

The Nature of Reflective Communication Within Video Clubs: What Matters?

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Abstract: The study's aim is to shed light on the nature of future English language teachers' reflective communication in the context of video clubs. The objectives of the video clubs were to further develop students' pedagogical content knowledge in relation to English language teaching and learning, professional vision, and reflective competence. Concerning the professional and political aspects of communication, this study aims to investigate the influence of different types of video interventions implemented in four different video clubs on the nature of pre-service teachers' communication and, consequently, its effects on students' reflections and their professional learning.

Keywords: reflective communication, political aspects of communication, professional learning, collaborative professionalism, communities of teachers, video clubs, video interventions, professional vision, pre-service teachers

The professional development of the participating pre-service teachers (PSTs) lies at the heart of this study. The study draws on the author's long-term experience with leading video clubs in the role of a facilitator and an ELT (English language teaching) methodology teacher at the same time. The focus of interest was directed towards the nature of communication among the PSTs within the video clubs and any possible differences that may have arisen due to different types of video interventions. Video clubs, in our sense, refer to developmental study courses in which PSTs individually and collectively observe and reflect video recordings of different (future) teachers (similarly e.g., Sherin & Han, 2004 and many others). Reflective communication, thus, plays a crucial role in the PSTs' professional learning.

1 Nature of reflective communication: two perspectives

The nature of reflective communication may be perceived and researched from at least two perspectives. For this study, these are defined as *professional aspects of communication* and *political aspects of communication*.

Professional aspects of communication include the ability to use professional language, which is an attribute of a profession and its professionals. Professional language plays a role in pre-service teacher education in a two-fold way. On one

26 hand, it is the aim and instrument of the PSTs' professional learning (cf. Wipperfurth 2015). On the other hand, the PSTs' command of professional language reflects the degree of their professional development. It functions as an interpretative frame for structuring and analysing experience. It is also a tool used for further learning such as for the development of *practice-based theory of knowledge and action* (Goodwin, 1994) or *theory-enriched practical knowledge* (Oonk et al., 2004). These theories link the quality of reflection, i.e., the language of reflection, with the depth and breadth of understanding of the issues addressed (concerning reflection in its relation to language, also refer to Knorr in this monothematic issue). PSTs' command of professional language also supports bridging the gap between discourse of practice rooted in the practical experience of teachers and discourse of theory often based on the meta-language of theory and research (e.g., Giddens, 1986; Korthagen et al., 2001; Wipperfurth in this issue). Pre-service teacher education and the PSTs' discourse is quite specific since it differs from both, the academic language of theory and the practice-based language of practice (e.g., Cassidy & Tinning, 2004). In the words of Freeman (1996), PSTs are primarily equipped with so-called local language, primary discourse, which enables teacher educators to develop the PSTs' professional language in close relation to practical experience through its reflection. A video-based approach is one of the most effective ways to do so since PSTs' primary discourse develops towards professional discourse effectively precisely through reflection of various types of recorded lessons. Additionally, the concept of professional vision, in close connection with a video-based approach, is one of the most effective frames to do so since it functions as an interpretative frame for the reflections (e.g., Sherin & van Es, 2009; Santagata & Guarino, 2011; Gaudin & Chaliès, 2015; Minaříková et al., 2015; Estapa et al., 2016; Hüttner, 2019). The relationship between a video-based approach and professional vision was already addressed in Goodwin's (1994) claims about the role of language in the processes of structuring professionals' in-field experience and the development of professional vision. Professional vision is defined as a professional competence, which consists of two interconnected dimensions: selective attention, i.e., knowing what to pay attention to, and knowledge-based reasoning, i.e., reasoning about the identified moments (for more details on professional vision see e.g., Sherin, 2001, 2014).

Taking these considerations of the professional aspect of communication into account, in this study, we primarily focus on the political aspects of communication. Although being of great importance, these are often overlooked when furthering or investigating professional vision in the context of pre-service teacher education. In Goodwin's (1994, p. 606) original definition professional vision comprises "socially organized ways of seeing and understanding events that are answerable to the distinctive interests of a particular social group". It reflects the political dimension of professional vision through acknowledging the role of social processes while constituting the professional vision as such. Goodwin's original definition of professional vision thus included two equally important traits, social processes through which specialized knowledge is constructed, and specialized knowledge itself.

