know more about T-L relationship.-Psychology. We didn't have enough psychology classes and it was mainly general psychology. I know really well how to make a lesson. I would like to know more about what is happening between the T and the L. Things you can't see. I mean their souls -I want to know more about psychology and work with children who are handicapped somehow, dyslectic, hyperactive. There are many of them in schools.	He didn't manage to develop a relationship with older ps (14 years old). It was partly due to a special situation in this group.
Teacher	I didn't always feel energetic and I could see an impact on the whole lesson and on ps who constantly need encouragement for activities -I was too soft and I had a bad feeling when giving bad marks.		
Class language	I didn't know which vocab. and grammar ps knew		
Lack of authority		Lack of natural authority	
Class management			Class management
Lack of creativity		Interesting ways of presenting grammar	

Key: SQN = students' questionnaires   B = British   Am = American   qs = questions   T = teacher   L = learner   bb = blackboard
TQN = teachers' questionnaires   ps = pupils   lang = language   Individual comments are separated by dashes.   sb = somebody
INT = interviews

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APPENDIX 14 - SUCCESSES

CATEGORY	SQN 1	SQN 2	SQN 3	TQN
Well-prepared lessons	Our teacher always made us be well prepared for almost any possible situation during a lesson. I did not get into any situation when I didn't know what to do or how to behave.-I teached ps who were really bright, ready to learn. With well-prepared lessons everything went OK most of the time.	Special lessons. Ps produced what I wanted them to do. -Ps remembered a lot of new words from special lessons even if I didn't teach them to remember or learn them.-I can't tell whether it was because of my lessons or because the ps were so smart. They enjoyed special lessons because there were activities different from the ones in the textbook.-My special lessons proved to work very well.-Most of my special lessons. I included a drama activity into each lesson.		She did a good job generally but her best lesson was her special lesson. The planning of the lesson was very accurate.-Yes, he did. He prepared very good lessons ...outside'' for the 6th and 8th classes.
Strategies	I knew a lot of teaching strategies and techniques.-Strategies of teaching vocab., listening, etc.	I had success with a couple of games and exercises	I presented some activities which were very effective. e.g. A good way of presenting and practising vocab. is using real clothes and a washing line.	She thoroughly practised the present tense. She prepared activities not only from the textbook she used. She successfully prepared written tests.-Good preparation for listening activities, warm-ups, using flash cards, group work.
Motivation	I quite succeeded in motivating ps to work.	When they didn't notice that it was the end of the lesson and kept working.-I think I managed to create positive and friendly atmosphere which motivated ps to work when I prepared activities using popular songs.	Yes, in the 8th class. The ps there liked me very much as the activities I chose for them were highly interesting and enjoyable for them.	She had a perfect relationship with younger ps (11 years old) maybe because of an interesting topic.-She motivated ps with songs. This is always successful even though the language learnt during the activity was small compared to the time spent on it.-Ps liked her lessons because of her behaviour and interesting methods
Feedback		When ps used a new word from the previous lesson.	Ps in 3.B wrote 2 tests and achieved good results. It was both their and my success. - Ps of 7.B told me they had learned st. useful in my lessons. good feedback.	She reached very good results in teaching vocab
Involving ps		Success in making ps work.-- I think I managed to create positive and friendly atmosphere in which ps worked hard.- Encouraging ps.	There was 1 boy who was known as an extremely passive pupil. However, in my lessons he was quite active.	Ps were very active.-Setting up new pairs/groups through brief communicative activities involving all ps
English	I was quite confident about the lang.-I was prepared for teaching the language.			
Discipline	I succeeded in managing discipline in the classroom.	Success in calming ps down.	I taught a group of ps who were extremely undisciplined. Sometimes I succeeded in quieting them down	
None		I am not aware about any special success		
T-L interaction		Building respect and staying their friend at the same time		She successfully worked with small

