Developing Supervision: A study on Improvement Reflection in Pre-Service Teachers in KSM University.

Submitted by

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Abstract

This intervention study explores the feasibility and possible benefits of using reflective practice as a suggested model of supervision to improve the teaching of trainees during their field placement (practicum) in one girls' educational college in Saudi Arabia (KSA). An intervention study was thought to be of use because, although the literature indicates "the strong connection between teachers' culture and their conceptualisation of pedagogical practice" (Adam, 2015, p. 204; Almazrawi, 2014), the potential for using reflection to improve the teaching of Saudi trainees during their practicum cannot be guaranteed by other research findings around the world. This study also aims to use teachers' pedagogical knowledge to help trainees improve their teaching as suggested by prior research. Accordingly, the main questions regarding the application of reflection with trainees in the Saudi context are:

1. What are the participants' views about the current system of supervision?

2. How do trainees, their supervisor and teachers in the school perceive a reflective practicum course?

3. What advantages and disadvantages might a reflective practicum course offer?

4. What are the primary challenges involved in implementing a reflective practicum course as a model of supervision?

My research used an action research methodology. Data were gathered from six trainees in the final year of the school of Arabic literature at KSM University, together with their college supervisors and two co-operating teachers using interviews, focus groups, reflective journals, and diaries. Key findings demonstrated that trainees gain some advantages through the reflective journey in which they engage in their practicum. During this journey, trainees engage in the 'instructional rounds' that include teaching, observation, reflection, discussion, and interaction. Inside this cycle, the trainees gained opportunities to test their preconceptions about teaching. The data also indicated the potential of reflective discussions for building 'decisional capital' in trainees as an important skill for teaching. Findings suggest that another advantage of applying reflection is tangible—it makes the classroom a place where professional conversations about teaching and learning can occur.

However, the data analysis also shows that many challenges limit the trainees' benefits from this course. With regard to the strong relationship between education and culture, Saudi culture seems less supportive of ideas involving reflection, such as critical thinking and individual autonomy. Thus, most of the challenges to applying reflection are actually based on the teachers' lack of necessary knowledge to implement it effectively. Also, gender ideologies that can be attributed to traditional and socio-religious values make the situation worse for women in education in terms of their ability to take responsibility and develop decision-making skills.

This study has contributed to the field of research by recognising the effectiveness of using reflection in the trainees' programme at KSM University in KSA. The main contribution to knowledge of the current study is that it is the first local study which provides research findings on trainees' practicum designed to enhance trainees' reflection. The study findings can be used to inform present and future educational policy. In addition, this study uses the action research method for conducting this research in the Saudi context, making a contribution through the ability of action research to incorporate change in live action. Through analysing data, this study has revealed the impact of Saudi culture on the educational system in general and practically on teacher education.

I dedicate this thesis to my beloved family

My husband for all his love, support and sacrifices throughout this long journey.

My daughters for their love and smiles that enlightened my everyday life.
To my supervisors for their support.
To teachers and colleagues
To the research community

Acknowledgements

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. Background

High-quality teachers are the most effective way of raising educational quality (Darling-Hammond, 2012).Producing such teachers is considered the ultimate aim of teacher education programmes (TEPs) (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Feiman-Nemser &Buchman, 1997), and the practicum is regarded as playing a vital role in achieving this aim (May & Zimpher, 1986).Practicum supervision has been described as 'a cornerstone of teacher preparation' among the several crucial factors that support student teachers' (STs') learning, such as modelling and pedagogical practice(Valencia et al., 2009, p. 304). Korthagen (2010, p.673) argues that 'a strong supervisor may be able to effectively connect the student's personal experience in educational settings'.

However, research into supervision in pre-service teacher (PST) training has identified many problems during trainees' teaching practice, showing that many of these deficiencies stem from their training as "skilled technicians" who carry out their teaching by relying on an approach of "what works" rather than on careful thought (BERA, 2014; Goldacre,2013). The lack of coherence between theory and practice in some models of teaching, such as technical-rationality, leads to the "washing out" during the practicum of what the ST has learned at university (Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1981, p.7, as cited in Erginel, 2006).

One possible way of addressing deficiencies in teacher training is the introduction of reflective practices in TEPs. Reflection is aimed at developing teachers' "situational understanding", revealing their hypotheses and reconceptualising what they learn in practice (Brookfield, 1995; Elliott, 2012; Loughran, 2002; Shulman and Colbert, 1989). Hoover (1994) makes a connection between good reflectors and good teachers, claiming that when good teachers reflect, they consider all of the situations that form their practice and make decisions about their practice based on that reflection. However, Elliott asserts that there needs to be some 'action' taken after reflection if practice is to be changed and improved (2012).

Given the importance of the reflection in teacher education, interest in it has increased (Farrell, 2001; Griffin, 2003; Kaminski, 2003; Orland-Barak, 2005). However, despite the growing evidence of the value of such reflection, current teacher education in Saudi Arabia (KSA) does not appear to follow this trend. In the KSA and other Arab countries, models which depend on reflection skills might still be implicit rather than explicit. In general, the Saudi educational environment has long emphasised the traditional teacher-centred teaching-learning process (Alenizi,2012; Smith & Abouammoh, 2013).This orientation derives from a behaviourist model of teaching and learning and 'emphasises the knowledge and behavioural skills that teachers require and has been associated with micro teaching and competency-based approaches to teacher education' (Calderhead & Shorrock, 2005, p. 2).

In 2009, the Saudi government's policy changes began to encourage the use of teaching strategies that support constructivist learning. This educational reform was aimed at encouraging students to perform complex and logical activities, such as decision-making, which rely on critical and innovative deduction rather than on memorising facts (Alansari, 2010). However, teachers in schools and even higher education still use rote teaching-learning strategies in which the learner has a largely passive role (Allamnakhrah, 2013).

Consequently, while the TEP supervision system extensively emphasises theory in terms of technical proficiency, there is increasing demand for a new type of teacher (Saudi Ministry of Higher Education, 2014), described by Smith and Lev-Ari (2006,p. 290) as one 'who will improve student achievements, yet who are knowledgeable, reflective and actively engaged in professional development activities and who master the more technical aspects of teaching such as classroom management, working with children of diversity and good lesson planning'. However, the question of how to prepare effective teachers is still on the minds of researchers (George et al., 2000).

1.2. Statement of the problem

My interest in issues of practicum supervision in KSA universities, particularly KMS University where this study was conducted, began in 1998, when I was an ST myself. It intensified in 2010, when I was a practicum supervisor of trainees as part of my job of lecturer in that university. I found the trainees to be passive learners who waited for my instructions. They appeared to consider me the only source of knowledge and accepted my words without discussion or disagreement (Allamnakhrah, 2013). This passivity may have sometimes led to a lack of resolution of conflicts between the theory they had learnt in

lectures and the appropriate practice I suggested to them for specific classroom situations. This passivity challenged me to construct a new concept of active participation for my students to replace the passive information reception on which they had been relying.

When my trainees requested that we meet in a different room from the one in which all trainee groups and their supervisors met simultaneously, I formulated a tentative hypothesis that they may have been embarrassed about discussing, in the presence of their peers and other supervisors, my feedback, which was more detailed than that which my colleagues provided. Although they denied that they felt disappointed by the long discussions after their lessons, I believe that they were indeed affected by the culture of their learning environment that equated more discussion with more mistakes. Allamnakhrah (2013, p.205) attributes trainees' passivity to cultural influences: 'We are living in an uncritical society'. Saudi society needs to learn that others' views must be respected. Thus, trainees find themselves in the position of 'tell me what I have to do' instead of thinking, discussing and acting' (see Chapter Two).

Another key issue I noted during my supervisory experience was that the staff of the schools where practicums took place were almost completely separated from trainees and their supervisor. I remarked that there was also no effective communication between these two separate groups; conversations between them were limited to the topics of the lessons which the staff offered the trainees. On occasions, it was possible for trainees or their supervisors to request a teacher's assistance in controlling bad behaviour, but I strongly felt that opportunities to increase the effectiveness of practicums were lost by this lack of regular contact. Teachers' abilities that could bolster trainees' specific learning and broader education should be employed when they are available (Calderhead & Shorrock, 1997; Stigler &Hiebert,1999).

My personal interests were triggered by these two key points in my work as a university supervisor: the passivity of learners and lack of connection between PST education in university and in-service teachers (ISTs) in the actual schools. Therefore, I decided to conduct a study of TEP supervision in the KSA, focusing on revealing the short comings of the practicum course from the perspectives of trainees and of their supervisors. However, my initial approach did not continue unchanged during the course of my study, as Ravitch and Riggan (2012) report is to be expected. Through my reading of research on teacher education from both international and local contexts, I noticed first that many Saudi studies had reported on the main short comings of TEPs in Saudi universities (see for example,

Alghamidi, 2011; Alqow, 2001; Altawel, 2002;Hejazy, 2010; Khalifa, 2007;Noraldeen 2002). Due to the many common elements of the educational system used across Saudi universities, most of their findings could be applied to my area of interest.

Second, my reading convinced me of the value of reflection in teacher education. In fact, I was surprised to learn that there were similarities between what I tried to do, on a practical level, with my trainees to improve their teaching and the theoretical bases of reflection. I found Schon's idea of reflection-on-action to be very stimulating, along with Shulman's philosophy of teaching (Schon, 1983; Shulman, 1989) (see Chapter Three). This led me to the idea of "research-based teaching" or the "teacher as researcher", which emerged in the UK in the context of Stenhouse's Humanities Curriculum Project (1967–72) and was continued by Elliott (see Elliott, 2006, p. 408; Stenhouse, 1975, 1979).

Then, I was fortunate to attend the The World Association of Lesson Studies (WALS) 2013 conference in Sweden. At this event, I took advantage of opportunities to meet expert teachers, researchers, and key speakers in reflection and discuss their experiences of using reflection on teaching through lesson studies. I noticed that I was the only Arabic-speaking researcher at the conference who was interested in this area. When I returned from the conference, I was of the belief that reflection has the potential to improve trainees' practicum experience. Thus, I thought about proposing reflection to improve the TEPs. However, '[b]elief alone is not evidence, interest alone is not an argument for why a study matters' (Ravitch &Riggan, 2012, p.11). Furthermore, positive results of using reflection in one context, such as the UK, do not guarantee similar outcomes in contexts like the KSA, which have different cultural settings and educational systems. As a result, I found myself asking the question of whether I could test the potential of using reflection in a Saudi context.

The answer was that it was possible, especially given the access that I enjoyed from being a supervisor at KSM University. However, I had the dual challenges of time limitations to conduct this experimental study and of the lack of studies focusing on reflection in teaching in the Arab world. These challenges doubled the effort I spent conducting the empirical work. Ultimately, I determined that if I were to spend at least four years in conducting my study, it should be as thorough and worthwhile as possible.

1.3. The aim of this study

The concerns detailed above and derived from my personal experience highlight problems in the practicum supervision system at KSM University: the learners' passivity and the disconnection of practicums from teachers in schools. The present study contributes to the improvement of that supervision system by proposing models to be implemented in an effort to solve the problems in the pre-service practicum course in KSM University. The model focuses on two main points:

- Supporting the positivity of trainees toward their learning by enhancing their reflection on their own teaching.

- Engaging teachers in schools in cooperative work with the supervisor for the benefit of trainees.

