MINISTY OF EDUCATION YOUTH AND
SPORT

UPGRADE QUALITY OF TEACHING PRACTICE

THROUGH

FEEDBACK SKILLS

TEACHER TRAINING DEPARTMENT
2016

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Preface

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) has been paying critical attention to human resource development in response to social progress. The capacity development of teachers is a necessary factor to attain the national education goals, the Education Strategic Plan (ESP), and the Rectangular Strategy of the Royal Government of Cambodia. Meanwhile teacher training has placed a strong focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning performances of the student teachers in all teacher training centres.

In order to respond to the above context the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport developed a manual on feedback skills for teaching practice committees, the management of teacher training centres, teacher trainers, model teachers, and the student teachers to use as a guide in giving feedback to the student teachers to improve their teaching and learning activities more qualitatively and effectively.

Furthermore, the manual on feedback skills will help the student teachers to increase their knowledge and are able to apply what they learn to meet the Teacher Professional Standard (TPS).

The MoEYS hopes that you will implement this manual and the best use of it to contribute to the human resource development qualitatively and effectively.
Finally, the MoEYS would like to express its appreciation to the Teaching Practice working group and VVOB for making a great effort to develop this important feedback manual.

Phnom Penh, 2016
Minister of Education, Youth and Sport

Acknowledgement

This manual for feedback skills will serve as a road map for teachers and teacher trainers in strengthening their teaching and learning performance, especially in helping student teachers during their teaching practice.
The manual is written and compiled by the MoEYS Teaching Practice working group and VVOB Cambodia with the technical support from Artevelde University College in Belgium.

This document is the basic information on feedback skills and is important for the directors, deputy directors, teacher trainers, and the teachers at the PTTC and the practice schools to use in giving feedback to the student teachers. This feedback skills manual could be used to provide feedback to anyone at any institution.

The manual is developed based on the results of the observation of feedback sessions and a survey at PTTCs with the management and the teacher trainers. The survey results showed that the teacher trainers and model teachers are in need of capacity development on feedback skills.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our profound thanks to MoEYS' leadership that provided ongoing encouragement and support to establish this feedback skills manual.

The author group hopes that the manual will be a good consultation tool and that it will contribute to improve the feedback skills of the teachers and teacher trainers. They are the main instruments of implementation of teaching practice and they accomplish good results when the student teachers become capable teachers in the future.

We are happy to accept your constructive criticism from teachers and the public.

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Introduction

Objectives of the feedback skills manual

The feedback skills manual is developed with the following objectives:
- Strengthening the capacity of the teacher trainers and the model teachers.
- Assist the teacher trainers and model teachers in order to help student teachers to improve their teaching and learning.
- Assists the teacher trainers and model teachers to assess the student teachers works more transparently and effectively.
- Strengthening the professional development of the student teachers.
- Strengthening the knowledge of the student teachers in their teaching and learning especially in the teaching practice.

The content

This manual contains four parts:

- Part 1: The characteristics and responsibilities of the teacher trainers and model teachers
- Part 2: Feedback skills
- Part 3: Steps in a feedback session
- Part 4: Organisational aspects of feedback session

Part 1: The characteristics and responsibilities of teacher trainers and model teachers

Objective: To strengthen the capacity of teacher trainers and model teachers to be prepared to lead the student teachers' teaching practice better.

1.1 Characteristics of the teacher trainers and model teachers

To be a good mentor requires a variety of characteristics as follows. A good mentor:

- **Is a role model**
  A person regarded by others, especially student teachers, as a good example to follow, because s/he shows the desired behaviour and attitude.

- **Is an active listener**
  An active listener who pays close attention to both verbal and non-verbal signs of the speaker. The teacher trainers or model teachers who are the listeners have to pay attention to listen to student teachers and try to understand their issues and provide sufficient time for them to express their ideas. They should not jump to conclusions too quickly.

- **Sets clear rules**
  The mentor will have to make sure that the student teachers take the right steps during the teaching practice based on the TTD teaching practice guidelines. When a student teacher is not performing well or shows inappropriate behaviour the mentor will have to clearly define the rules/regulations/boundaries that the student teachers have to follow.

- **Has analytical skills**
  In order to be able to provide constructive feedback to student teachers a mentor needs to be able to analyse a lesson and the student teacher's behaviour and give honest feedback.
  This creates opportunities for student teachers to improve their professional knowledge.

- **Is committed to the role as a person to provide feedback to the student teachers**
  The mentor has to be involved and caring for the student teacher's welfare and professional development and ensure the student teacher's personal development during the implementation of their teaching practice through the advice and feedback of the mentor.

- **Is accepting the student teachers as they are**
  When the mentor shows empathy to the student teacher it creates a safe environment in which chances of learning are much higher than in an unsafe or unfriendly situation.

- **Has pedagogical support skills**
  The mentors must be experienced and willing to share their knowledge to others.

- **Is a role model for continuous learning**
  The mentor has to show that s/he likes to keep on learning and self-improving and knows how to self-assess his/her own teaching consistently.

- **Communication with hope and optimism**
  The mentor has to communicate with the student teachers with hope and encouragement so that they can acquire their self-development.

