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A Corpus-driven Conversation Analysis Approach to Mentor-Mentee Interactions in a Practicum Context

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ABSTRACT

Effective collaboration of a mentor–mentee type is built on nonhierarchical, non-directive, frequent, meaningful, (in)formal and compassionate relationships (e.g., Arshavskaya 2014; Izadinia 2015; Kim – Schallert 2011; Long et al. 2013; Mena et al. 2017; Moser et al. 2019). Such contact opens a space for constructive conversations that build the intellectual, knowledge and social capital of teacher candidates, their future pupils and mentors (Langdon et al. 2014). Contrarily, contact based on a highly hierarchical expert–novice type leads to a supervisory rather than a supportive relationship (Jones et al. 2016). The supervisory type negatively influences the challenging apprenticeship of observation (Lortie 1975) and the shaping of teacher candidates’ teacher identity (Long et al. 2013; Palazzolo et al. 2019; Patrick 2013). This paper adopts a corpus-driven conversation analysis approach to nuances of *effective and good* mentor – mentee interactions during feedback sessions of student-teaching practica. The corpus consists of 109 utterances which were made by effective and experienced mentors and which are recorded in 11 transcript excerpts selected from three scientific articles. The utterances were used in this paper to develop a *framework of effective and good mentor communication*. This framework was built by assigning these 109 utterances to one of the three types of conversational frames outlined by Long et al. (2013), i.e., educative or supportive or evaluative, paired with one of three types of *eutoric* cues characterized as positive/good communication by Korwin-Piotrowska (2020), i.e., the human being/mentee or the topic or the conversation/dialogue. The findings show that there is a statistically significant difference between the frequency of utterances addressing the mentee and the topic in the educative frame and such frequency addressing the mentee and topic in the evaluative frame. In other words, in the educative frame utterances are topic-centered and in the evaluative frame they are mentee-centered. This framework can help in acquiring a better understanding of one’s linguistic choices when interacting with others.

Keywords: conversation analysis, mentor-mentee interactions, practicum.

1. Introduction

This paper utilizes a corpus-driven conversation analysis approach as it looks at mentor – mentee forms of communication by means of narratives enacted through face-to-face and online conversations. In particular, it refers to transcripts of mentor–preservice teacher conversations during feedback sessions of student-teaching practica. The point of reference is the thesis that such social interactions should reflect (family) relationships based on truth, sincerity and understanding, rejecting the policy of “smooth interpersonal functioning” (Korwin-Piotrowska 2020: 12, 55).

In this way, the paper addresses the neglected problem of reciprocal compassionate relationships in the context of pre-service teacher education in general and the quality of the practicum in particular (Kim – Schallert 2011; Long et al. 2013). Empirical findings point to the fact that effective collaboration of the mentor–mentee type is built on nonhierarchical, non-directive, frequent, meaningful, (in)formal and compassionate relationships (e.g., Arshavskaya 2014; Izadinia 2015; Kim – Schallert 2011; Long et al. 2013; Mena et al. 2017; Moser et al. 2019). Cultivating non-hierarchical relationships opens a space for productive conversations which further build the intellectual, knowledge and social capital of teacher candidates, their future pupils and mentors (Langdon et al. 2014; Long et al. 2013). Real human-human understanding via communication develops the parties’ healthy personality (Necki 1996: 55). Contrarily, contact during feedback sessions based on a highly hierarchical expert – novice type leads to a supervisory type of relationship (Jones et al. 2016; Long et al. 2013). Such relationships negatively influence the shaping of teacher candidates’ teacher identity (Long et al. 2013; Palazzolo et al. 2019; Patrick 2013; Soslau 2012). Most importantly, as stated by Kim – Schallert (2011: 1060; see also Dreer 2020: 677; Langdon et al. 2014: 93; Komorowska 2021), preservice teachers *may* project their (compassionate) relationships with mentors onto their future relationships with their own pupils.

Despite these tendencies, the relationship of the mentor–mentee type leaves much to be desired. For instance, as a rule of thumb (school) mentors and (school) administration tend to appraise mentees unrealistically, positively causing “an ideological meltdown” on the part of mentees (Smagorinsky et al. 2004: 22 quoted in Long et al. 2013: 181; Mena et al. 2017: 55). Also, making teacher candidates imitate “an assigned identity” rather than broaden their autonomy damages their confidence in developing their own unique (teacher) identity (Izadinia 2015: 5; Mena et al. 2017: 56-57).

In the end, an “[a]ddiction to praise can also reduce levels of motivation and autonomy” (Komorowska 2021: 38).

Accordingly, this paper examines attitudes hidden behind words and expressions reflecting specific conversational styles typical of *effective and good* post-lesson observation conferences. The inspiration for the introductory part of this paper is the Greek word *metaxú* “in-between”. *Metaxú* characterizes human existence as being “between immanence and transcendence, the sacred and the profane, finitude and eternity, determinacy, individual and community, self and other, unity and plurality, the fear and the promise of plentitude...” (Duraj 2017: 5). In this instance, *metaxú* refers to a positive inter-human borderland, a *metaxú* sphere which is attainable through positive/good communication (Korwin-Piotrowska 2019, 2020). The rules of positive/good communication are discussed here, following Korwin-Piotrowska (2020), in the context of *eutoric*, a new branch of rhetoric, described as “mutual listening, empathy and a constructive dialogue” (Korwin-Piotrowska 2017: 20). In turn, the main part of this paper constitutes a corpus-driven conversation microanalysis of transcripts of utterances made by experienced and effective university student-teaching mentors. This microanalysis gives insights into patterns of mentor-mentee interactions approximating the positive inter-human borderland, the *metaxú* sphere. This paper offers a description of a *framework of effective and good mentor communication* as it emerged from the examined corpus.

It is hoped that this framework will help university mentors gain a better understanding of their own linguistic choices when interacting with mentees, and plan their future interactions appropriately.

2. The art of conversation

There are many complexities to human comprehension. We establish, maintain and develop contact with others by using (non)verbal communication. Verbal communication is, of course, possible by means of language, which is a tool used to express facts as well as opinions and intentions. It also represents a reality in human minds, and it reflects cognitive processes used in processing information. Language is represented by words and meanings which are related, but separate psychological entities. In fact,

it is impossible to posit [a] one-to-one relationship between [a] linguistic form and meaning (or, [to] put it another way, between language form and function). The same linguistic, and inseparably,

paralinguistic form can have [a] different meaning depending on the speaker (who is saying it) and the context (how the speaker perceives the situation and the relationships among the participants) (Tannen 2005: 10-11).