	I quite succeeded in motivating ps to work.	When they didn't notice that it was the end of the lesson and kept working.-I think I managed to create positive and friendly atmosphere which motivated ps to work when I prepared activities using popular songs	Yes, in the 8th class. The ps there liked me very much as the activities I chose for them were highly interesting and enjoyable for them.	ups, using flash cards, group work. She had a perfect relationship with younger ps (11 years old) maybe because of an interesting topic.-She motivated ps with songs. This is always successful even though the language learnt during the activity was small compared to the time spent on it.-Ps liked her lessons because of her behaviour and interesting methods
		When ps used a new word from the previous lesson.	Ps in 3 B wrote 2 tests and achieved good results. It was both their and my success.-Ps of 7 B told me they had learned st. useful in my lessons, good feedback.	She reached very good results in teaching vocab
		Success in making ps work.-I think I managed to create positive and friendly atmosphere in which ps worked hard.-Encouraging ps.	There was 1 boy who was known as an extremely passive pupil. However, in my lessons he was quite active.	Ps were very active.-Setting up new pairs/groups through brief communicative activities involving all ps
...sh	I was quite confident about the lang.-I was prepared for teaching the language.			
Discipline	I succeeded in managing discipline in the classroom.	Success in calming ps down.	I taught a group of ps who were extremely undisciplined. Sometimes I succeeded in quieting them down	
None		I am not aware about any special success.		
T-L interaction		Building respect and staying their friend at the same time		She successfully worked with small children. She managed to cope with some hyperactive ps.-She was successful with smaller ps.
Clear explanation			Ps understood what I explained to them.	She successfully presented, practised and revised new lang. items
Using the bb				Good work with the bb
Skills activities				All the lang. skills were in balance
Drama				Introducing drama features into lessons.
Confidence	the supervising T and my colleagues said I looked confident although I didn't feel that way.			

Key: SQN = students' questionnaires
TQN = teachers' questionnaires
ps = pupils
vocab. = vocabulary
st. = something

lang = language
T = teacher
L = learner
bb. = blackboard

CATEGORY	SQN 1	SQN 2	SQN 3	TQN
Patience	I was patient	I can be modest and patient -Patience		Patience.
Good contact with ps	I have not got a chance to really see if my teaching was effective. However, I felt very strongly about making a good contact with ps. in the classroom. By contact I mean a good friendly atmosphere for teaching.-Having ps amused when any funny moment appeared. We laughed together.- A good relationship with children.	I think I didn't discourage ps.-I think it is my approach to ps. I can be very strict but on the other hand I am able to show that I like them.-I tried to be objective.	Creating a friendly atmosphere in the class.-A good relationship with ps (2x).- A friendly approach to ps (2x).	Nice relationship with ps.-Positive relationship to ps.-Good relationship with ps.-Ability to work with all age groups.-Her relationship with ps.-Attitude to ps.- She is friendly to ps.
Well-prepared lessons	Well-prepared lessons.		Well-organised lessons.	Detailed lesson plans.-Adequacy of lesson plans.- She is careful. She always had detailed and well-prepared lesson plans. She tried to predict every detail of the lesson.-Methodology background
Motivation	Using different styles and teaching methods from what ps were used to before. It seemed to increase their interest.	I attracted ps' attention and made the lessons enjoyable.-I tried to make my lessons interesting and build up as friendly and pleasant atmosphere as I was able to.-The ability to make lessons interesting and create good atmosphere in the classroom.	I tried to include as many real factors in classroom learning as possible to make it more interesting.	She is able to attract ps' attention
English	I was confident with my E.-Having good knowledge of E. and using it for the benefit of ps.		Good knowledge of E.	Good knowledge of E.-Her knowledge of E is very good.-Her E is good
Involving ps		I was really concerned about ps' involvement.-Encouraging ps to speak		She managed to stimulate ps to work hard during lessons.
Individual attention			Helping ps individually.	She devoted enough time to weak ps.
Keeping ps' attention	Keep ps' attention.			She managed to keep ps' attention by changing activities while working with smaller children
Confidence	I don't know if this was my strength, but the supervising T and my colleagues said I looked confident although I didn't feel that way.			Confidence.-She is confident.
Authority	Authority			Natural authority.
Admitting ones errors	Admitting one's mistakes.			
Discipline	No problems with discipline			
I do not know.	I don't know.	I don't know.		
Natural behaviour		Trying to behave naturally.	I tried to react naturally to any occurring events or problems in the class	
Clear explanation		Explaining new lang. clearly		
Sense of fairness			Being fair	
Time management				She soon managed to guess how much can be covered in a 45-min. lesson
Creativity				Willingness to take risks in the form of trying out new techniques, e.g. a video-lesson
Personal characteristics				She is punctual, kind, polite.-Her constant effort to improve her teaching
Not included	The main strength of every teacher is classification. It is a weapon.			

