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How do student teachers face  
themselves?:  
Reflecting on reflection in action

East China Normal University  
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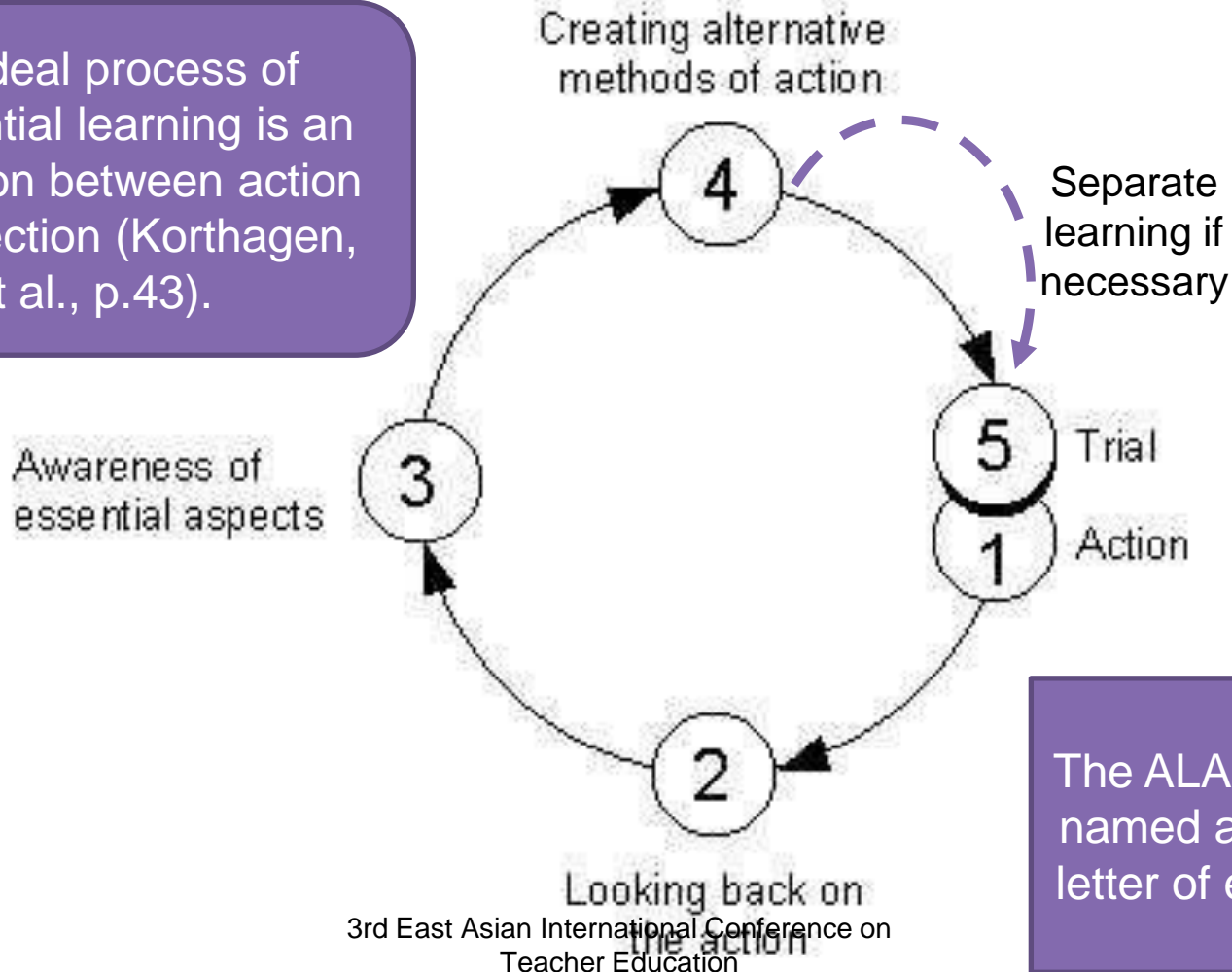
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# Outline of this presentation

1. Motivation of my study
2. Literature review: ALACT model, core qualities, onion model
3. Research methods: Two student teachers' teaching experiences, and process recordings
4. Discussion
5. Conclusion

# 1. ALACT model: Ideal process of reflection (Korthagen, et al., 2008, p.44)

The ideal process of experiential learning is an alternation between action and reflection (Korthagen, et al., p.43).



The ALACT model is named after the first letter of each phase.

