MIRROR, MIRROR:
Teachers as Reflective Practitioners

NOHORA BRYAN ZAMBRANO
ANA MARÍA TERNENT DE SAMPER
Teachers and Researchers
Department of Foreign Languages and Cultures

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La Sabana

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The Consultancy Protocol was developed by Gene Thompson-Grove, Paula Evans and Faith Dunne as part of the Coalition of Essential Schools' National Re:Learning Faculty Program, and further adapted and evised as part of work of NSRF.
http://www.nsrfharmony.org/system/files/protocols/consultancy_0.pdf

A Consultancy is a structured process for helping an individual or a team think more expansively about a particular, concrete dilemma.

Consultancy Protocol - Steps

1. Overview of the dilemma (8 minutes)

2. Clarifying questions (5 minutes)

3. Probing questions. Take a few minutes to look at the teacher reflections. (10 minutes)

4. Group discussion about the dilemma (15 minutes)

5. Presenter reflection (3 minutes)

6. Debriefing (3 minutes)

EDUCATIONAL CHANGE IS IN TEACHERS' MINDS AND HANDS; PROMOTING TEACHERS' CHANGE IS IN TEACHER EDUCATORS' MINDS AND HANDS.

- If students are to experience "deep learning", teachers must first be guided in becoming experts at "deep learning" themselves.

- Unless teachers become more reflective, self-directed, and focused on understanding, there is little hope for their students to become so. It is our duty, as teacher educators, to reflect on our practices to ensure that they contribute to these changes that are vital for education.

Context

Teachers' thinking

Professional development

Teacher change

Student change
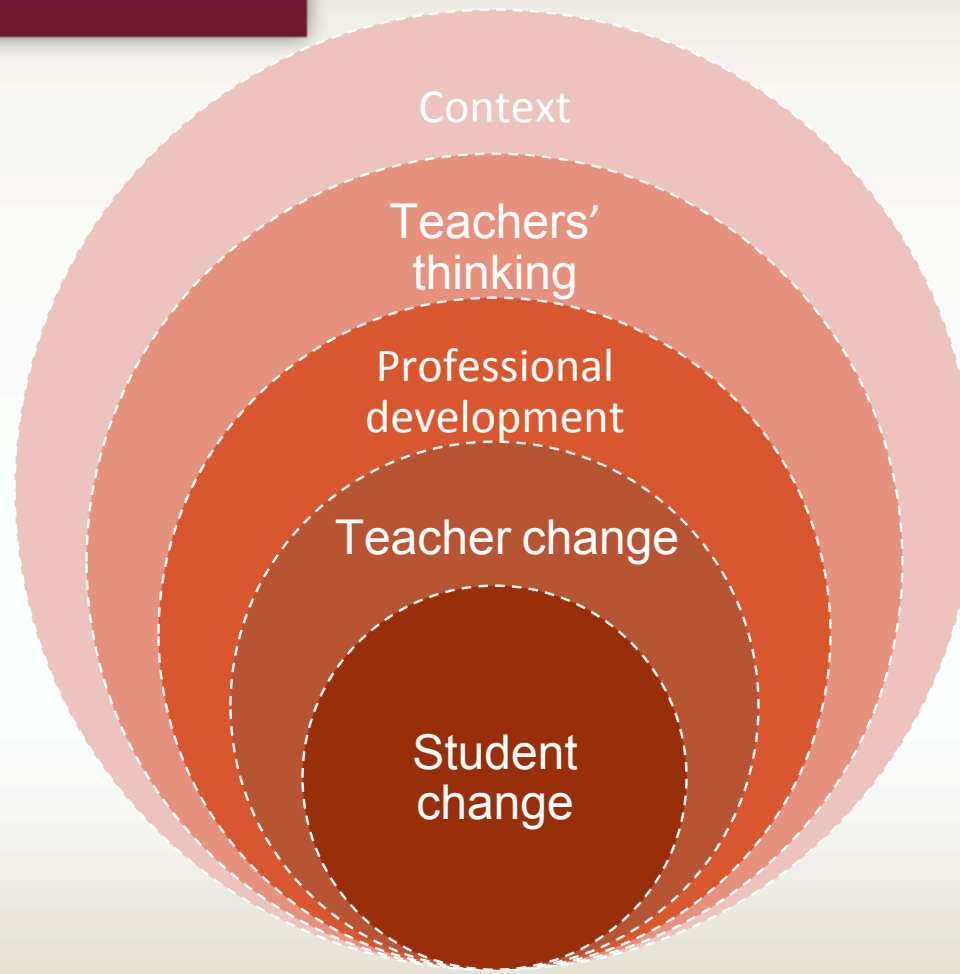
Context

Teacher Education in Colombia

- Traditional education
- Content and teacher centered instruction
- Ambitious national language learning goals
- Poor learning outcomes, esp. English
- One-shot workshops
Desire for "recipes"

Online Master's program in English Teaching at U. de La Sabana

- Many teachers with limited academic English proficiency
- Focus on autonomy and self-direction
- Diverse teaching methods and styles.
- Difficulty in measuring outcomes

Research Project

- Analyze needs
- Support program restructuration based on reflective pedagogy, collaboration, and use of technology
- Self-study methodology

Structured Scaffolded Critical Reflection

There is "rising concern for fostering the professional development of teachers by means of guided and focused reflection of their own learning process and their actions in the classroom, and thus their construction of knowledge and expertise." (Hüttner, 2012, p. xiv)

SELF

The major challenge for pedagogy in higher education today "is not one not one of knowing but of being".

Barnett (2004)

DIRECTION

Taking thoughtful action using one's understandings while actively engaged, which demands awareness on how or why one perceives, thinks, feels or acts as a person, as a learner and as a professional.

(Butani, Blankenburg, & Long,2013; Mezirow, 1990)

What we have done

- Socratic questioning
- Diverse resources and perspectives.
- Self-evaluation with co-created rubrics
- Class recording, self- and peer- observation
- Making thinking and understanding "visible"
- Collective and individual feedback
- Restructure content of courses around generative topics and focus on understanding rather than content
- Foster collaboration
- Technological tools

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NEGATIVE

- Have difficulties in changing their mindsets
- Adhere to traditional education
- Lack self-direction, initiative and a reflective stance
- Have difficulty expressing their own "voices"
- Seek teacher educator approval constantly
- Are not self-critical
- Focus on grades and completing the program
- Have superficial reflection
- "Adopt" perspectives and innovations to do more of the same (technological tools)
- Have little ownership of knowledge
- Think possibilities of change are limited by external factors

POSITIVE

- Look at their practice critically
- Reaffirm their strengths
- Transform their weaknesses
- Commit to change
- See difficulties as opportunities
- Take on interesting research projects
- Work fairly autonomously

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What effective, structured reflective practices can we, as members of a teacher training program, use to achieve more consistent, lasting, and visible results in helping language professionals transform their beliefs and practices?
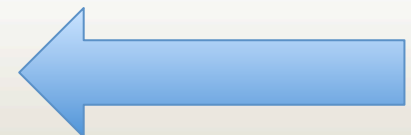
Group discussion about the dilemma (15 minutes)

- What did we hear?
- What didn't we hear that they think might be relevant?
- What assumptions seem to be operating?
- What questions does the dilemma raise for us?
- What do we think about the dilemma?
- What might we do or try if faced with a similar dilemma?
- What have we done in similar situations?

References

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Department of Foreign Languages and Cultures

Universidad de
La Sabana

Nohora Bryam Zambrano
nohora.bryan@unisabana.edu.co

Ana María Ternent de Samper
ana.ternent@unisabana.edu.co