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Facilitating Taiwanese Elementary School English Student Teachers' Learning Through Text-Based Protocols

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Abstract: This study used online responses, observation fieldnotes, and interviews to analyze eight student teachers' learning through text-based protocols on news analysis during their practicum, a core component for beginning teachers' competence construction, in a language teacher education program in the northwest of Taiwan. This study revealed that student teachers regarded the text-based protocols as useful pedagogical tools, particularly offering a clear focus on reading and analyzing the news. Through face-to-face and Facebook discussions on 33 news reports, student teachers became familiar with the latest policies and trends on English education, constructed their pedagogical competence in English instructional strategies, and examined the gap between policies and practice on the co-teaching model. Suggestions on effective implementation of the text-based protocols on discussing education news are provided in terms of preparation of a variety of news or issues, selection of the appropriate text-based protocols, and integration of theories on news analysis and discussions.

Key words: news analysis, practicum, student teachers, text-based protocols

Introduction

Practicum is considered one of the crucial components of language teacher training programs for pre-service teachers, particularly due to the impact on their future career (Gan, 2013; Riesky, 2013). The actual field experience offered in the practicum facilitates student teachers' identity construction from aspiring to become language teachers to actually being language teachers (Kanno & Stuart, 2011).

One of the anxieties that EFL (English as a foreign language) student teachers face is the lack of knowledge of linguistics and education (Agustiana, 2015). Student teachers in Taiwan are required to be familiar with updated educational news and issues in order to develop their expertise and competence during their practicum (Ministry of Education, 2018). Hence, they must be abreast of current educational policies and practices (Zhan, 2008). However, student teachers are not aware of the latest policies on language education or the educational context of their practicum, nor can they discuss educational issues critically or in depth.

Protocols used during teachers' professional dialogue can foster teachers' deeper discussions, elicit higher levels of thinking, and increase interaction (Ehrlich, et al., 2013). Protocol-based conversations are regarded as "powerful evidence-based conversations" (p. 29), according to Earl and Timperley (2009), because teachers can use relevant data to structure their talk about teaching and learning in order to promote deeper understanding in a

mutually respectful environment (Little & Curry, 2009).

Moving beyond using protocols only in face-to-face teachers' learning community or professional dialogue, text-based protocols, such as the Four A's Text Protocol, were integrated into a practicum as blended learning (face and online) to lead eight student teachers to discuss 33 online English educational news in order to facilitate their learning and construct their competence in English instruction. This study discusses the following three issues. First, what were participants' attitudes toward the integration of the text-based protocols into the practicum? Secondly, what learning did the participants gain from the integration of the text-based protocols into the practicum? Finally, what challenges occurred when the text-based protocols were implemented in the practicum? Suggestions for effective implementation of the text-based protocols for discussing education news were provided.

Literature Review
Types of Text-Based Protocols

Protocols are structures that are widely used by educators to explore and discuss ideas deeply through texts related to education, problems or issues that occur among the educators (Easton, 2009a, 2009b; Fahey & Ippolito, 2014). Before using the protocols to discuss classroom practice and student work, Glaude (2011) highly recommends that protocols are used around the reading assignments, because they are less threatening.

The use of the text-based protocols among teacher educators involves analyzing features of the texts (McDonald et al., 2003). Different types of text-based protocols have been developed, such as Text Rendering, The Final Say, Four A's Text, or Three Levels of Text (Easton, 2009b; Glaude, 2011; McDonald et al., 2003; National School Reform Faculty, 2015). McDonald et al. (2003) consider the text-based protocols as a "semiotic approach," as "the practice of textual analysis common in literary, media, and cultural studies" (p. 7). Take the Four A's Text protocol as an example. Four major questions were asked: "What Assumptions does the author of the text hold?"; "What do you Agree with in the text?"; "What do you want to Argue with in the text?"; "What parts of the text do you Aspire to?" (National School Reform Faculty, 2015).

Use of Protocols in Teacher Education

Scholars have identified the merits of using protocols for constructing teacher educators' competence (e.g., Curry, 2008). First, protocols deepen the discourse (Bondy & Williamson, 2009; Easton, 2005; Fahey & Ippolito, 2014; Slavit & Nelson, 2009). The Text-Rendering Experience and Four A's Text protocols were used in five elementary school English teachers' learning communities in Taiwan in Chien and Teo (2022) study. The protocols led the teachers to gain content and pedagogical content knowledge, particularly in differentiated instruction.

In addition, protocols promote inquiry (Bondy & Williamson, 2009; Easton, 2005; Fahey & Ippolito, 2014; Levine & Marcus, 2010; Rasmussen et a., 2018; Slavit & Nelson, 2009). Members of the critical friends group (CFG) in Revere High School in Curry's (2008) study engaged in protocol-guided conversations. Protocols facilitated these teachers to critically explore teaching and learning issues through the examination of artifacts used in their classroom practice. Hence, protocol-guided discussions lead teachers to inquire and become constructors of knowledge (Fairbanks & La Grone, 2006; Levine, 2010).