Many words can be used and understood both literally and figuratively. Indeed, “each word can have an unlimited number of meanings, especially when used metaphorically” (Nęcki 1996: 197). Apart from this, there are many additional complexities involved in readily available human-to-human comprehension, such as those related to situational contexts, human diversities and complex cross-relationships. While it is ultimately impossible to achieve a state of full mutual understanding, positive communication can generate a specific positive inter-human borderland (Korwin-Piotrowska 2019, 2020).

2.1 The practical aspects of mentor communication

For some, mentor – mentee conversations leave a lasting impression. This is especially possible when such conversations cross the inter-human borderland (Korwin-Piotrowska 2020: 151). Such extensive and real dialogic experience can be a critical moment in the (professional) lives of the mentor and mentee, comparable to *Kairos*, which builds an exceptional “bridge” which exists between two people for the rest of their lives (Korwin-Piotrowska 2020: 149, 155, 156). Undoubtedly, practicum mentors bear the prime responsibility for being leading light facilitators of school placements turned into communities of practice, of learning, and of support (Chaliès et al. 2010; Arshavskaya 2014; Krutka et al. 2014; Montecinos et al. 2015; Palazzolo et al. 2019).

In practice, mentors’ roles take on a new aspect as they devote their time, space and readiness for the other party. Physically speaking, their body language should project acceptance, curiosity, engagement, openness, respect and trust. Psychologically speaking, mentors should cultivate the attitudes of mindfulness. Mindfulness is defined as a state of mind in which the attentional focus is in the present moment without judgment (Dekeyser et al. 2008; Kabat-Zinn 1990 quoted in Garner et al. 2018: 378). Linguistically speaking, mentors should be equipped with mediation skills. Their awareness of language ambiguity, its metaphorical nature and limitations can help them navigate a conversation expertly by stabilizing and monitoring it. Instances of these skills are reframing, renaming or recasting (Arshavskaya 2014: 136).

Thus, mentors' mediation is characterized by "re-framing the teacher's thinking about teaching toward a more expert way of thinking about teaching, re-naming the teacher's conceptions of teaching through expert discourse, and promoting the teacher's more expert understanding of teaching through the use of the pedagogical concepts of teaching" (Arshavskaya 2014: 136). For example, as stated by Arshavskaya (2014), the preservice teacher should strive to externalize the need to create a more compassionate relationship with pupils by stating that she wants them to feel that they are important and cared for so that the classes are special for them; the mentor should strive to reinforce this need of re-framing and re-naming this concept as a way of creating "a community of learners" who "invest more in the class than just getting the content" (Arshavskaya 2014: 133).

Mentors' mediation also means carefully withdrawing and giving time and space to the other party rather than appropriating the right to be correct. For example, Vásquez reflects thus: "as I began to analyze these data, both the program director and I were shocked to discover how much talk we produced relative to the TAs [teaching assistants]. This realization led to significant changes in the ways we conducted future meetings" (2004: 42). Likewise, Mena et al. maintain that "only a small number of mentors manage to create an environment in which PSTs [preservice teachers] are encouraged to raise more general questions and to discuss their own concerns" (2017: 57, based on Harrison et al. 2005).

Also, mentors' mediation includes differentiating between facts and opinions, as well as finding areas of partial understanding, similarity and agreement when it comes to diagnosing and solving (classroom) problems. The mentoring language used in a conversation should not be categorical, confusing, disorientating, humiliating, ironic or moralizing. Mentors should respect the mentees' perceptions, interpretations and their unique judgements of (classroom) incidents and events. Positive communication is built on intellectual and emotional empathy. While the former enables the making of accurate predictions about behavior, the latter enables the awareness of what someone else is feeling and effectively communicating it (based on Korwin-Piotrowska 2020: 140-155 chapter III/5; 2019: 67).

2.1.1 The art of listening

The art of listening constitutes both reflective and dialogic listening. Reflective listening assumes a mentor – mentee intellectual and emotional empathic engagement in communication. Such listening is active, attentive,

careful, close and intentional. Reactions include mimicry, gesture, posture, nodding, exclamations, commentary, and questions or silence. It is important to listen carefully all the way to the end of a sentence uttered, which helps in better understanding someone else's point. Other strategies enabling better understanding of what is "hidden between the lines" are paraphrases, clarifications and reflections (Suchańska 2007: 160).

Preservice teachers must feel safe to say whatever they think since "the more we can build trust, the more risk they'll take in their teaching and their learning, and the more they'll be willing to confront tough issues that will eventually shape their lives as teachers' (4-27-04, 3rd interview)" (Kim – Schallert 2011: 1065). Symptoms of a lack of reflective listening are disinterest, indifference and passiveness, as well as a willingness to make a rapid assessment and retort, trying to appropriate the content of what was said for one's own ends.

Dialogic listening moves beyond empathetic listening towards active intellectual and emotional engagement. Dialogic listening is possible by means of "sculpting mutual meaning" (Stewart – Thomas 2000: 234-256). For example, "if the majority of the discourse is centered on how the student teacher feels, recounting the lesson, and giving advice, as is typical of the *telling* style, then opportunities to discuss the complexities of learning how to teach and discovering the deep rationales behind decision-making are non-existent" (Soslau 2012: 777). Also, "while emotional support is an important aspect of the supervisor's role, by itself it does not allow for the development of a vision of ambitious instruction" (Long et al. 2013: 187). There are three reactions involved in this approach to listening which deepen mutual understanding towards working out new solutions. These reactions include asking for elaboration on a new issue, introducing metaphors, and using paraphrases as extensions of the interlocutor's ideas (Stewart – Thomas 2000: 247-251) (based on Korwin-Piotrowska 2020: 143-145 chapter III/5).

2.1.2 Three practical aspects of good mentor communication: The mentee, the topic, and the dialogue cues

Korwin-Piotrowska (2020) analyses forty-one linguistic choices with a view to achieving the inter-human borderland on the part of interlocutors. The choices are grouped in relation to (1) the human being, (2) the topic, and (3) the dialogue.

