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Clear, Clinical Supervision

Leslie Sharpe

ABSTRACT

This paper analyses the practice of IE supervisors' disclosure of formative grade to their supervisees during post lesson conferences on teaching practice. A comparison is made between students who were, and who were not, told their

grade. The results suggest that in Singapore it is possible to synthesize the advantage accruing from both clinical and technical – rational modes of teacher supervision.

Keywords: Teaching Practice (Practicum), Supervision, Pre-service, Assessment.

Formative and Summative Evaluation

A recurring issue in student teacher supervision is whether it is desirable to grade classroom teaching during teaching practice and whether grades should be made available to students during post lesson conferencing. On the one hand, there are arguments that it is not desirable, especially where feedback involves disclosure of normative grades. On this view, disclosure can lead, amongst other things, to student anxiety, low personal esteem, submissiveness, highly conformist behaviour, narrowness and a lowering of performance. On the other hand, it is argued that grade feedback can help focus the student's improvement strategies by providing a norm-referenced profile of strengths and weaknesses which can form the basis for systematic improvements. However, arguments of this kind are not solely about grading per se, but are often developed from established positions such as clinical and technical-rational models of supervision, which over time, have developed in opposition to each other. Experience in monitoring the development of a Practicum Curriculum programme at the Institute of Education in Singapore has provided an opportunity to research some of these alleged consequences of grade disclosure on student performance and attitude. The findings suggest, generally, that there is a need for

caution when applying arguments and research findings generated in one culture to another (Broadfoot et. al. 1988), in this case Singapore. More specifically, they suggest that it is possible, given certain distinctive features of Singaporean culture and schooling, to combine aspects of clinical and technical-rational modes of supervision to provide a form of clear, clinical supervision.

The Dip. Ed. Practicum Curriculum Programme at the Institute of Education, Singapore

From its inception in 1986, the Practicum Curriculum programme at IE has incorporated procedures for combining formative and summative evaluation for practice teaching, as well as a course structure that affords an opportunity for combining reflexive clinical supervision procedures with an essentially competency-based model of effective teaching.

Rooted in the Practicum Curriculum model pioneered by Cliff Turney (Turney, C. et.al. 1985), the IE model was designed initially as a one-year Dip.Ed. programme for the initial training of secondary school and Junior College teachers, and later extended to a two year Certificate-in-Education programme. (At the time of writing both of these programmes are under review). The IE practicum curriculum programmes retain

certain key features of the parent model, notably (i) the idea of practice being at the centre of teacher training programmes (ii) focussed supervision, learning and development being at the heart of teaching practice and (iii) a predetermined model of good teaching, specified in terms of classroom teaching processes made up of competencies and personality characteristics.

In other respects, however, notably the design, supervision and assessment of teaching practice, IE programmes have been developed to meet local needs. Of these, timescale was an important consideration, especially with the one-year Dip. Ed. course. A second consideration concerned the developing logic of teacher education in Singapore, particularly the policy of designing courses to meet specific needs of the beginning teacher, the trainee Head of Department and the potential Principal. Each of these courses was to draw on differing skills and differing knowledge bases, with the pre-service programmes focussing directly on classroom teaching processes.

Seven classroom teaching processes form the focus of the Dip. Ed. initial teacher training programme, which is now being followed by the fourth cohort of students. These are: Planning, Inducting, Communicating, Managing, Evaluating, Learning and Socializing. As in the Sydney model, these roles form the centre of the teaching programme which provides students with a knowledge base for understanding *how* the classroom teaching processes may be performed, and *why* they should be performed in particular ways.

Linkages between the knowledge-base acquired on campus and the practice of teaching are effected in three main ways: (i) during taught courses which include "Experience Modules", where students may be provided with school scenarios requiring them to devise and justify suitable courses of action, (ii) through videotaped micro-teaching sessions where students practice particular skills with groups of peers under the supervision of a member of staff and (iii) during Teaching Practice. At all points, students, tutors and supervisors are encouraged to "link theory and practice" reciprocally, so that practical teaching is informed by theory, and vice versa.

Organisationally, school-based experience takes the form of two weeks of preparatory School Experience, followed by a ten-week block of teaching practice. Students are placed either in

Secondary Schools, Junior Colleges or Institutes and teach approximately 9 hours per week, divided in to an approximate ratio of 2:1 between their 1st and 2nd teaching subjects. Additional assignments include observation of teachers and peers, involvement in school activities such as ECAs, as well as school-based coursework.