Moreover, protocols create the equal amount of time for teachers to participate in

professional dialogue (Nelson et a., 2008). The text-based protocols, such as Turning Protocol, were employed among teacher candidates in their early childhood practicum in Norman et al's. (2005) study. Participants appreciated the equal amount of time in thinking and talking instead of one teacher candidate dominating the time and discussion.

Similarly, four student teachers and their cooperating teachers in Munarriz-Diaz and Castañeda's (2013) study used the Three Levels of Text protocol to discuss the articles on communities of practice. The analysis of meeting artifacts, interviews, surveys, and observation fieldnotes concluded that participants held positive attitudes toward the protocol, because protocols helped them explain the texts and discuss the implications for their future practice.

Literature Gap and Conceptual Framework

Different types of protocols are widely used in English instruction in reading (e.g., Karizak & Khojasteh, 2016) or writing (Arndt, 1987; Chen & Hu, 2007). Protocols are also used in different disciplines for class discussions (e.g., Chandler & Ehrlich, 2016). However, few studies have explored the influence of protocols in language teacher education programs among pre-service teachers (e.g., Munarriz-Diaz & Castañeda, 2013; Norman et al., 2005), in-service teachers (e.g., Author; Curry, 2008; Little & Curry, 2009; Levine & Marcus, 2010; McLeod, 2015), or teacher leaders (Nelson et al., 2008).

Moreover, most protocol-based dialogues or conversations conducted among pre- and in-service teachers are mainly face to face (e.g., Curry, 2008; Little & Curry, 2009). Protocols can be used to foster meaningful dialogue and improve discussions in both online and face-to-face courses (Ehrlich et al., 2013). Hence, this study integrated text-based protocols into the practicum in both face-to-face and online (Facebook).

The conceptual framework in Figure 1 was developed based on empirical studies (e.g., Earl & Timperley, 2009; Levine & Marcus, 2010; Munarriz-Diaz & Castañeda, 2013). The text-based protocols and news reports as the content served as pedagogical tools. The content might vary each month, since participants chose different news reports related to English education. Through the blended learning process of face-to-face and online Facebook discussions, protocols are used to facilitate participants to associate with various teaching approaches and theories through discussing English instruction.
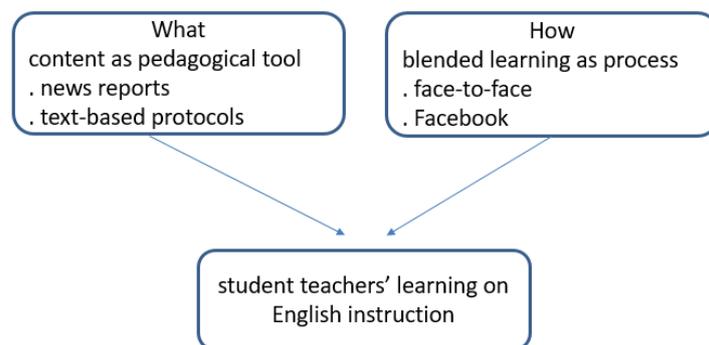
Note: Adopted based on Earl & Timperley (2009), Levine & Marcus (2010) and Munarriz-Diaz & Castañeda (2013)

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Method

A qualitative case study method was employed in this study, because Merriam (2009) defines case as "a phenomenon that is inherently bounded, with a finite amount of time for data collection or a limited number of people who could be interviewed or observed" (p. 27). In this study, the practicum was the bounded system, and the multiple data collection included interviews, online responses, and observation fieldnotes.

Participants and Setting

Participants consisted of eight student teachers from a language teacher education program in northwest Taiwan. Eight student teachers were enrolled in the "Teaching Practicum" course as part of their graduation requirement for one semester of six months and the researcher was their practicum supervisor. The researcher explained the design of this study to participants at the beginning of the semester. They voluntarily participated in the study and signed the consent forms. All the participants were female and pseudonyms are used throughout the paper to protect the anonymity of the participants.

