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ABSTRACT

Videotaped recordings of supervisor-teacher micro-teaching playback sessions were used tc identify evaluative discourse. Fifteen student teachers discussed a 10-30 minute lesson they had just taught to college freshmen, with graduate student supervisors. Supervisors and student teachers evaluated lesson topics such as teacher questions, content, lesson goals, methods, materials, and nonverbal behavior, with adjectives--good, bad, important; or with prescriptions--should, ought. The evaluation was then classified according to a variety of constructs including: components of the Smith valuing model; valence (positive, negative, neutral); initiator; and justification. The analysis indicated the following: (1) evaluations were unaccompanied by rules or standards for judging the effectiveness of teaching interactions; (2) three-fourths of the evaluations were positive, but they failed tc indicate both strengths and weaknesses; (3) teachers made more negative evaluations than supervisors; and (4) evaluative talk was characterized by a narrow topic range, restricted support, and vague focus. (Author/CP)

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Videotaped recordings of supervisor-teacher micro-teaching playback sessions were used to identify evaluative discourse. The discourse was then classified according to a variety of constructs including: components of the Smith valuing model; valence of the evaluations; initiator of the evaluations; justification for the evaluation. The analysis indicated that evaluations were unaccompanied by rules or standards for judging the effectiveness of teaching interactions, that three-fourths of the evaluations were positive, that teachers made more negative evaluations than supervisors and that evaluations were not clearly focused.

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INTRODUCTION

Educational supervisors are a heterogenous group whose occupational backgrounds, degrees and experiences vary. They work with diverse groups of teachers in varied settings. The elementary school supervisor may conduct a two-day workshop on teaching the metric system and observe half of the teachers once and one teacher four times; the educational technologist in a police training institute may work closely with a group of policemen for several weeks, both teaching and observing them teach and never see them again; the university supervisor may confer with a student teacher three times during a semester; the free-lance supervisor may consult with a business several times over a two-year period, training and observing in-house teachers; the faculty "developer" may work intensely for a short period of time and then occasionally with different individuals who want to improve their teaching.

There is at least one important element common to the majority of these settings. It is the supervisory-teacher conference, characterized by a face-to-face meeting where supervisor and instructor discuss a lesson the instructor has taught. The lesson may have been one in the teacher's regular assignment, or it may have occurred in a more controlled, laboratory setting. The data upon which the supervisor and instructor base their discussion varies with the setting and can include supervisor notes, lesson transcripts, supervisor perceptions, student written evaluations, audiotapes of the lesson and videotapes of the lesson. Whatever the organizational setting and available data, the two-person conference is common. It functions to sharpen a teacher's understanding of classroom interactions, thereby improving teaching.

Until recently, interest in and evaluation of supervisory-teacher conferences was as uncommon as the conferences themselves were common. In order to increase our knowledge of what occurs during the conferences, to identify effective supervisory strategies and to provide individual feedback to supervisors, supervisor-teacher conference dialogue has been recorded and analyzed. [1,10,16] Blumberg [1] and Weller [16] developed different observational systems; each of the systems provides a window from which conference dialogue can be viewed. However, any one perspective inadequately mirrors the complexity in conference talk. For example, Blumberg's analysis strategy [1] is an adaptation of Flander's interaction analysis system; it provides insight into certain classes of verbal supervisory behaviors and teachers' reactions to them, but does not give information about the content of the discourse and how it was treated. Other category systems organize this information. [2,16] The MOSAICS observational system, an adaptation and expansion of the Bellack classroom observational system, focuses on the content of supervisory conferences and whether content is treated analytically, empirically or evaluatively. [16] Both Bryan [2] and Weller [16] assign a wide range of verbal behaviors to each category. Consider the following examples of supervisor talk:

1. "Your questions were good. I really liked them."

2. "Your questions were good, You redirected to bring Tom and Sue into the discussion. You, uh, asked some students to clarify and expand. Uh, there was both quality and quantity there."

Both sets of statements are quite different and the differences are meaningful. The teacher listening to the first comment would not be receiving information that could easily suggest future practise. The teacher listening to the second set of comments would know what aspects of his/her questions were good and why--information that generalizes to future situations.