1.2 Responsibilities of teacher trainers and model teachers in their practicum leadership

These responsibilities as below are taken from the official guidelines for teaching practice from TTD-MoEYS 2016. Further detailed descriptions of role and responsibilities for teacher trainers and model teachers, as well as for other institutions such as the teaching practice committees, Provincial Office of Education, etc. can be found in that document.

a. Responsibilities of Teacher Trainers

- Direct and manage the student teachers at the practice school
- Be present at practice centre and have regular meetings with teaching practice committee, and student teachers to discuss strong points and points for improvement of each student teacher in order to motivate them and make an improvement plan in time.
- Cooperate with teaching practice supervisor, model teachers, subject teachers in order to follow up, and to correct the student teachers in timely manner.
- Collaborate closely with the model teachers in order to observe the student teachers' learning and teaching and to provide feedback.
- Collaborate with model teachers to assess student teachers' teaching and learning for at least 3 times in each lesson (each teaching practice ?) and also provide score and comments appropriately.
- Prepare the score chart and teaching practice results and then submit to teaching practice committees at practice school through teaching practice supervisor.

b. Responsibilities of Model teachers

- Introduce the student teachers to working processes, school customs and good communication with other staff in the practice school.
- Observe the student teachers' teaching and learning and provide feedback regularly.
- Cooperate with the teacher trainer in order to evaluate the student teachers' teaching and learning before providing score and comments in the assessment form.
- Make the best effort to support the student teachers on:
    o Class management and administration
    o Teaching and learning tasks (plan and prepare lesson plans, teaching performance, and attitude towards the students)
- The good communication with school management, students, and communities.
- Be friendly and respectful to student teachers' characteristics; especially there must be fairness and transparency.

Part 2 Feedback skills

Objective: To introduce communication techniques to the teacher trainers and the model teachers in order to provide feedback more effectively.

2.1 Feedback definitions

Feedback occurs normally after a lesson observation but can also be given after other actions or behaviour outside of the lesson whenever the situation requires this.

- Feedback is the recognition of the positive aspects of student teachers' work or the constructive criticism of a skill and task which could be improved.

- Feedback is offering good points, points for improvement and recommendations provided by a mentor (model teacher or teacher trainer) about aspects of someone's (the student teachers) performance or understanding.

- Feedback is giving specific information about a person's current behaviour in order to help him/her either to continue that behaviour or to modify and improve the behaviour.

2.2 Basic rules of feedback

According to Portner (2003) the feedback must proceed from the following principles:
- We have respect for each other's words and actions,
- We only speak in our own name
- We are talking mostly about the here and now, not 'histories'
- What is discussed, remains between us
- We regularly discuss our way of working
- Our central concern: learning together about learning and teaching.

2.3 Theory of the Johari window[1]
The Johari window is a model for self-awareness, personal development, group development and understanding relationships.
The Johari-window theory was created by two American psychologists – **Jo**seph Luft and **Hari** Ingham. It consists of 4 quadrants and each quadrant contains characteristics of each individual. These quadrants together are a combination of all things about us that are known and unknown, to us and to others.
To have more insight in yourself as a person, you need to know how people look at you. To speak in the terminology of the Johari window, growing means that the Open Area becomes bigger.

1. Open Area:
This quadrant represents the things that you know about yourself, and the things that others know about you. This includes your behaviour, knowledge, skills, and attitudes.
> **Example:**
> *"I know I talk very fast, and others can hear this and therefore they know it too".*

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[1] *JOHARI "A graphic model of interpersonal awareness", Joseph Luft en Hari Ingham USA*

Johari Window theory		---------------Feedback------------>	
		Known to self	Unknown to self
----- Disclosure ------>	Known to others	1.Open area	2. Blind Area
	Unknown to others	3.Hidden area	4.Unkown area

2. Blind Area

This quadrant represents things about you that you don't know about yourself, but that are known by others. This can include simple information that you do not know. It can also involve deep issues, for example, feelings of inadequacy, incompetence, unworthiness, or rejection, which are often difficult for individuals to face directly, and yet can be seen by others.

Example:

"In the past I used a lot of hand gestures during the lesson when I was talking, but I did not know this about myself. When my mentor pointed this out to me I realised that it looks like I am nervous and that the hand gestures are distracting for the listener. This behaviour was in my Blind Area, but now it is in the Open Area. Now that I am aware of it, I try to reduce the hand gestures. "

3. Hidden Area

This quadrant represents things that you know about yourself, but that others don't know. You keep it hidden from others.

Examples:

"I know that I am a jealous person, but I don't show it to others."

"I am not good at ICT things, but I never tell that to my colleagues."

"I am not a confident person, but I try not to show this and try to act as if I am confident."

In sharing your self-knowledge that is not known to others with others, you move it from your Hidden Area to your Open Area. Others may understand you better, but of course not everything needs to be shared with others. Everyone has a choice in what they want to share or not.

4. Unknown Area

This last part of a person's personality is related to things that you don't know about yourself and others also don't know about you. In psychology terms: the subconscious. For our purpose, mentoring student teachers during teaching practicum, this quadrant is least relevant.

Example:

"I find it really difficult to make contact with other people and I don't know why. Other people do not notice that I have this problem."

This person seeks guidance from a psychologist and starts talking about the past where he trusted the wrong people, and therefore his faith in people was damaged. He is now not conscious that the past influenced his current difficulty with making contact. Through the talks with the psychologist the subconscious became conscious. Then this person can choose to put it either in the Hidden Area or the Open Area.

Conclusion
In a feedback session we have to try to make the Open Area of the student teachers to become bigger. There are different ways to make this area bigger: through observation and feedback from others (which decreases the Blind Area) and the disclosure of confidential stories (which decreases the Hidden Area). The Open Area is the most important quadrant. Generally, the better we know each other, the more productive, cooperative, and effective we are. The ultimate goal of the Johari Window is to demonstrate feedback is important to enlarge the Open Area. These shifts between the Open, Blind and Hidden Area are processes of refelction and they can help us to understand more about ourselves and others.

From the above explanation of the Johari window theory we can also understand why it is so valuable for the student teachers to reflect on their work through dialogue with others, like mentors, subject teachers, teacher trainers and so on. Others may have a completely different view on the student teachers' behaviour than the student teachers have about themselves.
In fact, the Blind Area of the student teachers need to be reduced and this will help them to reach higher achievements. In that way a student teachers will step by step get more understanding of themselves as a person and as a teacher.

2.4 Tools for giving feedback
The following tools for providing feedback will be discussed:
- Active listening
- Mirroring
- Confronting with attention and care
- Using the I-message

2.4.1 Active listening
Active listening is a communication technique that increases understanding and relationship between speaker and listener. Rather than passively listening to the speaker, or not listening at all, the active listener pays close attention to both verbal and non-verbal language of the speaker, and then repeats back the most important points of the speaker's message.