1.4. Research questions

1. What are the participants' views about the current system of supervision?

2. How do trainees, their supervisor and teachers perceive a reflective practicum course (RPC)?

3. What advantages and disadvantages might a RPC offer as a model of supervision?

4. What are the primary challenges involved in implementing a RPC as a model of supervision?

1.5. Related studies

In designing the present enquiry, I reviewed a range of literature on the practicum of pre-service teachers education. Some studies were undertaken at different KSA universities, while others focused on Arab countries with cultural contexts similar to the KSA. These parallels helped me to consider some of the results of these studies as references for my own data analysis and subsequent discussion. I have divided my review into two main sections: the first discusses the practicum programmes, especially supervision, and the other examines reflective teaching in general.

1.5.1. Studies in the supervision of TEPs (practicum)

There is a wide range of research into practicums in TEPs. Studies conducted in the Arab context include those by Almethen (1995), Alsuaidi and Alwakeel (1995), Eprahem (1997), Ahmad and Osama (1997), Hasan (1997), Bakhsh (2000), Noraldeen (2002), Altaweel (2002), Alastal (2004), and Alsamadi and Abojamos (2005). They all highlight several weaknesses associated with supervision in TEPs, such as the chronic lack of a supporting role by supervisors; many studies also indicate that the gap between theory and practice remains the primary perceived problem in practicums, and that some supervisors seem unwilling or unable to provide trainees with supportive feedback to reduce this gap (Ahmad and Osama, 1997; Alqow, 2001; Almethen, 1995; Alsamadi and Abojamos, 2005; Alsuaidi and Alwakeel, 1995; Amar, 1997; Eprahem, 1997; Ghareeb, 1990; Hasan, 1997; Noraldeen, 2002).

Noraldeen's study (2002) lays out several weaknesses in the practicum programme from the perspective of trainees in the educational college in Jeddah, with supervision prominent among them. She found that supervisors neither met their trainees before the practicum in schools nor prepared appropriate schedules for their teaching sessions. Alqow's (2001) study sought to identify the most important problems facing trainees in the Department of Islamic Studies at the College of Education at the University of King Faisal. It concluded that, among many problems in the practicum programme, one was the lack of assistance provided by the supervisor; there appeared to be no link between what the supervisors taught at university and the practical educational duties of trainees in schools.

Regarding the shortcomings in the supporting role of supervisors, Alwabli (1986) and Khalifa (2007) both found ambiguity and disjointed mechanics in the supervisor's supporting role to be the main complaints from trainees. Therefore, many researchers have suggested conducting more studies in this area, citing "the need for better understanding of the way tutors operate when they are supervising" (Alkamees, 2001; Alwabli, 1986; Alzadejaly, 2009; Proctor, 1993, p. 95). For example, Alkathery's research (1987) with trainees at King Saud University, which was designed to elicit their views on the responsibilities of practicum supervisors, led to his confirming that supervisors play a vital role in trainees' learning and development. He went on to craft a description of the supervisor's role and prepare a list of activities and approaches to assist them in their duties.

Whilst some researchers refer to shortcomings in the supporting role of practicum supervisors in TEPs, others refer to the drawbacks found in the students themselves. These

studies usually deal with the evaluation of the practicum as a whole. The findings point to a low level of ST interaction, whether with peers, supervisors, or the schools in which they conducted their practicums (Altaweel, 2002; Hejazy, 2010).

Alghamidi's research (2011), conducted in the Art Department of Umm Alqura University, indicated some problems in supervisors' evaluation of their students. He argued that the limited number of supervisors' visits and their deficiency in training students to become self-learners may leave a negative impact on the credibility of their summative evaluation. He found that 70% of students were not sateachersfied with their practicum supervision and assessment process. Moreover, he pointed out that the assessment checklist that was applied to all departments at the university did not fit well with the pedagogical needs of the Art Department. This raises the question of whether it would be preferable to design assessment tools according to each subject.

1.5.2. Studies of reflective teaching

To the best of my knowledge, in the KSA and other Arab countries, models which depend on reflection skills might remain implicit because traditional teaching models such as "technical-rationality" are still in wide practice (Alansari, 2010). I found only one study that explored reflective skills among Saudi female in-service teachers, which was carried out by Ghada Almazrawi (2014). Almazrawi examined the reflective skills and attitudes used by those teachers. The research instruments included a survey and individual interviews. The total number of survey respondents was 356 teachers, while 10 teachers volunteered to sit for one-on-one structured interviews. Her study revealed that Saudi female in-service teachers suffered from weakness in their reflective teaching skills and attitudes. She suggested providing a space for Saudi female teachers to modify the provided curriculum and to develop their own teaching styles. In addition, she suggested that the professional development staff provide in-service teachers with professional training about reflection and work with school leaders to produce a culture of enquiry in their schools. Almazrawi considered her study to be "the first study that investigates the RP in Saudi educational literature" (2014, p. 2). Thus, her work offers another important foundation for the present study.

Despite the concerns outlined above, there are small-scale changes underway; Jordan and Jerusalem appear to be considering the establishment of reflective training in TEPs. For instance, Alwashah's study (2007) examined the level of reflective training in TEP at the University of Jordan, arguing for more reflective training and supervisory meetings to help

trainees to change positively and foster reflectivity in teaching. Ali (2010) conducted a study into beliefs and practices of reflective teaching in English language classrooms in Jerusalem. She used a questionnaire, interviews, and classroom observations to collect findings for her research. She found that teachers tended to use more reflective thinking when planning a lesson, but less after a lesson. She recommended that teachers be encouraged to reflect on their teaching especially after having completed a lesson, and that further practical research to train teachers in becoming more reflective be undertaken.

Dabia (2012) conducted an action research study aimed at developing the pedagogic skills of Libyan preservice teachers through the use of reflection. The findings indicated that the implementation of reflection in the Libyan context promoted a culture of observation and critical discussions in a setting that had "traditionally been characterised as passive and non-reflective" (Dabia 2012, p. I). He recommended a greater understanding of the pedagogic process that supports students, which requires a commitment to collaborative work between institutions of higher education and schools.

1.6. Significance of the study

From the studies presented above, the weaknesses in the role of supervision in TEPs can be summarised as follows: ambiguity in the supervisor's role; the lack of an appropriate supporting function; and a general negative attitude among trainees in terms of their learning responsibilities. The current study explores the same field – supervision in practicum. Rather than simply identifying weaknesses or enumerating those already discovered, it aims to implement and test proposed solutions. Thus, this study differs from others in certain key facets:

-Unlike most of the above studies, which tried to explore the common problems from which supervisors suffer, this study aims to implement suggested models as an attempt to solve these problems in the pre-service practicum course in KSM University, through a training and implementation cycle of action research (AR) in an authentic school setting;

-In the field of teacher training, reflection is regarded as an effective way to prepare high-quality teachers (BERA, 2014). This study contributes to a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of reflection in in-service teachers training. This understanding is drawn from the perceptions of trainees, teachers, and supervisors. These views will enrich our knowledge about this important phenomenon. Moreover, the process of enhancing

trainees' reflection may well shed light on what reflective methods such as journals and dialogue can contribute.

- Despite the significant role of reflection as a key component of teachers' learning, there are few studies in this area in the Middle Eastern context. Using AR methods in an educational setting is also rare, as is indicated by the scarcity of research based on implementation research in teacher education. Using AR as a method for conducting this research in the Saudi context makes a remarkable contribution through the unique ability of AR to incorporate change in live action (see section 9.2.2 in Chapter Nine).

In addition, this study will give trainees opportunities to connect with knowledgeable others (peers, supervisors, and cooperative teachers), reflect upon and interpret the knowledge that they can acquire, and then use this knowledge to improve their teaching. This chance to negotiate their own professional identities within a reflective and goal-directed framework may help trainees move away from the traditionalist approaches that have long guided teacher training in much of the Arab world.

Despite the growing body of empirical evidence in the international research literature of the benefits of supervision and mentoring in teaching practice (for example, Bullough &Draper 2004; Hobson et al., 2009; McIntyre et al.,2005; Wang et al., 2008), many researchers agree that supervisors remain a little-known group. Thomas (2001, p. 3) notes that the literature about training reveals a surprising lack of information about how TEPs support initial training and continuing professional learning among supervisors. Tardif et al. (2001, p. 2), who studied groups from different universities, argue that "in every pre-service training reform project, university trainers play a key role" and ask: "But who are they? What are their beliefs and their actual practices in terms of training? Are they taking ownership of reforms and to what extent are they ready to support them?" This study will explore one supervision system, how it works, who works in it, and what the results of this work are.

While this study aims to apply the suggested model of supervision to a sample of trainees in the practicum of KSM University, its findings may also contribute to the development of more effective models of supervision at a broader contextual level (see section 4.3.1.2 in Chapter Four).

1.7. Definition of key terms

Saudi student teacher (ST)/ Trainees: Students in the fourth and final academic year who wish to qualify as teachers and are undertaking an appropriate teaching placement. However, this term is used to describe students who participated in this study, while "pre-service teacher" (PST) is used to describe all those trainees who are in their initial teacher education programmes (ITE),(not participated).

Teacher-in-school (TEACHERS): The term used for the teachers who participated in this study (only two teachers), while "in-service teachers" (ISTs) refers to all teachers who have completed their qualification and are working in schools (not participated).

Supervisor: In this study, the supervisor is a member of the university teaching staff who is authorized to supervise students' training in TEPs. He or she works on achieving the objective of instructing, encouraging trainees to develop their teaching capabilities, and providing them with suggestions. The supervisor's role also includes serving as a liaison with the education departments that associate with the schools in which the trainees will practice their teaching, taking responsibility for practicums, and determining the trainees' grades for formative and summative assessment (Alenizi, 2012).

Co-operating teacher: Teachers in schools who monitor trainees' teaching and have responsibility for ensuring that they are given written guidance on their teaching placement and on cooperation with the college supervisor (Al Dawood, 1994; Ministry of Education, 2000, p. 17). Critically, the co-operating teacher is unexcited in the supervision system in initial teacher education (ITE) in Saudi women's education (see Chapter Two).

Practicum: Practice-related courses in "a teacher preparation programme that aim to provide PSTs with opportunities to experience an authentic teaching and learning environment" (Evginel, 2006, p.11). The equivalent term used in KSA is "field education". It refers to the course in which trainees can practice their teaching skills, including the application of aspects of knowledge, skills, and experience that the student gains through studying in TEPs.

1.8. Structure of this thesis

This thesis comprises nine chapters. Chapter One introduces the research issue, including aims, questions, related studies, significance of the study, and definitions. Chapter Two outlines the background to the research context. Chapter Three provides a literature review

that assists in understanding the field of this study. This chapter examines three key aspects of the relevant literature: teacher education, supervision of trainees, and theoretical perspectives on reflection.

Chapter Four outlines the methodological framework adopted in this study. It includes the underpinning philosophy, the detailed methodology, and my positioning in the research. It also elaborates on potential issues in my decisions about the research design, such as the validity of the research and the possibility of generalisation.

Chapter Five offers details about my process of generating data regarding the application of reflection as a model of supervision to improve teaching in the Saudi context. It is divided into five units. The first describes the initial stage of data collection, which took place before the trainees began their teaching practice. The second unit clarifies the process of data collection and provides details about data collection methods: focus groups (FGs), reflective journals (RJs), diaries, and interviews. Next, it describes the participants in this study and thus includes my position as an insider, researcher, and the manager of this study. Section four highlights the ethical considerations of this research. The fifth section explains the process of data analysis and interpretation.

Chapters Six, Seven, and Eight address the major findings of this thesis by answering the main research questions. Chapter Six is divided into three sections to address each of the participants' roles: the supervisor, trainees, and teachers in reflective practice course (RPC). Chapter Seven discusses the major advantages that trainees gain from RPC, while Chapter Eight analyses the challenges that limit trainees' benefits from this course.

