

# Promoting teacher self-assessment through video-recording (with a questionnaire study on Turkish university teachers)

Betul Ayse SAYIN\*

## Abstract

The need for continuous monitoring and reviewing of the learners and learning activities in class entails the need for teacher assessment. Teacher assessment is necessary for the betterment of teaching practice and brings critical self-inquiry which supports future evaluations and assessments. School administrations also mandate teacher assessment in order to observe improvements in practice.

Video-recording, as part of reflective teaching, has positively influenced the professional development efforts for teachers since the time it was started to be used. Among a variety of methods for teacher assessment, video-recording is accepted to be an innovative, effective and objectivity-driven tool. Besides, video-recording has made the evaluation self-oriented rather than a general evaluation done by students, colleagues or school administration.

This paper describes the use of video-recording for teacher self-assessment and its superiority to other methods with a questionnaire study on Turkish university teachers through which it was aimed to show the inclination towards the method of video-recording.

**Key words:** (turkish) teacher assessment, self-assessment, video-recording, reflection, reflective practice, teaching practice

## 1. Introduction

Evaluating teachers' own teaching is a way to identify the strong aspects of their practice, as well as their weaknesses which may need to be changed and improved. Teachers should take initiatives and responsibility to evaluate their teaching and make improvements over time (Chan, 2010).

Recent education reform efforts and mandates have resulted in a need for educators to address accountability for the outcomes of all students, to use responsive and evidence-based instructional and assessment practices, to collaborate actively in tiered service delivery models, to promote equity and social justice, and to use culturally sensitive and responsible practices (Etscheidt, Curran, & Sawyer, 2012). These reforms aim at teachers and result in improvement in their teaching skills.

The emphasis on reflectivity in teacher education programs occurred in response to attacks on the adequacy of teacher preparation. Teacher education was characterized as being technocratic, routine, and recipe oriented (Price, 1989), based on a deterministic model of teaching and learning, thereby fostering highly managerial and prescriptive paradigms (Gordon, 1985). Critics contended that preparation was remote from the real world, filled with subversive educational theory (O'Donoghue & Brooker, 1996) and focused on externally imposed mandates implemented without agreement or understanding (Newman, 1996 cited in (Etscheidt, Curran, & Sawyer, 2012).

Reflective teachers identify problems and generate and test solutions, thereby building a professional knowledge base constructed through experience and a consciousness of professional action (Colton & Sparks-Langer, 1993; Copeland, Birmingham, De La Cruz, & Lewin, 1993). Prospective teachers must become aware of how their thinking, beliefs, and values impact their actions (Ross, Bondy, & Kyle, 1993) and have methods for evaluating instruction and a process for applying the knowledge they receive in their preparation programs (Dieker & Monda-Amaya, 1997). Reflection is the interaction of experiences with analysis of beliefs about those experiences (Newell, 1996), a developmental process resulting in more in-depth and sophisticated reflection over time (Pultorak, 1996 cited in (Etscheidt, Curran, & Sawyer, 2012).

Reflection enables teachers to recognize the limitations of their personal assumptions, acknowledge other perspectives, consider the moral and ethical consequences of choices, and

clarify the reasoning processes involved in making and evaluating decisions, in turn enhancing their growth (Harrington & Hathaway, 1994 cited in (Lee & Wu, 2006). Reflection basically helps teacher to achieve self-evaluation and reflection skills can be developed spontaneously through practice (Lee & Wu, 2006).

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Methods for Teacher Self-Assessment

Viewing teaching removed from the immediate demands of the classroom permits teachers to critically notice and examine the intricacies of the teaching process (Sherin & van Es, 2005), identifying important interactions and making connections between interactions and learning concepts (van Es & Sherin, 2002).

The process of self-evaluation of teaching requires teachers to reflect upon the effectiveness of their instructional delivery for the purpose of informing areas of improvement in teaching skills (Keller, Brady, & Taylor, 2005). Various approaches have been used in teacher education to support teacher self-evaluation. Haertel (1993) cited in Lee & Wu (2006), classified advances in educational research methods that have influenced teacher self-evaluation into three categories: (1) rating scales and self-reports; (2) electronic recordings; and (3) teacher reflection and teaching portfolios.