The very comprehensiveness of existing conference analysis systems can obscure interesting and important aspects of conference discourse; in the next paragraphs, a rationale will be offered for supplementary study of one portion of total conference dialogue--evaluative discourse.

Among educators, there is a professional commitment to rational evaluation. [3,4,6] In any educational setting, skilled teachers deliberately manipulate instructional events on the basis of student feedback, past knowledge and experiences, suggestions and advice. Because teaching usually occurs behind closed doors where little systematic supervisory evaluation can occur, it is the individual teacher who must regularly carry out the analysis and evaluation necessary to responsive instruction. Where do teachers learn analysis and evaluation skills? In part, from supervisors.

What activities teachers engage in, and how they observe, interpret and examine these activities is the responsibility of the professional supervisors who work with them. [5,16] One explicit goal of supervisors working in conferences with teachers is to model and teach processes of lesson observation and rational analysis (that is classroom observation and analysis grounded in observation and logical interpretation, rather than observation and "magical" interpretation or observation and wishful thinking). [5,8]

There is also the continuing thread of research evidence to show that evaluations and evaluative discourse can increase realism about behavior and facilitate desired changes in skills and attitudes. [7,9,11]

Evaluation in supervisory conferences has not been studied systematically. We have assumed or hoped that evaluations were supported by relevant observations, by references to appropriate authorities, by criterial and other logical statements. We have assumed that both supervisors and teachers were making and discussing evaluations. We have assumed that evaluations grew out of systematic classroom observations. However, we really don't know if this is true. Initial observations

of evaluative portions of several supervisory-teacher conference videotapes did not support many of the above assumptions. Therefore, a more structured, precise survey has been undertaken to determine what occurred during evaluative discourse in supervisory-teacher conferences.

The survey focused on components of evaluative discourse which logically could be expected to influence conference outcomes. One component, the kind of supporting evidence offered for evaluations, was used to indicate the rationality of evaluative discourse. Because kinds and amounts of praise and criticism are related to learning [9,11], positive and negative ratings were recorded. Other information--proportions of supervisor to teacher talk, topics of evaluation--which would provide useful feedback to individual supervisors was recorded as well.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SURVEY

SETTING: Data was collected in the Teaching Techniques Laboratory of the University of Illinois with the cooperation of Dr. William D. Johnson and his staff. In the Teaching Laboratory, pre-service teachers teach one ten-twenty minute microlesson per week to a supervisor and a small group of students (college freshmen) hired by the laboratory. Usually a different specific teaching skill--for example, conducting a discussion, teaching a concept--is emphasized each week. The lessons are videotaped. When the lesson is completed, the freshment students fill out reaction forms and leave. The supervisor and teacher critique the lesson using the videotape replay, the student reaction forms and the supervisor's and teacher's observations and reactions as feedback sources. This setting was chosen for two reasons: the survey results would be used in training of Teaching Technique Laboratory supervisors; the availability of videotaping personnel and equipment and cooperative supervisors, students and teachers made data collection possible.

SUBJECTS: Four supervisors, fifteen teachers and fifty supervisor-teacher conferences were the subjects of the survey. Supervisors were graduate students in the College of Education at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and had supervised in the Teaching Techniques Laboratory for at least one year before data for the survey were recorded. Teachers were pre-service education students enrolled in classes which required laboratory teaching experiences. The distribution of supervisor-teacher conferences in given below.

	# of Conferences Analyzed	# of Teachers Supervised
Supervisor A	19	5
Supervisor B	17	5
Supervisor C	10	3
Supervisor D	4	2

DEFINITIONS: Explicit "valuing behaviors" of supervisors and teachers were the focus of this survey. "Valuing behavior" included any statements having an explicit rating term or a prescription. Words such as *good* or *bad*, *effective* or *ineffective* are examples of explicit rating terms. Prescriptions can be identified by such verbs as *should* or *ought* . Suggestions and opinions were considered prescriptive forms. "Valuing behavior" also included any justifications used to support evaluations and prescriptions.*

*See Paul Taylor's book, Normative Discourse for further discussion of the relationship between evaluations and prescriptions and the justifications for each. [15]

PROCEDURES: Videotaped recordings of supervisory-teacher conferences were made. The taped supervisory sessions were observed until a rating term or a prescription was identified. The value object or focus of the rating or prescription was identified and recorded. (Teacher questions, content, lesson goals, methods, materials are examples of value objects.) The videotape was moved forward and backward until the beginning and end points of discussion about the value object were identified. All verbal discourse between these two points was considered a single evaluative venture. The number of evaluative ventures in each conference was recorded. All verbal discourse between the beginning and end points of discussion about a single object of evaluation or a single prescription was classified according to the constructs listed below.

