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Newly qualified teachers and preservice teachers in collaboration in learning circles. Outro - Intro

Lunde Frederiksen, Lisbeth; Halse, Elisabeth

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Newly qualified teachers and preservice teachers in collaboration in learning circles.

Outro - Intro

**Lisbeth Lunde Frederiksen, Ph.D. , Head of research wst. VIAUC.
Elisabeth Halse, associated professor, VIAUC**

Background context

November
2020

The Ministry of higher education an official memorandum
– Rethinking the teacher training program

One aim: to ease the transition into the profession, and thereby attract and retain the NQTs

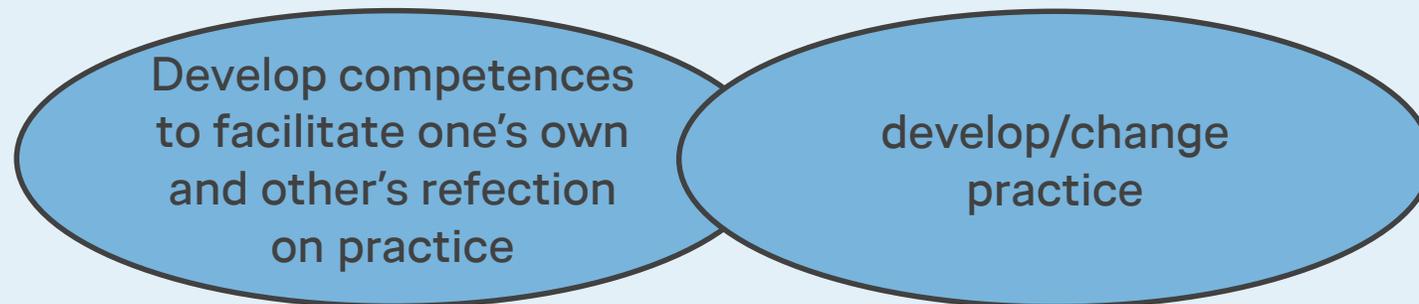
...identify different ways to ease the start for the NQT. This could be mentor programs, supervision or genuine induction programs in cooperation with the teacher training program.