In the study of Chan (2010), methods for self-evaluation of teachers are mentioned as:

1. Self-monitoring
2. Audio and video recording
3. Students' feedback on teaching
4. Feedback from observation by other colleagues and experts (Chan, 2010, pp. 1-4)

Self-monitoring, according to Chan (2010), refers to teacher's keeping a log as a portfolio or even video log. It is the monitoring of teacher's self-performance and a meaningful source. Teacher either asks questions to himself or completes a form in order to meet the goals and objectives of the lesson.

Audio or video recording helps teachers to 'keep record of and investigate their actual performance in detail' (Chan, 2010,

\* Ph.D. student, Faculty of Education, International Black Sea University, Tbilisi, Georgia; E-mail: aaltintop18@hotmail.com

p. 2). Even though it seems meaningless on its own, recordings show the real performance of teachers and ‘help teachers to track their own progress’ (Chan, 2010, p. 2). It is highly useful so as to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the teacher, and it will not take as much time as self-reports or peer observation/feedback methods of evaluation.

Students’ feedback can be supplied through questionnaires, surveys or interviews. Students play a major role to assess a teacher’s performance, but it is not sufficient alone to depend on. The design of the questionnaires, surveys or interviews should be carefully planned, and their evaluation should be carefully done, too. The use of students’ feedback can either give lots of useful information or reflect too much personal perspectives of students that diverge from the aim of finding out how teacher performs in the class.

Feedback from the observation of a colleague or expert is another useful method for teacher evaluation. It can be held by their invitation to the target teacher’s class and by sharing their observations and evaluations. They can be helpful if these conversations reflect objective comments or if these observations are held by the consultants of institutions’ consultant service.

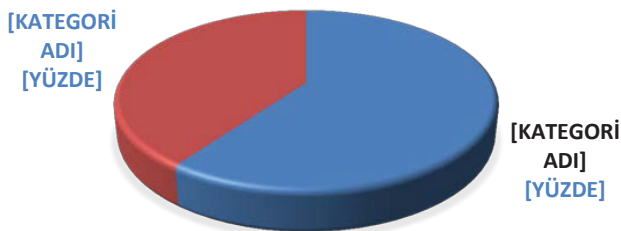
While the diarist’s principal object of study is him- or herself, and the researcher is expected to be as candid as possible and to record anything and everything she considers important (Gascoigne & Kari, 2000), peer observation aims to provide the participant with feedback, support and assistance from his or her colleagues (Donnelly, 2007). However, in capturing permanent and exchangeable representations of practice, video encourages a collaborative approach to reflection and is consistent with the original ideas of John Dewey (McCullagh, 2012).

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. The Attitude of Turkish Teachers towards Self-assessment

According to the quantitative questionnaire we held among 23 participants from Turkey; 20 of them were English language teachers and 3 were academicians and lecturers at Social Sciences Faculty of Turkish universities, the results have shown that 60 % of the participants displayed positive attitude towards

**Table 1. The attitude of self-assessment of teachers**



self-evaluation (Table 1). We have deduced that most of the teachers spent time in and out of classes to improve themselves.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid ALWAYS	1	4,3	4,3	4,3
QUITE A LOT	6	26,1	26,1	30,4
NOT MUCH	4	17,4	17,4	47,8
NEVER	12	52,2	52,2	100,0
Total	23	100,0	100,0	

While 65,2% of the participants responded the sentence “I devote some time to think about how to improve my own work in class” with the response of ‘quite a lot’, and 60,9% also said ‘quite a lot’ for “I talk to my colleagues to exchange ideas on what I should do in class”, we have seen that they did not use the evaluation method of peer observation with the result of ‘not much’ (47,8%) or ‘never’ (34,8%). In the same way, we see that the questionnaire item “I keep a (diary or video/audio) record of my teaching practice and use them for self-assessment” was responded in a negative way, as well. Most of the respondents have answered that they have ‘never’ tried it or ‘not much’ (Table 2). The results display that the participants need self-evaluation and they are positive towards it, but do not systematically apply it to develop themselves and for self-assessment.

According to Gun (2011) “we need to hold up mirrors to our own practice, making more conscious what is beneath the surface” and added a rhetorical question that “What better tool can we provide teachers for doing this than a camera in the classroom?” (Gun, 2011, p. 128).

Studies have shown that the use of video-based self-evaluation in a teacher preparation programme can provide specific information on teaching performances and allows pre-service teachers to evaluate their performances as often as they wish, and simultaneously monitor their personal growth (Struyk & McCoy, 1993).