Chapter Nine provides a summary of the entire project, including its findings, major contributions, and limitations. The chapter also outlines some recommendations for further research before closing with a final reflection on the thesis.

Chapter Two: Research Context

The aim of this chapter is to provide information about the context in which this study was undertaken for this thesis. It gives a general background of the country in terms of location, population and government system. Of relevance to this thesis, a historical overview of Saudi Arabia's educational system is outlined with a special focus on Saudi female teacher education.

2.1. Brief background of KSA

The KSA is located in the Middle East and was established in 1932 on an area that covers about 80% of the Arabian Peninsula. Arabic is the official language of KSA, and Islam is its religion and the basis of its constitution. According to the Saudi Central Department of Statistics and Information (2013), the estimated population is 29 million, including 9 million foreign residents. The kingdom is considered to be one of the top producers of oil and petrochemicals. Health services, social services and education are provided by the government of KSA
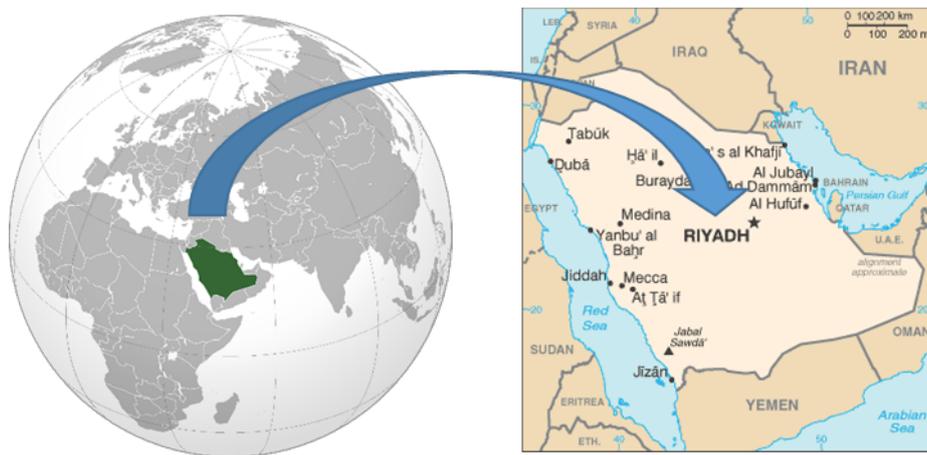
Figure 2.1. Map of KSA

file://ueahome/eresssf2/xnq08zqa/data/NTProfile/Desktop/Saoudië-Arabië_tcm313-81414.gif

Saudi culture is strongly determined by the Islamic religion. Thus, one of the main characteristics of KSA is its Islamic identity, and it derives its constitution from Islamic law (sharia) and the instructions of Prophet Mohammed (Oyaid, 2009). Indeed, the religion of Islam covers all aspects of the people's lives and places particular emphasis on education, as the next paragraphs will describe (Alrashidi and Phan, 2015).

2.2. Saudi education system

2.2.1. General background

According to the UNESCO (2007) report on World Data on Education:

[T]he general goals of education in the KSA are: to have students understand Islam in a correct and comprehensive manner; to plant and spread the Islamic creed; to provide the students with the values, teachings and ideals of Islam; to equip them with various skills and knowledge; to develop their conduct in constructive directions; to develop the society economically and culturally; and to prepare the individual to be a useful member in the building of his/her community.

(http://www.ibe.unesco.org/Countries/WDE/2006/index.html).

The Saudi educational system was developed relatively late and has expanded very rapidly over the past fifty years (Hussain, 2007). With regard to the above goals of education in KSA, its roots go back to Mecca, the holy city for all Muslims around the world, which is located in the west of KSA. Education was first based in the mosques, then in the Qur'anic schools or Kuttabs, where students learned to read and write Arabic, focused on 'the memorization of the Quran and religious basic texts' (Almazrawi, 2014, p. 7; Al-Salloom, 1995; Alrashidi and Phan, 2015). The Kuttabs fell under the domain of the Directorate of Education when the country's first organised educational system was established in 1925 (Alsharif, 2011). According to Almazrawi, the Kuttabs were 'the early form of public education in the region in the seventh century . . . [where they] totally focused on the memorization of the Quran and religious basic texts' (2014, p. 7). This type of education includes Islamic instruction and an informal system to teach literacy and learn the Qur'an (Al-Silami, 2010). Al-Silami describes the Kuttab classrooms as 'taught by a Motawwaa [mutawwi], who was usually an imam[1], and this type of teaching was instructive, where

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[1] An imam is a leader of congregational prayer in a mosque. (http://www.thefreedictionary.com/imam)

students learned the alphabet and to transcribe Qur'anic verses' (2010, p. 91). As seen from Figure 2.2,the imam (teacher) stays in the front of students and they listen, repeat and write what he said even they do not understanding.

Figure 2.2 Kuttab classroom (http://gomhuriaonline.com/main)

In 1930 the first public primary schools in KSA. opened (Wiseman, 2010). They were free, although girls were not formally enrolled (Al-Salloom, 1995, Alsharif, 2011). However, according to Bahgat (1999), the foundations of the modern school system were laid in the 1950s when an influx of 'petrodollars' flowed into the Gulf Region, making funds available to promote public education. In 1953 the Directorate of Education became the Ministry of Education (MoE). More schools were opened, and public education started to expand throughout the country. The expansion in education was so rapid that the MoE found it necessary to create educational directorates in different parts of the country to assist it by distributing some of its responsibilities (Alhamed et al, 2007; Alrashidi and Phan, 2015). In 1958, the structure of the education system was changed to adopt the uniform educational policy, which is based on the agreement of Arab League members (Alhamed et al, 2007). Subsequently, the educational system in KSA. has consisted of four levels: the pre-elementary level (kindergarten), primary school, middle school and secondary school (Alhamed et al, 2007) (see table below).

Level	Child's age	Period of education
Kindergarten	3–5	optional
Primary school	6–12	6 years
Middle school	13–15	3 years
Secondary school	16–18	3 years

Tabel 2.1: Saudi educational levels

Students are not assessed at the kindergarten level. Students in primary school are not required to take any exams, as they are assessed formatively through the whole year (Alharbi, 2011). Students are assessed twice a year through comprehensive exams in middle and secondary school. Then, when the students complete their study at secondary school, they are strongly encouraged to continue their higher education by attending free public universities (Almazrawi, 2014).

The last two decades have witnessed substantial development in the Saudi educational system, especially under King Abdullah (2005-2015), who was determined to use the country's wealth in the development of a 'knowledge society' (Profanter, 2014). To this end, many schools were built, huge numbers of local teachers were recruited, and new curricula were adopted to meet the needs of the increasing number of students. For example, in 2015 there were 30,828 public schools in the country providing free education, textbooks, and health services for their students (Ministry of Education, 2015). Both public and private schools are administrated directly by the MoE (Batterjee, 2011).

2.2.2. The Culture of Learning in KSA:

According to James and Biesta (2007, p. 23) a culture of learning encompasses 'the social practices through which people learn'. As described earlier, Saudi education began in the mosques, where kuttabs were established to teach the content of the Quran and religious basic texts. However, this religious origin still has a major influence on the aims of education in the KSA (see Section 2.2.1.) Thus, it can be argued that kuttab-style learning, where the teacher is the centre of a learning process with a heavy emphasis on memorizing and repetition, continues to impact on the culture of teaching and learning at every level in the country (Alenizi, 2012; Almazrawi, 2014; Alrashidi and Phan, 2015). Smith and Abouammoh (2013, p. 6) claim that:

> Saudi Arabia has received sustained international criticism over many years
> about the quality of its education system, with major concern directed at the

content of its curriculum and the didactic nature of its pedagogy. Achieving high quality teaching and learning standards is one of the major challenges being confronted by Saudi universities.

Saudi education is teacher-centred rather than student-centred, which contributes to deterring students from developing their skills as independent learners (Ahmed, 2014; Alkubaidi, 2014; Alrabai, 2014; Alrashidi and Phan, 2015; Fareh, 2010; Rajab, 2013; Smith and Abouammoh, 2013). In Saudi academic culture, teachers are seen as the main source of knowledge who dominate the learning process, and students rarely have a chance to speak or ask questions (Alkubaidi, 2014; Alrabai, 2014; Alrashidi and Phan, 2015). Classrooms are almost eerily quiet as students take a strikingly passive role in the learning process (Alkubaidi, 2014). Alrashidi and Phan (2015, p. 38) described Saudi classrooms as follows:

> … teachers spend most of the time illustrating and explaining the items of the new lesson verbally or writing on the board, while students are passive listeners and their responsibility is to record what has been taught and to copy from the board.

This teacher-centred approach in the Saudi education context has led to a lack of opportunity for students to interact and participate effectively in the learning process, where they should learn to be creative, think critically and develop ideas (Alrashidi and Phan, 2015). As a result of teachers' dominance, students rapidly become highly dependent on learning strategies which may at times be inappropriate such as memorization and rote learning (Alkubaidi, 2014; Almutairi, 2008; Alrabai, 2014; Fareh, 2010; Rajab, 2013). In almost every classroom, most students simply memorize the teacher's or the textbook's words as their primary strategy for learning (Alkubaidi, 2014; Rajab, 2013). Achieving higher marks may depend on students' abilities to memorize and regurgitate the knowledge on which the exam will be based (Alkubaidi, 2014). Alrabai (2014) claimed that Saudi students are little more than receivers, memorisers and reproducers.

There is no meaningful difference in the culture of learning at the higher education level in the KSA. Smith and Abouammoh (2013, p. 86) claim that 'many faculty members are still using traditional teaching methods that do not enhance students' skills and abilities'. Lectures as a teaching method that relies on one-way communication remain the centre of university teaching (Smith and Abouammoh, 2013).

2.2.3. Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in KSA

2.2.3.1. Once-over

ITE is the process of forming teachers, 'based on assumptions about what constitutes good teaching at both the preparation of expert and novice levels, and about the processes involved in learning to teach' (Brisard, 2003, pp. 51-52). ITE is unavoidably linked to the whole education system and hence to the socio-political context of the country in which it exists (Alenizi, 2012). Thus, understanding the Saudi culture of learning, which has been argued above, is fundamental to an understanding of how teachers are expected to learn to teach in the way they are expected to teach after qualification (Zeichner and Tabachnick ,1985).

ITE in KSA strives to achieve key objectives in its education system. The first is to maintain its primary purpose: to 'understand Islam in a proper and complete manner, to implement and spread the Muslim faith, to provide a student with Islamic values, and teachings' (Al-Zaid, 1982, p. 51). Another is to use the advantages of science and technology to assist with social and economic development (http://faculty.ksu.sa). However, this use should be above all 'a continuation of its Islamic educational heritage' which means a continuation of rote learning (Al-Zaid, 1982, p. 51).

Hence, the religious view that dominates the Saudi educational system may continue to promote teaching methods that support rote learning more than reflective learning. Therefore, it is no surprise that a technical orientation, which Schon (1991) calls "technical rationality", is clearly identifiable across teacher education programmes in KSA regardless of the currently prevailing international view that a constructivist model based on the theory of Vygotsky (1987) is the best way to teach (Al-Eisa, 2009) (see Section 2.2.3). The supervisors tell the student teachers what they have to do and the student teachers have to apply exactly what their supervisors have said (Alenizi, 2012) (more about Saudi supervision will be provided in Section 2.4). Thus, a common complaint among members of the teaching field is that teacher education should extend beyond the traditional methods of teaching because it is not providing teachers with adequate teaching and training programmes (AlMunajjed, 2009).