There are fifteen *eutoric* procedures to addressing a human being, including the following actions: *pro homine* & *pro personae bono*, encourage &

show interest, highlight the shared reality, use 1st person plural to develop a sense of community, suggest help/suggest sincerely, understand emotions, show respect for silence, support linguistically, support cognitively, show a positive attitude irrespective of disagreement, summarize mutual discrepancies, the act of *parrhesia*, a one-sided conversation, and introduce silence.

There are eighteen *eutoric* procedures related to a topic: treat a topic as a common cause, search for agreement, order and clarify issues, calibrate meanings, show subjectivity of judgements, accept the interlocutor's stances, find arguments for the interlocutor's thesis, delay (negative) answers, summarize in a subjective retrospective manner, ask for correction and verification, summarize partially with a question, hedge to maintain rapport, think alternatively, be empathetic with insights, highlight shared realities, suggest settling claims together, ask for questions and explanations, utilize paraphrases.

There are eight *eutoric* actions, which are metacommunicative in nature: provide comments showing appreciation of the dialogue, monitor and modify the dialogue, ask for clarification with reflection, self-correct, use politeness conventions, comment by means of politeness conventions in metacommunicative ways, signal topic changes as well as openings or closings of digressions, suggest undertaking decisions together (based on Korwin-Piotrowska 2020: 159-166).

2.2 Three practical aspects of effective mentor communication: Educative, supportive and evaluative frames

Long et al. (2013) analyze mentor-mentee interactions during post-observation meetings from the perspective of developing ambitious teaching. The vision of ambitious teaching has been a part of mathematics and science reform initiatives (Long et al. 2013: 180). Referring to a number of sources (Fennema – Romberg 1999; NAS 1996; NCTM 2000; NRC 2001, 2007; Windschitl et al. 2011), Long et al. suggest that

ambitious mathematics and science teaching emphasizes a student-centred pedagogy that enables students to know and use mathematics and science knowledge, to reason mathematically and scientifically, to test models and provide evidence-based explanations, and to participate productively in mathematical and scientific practices and discourse (2013: 179-180).

Categorizing, or framing, conversational interactions between university mentors and mentees into educative, supportive and evaluative shows how language and conversational style influence the effectiveness of such interactions (Long et al. 2013: 181). The educative, supportive and evaluative frames were identified in supervisors' comments, explanations and suggestions and highlighted by using Jefferson Transcript Notation (e.g., Atkinson – Heritage 2006).

The educative frame is characterized as “a willingness to give and receive feedback, suggestions, and explanations” (Long et al. 2013: 193). An example of this frame is the following mentor’s utterance: “*maybe just do sort of like a model of what they are going to do*” (Long et al. 2013: 184). The supportive frame in turn concentrates on emotional support, redirecting the conversation “away from critical comments”; an example of this frame is the following mentor’s utterance: “*I understand, again, there’s parameters and, you know, there’s only so much you can do in certain situations*” (Long et al. 2013: 184). The evaluative frame is characterized by (extensive) discussions and repetitions “to emphasize importance of issue” rather than provide preservice teachers with the “opportunity to explore and develop a vision of ambitious instruction” (Long et al. 2013: 184). An example of this frame is the following mentor’s opinion: “*I think you made very clear directions. That’s one of the things I see that you do more and more as we go along. Your directions are clear and there’s no confusion as I look around the room ... so than you for being really top-notch in that regard*” (Long et al. 2013: 184).

3. Corpus-driven conversation analysis of mentor utterances in the context of feedback sessions

3.1 Research aims and questions

This part of the paper examines post-observation university mentors’ utterances. The corpus of 11 excerpts and 109 utterances was accessed through three scientific articles by Arshavskaya (2014), Kim – Schallert (2011) and Long et al. (2013) which were selected from a set of 23 articles constituting datasets of a part of ongoing larger corpus-based research. The rationale behind this corpus selection is that it includes excerpts of effective and experienced mentor utterances. In these articles, the excerpts were examined to analyze affairs between university mentors and their mentees, such as mediation in dialogic exchanges (Arshavskaya 2014), caring relationships (Kim – Schallert 2011), and conversational frames (Long et al. 2013).

It is assumed that a close analysis of effective and experienced mentors' words and sentences/utterances can help develop a *framework of effective and good mentor communication*. In the course of this analysis there were four stages. First, the supervisors' turns were singled out from the conversations. Turns are defined here as uninterrupted flows of speech during turn-takings which occurred during those conversations. Next, the mentors' uninterrupted flows of talking were divided into utterances. If the filled pauses included such hesitations as 'uhm', 'well', 'you know' which referred to what had been said, they were counted as utterances. If these filled pauses were used to signal a new topic, they were counted as utterance boundaries. Likewise, the unfilled utterances, such as hesitations, were counted as utterance boundaries within a turn. Then, the 109 utterances were assigned to one of the three types of conversational frames, i.e., educative, or supportive, or evaluative (Long et al. 2013). Finally, the utterances were paired with one of the three types of *eutoric* cues characterizing good communication, i.e., the human being/mentee, or the topic, or the dialogue (Korwin-Piotrowska 2020). Finally, the utterances were counted and coded as numbers.

The following research question was formulated: What is a model mentor conversational style with reference to the educative frame?

3.2 Research analysis and results

Altogether, in the corpus of 11 excerpts there were conversations among eight preservice teachers and their six teacher educators at universities in the United States. As already stated, in transcript excerpts nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 (Long et al. 2013), each mentor's uninterrupted utterances at each turn that took place were separated, counted and numbered.

Frames	Educative		Supportive		Evaluative
Sources	Arshavskaya 2014	Long et al. 2013	Long et al. 2013	Kim – Schallert 2011	Long et al. 2013
transcript	excerpt no 8	excerpts no 4, 5, 6, 7	excerpt no 3	excerpts no 9, 10, 11	excerpts no 1, 2
participants	1 mentor / 1 mentee	2 mentors / 2 mentees	1 mentor / 1 mentee	1 mentor / 3 mentees	1 mentor / 1 mentee
Contact	a blog (online)	face-to-face	face-to-face	TeachNet (online)	face-to-face

In transcript excerpts 8, 9, 10, 11 (Arshavskaya 2014; Kim – Schallert 2011) each mentor's quoted utterances were selected and used in the sources. Furthermore, they were separated, counted and numbered in the order in which they appeared there. In this way, it was possible to keep a record of all mentors' utterances in this corpus. In total, there are 11 transcript excerpts.

