

## Maybe We Should Talk: Bringing Together Diverse Perspectives on Supporting Teachers' Reflective Dialogue

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**Abstract:** The importance of teachers' reflection for teachers' professional development is often emphasized, and reflection holds much potential for learning especially when it takes place in dialogue with (knowledgeable) others and is focused on representations of practice. However, there is variation in theorization, design of learning arrangements, and contexts where teachers' reflection takes place, and research is taking place in various subfields. Consequently, this workshop aims (1) to build a community of learning scientists who are investigating ways to support teachers' reflective dialogue, and (2) to explore synergies, divergence, and convergence across the various fields where this learning mechanism is studied. The workshop follows a long-tailed format with a prolonged series of discussion activities before, during, and after the conference takes place. This workshop will contribute to community building, understanding of the convergence and divergence in the field, identification of areas that warrant further discussion, as well as a proposal for future work.

### Organizers' names and backgrounds

Sara van der Linden is an assistant professor at ELAN section of teacher development of the University of Twente in the Netherlands. She has co-organized the 2021 online symposium Partnerships to Upscale the Learning Sciences in Europe (PULSE 2021) for early career researchers. Susan McKenney is professor and chair of both the Learning, Data-Analytics and Technology department and of ELAN, the section for teacher development at the University of Twente in the Netherlands. She is an ISLS fellow who has co-facilitated pre-conference workshops at ISLS in 2012, 2014 and 2016. Adam Lefstein is a professor in and director of the School of Education at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in Israel. He was curriculum director of the Key Concepts and Methods Ethnography, Language and Communication summer school (run out of Kings College London for ten years) and co-facilitated a pre-conference workshop at ISLS in 2018. Gaowei Chen is an associate professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Hong Kong. He was a co-chair of the SIG on CSCL and Learning Sciences of the 27th International Conference on Computers in Education in 2019. He also organized the Doctoral Student Forum of the 22nd Global Chinese Conference on Computers in Education in 2018.

### Workshop theme and goals

This workshop aims (1) to build a community of learning scientists and researchers who are (interested in) investigating ways to support teachers' reflective dialogue, and (2) to explore synergies, divergence and convergence across the various fields where this learning mechanism is studied. The participants will be invited to take part in a prolonged series of discussion activities to share their perspectives on issues related to conceptualizations of teachers' reflective dialogue, artifacts/ data that can serve as input, technological and/ or human support or facilitation, the influence of context (i.e. pre-service vs in-service learning), and methods for studying this phenomenon in the real world. By bringing together research from various backgrounds and by exploring variation in conceptualization, support, and measurement, the workshop aims to contribute to the quality of research on this topic, and to identify areas that warrant further discussion.

### Theoretical background and significance

The importance of reflection for teachers' (professional) learning is often emphasized (e.g. Darling-Hammond et al., 2017), and a frequent professional practice of expert teachers (Anderson & Taner, 2022). In particular, reflective dialogue with colleagues or coaches and based on representations of teachers' own practice, such as video, seems to hold potential (van der Linden et al., 2022; Lefstein, Louie, Segal, & Becher, 2020). But reflection is an ambiguous concept (Clarà, 2015; Collin et al., 2013) and we still know little about how teacher reflection works (Clarà, 2015), even though it has been part of scholarly debate for decades. There is a lack of a coherent body of empirical teacher reflection literature to inform teacher education programs (Collin et al., 2013), while fulfilling the role of a knowledgeable other to support reflection is not without challenges (Gelfuso & Dennis,

2014). Similarly, this body of knowledge is missing for coaches responsible for leading professional development opportunities in schools.

Next to differences in theorization, additional complexity arises through the myriad of contexts and types of learning arrangements where reflective dialogue takes place. Theoretical background as well as contextual conditions can influence the design of learning arrangements (McKenney & Reeves, 2019). Teachers' reflective dialogue can take place in a variety of educational settings of more formal and informal nature (Lefstein, Vedder-Weiss, & Segal, 2020). Moreover, research on supporting reflective dialogue is taking place in various sub-fields that foreground different aspects of the learning design, like collaborative discourse (Lefstein, Louie, Segal, & Becher, 2020), video clubs (van Es & Sherin, 2010), visualization tools for video-based PD (Chen et al., 2020), video coaching (van der Linden et al., 2022) etc. Thus, while reflective dialogue about practice is regarded as a key aspect of many learning interventions designed for teachers, the field is fragmented and could benefit from community building to enhance the quality of research. Sparking dialogue and exploring synergies between related but different lines of research could inspire new ways of thinking about teachers' reflective dialogue.

