

**Comparing Feedback Given to Preservice Teachers during Microteaching Experiences**

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### **Introduction**

This research studied the impact of a new Professional Development School (PDS) microteaching program for Agricultural Education preservice teachers as part of their teaching methods course at Kansas State University. The PDS program was designed to give senior preservice teachers the opportunity to prepare and teach four lessons of instruction in a local high school agricultural classroom. The lessons were prepared and practiced in class and were then taught at PDS sites on four different dates throughout the Fall semester. The program aims to provide preservice teachers authentic opportunities to apply instructional strategies learned in their teaching methods course. The PDS program consisted of four local high school Agricultural Education programs as the PDS sites, with students rotating through each PDS site in pairs for a total of four rounds. The sample consisted of ten preservice teachers all of whom were enrolled in teaching methods during the semester before their student teaching experience.

### **Statement of the Problem and Research Questions**

Past studies have shown preservice teachers tend to focus on different elements of improvement than their university supervisors do (Napoles, 2008). In prior years the PDS program did not involve university personnel traveling with preservice teachers to their assigned schools, which did not allow for university personnel feedback to assist the PDS host teacher in fostering growth for preservice teachers. Other studies have identified the importance of observations as an opportunity for preservice teachers to grow and learn (Fantozzi, 2013). As a possible solution to this problem, university personnel attended the first two PDS visits and the students then completed the last two PDS trips on their own. It was anticipated this would allow for both the PDS teacher and university personnel to assist the preservice teacher in growing professionally during the Field Experience portion of their pre-service program, which is a valued component of agriculture teacher education (Retallick & Miller, 2007).

This census study attempted to analyze the impact of adding university personnel feedback to the PDS program. Two questions guided this study: 1) What types of observations are made by PDS teachers and university personnel according to categories of Danielson's Observation Evidence? 2) How does observational feedback from PDS teachers and university personnel impact reflections on practice by preservice teachers?

### **Methodology**

As part of data collection, a combination of instruments was used including video of the university personnel/PDS teachers' verbal debriefing with preservice teachers, PDS teacher/university personnel written feedback, and preservice teacher reflection papers. There were a possible twenty teaching occurrences to be studied, with an actual response rate of 95% (n=19), as one preservice teacher was ill and unable to perform the 2nd PDS round. The response rate for actual occurrences was 100% for both the PDS teacher and university personnel feedback (n=38), and 94.7% (n=18) for reflection papers.

In order to identify the types of observations made by PDS teachers and university personnel, the feedback for each of the PDS experiences was coded by the researcher according to the three domains of teaching responsibility: planning and preparation, classroom environment, and instruction (Danielson, 1996). This allowed the researcher to chart the type of observations made by PDS teachers and university personnel, and tally them on the Danielson (1996) observation form. The feedback were color coded with a specific color representing the

university personnel, PDS teacher, and preservice teacher before being recorded on individual Danielson (1996) observation forms for each of the 19 PDS experiences. Color codes were then used to analyze reflection papers by cross referencing the charted feedback data to identify the originating source of the preservice teacher's reactions to each element of their instruction.

The observation forms were also utilized to look for themes among the types of feedback given by PDS teachers and university personnel to examine potential variances. Although the data were not inferential in nature, paired-samples t-tests and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were run to compare means for significant variance between the types of feedback provided. This resulted in six total means, including the three types of feedback (Danielson, 1996), with two sources for each feedback type (PDS teacher and university personnel).

### **Findings and Discussion**

Descriptive statistics were run for the types of feedback provided from PDS teachers and university personnel, resulting in 378 total points of feedback (164 PDS teacher and 214 university personnel). The feedback was further broken down into the three domains of teaching: preparation comments, learning environment comments, and instruction comments. A paired-samples t-test between the three domains of feedback reported significant differences in the average number of points of instructional feedback per student between the PDS teacher ( $M=3.05$ ,  $SD=2.09$ ) and university personnel instructional feedback ( $M = 5.26$ ,  $SD = 3.41$ );  $t(18) = -2.36$ ,  $p = .03$ . A Brown-Forsythe test (Field, 2013) resulted in significance at the .05 level,  $F(5, 85.83) = 3.69$ ,  $p = .004$ . Further, Games-Howell post hoc comparisons revealed significance between the average number of points of instructional feedback per student for PDS learning environment feedback and university personnel instruction feedback ( $p = .007$ ). While both analyses resulted in significance between at least one pairing, unlike the t-test, the Games-Howell comparisons did not find significance between the PDS teacher and university personnel instructional feedbacks when accounting for all possible pairings. Most significantly, these results support the conclusion that university personnel's feedback varied with that of PDS teachers' feedback. University personnel provided 30% more points of feedback per student ( $n=214$  to  $n=164$ ), and a significantly different combination of feedback than PDS teachers.

The number of feedback comments for PDS teachers and university personnel were totaled and then compared with the number of reflections originating with each of those feedback sources to determine how PDS teacher and university personnel feedback impacted preservice teacher reflections. In total, there were 49 reflections originating from PDS teacher feedback, 41 reflections originating from university personnel feedback, and 42 reflections originating from the students themselves (PDS=37%, University personnel=31%, student=32%). A one-way ANOVA comparing the three sources of reflections per PDS teaching occurrence resulted in no significance,  $F(2, 54) = .736$ ,  $p = .484$ . While this may not seem noteworthy, no statistical significance implies preservice teachers relied on the three sources of feedback comparably when making reflections on their teaching.

### **Implications**

The results of this study provided explanations for the two research questions; which in turn addressed a key question for the Department of Agricultural Education – are the changes to the PDS program beneficial? By using information gathered from the research questions, the answer is yes. University personnel traveling with the preservice teachers provided a wider variety of feedback, increasing preservice teachers' opportunities for professional growth.

## References

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