This definition allows for the social process through which specialized knowledge and knowledge-based reasoning to be seen as equally important as the specialized knowledge itself. In line with this understanding, Lefstein and Snell (2011) explored the *political dimensions of teacher learning*. They revisited Goodwin's origins of professional vision on a theoretical level and explored the implications of re-asserting the *politics of professional vision* within a video-based teacher development programme. Their findings suggest that what is talked about and how it is expressed is influenced not only by what the participants of the study noticed, their selective attention. It is also affected by group dynamics, political correctness, and diplomacy among the participants. For example, all participating teachers shied away from particular issues in the workshop discussion, tried to minimise face threats, and the discussion included many prolonged silences (Lefstein & Snell, 2011, p. 20–21). These considerations and previous findings highlight the influence of political aspects on the ways teachers and PSTs communicate among each other and open two further dimensions to be considered.

The first dimension is the role of *teacher learning communities* as a common model of teacher development (e.g., Hargreaves, 2000; van Es, 2012). This model is based – as the term already suggests – on teacher learning in continuous cooperation within professional communities and on planning, sharing, and reflecting experiences in order to improve learning processes and outcomes (see, e.g., van Es, 2012 on the development of a teacher learning community in a video club). However, not every group of teachers is a community of teachers in the sense of sharing and reflecting own teaching practices and cooperating with the aim to learn and develop professionally (Grossman et al., 2001). Moreover, establishing an environment of a community that enhances deeper and stronger relationships, support and solidarity often needs to be supported. Hargreaves and O'Connor (2018) frame such support as *collaborative professionalism*, which they differentiate from professional collaboration and informal collaboration: „One way to think about all this is in terms of high and low emphases on trust in working relationships on the one hand, and structure, tools and precision in work organisation, on the other” (p. 5). According to them, “collaborative professionalism is the golden cell of professional collaboration, where teachers have strong relationships, trust each other, and feel free to take risks and make mistakes” (p. 5). In our view, these are the positive variables influencing the nature of communication and supporting the development of a teacher learning community. Grossman et al. (2001) propose a model of teacher community in the workplace based on a long-term project with mainly English and English as a second language teachers. It is a “model of the markers of community formation as manifested in participants’ speech and action” (p. 2), i.e., in communication. In a developmental perspective, they introduce the term *pseudocommunity* to describe the initial stages when a community starts to form and individuals have a natural tendency to pretend to be in community and act as if they are already part of a community that shares values and common beliefs. At this stage, members of the groups interact face-to-face with the tacit understanding that it is against the rules

28 to challenge others or ask for clarification. This understanding paves the way for the illusion of consensus, a false sense of unity, and conflict suppression. Pseudocommunities regulate speech by appointing a facilitator to control the discussion or allowing a group member, who is often the most voluble member, to seize the conversational reins. Within their model of forming teacher professional community, Grossman et al. (2001, p. 94) place pseudocommunity at an evolving phase of forming group identity and norms of interaction among the members of the group. Similarly, Grossman et al. (2001) talk about surface friendliness and Tickle (1994) introduce the notion of deceptive discourse. In both cases, the nature of communication is again being influenced in a restrictive manner.

The second dimension covers the core of the collaborative processes, that need to be considered when establishing learning communities, especially with PSTs. In connection to the nature of communication within video clubs, it is mainly the type of experience that participants work with or, in other words, the *type of video intervention*, which is how the video is shared, observed, and reflected. Previous research shows differences between settings that use video recordings of participants' own teaching or video recordings of peer teachers or unknown teachers. Some researchers (Eraut, 2000; Seidel et al., 2011; Zhang et al., 2011; Kleinknecht & Schneider, 2013) observe that sharing own teaching with others, i.e., using own and peer video recordings, trigger and increase the influence of issues of political correctness, self-defence mechanisms, a lower degree of criticism, avoidance and suppression of conflicts, surface friendliness, etc. This occurs especially at the beginning of such experience. However, over time, as the relationships develop and establish, reflective discussions among the members of the community become more open through addressing a variety of aspects, including providing each other with e.g., constructive critical feedback (e.g., Seidel et al., 2011; comp. with Grossman et al., 2001). This might also be caused by the fact, that from the very beginning of sharing and reflecting own and peer teaching, demand for and appreciation of feedback from peers occurs (Trip & Rich, 2012; Minaříková et al., 2016). On the other hand, observing and reflecting on videos of other/unknown teachers or student teachers usually leads to more dynamic and open interactions among the members of the community, they are more involved in the discussions from the very beginning, addressing a variety of topics (e.g., Gaudin & Chaliès, 2015).

As the discussion of previous findings has shown, there is a certain degree of understanding of the nature of communication among (future) teachers in the context of communities of practice as well as to its establishment, in comparison to the professional aspects of communication, there is little known about the political aspects of communication. The variables influencing the width and depth of communication, and about the emotional and motivational processes are not as well studied (e.g., Kleinknecht & Schneider, 2013).