I. Categories of the Smith system for classifying evaluative discourse. [12] These categories are:

VALUE OBJECT (Category 1): something whose goodness, worth, importance was the focus of evaluative talk.

VALUE OR RATING TERM (Category 2): a rating word, usually adjectival, such as *good, bad, important, inadequate,* which in commonly accepted meaning and in context indicated an evaluation was going on. If the value term was not present, but could be inferred from descriptive statements, the talk was considered evaluative.

DESCRIPTIVE ELEMENTS SUPPORTING EVALUATIONS/PRESCRIPTIONS (Category 3): factual statements or portions of statements which specified the relevant good or bad making characteristics of the value object so that the *VALUE TERM* was or was not applicable to the *VALUE OBJECT*. [4] "The students responded to each other," "The purpose of the assignment wasn't mentioned," "All their comments were directed toward me," were examples of descriptive elements found in the videotape discourse.

CRITERIAL ELEMENTS SUPPORTING EVALUATIONS/PRESCRIPTIONS (Category 4): statements which contain rules, standards or generalizations which support evaluations. For example, "Role-playing is a good method,uh, it makes students take and understand other people's points of view" is one criterial statement. Another is "Spaced practise results in greater learning than massed practise."

RELATIONAL ELEMENTS SUPPORTING EVALUATIONS/PRESCRIPTIONS (Category 5): statements or portions of statements which provide additional information used to support or refute some rating. Statements citing authorities or containing analogies which support evaluations were classified here.

TANGENTIAL ELEMENTS UNRELATED TO EVALUATIONS/PRESCRIPTIONS (Category 6): statements or portions of statements whose content was relevant to the value object but not directly relevant to the rating under discussion were grouped here.

The following categories were added to Smith's [12] :

PROCEDURAL ELEMENTS (Category 7.1): statements which related to how the conference was to be conducted.

PERSONAL PREFERENCES SUPPORTING EVALUATIONS/PRESCRIPTIONS (Category 7.2): "I liked it" and "This method just doesn't suit me" are examples of of personal preference elements.

INAUDIBLE (Category 8)

PRESCRIPTIONS (Category 9): suggestions or opinions or hints for future behavior. Categories 1 and 9 were analogous since the support for either is contained in categories 3, 4, 5 and 7.2. (A statement could not be classified in both categories 1 and 9.)

II. The *TOPICS* of evaluations and prescriptions were recorded in order to see what topics supervisors in conferences with pre-service teachers emphasized. Eight categories derived from a content analysis were used; these categories are:

1. Objectives and Goals
2. Content
3. Methods (including references to lesson organization and time allocations)
4. Instructional Materials
5. Instructional Interactions (including references to teacher questions)
6. Non-verbal Behaviors
7. Lesson-general (Statements like "How did the lesson go?" signal this category.)
8. Other (a large number of topics classified here were personal behaviors, as in "You really did a great job today," and "My heart wasn't in it today.")

III. The valence of evaluations and supporting elements were observed and recorded. The three valence categories were *positive*, "This lesson was good," *negative* , "This method is not useful in my field," and *neutral*, "There were both good and bad parts to your handling of the discussion."

IV. Modified Bales units [16] were used to obtain estimates of the proportion of time devoted to each of the evaluative elements.

V. The speaker, the supervisor or teacher, of each element was noted and recorded.

VI. The frequency with which the four sources of available feedback preceded evaluative ventures was noted and recorded. The sources were videotaped playback, student evaluations forms, supervisor perceptions and teacher perceptions.

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

NUMBER OF EVALUATIONS PER CONFERENCE: The average number of topics evaluated/prescribed in thirty-seven ten-minute conferences was 8.2. The average number of topics evaluated in fourteen thirty-minute conferences was 9.8.