Key: SQN = students' questionnaires   E = English   ps = pupils
TQN = teachers' questionnaires   T = teacher   lang = language
Individual comments are separated by dashes.

Students´ questionnaire 1
When you did not agree with your supervising teacher, did you
a) accept her idea because she is more experienced?
b) pretend that you accepted her idea but in fact were not convinced of it?
c) try to defend your point of view?
Please comment on the item you have chosen by giving an example.

Students´ questionnaire 2, 3.
When you did not agree with your supervising teacher, what did you do?

Comments were divided into the following categories:
1. No disagreement
2. The students accepted the supervising teachers ideas
3. The students defended their point of view
4. A mixture of 2 and 3 above
5. Others

SQN 1
No disagreement
- I think most of the time my supervising teacher's comments were right so I had to agree, but not because she was more experienced or whatever, but because she saw the lesson from a different point of view - as an observer and she gave us some really good ideas.
- I agreed with her in everything simply because there was nothing to argue about. She told us a lot of things about the pupils before teaching and it proved to be that way. After the lesson she had no negative comments.
- Mostly we agreed. I don't remember any for me important disagreement.
- We didn't have any serious problems with it because the supervisor gave us a chance to try out everything to get experienced.

The students accepted the supervisor teachers´ ideas
- I accepted her ideas because she is more experienced.
- I accepted her ideas. She knew which pupils had difficulty in learning (e.g. at that time one pupil had family problems) and so I was very glad when the teacher advised me how to deal with this pupil and the others.

A mixture of 2 and 3
- First c) then a). When the teacher suggested a change in my lesson plan, I tried to explain the reasons why I decided to do it that way when I felt strongly it was a good idea. I accepted the teacher's idea when I wasn't sure whether that particular idea was useful.
- There were two situations: 1)I accepted his advice about pupils´ attention and it really worked.
                              2) I tried to defend my idea about one game that was based on translation into the Czech language. I managed to do it and children enjoyed it very well. I then used it regularly at the end of lessons.

- I had two supervising teachers who differed from each other. The first one was very experienced and most of the time when she made comments about my teaching, she was right and I accepted it. The second one was really young and I sometimes disagreed with her. Then I tried to defend my point of view.
- It depended on the situation. Sometimes the supervising teacher convinced me that I was wrong and sometimes I tried to defend my point of view because I believed that I was right.

Others
- I can't comment on it as my supervising teacher wasn't used to discussing my teaching. She just said what she liked and didn't like.

SQN 2
No disagreement
- My supervising teacher wasn't there most of the time. When she was there, I agreed with her.
- I mostly agreed with my supervising teacher. When we didn't, we discussed my point of view.
- In fact this didn't happen.
- I don't remember any disagreement.
- I didn't have to cope with this situation.
- There weren't any disagreements between my supervising teacher and me.
- No disagreement.
- I didn't get into a situation like this. Mrs Kopackova was a very pleasant person and she welcomed my lessons as a source of new ideas and she treated me in a very friendly way.
- I always respected her and agreed with her as she was really experienced and professional.

The students accepted the supervising teachers´ ideas
- I let her persuade me because she knows the pupils better and she is more experienced.

QN3
No disagreement
- I can't remember any disagreement.
- Such a situation didn't happen.
- It didn't happen.
- We always agreed.

The students accepted the supervising teachers´ ideas
- I always sheepishly accepted my supervising teacher's comments on my lessons.

The students defended their point of view
- I explained my stand.

Others
- No comment

Teachers´ questionnaire
When the student did not agree with you, what did he/she do?

No disagreement
- There was no disagreement.
- There was no disagreement. He accepted my advice.
- Mostly she agreed with me.
- There was no disagreement. We analysed a problem. I suggested that she should do it in a different way and she mostly accepted my idea.
- It didn't happen.
- She always agreed with me.

The students accepted the supervising teachers´ ideas
- He co-operated very well. He followed my instructions.
- She reacted positively to my advice and suggestions. She tried to improve what was wrong. She needed my help. She did not even want to stay in the classroom without me.

The students defended their point of view
- She tried to explain why her attitude was like that. We had a discussion. Finally, we always came to an agreement.
- She tried to explain her point of view, but she was very polite.

Others
- Mostly they did not tell me.

Students´ interview
Can you name any change in teaching you observed in yourself?