Data Collection

Data in this study included online responses to the text-based protocols, observation fieldnotes, and interviews. First, every month before participants attended the meetings held by the language teacher program, they chose online local news reports related to English instruction and wrote their responses to the text-based protocols based on the procedure in Table 1 on the Facebook page created by the researcher, their practicum supervisor. During the face-to-face monthly meetings, participants read aloud their online posts and others either responded orally or typed in comments on Facebook. The researcher observed the participants' sharing and discussions and took fieldnotes. After each participant shared her post, the supervisor led the debriefing by asking the participants questions, such as "What important points came out in the discussion in each quad?" The researcher also took notes of the debriefings.

| Months	Protocols	Procedures
08	Three Levels of Text Protocol	LEVEL 1: Read aloud the news report that you selected LEVEL 2: Say what you think about this news report. LEVEL 3: Say what you see as the implications for your work.
09	Provocative Prompts	Step 1: Read the news reports on a policy. Think how this policy would "fly" in your school. Step 2: What do you think would "fly?" Step 3: What do you think would not "fly? Step 4: What questions do you have about this policy statements?
10	Four A's Text Protocol	What Assumptions does the author of the text hold? What do you want to Argue with in the text? What do you Agree with in the text? What parts of the text do you Aspire to?
11	Text Rendering Protocol	Step 1: Share a sentence from the news report that you feel is particularly significant Step 2: Share a phrase from the news report that you feel is particularly significant. Step 3: Share a word from the news report that you feel is

12	Supporting Evidence	particularly significant.
		Step 4: Shares the words that emerged and any new insights about the news report.
		Based on the news reports, what made this event or policy successful?
		Identify the following two elements:
		Key to success….
		Supporting Evidence

Table 1: Protocols and Procedures

The semi-structured interview protocol was developed based on empirical studies (e.g., Levine & Marcus, 2010; Munarriz-Diaz & Castañeda, 2013) as in Appendix I. The semi-structured interview was conducted among eight participants to obtain detailed descriptions of their learning from (question 1), challenges (question 2), and attitude toward (question 3) of using text-based protocols in their practicum. A sample question "How do you feel about using this particular protocol passage rather than simply expressing your opinions related to the news report?" was used to discover participants' attitude toward using text-based protocols on news analysis. At the end of the practicum, participants were interviewed, and each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes. All the interviews were recorded, transcribed verbatim, and later further translated into English in their entirety.

Data Analysis

The interviews and observations were transcribed. Thematic analysis was carried out throughout this study as in Figure 2. First, the initial analysis of the data involved reading, re-reading, and annotating the transcripts with comments and specific descriptive phrases (e.g. structure, bilingual, busy). These open codes were subsequently clustered into broader ideational categories (e.g. clear focus, policies and trends, time). Finally, these categories were grouped into major themes based on the theoretical framework and the research questions (attitude, learning, challenges).
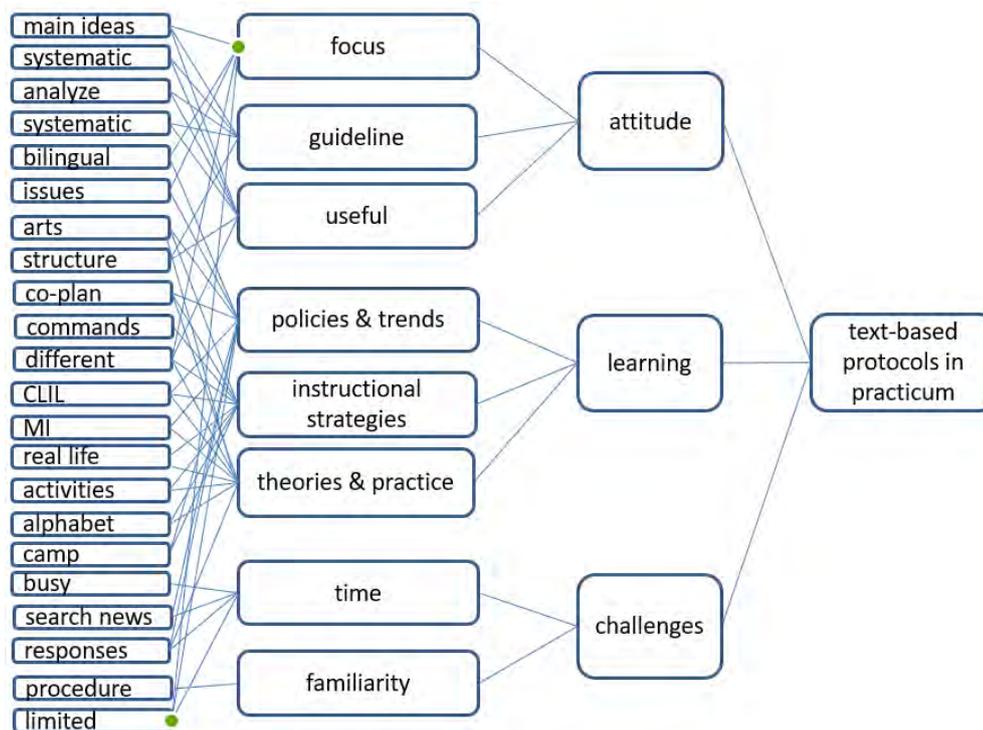
Figure 2: Data Analysis

To establish credibility, online responses to the text-based protocols, observation fieldnotes, and interviews were triangulated. Moreover, member checking was conducted by sending back the tentative interpretations to the participants to see if they were accurate. Peer review was enacted by discussing with two colleagues in the field of language teacher education with regard the congruency of emerging findings with the data and tentative interpretations.