With the increasing number of Saudi female graduates, the demand for teaching jobs for Saudi females has increased. It is possible to attribute this growing demand for Saudi women teachers to the social view of a teaching career as a suitable and well-paid job for

females[2] (AlMunajjed, 2009; Almazrawi, 2014). To meet this demand, the MoE has implemented 'a two-year diploma programme for teacher preparation. The participating teachers were only required to have completed an elementary school degree' (Jamjoom, 2010, p. 548). Saudi graduates are also given priority for job placements over non-Saudis under the new policy called 'Saudization' (Jamjoom, 2010). Consequently, the total number of female teachers in the public education system—at all school levels—has increased from 185,956 in 2001–2002 to more than 250,000 in 2012–2013 (Saudi Press Agency, 2012).

In turn, these implementations may contribute to the shortage of well-qualified teachers in KSA. which is considered a vital challenge in Saudi educational reform. Zeyada claims that 'the enrolment of large numbers of non-qualified teachers to work in teaching is one of the main problems that affect the quality of teaching and thus of educational reform'. He adds that simply graduating from an educational college is not enough to ensure being a good teacher, and thus he requests that graduates apply for what he calls a 'license of teaching' after graduation (edited by Alhamed et al. 2007, p. 256).

AlMunajjed indicates the shortage of well-qualified teachers in girls' education and emphasises the lack of the teachers' ability to 'communicate and interact with students, encourage teamwork, and develop the personality of students while promoting the value of understanding and tolerance' (2009, p. 14). She also mentions the lack of the concept of lifelong learning among teacher education, which is essential to update knowledge and skills. Thus, Saudi academics have expressed the need to formulate new programmes for teaching (AlMunajjed, 2009; Alenizi, 2012).

2.2.3.2. Teacher preparation procedure in KSA.

Current teachers in Saudi schools graduate from two types of institutions—intermediate colleges or universities. Intermediate colleges provide a two-year teaching diploma for high school graduates. Universities offer two kinds of teaching certificates—four-year bachelor's degrees at a College of Education, as in the case of KSM, or a diploma for bachelor's degree holders where they receive a comprehensive education to prepare them for teaching (Almazrawi, 2014).

There are two pathways to prepare a teacher at a College of Education in KSA. The first, which is more popular, requires three-and-a-half years of study in the college, and a half-year of teaching practice at schools (practicum). This half-year is under the supervision of

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[2]Between SR5,000 (US$1,335) and SR17,000 (US$4,535) per month (AlMunajjed, 2009).

the university with main assist from a school monitor, who is a teacher from the school (Alghamdi, 2012). The second way, which is part of the educational college at KSM University (where this study was conducted), requires four years of study in the college, with teaching practice at schools included during the sixth and seventh semesters. Teaching practice at schools (practicum) is under the supervision of the university, directly by- a supervisor from the academic staff of the university.

The programme of teacher education at KSM University is conducted via two pathways—theoretical and practical. The theoretical pathway provides students with some lectures on basic education knowledge, such as the history of education, educational theory, educational pedagogy, and assessment approaches, as well as lectures in their particular subject matter. The second pathway is conducted practically through microteaching in the university or through teaching in schools in the sixth (first period) and seventh (second period) semesters.

In the first and second periods, student teachers should have an opportunity to conduct field visits in both school observation and teaching. Students must spend one day from 7:00 am to 1:00 pm in schools every week in the sixth and seventh semesters. During this day, the students join in groups of 6-8 students and work with one supervisor, who is one of the academic faculty members in the Department of Education at the university. The practicum office in the university will have provided the supervisor with a list of the students' names and the schools where they have to practeacherse their teaching. Then the supervisor has full responsibility to contact the school staff to facilitate the practicum—for example, managing the timetabled lessons for the student teachers, discussing with the heads of the schools any issues that would facilitate the student teachers' teaching process, or managing any complaints about issues that hinder their performance.

Each student teacher's group must teach at least three lessons in one day in different classes in the same school. Each lesson is presented by one student while the other students in the same group observe the lesson with their supervisor and take notes to discuss it at the end of the day. These procedures appear to be much smaller to collaborative teaching practice which support learning as a process of interacting and participation between learners, such as lesson study[3] (LS). However, even the application of LS in schools leads to

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[3] a group of teachers seeking to enhance their approach to teaching a particular item or concept, or to improve how learners learn it, by collaboratively analysing how this can be done (Dudley, 2013). More will be provided in chapter three.

different results, due to the impact of the culture of learning in the KSA. For example, while the trainees should be encouraged by their supervisor to generate new knowledge in their interactions within the LS group, in reality they simply listen to the supervisor's feedback and ask what they should do next (Alenizi, 2012; Smith and Abouammoh, 2013).

The duration of the practicum usually ranges from 10 to 12 weeks (except for the first week and the last three weeks in the examination period). The practicum starts with two weeks of observation. Then students begin teaching once a week for about eight to ten weeks, with the supervisor's support and evaluation. Then comes two weeks of daily teaching with only evaluation from the supervisor, for both the sixth and seventh semesters.

2.3. Saudi women in education

2.3.1. Gender ideology

Educational services were not available for girls until 1960, when the General Presidency of Girls' Education (GPGE) was established (Smith and Abouammoh, 2013) .This indicates another main characteristic of the Saudi educational system, which is that it is a 100% single-sex schooling system with no coeducational institutions. This emerges from cultural and religious traditions regarding the social status of women (Al Salloom, 1995; Wiseman, 2010). This delay in women's education was because female education was met, at that time, with great opposition from some parts of the local community such as religious people, who thought that secular education for girls was useless (Metz, 1992; Groiss, 2003). Consequently, the GPGE was heavily influenced by religious conservatives who approved of women's education only under the direction of 'ulama[4]' (Hamdan, 2005, p. 44).

Because of religious people's view of girls' education based on a fear that it is a 'Western' tradition, women's education in KSA keeps to traditional attitudes regarding the place of women in society (Hussain, 2007). For this reason, the GPGE has differentiated the girls' curriculum at the primary and intermediate levels from that of the boys, who fall under the MoE. For example, school textbooks encourage women to excel in subjects such as home economics by describing traditional families in which fathers go to work and mothers stay

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[4] Some resources refer to religious conservative scholars by calling them 'ulama'. Conservative religious scholars are those who believe in one interpretation of the Qur'an. However, the word 'ulama' is the plural for 'alim', derived from the world 'ilm', which means knowledge. Ulama thus refers to a group of people (usually men) who are scholars of religious knowledge, and thus the term can be used for both conservative and progressive interpreters (Hamdan, 2005, p. 44).

at home and practise appropriate hobbies for women such as embroidery (Rawaf and Simmons, 1991).

Nevertheless, schools were opened for women at all levels—elementary, secondary, high school and university—but still remained under the GPGE (while the education of boys was overseen by the MoE) to ensure that women's education did not 'deviate from the original purpose of female education, which was to make women good wives and mothers' (Hamdan, 2005, p. 44). However, the GPGE was granted a lower budget than its male counterpart. In fact, many girls' schools were very old, and many unsafe rented buildings existed. Thus, public dissatisfaction with the GPGE was on the rise (Hamdan, 2005).

In 2002 the GPGE and the MoE were integrated as a result of requests from both the general public and the government. This amalgamation came about as a government reaction to a fire in March of 2002 in a girls' elementary school in Mecca that resulted in the deaths of 15 young girls. The issue was widely discussed in the Saudi press that 'maintained that the religious police discouraged the firemen from entering the girls' school because the girls and teachers may not be wearing their hijab[5]' (Hamdan, 2005; Alsharif, 2011).

2.3.2. Women's social status

It is impossible to discuss women's education in KSA without introducing the social and political forces that have shaped it. First is the discovery and production of oil in the 1930s. In the early 70s, oil-generated revenue introduced large-scale changes in KSA. The wealth that resulted from oil helped create a 'postcolonial system of neo patriarchs in which the political control is exerted through existing tribal based networks in which loyalty is paramount' (Profanter, 2014, p. 209). The main issue in this patriarchal system is male domination even though the education system was opening to both boys and girls (Hamdan, 2005). However, after the Iranian revolution in 1979, strict restrictions began to be re-imposed on women's clothing and movement. The situation of Saudi women was then exacerbated by Islamic radicals who seized the Grand Mosque. This incident made women 'less visible; severe restrictions were imposed by the religious police resulting in a rapid decline of the liberalization of women in society' (Profanter, 2014, p. 209).

In 1990 came the Gulf War, or what America called 'Desert Storm', during which Iraq invaded Kuwait. 'The American presence was highly visible in the KSA capital city of Riyadh and on the east coast close to the Saudi-Kuwaiti borders. With the participation of American

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[5]The headscarf that women should wear according to Islamic instructions.

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troops in the war, American women in service were seen driving cars' (Hamdan, 2005, p. 43; Almania and Alalshikh, 2014). I was a teenager at the time and I was surprised when I saw an American woman drive a car as well as Kuwaiti woman who had fled their country. In this case, 32 Saudi women broke free of the traditional roles that prevented Saudi women from driving cars by driving through the streets of Riyadh. After two hours, they were stopped by clerics and policemen. Although all these women had international driver's licenses, they were dismissed from their jobs and taken from their guardians. They vowed not to repeat this behaviour (Almania and Alalshikh, 2014). Although the incidents mentioned have affected women and challenged Saudi society, it was still 'a society that until then had experienced very little change in its policies toward women' (Hamdan, 2005, p. 43).

Generally, in Arab culture, and Saudi culture in particular, males dominate based on the belief that they are superior to females (Becker, 1991). Keddie (2007, p. 407) claims that 'the normal or average situation of most women has involved male dominance'. Grant (2013, p. 18), a Western feminist who helped Princess Lolowah al-Faisal start Effat University in Jeddah, KSA, describes the situation of Saudi women:

Males have an overall dominance in KSA that has a huge effect on space. Males dominate the workplace, schools, and even the transportation system. In my opinion, Saudi Arabia is very behind when it comes to women's rights and gender equality, but to people who live in Saudi Arabia it is just what they know and it is normal. Women can still work, but they have little variation in job choice.

Consequently, 'lingering social norms, local traditions, and the structure of the system of public education have been constraints on women's realization of their equal opportunities in society and their full participation in the labour market' (AlMunajjed, 2009, p. 1). Nonetheless, in September 2000, the Saudi government signed and ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), though with some reservations (Islam, 2014). It is also worth mentioning that the Saudi government has made a considerable effort to promote gender equality and to ensure women's equal access to education (Islam, 2014).

Hence, regarding the lateness of Saudi female education as compared to that of males, 'rapid progress toward gender parity in schooling has occurred (Wiseman, 2010, p. 16). For example, the percentage of women receiving education has increased from only 25% of the total student enrolment in schools in 1970 to almost 50% in 2010 (see next table which

shows the number of schools, students, and teachers in all different levels of education under the supervision of the Ministry of Education in 2009). Also, in international tests such as the TIMSS, girls achieved better results than boys in science, though there is no significant difference between girls' and boys' achievement in mathematics. Of note, women are still culturally prevented from taking courses in certain fields such as engineering, journalism and architecture (Wiseman, 2010; Islam, 2014).

