

Feedback in pedagogical practices: interactions between university supervisors and preservice teachers

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Abstract

Introduction: This research sought to identify the type of interventions produced between university supervisors and student teachers during feedback phase in practical training, **Objective:** To analyze how interactions can promote reflection and autonomy of teacher in training. **Method:** Methodologically framed in a case study, two supervisors and ten student teachers from a public university in Chile participated. They were examined ten transcripts of video recordings were analyzed using Heron's interpersonal relationship analysis framework for the description of feedback given by the supervisor. **Results:** The main findings account for two interventions areas in which the dialogue is centered: feedback focused on management skills and classroom procedures and predominantly directive feedback with the presence of non-directive interventions focused on giving support.

Keywords: initial teacher education, pedagogical practices, feedback, teacher supervision.

Retroalimentación en las prácticas pedagógicas: interacciones entre supervisores universitarios y profesores en formación

Resumen

Introducción: Este estudio busca identificar el tipo de intervenciones producida entre supervisores universitarios y profesores en formación durante la fase de retroalimentación en la formación práctica. **Objetivo:** Analizar cómo las interacciones pueden promover la reflexión y autonomía del profesor en formación. **Método:** Enmarcado metodológicamente en un estudio de caso, participaron dos supervisoras y diez profesoras en formación de una universidad pública en Chile. Se examinaron diez transcripciones de video-grabaciones, utilizando el marco de análisis de las relaciones interpersonales de Heron para la descripción de la retroalimentación dada por el supervisor. **Resultados:** Los principales hallazgos dan cuenta de intervenciones en las cuales se distinguen dos focos o ámbitos en los que se centra el diálogo: retroalimentación centrada en habilidades de gestión y procedimientos del aula, y relaciones de retroalimentación predominantemente directivas con presencia de intervenciones no directivas focalizadas en dar apoyo.

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Palabras clave: formación de docentes; prácticas pedagógicas; retroalimentación; supervisión de docentes.

Introduction

In initial teacher education (ITE), field experiences and reflection play a decisive role. Regardless of the prevailing training model, training institutions emphasize the figure of a scholar who directly supervises part of these experiences (Matsko et al., 2020; Taylor et al., 2014).

During this supervision, the scientific literature argues that university supervisors need to choose appropriate supervisory approaches to address the professional development needs of preservice teachers and the characteristics of supervisory situations (Glickman et al., 2014; Mette et al., 2017).

The interaction between preservice teachers and university supervisors becomes particularly important during the post-observation interview (Flushman et al., 2019). This moment usually consists of a private stage in which both supervisor and supervisee establish an asymmetrical dual relationship, where a dialogue oriented to the analysis and evaluation of their own performance prevails, in order to favor reflection in students regarding their pedagogical actions (Andreucci, 2016).

As expected, this learning stage becomes truly nurturing when interactions with the supervisor are based on a reflective dialogue in which trainees act as confident professionals activating their learning, challenging conceptions, and beliefs regarding teaching (Hudson, 2016).

In recent years, the preservice teacher-university supervisor relationship has been the focus of diverse international research (Flushman et al., 2019; Kindall et al., 2017; Shanks, 2017; Tonna et al., 2017). However, despite the acknowledgement of the crucial role of supervision in the preparation of future teachers (Wilson & Huynh, 2020) and the consensus view of the importance of feedback in their professional development (Dangel & Tanguay, 2014), previous

research in the field has tended to focus heavily on the perspective of prospective teachers giving less attention to the role of university supervisors.

In this sense, studies have focused on analyzing the perceptions of supervisors and students regarding field practice processes (Hernández Del Campo et al., 2016); the predominant supervisory styles and the relationships between beliefs and styles (Romero & Alcaíno, 2014); factors associated with reflective practice in student teachers (Salinas Espinosa et al., 2018); and characterization of feedback practices (De la Cruz, 2020). Therefore, we still know relatively little about what supervisors teach preservice teachers and how they deploy reflective processes, despite the wide use of this construct in the literature and in public policy guiding instruments.