Results

Based on the conceptual framework, the analysis of the online responses to the text-based protocols, observation fieldnotes, and interviews are discussed in terms of participants' attitude toward, learning through, and challenges to implementing text-based protocols in news discussions.

Participants' Attitude Toward Text-Based Protocols in News Discussions

Participants held a positive attitude toward the text-based protocols in news discussions and regarded these protocols as "offering a clear focus on reading news," "guidance on analyzing the news," and "useful in analyzing the news from different perspectives." Rourou said in the interview, "The protocols enabled me to focus on the news and strengths and weaknesses of the policies." Huihui said, "At first, I did not know how to analyze the news. I even did not know the main ideas of the news and focus for the discussion. The protocols led me to focus on major issues for discussion."

First, protocols are useful in creating focus and substantive dialogue and establishing a culture of joint inquiry among teachers (Norman et al., 2005). Protocols provide a certain degree of focus for discussions, so teachers can go beyond "just talking" (Little & Curry,

2009; McDonald et al., 2003; Nelson et al., 2008).

Under level 1 of the Three Levels of Text protocol, participants were asked to read aloud the news report that they selected. For level 2, they were asked to write what they thought about this news report. For level 3, they were asked to share what they saw as the implications for their work. Online post 1 revealed what Huihui wrote for the news report on Taiwan as a bilingual country. For level 2, she interpreted this news on a bilingual country as "English teachers' willingness (competence)" and "native English-speaking teachers." For level 3, she came up with the implications "co-plan" and "co-teach" as the solutions for English teachers' willingness and competence to implement the immersion education program.

Online post 1: Huihui (0801)
Level 2: For implementing bilingual country and immersion education, two issues: English teachers' willingness (competence) and recruitment of native English-speaking teachers.
Level 3: English teachers can co-plan and co-teach with other content teachers, particularly in physical education, health, or arts.

Hence, text-based protocols provide intentional focus for student teachers to read, analyze, and discuss issues related to English education. The intended focus of collaborative learning influences student teachers' learning through digging into aspects of instructional practice and guiding them into explicit sharing (Levine & Marcus, 2010; Nelson et al., 2008).

Moreover, the text-based protocols were considered as the guidance for participants to analyze the news; as Yunyun replied in the interview, "The protocols as the guidance helped me read the news systematically and structurally." Yiyi added, "After reading the news, I immediately knew how to answer the questions, such as How to fly it (referring how to be used)." Under the provocative prompts, participants were asked to read the news reports on a policy and think how this policy would fly, in their school. As revealed in online post 2, Yiyi thought classroom English or language for learning such as commands can be "the fly" as the start for bilingual education.

Online post 2: Yiyi (0901)
According to the policy of bilingual education, I think we can start by using English to teach subjects who need lots of commands and directions, such as music, arts, PE, and computer study, or integrating English learning into school-based curricula to create a rich English-language environment.

Participants in this study chose the news they were interested in and used the protocols to guide them to analyze the news and implications. Such findings of this study were in congruence with previous empirical studies (e.g., Levine & Marcus, 2010; Nelson et al., 2008) that protocols are used as the guiding tools in teachers' learning communities. Individual teachers can choose the content and the degree of detail they intend to share. Protocols lead teachers to explore the specific aspects of educational issues that they are interested about.

Thirdly, the text-based protocols also led the participants to analyze the news from different perspectives. Wanwan declared, "In the past, I read the news and I responded only from my side. Now the protocols, particularly Provocative Prompts, enabled me to read the news from different perspectives "fly" and "not fly" and the implications of the policies." Tingting commented, "I particularly like the Four A's Text Protocol. The four A's, including assumption, argue, agree, and aspire, led me to analyze the news from four angles." This finding was consistent with Munarriz-Diaz and Castañeda's (2013) study that text-based protocols enable four student teachers and their supervising teachers to have different perspectives, opinions, and experiences to share during their internship.

Online post 3 revealed Tingting's four perspectives on an English immersion program.

She first summarized the news report in the "Assumption" as "An English immersion program that integrates English with other learning areas, like arts and science, is a good way to encourage students to use English with authentic purposes." She explained why she agreed with an immersion program as "Only when the learning content is meaningful and useful will students be motivated to learn." She later provided four challenges as her Argument in terms of teachers' workloads, types of assessments, and negotiation with parents. Finally, she offered implications on the integration of multiple intelligences into the immersion program as her Aspire.