3.2.1 Part 1 (see Table 1 in the Appendix)

This corpus illustrates the educative conversational frame. It is based on transcript excerpts nos. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. Transcript excerpt **no 8** (Arshavskaya 2014) uncovers a teacher educator's mediation with an MA TESL¹ preservice teacher via a dialogic blog as an assignment for the MA TESL teaching practicum. The teacher educator is a professor with extensive experience in ESL teaching, supervising and mentoring MA TESL preservice teachers (Arshavskaya 2014: 131).

Transcript excerpt **no 4** (Long et al. 2013) reveals how a university supervisor created partially educative experience in a face-to-face conversation with a mathematics preservice teacher. The university supervisor is a secondary mathematics supervisor with less than five years of teaching experience hired by a university to mentor student teachers during their practicum. The broader aim of the teacher education program was "to prepare student teachers to adopt ambitious teaching practices" (Long et al. 2013: 182). Transcript excerpts **nos. 5, 6, 7** (Long et al. 2013) present how a university supervisor provided a science preservice teacher with educative experience in a face-to-face conversation. The university supervisor is a secondary science supervisor with less than five years of teaching experience hired by a university to mentor student teachers during their practicum. The broader aim of the teacher education program was "to prepare student teachers to adopt ambitious teaching practices" (Long et al. 2013: 182).

These excerpts lead to productive conversations and discussions highlighting specific critical incidents and events and the asking of probing questions. Detailed analysis of the linguistic cues in these transcript excerpts allowed categorization of the utterances into the dominating educative experience (37 utterances nos. 1-37) as well as, single examples of utterances categorized into supportive (5 utterances nos. 38-42) and evaluative (3 utterances nos. 43-45) experience. Table 1 contains all 45 utterances.

¹ Master of Arts (MA) in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL).

3.2.2 Part 2 (see Table 2 in the Appendix)

This corpus illustrates the supportive conversational frame. It is based on transcript excerpts nos. 3, 9, 10, 11. Transcript excerpt **no. 3** (Long et al. 2013) shows the flow of a face-to-face conversation between a university supervisor and a biology preservice teacher. The university supervisor is a secondary science supervisor with over 20 years of teaching experience hired by a university to mentor student teachers during their practicum. The broader aim of the teacher education program was “to prepare student teachers to adopt ambitious teaching practices” (Long et al. 2013: 182).

Transcript excerpts **nos. 9, 10, 11** (Kim – Schallert 2011) contain a teacher educator’s responses, via the online posting medium *TeachNet*, to three preservice literacy teachers’ public reactions to their course readings. The teacher educator is “a professor of literacy, the lead instructor of the program preparing future primary teachers of literacy. A recognized figure both on campus and in the field, he was known as an excellent teacher educator” (Kim – Schallert 2011: 1061).

These excerpts are characterized mainly by emotional support with a limited amount of critical, deepened explanations of the matters in question. A detailed analysis of the linguistic cues in these transcript excerpts allowed the categorization of the utterances into the dominating supportive (24 utterances nos. 51-74), educative (5 utterances nos. 46-50) and evaluative (10 utterances nos. 75-84) experience. Table 2 contains all 39 utterances.

3.2.3 Part 3 (see Table 3 in the Appendix)

This corpus illustrates the evaluative frame. It is based on transcript excerpts **nos. 1, 2** (Long et al. 2013). They provide an example of a face-to-face conversation between a university supervisor and a preservice mathematics teacher. The supervisor is a secondary mathematics supervisor with over 20 years of teaching experience hired by a university to mentor student teachers during their practicum. The broader aim of the teacher education program was “to prepare student teachers to adopt ambitious teaching practices” (Long et al. 2013: 182).

These excerpts are based on detailed descriptions of pupils’ behavior with little or no input of how to refine the practicum. Detailed analysis allowed for a distinction between the dominating evaluative experience (19 utterances no 91-109), educative experience (4 utterances no 85-88) and supportive experience (2 utterances no 89-90). Table 3 contains all 25 utterances.

3.2.4 Sum up of parts 1-3

In total, there are 109 utterances in these 11 transcript excerpts, as shown below:

Frames	Educative	Supportive		Evaluative	
Sources	Arshavskaya 2014	Long et al. 2013	Long et al. 2013	Kim – Schallert 2011	Long et al. 2013
transcript	excerpt no 8	excerpts no 4, 5, 6, 7	excerpt no 3	excerpts no 9, 10, 11	excerpts no 1, 2
number of mentors' utterances	14	31	13	26	25
total in frames	45		39		25
Total	109				

Frame	Table	Educative	Supportive	Evaluative	Total
Table 1		37	5	3	45
Table 2		5	24	10	39
Table 3		4	2	19	25
Total		46	31	32	109
		109			

3.2.5 Part 4

In order to design a *framework of mentors' effective and good communication* in this corpus, the 109 utterances, assigned to the three frames, were also assigned to 41 *eutoric* cues within the three groups: the mentee / the topic / the dialogue. The quantity of the 109 utterances as categorized into the three *eutoric* cues and frames are shown below:

Frames	Educative (46 utterances)	Supportive (31 utterances)	Evaluative (32 utterances)
the mentee	5	38, 39, 40, 41, 51, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 89, 90	43, 44, 45, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 84, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 109

the topic	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 85, 86, 87, 88	42, 52, 58, 59, 60, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74	83, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 106, 107, 108
the dialogue		61	

3.3 Findings

In order to test whether there was a relationship between the *eutoric* cues and frame types, the χ^2 test was used. This test verified whether there was a statistically significant difference between the expected frequencies, i.e., as specified in the research question (What is a model mentor conversational style with reference to the educative frame?), and the observed frequencies in the contingency table. The contingency table included two variables associated with *eutoric* cues (category: the mentee, the topic, the dialogue) and conversational frame types (category: educative, supportive, evaluative). However, taking into account a single sentence in the category: dialogue (i.e., sentence 61), this category was excluded from this analysis. Consequently, the variable *eutoric* cues had two categories: the mentee and the topic. The χ^2 post-hoc analysis was based on adjusted standardized residuals. Additionally, the Cramér’s V was used to assess the effect size.

The findings show that there is a statistically significant relationship between *eutoric* cues and conversational frames (see table 4).