#### 3.2. Use of Video-recording for Teacher Assessment

Self-evaluation of teaching using video-taping has been used for quite some time. According to the study of Capizzi & et. all (2010), examination of videotaped and audio-taped lessons allowed intensive evaluation and self-reflection on lesson components with active involvement by teacher candidates. Use of videotapes and subsequent reviews of instructional delivery warrants investigation as a way to enhance supervisory feedback during teacher candidates’ field experiences (Capizzi, Wehby, & Sandmel, 2010).

According to the same questionnaire we held, the last question was related with the ranking of five basic self-assessment methods which were given in the questionnaire as;

- Students’ feedback on teaching
- Audio and video recordings of self
- Self-monitoring and self-reports
- Feedback from observation by other colleagues and experts
- Feedback and evaluations of school administrations and participants were asked to rank them from the most important to the least according to their personal view of getting high benefit for their self-improvement and self-evaluation.

The results were not as how we expected with ‘student’s feedback on teaching’ in the first rank with 46,7% and ‘audio and video recording of self’ in the second rank with 26,7%, while we were expecting the ‘audio and video recording of self’ in the first rank. However, the third rank was ‘self-monitoring and self-reports with 20% (Table 3). This proved us that while students were seen as the base for teacher self-assessment, audio and video recordings together with other self-improvement methods of self-reports and self-monitoring will be highly useful and beneficial for teacher self-assessment, as well.

**Table 2. I keep a (diary or video/audio) record of my teaching practice and use them for self-assessment.**

**Table 3. Questionnaire ranking results**

<b>Student feedback on teaching</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MOST IMPORTANT	7	46,7	46,7	46,7

<b>Audio / Video-recording of self</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MOST IMPORTANT	4	26,7	26,7	26,7

<b>Self Monitoring and Self Report</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MOST IMPORTANT	3	20,0	20,0	20,0

<b>Feedback from observation by other colleagues and expert</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MOST IMPORTANT	2	13,3	13,3	13,3

<b>Feedback and Evaluations by school administration</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	LEAST IMPORTANT	6	40,0	40,0	100,0

This result have also shown us that with the previous question in the questionnaire which was "I keep a (diary or video/ audio) record of my teaching practice and use them for self-assessment" revealed most of the respondents have not tried audio or video recording before while still some of them guess and rank that this method can be beneficial for self-evaluation. The results could probably be different, if the majority of the participants have used recording method in their classes for self-evaluation.

Besides, peer observation was ranked as fourth, and feedback and evaluations of school administration ranked as the least important. The results are the evaluations from a minority group of teachers but reflects a general idea for others, too.

#### 4. Results and Discussion

The questionnaire results did not directly give the intended results but helped to analyze the target topic, as well as some other issues.

According to research, although very few people are innovators many more people could be persuaded to adopt innovations even though it is likely that there would always be some people who would always resist change; participation in professional development was shown to increase the rate of adoption (Atkinson & Bolt, 2010).

The results also gave the idea that if the teachers had the

chance beforehand to try the method of video-recoding, it would not have been ranked as the second rank, but would possibly have the first rank. Some of the participants seem to apt to innovations and consider teacher self-assessment as a major issue for self-development which is also a normal outcome for most Turkish educators contrary to the idea of being thought of not have a tendency for renovations.

As seen from the results of the questionnaire, most teachers resist the evaluations of school administration, or also do not show an inclination towards peer observation both of which represents an outer evaluation type and may not be regarded as the base for self-evaluation as much as individual methods. On the other hand, student feedback cannot be categorized as the same way with school administration or peers, since most of the teachers see students as a direct positive result of their teaching methods. By giving students a proportion of not always being impartial for teacher evaluations, teachers' their own self-assessment, but in combination with objective methods, should carry the highest importance. In this regard, what is offered with this study is an objective and direct method for teacher self-assessment, and it is thought to be the video-recording method.

The use of video-based pedagogy in teacher education is mainly in two areas: learning from exemplars and self-evaluation. The first approach, generally termed video-case methodology, portrays realistic classroom situations that give teachers the opportunity to share experiences and reflect on models or

dilemmas of classroom practices (Rowley & Hart, 1996; Friel & Carboni, 2000). The second approach, video-based self-evaluation, uses video recordings of teaching instances to analyze, evaluate, and improve upon individual teaching performance (Lee & Wu, 2006).