Feelings
- I am more experienced.
- I feel more certain, not so much nervous.
- I feel more experienced.
- I am not so nervous. I am more confident. When I make a mistake and pupils tell me, it does not frustrate me. Everybody makes mistakes. I thank pupils for it. I do my best to avoid making mistakes but if I make one, I do not make a fuss over it.
- I feel more confident.
- I am more confident.
- My confidence has increased. I feel more like a teacher.
- Now I feel more comfortable in classes. I am not afraid that children will not want to co-operate with me. I feel more confident.
- I feel more comfortable, more confident. It can be observed in my classes.
- I am more certain.

Concrete issues
- When I do activities for the second time, everything goes more smoothly.
- Now it is no problem for me to communicate with children.
- I have changed the way I speak. I speak loudly now. It is not a problem to extend a textbook by using exercises from other sources.
- I can guess better what my pupils will do.
- I know better how to behave in class, what I can afford, which words to choose. I know better how to communicate with children.
- No striking change has happened. From the methodological point of view I always make full of my prior experience. I do things better for the second time.
- I know my pupils, I know who is strong, who is slow. I know what my pupils know, so that the activities I prepare are more appropriate and they can manage to do them. I know better how much time activities can take, which problems may occur.

Flexibility
- I am able to guess better what I should do or what will happen.
- When pupils do not do what they are supposed to do, I notice it in time and am able to react accordingly. Teaching practice makes a teacher beginner more experienced. I am able to recognise where the problem is when pupils do not understand something.

Teachers´ questionnaire
Can you name any change our student has made in his/her teaching, in his/her approach to teaching?

Concrete issues
- She focused on quality, not quantity. She became more consistent and strict.
- He consistently gave instructions in English. He learnt to use the language pupils understood.
- He improved writing on the blackboard. I asked him to do it.

- She made changes mostly on the basis of my suggestions or if she realised that teaching methods chosen by her did not work.
- At the end of the teaching practice her lessons were more pupil-centred. She started - at least partly- taking pupils as subjects of learning and not objects of a teacher´s activity.
- Time management in lessons improved.
- She was better at setting up pair/group work, checking pupils´ work and giving feedback.
- She improved on preparing supplementary materials from different sources to extend a textbook in which there were not enough exercises to practise some language items.
- She was able to recognise pupils´ interests and motivate them better.
- She tried to avoid making mistakes I told them about.
- She was not so concentrated on herself. She was able to divide her attention into pupils and their mistakes, a lesson plan, the blackboard, a cassette player and discipline.
- She was more successful in class management and lesson timing.
- She began to use the blackboard more efficiently.
- She started to introduce more revision activities.
- She started to realise that her teaching needed thorough preparation.
- She spoke English all the time. At the beginning she explained some more complicated issues in Czech.

Flexibility
- She managed to recognise what was demanding for children, when it was necessary to devote more time to a particular language item.
- He sensitively reacted to different pupils´ reactions. It is connected with the ability to improvise. He recognised what was important to practise more.

Feelings
- At the end of the teaching practice she was not so shy.

APPENDIX 18

In what ways do student teachers' personal theories develop within 1 academic year?

SQN

INT

Give a definition of good teaching	What is your philosophy of teaching? What do you believe in?
Name one or more prior beliefs which changed during the teaching practice.	During the teaching practice did you discover anything new about teaching?
Name one or more prior beliefs which did not change during the teaching practice.	
When was your idea of good teaching formed?	What is the source of your ideas about language teaching?

Key: SQN = students' questionnaires
INT = interviews

SQN : Give a definition of good teaching
INT: What is your philosophy of good teaching? What do you believe in?