Table 4. The relationship between the two types of eutoric cues and the three types of conversational frames in the corpus

Variables	<i>Eutoric</i> cues			
	the mentee		the topic	
	N	%	N	%
Frame type: educative	1	2.2%	45	97.8%
Frame type: supportive	12	40.0%	18	60.0%
Frame type: evaluative	19	59.4%	13	40.6%

$\chi^2_{(df=2)} = 31.76; p < 0.001; \text{Cramér's } V = 0.54$

Additionally, post-hoc analysis shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the frequency of the mentee category and the frequency of the topic category in frame types: educative ($p < 0.001$). Additionally, there is a statistically significant difference between the frequency of the mentee cues and frequency of the topic cues in the evaluative frame type: evaluative ($p < 0.001$). However, there is no difference between the frequency of the mentee cues and the frequency of the topic cues in the supportive frame type: supportive ($p = 0.134$).

To sum up, the model mentor conversational style emerging from this corpus shows that: (1) in the educative frame (characterizing effective interactions), the *eutoric* cues (characterizing good communication) focus on the topic (97.8%) rather than on the mentee or the dialogue; and (2) in the evaluative frame, the majority of *eutoric* cues address the mentee (60%) rather than the topic or the dialogue, as illustrated in Fig. 1.

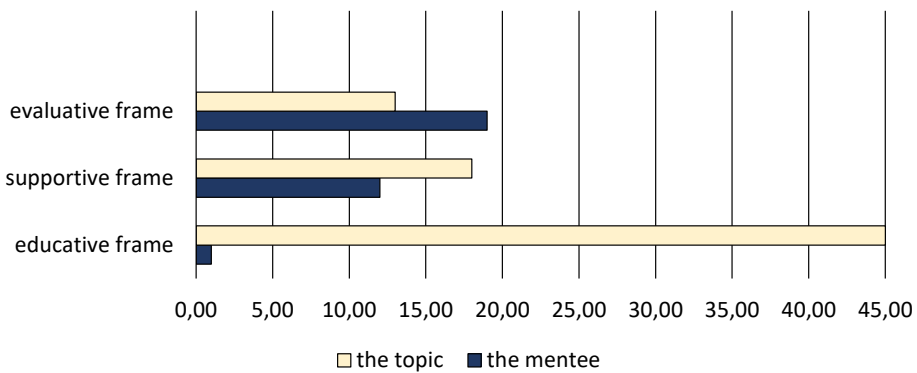


Fig. 1. The relationship between *eutoric* cues and conversational frames in the model mentor conversational style.

4. Conclusions

As outlined above, in preservice teacher education in general, and in the practicum context in particular, the matter of reciprocal compassionate relationships does not seem to be given the attention it deserves. Caring relationships between mentor and mentee positively contribute to future teachers' autonomy and readiness to take calculated risks. The mentor-mentee rapport enjoyed during the practicum positively influences future teachers' caring relationships with their pupils. It also enhances the development and maintenance of a healthy teacher identity.

The evidence scope of this article was limited to a corpus of mentors' exchanges in feedback sessions which were examined in three scientific articles, the aim of which was to pinpoint effective mentor-mentee interactions related to mediation in dialogic exchanges, building compassionate relationships and developing ambitious teaching through the educative conversational frame. The novelty here was the attempt to build a new framework of effective and excellent mentor conversational style as a result of analyzing this corpus. The framework was built on six categories of linguistic cues characterizing effective and clear communication. The conversational style emerging from this framework, which rests on the foundation of this corpus, shows that most of the utterances were educative in nature and concentrated on the topic.

To sum up, clear and effective communication in this academic setting depends on the sharing of similar views, the providing of reciprocal responses, and the cultivating of partnerships which benefit each interlocutor by means of instructive, mutual dialogue (Al-Mekhlafi 2010; Kim – Schallert 2011; Okraj 2017: 56).

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APPENDIX

Table 1. 45 mentors’ utterances providing dominating **educative** (nos. 1-37) as well as supportive (nos. 38-42) and evaluative experience (nos. 43-45)

<p>Educative frame</p> <p>educative experience (suggestions for improvement)</p>	<p>(1) “... think of it as you are learning with the students... if you are not sure of the answer it is <i>OK</i> to say so but then to reason out loud why you think one particular answer is better than another, and let them reason out loud too, and together see if you can come up with the various ways in which you all understand the question/answer. (Blog entry, 3 February 2008)” (Arshavskaya 2014: 132-133).</p> <p>(2) “this <i>seems like</i> you have a good strategy. (Blog entry, 3 February 2008)” (Arshavskaya 2014: 133).</p> <p>(3) “‘... <i>if</i> you make it [an ice-breaker activity] quick and fun those who come late will think they missed out on something and may want to come on time’ (Blog entry, 3 February 2008)”* (Arshavskaya 2014: 133).</p> <p>(4) “‘Next class bring in something to eat (a box of donuts, or something small) use them as rewards for doing/saying something for the first 15 minutes and then quickly put them away – those coming in late will again think they missed something’ (Blog entry, 3 February 2008)” (Arshavskaya 2014: 133).</p> <p>(5) “... I appreciate your comments about caring for students – this is critical in creating a community of learners and in getting students to invest more in the class than just getting the content. (Blog entry, 6 February 2008)” (Arshavskaya 2014: 133).</p> <p>(6) “... <i>sounds like</i> giving them a bit of ownership over even a small aspect of your course (the topic of their presentations) has made a huge difference in terms of their engagement and motivation. (Blog entry, 8 March 2008)” (Arshavskaya 2014: 134).</p> <p>(7) “With all that instructional paraphrasing going on, and in particular for beginning-level students, making your recasts and expansions explicit/concrete is essential. You did a lot of this, by writing new words on the board, but <i>I noticed that</i> very few students wrote them down. You <i>might want</i> to either ask them to write down everything that you write on the board, or you can write it down during the break, and then either give the word/phrase list to the students or <i>perhaps</i> have them do something with the list (create a concept map, or tell a round-robin story using each of the words, etc.). This <i>just</i> makes your instructional paraphrasing more concrete, more permanent, so now they can refer back to these words/phrases in other contexts or for other assignments... (Blog entry, 10 April 2008)” (Arshavskaya 2014: 135).</p>
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- (8) "I noticed that you do a lot of instructional paraphrasing. This [instructional paraphrasing] is an excellent instructional strategy as it shows them [the students] that you are trying to build bridges between what they know and what you are trying to teach them. It also allows you to recast students' contributions that may be difficult for the rest of the class to understand. (Blog entry, 10 April 2008)" (Arshavskaya 2014: 135).
- (9) "... all this sort of situating makes your instructional goals clear, the content/skills of your lesson transparent. (Blog entry, 10 April 2008)" (Arshavskaya 2014: 135).
- (10) "... so, for example, you *might have begun* with something like, 'Today we are going to continue our discussion of the professions, but today we are going to talk about the changing roles of men and women in different professions...'" (Blog entry, 10 April 2008)" (Arshavskaya 2014: 135).
- (11) "This *may seem* trivial to you but it is essential that you and the students can walk away from any of your classes and articulate what they have learned and why." (Blog entry, 16 April 2008)" (Arshavskaya 2014: 135).
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- (12) "... *yeah. Okay.* So when you're looking at ... *Okay ...* So what do you see when you look at this. ... *right.* (Excerpt 4 lines 85, 87, 89, 91)" (Long et al. 2013: 189-190).
- (13) "So, and that is exactly what the comment was that *maybe* we can try and go for a little more student talk and interaction..." (Excerpt 4 lines 93-94) (Long et al. 2013: 189-190).
- (14) "... and there's ways that you can do that. There's lots of creative ways that you can have them *you know* do more exploration and just have it be less work on you – less teacher-driven..." (Excerpt 4 lines 96-97) (Long et al. 2013: 189-190).
- (15) "... and more student-driven. So I just wrote down a couple of examples of maybe ideas like you could have them measuring the sides so they get out a ruler and they measure each side and then they..." (Excerpt 4 lines 99-100) (Long et al. 2013: 189-190).
- (16) "... kind of come up with some conclusions..." (Excerpt 4 line 102) (Long et al. 2013: 189-190).
- (17) "... like what did you notice about this triangle. Turn to your partner and talk to them about what you noticed. All sides are equal. Okay. Well what do you think would be a good name for this kind of triangle. And then what do you notice about this triangle ... that kind of thing. (Excerpt 4 lines 104-106, 108)" (Long et al. 2013: 189-190).
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- (18) "... if they were to work out this problem right here..." (Excerpt 5 lines 12-13) (Long et al. 2013: 191).