Online post 3: Tingting (1001)
Assumption: An English immersion program that integrates English with other learning areas, like arts and science, is a good way to encourage students to use English with authentic purposes.
Agree: I agree with the idea of changing the order of units based on months or seasons to make the learning content related to students' real life. Only when the learning content is meaningful and useful will students be motivated to learn…
Argue: In reality, changing the order of instructional units may meet several challenges. First, the workload of teachers will increase because they have to work with teachers in other learning areas to develop an English immersion program. Without the bonus, teachers may feel reluctant to make this kind of change. Second, as the instructional method changes, the way to evaluate students' learning outcomes should also be adjusted. Third, teachers should help parents understand the teaching belief behind the program and win their approval, or the implementation of the program will encounter lots of difficulties.
Aspire: According to Gardner, people possess eight types of intelligence: verbal, mathematical, visual, naturalistic, musical, kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. Each person may be strong in different areas. In the English immersion program, students who are not good at English get the chance to show themselves via other channels. For example, students who are good at drawing can get a sense of achievement in English class even though they are not proficient in English.

The text-based protocols are recommended to be used in teacher education programs, such as in online post 2, because protocols offer explicit structures for discussions. Teachers as learners are encouraged to use critical thinking and different perspectives through protocols. Protocols for discussions improve the depth of teachers' understanding and reflections that occur during the conversations (Chandler & Ehrlich, 2016; Nelson et al., 2008).

However, of all the 40 online posts, only one educational (Gardner's multiple intelligence in online post 3) and two English educational theories (definitions of CLIL, content language integrated learning, and theme-based instruction) were employed by the participants for news analysis. Theories comprise the heart of science and are constructed to explain the teaching and learning phenomena (Allen, 2009l Zhan, 2008). A balanced curriculum that narrows the gap between teachers' perceptions of theories and practice should be promoted in language teacher education. The protocols and guiding questions are recommended to be designed contextually to encourage student teachers to apply the theories into news analysis and discussions (McDonald et al., 2003; Ehrlich et al., 2013).

Participants' Learning Through Text-Based Protocols in News Discussions

Participants' learning through text-based protocols in news discussions was observed particularly in three areas in terms of being familiar with the latest policies and trends, constructing competence in instructional strategies, and examining the gap between policies and practice. First, with regard to the familiarity with the latest language policies, Rourou stated, "I learned the latest policies. Through reading the news posted by other student teachers, I also learned other policies in other cities and counties, too." Shushu mentioned, "Reading these news reports helped me be familiar with the educational policies in the cities where I might teach in the future."

Of all the 33 news reports used for analysis and discussions, the top topic was bilingual country or schools that English and Mandarin are used as official languages (n=12), followed by language teacher education or preparation (n=5) and CLIL. Other topics included contexts for language instruction (n=4), English camps (n=3), TELL (technological-enhanced language learning) (n=2), and NESTs (native English-speaking teachers) (n=2).

In online post 4, Shushu summarized the latest English educational policies in Hsinchu City, such as English competitions and a bilingual country. In response to the guiding prompt "Read the news reports on a policy. Think how this policy would 'fly' in your school" of the protocol "provocative prompts," Shushu further commented on the weaknesses of such initiatives due to the gap between higher and lower achievers.

Online post 4: Shushu (1101)
The Executive Yuan issued the 2030 Bilingual Country Blueprint and expected Taiwan to be a bilingual country (National Development Council, 2018). A huge gap in English education existed in remote and urban elementary schools.
Hsinchu County planned diverse English initiatives, such as whole English instruction, teachers' training on English reading instruction, lesson plan design competition, instructional coaching, and immersion camps.
Some of the students in my practicum school are chosen to be in English competitions. These will be great experiences for higher achievers. However, lower achievers need to be exposed to more reading time.

In this study, reading the news and analyzing it through text-based protocols helped student teachers become familiar with updated policies related to English education. Text-based protocols can further foster teachers' critical thinking and value-based reasoning to address problems and issues (Chandler & Ehrlich, 2016).

Excerpt 1 revealed the discussions on the latest English education policies on English activities and competition in Hsinchu County. Both Shushu and Yiyi held positive attitudes toward the initiatives to be implemented in Hsinchu County, but they thought that all learners should be exposed to rich English input, not only advanced learners.

Excerpt 1: Discussion on latest English education policies
Shushu: I like that the initiatives to be implemented in Hsinchu City are good. But English competitions or activities are designed only for advanced learners. English teachers in my practicum school spend extra time training these students. More students can benefit from school-wide English activities.
Yiyi: Thank you for posting the news about English education policies in Hsinchu County. I like that initiatives designed for learners to be exposed to rich input are good. However, all learners should be exposed to rich input through a variety of English activities. Our school has a radio program during lunch time. I think an English radio program can be broadcast on Tuesday, so all learners, particularly the first and second graders, can listen to the program.
Shushu: An English radio program during lunch time is a good idea.