Our intention

Transition - part of a continuum of professional development



Space for both students and newly qualified teachers



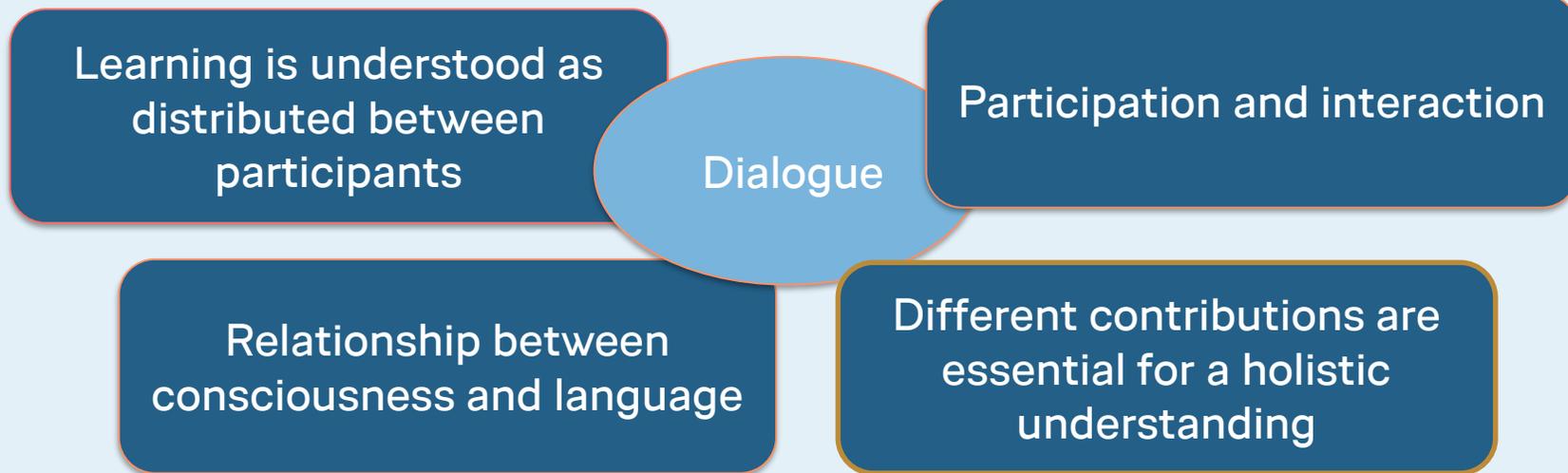
Inspired by

Research circles

Peer-mentoring, Finland - based on equality, autonomy

Social-constructive theories of learning

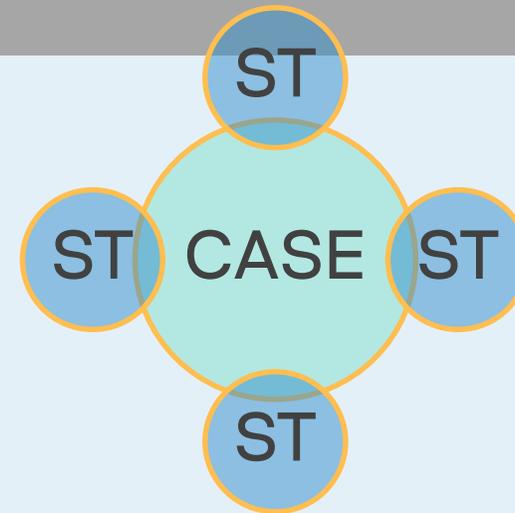
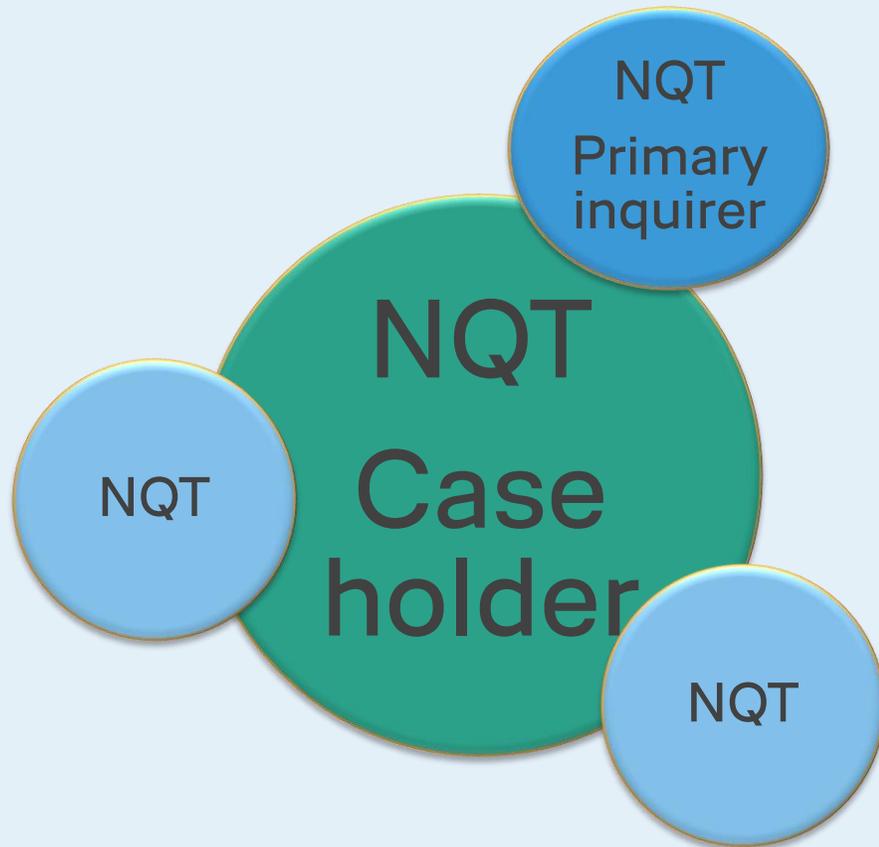
Persson, 2009
Kohonen et al, 2017
Illeris 2006
Rasmussen 2005
Vygotsky 1997, 2001
Säljö, 2000
Dysthe 1995, 2003