- (19) "... and be able to *you know* work it as if you were doing stoichiometry..." (Excerpt 5 lines 15) (Long et al. 2013: 191).
- (20) "... they would be able to come up well the reason why *you know* or the difference between normality and molarity and you can *sort of* explain it to them..." (Excerpt 5 lines 17-18) (Long et al. 2013: 191).
- (21) "... conceptually what means because *I think* students are still..." (Excerpt 5 lines 20) (Long et al. 2013: 191).
- (22) "... a little bit confused about the difference between normality and molarity..." (Excerpt 5 lines 22) (Long et al. 2013: 191).
- (23) "... I mean it's *really* simple lab which *you know would help* them..." (Excerpt 5 lines 24-25) (Long et al. 2013: 191).
- (24) "... but as you move forward with more complex concepts *I think it's helpful* to have that basic foundation." (Excerpt 5 lines 27) (Long et al. 2013: 191).
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- (25) "*one more suggestion* that I have is *maybe* to visually show them what they will be doing during..." (Excerpt 6 line 131) (Long et al. 2013: 192).
- (26) "... the lab, so here I *would draw you know* even on the board or on your lab handout *you know*..." (Excerpt 6 line 133) (Long et al. 2013: 192).
- (27) "... where's the base where's the acid..." (Excerpt 6 line 135) (Long et al. 2013: 192).
- (28) "... right. and see here. Also you can even put the amount..." (Excerpt 6 line 137) (Long et al. 2013: 192).
- (29) "... and the known amount..." (Excerpt 6 line 139) (Long et al. 2013: 192).
- (30) "... and you're being asked for so that visually they can *sort of*..." (Excerpt 6 line 141) (Long et al. 2013: 192).
- (31) "... okay as I move through this activity when I do this this is exactly what I am doing..." (Excerpt 6 line 143) (Long et al. 2013: 192).
- (32) "right. and I think this would also help them to bridge this connection right here..." (Excerpt 6 line 145) (Long et al. 2013: 192).
- (33) "... as they are being asked to solve the unknown *okay*..." (Excerpt 6 line 147) (Long et al. 2013: 192).
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- (34) "one more thing that *I thought may be* to *sort of* minimize the time that is spent on the procedural stuff getting ready *you know maybe* just do *sort of like* a model..." (Excerpt 7 lines 156-157) (Long et al. 2013: 192).
- (35) "... of what they are going to do. 'Okay. First you're going to get you know your acid and you're going to put this in this beaker and you can sort of do it with them..." (Excerpt 7 lines 159-160) (Long et al. 2013: 192).

Educative frame	educative experience (suggestions for improvement)	<p>(36) "... model it with them and then you know you're going to get your titration and so on and so forth and here's how you're going <i>you know</i> add the number of base into how you are going to mix the different solutions. And here's how are you going to read it so that when..." (Excerpt 7 lines 162-164) (Long et al. 2013: 192).</p> <p>(37) "... they get into their groups they probably spent more than half the time trying to get the things ready I mean ... yeah of course..." (Excerpt 7 lines 166-167) (Long et al. 2013: 192).</p>
	supportive experience	<p>(38) "'[W]hat you are experiencing is <i>pretty normal</i> for a novice teacher.' (Blog entry, 22 February 2008)" (Arshavskaya 2014: 134).</p> <p>(39) "This <i>may seem</i> trivial to you but..." (Blog entry, 16 April 2008) (Arshavskaya 2014: 135).</p> <p style="text-align: center;">☺☺☺</p> <p>(40) "okay when they get so when they before they were taking their notes at school, at home. Then what are they doing in class, just like working through practice problems" (Excerpt 4 lines 75-76) (Long et al. 2013: 189-190).</p> <p style="text-align: center;">☺☺☺</p> <p>(41) "... and I understand why you are trying to do this..." (Excerpt 5 lines 24-25) (Long et al. 2013: 191).</p> <p style="text-align: center;">☺☺☺</p> <p>(42) "I mean that's something you can easily go over a couple of times with them." (Excerpt 6 line 133) (Long et al. 2013: 192).</p>
	evaluative experience	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">no suggestions for improvement</p> <p>(43) "It was a pleasure to watch you teach yesterday. It is obvious to me that you have all of the management/procedural strategies and techniques of an experienced teacher. (Blog entry, 10 April 2008)" (Arshavskaya 2014: 135).</p> <p style="text-align: center;">☺☺☺</p> <p>(44) "... always thinking academically. Academic language. So, that's a really good tool for that, and then also a couple of times when you were asking the kids questions you did a good job of having them explain why. So you said why is that when they were responding and then I <i>really</i> liked the closure with the sorting game, so that that was <i>really</i> good. So as for next time. So think. <i>Okay</i>. So let's look at the form here and just see <i>like</i> what you see when you're <i>like</i> looking at that in terms of what's going on (Excerpt 4 lines 56-61)" (Long et al. 2013: 189-190).</p> <p style="text-align: center;">☺☺☺</p> <p>(45) "<i>yeah I think</i> they're still not clear on this. The purpose of the lab but..." (Excerpt 6 line 149) (Long et al. 2013: 192).</p>