Key Components of Teaching Practice

There are three key components of teaching practice supervision. The first is the "Supervision Cycle", which involves supervisors in pre- and post-lesson conferences as well as lesson observations. The second is the "Supervision Triad", where IE supervisors and school-appointed cooperating teachers meet periodically with the student to share observations and agree courses of action. The third is the "Assessment of Performance in Teaching" instrument (APT) which is an observational and feedback instrument used by cooperating teachers, IE supervisors & students. Acting together, these components of supervision are intended to enable the student teacher to form a clear understanding of relative strengths and weaknesses in classroom teaching; to relate IE coursework to analyses of the classroom and personal teaching; and to formulate hypotheses about teaching and to implement improvement strategies. The model of professionalism is what Hoyle (Hoyle, 1980) has described as a 'restricted' rather than 'extended' one, in the sense that the latter would involve equal emphasis being placed on school and community, as well as the classroom. A further development, building on in-service clinical models, has been an option of 'pair teaching' with the aims of, amongst other things, stimulating form of "practitioner" generated knowledge. (Smyth, 1987)

As described, the intention is to marry aspects of 'artistic' and technical-rational approaches to supervision. (Sergiovaani, T.J. & Starratt, R.J. 1983). On the one hand, there is a recognition of the need for face to face personalised supervision, informed analyses of classroom teaching, and focussed improvement strategies. On the other, there is a need for a predetermined model of effective teaching, and structured feedback with a normative reference point. Thus, teaching practice is intended to be much more than mechanical practice and evaluation of predetermined teaching skills. Rather, it is a learning

context where student and supervisor draw on coursework and personal experience to help decipher the context of teaching performance. In theory, the only limits to discourse and reflection are set by course content and experience, in the sense that students and supervisors draw on these to understand the classroom situation. In practice, of course, the limits are set by the ability and willingness of supervisors and students to engage in informed discourse. These dual and potentially conflicting aspects of the practicum are brought together in the form of the assessment instrument - the APT.

Clinical Supervision, Grade-giving and the APT Form

The APT form comprises five of the 7 teaching processes mentioned earlier: planning, inducting, communicating, managing and evaluating. Devised originally by Sim Wong Khooi, IE Director, the form breaks down each process into two component parts to provide a basic conceptualization of classroom teaching. The two parts are "competencies" and "characteristics". The former is conceptualized as basic skills and their associated knowledge base that can be taught to students; the latter, personality attributes that the students, by and large, bring with them to the classroom. It is the interplay of competencies and personality that produces what is commonly termed "teaching style". Each of the terms is defined in a handbook and made available to each of the parties using the form. This provides a common framework for observation and discussion.

The primary purpose of the APT form is to provide students with a profile of their relative teaching strengths and weaknesses at a particular point in time; to focus in on specific aspects of teaching that might be improved; to initiate discussion that draws extensively on coursework; and to devise improvement strategies. Used in conjunction with the supervision cycle (in its conceptualization) the form is consistent with aspects of the clinical model of supervision (Goldhammer, 1969, Lewis & Miel, 1972, Cogan, 1973). The form thus eschews a simple checklist or quasi-objective approach in favour of providing a context for the kind of intellectual discussions between teacher colleagues proposed by Goldhammer for use in in-service contexts.

Linking Formative and Summative Assessment

Formative grades are recorded on the APT form by the supervisor and a copy given to the student during the post-lesson conference. Students receive one formative form for each lesson observed, whether this is by the IE supervisor or CT. Five grades are recorded, one for each of the teaching processes, but not an overall grade. Over the course of a ten-week teaching practice, supervisors make a minimum of five observations. At the end of the teaching practice, the supervisor calculates a summative grade for each of the processes, together with an overall summative grade. This is done separately for the first and second teaching subjects. Final summative grades are not averages, nor are they based on the last lesson alone. Rather, they represent performance trends over the course of the teaching practice. These grades are not disclosed to students. Thus, though they have a normative reference point, formative grades do not carry a predetermined summative weightage.