Learning circle

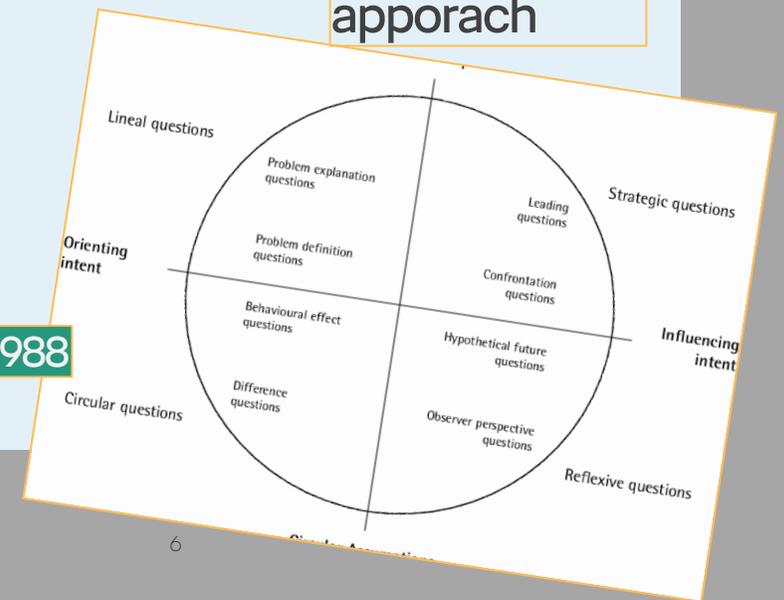
- A learning circle is a group consisting of **various participants** with different experiences, interests, prerequisites and intentions.
- Aim is for **collective knowledge development** to take place, and thereby to strive for **professional development** for all participants.
- In the circle, the participants **inquire** into a challenge from a teacher's practice in order to professionally describe and analyze it thoroughly, in order to acquire new insights and ways to develop future practice.

Learning circle



Inquiry-based approach

Tomm, 1988



Design

- Two learning circles led by a trained primary facilitator and an observer who acted as a secondary facilitator
- Each learning circle consisted of four newly qualified teachers (NQT) and four student teachers (ST)
- Six meetings over the school year; each 3 hour duration

Research questions

- How can/cannot learning circles in the form of peer-group mentoring with NQTs and student teachers, respectively, contribute to professional development, ease the transition from teacher education to the teaching profession, and contribute to further connecting theoretical and practical knowledge?
- Where do we see challenges, opportunities and limitations of working with learning circles in this context?



RESEARCH METHOD

Data

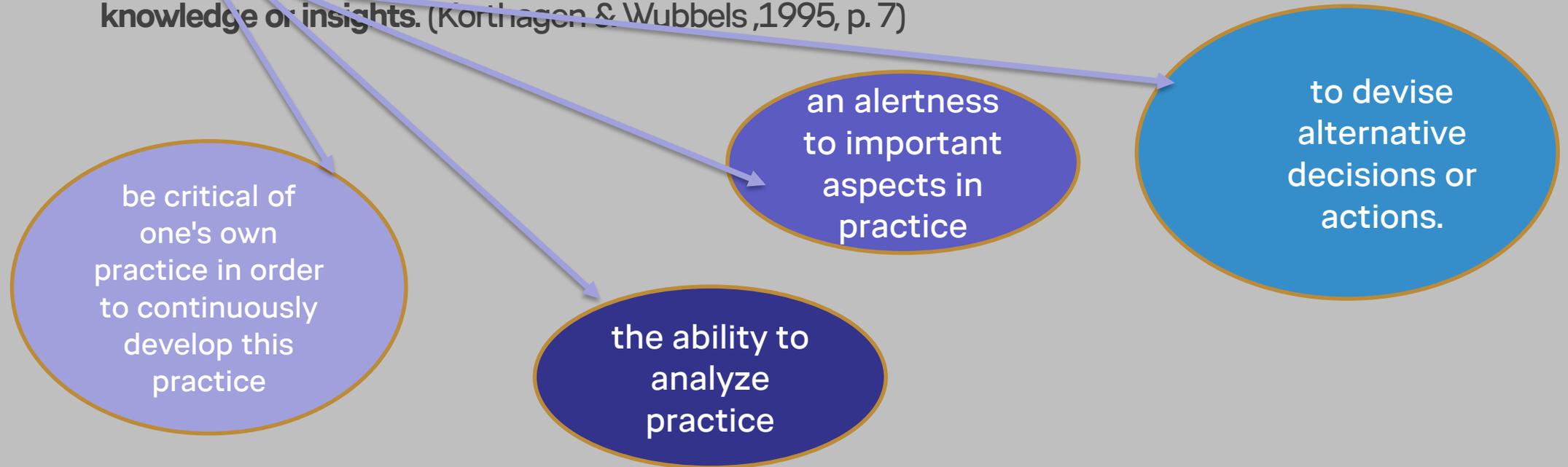
- 39 logbooks from student teachers
- 25 logbooks from NQT
- 11 logbooks from facilitators
- 11 observation notes
- 2 focus group interviews with student teachers
- 1 focus group interview with NQTs
- 2 individual interviews with NQTs