Analyzing and discussing the latest news enabled student teachers in this study to be familiar with policies related to English instruction. Text-based protocols used in discussions provide student teachers with opportunities to interact with others on matters of public concern (Chandler & Ehrlich, 2016).

Moreover, text-based protocols on analyzing the news reports enabled the participants to reflect on the instructional strategies or actions that they can take. Peipei said, "In response to the news, I began to think what I can do and how I can do it. Based on the policies, I began to design new instructional strategies, activities, and content." Tingting said, "I began to think how I can carry out these policies in my school with other English teachers." Tingting, in an online post, was inspired by the news and decided to design more activities for learners to dance and draw in her English classes.

Online post 5: Tingting (1201)
The news said that five types of activities were integrated into an English camp for second through fifth graders, including speaking, dancing, singing, playing, and drawing. In my future teaching, I would like to design more activities for learners to dance and draw, but not limited to speaking, singing, and playing, so I can create a diverse learning environment for my students.

Protocols provide teachers with guiding questions about a problem that they might be experiencing. Protocols can lead teachers to focus on issues that they have not previously considered (Levine & Marcus, 2010; Nelson et al., 2008).

Excerpt 2 was a discussion on a news report related to English instructional strategies between Tingting and Huihui. Huihui agreed with Tingting's idea on limiting activities to speaking and playing. She was inspired by this news to design dancing activities in her English classes.

Excerpt 2: Discussion on English instructional strategies
Tingting: [Read aloud her online post as in online post 5]
Huihui: I agree with you. When I design activities, I focus on speaking and games or activities for playing. This news reminded me of designing activities for learners to dance. Dancing or acting out can be supported by Total Physical Response that learners learn through action.
Tingting: Yes. You are right.

Excerpt 2 shows that student teachers' online posts constructed on the procedures of text-based protocols provided them with formal opportunity for instructional talk. Use of protocols can enable teachers to structure their conversations as evidence of a broader issue of instructional practice (Little & Curry, 2009).

Furthermore, discussing and analyzing the news report enabled the participants to examine the gap between policies and realities. Yunyun claimed, "Through reading these news reports and observing the classroom practice and English activities in my practicum school, I began to realize the gap between the policies and realities." Online post 6 revealed Yunyun's doubts about the gap between the policies and realities in bilingual education. Yunyun criticized the current co-teaching model between native and non-native teachers, particularly non-native speakers serve as translators only in the language classroom.

Online post 6: Yunyun (1101)
XX Junior High School is the first experimental bilingual school in Hsinchu City. Physical education, Scouts, and home economics will be taught in English. Native and non-native English-speaking teachers co-teach these subjects. I think it is a good idea. However, in reality, in my practicum school, I did not see co-teaching between native and non-native English-speaking teachers. Most of the time, native English-speaking teachers teach the lesson and non-native English-speaking teachers just observe or do the translation. Moreover, with limited

English proficiency and vocabulary words, it is impossible to use English to teach other subjects in my practicum school.

Such finding is consistent with Levine and Marcus' (2010) study that the prompts of the protocols might lead student teachers to think about the educational policies and their implementation difficulties in a new way. Student teachers can recognize their own roles and identity rather than just describing the problem or revealing their lack of understanding. The finding is in conformity with Gan's (2013) study. The text-based protocols on news analysis can be used to lead student teachers to observe the gap between pedagogical principles and theories and practices that they have been taught in language teacher education programs. Moreover, student teachers can notice the gap between policies and practices that they experience in the cooperating schools during the practicum.

Challenges on Implementation of Text-Based Protocols in News Discussions

Two challenges emerged during the implementation of text-based protocols in news discussions regarding limited time for discussions and familiarity with the protocols. Firstly, student teachers were extremely busy during the practicum. Searching for news related to English education, reading the news reports, and using the text-based protocols to analyze the news and write their responses online took time. According to Rourou, "Being a student teacher was extremely busy. In August, the beginning of the practicum, I had more time to search for news and completed the task on time. Later, I was getting busier for my practicum. I submitted my responses after the deadline."

The student teachers were asked to meet their supervisor every month in the language teacher education program. Discussing critical incidents in their practicum schools, debriefing their practicum experience, lesson planning, or reviewing educational theories for preparing for screening tests on English teachers were on the agenda during the monthly meetings. The supervisor used the limited time to lead student teachers to use text-based protocols in news discussion. Tingting said, "We spent a lot of time brainstorming the authentic context on the lessons we were going to teach. We had limited time to discuss the news reports and the implications." Yunyun said, "We only had limited time for discussion. Sometimes we were inspired to have new instructional strategies. But due to time constraints, we had to end our discussions. It was such a pity."