NUMBER OF EVALUATIVE ELEMENTS PER TOPIC: The average number of evaluative elements per topic in thirty-seven ten-minute conferences was 6.9. The average number of evaluative elements per topic in the fourteen thirty-minute conferences was 6.6.

COMPARISON OF TEN AND THIRTY-MINUTE CONFERENCES:
AMOUNT OF EVALUATIVE DISCOURSE

	# of topics	# of elements	average # of topics evaluated per conference	average # of evaluative elements per topic
37 10-minute conferences	306	2091	8.2	6.9
14 30-minute conferences	142	946	10.1	6.6

DISTRIBUTION OF TOPICS: The topics of evalution were distributed as follows.

DISTRIBUTION OF 436 TOPICS
IDENTIFIED IN FIFTY CONFERENCES

Objectives and Goals	2.5%
Content	9.6%
Methods	16.0%
Materials	2.0%
Instructional Interactions	28.8%
Non-verbal Behavior	5.5%
General (The Lesson)	23.8%
Other	11.4%

DISTRIBUTION OF TOPICS BY SUPERVISOR: The topics of evaluation, grouped by supervisor, were distributed as follows:

	SUPERVISORS			
	A	B	C	D
Number of Topics	168	112	113	43
Objectives and Goals	.5%	4.4%	3.5%	2.3%
Content	4.1%	9.8%	17.6%	9.3%
Methods	22.0%	12.5%	12.3%	11.6%
Materials	3.5%	.8%	.8%	2.3%
Instructional Interactions	30.9%	25.0%	32.7%	20.9%
Non-verbal Behavior	6.5%	4.4%	2.6%	11.6%
General (The Lesson)	19.6%	22.3%	29.2%	30.2%
Other	12.5%	20.5%	.8%	11.6%

FEEDBACK SOURCES: Videotaped lesson playback immediately preceded one-fourth (25%) of all explicit evaluations; the reading of pupil evaluation forms by teachers or supervisors immediately preceded 8.2% of all explicit evaluations.

It was noted that 7.3% of all conferences began with evaluations and 5.1% ended with summary evaluations. An unstructured inspection of conference discourse indicated that other evaluations often were triggered by verbal or aural stimuli. That is, a supervisor or teacher spoke a word or phrase and a short time later, an evaluation of some aspect related to the word or phrase occurred. Supervisors initiated 45% of all evaluations and teachers 7.3%.

DESCRIPTION OF EVALUATIVE ELEMENTS: The des
based upon the following data:

Evaluative Elements

# of Topics Evaluated	436
# of Evaluative Elements Identified in 436 Topics	3017

Evaluative Elements Reported by Speakers

	% of All Elements	# of All Elements
Elements Spoken By Supervisors	65%	1972
Elements Spoken By Teachers	35%	1045

Percent of Elements Supporting Evaluations: Only certain categories of elements support evaluative discourse. These categories are: Descriptive (category 2); Criterial (category 4); Relational (Category 5), Personal Preference (Category 7.2). Thirty-six percent (36%) of all moves were supportive.

Elements Supporting Evaluative Discourse: By Speaker: One-third of all supervisory elements of discourse supported evaluations. Forty percent of all teacher elements of discourse supported evaluations. There were about the same number of modified Bales units in supervisors' (2.5) and teachers' (2.29) supporting elements. In other words, teacher used a greater proportion of their elements to support evaluation than did supervisors.

Elements Supporting Evaluation: Elements supporting evaluations were distributed as follows:

	% of All Elements	# of Elements
Descriptive Elements (Category 2)	25.3%	763
Criterial Elements (Category 4)	1.0%	29
Relational Elements (Category 5)	7.0%	212
Personal Preference Elements (Category 7.2)	2.2%	67

In category 5, Relational, the majority of elements (200) consisted of supervisors or teachers reading from student comment forms. Few elements in categories 4 and 7.2 were found. Usually descriptive comments and pupil evaluations supported explicit evaluative discourse. An original goal of the survey was to examine the completeness of support offered for evaluations. Completeness was defined as the presence of a variety of categories of evaluative support. After the data were tabulated, it was evident that the descriptive element was primarily used. Therefore, no further observations were made concerning the completeness of support for evaluations.