Strategy for analysis

- Combination of inductive and deductive methods across all empirics (Brown & Clarke ,2006; 2013; Patton, 2002)
- Themes in the back of our minds , based on theory and inductive open coding with subsequent thematization

Reflection – the main theme

- Reflection: a central aspect of professional development (Rønnestad , 2008, Korthagen & Wubbels, 1995)
- Reflection: **“the mental process of structuring or restructuring an experience, a problem or existing knowledge or insights.** (Korthagen & Wubbels ,1995, p. 7)



An analytical firm grip on the theme of reflection

- Divided the concept of reflection into three independent themes:
 - Reflection
 - interaction between theory and practice
 - the action perspective.
- these themes are closely linked, intertwined, and interdependent, and in its entirety it is about reflection

to become clearer in the analysis



Reflection

- The dialogues in the learning circles have provided opportunities for both rearward and forward reflection for all participants.
- NQTs:
 - **to get in the dept with their challenges,**
 - **to see the complexity in their challenge**

by

 - **curious and inquiring questions,**
 - **change of perspective**

opportunities to think different and see new ways to handle the challenge.

from the concrete to the general and forward-looking and back to the concrete.

NQT continue the reflections afterwards in relation to practice, regardless of whether it has been their own case or others' cases

Reflection

.....if signs of learning are measured through written assignments in this online time, then how does one relate to the feedback part? Because, if there is no feedback for the students on the work they have handed in, does it make any sense at all? What is the purpose? Seem this requires some consideration - also for future assignments and feedback in a NON-online time.....(Logbook NQT)

The personal contact with all students is important, but especially perhaps those who have difficulty keeping up in the lessons. If one gets their angle on why it is difficult, then I think it creates a better understanding from both parts. And otherwise acknowledge what they can oversee to contribute. So their efforts are recognized, regardless of the size of the effort, rather than having a bad conscience that they have not contributed (Logbook NQT)