2 Investigation into the nature of communication within video clubs

Investigating the ways PSTs communicate among each other during video clubs and its impact on the learning environment and climate is essential to better understand their professional learning. Thus, this study attempts to shed light on the nature of reflective communication to contribute to the discussion concerning the influence of different kinds of video interventions realized in different kinds of video clubs on the nature of communication. Furthermore, we believe, the variety of video club interventions influence PSTs' professional learning processes and outcomes. Therefore, this investigation focuses on the political aspects of reflective communication as a significant variable in a PSTs' professional development.

2.1 Research context and participants: different conceptions of four video clubs

At the beginning of a two-year follow-up of a Master of Arts study programme for teachers of English as a foreign language, students were sent an e-mail with an offer to participate in a video club focussing on professional development based on working with different types of video interventions. An availability sampling method was used and generated a research sample of nine pre-service English language teachers who enrolled in this specialized course. The students were divided into two groups. During both semesters of their first year Master of Arts studies, each group participated in two video clubs: Video Club 1 and Video Club 2.

The first group worked with videos of other teachers and student teachers, which was called public video group (PVG). The PVG consisted of five PSTs in the first semester and four PSTs in the second semester due to one student's planned Erasmus scholarship. In the first semester (PVG1), the video club was based on a set of videos of practicing teachers. The second semester (PVG2) was based on videos of other student teachers. The videos were shared with the students, observed and reflected, i.e., future teachers at the same level of professional development.

The second group used video recordings of their teaching performance, called own video group (OVG). Four PSTs attended the OVG during both semesters. In the first semester, Video Club 1 (OVG1) included a so-called preparatory phase during which the participating PSTs planned and prepared lessons with the support of an ELT methodology teacher (author of this study). Firstly, in a seminar session, PSTs were provided with information about a cooperating school, a cooperating teacher and her three classes. They could choose a class according to its description and the topics to be covered. They chose to present and further practice past tense. As a home assignment, they were all told to think about the topic and come up with ideas which they brought to the second seminar session. During the second seminar session they prepared a general plan and developed own materials for two consecutive lessons together. Consequently, they individually finished the concrete lesson plans which

30 was again consulted with the ELT methodology teacher. Each student then taught the prepared lesson in the arranged classes in two parallel groups. These lessons were videotaped for the purpose of the video club so that one lesson by every student teacher could be discussed in the OVGs. OVG1 was designed in accordance with the principles of Lesson study (cf. Doig & Groves, 2011; Fernandez & Yoshida, 2004), except the supporting role of an ELT methodology teacher educator. In Video Club 2 (OVG2), participating PSTs planned and prepared their lessons individually. They taught and videotaped their lessons at different primary schools and classes of their choice during their regular mid semester month-long Teaching Practice placements in schools. The video recordings were then shared, observed and reflected with the other PSTs in the same way as PVG.

Each of the four video clubs was based on a different kind of video intervention, as summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 Different types of video interventions within the video clubs

	PVG intervention	OVG intervention
Video club 1	Practicing teachers	Own teaching with support
Video club 2	Student teachers	Own teaching without support

All video clubs were organized in the same way. Each video club (PVG1, PVG2; OVG1, OVG2) consisted of three online and three face-to-face seminar sessions with a rough length of 120 minutes, although the time frame was kept deliberately flexible. They were blended learning courses combining online tasks assigned via LMS Moodle with seminar sessions held once a fortnight. Each task assigned in Moodle consisted of selected video(s), a set of guiding questions, and an open question eliciting individual PSTs' further comments. In the Moodle assignment the PSTs were asked to observe the video(s) at home, write a reflection (its length was not set), submit it via Moodle, and bring it to the next seminar discussion. The whole seminar discussions were then devoted to oral reflections of the observed video(s) structured according to the above-mentioned guiding questions including any other topics that arose from the discussions. In all types of video clubs, observed videos were reflected both, individually and collectively, in a written form and orally, and in a structured and an unstructured manner.

2.2 Research aims and questions addressed

The main research aims were to uncover if and how different types of video interventions affect the nature of reflective communication within different types of video clubs. Three research questions were thus formulated:

1. What was the nature of reflective communication among PSTs in PVG during video club 1 and video club 2?
2. What was the nature of reflective communication among PSTs in OVG during video club 1 and video club 2?
3. What were the differences between reflective communication among PSTs in PVG and OVG during video club 1 and video club 2?