Levels	Gender	Schools	Students	Teachers
Pre-primary	Co-Education	1,521	106,301	10,337
Primary	Males	6,767	1,265,426	110,850
	Females	6,835	1,227,699	112,661
Intermediate	Males	4,130	634,927	58,989
	Females	3,780	553,415	58,381
Secondary	Males	2,469	606,062	47,353
	Females	2440	490,112	52,400
Special education	Males	1,064	17,393	5,383
	Females	487	8,932	2,419
Adult education	Males	768	12,671	0 *
	Females	3,156	70,100	13,319
Total		33,417	4,993,038	472,092

Table 2.2: Saudi levels of education (Ministry of Education, 2009)

The KSA of 2016 is vastly different from KSA of a century ago that rested upon existing tribal-based networks in which loyalty was paramount (Profanter, 2014, p. 209). It seems like a 'sleeping giant that is just awakening and beginning to exert its influence in a rapidly changing political, economical, and social world' (Profanter, 2014, p. 207). KSA is determined to use its wealth in the development of a 'knowledge society'. According to the Ninth Five-Year Development Plan (2010–2014) 50.6% of the Saudi budget went to human resource development, including education and training. This was an important jump to create a knowledge-based society (Profanter, 2014). A recent and complete overhaul of Saudi Arabia's educational system at a cost of US$3.1 billion made KSA the eighth-highest education spender in the world (Islam, 2014). However, gender ideologies that can be attributed to traditional and social values that 'gained legal force in Saudi society by being associated with Islamic teaching' have limited the quality of Saudi women's education (Hamdan, 2005, p. 45).

With regard to the strict segregation of Saudi Arabia's educational system between males and females, with different campuses for each (Alsharif, 2011; Al-Sadi, 2013), this study can have an interest in Saudi female trainees. For this reason, the following sections focus on female higher education and teacher education, which differ from their male counterparts.

2.3.3. The higher education of the Saudi woman

While the history of public education of Saudi women started in the 1960s, the first girls' college of education was established in Riyadh in 1970, to train girls to teach in intermediate and secondary schools (Al-Gady, 1981). Such colleges of education fall under the supervision of the GPGE. The girls who have enrolled in these colleges have successfully completed secondary school and gone on to earn four-year degrees. By the end of 1989, 12 colleges of education had produced over 16,000 graduates (GPGE, 1989). There is no fee for admission to these colleges because education in the KSA is free. Moreover, the government of KSA offers inducements in the form of a monthly allowance for students to attend these colleges. Fifteen of these colleges had been established by the mid-1980s, offering intermediate diplomas in education. In addition, due to the growing of the demands on girls' schools, GPGE established what is called 'junior colleges'. Students in junior colleges have to study for two years and, after their graduation, they have to make a contract to teach with the GPGE for at least three years in intermediate schools (Alshuaifan, 2009).

The universities in KSA did not open their doors to girls until 1976 at King Saud University[6], whichhad been established in 1957, because they were initially opened for boys and mixing gender was not acceptable (Alshuaifan, 2009). As women continued to demand higher education, the universities opened separate campuses for them. However, the government found itself in urgent need of Saudi female teachers due to the non-coeducation aspect of its educational system. To address this, the MoE imported teachers from other Arab countries, particularly Egypt and Syria, as well as some male staff who gave lectures via closed-circuit television. Although women are currently studying most of the same academic subjects as men in the universities, they 'do not enjoy the same level of facilities in terms of libraries and laboratories as the men do' (Alshuaifan, 2009, p. 17).

However, it is worth underlining the increased attention that has been given by the Saudi government to higher education. This increase can be noticed in the jump from seven Saudi universities (including 90 colleges) in the 1970s to 33 universities (including 494 colleges) in 2014. This jump has also affected the number of female students in higher education which rose from 20,300 to 47,000 between 1983 and 1989, and then increased to 666,157 women in 2012 (Metz, 1992; SAMA, 2012). Moreover, female students in higher education in KSA

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[6] However, Jamjoom and Kelly claimed that '[g]irls started to join Saudi universities in 1961/1962 by studying as irregular 'part-time' students at the Colleges of Arts and Administrative Sciences of King Saud University' (edited by Smith and Abouammoh, 2013, p. 119)

surpass those in Jordan, Lebanon, Tunisia and Palestine (World Bank, 2008). Islam (2014) attributes this superiority of Saudi women to the government's commitment to girls' education.

However, the development towards a knowledge-based society is not an easy task. Even though KSA is investing a lot of money into the educational realm, 'this is not necessarily reflected in the quality of the education system' (Profanter, 2014, p. 211). Lacey, who experienced living in KSA for four years writing the story of the Saudi Kingdom, concluded that 'reform in Saudi Arabia had never been a simple matter, and will never be given the religious mentality of people' (1981, p. 363).

2.4. The biggest challenges in Saudi education

One of the main challenges facing Saudi education is that the teaching method based on memorization still exists today (AlMunajjed, 2009; Alenizi, 2012; Almazrawi, 2014). Alenizi argues that 'tradition has persisted throughout history and has permeated all forms of education, continuing to co-exist alongside more recent innovations' (2012, p. 40). Thus, several studies conducted in Saudi schools indicate that there is a lack of critical thinking among Saudi students as a result of the traditional memorization method. They suggest that any reforms must incorporate critical thinking as a method of teaching as well as content introduced into the Saudi education system (Al-Eisa, 2009; Al-Miziny, 2010; Kafe, 2009; Elyas, 2008). Krieger (2007, p. 4) touches on a very important point when he says, 'reformers not only want to change what is taught, but how it is taught'.

Also, the Saudi educational system can still be described as 'very centralized' (Al-Degether, 2009, p. 1). This is not only because the curriculum is approved by the MoE (Batterjee, 2011), but also because the recruitment, promotion and termination of teachers is handled directly by the MoE. Moreover, applying new teaching methods or establishing any non-class activities also occurs through the MoE. Thus, Alkatheeri (1995) critiques the rigid centralized system, arguing that it should allow teachers to influence the curriculum and modify it to fit their school situations. Alenizi (2012) suggested that real change in Saudi education reform has to start at the top, because KSA is a country where education policy and practice is strongly centralized. However, such change is only possible when the desire to change is accompanied by the power to implement the change.

As a logical result of the dominant 'memorization' teaching method and the centralized nature of Saudi education, the traditionalism of the Saudi teacher's role as a source and an

indoctrinator of knowledge and preaching is one of the common features in Saudi education (Alhamed, et al., 2007). The Saudi educational environment has long emphasised the traditional teaching style in which teachers are the centre of the teaching-learning process (Ministry of Education, 2008; Ministry of Higher Education, 2008). It could be said that the prevailing ideology or the conceptual orientation of teacher education in KSA is the technical orientation (Alansari, 2010). This orientation derives from a behaviourist model of teaching and learning and 'emphasises the knowledge and behavioural skills that teachers require and has been associated with micro teaching and competency-based approaches to teacher education' (Calderhead and Shorrock, 2005, p. 2).

In 2009 the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Higher Education policy[7] changes began to encourage the use of teaching strategies that support constructivist learning in their classrooms. Educational reform aims to encourage students to perform complex and logical activities such as decision-making which rely on critical and innovative deduction rather than on memorising facts (Alansari, 2010). However, teachers in schools and at the university level still use rote teaching-learning strategies and the role of the learner seems to be a passive one (Alesa, 2012).

At the same time, louder voices are demanding the preparation of a new type of teacher who can meet the needs of the society (Alhamed, et al., 2007). Beed, et al. (2005, p. 166) describe this type of teacher, one who 'can work in a team, adjust to the fast-changing reality and demands of the surrounding world, exhibit tolerance and listen to differing views, and keep an open and critical mind, internalizing the ever-growing flow of information and reflecting on both personal and professional levels'.

2.5. Supervision of student teachers in KSA

Referring back to the early part of this chapter, which looked at Saudi Arabia's culture of learning, Bailey (2006) claims that the role of supervisors in the teaching field is in part culturally defined in the educational and political history of any country. Alenizi argues that the role of the Saudi supervisor is 'defined not only culturally in terms of gender but also socially through the guidelines governing the supervisor's role which limit the mentoring role and expand the clerical supervision role' (2012, p. 85).

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[7]In 2015 the Ministry of Education integrated with the Ministry of Higher Education under the name of Ministry of Education (Ministry of Education, 2015).

Historically, supervision of trainees in KSA has consisted of two different arrangements. The difference depends on the position of the supervisor, i.e., either from university (college supervisor) or school (supervisor teacher). The following is a quick glimpse into these two arrangements.

A - College supervisor: In this arrangement, the supervisor represents the university's training programme. She or he has full responsibility for the student teacher's practice in both academic and administrative aspects (Alenizi, 2012). The college supervisor's function includes some duties—for example, contacting the schools in a particular catchment area to inform them of which student teachers they will be receiving, helping student teachers apply the theoretical materials to the classroom context, and completing the documentation that indicates whether the student teachers pass or fail their practicums and submitting this documentation to the practicum office.

B - School-based supervisor teacher: In this arrangement, the supervisor is one of the teachers working at the school where the practicum is conducted; this teacher should be knowledgeable, skilled and experienced. The supervisor teachers are nominated by their supervisors (in service) and are seldom specifically prepared to supervise student teachers. Usually, they benefit from a reduction in class contact hours in order to undertake their supervisory responsibilities without any financial reward. This arrangement was conducted in the Girls' College of Education under the supervision of the General Presidency of Girls' Education (GPGE).

In 2002, the GPGE was integrated with the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE). With this integration, the position of teacher supervisor no longer exists. Thus, the university supervisor, who is the presenter from the MoHE, has full responsibilities for supervising PSTs. Regardless of the quality of the university supervisor in improving PSTs' teaching, this policy weakens and decreases the importance of ISTs in making a contribution to teaching knowledge and, therefore, their ability to help PSTs to improve their own teaching. In fact, this regulation may have led to a lack of alignment with contemporary tendencies in teacher education, such as those found in the UK, that strengthen school-led teacher training (Department for Education, 2016)

Despite the duties that university supervisors have to perform, they receive little training to empower them in their roles (Alenizi, 2012; Kaneko-Marques, 2015; Smith and Abouammoh, 2013; Zeyadh edited by Alhamed et al. 2007) claim that Saudi universities tend to select supervisors mainly on the basis of their working as teachers in higher

education, due to the assumption that someone who is a higher education teacher should by definition be able to assess trainees' teaching. Thus, most supervisors in Saudi universities start to supervise PSTs when they are appointed to the faculty at one of these universities, with little regard paid to whether they have actually received training in how to teach or assess trainees.

In the light of my own experience in supervision, I am in a position to assert that I did supervision tasks without an induction or training course. Also, through my field of study, I met few teachers who had experience in PSTs' supervision. Most of them were unhappy with their experience in PSTs supervision for different reasons. Some of these reasons are related to the trainees themselves, i.e. issues about their motivation, behaviour and learning. Other reasons are rather related to the supervision system, i.e. the lack of clarity of their roles as supervisors (see section 6.3.2. in Chapter Six).

To further complicate matters, the college supervisor is usually one of the academic staff at the university; however, due to the increasing number of female student teachers, the universities recruit the highest achieving graduates in all subjects to work as supervisors for PSTs in their practicums. Those supervisors have just finished their own courses of study at the universities and some of them have no teaching experience. They are also recruited on the strength of their subject experiences, but not familiarity with pedagogy. Indeed, some of academic staffs supervise PSTs without any experience of teaching or even supervision courses (my experience and interviews with supervisors, supported by Alenizi, 2012; Smith and Abouammoh, 2013).

AL-Ghamdi and Tight (edited by Smith and Abouammoh, 2013 p. 88) point out that:

> [m]ost Saudi academic staff begin their teaching careers without any formal
> pedagogical preparation, and hence, they often lack effective teaching skills.
> Although they may be knowledgeable in their discipline area and well prepared
> to conduct research, faculty members frequently lack the skills necessary to
> communicate their knowledge effectively to students.