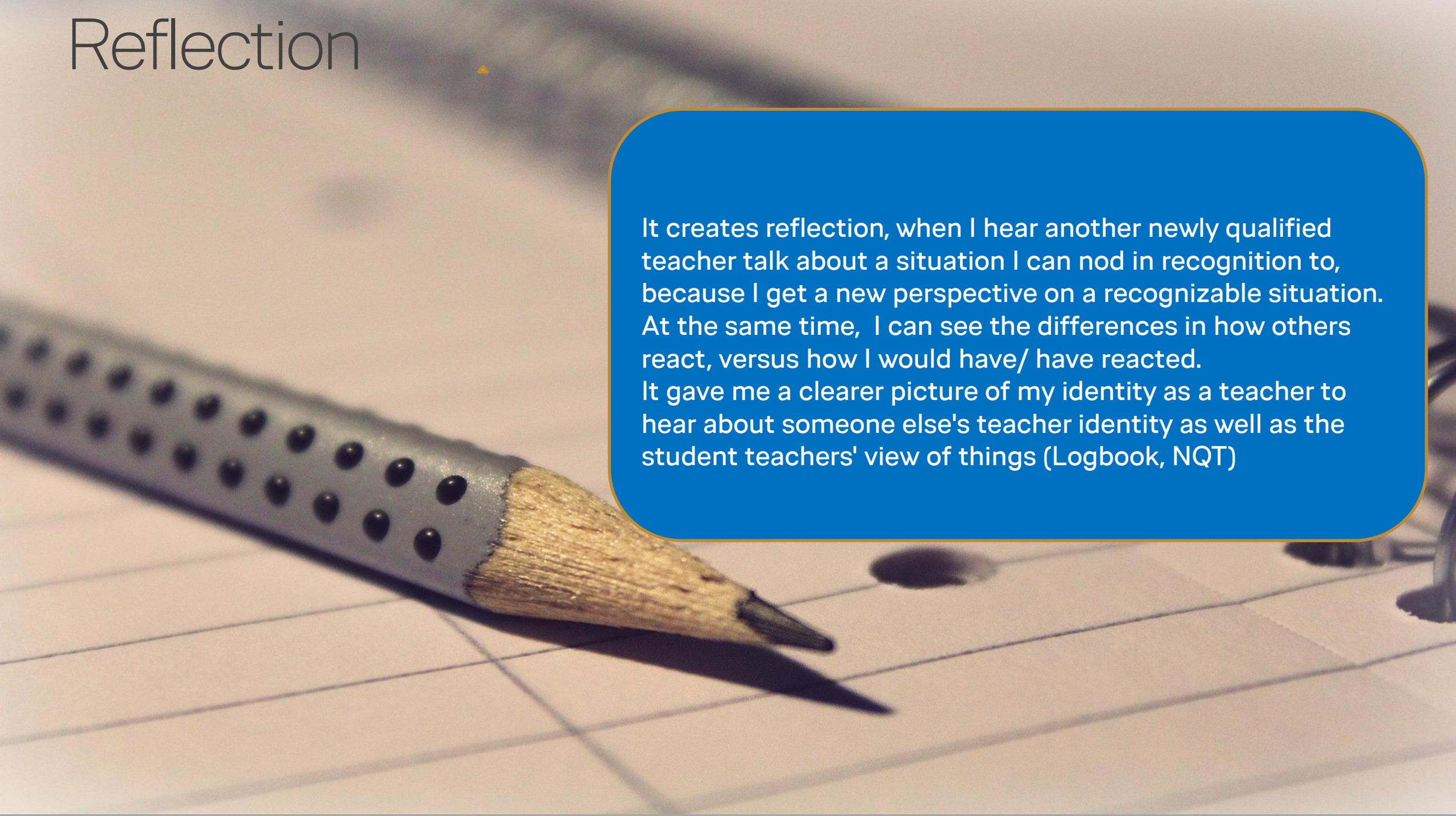
Reflection

I have experienced several times that you usually have the answer yourself, it just has to be dug up, using questions asked from the outside and put into words.
(logbook nqt)

You often sit with the keys yourself, you just have to find out where they are in the keychain!
(logbook nqt)

After putting my experiences and impressions of x [the pupil] into words, could I hear what I needed to do to change my image of him and maybe my relationship with him ?
(logbook nqt)

Reflection



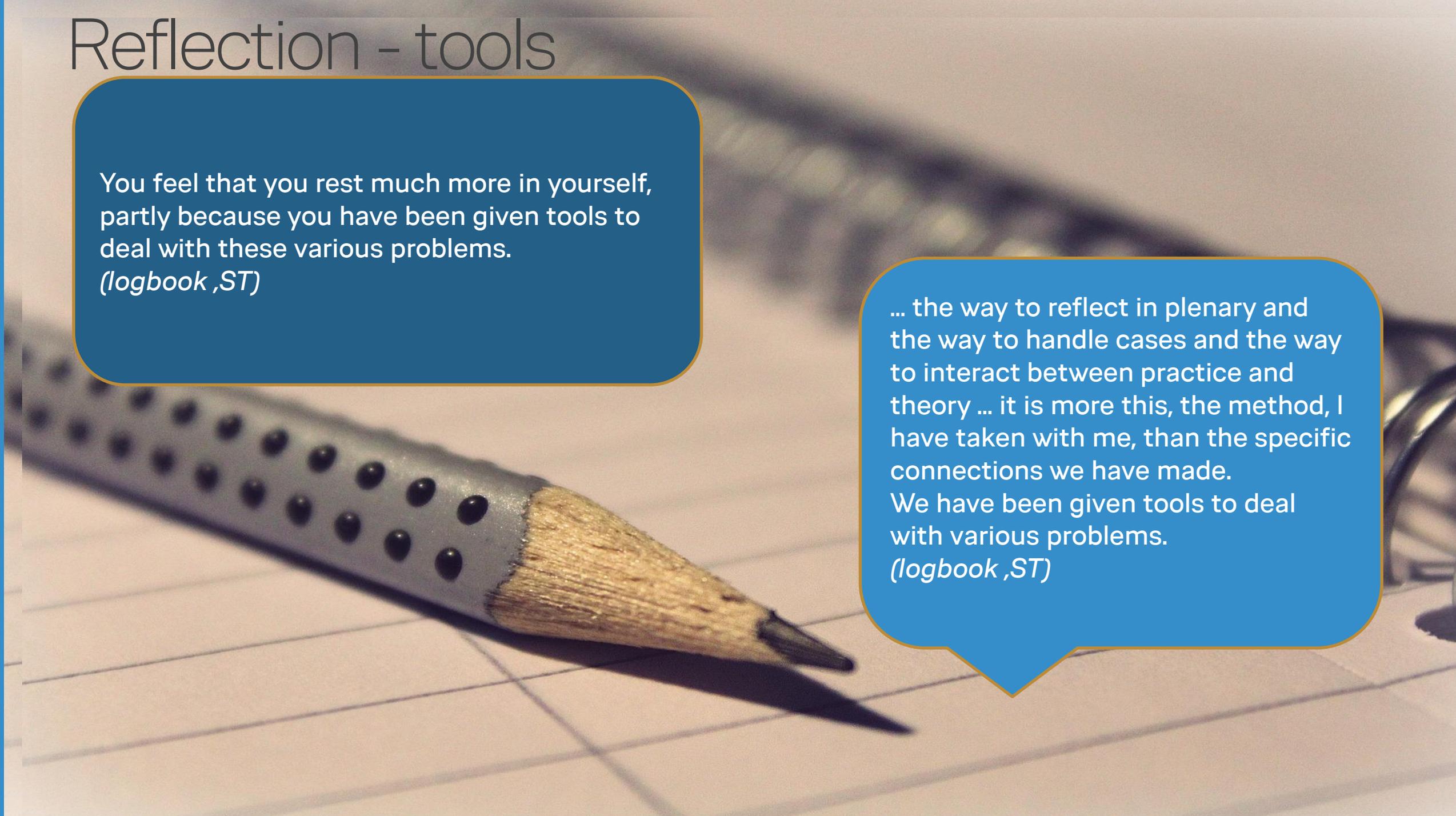
It creates reflection, when I hear another newly qualified teacher talk about a situation I can nod in recognition to, because I get a new perspective on a recognizable situation. At the same time, I can see the differences in how others react, versus how I would have/ have reacted. It gave me a clearer picture of my identity as a teacher to hear about someone else's teacher identity as well as the student teachers' view of things (Logbook, NQT)