The purpose of making formative grades available is to provide students with a profile of strengths and weaknesses, as well as a normative reference point, and to couple these with agreed strategies for improvement. In this way, students are encouraged to focus on improving specific aspects of their teaching whilst at the same time being able to monitor their development in terms of general norms of performance. There is a recognition, therefore, that "in the strictest sense formative and summative evaluation cannot be separated" (Sergiovanni, T.J. & Starratt, R.J. 1983, p.292) and further, that all parties are aware of this. The provision of formative feedback with a summative reference point thus makes manifest what would otherwise remain latent (and unexamined) value judgements about the student's teaching.

Difficulties in Implementing the APT Instrument

The position on revealing formative grades just described is the current position and was only introduced with the present cohort of students after considerable debate within IE. It was one of a number of difficulties experienced in introducing the APT form, only two of which will be mentioned here (Sharpe, L., 1988). The first involves a debate about the merits of disclosing formative grades to students; the second, the use

of the form for both formative and summative purposes.

These difficulties are interrelated and have been the subject of much discussion within IE. Broadly, there are two opposed points of view. They centre on the issue of whether it is possible to combine formative and summative assessment in the manner defined, using the APT instrument. On the one hand there are staff who have tended to adopt versions of what might be described as an 'artistic' as opposed to a 'scientific' approach to supervision. (Sergiovanni, T.J. & Starratt, R.J. 1983). Those adopting a hard version of the former position have faced a real dilemma, namely that grade giving places them in an adversarial relationship to the student teacher, who is likely to feel threatened and defensive. (Turney, 1985) Accordingly, they have argued for a complete separation of formative and summative assessment. For them, a separation of function would be the ideal, as in forms of in-service supervision where supervisors and principals, independently, undertake the two assessment functions. However, acceding to the reality that the pre-service supervisor has no choice but to combine the roles, they have argued that separation must take the form of a partitioning of judgement, as it were, leaving all grading until the end of the teaching practice. Summative assessment should be carried out at the end of teaching practice as a separate exercise from the developmental role of the supervisor during teaching practice. On this view, supervisors should not grade students and certainly should not communicate grades to them.

Given the institutional requirement that formative grades should be recorded, a somewhat softer version of this position prevailed. This was that supervisors should record grades but not disclose them to students.

On the other hand are staff who have adopted a more scientific, technical-rational approach, emphasizing that precise feedback on the attainment of predetermined competencies and attitudes is a *sine qua non* of progress. They have argued that without detailed feedback on current performance, especially in the form of grades, students are in no position to judge the scale of potential progress or to devise strategies for improvement. (D. J. McIntyre 1983).

Arguments of this kind tend to become circular and counter-productive, the reason being that they impinge not simply on the issues at hand but

on deeper and well established educational ideologies, regarding not only the nature of education and of 'good' teaching, but also conceptions of individuality and social structure. At their extremes, they are articles of faith, quite immune to rational discourse. For example as Anderson (R. Anderson 1986) has noted, any discussion that involves clinical supervision is likely to release heated feelings and manifest entrenched views. When combined with traditions of "autonomous pluralism" found particularly in Higher Education, these entrenched views can become a real barrier to change. (D. Hopkins, 1985). It is for this reason perhaps that neither argument was allowed to prevail at IE during the first three years of the programme. Instead a compromise was adopted, giving departments and staff a choice of whether to reveal formative grades to students, but retaining the requirement of supervisors to keep personal records either way. The result of this compromise was to divide the 1988 Dip. Ed. student intake into almost two equal groups on teaching practice: approximately half receiving grades from their supervisors and half not.

Methodology

The present study was not pre-structured in the sense that a research design was drawn up specifically to investigate the influence of grade disclosure on student outcomes. Had this been the intention, more refined techniques would have been used. Neither was it the intention to monitor the effectiveness of the Practicum Curriculum programme in synthesizing clinical and technical-rational supervision modes. Rather, the opportunity to research these matters only became apparent when routine data had been collected and analysed and it was realized that half of the students had been given their potentiation grades, and half not.

Data for the present study was in fact routinely collected from two sources: summary evaluation sheets completed by IE supervisors for submission to the IE Board of Studies and pre-and post-teaching practice student-teacher questionnaires.

Supervisor Grade Summary sheets

These were compiled by supervisors immediately after Teaching Practice for submission to the Board of Examinations.