Therefore, they tend to teach as they had been taught when they were students (Qureshi, 2006). This has led to the continued use of received teaching methods such as traditional lecturing approaches, in which the lecturer stands at the front of the class and delivers information while students listen, write down what they hear and then strive to recall that information on tests (AL-Ghamdi and Tight, edited by Smith and Abouammoh, 2013). Thus,

it can be argued that 'directive' supervision is the dominant model, in which the improvement of PSTs' teaching is assessed based on the supervisor's own definition or criteria of 'good' teaching (Kaneko-Marques, 2015) (see Sections 3.2.3 in Chapter Three).

Moreover, the supervisor may have little time to work with the PSTs. She or he may work with many groups of 7-10 PSTs and may only observe each one twice during the practicum (according to my interviews, supported by Alenizi, 2012). This issue is well known and well understood. Many supervisors claimed that their limited supervisory duties is due to heavy teaching hours and increasing number of PSTs with the shortage of supervisors. This leads to insufficient time and energy (my experience and interviews with supervisors, supported by Smith and Abouammoh, 2013).

Hence, supervisors' lack of preparation to undertake their roles, especially those who have no teaching experience in schools, can lead to 'undue emphasis on reactive performance – doing things as a result of crisis orientation – rather than through careful, logical planning and preparation' (Daresh, 2001, p. 25). Indeed, most Saudi supervisors implement methods of supervision that have been characterised as adjudicatory rather than as promoting the development of RP. Hence, the role of supervisor is limited to going 'into schools to observe student teachers and makes suggestions about their teaching practice' (Stones, 1984, p. viii).

Chapter summary

The chapter has provided an overview of the Saudi geography, cultural background, and education system with a special focus on women's education and social status. It also highlighted the most pressing challenges in the Saudi education system, such as memorization teaching methods, centralisation, and the dominance of a technical orientation as a model of teaching. I also examined the culture of ITE as well as the procedures of producing female Saudi teachers. The chapter closed by providing a general overview of supervision of students in KSA. All of this information about the context of this study is pertinent to the main aim of this study—understanding the potential of using reflection to improve STS' teaching.

Chapter Three: Literature Review

Building on the previous chapter describing the research setting KSA, the present chapter examines the relevant literature in order to construct an appropriate conceptual framework (Ravitch and Riggan, 2012). This comprises three key elements: teacher education and preparation (TEP), supervision of students and theoretical perspectives on reflection.

3.1. Teacher Education and Preparation (TEP).

3.1.1. What makes a good teacher?

Central to understanding what constitutes high-quality teaching is a set of arguments about the nature of teachers' professional knowledge, learning and development (Pring, 2009). According to Winch et al. (2013), teachers' professional knowledge consists of practical wisdom, technical knowledge and critical reflection. The effectiveness of both practical wisdom and technical knowledge in teacher training has often been questioned—as for example, in the scepticism expressed by Winch et al. (2013) about research that emphasises the benefit for trainees of adopting a 'teacher-as-craftsperson' approach to learning during their first year of classroom experience. They argue that the complexities of teaching go further than what is heard or 'learned' in casual staff room interactions, which they consider invalid if untested against other and more recent studies and concepts (Winch et al., 2013, cited in BERA, 2014, p.20). Others have raised doubts about assuming that teachers are mere practitioners who need only to follow procedures prescribed as best practice (BERA, 2014). There is serious debate as to whether teachers should simply follow such prescriptions of 'what works', without reflecting on and understanding the underlying reasons for the suggested protocols, as Alexander expressed 'character' rather than the intellect' (Alexander, 2004, p.8; BERA, 2014; Goldacre, 2013).

In this context, Winch et al. (2013, p. 20) asserted that 'what is missing from both the simplified craft view and narrow technical view is the capacity for critical reflection'. Critical reflection is understood to entail deeper insight arising from the investigation of a practice and clarification of its underlying assumptions and values (BERA, 2014). This process underlies the production of what Shulman (1987) called 'knowledge of teaching'. Among his ideas of most relevance to the current situation in education in KSA (see Chapter Two),

Shulman reports a 'marked shift from examination of management of the classroom to management of ideas within classroom discourse' (Shulman, 1987, p.1). He argued that teaching is not an easy task because it involves several complex processes: 'understanding begins with what is already inside the learner's head'; 'working on it together while it is out'; and 'putting the outside back in' (Shulman, 2000, p.133). Rather than imparting facts, teaching is about learning to be emancipated through knowledge, developing students' skills in using knowledge to reinforce better understanding (Stenhouse, 1979) because 'our knowledge is questionable, verifiable and differentially secure' (ibid, p. 181). It follows that teaching requires a continuous and reflective knowledge base, as the teaching process always requires innovation (Shulman, 1987).

In explaining how such knowledge and skills transfer to classroom practice, Vygotsky (1987) seems to share Shulman's view of the complexity of teaching, based on the idea that learners' minds are not blank sheets but come with existing beliefs, perceptions and life experiences. Vygotsky sees this transfer as 'inter-intra-inter'; in the first phase (inter, also called 'other-regulation'), trainees bring their repertoire of experiences. In the second phase (intra), there is interaction between trainees and teacher educators or supervisors, whose quality, Vygotsky believes 'determines that of teachers' higher cognitive levels'. In the final phase (inter, also called 'self-regulation'), trainees recast their intellectual conceptions during interactions with students (Manning and Payne, 1993).

These conceptions of knowledge can be related to constructivism, which views knowledge as socially constructed and learning as active and reflective (Clough, 1998; Schwartz and Lederman, 2002). Lawson (1995, p. 2) illustrated this view of how knowledge is constructed:

> Order imposed by the human mind is always a created thing. That creation is
> found to be true or false by testing through behaviour. The mind creates from
> sensory data and then imagines the creation to be true to allow the generation
> of an expectation, which is then tested in the external world. If the expectation
> is met, the creation is retained. If not, the creation must be replaced.

This philosophy of learning views the construction of meaning as based on prior experiences, where new experiences challenge, compare, evaluate and reconstruct conflicting ideas. Constructivism has played a significant role in TEPs (Hammrich and Blouch, 1998). Richardson (1997) proposed the use of this approach in helping STs to link understanding to action in developing their own approach to teaching. However, the philosophy of learning that informs constructivism has been excluded from the more

traditional TE perspective that 'teaching activity is a moment to exteriorize the knowledge and skills acquired by teachers, who should demonstrate efficiency when applying techniques and strategies in their classrooms' (Kaneko-Marques, 2015, p. 64).

Change in the philosophy of learning in ITE has also changed understandings of the teacher's role. In the UK, for example, the teacher's role has developed from subject expert and transmitter of knowledge to encompass the roles of facilitator, enabler, tutor and counsellor (White, 2005), and, researcher (Stenhouse, 1979). Manning and Payne (1993) claimed that such TEPs are more likely to produce teachers who will support higher level thinking in their students because they view teaching as an intellectual rather than a behavioural endeavour.

However, more recently, this view has been questioned. For example, in *Seven myths about education*, Christodoulou (2014) argues that the assertion that 'teacher-led instruction is passive' is one of the myths that dominates the educational field in the UK. She bases her claim on three pieces of evidence: empirical research[8], the notion that fostering independence in learners does not mean they should learn independently and the importance of guidance in the human learning process. She concludes that '[t]he solution to mindless rote learning is not less teacher instruction; it is different and better teacher instruction' (2014, p. 38). In learning how to solve problems, 'students need to know facts' (Riley, 2016, p. 36). For instance, memorizing multiplication tables in the middle of a complex math problem is still important to speed up students' thought processes and track the line of building new knowledge (Christodoulou, 2014; Riley, 2016).

In the Saudi teaching context, 'technical rationality' remains prevalent across ITE, despite current reforms encouraging teaching strategies that support constructivist learning (Alhamed et.al, 2007). For this reason, although Saudi trainees learn a range of approaches such as cooperative learning[9], 'the predominant teaching style in schools is, at the time of writing, the 'command' end of the spectrum, with relatively little evidence of teaching at the 'discovery' end' (Alenizi, 2012, p. 55). (More detail about the Saudi educational system was provided in Chapter Two).

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[8] See for example John Hattie's book Visible Learning; A synthesis of over 800 Meta-Analyses Relating to Achievement (Hattie, 2009).

[9] In cooperative learning, a group of learners is guided by teachers, who use questions to lead students to the right conclusion (Mosston and Ashworth, 1989).

3.1.2. How, where and whom can make good teachers?

Following from the dilemma of teaching knowledge as outlined above, a further dilemma relates to how and where this knowledge can be learned, reflected in disparate approaches internationally (i.e. theory-based or practice-based) to the preparation of new teachers. Indeed, considerable debate often arises within a given country about those best qualified and best placed to teach trainees—'teacher educators' or 'practising expert teachers', 'schools' or 'Universities' (Young et al., 2007). In the changing philosophy of ITE around the world over the last thirty years, new understandings of how best to produce good teachers include a shift of emphasis from knowledge alone to knowledge combined with practical skills, coinciding with an increased focus on teaching the individual (Alenizi, 2012).

In the Western world, there is an increasing belief that teachers are more effective when training programmes include a practical component. England goes further in this regard, accepting school-based training as a model for teachers' education in addition to TEPs in colleges and universities (Darling-Hammond and Lieberman, 2012). The English Department for Education in its recent publication *Educational excellence everywhere*: the schools White Paper 2016 report that '[w]e want a high quality teaching profession which embraces evidence-based practice to drive up standards in schools. We have already given schools freedom to lead on recruiting, training and developing teachers' (DoE, 2016). In her study exploring the impact of school-based learning on ITP, Tang (2004) found that the gap between theory and practice can be significantly reduced by what she called the process of 'the teaching self' (Tang, 2004, p. 197). However, the growing emphasis in ITE reform on the 'wisdom of practice itself' insists that teachers need to consider lesson content as well as technique in order to benefit from observation and assessment (Shulman, 1987, pp. 12, 20).

In current teacher education, coherence between theory and practice is seen as the vital factor in producing good teachers (Dean et al., 2005; Korthagen et al., 2006; Valencia et al., 2009; Zeichner, 2010). Before considering this issue of coherence, it seems important to clarify the distinction drawn between theory and practice. As Aristotle explained it, while theory ('episteme') relates to the scientific understanding of a problem as a general conception applicable to a variety of situations, practice ('phronesis') relates to practical wisdom or the perception of the problem in a particular instance (Kessels and Korthagen, 1996). More recently, Zeichner (2010) has used the term 'theory' to represent 'the broad range of concepts and skills associated with the declarative and procedural knowledge taught to student teachers on campus; and the term of "practice" to refer to the classroom

pedagogy and activities of the teacher' (cited in Allen et al., 2013, p. 119). However, according to Connelly and Clandinin (1995), this does not mean that all classroom activities are 'practical' or that all campus work is 'theoretical'.

Around the world, TEPs differ in terms of their values and beliefs about teacher education, the structure of programmes, duration of study, systems of administration, and so on (see Darling-Hammond and Lieberman, 2012). However, across these various models and structures (Fajet et al., 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2000), some key components of ITE recur, such as subject matter, pedagogical knowledge, theoretical foundations of education and school experience (teaching practice). While the first three of these components are usually provided within the university or college, teaching practice is provided in a school context. Tardif et al. (2001, p. 6) argued that the university components contribute to training in two areas: 'foundation courses for the teaching of school subjects 'and 'various disciplines within the science of education'. Grossman et al. (2008) stressed the importance of creating coherence between these areas.