Active listening means
- *to understand*
  What is the message the student teacher is telling me?
- *to feel*
  What are the student teacher's emotions that are involved in the mentoring conversation? Stressed, confident, happy, worried? And do these emotions affect the performance of the student teacher?
- *to perceive*
  What do I notice, observe when the student teacher is talking?
- *to sense*
  Is there something the student teacher wants to say but doesn't feel comfortable saying it? How can I make the student teacher feel at easy to freely discuss issues?

Benefits of active listening

Active listening:
- encourages the speaker
- promotes trust and respect between the student teachers and the mentor
- enables listener to gain good and complete information
- improves relationships
- makes resolution of problems more likely
- gains cooperation
- promotes better mutual understanding

Principles of active listening

In order to ensure effective active listening, the listener must:

1. Pay attention
   - Looks at the speaker directly
   - Avoids being distracted by the environmental factors (phone, pupils, colleagues dropping in)
   - Observes the speaker's "body language"

2. Show to be really listening
   - Smile or use happy facial expressions
   - Open mind to receive information
   - Sit appropriately
   - Focus and understand the speaker
   - Use eye contact
   - Nod occasionally
   - Encourage the speaker with expressions like: yes, oh, huh, wow

3. Summarize and ask good verifying questions
   - Paraphrasing: "What I'm hearing is…" or "It sounds like you are saying…"
   - Asking clarifying questions like: "What do you mean when you say…"

4. Avoid judgment
   - Don't interrupt
   - Listen before judging (be careful in the terms of your judgement)
   - Always allow the speaker to finish their talking first

5. Respond appropriately
   - Be candid, open and honest in your response
   - Asserts your opinions respectfully
   - Puts yourself in the speaker's "shoes"

Pitfalls

When providing feedback there are some points that the mentor should avoid doing.
- Disregard feelings and emotions of the student teacher.
- Jump to conclusions, judge too quickly , play the psychologist, ask too personal questions.

- Searching for the "guilty" meaning, talking about reasons for mistakes too long instead of focusing on the solution.
- Deny the problems that were raised.
- Giving own interpretation without giving the student teacher a chance to explain.
- Bring a personal story and stop listening to the explanation of the student teacher.
- Interrogate, examining of the student teacher.
- Give too many solutions and advice. Instead the mentor should ask the student teacher to think of solutions themselves.
- Judge with prejudice.
  Example: the mentor doesn't like this student teacher very much as she used to disturb the lesson often. The mentor starts the observation with a negative view on the student teacher already.
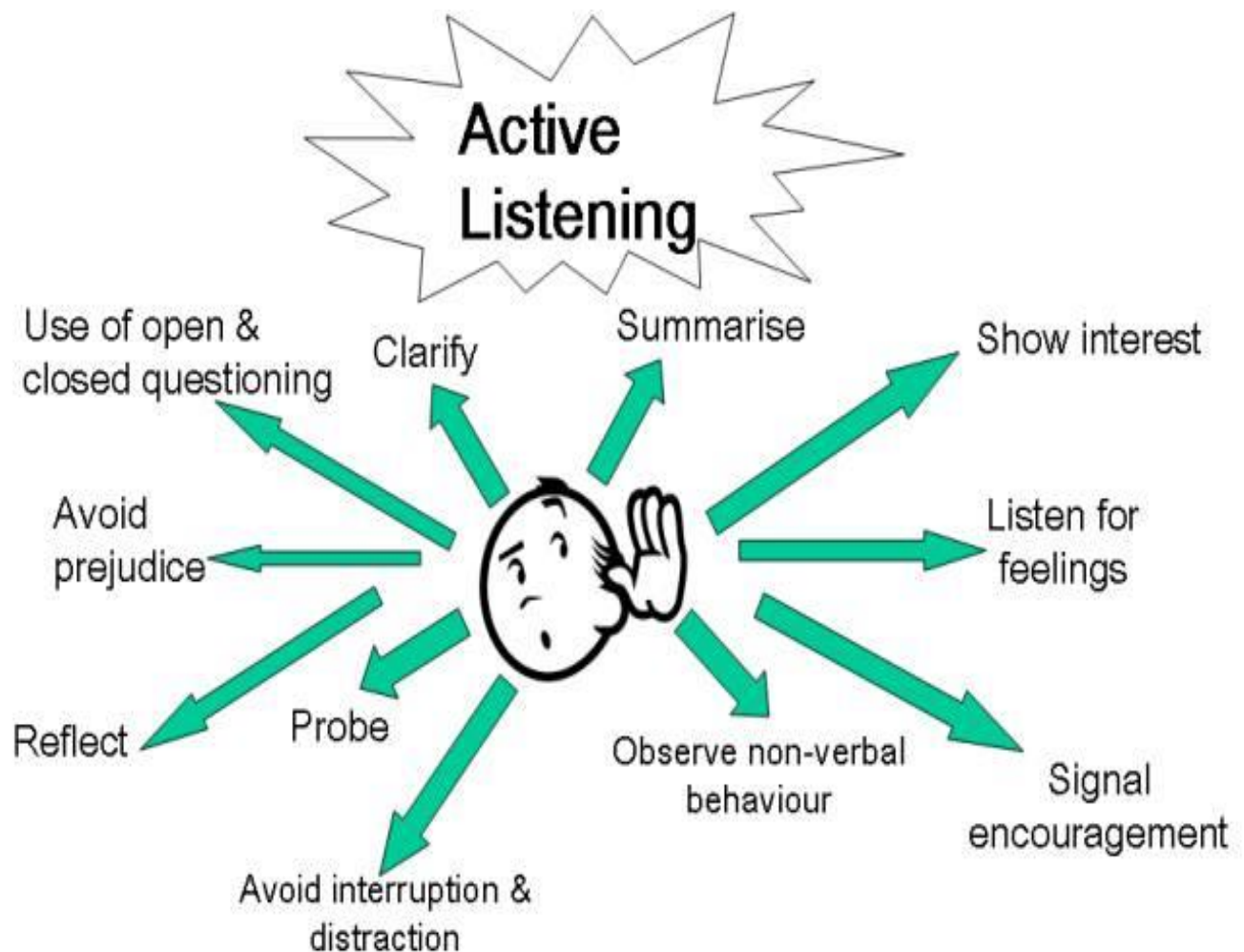
2.4.2 Mirroring

"Mirroring" is an effective feedback strategy. It is putting a figuratively mirror in front of someone so the person can reflect on their own behaviour. The mentor helps the student teachers to look at themselves by telling what the mentor has observed. The mentor can use different ways of mirroring.