## 2. An example of a reflection: Skipping awareness of essential aspects

Senior: Jun.6<sup>th</sup>

- Looking back

She felt an insurmountable wall between the students and herself and “could not do anything to students.”

- Creating alternative methods of action

To say “hello” to students

- After trial

Her communication with students became active. At the end of her practicum, according to her, a student said to her “Don’t go back [and become our teacher].” She sincerely would not like to leave the junior high school.

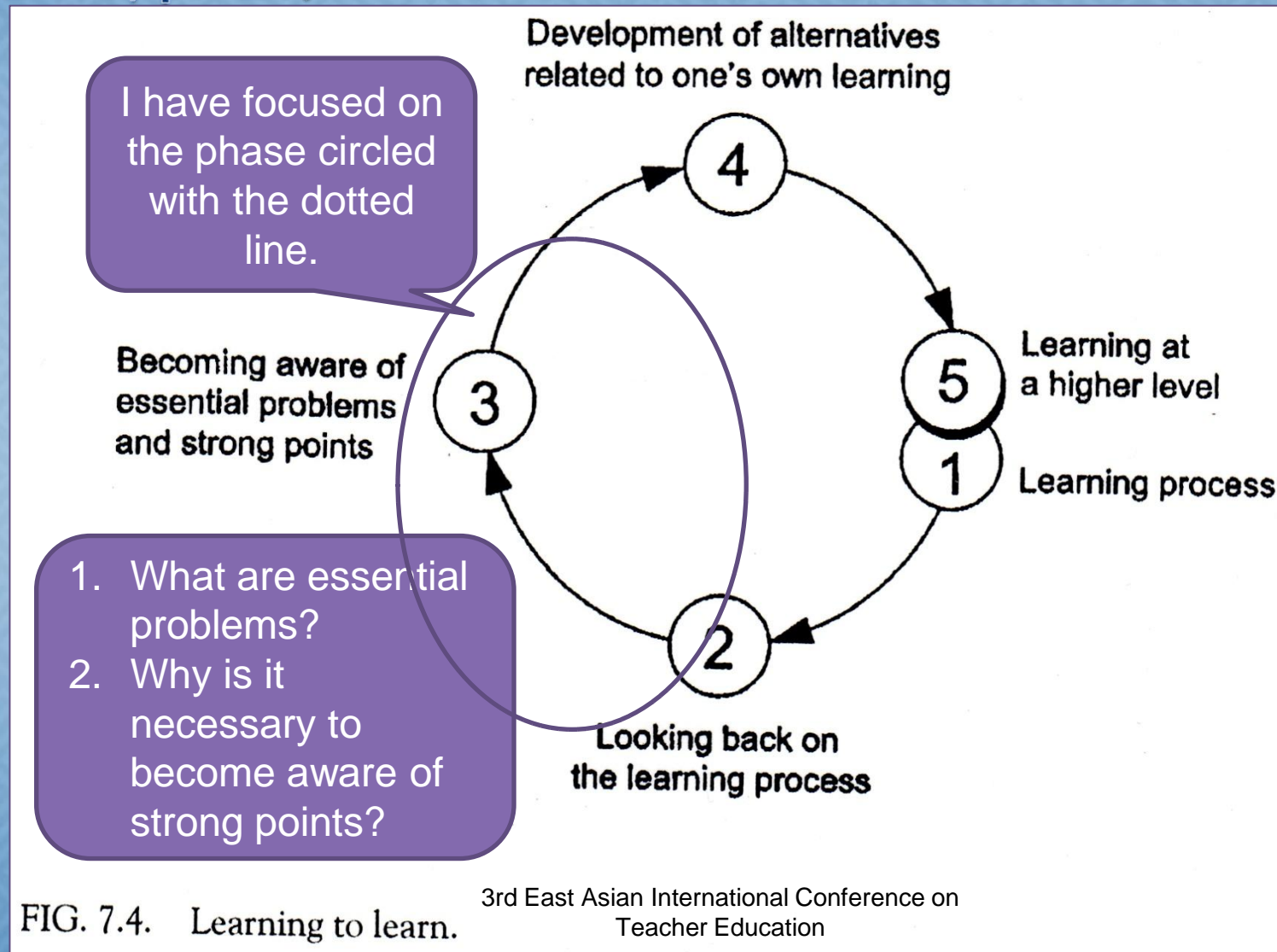
(Saito, 2011)

This was her turning point for overcoming her fear of students, and the biggest moment in her student teaching. However, she hadn’t mentioned the awareness of essential aspects.