Prescriptive Elements: Prescriptions (category 9) were distributed as follows:

	Supervisors		Teachers	
	% of all elements	# of elements	% of all elements	# of elements
Declarative Talk	1.2%	37	5.9%	181
Interrogative Talk	3.9%	119	8.5%	259

Remaining Elements: The remaining elements were distributed as follows:

ELEMENTS	%	#
Identification-Rating Elements (	11.2%	339
Declarative Talk	7.2%	218
Interrogative Talk	4.0%	121
Rating Elements (Category 3)	6.2%	193
Declarative Talk	5.8%	178
Interrogative Talk	.4%	15
Tangential Elements (Category 6)	11.7%	355
Procedural Elements (Category 7.1)	5.2%	159
Prescriptive Elements (Category 9)	19.7%	596
Declarative Form	7.2%	218
Interrogative Form	12.5%	378
Unclear (Category 8)	4.0%	117

The remaining elements (less than 7%) consisted of interrogative forms or repetitions of elements 2, 4, 5.

Positive or Negative Valence of Ratings:

For Supervisors - About four-fifths (82%) of all supervisory topic identification and rating discourse (category 1) was positive. Supervisors made few additional ratings (category 3) and most of these were positive. About one-fifth (17%) of all supervisory topic identification and rating discourse (category 1) was negative. The remaining supervisor rating discourse was neutral or the direction of the valence was unclear.

Individual supervisory variations were evident. One of the four supervisors made about half the average number of

identification-ratings (categories 1 + 3), fewer positive (67%) and more negative (31%) ratings than the other supervisors.
For Teachers - Approximately two-thirds (60%) of all teacher topic identification and rating discourse (categories 1 + 3) was positive and one-third negative.

ive or Negativ g Evidence

always possible to identify the direction of the valen supporting evidence. For those supporting elements where a direction was evident, the following observations were made: when a positive rating (categories 1 + 3) was made, the preponderance of evidence supported the rating. When a negative rating was made, conflicting evidence (some of which supported the rating and some of which denied it) was given.

DISCUSSION OF SURVEY RESULTS

Conference Length: Conferences were scheduled for either ten-minutes or for thirty minutes, depending upon the length of the lesson taught; longer conferences followed thirty-minute lessons. Longer conferences did not proportionally increase the amount of explicit evaluative discourse. Since shorter conferences resulted in roughly the same amount of evaluation, unless other factors point to the use of longer sessions, conferences could be shortened. Supervisors would have time for more conference sessions.

Percent Distribution of Topics of Evaluation: *Instructional interactions* (28.8%) and *the lesson* (23.8%) were topics most commonly evaluated. The emphasis on *instructional interactions* is paralleled in Weller's survey [16] and reflects the beginning teachers' concerns with the way students did or did not react and "fit in" with teachers' plans. Such emphasis also may indicate supervisory concerns for whether or not intended student learning occurred as a result of instruction.

In evaluative discourse, there is a lack of emphasis on

objectives and goals. (2.5%) This lack, also reported by Weller [16] is disturbing. (For example, a ten-minute lesson On "How to fold a letter and put it in an envelope," taught to college freshmen, was not evaluated in relation to lesson objectives.)

There was a relative lack of emphasis on *lesson content* (9.6%) for two reasons: Teaching Technique Laboratory assignments emphasize techniques, methods and [illegible]ies; supervisors and teachers do not often have common content backgrounds. Supervisor C, whose conferences stressed content more than other supervisors', had several conferences with a teacher who shared his major field of study.

The high percentage of global *the lesson* evaluations (23.8%) may reflect a combination of two factors. One is the supervisors' attempts to encourage teachers to evaluate their own lessons. A non-directional open call for evaluation, as in "How was the lesson?" or "What did you think of the lesson?" are examples of supervisory questions which elicit teacher evaluation. A second factor may be the undifferentiated perceptions of novice teachers who are just learning to analyze instruction and who do not easily recognize relationships among teaching variables. The combinations of the two factors results in an absence of evaluative focus.

Evaluation of *non-verbal behaviors* (5.5%) occurred with more frequency than, for example, evaluation of objectives and goals. Non-verbal behaviors, as a topic for evaluation, may be fostered by the video-tape medium.