The questionnaires — The pre-school placement questionnaire was completed by students immediately before School Experience in January 1989. The post teaching practice questionnaire was completed by students immediately on return to IE from teaching practice in April, 1989. Both were conducted as routine evaluation exercises to explore various aspects of the practicum. 232 out of a total of 260 Dip.Ed. students completed the post-TP questionnaire, making a response rate of 89%. Of these, 10 students did not record their NRIC/Passport number, and consequently had to be left out of the study. 215 returns were usable for the pre-TP questionnaire for the same reason. To enable a matching of supervisor and student data, local students were required to insert their National Registration Identity Card (NRIC) number, and for foreign nationals, their passport numbers, on the questionnaire. Students were assured of confidentiality, being told that the databases would be 'locked' and only accessible to the researcher, and that their questionnaires would be destroyed once data had been entered into the database. It should be noted that cross-tabulations are affected by omissions

on certain items. Thus, for example, 15 students left blank the item asking whether supervisors had revealed formative grades; 253 actual summative grades, but only 190 expected summative grades were available for inclusion in the analyses.

The basic procedure here is to examine this data in relation to those students who were provided with their formative grades by their supervisors (informed students) and those who were not (uninformed students). After presenting these results, the discussion attempts to locate the findings within the context of the broader debate on supervision models.

Results

1. Formative Grade Disclosure by Supervisor vs Expected and Actual Overall Summative Grades

The following four tables examine the relationship of the summative teaching practice grades that students expected to receive, their actual grades, and the relationship on these of disclosure of formative grades by supervisors.

1.1 Summative Grades Expected by Students vs Actual Overall Summative Grades Awarded by IE Supervisors

TABLE 1
EXPECTED GRADE

		TOTAL	NR	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A
		260	70	3	5	8	17	101	36	14	6
ACTUAL GRADE	NR	7	3	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	0
	C-	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	C	8	3	0	0	1	0	4	0	0	0
	C+	21	7	1	1	1	2	6	3	0	0
	B-	50	15	2	2	3	5	15	4	4	0
	B	79	23	0	1	2	5	36	9	1	2
	B+	64	9	0	1	1	2	29	13	5	4
	A-	24	5	0	0	0	2	7	7	3	0
	A	4	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0

NR = Nil Response

On their return from Teaching Practice, students were asked to record the overall grade that they expected to receive for teaching practice. This was then compared with the actual overall grade submitted to the Board to Exams by supervisors. The cross-tabulation in Table 1 shows that there is a close relationship between expected and actual

grades. Most students are accurate to within one half grade, though there is a greater number of 'pessimistic' than 'optimistic' students. Pessimistic students are those who expect to receive lower grades than they are actually awarded, and optimistic are those who expect higher grades.

1.2 Disclosure and Non-Disclosure of Formative Grades by IE Supervisors vs Summative Grades Expected by Students

TABLE 2
EXPECTED SUMMATIVE GRADES

	NR	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A	TOTAL
NR	2	0	0	0	0	5	4	3	1	15
INFORMED	9	0	2	4	11	45	15	7	3	96
UNINFORMED	21	3	3	4	6	51	17	4	2	111
TOTAL	32	3	5	8	17	101	36	14	6	222

Table 2 sets out the grades expected by students whose supervisors provided them with their formative grades during teaching practice and those who did not receive their grades. There is no statistically significant difference between the

grades received by both sets of students. Whether grades were given to students or not, during observational visits by supervisors, did not influence the students' estimated grades.

1.3 Disclosure and Non-Disclosure of Formative Grades by IE Supervisors vs Actual Summative Grades Received by Students

TABLE 3
ACTUAL SUMMATIVE GRADES

	NR	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A	TOTAL
NR	1	3	3	5	11	13	11	4	2	53
INFORMED	5	0	4	6	13	36	23	8	1	96
UNINFORMED	1	0	1	10	26	30	30	12	1	111
TOTAL	7	3	8	21	50	79	64	24	4	260

Table 3 shows that, as with expected grades, there is no statistically significant difference between the informed and uninformed students in terms of their final summative grades.

Again, students who were given grades by their supervisors achieved similar grades to those who were not.

1.4 Accuracy of Grade Predictions made by Students who were told, and not told, their formative grades by IE Supervisors

TABLE 4

	PESSIMISTIC	SPOT ON	OPTIMISTIC	TOTAL
NR	6	1	6	13
INFORMED	24	30	29	83
UNINFORMED	38	27	25	90
TOTAL	68	58	60	186

Table 4 provides information on the accuracy of student grade predictions. Those whose expected and actual grades were the same are termed "spot on"; those whose expected grade was higher than their actual grade are termed "optimistic"; and those whose expected grade was lower than their actual grade are termed "pessimistic". Once again, there is no significant difference between the informed and uninformed students.