Due to the existence of different approaches to supervision, it is relevant to distinguish between two trends. The first one is focused on the development of teaching competencies from a collaborative model (Kaneko-Marques, 2015), while the second one is focused on evaluation, generally associated with prescriptive models (Ward et al., 2011). However, in the actual coaching action, subjects may consider these approaches depending on the dimensions, senses, and attributed meanings that are generated, which affects post-observation reflection to take unplanned or unanticipated courses. Consequently, the study of these dialogical relationships requires an analytical framework that allows us to determine the perspectives tutorial action is forged in practice.

Within this context, Heron's (2001) categories of interventions constitute a framework of interpretation for interpersonal relationships, especially in terms of supervision. This approach presents six categories of analysis, dividing interventions into two groups: authoritative (prescriptive, informative, confrontational) and facilitative (cathartic, catalytic, supportive).

Randall and Thornton (2001) suggest using the categories of this model as a general framework for describing the feedback given by the supervisor, in order to understand the ways in which feedback is generated. To facilitate their identification,

these authors renamed the groups of categories as directive (authoritative) and non-directive (facilitative); furthermore, they argue that both can be positive, since they provide differentiated aid and support according to the context, time, and purposes of a given tutorial action.

Even so, a certain hierarchy is established among these categories, so that the catalytic one (as part of the non-directive ones) is seen as particularly crucial in the intervention process, since it focuses on the interventions that allow building pedagogical knowledge from the diverse experiences that occur in field practice. In this sense, Heron (2001) recognizes that the self-direction and autonomy of the preservice teacher are achieved from the dialogic relationship generated between the preservice teacher and the supervisor. That is, instead of taking a hegemonic role over the action and the observed subject, the supervisor promotes the reflective analysis from autonomy in a progressive manner and according to the trainee's level of development.

In this vein, the operationalization of the model encompasses theoretical conceptualizations of Developmental Supervision (DS) by authors such as Glickman et al. (2014) and Watkins (1995); within this approach, it is assumed that teachers operate at changing conceptual levels, skills, and effectiveness; hence, they need to be supervised in a manner consistent with their developmental needs.

Reflection: An Essential Element for Building Autonomy

In the last twenty years, the term *reflection* has become relevant in ITE programs, considering it as a resource for knowledge construction (Lit & Lotan, 2013; Sim, 2011) and professional identity (Pillen et al., 2013), which functions as a scaffolding strategy for critical thinking (Bharuthram, 2018) and the promotion of self-regulation in teachers (Priestly et al., 2013), enabling the integration of theory and practice (Zeichner & Liston, 2014).

Closely related to reflection, preservice teachers need to develop skills aimed at reviewing their beliefs about teaching and learning. In this way, they can recognize models or implicit theories inherited and applied in the teaching practice

in order to contrast them with the theoretical knowledge acquired in the training programs, giving rise to the creation of practical knowledge (Campos, 2016).

The ability to reflect on one's own practice encourages trainees to alter procedures, concepts, or decisions, and even to discard a particular construct that may have been successfully applied in one context but failed in another. Hence, it is necessary that ITE focuses on the fundamentals of teaching and prepares future teachers to learn in and from their practice, a situation in which reflection plays a fundamental role.

In this process of learning to reflect, controversy arises about the role of the supervisor, since their actions require a balance between their role as an evaluator and the one which describes them as a promoter of reflection and articulation of teaching practices conducive to the continuous development of the preservice teacher.

Consequently, during the feedback process, the supervisor is expected to guide the course of the conversation by asking questions to promote individual thinking, prompting metacognitive development, and the ability to think independently and critically (Glickman et al., 2014). The pattern of interactions characterized by promoting *challenge-support*, as opposed to a directive pattern in post-observation, has a powerful effect on activating reflective thinking in both supervisors and students (Arredondo & Rucinski, 1998).

In addition, a dialogic process is suggested, in which "ambos, mentor y estudiante, deben examinar sus metas, preocupaciones, y sus expectativas" (both mentor and mentee should examine their goals, concerns, and expectations) (Fairbanks et al., 2000, p. 106), thus fostering a more horizontal professional relationship. However, supervision serves several functions.