Evaluative refereces to teachers' personal behaviors, as in "Your style was just great today, Vicky," were classified in the *other* category. More than ten percent of the evaluative topics were classified here. Some of the evaluations whose topics were classified as other were expressions of annoyance or exasperation; some were defensive teacher reactions to negative evaluations; some reflected an individual supervisor's characteristic verbal mode of expression.

Feedback Sources: *Videotaped lesson playback* preceded evaluative discourse one out of four times. *Student reaction forms* (written

student observations and evaluations) preceded roughly one-tenth of all evaluations. Over six percent of all support for evaluations came from the student written remarks. How much videotape or student feedback is sufficient for evaluations depends upon the situation and people involved.

Two possible misuses of feedback sources were noted. One was that long periods of time were spent silently watching the videotape in thirty-minute conferences. Neither evaluation nor focusing occurred. The literature on the use of videotape feedback in teacher education is almost unanimous in support of the necessity for focus.[7] The second observation was that supervisors and teachers would begin by using student comments to support specific evaluations, but then lose the initial evaluative thrust of the discussion and simply read all student comments. Again, focus was lacking.

Supervisors, another source of evaluative feedback to the teacher, initiated evaluation four times as often as teachers. Forty-five percent of all evaluation was preceded by supervisor commentary. It seems clear that supervisors will have to try different strategies if one of their goals, encouraging teachers to become self-evaluative, will be met.

Distribution of Evaluative Elements: Over two-fifths of all elements were evaluations and ratings (categories 1 and 3); a smaller percentage of these elements which are essential to the evaluative process is unlikely. One-fifth of the elements were tangential and did not contribute to evaluative discourse. Sixty percent of all elements were accounted for in these three categories. Another 5.5% of the discourse was uncodable or repetitious. Therefore, only slightly more than one-third of all elements could support evaluations.

Distribution of Support for Evaluations: Almost all of the support was descriptive (category 2) citing the relevant good or bad-making characteristics of the topic of evaluation. For example, in the evaluation, "The lesson was good," some of the following relevant supporting description might be cited --

"the teacher seemed relaxed;" "the students were responsive;" "the examples were interesting."

Only one percent of the supporting discourse gave criteria (category 4), rules or standards underlying value judgments and underlying descriptive statements. For example, the supervisor might have said that the lesson was good because the relevant concepts were defined and illustrated through the use of examples and non-examples. Because rules and standards help teachers generalize from one situation to another, their absence as support for evaluative statements is disturbing. The question of why supervisors don't use criterial statements needs to be answered. Do supervisors not know relevant educational generalizations, rules and other criteria? Do supervisors believe educational criteria to be unsupported by evidence? Do supervisors believe criterial statements ineffective or inappropriate in conference settings? Once the questions are answered, it should be possible to show supervisors the need for effective use of criterial statements.

Prescriptions: Supervisor prescriptions accounted for about one-tenth of all categorized supervisor elements. An additional 13% of supervisors' prescriptions requested suggestions from teachers. Since prescriptions often involved supervisors and teachers in discussions of what could have been done better, or what could be done in the future or in hypothetical situations, and why, entries in this category indicate that the supervisors and teachers were engaged in some problem-solving. In addition, teachers saw supervisors as a source of information and supervisors gave information to teachers.

By asking for prescriptions, supervisors provided opportunities for teachers to practise problem-solving; teachers did so only thirteen percent of the time they were asked to. Why teachers did not attempt to respond more often is an interesting question. It may be that a teacher wasn't particularly interested in the topic of evaluation or did not agree that a change was desirable.

It may be that the supervisor did not wait for the teacher to answer or that the teacher simply did not have have a prescription to offer.

Valence of Ratings: Of two-hundred forty-four explicit evaluative ratings three-fourths were positive. There were more positive ratings (95) from teachers than from supervisors (36). Since supervisors talked twice as much as teachers, the difference stands out.