- Repeat
  Repeat an important point raised by the student teacher, and then add a question.
    o Example *"You said that your classroom management is important. How do you plan to work on your classroom management?"*

- Restate
  Restate a comment of the student teacher. This helps the student teachers to reflect more and come up with more ideas for reflection or action.
    o Example: The student teachers said: *"I felt I did not control the class today, the pupils did not listen very well when I explained."*
      The mentor can restate: *"So you are saying that you want the pupils to be more actively involved today?"*

- Summary
  Is a summary of the conversation and the actions.
    o Example: A student teacher talks about an incident that happened in class with a boy, giving a lot of details. The mentor summarises *"You said you were upset with Sopheap because of his immature behaviour. Then you talked through the situation with him. And now you have worries about his behaviour in the future."*

Three types of mirroring
The above mentioned actions for mirroring can be applied in different ways. The mentor can choose to repeat, restate or summarise focussing on the feelings the student teacher expressed (warm mirror), or focussing on the facts and the content of what was said (cold mirror), or exaggerate to make the student teacher reflect (make-up mirror).

A. Warm mirror (focus on empathy and tolerance)
The mentor describes the intention of the words, gestures and appearance of the student teacher as observed as accurately as possible. At this point the mentor demonstrates empathy and tolerance towards the student teacher.

B. Cold mirror (focus on the facts and contents but not exploring of feelings)
The mentor only describes efficiently the facts and what is observed in a factual way. The mentor puts the emphasis on handling questions and problems and avoids deeper exploration of feelings of the student teacher.

C. Make-up mirror (Make the story that you have seen or heard bigger and interpret)
The make-up mirror is designed to increase, exaggerate or make bigger what the mentor has obserbed or heard. Then the mentor asks if the interpretation of the story is correct. By presenting a problem back to the student teacher bigger than it actually is, the student teachers might see the actual problem more clearly.

Here are examples of the different mirroring techniques used by a mentor in reply to the same situation the student teachers raised.

The student teacher says:
"Both of the student teachers in my teaching practice group have been sick for a week already and I have to do much more preparation alone and I cannot discuss my prepared lessons with anyone. I feel left alone with too many tasks."

The mentor responds using the <u>warm mirror</u>**:**
"If I understand well, you seem to feel a bit stressed and left alone because it is not clear how you can manage all the work. Is that correct?"

The mentor responds using the <u>cold mirror:</u>
"The absence of the 2 student teachers in your group is a problem for you and you needed a solution. Am I right?"

The mentor responds using the <u>make-up mirror:</u>
"From what you've said, I understand that the 2 student teachers in your group have helped you a lot and that from now on you are standing completely alone without having any idea how to handle this. Is that right?"

The three mirrors above can all be effectively used during reflection in different situations.
When the student teachers have a need to express their feeling they may need someone who understands their feelings that can support them (Warm mirror).
In some cases the student teachers only want to solve the problem and don't want to discuss their feelings or there is no need to go into the feelings. (Cold mirror)
Exaggerating the problem can help some student teachers to see the issues more clearly. It can also help the student teachers to see things in perspective and see everything is not as bad as it looks. They then start to find simple solutions based on their capability. (Make-up mirror)

2.4.3 Confronting with attention and care
Sometimes a mentor needs to tell the student teacher a difficult or confronting message about their behaviour, their teaching or learning activities. The mentor needs to confront the student teacher but at the same time needs to keep a good relationship. Therefore the confronting message needs to be said with attention and care.

Appreciation versus criticism
It is known that most people cannot take criticism very well, but perhaps this is not entirely true. People have a hard time with criticism when they do not get enough appreciation to balance it with.
In order to make someone accept advised improvements they also need to get enough appreciation. In other words, if we know that we are appreciated, we are often curious about the comments from others. The student teacher is more likely to listen to points for improvement when the relationship is good, when the student teacher feels appreciated as well.

So to ensure the student teacher will be receptive to criticism, and will hear and work on these point for improvement, the mentor can apply different ways to deliver the content of the message, and maintaining a good relationship with the student teacher at the same time.

These 2 ways to deliver a confronting message must be avoided:

⇨ Too direct and too blunt

If the message is told too straight forward or too blunt the student teacher might feel attacked, or offended, and the response is often defensive or avoidant.

⇨ Too careful

It also possible that the mentor is too careful in telling the student teacher the constructive comments to avoid hurting the students' feelings. The mentor fears that the relationship will be less positive when criticism is shared with the student teacher and decides not to say it. When the mentor cares too much about the relationship, the confronting message is not delivered or not delivered clearly to the student teacher. In the end the student teacher does not know what the important improvement points are for the future.

So instead, in order to give effective but confronting feedback we can use:

The Relationship - Content Message

In providing a message to someone the content of the message and the relationship between the two participants are equally important. It can help in some cases to formulate a "relationship - content" message to make it easier to give feedback, and easier for the other person to receive the feedback.

Example:
"I know you will find it difficult to hear this (keeping the relationship good), but I do think you need to spend more time on improving your understanding of mathematics (content)."