# My biggest concern as a teacher educator

Why do they often skip  
the third phase,  
awareness of essential  
aspects?

# 3. Learning to learn (Korthagen, et al., 2008, p.128)



# 4. Discrepancy and core quality

There is an important difference between this process [becoming aware of inner tension or discrepancy] and a process of reflection involving only the outer levels of Figure 4 [the onion model shown later]: often the formulation of the discrepancy between the ideal situation and the limitations one is experiencing is enough to clarify the problem, which is at the root of many other problems on the levels of behaviour, competencies, or beliefs. One could say that this brings to light a core discrepancy, i.e., a tension that touches the very core of the individual. To follow up on the example we gave above: the student teacher in this case was made aware of the tension between her ideal situation – feeling self-confident and relaxed in the classroom – and her limiting belief that this is something which is only achieved by very experienced teachers. (Korthagen, & Vasalos, 2005., p.55).



# 5. Learning and self

- Identity formation is the core of learning. Learning is about themselves, especially examining who they are and probing who they become. (Saeki, pp. 28–31)
- Individuals, making good use of languages to re-experience their own experiences in their meta-thinking, construct meanings in the objectified world and at the same time form themselves facing the objectified world. Moreover, applying meta-thinking to examine themselves, they reconstruct themselves. (···) Self-searching is just a fundamental desire to lead them to learning practices (Sato, p.74) .

## 6. Concretizing questions for phase 2 of the ALACT model (Korthagen, et al., p.214)

### 0. What is the context?

1. What did I want?

5. What did the students want?

2. What did I do?

6. What did the students do?

3. What did I think?

7. What did the students think?

4. What did I feel?

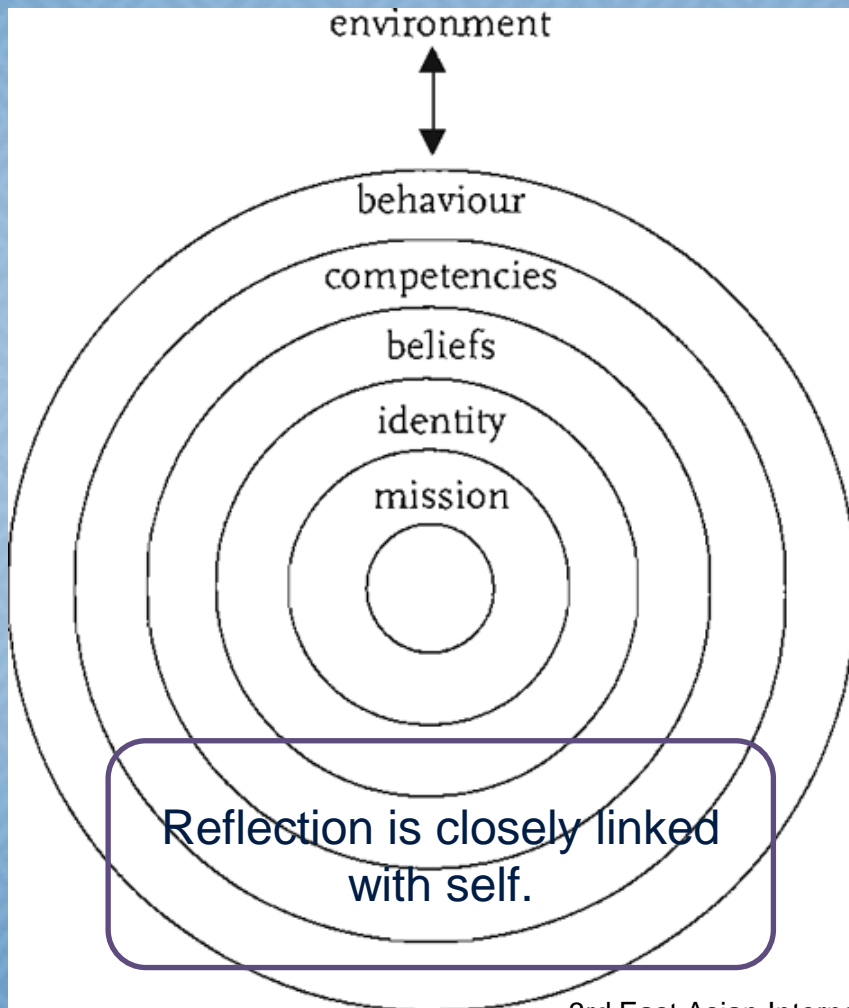
8. What did the students feel?

self

others

# 7. Onion Model: Level of reflection

(Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005, p.54; Korthagen & Vasalos, 2010, p.535)



- Environment  
What do I encounter?/What am I dealing with?
- Behaviour  
What do I do?
- Competencies  
What am I competent at?
- Beliefs  
What do they believe?
- Identity  
Who are they?/How do they experience themselves and their self-concept?
- Mission("transpersonal level")  
What inspires them?/What greater entity do I feel connected with?/What gives meaning and significance to their work or their lives?