Category	SQN 1	SQN 2	SQN 3 + INT
	Metaphor: Good teaching is like a game. All are motivated, thinking only how to win. There is a motto. Glory to winners, honour to the defeated.		
	Human interaction between T and Ps with the goal of reaching a better person		
	Teaching consists of two parts - someone who wants to teach and someone who wants to be taught.		
Pragmatic goals	To teach ps everything useful and important for their future life.	Teaching only things that are useful.	Trying to prepare ps for everyday life. - Stress on fluency, on the ability to communicate. It is more important than accuracy
	Not to make fun of ps' mistakes.		
Motivating pupils	Drawing ps' attention. T should be able to attract ps' interest. - Ability to motivate ps for learning.	Attractivity of what ps are being taught - Motivation.	T must study new ways, approaches to teaching. - Help ps create positive attitude to learning. They must want to learn not for T but for themselves. - Raise motivation. Use activities from other books to motivate.
Transmission of knowledge in an interesting way	Giving knowledge in an interesting way.	Interesting, creative. - Inventive.	Interesting. - Variety of activities. - Variety of activities to avoid routines.
Ability to explain clearly	Ability to explain clearly.	Be able to explain everything.	T must know what to do. -Before practising everything must be properly presented
Adequate preparation	Proper preparation.	Proper preparation. T must prepare lessons according to ps' way of thinking. T must pay attention to ps' needs	T should know ps and their learning habits. - T must be able to make teaching suitable to ps' needs.
Flexibility	Spontaneous, reaching the actual situation.	Flexible.	Flexible, not to insist on a lesson plan.
T's good knowledge of E	Good knowledge of English.	Good knowledge of English.	T must know E well. - T must be a professional. - T must be a balanced personality.
Admission of one's own errors	Being able to admit one's own errors	T must admit when he makes a mistake	Admitting one's own errors.
Ability to maintain discipline	Natural authority.	Natural authority.	
I do not know	I do not know.	I do not know.	So far I am not experienced enough to know
Appropriate relationship with ps	Understanding the problems of ps. - Having sympathy for ps.	Positive approach to children. T must be friendly.	Have a good contact with ps.- Good relationship with ps. - To give ps guide and support. They feel it. Interested in ps' opinion.- Balance between authority and friendship
Fairness		Sense of justice.	Just. - Fair
Tolerance		Tolerant.	Tolerant
Challenging ps		Challenge for ps	
Calmness		Calm.	
Liveliness		Lively.	
Confidence		Confident	
Sense of humour		Sense of humour	
Consistency			Consistent
Including enough revision.			Often revise.
Encouraging ps			Praise ps. - Encourage ps. It has a good effect on them
weak ps			Praise weak ps. They make more effort.

IV1. *During the teaching practice did you discover anything new about teaching?*

The number 1,2,3 before each comment indicates in which set of questionnaires a particular comment was found.

Category	Prior beliefs changed	Prior beliefs did not change
Teacher's good knowledge of English	1. Now I know that when a teacher is able to speak excellent English, it doe not mean that he/she is a good teacher. 1. To be a good teacher does not mean only to teach, but to be able to deal with problems of pupils and problematic pupils. 1. Knowledge of English not enough. 3. Teacher must study the whole life.	1. If the teacher wants to be good, he must study the whole life. 2. Students like lessons when they could see that the teacher is enthusiastic. 3. Children like teachers with a good sense of humour.
Motivation of pupils	2. Some pupils do not have to be put under stress of being graded to make them learn when the topics are interesting. 2. Some pupils have to be motivated through marks to work hard. 3. There are good pupils with motivation and bad ones without it. Then it is up to the teacher to motivate them.	1. The atmosphere in the lesson can be relaxed and pupils do not have to be put under stress if they are sufficiently motivated. 3. Pupils motivated when they are to be tested. 3. Motivation is the main aspect in teaching.
Transmission of knowledge in an interesting way.		2. Visual aids are useful. 2. Stereotypical teaching inevitable after more years of teaching. 2. Children like group/pair work.
Flexibility		3. Teacher should adapt the topics of lessons according to pupils age, interest.
Adequate preparation	3. It is impossible to plan every detail of a lesson. Improvisation cannot be avoided. 3. Before the teaching practice I thought that every parallel lesson would be the same. There are different children in every lesson. Changes to lesson plans are inevitable.	1. Lessons must be prepared carefully.
Appropriate relationship with pupils.	1. I wanted to treat pupils as equals, but it did not work. 2. To be only nice to pupils does not help them learn. 3. There are limits of tolerance. The teacher must be consistent. 3. Sometimes the teacher cannot be pupils' friend because they could lose their respect to his/her requirements	2. Good relationship with pupils, but also authority of the teacher. 2. Positive relationship between the teacher and pupils makes teaching 100% easier. 2. It is positive when the teacher is a friend as well. 2. Teaching English to small children can only be done in a friendly atmosphere without stresses. 3. Teacher should be tolerant, just. 3. Positive effect of friendly approach to pupils
Learner	1. It does not mean that pupils learn more or they are going to like the teacher when he/she is friendly 1. I expected that the majority of pupils would be interested in English. 2. I expected that pupils would be still obedient. Sometimes I had to change my belief. 2. Now I believe that even weak pupils taken as lost are able to work hard and learn quite a lot.	2. Pupils need individual approach 2. Children are always good inside even if it is hidden. A sensitive teacher can find it. 3. I always thought that when pupils volunteered, they were ready to answer. Sometimes it may be confusing. They volunteer to make a good impression on the teacher. They do not know the answer 3. Smaller pupils are more enthusiastic and grateful than older pupils. 3. Smaller pupils respect the teacher more. 3. Smaller pupils appreciate more than older pupils when the teacher tries to arouse their interest. 3. What works with smaller children does not have to work with older ones. 3. It is sometimes difficult to interact with some children. The same reaction cannot be expected.
Teacher	1. Before the teaching practice I never believed I could do it. Now I do. 1. Only one thing changed. I am able to do it	2. A teacher needs a lot of energy. 2. Teachers are psychologically affected by their profession. 2. To teach I need more energy than I sometimes have. It is possible to