Skills to facilitate own and others reflection

- To describe and to expand a case
- Knowledge and insight in different types of questions
- Change of perspective as a part of an inquiry based approach
- Superior generalization of a case
- Involving relevant theory
- Very strict frame-setting for the conversation



Reflection - tools



You feel that you rest much more in yourself, partly because you have been given tools to deal with these various problems.
(logbook ,ST)

... the way to reflect in plenary and the way to handle cases and the way to interact between practice and theory ... it is more this, the method, I have taken with me, than the specific connections we have made.
We have been given tools to deal with various problems.
(logbook ,ST)

Reflection - tools

It has provided new perspectives and helped to uncover several aspects in the various cases I have presented at the meetings. The way to ask (linear, circular, etc.), I also think, I can use it to my advantage - both professionally in relation to students and colleagues, and also personally, so I do not put myself "as the judge" of other people's problems, but try to understand, reflect and inquire instead (logbook NQT)

Interaction between theory and practice

Primarily through use of professional language – conscious or not
Concrete theory and theorists have, on occasion, been present

ST contributed with theory,
theoretical terms and
professional pedagogical,
psychological and didactic
language

NQT's contributed mostly
with descriptions and
analyzes from practice,
along with professional
pedagogical, psychological
and didactic language

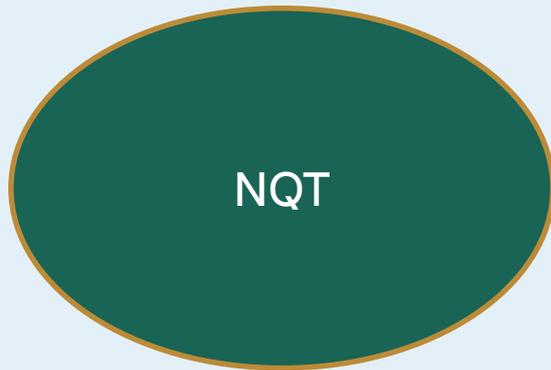
Interaction between theory and practice



... were able to see a connection between their teacher education theory and the practice and cases that were presented.

... were able to see the usefulness of the theory more thoroughly when they inquired upon "real" cases from practice, contrary to the more "flat" constructed cases presented in the teacher education.

Interaction between theory and practice



... were under the impression that theory was not discussed. They understand theory as a theorist's over all theory, not as concepts and professional language

... came to realize, through theoretical discussion, that they, in some aspects, already had diverged from their visions and values of good teaching

Interaction between theory and practice

The learning circles have helped me to recall some of the theory, but without necessarily name-dropping a whole lot of theorists, but we have put so much into words that gets one to think "oh yes!". To connect the dots. That too has been really nice.

(logbook NQT)

Some of the topics [in the LC] we touch upon [at edu]. We just haven't worked with them this thoroughly. Nothing this close to practice has ever been put into words.