Table 2. 39 mentors’ utterances providing educative (nos. 46-50) as well as dominating **supportive** (nos. 51-74) and evaluative (nos. 75-84) experience

Supportive frame	educative experience (suggestions for improvement)	<p>(46) “She was one of only two people, <i>I think</i>, who actually responded to this reading. I just love the way, I love that paragraph ... the idea that in reader response, we’re really talking about a relationship of a person with the text or the author is a new way of thinking for them, and she <i>really</i> put it together nicely, <i>I thought</i>. (4-27-04, 3rd interview)” (Kim & Schallert 2011: 1064).</p> <p>(47) “I’m glad you took it on ... she’s <i>really</i> a wonderful person ... you would like her a lot ... but that’s <i>probably</i> not relevant ... <i>right?</i> (Paul Jones/3-29-04)” (Kim & Schallert 2011: 1065).</p> <p>(48) “but never perfect ... always a limitation ... careful ... ‘the most cited research journal in education.’ Do you really think it <i>would</i> get in this journal if it <i>were</i> flawed...? <i>The fact is</i> that there has been plenty of opinion but no data on this... (Paul Jones/3-29-04)” (Kim & Schallert 2011: 1065).</p> <p>(49) “Yikes ... I am going to send this review to her ... (Paul Jones/3-29-04)” (Kim & Schallert 2011: 1065).</p> <p style="text-align: center;">☼☼☼</p> <p>(50) “And I just had a question here. In the question it says ‘three theories’ and then I heard you using the word ‘hypotheses’. Do they use them interchangeably or ... ” (Excerpt 3 lines 34-35) (Long et al. 2013: 188).</p>
	supportive experience no suggestions for improvement	<p>(51) “There’s no question mark on Michelle. She’ll be great. She <i>just</i> needs more space for her personality to come out a bit” (Kim & Schallert 2011: 1063).</p> <p>(52) “hold on to this ... despite what you might hear, this is the assumption you must make... (Paul Jones/3-23-04)” (Kim & Schaller 2011: 1063).</p> <p>(53) “question everything ... I love the notion of being critical but not cynical ... ask questions because we can learn. (Paul Jones/3-29-04)” (Kim & Schallert 2011: 1063).</p> <p>(54) “I watch for this because this is new ... <i>I mean</i>, if you look back through her comments, this is the first time she’s taken a stance, <i>I think</i>, and this isn’t very strong but at least it’s a start. (4-15-04, 2nd interview)” (Kim & Schallert 2011: 1063).</p> <p>(55) “She is having great tutoring experience with just a wonderful kid ... It’s just been <i>really, really</i> positive ... She’s the one I know the least ... But again, I don’t worry because I’ve got another year with them. It often happens that there are some kids that <i>sort of</i> stay in the background during the first semester and as they begin to get into a classroom situation, they come out <i>a little bit</i> more. (4-15-04, 2nd interview)” (Kim & Schallert 2011: 1063).</p>

- (56) "There isn't a level of understanding or trust yet of her for me that she can open herself up yet. It'll happen. It's just going to take a little bit more time" (4-15-04, 2nd interview)" (Kim & Schallert 2011: 1065).
- (57) "she must feel safe to say whatever she thought in TeachNet" (4-27-04, 3rd interview)" (Kim & Schallert 2011: 1065).
- (58) "[T]he more we can build trust, the more risk they'll take in their teaching and their learning, and the more they'll be willing to confront tough issues that will eventually shape their lives as teachers' (4-27-04, 3rd interview)" (Kim & Schallert 2011: 1065).
- (59) "HA!!! And stay out of trouble as well? No fear ... I don't know this author. Blast away (Paul Jones/4-07-04)" (Kim & Schallert 2011: 1065).
- (60) "We've got to learn to respond to each other and that will take a little time" (6-17-04, 4th interview)" (Kim & Schallert 2011: 1066).
- (61) "I have to be *really* careful about how I respond to her' (6-17-04, 4th interview)" (Kim & Schallert 2011: 1066).
- (62) "I have to be *really, really* careful. I'm not as circumspect as I should be in responding to certain people. We've got to learn to respond to each other and that will take a little time. (6-17-04, 4th interview)" (Kim & Schallert 2011: 1066).
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- (63) "we were discussing the way lesson was broken up so the first part. You did warm-up and you had an agenda on the screen for them and they revisited some materials you'd done before. And looking at the three theories of how life on earth originated. *Okay*. And they you gave them a few minutes while you went around and stamped the homework..." (Excerpt 3 lines 1-4) (Long et al. 2013: 188).
- (64) "So this homework is like something that they already have printed out ahead of time or just something you assign each day for ... practice ... last class..." (Excerpt 3 lines 6-7, 9, 11) (Long et al. 2013: 188).
- (65) "*Okay. All right*. So, you stamped that and then how will you check for completion on that. *Just* you basically as you go around and stamp you're just looking for completion..." (Excerpt 3 lines 13-14) (Long et al. 2013: 188).
- (66) "*Okay. All right* and then you used a random call method to choose students to give their answers that they'd written for the three theories and answered hydrothermal vents and then you asked some other additional questions that the other students answered. And then Mark said meteorites..." (Excerpt 3 lines 16-18) (Long et al. 2013: 188).
- (67) "and again, you elaborated ad asked some more questions. And then Steven said pass..." (Excerpt 3 line 20) (Long et al. 2013: 188).