A. The relationship part of the message

During the feedback you need a good relationship in which the student teachers feel comfortable. The student teachers can learn more when they feel comfortable and are not afraid to communicate with the mentor. A good relationship is created by choosing the appropriate words and friendly behaviour. The relationship part of the message for the student teachers can be captured in phrases like:

o I don't want to hurt your feelings……..
o I don't want to take your confidence away…..
o I can see you are struggling….
o I understand you find it difficult ….
o I want to help you….
o I can see you feel frustrated….
o I don't want to make you feel you are doing something wrong….
o You shouldn't feel bad about the lesson….
o I think you may find it difficult to hear this….
o I appreciate you are trying very hard…

B. The content part of the message

In a mentoring situation you need to provide feedback, tell points for improvement. These are the pieces of information, the content of the message that are useful for the student teachers so they know what to work on. Examples of the content part of the message:

o I think this approach will not work.
o I noticed you find classroom management difficult.
o Your voice was a bit too soft.
o I think you have not used enough teaching aids.
o I think you did not notice that half of the pupils in the class were not paying attention.
o I feel you should prepare a better lesson plan.
o I noticed you have not applied the suggestions I gave you last week.

o You have to check your spelling more carefully.
o You need to improve your writing skills on the blackboard.
o You are always late for teaching.

C. Examples of linking the Relationship and Content part of the message
- Often the mentor sees that the student teacher has good intentions but also observes that the behaviour is not effective.
  Example: *"I can see your good intentions (keep a good relationship), but the educational game you used is not suitable for this grade" (explaining the content).*

- Sometimes the mentor may be afraid to hurt the student teacher's feeling.
  Example: *"I don't want to hurt you, the opposite, I do care (relationship) but I do observe that you use your voice in the wrong way" (content)"*

- Sometimes the mentor can conclude that s/he finds it difficult as well.
  Example: *"I find it difficult to say this, because I sometimes do that myself, so I understand why you do it (relationship). Nevertheless, I still think you should control your anger in front of your pupils." (content)*

- Sometimes the mentor can sense that the student teacher will find it difficult to understand the mentor's point of view.
  Example: *"I think you will probably find it difficult to hear this (relationship). Nevertheless, I think you should not reprimand the pupils in the way you do (content).*

Point for attentions for giving feedback
When giving feedback a mentor needs to keep in mind:
  ➢ **To do it frequently and immediately**
  When a mentor and a student teacher discuss some points for improvement frequently and in a constructive way, it will become a good habit. If a mentor waits too long, then it is a big surprise or disappointment for the student teacher to suddenly hear a lot of comments at once. The mentor should not wait too long to give the feedback because it is easy to forget the points that the student teacher needs to know in order to improve their teaching, and additionally the student teacher could already have forgotten about the points the mentor raises.

  ➢ **To do it step by step**
  The mentor should not bring up too many points for improvement at the same time, because it will make the student teachers feel that it is too much for them to implement. When providing feedback the mentor should provide only a few of the most urgent recommendations each time.

  ➢ **Using a clear message**
  The Relationship – Content message has to be clear in order to improve and support the student teachers teaching.

2.4.4 Using the I-message
Similar to the relationship-content message mentors can also use the "I-message" in order to keep a cooperative environment. The "I-message" is often more effective and more constructive than the "You-message" especially when you bring up someone's behaviour. For example:
  If the mentor says: "__You__ are not using enough teaching aids", a student teacher will feel as being attacked and may be feel insecure.

*If the mentor instead says: "**I** would like it if you use more teaching aids", the student teacher will feel more encouraged to try something else.*

By using the "I-message" the mentor keeps the message close to his or her point of view. The mentor using an I-message is not attacking the other person but is explaining their side of the matter.
If the mentor uses the "I-message" the student teacher cannot object so much because it shows the reflections and ideas of the mentor. Subsequently the mentor shows to be taking part in the responsibility for the student teacher's problems and helps to find solutions together.

**The differences between the I-message and the You-message**

I-message	You-message
• Does not make the student teacher feeling attacked. • Makes the student teacher be more open to listen and improve. • Makes the student teachers understand the problems that the speaker has discussed.	• Has the risk that the student teacher denies or is defensive or insecure. • Draws attention away from what you actually want to achieve. • Puts the blame on the student teacher.
Example: "I appreciate it when you arrive in class on time."	Example: "You're always late."

How the You-message can be changed into a more positive I-message

The message starts with You   : You did not give me your lesson plans on time.
The message starts with I   : I cannot prepare well for the observation if I don't have the lesson plan on time.
The message starts with You   : You used teaching aids that are too small
The message starts with I   : I think that the pupils can see more clearly what you mean if you use teaching aids bigger than this.
The message starts with You   : You're not answering my question.
The message starts with I   : I find it difficult that I still don't know…….

Part 3. Steps in a feedback session

Objective: To explain the important steps in order to provide feedback successfully.
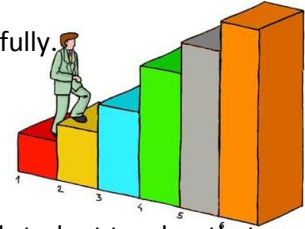
3.1 Overview

The process of a feedback session is the conversation between the mentor and student teacher that usually takes place after a lesson observation. During the session the mentor will lead the conversation through different phases, which we call the 6 steps of the feedback session.
A feedback session should be from 10 to 20 minutes maximum. Within that time the mentors should give student teachers the opportunity to self-reflect, and not only just pose their own ideas.
The time can be flexible based on the issues that need to be discussed by the mentor and the student teacher.

The six steps in the feedback session are:

> Step 1: Introduction
> Step 2: Student teacher's own impression of the results of their teaching and learning
> Step 3: Giving feedback by the model teacher or teacher trainer
> Step 4: Ask the student teacher to respond to what has been raised
> Step 5: Discuss the ways to improve the results for implementation in the future
> Step 6: Round up: remaining questions and making an appointment for the next meeting

3.2 The 6 steps in the feedback session

Here are some practical guidelines to reach a good result with the feedback session by following the 6 steps.

Step 1. Introduction

In the first step, the introduction to the session, the mentor should:
1. Have an informal chat with the student teacher in order to break the ice.
2. Explain the student teacher the objectives of the feedback session.