2. Student Self-Ratings on Competence in Performing the Five Teaching Processes.

Before they went on teaching practice, students were asked to respond to a number of items on the pre-teaching practice questionnaire concerning their confidence in performing the five

teaching processes. On their return they were asked to answer exactly the same questions. It is possible, therefore, to compare the levels of confidence expressed by the students before and after teaching practice and to compare changes in these between the informed and uninformed students. Though not ideal, this measure gives an indication of qualitative changes occurring over the teaching practice and the relationship of grade disclosure to them.

The questionnaire item was worded: "On the 7-point scale, please rate how 'competent' you feel in performing each of the teaching roles in the classroom : "

Very Competent $\xrightarrow{\hspace{10em}}$ Not Competent at all
7 1

2.1 Changes over Teaching Practice in Perceived Confidence in the Planning Role

TABLE 5

	DETERIORATION		NO CHANGE	IMPROVEMENT		
	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N
INFORMED	5	14	35	23	6	83
UNINFORMED	2	10	37	29	8	86

Table 5 shows changes occurring over the Teaching Practice period in students' feelings of confidence in performing the planning role. As with other items in this section, student responses have been grouped according to the difference between their level of confidence at the beginning and end of teaching practice. Thus, for example, a student whose rating is the same at the beginning and end of teaching practice is rated '0'; one whose final rating is one point higher on the scale is rated '1'; and one whose final rating is one point lower on the scale is rated

'-1', and so on. Cross tabulating responses from the two databases reduces the sample size for the calculations.

It can be seen that for the planning role, confidence levels, for the most part, are either the same or improve over the course of the teaching practice. However, there are no significant differences between the informed and uninformed groups.

Tables 6, 7 and 8 show a similar picture for the Inducting, Communicating and Managing Roles.

2.2 Changes over Teaching Practice in Perceived Confidence in the Inducting Role

TABLE 6

		← DETERIORATION		NO CHANGE	IMPROVEMENT →			
	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	N
INFORMED	0	4	13	35	28	2	1	83
UNINFORMED	3	2	12	31	30	6	2	86

2.3 Changes over Teaching Practice in Perceived Confidence in the Communicating Role

TABLE 7

		← DETERIORATION		SPOT ON	IMPROVEMENT →			
	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	N
INFORMED	2	2	11	32	22	12	2	83
UNINFORMED	1	2	9	29	35	9	1	86

2.4 Changes over Teaching Practice in Perceived Confidence in the Managing Role

TABLE 8

		← DETERIORATION		SPOT ON	IMPROVEMENT →			
	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	N
INFORMED	3	4	13	27	27	8	1	83
UNINFORMED	0	3	18	31	21	11	2	86

2.5 Changes over Teaching Practice in Perceived Confidence in the Evaluating Role

TABLE 9

		← DETERIORATION			SPOT ON	IMPROVEMENT →			
		-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	N
INFORMED		3	4	18	31	17	10	0	83
UNINFORMED		2	5	20	28	24	5	2	86

Table 9 shows that it is with the evaluating role that approximately one third of the students feel less confident at the end of TP than at the beginning. This finding is consistent with previous findings. (Sharpe, L. 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989). Again, however, there is no difference between the informed and uninformed groups.

3. Grade Disclosure and Student Attitudes towards Supervisors

Students were invited to respond to a number of Likert-type attitude items concerning their supervisors, using a five point scale. Three of these items are analysed below, for the informed and uninformed groups.

3.1 Table 5 sets out student responses to the first attitude item. It shows that there is no difference between the informed and uninformed students.

TABLE 5

Generally, my supervisor helped me to relate my coursework to my teaching:

		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			
		NR	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL
NR		4	1	3	2	4	1	15
INFORMED		5	4	8	20	36	23	96
UNINFORMED		4	10	8	22	42	25	111
TOTAL		13	15	19	44	82	49	222

3.2 Table 6 sets out student responses to the second attitude item and shows, again, that there is no difference between the informed and the uninformed students.