2.3 Data collection and analysis

Data that enabled us to answer our research questions about the nature of reflective communication among students and possible developments of it during video clubs were collected in the seminar sessions. All sessions were audio-recorded and transcribed and both, recordings and transcripts analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. To capture the nature of reflective communication and its possible changes caused by different types of video interventions the obtained data were approached from various perspectives and by different means.

Audio recordings were analysed first with regard to the *PSTs' engagement during reflective discussions*. To this end firstly, a quantitative analysis was applied to measure the *time proportion of the PSTs' engagement* and the *time proportion of the facilitator's (author of this study) engagement* in the seminar discussions. Secondly, inspired by a conversation analysis approach (e.g., Clift, 2016), we focussed on the *nature of the PSTs' engagement* by capturing *turn-taking*, primarily how turn units were allocated among speakers, in that case among the participating PSTs. Thirdly, the fluency of discussions, pauses, the occurrence of overlaps, and raising new topics for discussion, i.e., opening new discussion lines were analysed.

Transcripts of the seminar discussions were further analysed through deductive and inductive content analyses. In both cases, specific attention was paid to the differences between PVG and OVG and possible changes during the video clubs.

The deductive content analysis aimed to investigate categories of professional vision (see e.g., van Es & Sherin, 2010). *Occurrence and nature of evaluations in the context of alterations and predictions* were chosen because such categories explicitly or implicitly include opinions the participating PSTs express about the observed lessons. The chosen categories of professional vision were defined as follows: evaluation is a subjective judgement of what was noticed in the video; alteration is a suggestion for an alternative action to how the teacher in the video acted; prediction is a connection of what was seen in the video with a future state, e.g., what effect the event might have on pupils' future understanding or use of the subject matter (see e.g., Vondrová et al., 2020; sample statements are included in Table 5). Three subcategories were included in the coding process to revealed the three main categories' relevance and their interrelations for reflective communication: (i) Frequency of occurrence of the three categories (E: evaluation, A: alteration, P: prediction). (ii) Proportion of positive and negative evaluations (Ep: positive evaluation, En: negative evaluation). (iii) Cooccurrences of evaluations, alterations, and predictions

32 through first identifying each category occurring separately from others (see i) as well as in combinations of evaluations and either alterations or predictions. Thus, instances when evaluations were accompanied by alterations and/or predictions were identified first. Consequently, two possible sequences were analysed in detail for evaluations followed by alterations or predictions (Ep/En → A/P) and alterations or predictions followed by evaluations (A/P → Ep/En).

The inductive content analysis aimed at uncovering and capturing *specific features of the seminar discussions* as well as differences between the two settings of PVG and OVG over time. Repetitive hermeneutic readings of seminar discussion transcripts were employed. In addition and in accord with selected principles of grounded theory (e.g., Strauss & Corbin, 1994), we searched for emerging parts of transcripts representing the specific features of reflective communication during seminar discussions in pre-service teacher video clubs. Such idea units were then clustered into more general categories related to the topic of our interest. At the end of this phase, two PSTs, each a representative of one group (PVG and OVG), were asked to validate final summaries of the results.

2.4 Summary of main findings

Proportion and nature of PSTs' engagement in seminar discussions

As mentioned above, each video club (PVG1, PVG2; OVG1, OVG2) consisted of three online and three face-to-face seminar sessions. The time set for each face-to-face session was 135 minutes (i.e., three 45-minute units). However, time flexibility was one of the claimed characteristics of the video clubs to allow for enough time until a discussion was running, the seminar continued and did not end until the discussion was exhausted. The discussions were considered exhausted when none of the students wanted to comment on the observed lessons or related topics and when all the topics from the students' written reflections were discussed, i. e. the topics the students did not bring to the discussion themselves, but they were included in their written reflections and it was the facilitator who opened the discussion lines. The shortest session took 100 minutes and the longest was 180 minutes. The average length of each face-to-face session was 129 minutes. In total, the OVG sessions were longer than those of the PVG.

The time proportions of PSTs' engagement in seminar discussions are presented in Table 2. In general, data showed that the PSTs from the PVG engaged in the discussions more than those from the OVG. Therefore, facilitator's engagement was less in the PVG and the engagement of the individual PVG PSTs was less balanced. Each individual PST's engagement varied naturally due to personal potential and willingness to communicate and share ideas. In each group there was one comparably quiet PST (Patricia and Olympia). More significant variances were caused mainly by Peg, who was the only PST of all who had a part-time job at a primary school while being engaged in pre-service teacher education and who thus dominated the discussions.