Supervisors observe classes not only to offer guidance and support the learning of trainees, but also to evaluate them and contribute to the construction of their professional identity; therefore, the purpose of supervision is to promote the professional development of teachers in order to improve the achievement of student learning, while the purpose of evaluation is to ensure the

achievement of minimum competencies for teaching (Nolan & Hoover, 2010).

This study originates from the premise that the role of the supervising professor is fundamental in the development of a reflective practice focused on teaching action and student learning in relation to the context in which teaching takes place (Beauchamp, 2014). Consequently, beyond formalities, the interest of this study focuses on unraveling the dynamics originated in the dual relationship—between a university supervisor and a student teacher—which enable or hinder the training of reflective and professionally autonomous teachers. To this end, this study uses Heron's (2001) six categories of intervention analysis.

The research objective is to analyze how interactions can promote reflection and autonomy in preservice teachers, according to the methodological orientation and based on the following questions that guide this study: What type of interventions does the university supervisor make during feedback delivery in terms of Heron's six intervention categories? In what teaching areas does the feedback delivered during the post-observation stage focus

Method

This research is based on the qualitative approach, methodologically supported by a case study, which seeks to analyze how interactions can promote reflection and autonomy of the preservice teacher during their professional field practice (Freebody, 2003).

Two female supervisors and ten students also participated as informants in the study.

The deliberate selection of the sample (Hurtado, 2012) is made considering the following characteristics: the supervisors are university professors with no less than 5 years of experience in teaching and supervision activities, yet they do not have advanced or postgraduate studies in the area of professional development or supervision of professional practices as a specific area of study; on the other hand, the students were doing their last internship of a pedagogical

program for primary education in a Chilean public university.

It should be noted that the supervisors who met the aforementioned criteria and the female teachers in training who were guided by these scholars in their internship were previously summoned and informed of the objectives, benefits, importance, and responsibilities of the research. Then, the informants of the study were appointed based on the clear interest to participate voluntarily through the ethical principle of informed consent.

In this sense, class supervision in this training program includes the observation of three or four classes by the same supervisor as a primary technique. All these actions are graded using an assessment guideline elaborated in light of the Good Teaching Framework (MBE, 2003), a document issued by the Ministry of Education that guides the performance evaluation system for in-service teachers. In addition, the post-observation meetings analyzed in this study did not exceed an average of twenty minutes, taking place immediately after the end of the class, and each teacher in training was given individual feedback.

Likewise, the collection of information was supported by videotaping the feedback interviews with the ten interns. Each of these video recordings was transcribed for further review and analysis. In the first phase, each intervention was subjected to content analysis based on Heron's model (2001), using the qualitative data analysis software Atlas ti, version 8.3.0, which made it possible to establish their frequency and main dimensions of saturation.

Subsequently, the areas on which feedback was focused were identified, establishing emerging categories such as pedagogical skills demonstrated by the preservice teacher, content proficiency, classroom interaction, learning opportunities for students, learning resources, and identification of goals for the following class. To safeguard the quality of the data analysis, investigator triangulation, also called inter-subjective reliability (Urrea et al., 2014), was used as a validation strategy.

Results

Understanding reflection as a cyclical recursive process that is promoted mostly through non-directive feedback (Glickman et al., 2014), the spaces for reflection in this study were generated in light of the dialogue between the supervisor and the preservice teacher. In the subsequent analysis of these interactions, two areas on which the dialogue is focused can be distinguished. On the one hand, the feedback content and, on the other, the feedback relationships. That is to say, in the first case, the analysis focuses on the content that is transformed into an object and, in the second one, on the subjective interactions.

Feedback Content

In the analysis, we see that the object of the feedback dialogue is centered mainly in three areas. The first, which shows the greatest preponderance, is the one associated with the deployment of the pedagogical skills demonstrated by the preservice teacher during the observed class. The focus of feedback is the understanding of content, the interactions that occur in the classroom, the learning opportunities for all students, the learning resources, and the identification of goals for the following class. Some evidence of feedback found is shown below:

S2: Yes, I think it was a good start, a good start of activities with a challenging proposal that helps to introduce the contents... (...) you have good learning resources, the scale, the exercises, the work guide, which helped to catch the students' attention to understand the key concepts in a concrete and very attractive way.