# 8. Assumption of this study

- Student teachers face discrepancies and mental conflicts with their students.
- Their wanting, doing, thinking, and feeling in the scene may include markers connecting to their core qualities.
- It is crucial for teacher educators to help student teachers to reflect their interactions with their students (= reflection on reflection in action).
- Reflection on reflection in action would lead the student teachers to pay attention to and become aware of their stronger side; i.e., their core qualities.

# 9-1. Student teacher A' s teaching experiences

Student A: junior

\* He is going to have his three week mandatory student teaching next September.

## ① Seminar for future teachers

- He mainly cultivated his perception of teaching (April to July)
- He observed the lessons (September to November) and practiced his micro-teaching (15 minutes) once (November 19th)
- He is scheduled to start his full 50-minute teaching on Dec. 17<sup>th</sup> and will teach once a week until the beginning of March (except during high school winter break).

## ② His voluntary participation to my special lectures (comprehensive learning classes) for local secondary school students

April 18<sup>th</sup> (about 30 minutes), May 23<sup>rd</sup> (about one hour), July 30<sup>th</sup> (1.5 hours), August 11<sup>th</sup> (2.5 hours), Nov. 24<sup>th</sup> (2.25 hours )

## ③ His mock teaching: about 20 times

\*On Nov. 15<sup>th</sup> he conducted a 50-minute mock teaching to a group consisting of university and high school students.

# 9-2. Student teacher B' s teaching experiences

Student B: Senior

## ① Seminar for future teachers

- She observed a lesson (October 17<sup>th</sup>) and conducted micro-teaching (15 minutes) twice (November 27<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>). But accidentally, they are both about 40 minute lessons.
- She is scheduled to start her full 50- minute lesson in mid Dec. and will teach once a week until the beginning of March (except during high school winter break).

## ② Mandatory student teaching

She had her three week mandatory student teaching from Oct 22<sup>nd</sup> to Nov. 9<sup>th</sup>.

## ③ Her mock teaching: about four times

\*On Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup> she conducted a 50- minute mock teaching to a group consisting of university and high school students.

# 10. Research methods

## Inquiry-oriented approaches:

- ① reflective journals
- ② group seminars
- ③ reflective interviews
- ④ peer observation conferences
- ⑤ process recording

In the initial stage, in order to focus on their reflection on reflection in action, I have employed process recordings. After their full 50 minute teaching starts, reflective journals are used instead.

# 1 1. Why process recording?

- recalling specifics
- examining the dynamics of student-to-student- teachers interactions
- facing their discrepancy and inner tensions
- sharing difficult feelings and problems among seminar classmates and instructors
- finding their core qualities with other classmates and instructors
- encountering other ideas and having more diverse ideas on their practices
- becoming comfortable being a student teacher



# 12. 2012 process recording template

Students' dialogue/ response/ behaviour	What did I feel/think/want?	What did I do?	Analyzing/ consideration
Reasons I describe this scene			
What did I learn from the scene?			
Suggestions/ comments from supervisors			

## 13-1. Example of Descriptions (student teacher A)

Students' response/behaviour	What did I feel/think/want?	What did I do?	Analyzing/consideration
<p>Reasons I describe this scene: In the end (of the micro-teaching), a student said, "I don't understand everything (student teacher A has taught about this subject)", which were the last words I would like to hear. I (was confused and) didn't know how to deal with it.</p>			
<p>2. A female student, appearing interested in me, said, "[I] don't understand everything."</p>	<p>3. [My]today's 15-minute teaching completely fails. The student, listening to [my explanation] most, is like this.</p>	<p>1. At last, do you have any questions? 4. Jeez, [it is OK to ask me] any Kanji characters or any technical terms. Try to ask any questions!</p>	<p>I totally understand my teaching has completely failed. I felt keenly my teaching would fail. I should have changed my pedagogy and reconstructed my teaching flexibly (cont )</p>