Bailey (2006) argued that 'teaching practice' is a key component of TEPs, 'predicated on the assumption that novice teachers need guided practice in learning how to teach' (p. 233). Usually, the PSTs is placed in a school and is supervised by an experienced teacher, or by a college supervisor (Kaneko-Marques, 2015; Hiebert et al., 2007). Through teaching practice, PSTs have an opportunity to practeacherse what they have learned in their university course (i.e. subject matter knowledge and analytical skills), enabling them to analyse their teaching and to assess its effect on students' learning (Hiebert et al., 2007). The fundamental value added by teaching practice is that the knowledge that emerges from such practice is contextual or local knowledge, based on the real problems that PSTs themselves have constructed (Johnson, 2009). Kumaravadivelu (2003) argues that PSTs should develop their reflective skills during their university courses in order to adapt what they learn to what they encounter in real classrooms.

However, most TEP components need rethinking if they are to link effectively to the teaching process. Some researchers have argued that, in many pre-service programmes, there is little connection between the academic programme (theory) and the practicum (practice) (e.g. Goodlad, 1990; Zeichner and Liston, 1996). Tardif et al. (2001) claimed that, in universities, subject matter is taught as pure science, with no modification for the purposes of the teaching process. Some researchers argue that the same applies to the science of education, as knowledge of teaching continues to be taught without any clear

link to real practice (Tardif et al., 2001). Shulman (1987) suggested that this should be called 'knowledge about teaching' rather than 'knowledge of teaching'.

Given the continuing separation of responsibilities for teacher education between universities and schools, achieving the desired coherence between theory and practice is not an easy task (Dean et al., 2005; Korthagen et al., 2006; Valencia et al., 2009; Zeichner, 2010). Beck and Kosnik (2000) expressed the view that as long as education researchers and teachers continue to live in separate worlds, it will be difficult to resolve these issues. Education policy makers, who have no knowledge of the daily life in a classroom have carried out the function of educational reform from their desks (Burns and Richards, 2009; Richards, 1998; Wallace, 1991; Williams, 2001; Zeichner, 2008), providing teachers—who are 'insiders with daily access extensive expertise, a clear stake in improving classroom practice'—with educational theories ('episteme'), whereas teachers must apply these in real classroom 'phronesis' (Liu, 2015, p. 150). On that basis, it has been argued that knowledge does not always lead to good practice, and research findings may be irrelevant to teachers who are not in a position of authority in overseeing educational reform (Stenhouse, 1979).

With regard to teachers' ability and authority to conduct their own research, there has been some support for the idea of 'teachers as researchers' or 'teachers as investigators' (Dewey, 1929, p. 46, cited in Liu, 2015; Stenhouse, 1979; Elliott, 1991). This is based on the long-established belief in teachers' ability 'to contribute unique insights to both the academic research community and the community of teachers' through tacit knowledge gained from experience and daily practice (Liu, 2015, p. 150). This 'tacit knowledge' was explained in Schon (1983) as 'knowledge in action', where teachers encounter situations that 'cause them to question currently held frames of reference and, as a result, alter them to reflect their acquisition of understanding and knowledge' (Curran and Murray, 2008, p. 104). This does not necessarily produce additional information but is a new viewpoint resulting from experiences and their evaluation (ibid).

Nevertheless, preparing teachers who can act autonomously in the classroom and study their own practice requires a qualitative shift from seeing knowledge as 'right or wrong' towards 'contextual conceptions of knowledge' (Cheng et al., 2012; Stenhouse, 1979; Moon, 2008). Elliott (2012, p. 4) emphasises 'situational understanding', which 'involves discrimination and then synthesizing the practically significant elements of a situation into a unified and coherent picture of the whole'. This idea of 'situational understanding' is

characterised by Birch (2009) as 'local knowledge', which 'honours the knowledge and experience of local teachers who are experts in the cultural and social resources for learning and the participants' openness to learning' (p. 134). With this change, the gap between theory and practice in educational processes will be reduced, by 'look[ing], think[ing] and act[ing]' (Koch and Kralik, 2008, p. 2).

Teachers should also engage in research as a way to expand, inform and update their professional knowledge (BERA, 2014). While not all teachers have the potential to become expert practitioners in the classroom or in educational research, this approach can have a profound influence on education theory and practice (Winch et al., 2013). There are strong demands to reformulate ITE objectives that enable teachers to engage in collaborative projects with researchers for systematic observation and reflection on pedagogical actions (Gebhard, 2009). Although it is assumed that higher education is primarily responsible for articulating models of teacher training supervision, Rodgers and Keil (2007) claimed that teachers can also support supervision efforts by building relationships with trainees, grounded on trust, reflection and empowerment (Kent, 2001), to create a philosophy that supports discussion of trainees' learning (Wilson and Berne, 1999; Burns and Richards, 2009). To that end, inputs from ISTs during practicum can help to develop the teaching skills of PSTs (Ma, 1999; Stigler and Hiebert, 1999), given their unique potential to become 'powerful allies' of trainees and university faculty in teacher preparation (Rodgers and Keil, 2007, p. 64).

To develop PSTs' teaching skills to meet these requirements, Kaneko-Marques claimed that 'future teachers need to be stimulated to (re)construct their knowledge and to reflect on their classroom practices during teaching practice. The role of supervisors is crucial in this formative process to ensure that this school experience leads to professional development (2015, p. 66). The next section addresses the importance of supervised teaching practice for ITE and changing definitions, models and functions of supervision over time.

3.2. Supervision of trainees.

Among the several crucial factors that support pre-service teachers' learning, including modelling, pedagogical practice and supervision, the supervisor's role has been described as 'a corner stone of teacher preparation' (Valencia et al., 2009, p. 304) in helping students to link theory and practice (Grossman et al., 2009). Korthagen (2010, p. 673) argued that 'a

strong supervisor may be able to effectively connect the student's personal experience in educational settings and his/her present concerns to theory'.

Through a purposeful professional relationship, an effective supervisor can make a number of important contributions to pre-service teachers education. For instance, they can help with teaching problems that influence what trainees do in the classroom (McNamara, 1995; Meijer et al., 2009). Supervisors can also support trainees' ability to plan for instruction (Urzua and Vasquez, 2008) and contribute to strengthening cooperation between universities and schools (Beck and Kosnik, 2002). Grossman et al. (2009) highlighted the importance of skilled coaching by supervisors to provide trainees with rich feedback on specific practices. In light of the importance of critical reflection skills in ideal teachers (see sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2), supervision also plays a vital role in this process, in stimulating trainees to reflect on their own practice by taking the lead in problem solving and decision making (Burns and Richards, 2009). In summary, supervision has been identified as an essential entity to teaching development (Bernard and Goodyear, 2004).

Supervisors face some challenges that must be actively addressed during supervision (Nolan and Hoover, 2011). For example, through TEPs, pre-service teachers acquire 'academic/ theoretical knowledge' that needs to be developed into 'practical knowledge' during actual teaching experience in a real classroom. This transition from university student to classroom teacher requires a great effort to inculcate responsibility as a classroom teacher who must make professional judgments (Cochran-Smith, 2000). The supervisor serves as mediator in this transition, which requires collaboration between schools and universities as a 'partnership that is marked by shared knowledge and goals, respect for one another's expertise, and equity in decision making' (Nolan and Hoover, 2011, p. 203).

However, the literature indicates a lack of precision within the research on supervision, leading to a remarkable empirical gap. Despite the wealth of information available to supervisors and educators, there is a shortage of empirically based information, which threatens to hinder further growth within the field of supervision (Borders, 1989; Ellis, 1991; Ellis, Krengel, Ladany and Schultz, 1996). Indeed, Herbert (2004) claimed that this gap has contributed significantly to the lack of clarity about the supervision process itself.

3.2.1. Supervision: changing definitions over time.

Definitions of supervision have developed over the last thirty years. Supervision is seen primarily as a means of maintaining and enhancing the professional competence of pre-service teachers and in-service teachers by transmitting skills and knowledge to them (Bernard and Goodyear, 2004). Neagley and Evans (1980, p. 2) defined supervision as 'any service rendered to teachers that eventually results in the improvement of instruction, learning, and the curriculum'. In the 90s, the revolution in professional development meant that supervision was aligned with development and ongoing professional learning. In a study in two schools to explore what constitutes 'good supervision', Webster (1993) found a remarkable increase in focus on organisational performance. Several years later, more emphasis seemed to be placed on individuals' ability to meet desirable objectives in such organisations (Daresh and Playko, 1995). However, until the late of 90s, supervision was still seen from the perspective of teaching technique, as a way of providing teachers with 'specialized help in improving instruction' (Oliva and Pawlas, 1999, p. 11, cited in Alenizi, 2012).

The understanding of supervision as a collaborative process between supervisors and pre- or in-service teachers did not emerge until the new millennium, when Beach and Reinhartz (2000, p. 8) proposed the following definition:

> A complex process that involves working with teachers and other educators in a collegial, collaborative relationship to enhance the quality of teaching and learning within schools and that promotes the career long development of teachers.

Noting the introduction of the concept of reflection idea to the field of teaching, Carroll defined supervision as 'a forum where supervisees review and reflect on their work in order to do it better', placing greater emphasis on a relationship of trust and transparency between supervisors and supervisees (2007, p. 36). Thus, supervision made the transition from 'general supervision, which is concerned with administrative aspects… [to] clinical supervision, which regards formative issues'. However, this is in contrast to the supervisor as authority' model which recently prevails in KSA (Alenizi, 2012) (see Chapter Two).

3.2.3. Models of supervision

Just as definitions of supervision in ITE have changed over time, the supervisor's roles and responsibilities can also vary considerably. There follows a classification of models of supervision that most relate to the aims of the present study.

Alarcão et al. (2009) asserted that different approaches to supervision relate directly to conceptions of teacher education, and each supervision model evolved in response to the weaknesses of the one preceding it. Supervision models can be said to range from totally directive to almost wholly non-directive (Uys et al., 2005). At one extreme, the supervisor provides pre-service teachers with all the necessary information and instructions to succeed in a test or a task. At the other extreme, pre-service teachers decide what they study, when and how to study it, and whether to involve others (e.g. pre-service teachers, supervisors, in-service teachers, or even family members) in their learning process (Reid, 2005).

In 1991, Wallace established two different categories of supervision: general and clinical. The former is concerned with management and a directive style, usually involving prescription for the purpose of evaluation (summative assessment). The latter (clinical) approach, which is often seen as a collaborative model (Young, 2009, p. 2) focuses on formative issues. Other classifications of supervision models, as for instance developed by Tanner and Tanner (cited in Bourke, 2001), distinguishes between inspection, production, clinical and developmental forms of supervision. According to Kaneko-Marques (2015), supervisors in the first model are 'inspectors, and education is perceived as strict adherence to governmental policies, methods, and materials'. The production model follows a production-efficiency approach that views teachers as 'factory workers who are responsible for preparing their students for institutional assessments'. In the clinical supervision model, 'a supervisor observes a lesson and discusses teaching events in a face-to-face interaction with the teacher to analyse teaching behaviours and activities'. Finally, developmental supervision aims to stimulate discovery through a cooperative problem-solving process (p. 67).

The next section highlights the two main models of supervision of immediate relevance to the current study and to the dominant model of supervision in KSA Wallace's classification of supervision models seems able to capture both the essential supervision elements in KSA (directive supervision) and the new model whose effectiveness is investigated here (clinical supervision).