The relative absence of negative evaluation seemed to reflect the supervisors' attempts to establish positive rapport with teachers and supervisors' attempts to avoid making the conferences unpleasant for the teachers. However, supervisors were communicating negative evaluations in their non-verbal behavior--by turning away from the teacher, by reading during the teacher's talk, by repeatedly bringing up the same topic for evaluation. Since attitudes are readily communicated by non-verbal behaviors, teachers must have received the supervisor's negative messages. The conflicting verbal and non-verbal evaluations may create doubts in the mind of the teacher. Furthermore, neither reasons for the evaluations nor rational justifications accompany the non-verbal evaluations. As a result, the teacher may lose confidence in him/herself and in the supervisor. And the supervisor has passed up an opportunity to provide positive assistance to the teacher.

Using Conference Data Concerning Evaluative Discourse As Feedback to Individual Supervisors: Supervisors work unsupervised unless they are in a training program. Increased supervisory effectiveness depends largely upon the ability of individual supervisors to evaluate their own work. Using the survey approach, can the individual supervisor find out anything important about his/her evaluative conference behavior? The following observations were made of the evaluative discourse of one supervisor-teacher pair randomly selected as a test case:

a. Number of evaluative statements: This supervisor-teacher pair made fewer evaluative statements than did other

same supervisor-different teacher pairs.

b. Support for evaluations: The teacher offered less support for evaluations wh[illegible] wi[illegible] [illegible] ject [illegible] conferred.

c. Tangential Discourse: More tangential discourse occurred in the conferences with this teacher than in other same-supervisor-different teacher conferences.

d. Negative evaluations: Both supervisor and teacher made more negative evaluations in this conference series than in other same supervisor-different teacher conferences.

e. There are about one-third fewer supervisor requests for prescriptions in this conference series than in other same supervisor-different teacher conferences.

If it were possible, we would like to suggest to this supervisor and teacher that they try to figure out why the conference data was different and if the differences were meaningful. Were the lessons so bad that both supervisor and teacher tacitly agreed to avoid evaluative discussion? Or was the teacher so self-deprecating that analysis was painful? Or were the lessons so good and the teacher so capable of analysis that more evaluation was not necessary? Reflection of this kind may lead to additional insight about the supervisor's reactions to a particular teacher, or given subject matter or a particular kind of teaching weakness or strength. For example some supervisors ignore the emotional states of teachers; some supervisor-teacher pairs behaviors seem guided more by traditional male-female relationships than by the observed lesson; some supervisors are more exacting of teachers who share their subject area field. Thus an individual supervisor can use information about evaluative discourse to see if his/her actions reflect his/her intentions and as a data base for self-improvement.

CONCLUSION

A survey of evaluative discourse in supervisory-teacher microteaching conferences was reported in this paper. The observations indicated that:

1. In the Teaching Techniques Laboratory, videotaped playback and student evaluation forms were used both as stimuli and as support for evaluations. Sometimes, the two feedback sources were used without evident purpose. It might be worthwhile to ask the teachers a) if they were satisfied, and b) why/why not they were satisfied with the use of videotapes and student evaluations. Student responses to these questions would provide information that supervisors could use to maximize the effectiveness of the feedback.

2. Ten-minute and thirty minute conferences were observed. In the thirty-minute conferences, little additional evaluation and more unfocused use of videotape feedback occurred; the good effects of the longer conferences should be documented to see if their use is warranted.

3. Supervisors involved teachers in lesson evaluation. Supervisors encouraged teachers to engage in problem-solving. However, the teacher did not always respond.

4. Supervisors evidently found it difficult to provide well-rounded evaluations, evaluations which pointed out both the strengths and weaknesses of whatever was being evaluated. Explicit evaluations were usually positive; however, non-explicit negative supervisor evaluations, communicated through non-verbal and para-linguistic channels, were observed.

5. Supervisory-teacher evaluative talk was characterized by a narrow range of evaluated topics, restricted kinds of support for evaluations and a lack of cohesive evaluative focus.

Supervisor training programs might consider offering supervisors practise in

1. providing educationally sound reasons to support evaluations and suggestions;
2. explicitly communicating both positive and negative evaluations without making the experience painful for the teacher;
3. establishing cohesive evaluative focus.

Finally, the paper showed how observations about evaluative discourse could be organized and reported back to individual supervisors. Supervisors, using the observations, can carry out the self-analysis and evaluation necessary to responsive supervision.

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