## Workshop activities

The workshop will follow a long-tailed workshop format with activities leading up to and following on from the conference to reach the aforementioned goals. The prolonged workshop proposal is a combination of online and face-to-face activities. This workshop is intended for learning scientists interested in understanding and supporting teachers' reflective dialogue. The audience could include, but is not limited to those studying teacher learning, teacher collaborative discourse, teacher reflection in, on and for design, teacher video coaching, reflection in teacher education, technology-supported reflection, and video clubs.

## Participants

The workshop will be open to presenting and non-presenting participants. *Presenting participants* will include individuals and teams responding with promising ideas for the workshop's theme. Presenting participants will be asked to submit one A4 in a format of their choosing (prose, visuals, combination) that illustrates their experience with and insights into the workshop theme, as well as issues that warrant further discussion. This can include theoretical, empirical, or methodological work that has been presented elsewhere or has been submitted for this conference, and these contributions will serve as a starting point for further discussions. *Non-presenting participants* will include other ISLS-members who are interested in the workshop theme and will provide critique, infuse the discussion with their knowledge and experience, and assist in creating a lively and fruitful conversation. All participants will be invited to include up to three papers of their own or other researchers' work relevant to this workshop, which will serve as a bibliography.

## Before the conference

Themes will be identified based upon the contributions, and presenting and non-presenting participants will be allocated to theme groups. These could include but are not limited to conceptualization of teachers' reflective dialogue, artifacts/ data that can serve as input, (technological) support or facilitation, the influence of context, and methods for studying this phenomenon in the real world. The contributions from presenting participants will be made available to other participants within the theme group and all participants will be invited to explore the bibliography of relevant papers. Next, all participants will be asked to comment on the contributions in light of the theme in order to (1) get acquainted with other community members and their work, and (2) get the discussion started on synergies, convergence, and divergence. These asynchronous discussions will be led by the organizing team and guided by discussion prompts. Moreover, the responses will be used by the organizing team to identify issues that could shape further discussions during the half-day face-to-face workshop.

## During the conference

The half-day workshop will consist of four parts. First, it will kick off with a plenary introduction on the various themes that were identified using the presenting author contributions and the discussions that have taken place asynchronously in the various theme groups. Second, the participants will split up in their theme groups and presenting participants will pitch their contributions. The within-theme group discussion will continue to explore synergies, convergence, and divergence, and participants will prepare a report back of the theme and/ or directions for further research. Third, the theme groups will come together for a plenary debrief of theme group discussions. Finally, a plenary discussion of next steps and involvement with community and activities will take place.

## After the conference

Based on the final discussion during the workshop about the next steps and involvement, activities will be employed that could include, but are not limited to, the organization of a series of zoom meetings to explore issues further, and/or the development of a proposal for the next ISLS conference, and/ or the development of a special issue.

## Expected outcomes and output

The workshop is expected to lead to several outcomes. First and foremost is the creation of a community of (emerging) researchers who study teachers' reflective dialogue. Moreover, the proposed activities will help to provide insight into convergence and divergence within this fragmented field. In addition, the workshop will render several concrete outputs, like the contribution to the general proceedings, a rapid report detailing the outcomes of the workshop for the ISLS-repository including the bibliography of relevant papers on teachers' reflective dialogue, and a proposal for continued work.

## Relationship to similar events conducted in the past

Conceptually this workshop is connected to the ICLS 2018 workshop "Conceptual and practical tools for analyzing teacher team discourse and interaction" by Christa Asterhan, Ilana Horn, Adam Lefstein, Dana Vedder-Weiss. Procedurally this workshop is connected to the workshop ICLS 2012 workshop "Teachers as Designers of Technology Enhanced Learning Materials" by Susan McKenney and Yael Kali.

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