The second area of analysis focuses on the evaluation processes generated during the observed session:

S1: And the other thing that was missing is to have more evidence of the students' learning achievement with evaluation instruments; I know that the guide was an opportunity, but as there was no correction of the guide, you were not able to objectify the performance levels of the students in a more detailed way.

As a third aspect, interventions focused on the proficiency in teaching skills emerge:

S2: (...) you modeled the procedures for expressing probabilities in percentages by verbalizing the solution aloud, which I also find very remarkable in your class because many times we teachers sort of solve the problem, but we don't verbalize what we do.

P10: Point out the steps.

S2: Sure, but it is also saying them out loud, because one thing is that you can write down the steps and kind of explain them, but here you were talking about what you were doing at the same time; it is like you were talking out loud about what you were doing and that is very relevant at the moment of modeling.

Intervention Types and Space for Reflection

The interventions highlighted above are framed within what the MBE (Good Teaching Framework) has determined as areas of attention (specifically the A, B, and C domains) in the teachers' work. So far, it is not possible to observe that the supervisors incorporate other domains not contained in this instrument, nor do they report a personal or recontextualized reinterpretation of it. Nevertheless, when analyzing the interventions, the subjective dimension of the tutorial action arises. These were analyzed in the light of the model of Heron (2001), Randall and Thornton (2001), distinguishing between directive and non-directive interventions. Table 1 below refers to the presence of the different forms of directive interventions found in this study.

With respect to the directive function, interventions focused on prescribing, suggesting, and informing emerge strongly, at the expense of those aimed at confronting the beliefs and behaviors of preservice teachers. Some interventions in this line include prescriptive dialogues on future performance or, definitely, reprimands based on the preservice teacher's performance. Table 2 below shows evidence of each one.

As it is possible to deduce, during the class the preservice teacher had difficulties in keeping the students on task. The supervisor's intervention

relies on giving instructions and suggestions to be applied in future situations, establishing weaknesses as a focus that should be corrected as soon as possible. However, even when a difficulty is noted, the supervisor does not encourage the preservice teacher to analyze the problem, to wonder about the teaching structure, and to look for alternative ways of action. The solutions are given as unavoidable alternatives. Based on the interpretative matrix offered by Heron, it is possible to distinguish informative interventions. In this dialogue, the supervisor shares her knowledge about pedagogy, as shown in Table 3.

Finally, the feedback dialogues lead to a

confrontational intervention, as shown in Table 4.

In the first example, by means of the question “How would it be if certain items were done and discussed in pairs?” the supervisor tries to get the preservice teacher to reassess her actions to overcome the obstacles to learning. However, she does not encourage the future teacher to visualize the teaching situation and understand the problem, in order to be able to provide examples and alternatives, and identify ways to promote future growth based on her current performance. On the contrary, the supervisor immediately instructs the preservice teacher, showing courses of action to improve the observed teaching practice.

Table 1
Directive Functions of Supervisors' Interventions (Heron, 2001)

Function of the intervention	Prescriptive	Informative	Confrontational	Total Directive Actions
Number of interventions	47	53	1	101
Percentage	26,1%	29,4%	0,55%	56,1%

Note: Prepared by the authors (2021)

Table 2
Prescriptive Intervention

Directive Interventions	Function	Supervisory Intervention
Prescriptive	Interventions that provide sound direction. The supervisor informs the preservice teacher what to do through advice, instructions, and suggestions.	<p>S1: So (...) out of these aspects to improve that I have just mentioned, which one do you think could be something that I can already see in the next class? Commit to one of them: time management, behavior management, feedback...</p> <p>S2: But there are certain things that you can still do. and they are very small. I can give you a concrete suggestion— while you are talking, there are children who are shouting the answer [...] Only they are shouting, you should tell them, “I will not listen to you while you are not sitting and asking to participate”. And one by one, until you get them to listen to you, because you noticed that, at a certain point, I tried to help you, because if you talk while they are doing something else... There was one who was at the door, another one who was starting to hit another boy, those things... You cannot turn a blind eye to that, you have to work on it more directly, so I would ask you to make this the focus of our next class, I do not know whether you agree.</p>