Videotaped evaluation is not only necessary for teacher candidates, but also for prospective teachers. Administrators and teachers should be interested in video observation for three reasons: (a) video can positively influence teacher and student performance, (b) video supports teacher growth and development, and (c) video has the potential to enhance principal and teacher consultations (Wright, 2008, p. 34).

Video observations provide teachers the opportunity to further analyze their teaching from multiple unbiased perspectives (Brophy, 2004). Arther suggests teacher growth hinges on connecting feedback to actual examples. She says that unsubstantiated feedback rarely has lasting effects, whereas when feedback "statements can be connected to actual samples...it provides a powerful instructional tool" (Arther, 1999, p. 24).

According to the study held by Seidel & et. all (2011) the emotional activation of the videos is higher for persons who observed their own video and have experiences in comparison to persons who observed an external video and have no experience. 'External videos drive persons without experience to a focus on subject contents' (Seidel, Sturmer, & Blomberg, 2011) instead of directing them to evaluate teacher's way of teaching. Therein own videos are likely to be perceived as more stimulating and emotionally arousing (Seidel, Sturmer, & Blomberg, 2011).

More added value of the video medium lies in the comprehensive application possibilities it offers for focusing on verbal aspects (i.e., the content of what is being said), paralingual aspects (i.e., intonation, speaking pace and volume) and non-verbal aspects (e.g., body posture, eye contact, use of gestures). Attention to each of these aspects is important because they all play a significant role in the various communication skills required in professional practice, including receptive skills (e.g., asking open questions, looking at the other person, use of silences), informative skills (e.g., explaining things in a comprehensible way, speaking calmly) and relational skills (e.g., asking about the other's experiences and displaying empathy) (Duffy et al., 2004; Hulsman et al., 1999 cited in (Fukkink, Trienekens, & Kramer, 2010).

The emphasis in today's training programs is no longer on confronting participants with images of themselves. Instead, 'positive self-modeling' approaches focus solely or primarily on successful interactions by the participant in order to reinforce the desired target behavior and to give the participant a positive self-image (Fukkink, Trienekens, & Kramer, 2010).

Teacher education programs routinely employed micro-teaching activities, wherein preservice teachers teach and record brief lessons to peers and receive feedback from both peers and supervisors. According to Grossman (2005), "micro-teaching grew out of the process-product line of research, which identified particular teaching skills that correlated with gains in student achievement and then tried to teach these discrete skills to teachers" (p. 429). Recently, video capture and analysis tools have been developed to optimize the benefits of these methods, providing potentially deeper and more precise insights into teachers' thought processes for practical inquiry (Rich & Hannafin, 2008).

New methods of annotation have emerged that afford even greater power and utility for examining and improving instructional decision-making. These tools allow an individual to both capture and analyze teaching practice, allowing preservice teachers to review, analyze, and synthesize video of their own teaching in authentic classroom contexts to examine relationships between and among teaching context, practice, and instructional decision-making (Rich & Hannafin, 2008).

Video analysis may offer potentially rich, complementary, and highly situated methods to elicit teachers' beliefs about specific teaching practices (Rich & Hannafin, 2008). Other methods of self-assessment are still needed to be used, but as collateral methods together with video-recording in order to

enhance its use. They are not sufficient alone to help the teacher to assess his/her self-attitudes and teaching methods in class. Besides, video-recorded self-assessment seems to surpass the benefits and usage of other methods.

## 5. Conclusion

Video observation is necessary for teacher development and growth. While professional development practices and reflectivity of teachers are gaining importance in current education system, to undertake necessary steps and follow assessment procedures are essential, as well, in order to see the progress of teachers.

Feedback in general plays a vital role in skills teaching. What makes the feedback in the video feedback method unique is that it allows course participants to look at themselves 'from a distance' and with space for reflection, thereby giving them a realistic picture of their own skills, or self-image (Fuller & Manning, 1973; Hargie et al., 1983; Hosford, 1980 cited in (Fukkink, Trienekens, & Kramer, 2010).

The questionnaire results have been a clear indicator of that still many teachers need to try the video observation method in order to assess its benefits for their self-assessment and development, while video self-analysis is becoming increasingly powerful and accessible among teacher education programs. Further, video self-analysis may provide a window into teacher thinking to extend the way researchers conceive of the connection between beliefs and actions (Rich & Hannafin, 2008).

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