Although protocols enable the discussions to have a substantive focus on talk, time allocations for such discussions and talk might be limited among student teachers in this study or other teacher educators in their professional development. Little and Curry (2009) suggest that teachers should not strictly adhere to the procedure of the protocols, but revise the various protocol phases based on the discussion.

Secondly, text-based protocols were new to participants, and they were not familiar with the protocols or terms. Wanwan shared in the interview, "It was my first time to experience using protocols for discussions. It was completely new to me. I was not sure about the procedure. I just tried to answer the guiding questions posted by my supervisor." Huihui admitted, "I was not familiar with the protocols. I even asked my supervisor about some terms, such as fly or Aspire." Training should be provided to student teachers so they become familiar with the protocols. Teacher educators should model how to facilitate the discussions with protocols and play the different roles of facilitator, timekeeper, and even process-checker (Levine & Marcus, 2010).

Discussions

Based on the conceptual framework in Figure 1, the data analysis of online responses to the text-based protocols, observation fieldnotes, and interviews reached the following conclusions. Firstly, in response to the first research question "What were participants' attitudes toward the integration of the text-based protocols into the practicum?", these eight student teachers held positive attitudes toward the news reports and text-based protocols as the content for pedagogical tools for "offering a clear focus on reading news," "guidance on analyzing the news," and "being useful in analyzing the news from different perspectives." Such benefits of protocols were in accord with empirical studies, where protocols with specific rules, procedural steps, and guidelines can be employed for group discussions. Teachers can make productive use of the protocols and contribute their ideas through evidence-based conversations (Earl & Timperley, 2009; Ehrlich et al., 2013; McDonald et al., 2003).

Protocols, particularly text-based protocols, with formal structures along with the supervisor's assistance, enable student teachers to have deeper understanding of issues related to English education and develop an inquiring habit of mind. Making good on the promise of the protocols requires explicit preparation and facilitation (Earl & Timperley, 2009; Fahey & Ippolito, 2014). Text-based protocols should be integrated into the teacher education programs to discuss educational issues for student teachers' learning and development.

Secondly, to answer the second research question "What learning did the participants gain from the integration of the text-based protocols into the practicum?" through discussing news from the blended learning process consisting of monthly face-to-face meetings and Facebook platform, student teachers were familiar with the latest policies and trends, discussed and reflected on their instructional strategies, and examined the gap between policies and practice. Protocols and other discussion prompts are regarded as useful tools for blended learning, because they help learners feel more connected, increase their interaction, and create deeper discussions. Under blended learning as a type of socialized learning practice, student teachers learn different perspectives from others and take their learning into account as systematic experimentations with different instructional practice (Fahey & Ippolito, 2014). Protocols in blended learning provide balanced facilitations between instructors and learners themselves, so learners can be provided more opportunities to engage in ownership (Ehrlich et al., 2013).

Finally, with regarding to the third research question "What challenges occurred when the text-based protocols were implemented in the practicum?" time constraints and familiarity with protocols were the major challenges faced by student teachers during the process. Such finding was in accord with McDonald et al.'s (2013). Teachers ran out of time in using protocols in their learning community due to sticking with protocols during the discussion and not familiar with the process of the protocol.

Implications

The conceptual framework in Figure 1 was used to analyze eight student teachers' learning from text-based protocols on news analysis and discussions. In order to effectively implement the text-based protocols in the blended learning along with the advisor's supervision in teacher education programs for equipping the student teachers with knowledge and competence, three issues were discussed and proposed for "content as pedagogical tool" in terms of preparation of a variety of news or issues, selection of the appropriate text-based protocols, and integration of theories on news analysis and discussions, as in Figure 3.
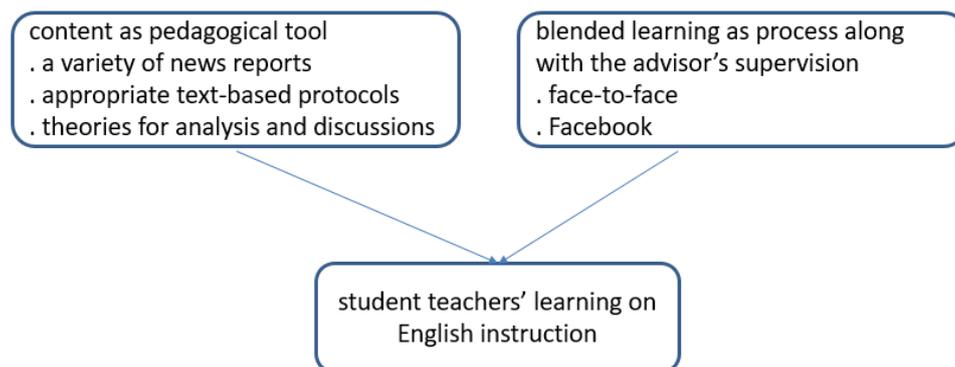
Figure 3: Effective Integration of the Text-Based Protocols into Practicum

