



Reshaping Educational Evaluation through Reprioritizing Reflective Teacher Voice

Leigh M. Tolley, Ph.D.

Department of Educational Curriculum and Instruction,
College of Education & Human Development

Elizabeth A. Grossie, Ed.D.

Elevate K-12



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(re)shaping evaluation together

EVALUATION 2022

Reshaping Educational Evaluation

Why should this be a focus?

- Ever-shifting context
- Concerns about “learning loss”
- Gaps in standardized assessment data due to the pandemic
- Lack of change in assessment practices
- Deprofessionalization of teachers
- Increasing numbers of teacher attrition for both novice and experienced educators

Reprioritizing Reflective Teacher Voice

Why should this be a focus?

- A great number of changes that are ongoing in education—teachers are the ones who have made and will implement them
- Onus upon educators for student success
- Awareness of classroom context
- Embedded formative evaluation practices, which impact:
 - Assessment and instruction
 - Accessibility
 - Social justice ... *to name just a few*

Defining Reflective Teacher Voice

What does this involve?

- Contextually-embedded practices
- Selection, analysis, and interpretation of relevant data
- Part of teacher evaluations/observations
- Making implicit knowledge explicit
- Decision-making processes, which may be shared with others
- Expressions of teachers' evaluative thinking

Defining Evaluative Thinking

Examining Its Role in Education (Tolley & Daspit, 2019)

- Historical principles of evaluative thinking:
 - the need to be clear, intentional, accountable, specific, and systematic;
 - focusing and prioritizing, and making assumptions and criteria and standards for judgment explicit;
 - using data-based statements of fact and limiting generalizations and causal explanations to what data support in order to draw appropriate conclusions; and
 - the need for cultural sensitivity and cultural competence (Patton, 2018)

Defining Evaluative Thinking

Suggestive List of Core Elements

- In addition to previously identified historical principles of evaluative thinking:
 - Be systematic: carefully document what occurs at all stages of decision-making and data collection
 - Operationalize program concepts, ideas, and goals: determine how to measure what is important, and know what success will look like, and what constitutes failure
 - Distinguish inputs and processes from outcomes: look at the interconnections, and measure both
 - Engage in reflective practice

(Patton & Campbell-Patton, 2021)

Defining Evaluative Thinking

What are its foundations?

Rigor resides in, depends on, and is manifested in rigorous thinking—about everything, including methods and analysis. [...] An evaluator returns to the data over and over again to see if the constructs, categories, interpretations, and explanations make sense—if they sufficiently reflect the nature of the phenomena studied. (Patton, 2018, p. 24).

- Rigorous evaluative thinking components:

- Creativity
- Intellectual rigor
- Perseverance
- Insight

Aren't these all necessary traits in effective, ongoing, and sustainable teaching practice to improve student learning?

(Patton, 2018)

Defining Evaluative Thinking

Connections to Reflective Teacher Practice (Tolley & Daspit, 2019)

- Teachers analyze and use the results of their informal and formal assessment data to guide instructional decision-making; these choices are a form of evaluative thinking (Nelson & Eddy, 2008)
- Good teachers are, by nature, reflective learners that can use this reflexivity to understand themselves and their practices (Kelleher, 2003)
- Teachers that are able to critically examine their practice and increase their understanding of themselves and others are better able to engage in transformative learning (Beavers, 2009)

Defining Evaluative Thinking

Connections to Reflective Teacher Practice (Tolley & Daspit, 2019)

- Ongoing reflective practice that is supported organizationally can help to increase teachers' perceptions of their efficacy and mastery (Kennedy & Smith, 2013)
- Teachers' sharing of their practical knowledge and how they reflect on their practice can be used to:
 - explain what may/may not work in a given instructional context (Tolley, 2019)
 - benefit the training of new teachers and guide them toward becoming reflective practitioners (Griffiths, 2000; Verloop et al., 2001)

Mentor Teacher Training

The Context of the Evaluand

- Began in Louisiana in 2017; previously Supervision of Student Teaching certification
- State provided training from 2017-2020
 - Nine in-person, full-day modules on mentoring and content area skills
 - Required a series of four-part assessments completed through a third-party vendor
 - Many teachers trained; very small percentage passed assessments