1. Breaking the ice and blow off steam (informal chat with the student teacher)
When mentors start to give feedback they must avoid talking alone without letting the student teacher talk. This would impact on the process of the discussion and the mentor would still be using the old practice, most likely resulting in the student teacher not following the mentor's recommendations.
The mentor can start by making some casual comments on any topic, making a joke, asking the student teacher a few questions to make them feel at ease (how are you, etc.) or start by making a few compliments to break the ice.

2. Explain the student teacher clear objectives of the feedback session
The mentor will then explain the objectives of the feedback session.
> Example of explaining the objective:
> "So this is the second time we meet. The purpose of today's session is to discuss the progress you have made. It would be good if you give your own reflection on that first. Then you will also have the opportunity to ask questions. Is that okay for you?"

Step 2. Student teacher's own impression of the results of teaching and learning

The mentor will ask the student teacher to give their own impression of the lesson first. Are you satisfied with your own teaching? If yes, why? If not, why?

If the student teachers are quiet at first or unable to reflect on the observed lesson, the mentor can help by using these follow up questions:
- What are the objectives of your lesson?
- Did you implement it as you had planned in your lesson plan?
- What did you find to be successful?
- What were the pupil activities?
- Could you describe two good points? Why do you think they were good?
- Could you describe two points that could be improved? Why did you choose these two?
- When you do your next lesson, what should you improve and why?

The mentor should not ask all these questions at one time but can select the most useful questions in this Step 2 to help the student teachers to think about and describe their own teaching process.

Importance of self-reflection

Self-reflection is important because we force ourselves to think more critically and analyse our own activities to gain more knowledge related to our teaching and learning process. Based on self-reflection we can improve our own teaching and learning methodology even though we don't have someone else to teach us. The mentor has to teach the student teachers how to do self-reflection by asking the right questions. Later the student teachers will know by themselves how to ask yourself these questions.

Student teachers should regularly ask themselves the following questions:
- How did I behave? (verbal and nonverbal)
- What are my good points?
- What are my points that should be improved?
- How did others react to my behaviour?
- How do I feel about those points or issues?

If the student teacher has difficulty with reflection the mentor has to:

A. **Be patient:** The mentor has to be patient with the student teacher, because they are not used to being asked these self-refection questions. The mentor should know that self-flection is a skill that needs to be learnt but not everyone can do it right away. It takes time to before self-reflection skills become automatic.

B. **Explain:** The mentor has to explain the importance of self-reflection to student teachers to understand that in being a teacher we constantly need to do self-reflection. Even experienced teachers also need to self-reflect in order to review whether their students understand their lessons or not. Self-reflection is a skill that needs to be leant and should be started during the implementation of teaching practice. After the student teachers graduate they will have to know how to do self-reflection.

C. **Change the questions:** The mentor has to change from difficult or too broad questions (as mentioned above) to easy more concrete questions to help the student teachers to get started with self-reflection.
   Example:
- I observed that you did ... (a certain activity)... very well. How did you prepare for that?
- Do you think you reached the objectives of your lesson today? Why? How do you know that?

- Do you think every pupil has learnt something in this lesson? How did you arrange for that to happen?
- I noticed that you sometimes … (certain behaviour/activity)… Could you explain why you did that?

Step 3. Giving feedback by the mentor
The mentor should give feedback to student teacher on 2 main points, on observations and interpretations of the observations.

3.1 Observations
These observations made during teaching and learning activities concern:
- o the behaviour of the student teacher (I saw that you…..)
- o the content knowledge, teaching method and teaching aids that the student teacher used.
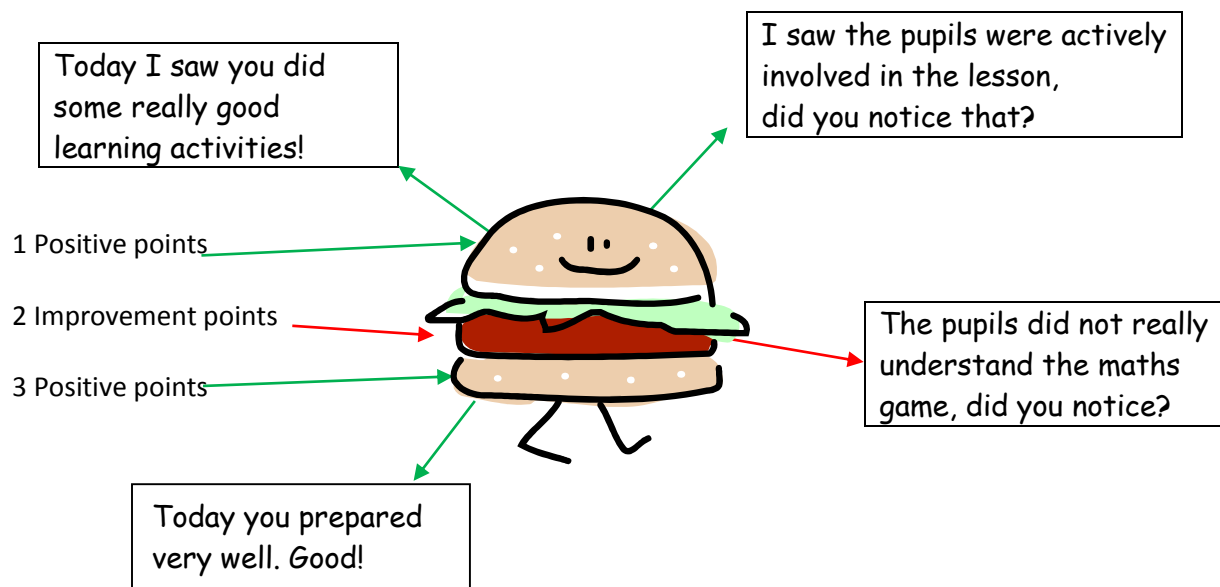
3.2 Interpretations of the observation
The mentor has to interpret the result of the observation.
- o "I have the impression that…….(example) you were very tired today….. is that correct…..?"
- o "In my opinion……."