She was able to provide more profound insight into the teaching and learning processes but mainly by relating the discussed topics to her teaching.

Table 2 Time proportion of PSTs' engagement in seminar discussions (%)

PVG			OVG		
PST	Video club 1	Video club 2	PST	Video club 1	Video club 2
Peg	23,0	30,0	Olivia	21,0	23,0
Penny	19,0	22,0	Ophelia	22,0	21,0
Pia	17,0	21,0	Octavia	18,0	22,0
Patricia	14,0	11,0	Olympia	16,0	13,0
Poline	14,0	–	–	–	–
Average	17,4	16,8	Average	19,3	19,8
Total	87,0	↓84,0	Total	77,0	↑79,0
Facilitator	13,0	↑16,0	Facilitator	23,0	↓21,0

Note: PSTs nicknames reflect their membership of PVG or OVG by an initial letter of the given name.

To begin with observations from PVG, discussions among the participating PSTs were fluent and continuous without any significant pauses. Every seminar discussion during both video clubs contained many instances of overlaps, i.e., simultaneous talk by two or more discussion participants (see e.g., Murray, 1988), which implies a natural character of discussion in which participants do not hesitate to take the floor. A changing tendency can, however, be traced between PVG1 and PVG2. While participants mainly expanded each other's ideas during overlaps in PVG1, PVG2 contained significantly more overlaps, including disagreement among PSTs.

Interestingly, all the topics discussed during the PVG sessions were raised by PSTs, primarily Peg and Penny. In contrast, Pia did not open new discussion lines, except during a PVG2 session when her own teaching performance was discussed. However, once a discussion line was open, she contributed actively. Patricia's and Poline's roles were less active. Not only did they not raise many new discussion topics, they did either not contribute to the discussions naturally and were also sometimes invited by the facilitator for their contributions. Therefore, it can be said that while the facilitator's role was not of any major importance concerning the content and flow of reflective discussions (since it was exhaustively covered by PSTs), it was crucial for keeping a balance of PSTs' involvement. The facilitator's engagement rose in PVG2, it was for two reasons. The PSTs either asked the facilitator to expand on relevant theoretical background related to the issues discussed or to explain or clarify issues about which the PSTs' opinions differed. The facilitator's role can thus be labelled as a source of expert information and partly as an organizer and coordinator of the reflective discussions.

In comparison to discussions among PSTs from the PVG, discussions among PSTs from the OVG were more balanced concerning the PSTs' engagement but, at the same time, less balanced in its flow. In comparison to the PVG, there were hardly any overlaps in speech in either OVG1 or OVG2. In OVG1, two accidental overlaps occurred, but one of the PSTs immediately stopped speaking and apologised. On the contrary, the OVG discussions contained many long pauses. In many cases, the facilitator filled a pause proposing a new discussion line when a topic was exhausted. In the OVGs, the PSTs raised only a few new topics.

It is to be noted here that all topics raised by the facilitator were drawn from the PSTs' written reflections (submitted via LMS Moodle), which the facilitator had studied before each session. If needed, these were used to initiate new topics and ask particular PST(s), author(s) of the reflection(s), to comment. In the OVGs, no PST would take on a leading role. As in the case of Patricia and Poline from the PVG, in the OVG Olympia did not contribute much and even less during OVG2 when independently prepared lessons were the subject of reflection. It is interesting that there was an increase in the PSTs opening new topics during the OVG2. It was so mainly in situations when the PSTs captured on the video under discussion themselves opened new discussion lines about their lessons. This observation might explain why during OVG2 the proportion of PSTs' engagement was more balanced. Olympia, however, remained an exception as she often participated in the oral reflection only after being called on by the facilitator. During the OVG video clubs, the facilitator functioned more as an organizer of discussions by proposing specific aspects of the lessons observed, maintaining the flow of the discussion, and by introducing new discussion lines.

Occurrence and nature of evaluations in the context of alterations and predictions within seminar discussions

Table 3 offers insights into the number of incidents when the PSTs explicitly or implicitly expressed their opinion about lessons that they observed and reflected through evaluations, suggesting alternatives, or predicting consequences.

Table 3 Frequency of occurrence: evaluations, alterations, predictions

	PVG		OVG	
	PVG1	PVG2	OVG1	OVG2
Evaluation	52	94	44	112
Alteration	33	47	39	55
Prediction	11	21	17	13

Suggesting alternatives and predicting the consequences of the observed moments are both valuable targets of the PSTs' professional learning (see above). In the case of alterations, PSTs in the PVG and the OVG developed equally. On the contrary,

while the PVG video clubs supported the PSTs' ability to predict consequences of the observed situations, OVG2, which was based on reflecting independently taught and recorded lessons of the participating PSTs, saw a decrease in predictions. This decrease seems to be at the expense of a significant increase of evaluations expressed by the OVG PSTs.