Preparation of a Variety of News or Issues

Of all the 33 news reports used for analysis and discussions, the major issue was Taiwan's policy on the bilingual country or schools that English and Mandarin are used as official languages (36%, n=12), because it was the hottest issue in Taiwan. Choosing thought-provoking content is crucial for planning successful discussions (Chandler & Ehrlich, 2016). In addition to news on English education policies, a variety of news or issues should be prepared by student teachers or teacher educators for analysis and discussions in order to prepare student teachers to be competent English teachers. The selection of a variety of news or issues can be determined by the concerns that student teachers might have during their practicum, such as English competence, lesson and material preparation, instructional strategies, and classroom practice (Agustiana, 2015; Gan, 2013).

Selection of the Appropriate Text-Based Protocols

These student teachers used the text-based protocols to discuss news reports through blended learning of Facebook and in monthly meetings. Text-based protocols, such as the Turning Protocol, can structure learners' explorations of required readings, so they will have opportunities to engage in protocols that connect to specific assignments for practicum (Norman et al., 2005). A variety of protocols is accessible online; however, not all the protocols are suitable for discussing news reports or educational issues. Teacher educators or trainers should choose appropriate text-based protocols. Moreover, they should model and facilitate student teachers in using these text-based protocols (Nelson et al., 2008; Norman et al., 2005).

Integration of Theories on News Analysis and Discussions

Pre-service teachers value the theories that they have learned from courses in the teacher education program. However, they might easily forget and neglect the theories (Allen, 2009). Of all the 40 online posts, only three theories were employed by the participants for news analysis. Lacking knowledge about linguistics and education becomes challenging for student teachers to employ the theories and practice that they learned in the teacher education program for news analysis (Agustiana, 2005; Allen, 2009).

Hence, under the text-based protocols, student teachers can use theories on news analysis and discussion. Integration of theories on news analysis and discussion can lead

teachers to explore and evaluate issues related to English instruction and equip them with content and pedagogical knowledge (Chandler & Ehrlich, 2016).

Conclusions

This study used online responses, observation fieldnotes, and interviews to analyze eight Taiwanese student teachers' learning through text-based protocols on news analysis during their practicum. This study revealed that student teachers regarded the text-based protocols as useful pedagogical tools, particularly offering a clear focus on reading and analyzing the news. The present research has two major contributions. Firstly, the conceptual framework proposed in this study strongly implies an urgent need for teacher educators to integrate text-based protocols into teacher education programs, so student teachers can be familiar with the latest policies and trends, construct their competence on instructional strategies, and examine the gap between policies and practice. Moreover, the implication on Figure 3 contributes to the current body of literature on language teacher education and raise issues about the effective integration of text-based protocols into teacher education programs in terms of preparation of a variety of news or issues, selection of the appropriate text-based protocols, and integration of theories on news analysis and discussions.

This study has some limitations. First, it focused on the influence of text-based protocols on student teachers' learning. As long as the news chosen by the participants was related to English instruction, the researcher did not take the quality or issues of the news as texts chosen into consideration or as factors. Second, the key limitation of this qualitative case study was its limited scope and participants. The results of a single case study can illuminate the phenomenon of using text-based protocols for student teachers' learning, but researchers and practitioners could determine the relevance of this study's findings in other educational contexts.

Qualitative data (online responses, observation fieldnotes, and interviews) were used to analyze eight Taiwanese student teachers' learning through text-based protocols on news analysis during their practicum. Other instruments such as a pre-test, post-test, and delayed post-test related to English education and theories can be designed for data collection for the future study. The analysis of the test results can be used to compare and contrast student teachers' learning of English instruction and policies before and after the implementations of text-based protocols on news analysis.

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Appendix I.
Interview Protocol

I am interested in your professional learning from the text-based protocols. This interview is intended to be noninvasive and confidential. It should last approximately thirty minutes and you are free to stop the MP3 or the interview at any time.

1. What important points came out in the discussion?
2. How would this discussion have been different without going through each step of the protocol?
a. How did the use of protocols facilitate or hinder your learning?
b. How could your discussions become more effective?
c. Describe the challenges you faced when using the protocol during the discussion.
d. Describe the problems occurred during the discussion.
3. How do you feel about using this particular protocol rather than simply expressingyour opinions related to the news report?
a. Do you like the use of protocols? Why or why not?
b. Describe how you felt about using the protocols.
c. Was it easy or difficult for you to express your opinions on news report?