(Logbook ST)

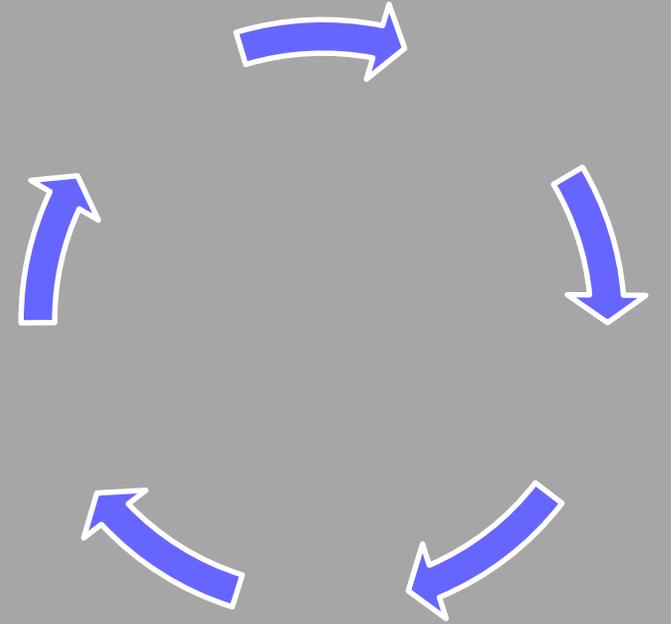
It was also cool to pull a little theory and conceptualized knowledge into the cases, and realize that you actually are capable to apply it in the conversation (Logbook ST).

Action Perspective

Helleve, 2017:

Effective professional development depends on:

“allowing teachers to repeatedly try new strategies and to reflect on what worked and did not and focuses on **records** of practice, including student work”



Action Perspective

– Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002

Change of practice depends on mediating processes of “reflection” and “enactment”, in four distinct domains which encompass the teacher’s world:

the personal domain (teacher knowledge, beliefs and attitudes),
the domain of practice (professional experimentation),

the domain of consequence (salient outcomes),

and **the external domain** (sources of information, stimulus or support)

D. Clarke, H. Hollingsworth / Teaching and Teacher Education 18 (2002) 947–967

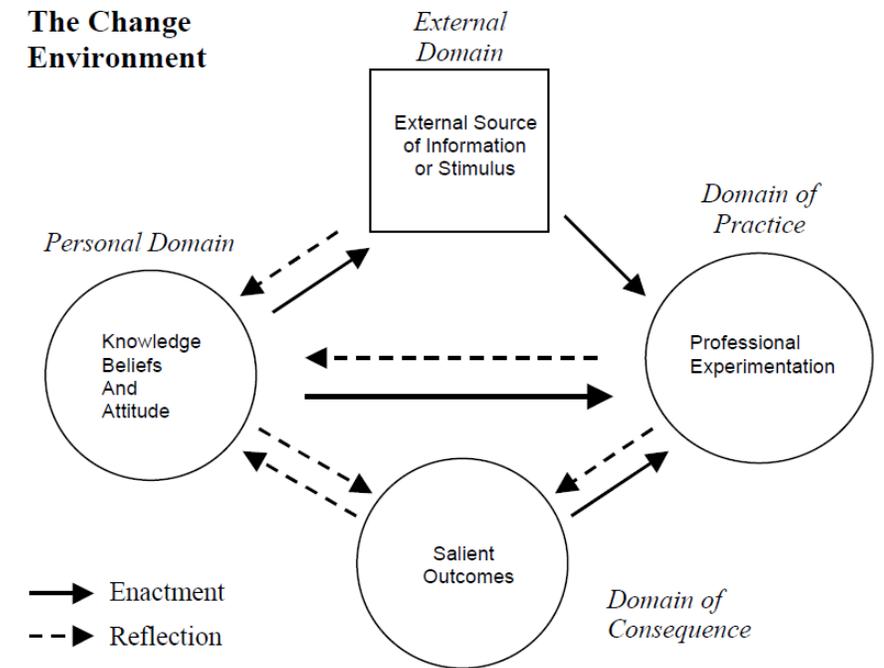


Fig. 3. The interconnected model of professional growth.

Action Perspective

- Not all discussion of cases resulted in direct action in practice, but only to new insight for both NQT and ST
- It was not only the nqt's who presented a case, that made new actions, but actually also the other participants . Both NQT and ST ! in their practice period.
- Focus in the dialogues and testing practice gives the ST hope for future tackling of challenges and gives insight in that situations can change, if you work seriously with them
- Challenges:
 - **Testing new practice**

To qualify an action on both a concrete level and on a general level.