Although in this phase you are focusing on professional working or technical skills, yet the psychosocial support also now remains important. The mentor has to be careful with interpretations because one cannot be sure if the interpretation of the situation is correct.

Hamburger Model
A good way for providing feedback is the Hamburger Model. Giving too many negative points to the student teachers could lead them to fear to give their innovatory ideas and to become dependent. The student teachers will learn better when the mentor shows that their activities are effective and successful. As a result, the student teachers increase their autonomy and are less dependent on others. Giving feedback by using the hamburger model means starting with some positive points first, then provide a few points for improvement and then close off with some positive points again.

Today I saw you did some really good learning activities!

I saw the pupils were actively involved in the lesson, did you notice that?

1 Positive points

2 Improvement points

3 Positive points

The pupils did not really understand the maths game, did you notice?

Today you prepared very well. Good!

Beginning:
The mentor has to mention some positive points first in order to motivate and encourage the student teacher. The student teacher is more likely to listen to your comments after a few compliments and positive points.

Next:
The mentor has to provide recommendations or constructive comments but it should not be too much. The mentor should raise only the important points which then can be implemented by the student teachers.

Finally:
The mentor ends the feedback by bringing one or two additional positive points to show that the student teachers are doing things correctly, and to ensure they will continue to apply the positive points as well.

Step 4. Ask the student teacher to respond to what has been raised
The mentor gives the student teacher a chance to react to the observations and interpretations mentioned. The student teacher can either agree or disagree to what the mentor has said. If the student teacher does not agree with what the mentor mentioned and gives good reasons for it, the mentor could change point of view or understand better where the student teacher is coming from and then prepare to discuss the solutions in step 5. Examples of guiding questions:
- *What do you think of the comments I gave?*
- *What's your point of view?*
- *Do you understand what I try to say?*
- *………………..*

The mentor has to actively listen to the reaction of the student teacher.
If the student teacher doesn't reply, the mentor can apply the same strategy as mentioned in Step 2; Patience, Explain, and Change your questions.

Step 5: Discuss findings and formulate alternative behaviour for improving the performance
The mentor raises around 2 or 3 improvement points in step 3 to be discussed further and to find solutions. For some improvement points the student teachers can find ways to improve by themselves after questions from the mentor such as:
- "Do you have an idea how you can improve on that points in the future? "

For other points for improvement the student teacher needs some ideas and alternatives from the mentor how to work on the points for improvement that were raised.
- "Is it a good idea if next time you do…………..?"
- "Maybe you could try to……."

Step 6. Round up

Summarise and Remaining questions
- Ask the student teachers to summarise the improvement points that will be implemented. If the student teachers could not describe all the points the mentor helps to summarise the main points again.
- Provide an opportunity for the student teacher to ask additional questions, if they have any.
- Ask if the student teacher is satisfied with this feedback session.

Next Appointment: Let the student teachers know when is the next observation or meeting.

The structure of the 6 steps of a feedback session in short

Steps	Content	The statements that mentor uses	Examples
STEP 1 Introduction	– Informal chat with the student teacher to break the ice – Explain the student teacher the objectives of the feedback session	– The objectives of this feedback are.... – Is that okay for you?	– *"The objective of this feedback is to discuss and find the solutions to improve your teaching and learning methods."*
STEP 2 Student teacher's impression of the results of the teaching and learning	The student teacher reflect on the results of teaching and learning (positive points and the improvement points)	– What is your understanding about…..? – What do you think about….? – What are the successful points?	– *"The positive points are…."* – *"The improvement points are…".*
STEP 3 Giving feedback by the mentor	3.1. Mentor communicates observations; what has the mentor seen/heard in terms of – Behaviour of the student teacher – Content methodology, teaching aids, and leaning outcomes	– I notice that you....... – I heard you say…. – This resulted in ……	– *"I noticed that you asked the same pupils to answer your questions. This way has made the other students become noisy."*
	3.2 Mentor communicates interpretations; What the mentor thinks, feels about the observation.	– I think you... – I wonder .... – I have the impression that ...	– *"I think you find it difficult to manage the class."* – *"I've seen that you are struggling to manage the class."*
STEP 4 Ask the student teacher to response to what have been raised	Reaction of the student (questions, does student recognize what mentor said, motives of the student, views)	– How do you see that? – What do you think of what I just said?	
STEP 5 Discuss findings and formulate alternative behaviour for improving the performance	The mentor and the student teacher discuss how to find possible solutions and recommendations for future implementation.	– What would you do to improve this problem in the future? – You should….	– *"Maybe you could try to..".* – *"What do you think of....?"*
STEP 6 Round up: questions and making appointment for the next meeting	Summary and Questions	– Ask student teacher to summarise the main points for the future implementation – Ask the student teachers if they have additional questions	– *"Please tell me the main points we discussed today."* – *"Do you have anything else you would like to ask or discuss?"*
	Next appointment	– Arrange the next meeting	– *"I will be here for the next observation on...(date)..."*

Part 4. Organisational aspects of feedback session

Objectives: To show the way how to prepare and plan in order to provide feedback successfully during the school visit.

4.1 Before providing feedback

1. Planning
   o Chose the practice school and appropriate timing
   o Make appointments with the students teachers
   o Identify clear topics

2. Try to apply the skills discussed in the feedback manual and study the assessment tools appropriately:
   a. Teaching practice guidelines (TTD guidelines)
   b. Lesson observation forms
   c. Daily Note book

3. Check the lesson plan the student teachers has prepared

4. Observe teaching and learning

5. Arrange the seats: The mentor needs to arrange the seats appropriately because it helps to enhance the process of feedback more effectively. If the seats are too close to each other the student teachers may feel uncomfortable or anxious but if the seats are too far from each other it would be hard for the student teachers to hear and this could result in them not paying attention or not feeling involved.