Supportive frame	supportive experience	<p>(68) “does Steven pass very often...” (Excerpt 3 line 22) (Long et al. 2013: 188).</p> <p>(69) “... but Vicky volunteered to answer...” (Excerpt 3 line 24) (Long et al. 2013: 188).</p> <p>(70) “and he said that large bacteria is that what she said...” (Excerpt 3 line 26) (Long et al. 2013: 188).</p> <p>(71) “... found underneath the surface of the earth.” (Excerpt 3 line 28) (Long et al. 2013: 188).</p> <p>(72) “... and then you elaborated on that as well. <i>Okay</i> and a few more students had some input there...” (Excerpt 3 line 30) (Long et al. 2013: 188).</p> <p>(73) “<i>All right</i>. So then you told them to put the warm up away and all that took about 15 minutes or so. ... (Excerpt 3 line 32) (Long et al. 2013: 188).</p> <p>(74) ... with hypotheses <i>okay I was just curious</i>” (Excerpt 3 line 38) (Long et al. 2013: 188)”</p>
	evaluative experience	no suggestions for improvement

Table 3. 25 mentor's utterances providing educative (nos. 85-88), supportive (nos. 89-90) as well as dominating **evaluative** (nos. 91-109) experience

Evaluative frame	educative experience(suggestions for improvement / reflection)	<p>(85) "what would be your impression of the class today as far as were they engaged were there a bunch of kids that were absolutely tuned out not involved what would be your overall impression..." (Excerpt 1 lines 84-85) (Long et al. 2013: 185).</p> <p>(86) "... they were doing some considerable work" (Excerpt 1 line 116) (Long et al. 2013: 186).</p> <p style="text-align: center;">***</p> <p>(87) "if it's just oral learning it's not going to work for these kids..." (Excerpt 2 line 239) (Long et al. 2013: 187).</p> <p>(88) "I thought you used some very high level questioning responding skills in here and examples of that are here's the big question how did you find it." (Excerpt 2 line 265) (Long et al. 2013: 187).</p>
	supportive experience	<p>(89) "contrary to what you might have felt - ..." (Excerpt 1 line 116) (Long et al. 2013: 186).</p> <p style="text-align: center;">***</p> <p>(90) "or maybe even less than you expected..." (Excerpt 2 line 259) (Long et al. 2013: 187).</p>
	evaluative experience (no suggestions for improvement)	<p>(91) "that's interesting that you brought up <i>yeah</i> Michael. I didn't have his name. I just said you direct a boy to a text. Boy being Brandon." (Excerpt 1 lines 96-97) (Long et al. 2013: 186).</p> <p>(92) "Now that I know it's Michael and you called it something like a weird red thing and he got it he went over and picked up a textbook." (Excerpt 1 lines 99-100) (Long et al. 2013: 186).</p> <p>(93) "... and came back to his chair and did look in there as a source of info and did get involved in that. Then what I saw with him was he asked one of the boys up here, who is obviously probably one of the really bright dudes, <i>or something</i>." (Excerpt 1 lines 102-104) (Long et al. 2013: 186).</p> <p>(94) "... for help and he wanted the boy to come back here and the boy wanted to stay up there and I wanted to say come on Brandon. Go up there it's all right." (Excerpt 1 lines 106-107) (Long et al. 2013: 186).</p> <p>(95) "... there is an empty chair but that is not my place. I am supposed to be a fly on the wall here, so I didn't but then what I noticed was that he wasn't maybe as you suspected he wasn't totally not involved in my estimation anyway. He where [researcher] sitting he asked that boy right in front of him for some help..." (Excerpt 1 lines 109-112) (Long et al. 2013: 186).</p>

- (96) "... and there was some dialogue back and forth which I was pleased. [student] it seemed like the one on her left there. Right here where I'm sitting did have some things going on and there was some and my listening to them was again..." (Excerpt 1 lines 114-116) (Long et al. 2013: 185-186).
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- (97) "at least as half the class..." (Excerpt 2 line 231) (Long et al. 2013: 187).
- (98) have a background as second language learners and I think what I am seeing is that you make provisions for that I know in your lesson planning you do and in your actual teaching with the visual things you put up on screen..." (Excerpt 2 lines 234-236) (Long et al. 2013: 187).
- (99) and the ways that you represent so that *because you know* and we've talked about it at great length *about you know...*" (Excerpt 2 line 238-239) (Long et al. 2013: 187).
- (100) "... and that's not what you are doing so thank you for that. I think you made very clear directions. That's one of the things I see that you do more and more as we go along. Your directions are clear and there's no confusion as I look around the room there's not a lot of kids looking rolling their eyes looking in – having to ask for repeat instructions..." (Excerpt 2 lines 241-244) (Long et al. 2013: 187).
- (101) "... so thank you for being really top-notch in that regard. You use some choral responses which is fine. I also know that you often go to the cards and do. I don't think it was appropriate today that you needed to do that..." (Excerpt 2 lines 246-248) (Long et al. 2013: 187).
- (102) "... but you often do use the equity methods." (line 250) (Long et al. 2013: 187).
- (103) "Today I think you were using more choral responses not yelling out. I think there's a differentiation there. When you wanted a choral response you got it. When you wanted to call of someone you got that..." (Excerpt 2 lines 252-253) (Long et al. 2013: 187).
- (104) "so I see you as clearly in charge in that way..." (Excerpt 2 line 255) (Long et al. 2013: 187).
- (105) "... rather than *you know* having the kids in charge or some other rather loosey goosey format. It is pretty clear cut. I thought that there was some very powerful pieces that you did during he warm-up which by the way seemingly timed-out bout right..." (Excerpt 2 lines 257-259) (Long et al. 2013: 187).
- (106) "... but the other obviously took longer which is fine *you know* the body of the lesson which I would if I had to vote I'd rather

Evaluative frame	evaluative experience	(no suggestions for improvement)	<p>see the body of the lesson take longer than the warm-up...” (Excerpt 2 lines 261-262) (Long et al. 2013: 187).</p> <p>(107) “... get way out of line or something and it didn’t. ... You were getting some answers about distances and things. Some specific <i>you know</i>. Almost I’ll call them procedural kind of answers but then you went for what I call conceptual learning you were asking for them to clarify and tell you what was going on...” (Excerpt 2 lines 264-268) (Long et al. 2013: 187).</p> <p>(108) “... and you were and anybody do anything different. Those kind of responses to me indicate your growing ability and incredibly good ability to go beyond the superficial questioning and that’s what it’s about in teaching and a lot of us don’t get there for years...” (Excerpt 2 lines 270-272) (Long et al. 2013: 187).</p> <p>(109) “... you are getting there and that’s great” (Excerpt 2 line 274) (Long et al. 2013: 187).</p>
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