Evaluating statements were further categorised as positive or negative evaluations to understand this area better. Table 4 shows the proportion of positive and negative evaluating statements in discussions of the PVG and the OVG during Video Club 1 and Video Club 2.

Table 4 The proportion of positive and negative evaluations (%)

	PVG		OVG	
	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Video club 1	46	54	73	27
Video club 2	62	38	61	39

It is a striking result that the proportions of positive and negative evaluations in Video Club 1 differ in the PVG and the OVG, i.e., in the PVG negative evaluations prevail, in the OVG positive evaluations prevail. Equally striking is the almost perfect balance between the PVG and the OVG in Video Club 2 when comparing the changes in evaluative tendencies in both groups. The main difference between the PVG and the OVG was that the PSTs who worked with video recordings of their teaching performances evaluated the observed moments more positively. It is also interesting to view the results of OVG from Table 4 in the context of Table 3. It shows that while the PSTs of the OVG evaluated the observed lesson much more during Video Club 2, the proportion of negative evaluations increased simultaneously. The PVG proportion of positive and negative evaluations changed in an inverse direction. While in Video Club 1 where they were reflecting on lessons of unknown practising teachers, the PSTs took more critical stands; when reflecting on video recordings of unknown future teachers, their prevailing evaluations were positive.

To summarise, positive and negative evaluations were viewed in context in order to deepen our understanding of the characteristics of reflective communication related to the PSTs' evaluative expressions in different video clubs. Thus, they were further categorised into positive or negative evaluations, as a separate category from alterations or predictions. Next, positive or negative evaluations were viewed in combinations/sequences together with alterations and predictions. Findings based on this analysis, i.e., prevailing tendencies typical for each video club, together with the results presented above are presented in Table 5 to summarize the main synoptic characteristics of the PVG and the OVG communication in Video Club 1 and Video Club 2.

In Table 5, each video club is firstly characterized by features of reflective communication based on the PSTs' evaluations, alterations, predictions, and various forms of their combinations that appeared to be typical for particular video clubs. As a strong indicator for these typical features served the highest or lowest proportion of the occurrence of all three categories among all four video clubs. Secondly, representative quotations are included. Thus, Table 5 enables us to compare the groups on the level of Video Clubs 1 and Video Clubs 2 (horizontal perspective) as well as on the level of the PVG and the OVG (vertical perspective).

Table 5 Characteristic features of evaluations in different video clubs (sample evaluations in bold)

PVG	OVG
PVG1	OVG1
<p>Highest proportion of En (54 %). Highest proportion of separate E (70 %), without A or P. Highest proportion of E & P combination with slight prevalence of En → P sequence.</p> <p>e.g.:</p> <p><i>I think this was all very unfortunate, that he decided to teach irregular verbs together with pronunciation this way, he should have thought about it better, because it was very difficult this way and they [students] will not remember much I think – he told them too many of the pronunciation specifics.</i></p>	<p>Highest proportion of Ep (73 %) in the context of lowest number of evaluative statements. Highest proportion of separate A (59 %), without E, which can be perceived as “hidden” or indirect evaluations. Highest proportion of Ep → P sequence.</p> <p>e.g.:</p> <p><i>It was a well-chosen topic for inductive grammar teaching. The pupils seemed engaged, they worked well, and I believe they will remember better. They might not be able to use it all immediately, but I am pretty sure, they understand the two tenses, its similarities and differences and how to use them.</i></p>
PVG2	OVG2
Proportion of Ep and En between PVG2 and OVG2 equals.	
<p>Lowest proportion of separate E (49 %), without A or P. Highest proportion of En → A sequence.</p> <p>e.g.:</p> <p><i>Well, I see it in different ways, but more or less I think it was not very good. But she did tell them what was going to happen, which might have been a lesson aim, but I do not think they understood, probably not. It was too general, it should have been SMART, which would have been better, because then, she could have reflected the lesson with them at the end.</i></p>	<p>Lowest proportion of separate A (23 %), without E. Highest proportion of A → En sequence.</p> <p>e.g.:</p> <p><i>Maybe it would have helped the pupils if you told them the aim and focus of the lesson. Something like we will do this and that because this and that. Or something like that. Without it, like the way it was, they might have felt a bit lost, do you know what I mean? Maybe it could have been done a bit better.</i></p>

To conclude, based on the tendencies typical for the nature of evaluative communication within individual video clubs presented in Table 5, a label characterizing each group and video club will be proposed.