Note: Prepared by the authors (2021)

Table 3
Informative Intervention

Directive Interventions	Function	Supervisory Intervention
Informative	To share knowledge about the teaching situation. The supervisor provides information to instruct or enlighten the preservice teacher. However, the supervisor's degree of dominance decreases compared to the prescriptive role.	S1: ... it has nothing to do with just saying, "Let's see, show me, tell us how you did it." ... because it will allow you to understand how the child is thinking about her solution, do you understand? At a procedural level, for example, when they went to the whiteboard to solve it [the mathematical exercise], you should not only ask them to do it and then explain it, but while they are doing it they can explain it, just like you did ... when you said "if I take it out of this part, I also take it out here," "it remains the same," so that the children have the opportunity to say it out loud. At a metacognitive level, it is super powerful...

Note: Authors' own elaboration (2021).

Tabla 4
Intervención confrontativa

Directive Interventions	Function	Supervisory Intervention
Confrontational	The supervisor aims to challenge those beliefs or behaviors of the preservice teacher that are considered problematic. The goal is to make them reevaluate their actions to overcome obstacles in their learning.	<p>Example 1: S2: What would it be like if certain items were done and discussed in pairs? I mean, I thought there were certain items that peer discussion could have been more effective for, that is, the very fact that they had to give the argument to the other partner, "Why does she think that's the answer?" especially because more collaborative or peer learning can also be more meaningful...</p> <p>Example 2: S1: The only thing I would highlight about the predictions is that you used them, but then you didn't get them back. You used them at the beginning, "What do you think the story is going to be about?" You used them... but you forgot about them. Of course, the idea of predicting is—hopefully at the end of the reading—to be able to say, "Oh, what Valentina said, what Laura said was... and check if the prediction was true or not." P4: Yes. S1: So that it makes sense to invest time in predictions as well.</p> <p>Example 3: S2: (...) but I pose it as a challenge that has to do with improving the contextualization of the equations... It was very focused on the procedure but lacked more context for... as in what moment they will use the equations in their daily life, what they can relate it to, what they can link it with, more than being a mechanical action... It is like, what does a person use it at all times for? But I am thinking for a fourth grade, what could be used to make sense of it to present problems that are more contextualized. Q8: Yes, I understand.</p>

Note: Prepared by the authors (2021)

Similarly, in the second evidence, the supervisor highlights a problem in the class development, but does not give the preservice teacher the time and the opportunity to think about the problem. Likewise, she does not ask questions conducive to reflection, but rather, she directly suggests a possible solution to the problem. Finally, evidence 3 shows how the supervisor mentions a weakness in terms of didactic knowledge, highlighting the importance of contextualizing the mathematical content. Although she asks questions that could eventually lead the preservice teacher to reassess her actions to overcome obstacles in the teaching-learning process, she does not encourage her to seek new forms of action (see Table 5). On the other hand, within the dialogues that both supervisors had with the trainees, the directive function is intermingled with non-directive functions. The latter are shown in the table below (see Table 5).

The non-directive functions that enable the free expression of emotions and feelings are present in the cathartic intervention offered below (see Table 6).

In the following interaction, the supervisor favors dialogue by promoting the preservice teacher's reflection through a catalytic type of intervention, in an attempt to increase the preservice teacher's awareness of her actions, self-discovery, and self-directed learning.

However, although the preservice teacher identifies a problematic aspect of the class, she does not receive the necessary scaffolding to get to the main issue, since she is not exposed to reflection-oriented questions about the difficulty, facilitating the evaluation of her performance as to modify her teaching patterns. The supervisor gives specific information regarding how to improve performance (see Table 7).