SOURCE OF IDEAS OF GOOD TEACHING

SQN 1: When was your idea of good teaching formed?
INT: What is the source of your idea of good teaching?

SQN 1
Prior to university
- I had several good teachers in secondary school and several bad ones as well. I had an opportunity to compare and form my ideas. They have stayed the same since.

- I admired a teacher in secondary school who was young, looked strict but was friendly and demanded some knowledge. We felt natural respect for her.

- I had a respect for a teacher. She did not shout at us. I learned very much and paid attention in her lessons not because I was supposed to but because I wanted to.

- My teacher of biology attracted our attention. He was not strict but respected.

- Because I had a chance to observe different teachers, I could compare their ways of teaching and could see what impact it had on me as a pupil.

Prior to university + at university
- As a pupil I had a few teachers that I admired and I had something like an ideal teacher in my mind. I got the information at university which have completed my idea about good teaching.

- Both at university and high school. I have met really good teachers with great personality that could make funny and interesting learning from boring stuff.

At university
- I met the best teachers here. They always stayed very professional, but still human beings.

- I had to read books about teaching and saw some of it in the classroom. I realised that teaching/learning does not have to be that boring as it was when I was a pupil.

- I never really thought about teaching before I went to study at university.

Source not clear
- I do not know. I think that ideas change during the whole life.

SQN 2
Prior to university
- In secondary school.

Prior to university + at university
- Since I started to go to school. It was changing. I had different ideas about good teaching when I could see it from the student's point of view than now.

At university
- I was mostly influenced during the teaching practice.

- During the 1st teaching practice.

- In methodology classes last year.

- During my study here and mostly during the teaching practice.

- It still continues to develop throughout my teaching experience.
- While observing English lessons during the teaching practice and while studying here.

- My ideas of good teaching are changing with every new experience as a teacher.

Source not clear
- It is a difficult question. It is probably still forming.

SQN 3+ INT
Prior to university + at university
- Secondary school - the role of the teacher. I liked when the teacher was a partner. In terms of how to teach - here.

- I had a model in me from secondary school. Teaching practice here helped me most.

- I had a model from secondary school. I learnt a lot at university.

- Almost everything at university. I met many excellent teachers here. Before university I had only a vague idea. I did not know whether I wanted to teach. But when you come somewhere where they want to make a teacher from you, it is difficult to resist. Now I am seriously thinking about becoming a teacher.

- My idea of good teaching has changed a lot. After 1989 I thought we should be only friendly to pupils. Teaching practice changed this approach because I found out that it did not work. It is better to proceed from a strict teacher to a more lenient one. Not the other way round. Also lessons of methodology at university were very useful.

- In primary and secondary school I experienced a different approach. What I learnt here changed my idea of good teaching. It is more relaxed in class now, It suits me better. I learnt the most here at university.

- Methodology of teaching English here. I had a model of the role of the teacher in secondary school. It still remains the same. The teacher must like his subject. This can be transferred to pupils.

- My idea of good teaching developed on the basis of what I experienced in secondary school. A classic authoritarian, teacher-centred approach. Here I found out that it could be done in a different way which suits me better.

- At secondary school, but the final idea was formed at university and during observations in schools.

At university
- During the teaching practice

- Especially during the teaching practice.

- Before that I had only a vague idea.

- Before that I had only a vague idea. I did not like teaching foreign languages in secondary school, but I did not think actively about how to change it. At university I discovered things under the surface that I could not see as a student. Now I can see a problem from the point of view of a teacher and student. Before that only a student.

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