## 13-2. Example of descriptions (student teacher A)

Students' dialogue/ response/ behaviour	What did I feel/think/want?	What did I do?	Analyzing/ consideration
<p>5. Well, what is the third pole [in Japanese politics]?</p> <p>8. Hum</p>	<p>6. For the time being, I survived! I have enough prepared for the question.</p> <p>9. Yes! My explanation works!!</p>	<p>7. I explained [He referred to Osaka mayor, Mr. Hashimoto and former Tokyo governor, Mr. Ishihara].</p> <p>10. Any other question? [Other students did not look interested.]</p>	<p>I can't think of how to deal with students' responses like, "I don't understand all." Before such reactions, I should have reorganized my pedagogy. <u>As I am still inexperienced, I should face such responses from now on.</u></p>

This comment comes from his core qualities.

## 13-3. Student A's learning from the scene

Just because students are there, [teachers] can offer lessons. I can't help feeling that I should have made the lesson plan, thinking of the students first. From now on, I will keep it mind. In addition, because of being anxious [about no response from students], I don't have to ask students a question. My teaching didn't go as planned [According to him, because there was no reaction from the students, his teaching plan went as he planned in the opposite sense]. When I am confused as to how to deal with the situation, such a question to escape [from the situation] don't even help me [survive the situation].

## 14-1. Example of descriptions (student teacher B)

Students' response/behaviour	What did I feel/think/want?	What did I do?	Analyzing/consideration
2. World War Two and the Pacific War, aren't they?		1. Before founding the United Nations, there were wars, the second something war and a war beginning with the attack on Pearl Harbor. What do you know is the war called?	Somehow, I felt I had some communication with the students in the back.

## 14-2. Example of descriptions (student teacher B)

Students' response/behaviour	What did I feel/think/want?	What did I do?	Analyzing/consideration
<p>4. Huh! [She is] treating us like fool.</p> <p>5. We can do anything during her teaching.</p>	<p>6. My way of questioning was bad, but they too have harsh tongues, don't they?</p> <p>7. <u>Feeling depressed doesn't give me anything.</u> <u>Anyway, I will keep it going.</u></p>	<p>3. That's right.</p>	

This comment was brought about with her core qualities.

## 14-3. Student B's description of her learning from the scene

After the lesson conference, Mr. Fujita, the mentor teacher, pointed out the ways [I] had asked questions, taught modulation, and [presented my] lesson theme. I felt that what he pointed out was all found in my teaching. I personally (felt I) was not able to communicate with the students well. On the coming Thursday, I will consider seriously how to ask questions, circulate among students, and communicate with students.

Her attention was put on her defects and faults. Then, without concretizing the essential aspects, she jumped into the fourth stage, creating alternative methods.

# 15-1. Discussion

- A) They are prone to pay attention to their faults.
  - lack of communications with the students
  - lack of lesson preparations
  - shallow lesson theme/ no consistent lesson theme.
- B) They show their own one-sided assumptions of teaching.
  - Student teachers have to be close to students, but stay in teacher-student relationship.
  - Teachers have to be like teachers.
  - Teachers make lessons, and students are “beneficiaries.”
  - Teachers have to keep students lively during classes.



# 15-2. Discussion

C) Their confidence depends on students' responses to/respects to/interests in them.

D) They face their discrepancies and inner conflicts and feel incapable as a student teacher.

“(From his volunteer experiences in the devastated area by tsunami) I am capable of getting along with students actively, but why can't I do?” (Student teacher A: Nov. 28<sup>th</sup> 2012) “I hate to be treated as humble.” (Student teacher B: Nov. 30<sup>th</sup> 2012)

# 15-3. Discussion

E) They saw their core qualities.

Student teacher A: Sense of self-efficacy, cheerful, openness, making his best efforts steadily as a future teacher

Student teacher B: “Never give up”; mission to tell her current/future students, “You live your own life”; dedication, always making her best efforts as a future teacher

# 16. Conclusion

- Two student teachers face their discrepancies and inner conflicts.
- Process recordings help two student teachers see their feeling, wanting, thinking and doing. Through writing their process recordings, and attending seminar discussions, they reflect their reflection in action.
- Their reflecting on reflection in action helps them examine themselves.
- In addition, their reflecting on reflection in action helps them to find their core qualities.
- The number of research participants is very small. This research is still ongoing. However, process recordings may help student teachers and their instructors see the interactions in the scene and find student teachers' core qualities. I assume that this work is going to lead student teachers to pay more attention to the essential aspects of the scene.

# Acknowledgement

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