The PVG seminar discussions can be described as *open critical communication*. The PSTs were mostly critical towards the observed lessons; however, in the course of all four video clubs, their stance shifted towards a more constructive approach. The occurrence of purely negative evaluations decreased. Negative evaluations were often entirely constructively supplemented by suggesting alternatives. Generally, the PSTs' stance changed from being more critical to more positive.

The OVG seminar discussions can be described as *sensitive, supportive communication*. This style was even more prevalent in OVG1, during which the PSTs generally evaluated each other's performance least often, and those evaluations were predominantly positive. In OVG1, critical comments were hidden behind alterations, which were mainly devoted to suggesting better alternatives to the lesson plans that the PSTs prepared with the facilitator. Despite the increase of negative evaluations in OVG2, the PSTs reflecting on the video recordings of their own performance maintained their positive stance and sensitive approach. They often provided each other with praise and appreciation, whereas their negative evaluations were often placed cautiously after offering an alteration.

Specific features of the seminar discussions

A number of specific features of seminar discussions concerning the nature of the PSTs' approaches to evaluations emerged from previous analysis. It revealed a strong contrast between *open critical communication* typical for the PVG video clubs and *sensitive, supportive communication* typical for the OVG video clubs. In both cases, a shift could be identified between Video Club 1 and Video Club 2. Although the main characteristic features remained the same, their nature changed. While the PVG PSTs' open critical communication became increasingly constructive, the OVG PSTs' sensitive supportive communication became more critical.

Based on a general understanding of the nature of communication not only in video clubs (see section 1 above), the findings summarized above led us to search for more systematic differences between the PVG and the OVG as well as between Video Clubs 1 and Video Clubs 2. Specific features of the seminar discussions were investigated by the inductive content analysis of the transcript of the seminar discussions. Further systematic differences could be identified for the following closely interconnected areas: criticism, defence, and agreement.

The degree of *criticism* expressed by the PSTs towards the observed lessons differed significantly between the PVG and the OVG. While the PVG PSTs often expressed critical comments concerning various aspects of the observed lessons, the OVG PSTs were much less critical to each other's teaching performance. In the PVG the degree of expressed remained stable during both video clubs. On the contrary, reflective discussions in the OVG almost lacked clearly expressed criticism towards observed lessons. What was, however, typical for communication among the PSTs

38 while reflecting on the video recordings of their own lessons was a high degree of self-criticism. During Video Club 1, such self-criticism was typically followed by praise and appreciation expressed by other PSTs, which further led to mutual support and reflection of the shared teaching experience on a more general level. During Video Club 2, the PSTs often expressed the wish to also receive critical feedback while sharing their own video recordings, which often functioned as a starting point to including some critical issues of the observed lessons in the discussions.

The degree of expressed *defence* was typical for communication in the OVG. However, it is interesting that it was not the self-defence mechanisms that prevailed. On the contrary, the PSTs expressed a certain degree of defensive attitudes towards critical comments, especially after that PST's self-criticism and facilitator's comments. As discussed above, such cases were often followed by reasoning about possible causes or general principles, especially in Video Club 1. An exciting insight into self-defensive attitudes and their influence on the nature of communication was revealed in Video Club 2. During the last seminar session, one PST, Olympia, expressed a substantial degree of self-defence connected to her video recording. It influenced other PSTs participation significantly and resulted in a relatively shallow and short discussion about Olympia's lesson since none of the PSTs expressed any disagreement with her explanations and excuses, nor expressed any elaborated reactions to the facilitator's comments connected to some critical moments of the observed lesson.

The degree of *agreement* among the PSTs was another area in which differences between the PVG and the OVG were identified. Disagreement among the PSTs was a typical feature of the PVG communication. PSTs often opposed each other's ideas by adding different and diverse pieces of opinion and often also by opening new related discussion topics. In this sense, the PVG communication can be labelled as a *chain communication*. It seemed to be a significant determinant of a PSTs' professional learning, especially by a wider variety of perspectives employed and by a need for reasoning expressed statements. The OVG discussion was, on the other hand, characterised by agreement. The PSTs often elaborated the already discussed topics further. However, the perspectives were not predominantly new or original, on the contrary, they often repeated and supported thoughts expressed by peers or they just deepened the insight into the discussed topics by adding a related thought or comment. Thus, this discussion can be labelled as a *snowball communication* in which PSTs reacted to each other by further elaborating the discussed topics. It can be viewed in the context of findings connected to opening new discussion lines and a leading role of the facilitator in raising new topics in discussions of the OVG.