Mentor Teacher Training

The Context of the Evaluand

- The University of Louisiana at Lafayette's (UL Lafayette's) Mentor Teacher Training program
 - Approved by the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) in 2019
 - Originally one of nine programs; now one of approximately 30
 - Most of the participants are in Acadiana
 - Focus: meeting needs of teacher participants

Mentor Teacher Training

The Context of the Evaluand

- UL Lafayette Mentor Teacher Training
 - Created—*and revised*—with input from teachers
 - Primary facilitators: Mentor Teacher Coaches
 - Designed and developed using principles of Understanding by Design (McTighe & Wiggins, 2012)
 - Exists as a professional learning community to encourage teacher learning, promoting significant and lasting change (Hill et al., 2002; Lieberman, 1995)

Mentor Teacher Training

The Context of the Evaluand

- UL Lafayette Mentor Teacher Training
 - Still using nine modules with state-provided materials, as well as supplemental resources
 - Mentoring and reflection modules (1, 2, and 9) as a group; content modules individually done
 - Incorporated three content-based required questions for each module
 - Coaching Days: informal support in Cohort I; formalized in Cohort II; revised for Cohort III onward (currently in Cohorts IV and V)

Program Overview

UL Lafayette Mentor Teacher Training by the numbers

Cohort	Training Dates	Number of Mentor Teachers		
		Initial Participants	Training Completers	Credentials Earned (self-reported)
I	October 2019 – May 2020	44	35	17
II	September 2020 – May 2021	47	33	22
III	July 2021 – April 2022	44	35	12
IV	January – December 2022	35* 1 withdrawn	32 anticipated in Dec. 2022	4 (Dec. 2022) + 3**
V	July 2022 – April 2023	45 0 withdrawn		2**

*1 participant in Texas; participating in program for professional development (PD).

**Was eligible for Louisiana Mentor Teacher credentials due to holding Educational Leadership certification or completing National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) training. Participating in program for PD.

Anecdotal Evidence

What emerged from this work to inspire our research?

- Reflection
 - Instructional practices
 - Experiences in education
- Reflective thoughts
 - How did I become this way?
 - Automaticity
 - Sharing the ingrained

Anecdotal Evidence

What emerged from this work to inspire our research?

- Teaching experiences
 - Pros and cons
 - Emotional expression
- Professional reflection and change
- Interactions with mentee
 - Improve mentee practices and experiences
 - Improve mentor teaching practices

Research Questions

Evaluative Thinking in a Mentor Teacher Context

1. What evidence is there of evaluative thinking in Mentor Teachers' written reflections as part of a mentor teacher training program?
2. What do Mentor Teachers' evaluative thinking processes look like in action?
3. Are there differences in Mentor Teachers' evaluative thinking in different grade levels and/or content areas?
4. Does the evaluative thinking process of Mentor Teachers develop/change as they are taking on a more clearly defined evaluator role?

What's Next?

Future Work with UL Lafayette Mentor Teacher Training

- Pursuing Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval to examine Cohort III responses as a case study; then Cohorts IV and beyond
- Using emergent themes to inform future work
- Submitted grant proposal to utilize Mentor Teacher expertise as a way of supporting teacher retention efforts
- Ongoing collaboration with districts, Mentor Teachers and their mentees at all experience levels, and our College to continually improve our programs and partnerships

How can this reshape our work?

Using These Lessons in Educational Evaluation

- Countering exclusionary practices
- Focusing on contextually-appropriate, rather than standardized, approaches
- Inclusion of relevant stakeholders throughout the process (formatively, summatively, and even developmentally, if possible)
- Stepping back from assuming capacity building and/or training is always needed
- Reciprocal teaching and learning opportunities for both educators and evaluators

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Thank You for Attending Today's Presentation!

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Please contact Dr. Leigh M. Tolley with questions or comments:

leigh.tolley@louisiana.edu / 337-482-1475