Way to work

From concrete case to a general level for better understanding and back again

Think of actions in two ways
to the concrete case
to general actions related to the concrete

I used a lot of energy in the conversations to generalize what was said, not only to teaching during corona, but to teaching in general, and to general didactic topics

Action Perspective

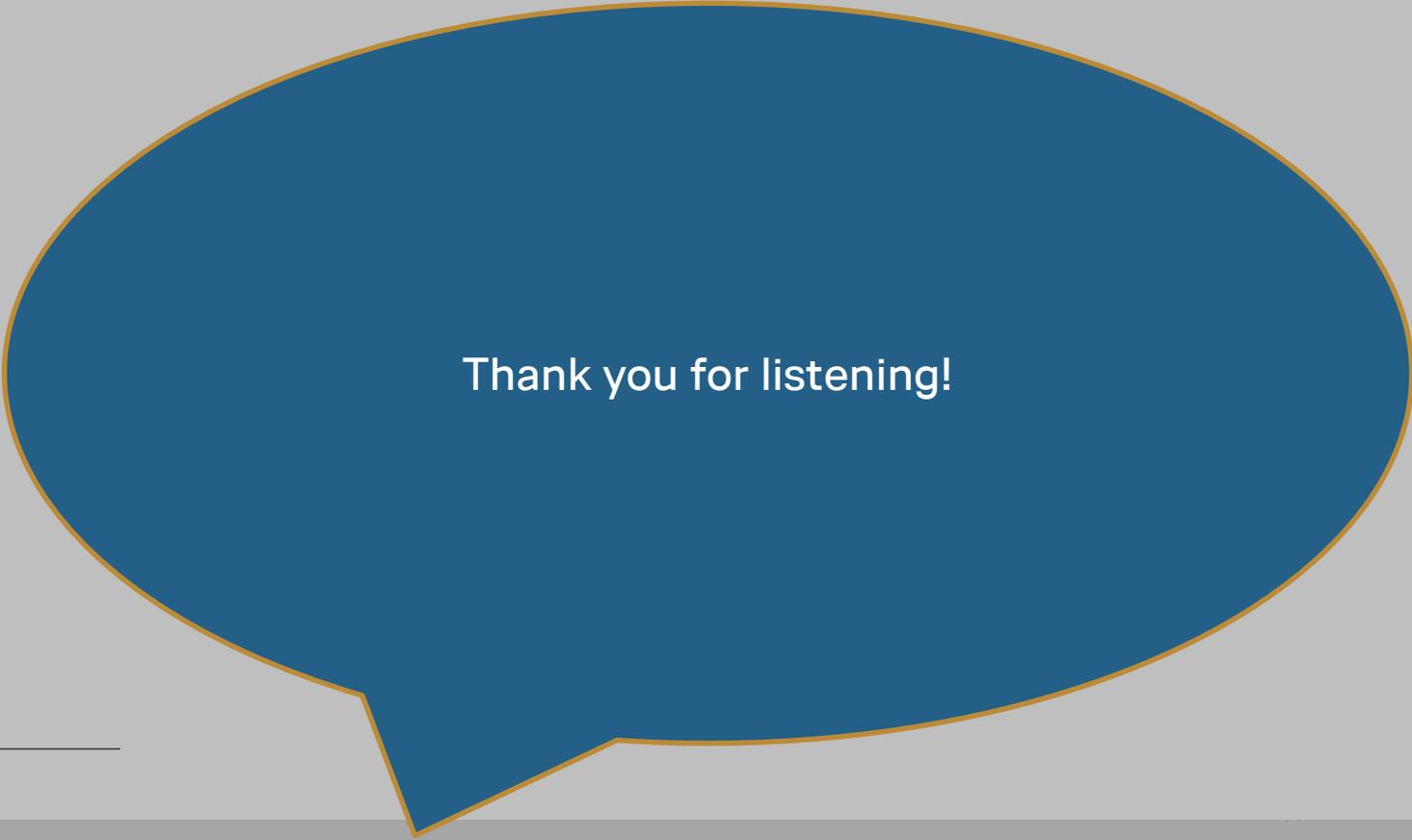
It seems particularly good to make a deal on specific agreements in relation to the next time, so that you can concretely return to your practice with a potential initiative, things to observe or the like (Logbook, NQT)

The "small homework" helped to make me have a different and special focus on my own practice, which has changed my view of my own thoughts and worries, even though I have not physically sat down and reflected on my "homework" (Logbook, NQT)

Action Perspective

You feel that you are self-supporting, you do this partly because you have been given tools to handle these various problems. (Logbook, ST)

I was just not sure that, really not at all sure, if I was going to be a teacher. I'm one hundred percent sure now! So so yes .. I will say, I am much more self-supported in my teaching role now ,... ..(Logbook , ST)



Thank you for listening!