Table 5.
Non-Directive Functions of Supervisory Interventions (Heron, 2001)

Function of the intervention	Cathartic	Catalytic	Supportive	Total Non-Directive actions
Number of interventions	2	22	55	79
Percentage	1,11%	12,2%	30,5%	43,8%

Note: Prepared by the authors (2021)

Table 6.
Cathartic Intervention

Non-directive interventions	Function	Example
Cathartic	It provides an opportunity for the preservice teacher to express their thoughts and feelings.	<p>S1: How did you feel?</p> <p>P6: The truth is that today, since it was the last hour of school, I was very nervous and said, "They won't listen to me," but no, the class worked...</p> <p>S2: ... What did you think about the way it turned out? Were you happy? Were you worried? How did you feel?</p>

Note: Prepared by the authors (2021)

Table 7.
Catalytic Intervention

Non-directive interventions	Function	Example
Catalytic	To encourage teacher participation in self-discovery by analyzing areas that seem critical and developing the knowledge and information needed for discovery. It focuses on helping the preservice teacher become more reflective through different questions to promote self-discovery, self-directed learning, and problem solving among students.	<p>S2: If you had the opportunity to do the class again, what would you improve?</p> <p>P10: What I am lacking is, maybe, having an activity where everyone pays attention, because the ones that participated in the class were the ones that typically participate... It may be something that I did.</p> <p>S2: And within those things that you say "it may be something I did"... What do you think you could still do as a teacher to be able to maintain students' participation, which is quite a challenge, isn't it?</p> <p>P10: Yes, it is quite a challenge. First of all, for there to be participation, they have to be attentive... So I have to look for something more motivating, more appealing.</p> <p>S2: ...I think... I was analyzing the type of questions you asked when working on the content and I realized that you mainly worked on closed questions, right? Be careful with that because that also restricts participation....</p> <p>Q10: Sure, the answer is either yes or no.</p>

Note: Prepared by the authors (2021)

Finally, supportive interventions confirm these dialogues. The supervisors look for mechanisms to congratulate, encourage, and highlight the positive elements observed in the classes.

Discussion

This study analyzes the interventions of university supervisors and student teachers during the post-observation stage, in order to identify the content or pedagogical ability on which it is focused and to understand how the interventions promote reflection and autonomy of the future teacher. When analyzing the information, both research objectives appear intermingled, thus the discussion of one focus implies the insertion of the other.

An interesting and challenging result of the research is that female university supervisors and preservice teachers do not engage in a free

or asymmetric conversation, or in what is referred to as 'two-way dialogue' (John & Gilchrist, 1999), in a way that provides space for discussion and reflection around different professional, personal, and identity areas involved in decision making.

On the contrary, feedback is delivered by adopting a directive approach, with a predominance of informative and prescriptive interventions (Randall & Thornton, 2001). This focuses on success formulas—what to do and how to perform within the classroom—without establishing pedagogical discussions or connections with professional knowledge for self-evaluation of the experience. In this particular study, this could be explained by the use of a structured classroom observation guideline in which assessment is the main goal, assuming a prescriptive approach to supervision (John & Gilchrist, 1999, p. 11).

Although the knowledge about teaching that the supervisor offers represents a useful framework for action (González-Toro et al., 2020), excessively focusing on this type of feedback

Table 8
Supportive Intervention

Non-directive interventions	Function	Example
Supportive	It attempts to improve the preservice teacher's self-confidence by focusing on areas of expertise and what he/she did well.	<p>S2: ...your great success in this class for me has to do with the variety of tasks you planned, which allows students who lose motivation at one moment to pick it up at another moment, right? ...</p> <p>S1: ...I think that one of the highlights that you have is this close relationship with the children based on positive reinforcement, constant songs that you perform...</p>

Note: Prepared by the authors (2021)

does not encourage the preservice teacher to develop a multilevel or multi-scalar reflective process that allows them to inquire about the reasons for their decisions and their impact on the classroom, or to differentiate between the factors that are their responsibility and those that depend on the context. In addition, directive intervention fosters a wait-and-see attitude in preservice teachers, where the supervisor takes on a leading role in providing all the answers or ideas for improvement.

Becoming an effective teacher involves much more than accumulating skills and strategies, adopting fragmented techniques to manage instruction, or managing student behavior. Reflection facilitates the integration and modification of skills for specific contexts and, eventually, the internalization of skills, allowing preservice teachers to develop new strategies. Without critical reflection and continuous discovery, preservice teachers will continue to rely on unexamined or extraneous judgments, interpretations, and expectations over their own professional judgment (Larrivee, 2010).