3 Conclusion and discussion

This study presented the results of an investigation into the nature of reflective communication within four different video club settings based on the different types of video interventions that were presented. While the first and second research questions were fully addressed in section 2.4 from various perspectives, the third research question, which aimed at capturing the differences between reflective communication among the PSTs in the PVG and the OVG during Video Club 1 and Video Club 2, will briefly be summarized in the form of a concluding synthesis. To this end, the most prominent differences will be outlined and discussed in relation to previous findings and theoretical concepts presented in section 1.

The PVG video clubs were characterized by open critical communication based on the principles of collaborative professionalism (Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2018) and learning communities (van Es, 2012), such as well-set relationships, trust, expressed disagreement, and natural fluent discussions. Additionally, the PSTs in the PVG expressed critical views towards the observed lessons, which, changed over time, i.e., during the two video clubs, towards a more sensitive and constructive approach often complemented by suggesting alternatives. When discussing video recordings of other teachers or student teachers PSTs participated more actively in discussions which is in line with previous research findings (Gaudin & Chaliès, 2015). The role of the facilitator was thus less important.

On the contrary, communication among the members of the OVG video clubs tended towards the features of a pseudocommunity (Grossman et al., 2001) indicated by a lower degree of disagreement, a higher degree of sensitivity in commenting on the observed video recordings and the use of deceptive discourse (Tickle, 1994). The OVG communication was labelled as a sensitive supportive communication. However, during the two video clubs and in accordance with Grossman et al. (2001), who view pseudocommunity as an evolving phase in the formation of functioning learning community with set norms of interaction, the nature of communication among the OVG PSTs changed and improved. There was a shift from political correctness, surface friendliness, avoidance of conflicts, a lower degree of criticism and expressed self-defence mechanisms related to sharing one's teaching performance with others (Eraut, 2000; Lefstein & Snell, 2011; Seidel et al., 2011; Zhang et al., 2011; Kleinknecht & Schneider, 2013) towards a more critical, although still sensitive, communication. It also further shifted towards expressing demand for feedback, and an appreciation of constructive critical evaluations from peers, which were, however, often placed after suggesting an alternative (Trip & Rich, 2012; Minaříková et al., 2016). It should not be left unmentioned that the gradually built safe environment proved to be fragile, as shown in Olympia's case at the end of the second video club. Olympia's self-defensive stance and expressed uninterest in any critical feedback reverted the nature of communication among the OVG participants to its initial stage. The role of the facilitator was increasingly significant in the OVG video clubs, especially in Video Club 1, which functioned on many principles of

40 a pseudocommunity where speech is regulated by facilitator controlling the discussions (Grossman et al., 2001). While in the PVG video clubs, the dominant role of the facilitator was a coordinator and an expert, in the OVG video clubs, the main roles were that of a proposer and a prompter (for more detail, see e.g., Rich, 2014).

The outcomes of the study suggest that different types of video clubs and video interventions influence the formation and functioning of the PSTs' learning community diversely and are suitable to be placed in different phases of pre-service and further in-service teacher education. For instance, observing and reflecting video recordings of unknown practicing teachers supports the development of the PSTs' reflective competence and the establishment of a collaborative learning community. Only in a second step, observing and reflecting on the video recording of one's own or peer teaching performance should follow and build on a well set and safe learning environment. Based on the results of this study it can be said that such an orchestration of different settings is likely to help promote the PSTs' professional learning based on reflection and cooperation.

Viewing these outcomes in combination with several limitations of this study can indicate implications for further research. It would be promising to replicate this study with more participants, involving a larger study group at a university and a group of practising teachers. This allows for three areas in which the research data in this study could and should be complemented. Firstly, it can compare the PSTs' written reflections prepared at home with their oral reflections in seminar sessions. Such a comparison would reveal what and how the PSTs shared within reflective communication. It also provides insight into what they decided to not discuss. Secondly, besides capturing the nature of political aspects of communication, it would be interesting to trace the development and changes of professional aspects of communication in both written and oral reflections. Lastly, as we gained data capturing students' professional vision before and after the participation in the video clubs, we should search for connections between the nature of reflective communication and the PSTs' professional learning by comparing the nature of communication within particular video clubs with the development of the PSTs' professional vision in dimensions, selective attention, and knowledge-based reasoning. This perspective would uncover the possible effects of political aspects of communication on reflective communication – reflective competence – and thus the width and depth of a PSTs' professional learning.

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