TABLE 6

Generally, my supervisor was helpful in correcting my weaknesses:

		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			
		NR	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL
NR		3	3	0	2	4	3	15
INFORMED		6	2	4	17	35	32	96
UNINFORMED		3	6	8	19	39	36	111
TOTAL		12	11	12	38	78	71	222

3.3 Table 7 sets out student responses to the third attitude item and shows no difference between the informed and the uninformed students.

TABLE 7

Generally, my supervisor was helpful in developing my strengths:

	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			TOTAL
	NR	1	2	3	4	5	
NR	2	4	1	2	5	1	15
INFORMED	6	3	4	19	37	27	96
UNINFORMED	4	6	8	25	34	34	111
TOTAL	12	13	13	46	76	62	222

4. Discussion

The results show that there is no identifiable difference in student grades for teaching practice, or changes in their perceived levels of confidence, or differences in attitudes towards supervisors, between those students who were told their formative grades by supervisors and those who were not. Students who were told their grades received similar summative grades to those who were not, were equally accurate in their expectations, felt they had made similar improvements in classroom teaching roles and held similar attitudes towards their supervisors. Though the measures do not cast light on the day-to-day management of grade disclosure by students, in summary terms they do not reveal any untoward effects of grade disclosure.

This finding, however, does raise important questions about the organisation of supervision, and its justification, especially in Singapore. Firstly, what are the consequences of the finding that grade disclosure is unrelated to outcomes? Should supervisors be left to decide for themselves whether or not to disclose grades? Secondly, are conventional beliefs and distinctions between clinical and technical-rational models of supervision really applicable to pre-service supervision in the Singapore context? Should these distinctions, which are partially based on beliefs about the consequences of regular grade feedback, be upheld in the light of these findings?

Dealing with the first question, current IE policy is that supervisors should reveal formative grades to their supervisees unless there are good grounds

for not doing so. These results support this policy: there is no evidence of any undesirable consequences, and, further, the policy is in line with student opinion that grades should be disclosed. (Sharpe, L., 1989-89) But more than this, the fact that regular, meaningful evaluations can be conducted without adverse consequences augurs well for the future development of the programme. It opens up the possibility of further developing a supervision mode that can combine features of clinical and competency-based approaches to supervision. This leads to the second question.

If grading, particularly norm-referenced grading, is a major perceived stumbling block to a synthesis, then these results suggest that it should not be. But what of the view that a predetermined competency based rating scale is another major stumbling block to a synthesis? This view rests essentially on the argument that it is impossible to marry together the view of classrooms as social constructions, whose meanings are constantly being negotiated and interpreted, with the sort of predetermined view of effective teaching that is built into the notion of competency-based rating scales. This argument is particularly cogent, it must be admitted, at the in-service level, especially where it can be demonstrated that there is a wide credibility gap between teacher constructions of classroom reality and those imposed on them in the form of external summative rating scales, and where teachers believe that they are already qualified and do not need to be evaluated. It is less forceful, however, where both the model of

good teaching and analyses of the classroom are rooted in the same knowledge base. Providing this correspondence is, of course, the main aim of the Practicum Curriculum programme.

Similarly, the possibility of "objective" feedback, leading to a breakdown of trust at the in-service level is highly plausible. It is so because of well documented scepticism about the validity and reliability of rating scales and assessors. (B. Dockrell, J. Nisbet et al. 1986). It too, however, is less plausible at the pre-service level where student teachers are more likely to rate their supervisors highly (Reid, K. 1985), and where, as has been argued, the validity of the assessment instrument is rooted in the course logic itself. It might be added that if there are such differences between pre and inservice teachers, then care needs to be taken when applying models of supervision designed for the one level to the other.

It is possible that there are additional cultural reasons for student teachers in Singapore not being adversely affected by grade disclosure. Singapore student teachers are the products of an educational system which places high value on regular grading and competition. Students are graded from the moment they enter primary school right through to their entry into IE. As such, they are likely to regard grade disclosure by supervisors as a more 'natural' process than non-disclosure. If true, this would be another instance where care needs to be taken when applying overseas research findings to the local context.

Whatever the explanation, the findings on grade disclosure would seem to permit more detailed feedback to students, helping them particularly to construct meaningful improvement strategies. It would aid, not obstruct, them in analysing the relationship between classroom reality and their own professional growth, which itself is a crucial component of any definition of classroom reality. The opportunity to disclose grades should be viewed positively, then, as an opportunity to go beyond accepted dichotomies to provide a form of supervision that is at once clear and clinical.

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