In order for preservice teachers to actively participate in the post-observation stage, it is important to provide opportunities to address their own concerns during the discussion. However, this study reveals the preservice teachers' view at the beginning of the feedback session, after which few circumstances were

granted to express feelings or cover points that were not on the supervisor's agenda.

In this regard, the scientific literature highlights the importance of building autonomy in ITE, which is determined by the implementation of self-determined educational activities and reflection (Bocciolosi et al., 2017). Developing autonomy involves the ability to think for oneself critically (Sarramona, 2012), considering that in school contexts there is great diversity and rising demands regarding teacher professionalism (Lederman & Lederman, 2016). It should be noted that autonomy is not an innate condition, but is built in a relational way, with the participation of supervisors and students, among other agents of the school system (Andreucci & Eisendecker, 2020; Cheon et al., 2018), based on the dialogic relationship generated between the preservice teacher and the supervisor, in which the latter promotes the analysis from autonomy in a progressive manner and in response to the preservice teacher's needs (Heron, 2001).

Additionally, the results of the study show that the non-directive interventions identified are fundamentally supportive and catalytic (Randall & Thornton, 2001), the former focusing on the reaffirmation of positive attitudes and actions of the preservice teachers, while the catalytic ones are not used as triggers for reflection.

Although, in the initial stages of training, the supervisor is expected to provide a safe and structured environment by providing guidance

and advice (Glickman et al., 2014), in the context of this study, since the preservice teachers were in their last internship and, therefore, a few weeks away from entering the working world, a more collegial, collaborative, and reflective supervision practice would have been desirable. A collaborative supervision model promotes the participation of preservice teachers in their own professional development by making them active subjects in decision making regarding the complexity of teaching and learning (Kaneko-Marques, 2015). To meet these objectives, preservice teachers should be encouraged to reconstruct their knowledge and reflect on their classroom experiences during teaching practice.

Research in the area recognizes the supervisor as an important figure in ITE, thus the tensions and difficulties they experience in defining their role must be addressed. The supervisor often faces the dilemma of appropriately balancing their duties by trying, on the one hand, to assist and support the preservice teacher, while at the same time having the major commitment of evaluating their performance. Because of this, it has been argued that as long as supervisors have the responsibility to evaluate, future teachers perceive them in an evaluator role rather than in a supportive role (Mette et al., 2017). This is particularly important if we want to balance the power relationship that occurs between the supervisor and the preservice teacher.

On the other hand, the reality of most of the ITE programs indicates that supervisors have learned their role through observation, their own experiences, and by imitating other members of the institution, since they do not have specific training in the area (Insuasty & Zambrano, 2011). Consequently, in light of the results, it is necessary for supervisors to be part of a continuous professional development program that is specific to the role they perform.

Hence, the findings of this study have important implications for improving the quality of supervision to which students in ITE programs are exposed. In this sense, it is imperative to conduct a curricular review of the training programs, in order to ensure that the practice courses include objectives aimed at promoting the connection between theoretical

knowledge, field practice, reflection, and its connection with action. Considering the ITE standards, the conceptualization of reflection as a meta competency could include and support all the other competencies necessary for teaching (Correa-Molina et al., 2010).

Furthermore, relevant, meaningful, and reflective feedback requires providing opportunities of continuous professional development to those who fulfill the role of supervisors. In addition to the need to achieve a better understanding of reflection and how it is applied to ITE, it is fundamental to make the distinction between an exclusively formal supervision focused on grading the experience, and one that sees itself as a space for the professional development of preservice teachers.

Therefore, teacher training institutions have the challenge of implementing and articulating different training scenarios. In this way, the aim is to strengthen the tutorial role performed by the supervisors who guide the training in field practice, with those focused on the training of mentors within the framework of the policies of teaching induction currently being implemented in the country. For all this to be feasible, it is necessary that the training institutions grant field practice and its supervision the status it deserves and, in turn, provide the material and economic structures that favor its development.

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