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6. Avoid environmental noises:
   o Noise: noise from machines, playing or screaming children, a telephone ringing, loudspeakers interfere with listening and make it hard to exchange information.
   o Temperature: too cold, or too hot circumstances can cause physical discomfort and it could distract the team from listening.
   o Lighting: choose a place with enough light in the room.

7. Avoid factors that may cause psychological noise or disturbance from oneself, such as feeling hungry, too tired, pain, too excited….etc. These feelings can impact the effectiveness of providing and receiving the information during the feedback session. If the mentor has a bad feeling during the feedback session it will influence the ability to listen to the student teacher's problems. Psychological noise can be:
   - Daydreaming: This is when we are not really listening to what someone is saying because our mind is drifting off to other things, and we are not really paying attention. There can be many reasons like feeling bored when listening to the speaker's story which you don't relate to, thinking about other things, lack of sleep.
   - Prejudice: Prejudice can lead to not getting the complete or right information because we assume we already know what the other person is going to say, or we assume what the other person will say is going to be wrong anyway.
   - Multitasking: If you are doing more than 1 thing at the same time, you are less concentrated on listening.

4.2 During the feedback session

Apply the six steps of the feedback session:
   Step 1: Introduction
   Step 2: Student teacher's own impression of the results of the teaching and learning
   Step 3: Giving feedback by the model teacher or teacher trainer
   Step 4: Ask the student teacher to respond to what has been raised
   Step 5: Discuss findings and formulate alternative behaviour for improving the performance
   Step 6: Round up: questions and making appointments for the next meeting

Note: Do not use the phone during the feedback session and put it on silent.

4.3 After the feedback session

- Write a clear report to keep for yourself and to submit it to relevant stakeholders.
- Communicate and discuss results with the people involved such as teacher trainers, model teachers, and school management.

Part 5. Annex

Annex 1: The observation form for Active Listening

Exercise: Watch a short video on active listening from DVD.

Please tick (√) if you see these aspects in the video

There are 5 main tools for Active Listening

	1st video	2nd video
1. Pay attention		
▪ Look at the speaker directly		
▪ Avoid being distracted by the environmental factors (phone rings)		
▪ Observe to the speaker's "body languages"		
2. Listening behaviour		
▪ Smile or use other facial expressions		
▪ Open minded		
▪ Sitting appropriately		
▪ Pay attention and understand the speaker		
▪ Use eye contact		
▪ Nod occasionally		
▪ Encourage the speaker with expressions like: yes, oh, huh, wow		
3. Summarise and ask questions to clarify		
▪ Paraphrasing: "What I'm hearing is…" or "Sounds like you are saying…"		
▪ Asking clarifying questions like: "What do you mean when you say…"		
4. Avoid judgment		
▪ Don't interrupt		
▪ Choose to listen rather than judge (be careful to let the student teacher finish the talking first)		
▪ Always allow the speaker to finish		
5. Respond appropriately		
▪ Be candid, open and honest in your response		
▪ Assert your opinions respectfully		
▪ Put yourself in the speaker's "shoes"		

Annex 2: Observation Form for Feedback session

This observation form can be used by:
- MoEYs and TTD
- POE
- The teaching practice committees of the PPTC/District/City
- Model teachers and teacher trainers can use this form to do self-assessment on their effectiveness of their feedback sessions

Practice School: ……………………………………….……PTTC: …………………………………...........
Teacher trainer: F/M   Subject: ....
Model teacher: F/M
Academic Year of STs: .... Sex of ST 1............Sex of ST 2........... Sex of ST 3............. Sex of ST 4...............

Start time: ....End Time: .... of feedback session

Observed in grade: ….......Subject taught: ……………………………..

What material does the student teacher use during teaching to take notes: …………………………………………………

What forms/materials does the mentor use to observe lesson: ....

Step 1 Introduction	1. The mentor creates an atmosphere of safety at the beginning of the meeting (blow off steam/breaking the ice).	0 Yes 0 No			
	2. The mentor clarifies the goals and content of the feedback session.	0 Yes 0 No			
Step 2: Student formulates own impressions/opinions	3. The mentor asks the ST to comment on own lesson and actions before giving own feedback.	0 Yes 0 No			
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Comments
	4. The mentor stimulates the ST to critically reflect on his/her own performance if the ST doesn't seem to get there on his/her own.					
Step 3: Giving feedback	5. The mentor clearly describes the observed teaching methodology to the ST.					
	6. The mentor clearly describes observed behaviour of the ST during the lesson to the pupils.					
	7. The mentor reports on interpretations of the observations.					

| Step 4: Ask student's reaction | 8. The mentor asks the student to respond to the observations and interpretations of the TT/MT. | | | | | |
| | 9. The TT/MT actively listens to the STs reaction. | | | | | |

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Comments
Step 5: Discuss findings together and formulate	10. The TT/MT encourages the ST to come up with their own solutions/alternative behaviour.					
	11. The TT/MT also provides options how to solve issues that were raised during the mentoring session.					
	12. The TT/MT summarizes during the mentoring session.					

Step 6: Round up	13. Did the TT/MT ask if the ST has remaining questions?	0 Yes 0 No	
	14. Was any advice given to the ST on how to plan for the next steps in the TP?	0 Yes 0 No	
	15. Does the mentor ask the student teachers to repeat the main points of the feedback?	0 Yes 0 No	
	16. Does the mentor ask the student teachers to take notes?	0 Yes 0 No	
	17. Did the TT/MT explain when the next mentoring session will take place?	0 Yes 0 No	

General	18. Feedback given was specific/concrete.	Very concrete	Concrete	Neutral	Not so Concrete	Not concrete at all
	19. Did the mentor mainly comment on the ST's strengths or mainly on weaknesses?	Only weakness	More on weakness	Both equally	more strength	Strengths only
	20. Were comments more constructive or more reprimanding?	Very repri.	Reprimanding	Neutral	Constructive	Very construct

Conclusion

Observer:…………………….. Date:…………………………….

Part 6. References

Documents

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