3.2.3.1. Directive supervision

In this model, the supervisor's role 'is to direct and inform the teacher, model teaching behaviours, and evaluate the teacher's mastery of defined behaviours' (Gebhard, 1984, p. 502). Freeman (1990) refers to models of intervention, which include the directive, nondirective, and alternative. In directive supervision, the supervisor makes comments on

trainees' teaching and offers suggestions to be implemented next time. The main purpose of this model is to improve the trainees' teaching according the supervisor's definition or criteria of 'good' teaching (Kaneko-Marques, 2015). Here, it is unclear whether the teacher or the supervisor is ultimately responsible for what goes on in the classroom. Nevertheless, Bucat (1998) claimed that the traditional view of teaching as a tool to transfer the knowledge and skills acquired by supervisors to trainees, still seems to be 'alive and kicking' (Bucat , 1998, cited in Mudavanhu, 2015, p. 98; Freeman, 2009). Alenizi (2012) also argued that 'this model of supervision is the one which predominated for many years and which many teachers and many teacher educators still recognize and even adopt' (p. 75). (See section 2.5 in Chapter Two).

3.2.3.2. Clinical supervision

According to Wallace's description, clinical supervision emphasises teaching and other classroom activities, and 'it implies a rejection of the applied science model and an acceptance of the reflective model of professional development' (Wallace, 1991, p. 108). It is based on an interactive process between supervisor and teacher, 'with the purpose of discussing and analysing previously observed classroom teaching in order to promote professional development' (Kaneko-Marques, 2015, p. 66).

Clark (1990) highlighted the role of clinical supervision at all stages of teacher growth from PSTs through novice to experienced teacher. For this reason, clinical supervisors are potentially the primary means of reforming TE (Pajak, 2000). Central to this potential is the dialogue between individual teachers or groups, based on practical, theoretical, moral and ethical interpretations of behavioural data for the purpose of solving real classroom problems.

Although Goldhammer's (1969) original model consisted of an eight-step cycle, a three-step cycle seems currently to be most widely used (Goldhammer et al., 1980). The three steps are the planning conference, classroom observation, and the feedback or post-observation conference. The first step involves establishing a relationship between the work group (supervisors and PSTs) and planning a pre-observation conference to include discussion of the goals and objectives of the lesson. The second step is the classroom observation of teaching. During the observation, the supervisor and PSTs aim to record data about the lesson. The third step involves a face-to-face interaction to analyse teaching behaviours and activities. In this step, PSTs analyse their own teaching and reflect on the lesson while the supervisor scaffolds the PSTs' understanding of teaching and offers alternative suggestions and strategies (Clifford et al., 2005).

While these steps can become overly repetitive, this model has a number of advantages. For example, it is based on the shared focus for supervision that results from goal-setting in planning lessons and observations. Additionally, understanding supervision as an interactive process between supervisor and teacher to promote professional development against developmental goals is a relatively non-threatening assessment. Kayaoglu (2012, p. 67) claimed that the term 'supervisor' has 'a hierarchical connotation because it carries the meaning of an expert and novice relationship'. This hierarchical relationship can have a negative effect by threatening the teacher's reflection (Kayaoglu, 2012). Placing PSTs with an experienced teacher 'to observe and learn can be seen as an illustration of the craft model' as previously discussed (see section 2.1.1. in Chapter Two). According to this model, PSTs learn by imitating the expert's techniques and instructions. Kaneko-Marques (2015) claimed that supervision 'tends to reside in prescriptive approaches' (p. 67). In contrast, clinical supervision facilitates structure and sequence in development in giving and receiving feedback, which is widely recognised as a key tool in PSTs development (Wallace, 1991; Goldhammer et al., 1980; Kaneko-Marques, 2015).

However, despite the potential advantages of clinical supervision, there are some problems with this model. The main difficulty is in identifying teaching elements and events that PSTs should observe with ignoring curricular development and educational planning. In other words, PSTs 'should follow the instructions and techniques to be applied in their language classrooms in order to be considered efficient teachers' (Bourke, 2001; Kaneko-Marques, 2015, p. 67). Other vital factors that impact on the effectiveness of the clinical model of supervision include the time available to complete the clinical cycle, the experience level of the supervisor and the context or setting (Acheson and Gall, 1997).

3.2.4. Supervision: functions and roles

Supervision of teaching practice has two main functions: evaluation and development. The aim is to evaluate the quality of teaching for the purpose of enhancing professionalism, and to develop teaching by supporting the renegotiation of current teaching methods and stimulating RP to build stronger links between theory and practice (Gosling, 2002). In light of these functions, Bernard and Goodyear (2004) proposed a definition of supervision focused on an operational relationship between supervisors and supervisees:

> …an intervention provided by a more senior member of a profession to a more junior member or members of that same profession. This relationship is evaluative, extends over time, and has the simultaneous purposes of enhancing

the professional functioning of the more junior person(s), monitoring the quality

of professional services offered to the clients that she, he, or they see, and serving

as a gatekeeper for those who are to enter the particular profession. (p. 8)

To this end, supervisors must address the challenges of their dual role—as mentors who guide teachers (formative assessment) and as evaluators who assess their teaching (summative assessment) (Sewall, 2009; Mudavanhu, 2015). Many researchers have argued that the supervisors' dual role is a source of conflict in ITE owing to the nature of assessment, which cannot form part of supervision. For example, Mudavanhu (2015) argued that 'supervision and assessment of teaching practice was interrogated to find out if it achieved both functions' because 'teaching practice should provide a non-intimidating environment for the participants and feedback must be supportive' (p. 100). For that reason, there are increasing calls to remove the assessment component of supervision on the grounds that 'supervision must remain non-threatening in order for the student teachers to accept the feedback' (Kayaoglu, 2012; Sewall, 2009; Mudavanhu, 2015, p. 99). However, other TE researchers have advanced a different view. For example, Stones (1984) argued that the assessment role of supervision is essential for teacher improvement, and that the conflict relates to the issue of summative versus formative evaluation. In emphasising growth and development, the latter is seen as more appropriate to ITE (Stones, 1984, p. 19).

Supervisory roles seem relevant to this conflict of supervisory functions. Clark (1990) identified five roles that supervisors of PSTs can play in ITE. The first role is administrative or judgmental supervision, in which supervisors focus mainly on the summative assessment of PSTs, and developing PSTs teaching ability is not a primary goal. The second role relates to follow-up after the supervision meeting, where supervisors accept teaching events non-judgmentally. The third role is referred to as 'clerical' supervision, which focuses on aims, objectives, programmes and assessment results. It can be argued that this kind of supervision is concerned more with school management records than with effective teaching in the classroom. The fourth supervisory roles is to support and facilitate PSTs' learning. In this role, PSTs supervise themselves, and each group of PSTs encourages and supports skill development. The same applies in the fifth role, but it is based on individualized or responsive supervision, in which teaching and professional development are directly related to the personal psychological or social needs of the individual in the classroom rather than to the teaching process.

In recent years, Western countries have placed increasing emphasis on the mentoring role of supervision, notably in providing teams of experienced teachers in schools to assist PSTs in developing their practice, as described earlier (see for example, Hamlin, 1997; Wilson, 2006). As outlined in Chapter Two, supervision in KSA adopts a somewhat different model and roles.

3.3. Theoretical perspectives on reflection

3.3.1. What is reflective teaching?

Reflection can be simply defined as looking back at something and thinking about what happened, and why. It is a way of trying to learn from our experiences and to use this knowledge to guide what we do in the future (Killen, 2006; Farrell, 2014). In teaching, the term has been misunderstood and criticised as ambiguous. Zeichner and Liston (1996) and Hatton and Smith (1995) highlighted this confusion and misunderstanding, which they attributed to substantial differences in perspective on teaching, learning and schooling among those who embrace the model of reflection. However, these criticisms do not address the model's usefulness in teaching so much as the beliefs, values, and assumptions of its practitioners.

Hatton and Smith (1995) noted further confusion about whether reflection is a thought process about an action or the action itself. While Gayle and Gayle (1999) viewed reflection as thinking about what you do, Fisher (2005, cited in Minott, 2006) believed that reflection does not exist in an abstract sense but is enacted through specific practices. Similarly, Zeichner and Liston (1996, p. 1) asserted that 'if a teacher … never examines his or her assumptions, then this individual is not engaged in reflective teaching'.

Following Coyle's recommendation (2002), it is important to clarify what is meant by 'reflection' and 'reflective practice' (RP) in the present study. Here, reflection is taken to refer to an approach to teaching, learning and problem-solving that uses reflection as the main tool. It involves encouraging teachers to create a distance between themselves and their practice in order to discuss, analyse, evaluate, change and develop that practice (Bengtsson, 1993). To that extent, reflection can be seen as a fundamental part of teaching, in which teachers examine and frame their assumptions and values while attempting to solve classroom problems. This activity includes awareness of the institutional and cultural context, participation in curriculum development and school change and responsibility for professional self-development (Zeichner and Liston, 1996; Farrell and Ives, 2015).

3.3.2. Reflection in teacher education

3.3.3.1. Why is reflection important?

Based on the views of Dewey (1933) and Schon (1983), the existing literature provides several reasons why PSTs reflectivity needs support. For example, Dobbines (1996, cited in Killen, 2006, p. 93) explained why the TEP practicum should focus on reflection. She begins by suggesting that, through reflection, PSTs can 'maximise their learning from the practicum and accept responsibilities for their own professional development', leading to 'think[ing] and learn[ing] from themselves'. Dobbines argues that enhancing reflection links to the changing demands and responsibilities of teaching over time; to respond to these changes, PSTs must be reflective teachers. Her further argument is that teaching is 'a moral endeavour', and that reflection enables teachers to make moral decisions about what they do, and why.

Similarly, Day (2000) suggested that teacher education must focus on developing future teachers by providing opportunities for PSTs to reflect on their teaching. They should be encouraged to explore their personal values by empowering them through what Gellel (2010) called 'communities of practice'[10](CoP), within which PSTs have a chance to connect with teachers, students and wider school communities and so feel more affiliated to this context. To achieve this, they 'must be allowed space within these communities to reflect, acquire stories and develop concepts that echo the everyday realities of teachers and schools' (Mergler and Spooner-Lane, 2012, p. 69). Gellel (2010) viewed this as impossible without concrete links to schools and practising teachers. (For more about communities of practice, see section 3.3.4.3.)

3.3.3.2. Models of reflection

To assist teacher educators in designing reflective teacher education programmes, several models of reflection have been advanced in different fields of professional education and practice. These models exhibit varying levels of prescription, explanation, criticality and reflexivity; most focus on reflection as a retrospective process, as in Schon's reflection-on-action (Finlay, 2008). Quinn (2000) outlined three fundamental processes involved in most models of reflection: 'retrospection: i.e. thinking back about a situation or experience; self-evaluation, i.e. critically analysing and evaluating the actions and feelings associated with

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[10]In communities of practice, group members engage in joint activities and discussions and share information (Wenger, 2007).

the experience, using theoretical perspectives; reorientation, i.e. using the results of self-evaluation to influence future approaches to similar situations or experiences' (Quinn, 2000, p. 82).

A commonly used model of reflection in teaching is Gibbs' (1988) reflective cycle, developed from Kolb's experiential learning cycle (see Figure 3.1). This consists of four elements: concrete experience, reflection, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation. Gibbs adds feeling to his model of 'learning by doing', which encourages a clear description of the situation, analyses of feeling, evaluations of the experience, conclusions where other options are considered and reflection on experience to examine possible actions if the situation were to arise again.

While Gibbs' model may be useful in suggesting basic questions to help structure reflection, a more critically reflexive approach is needed (Finlay, 2008). Zeichner and Liston (1996) emphasised that the essential part of the reflective process is to move beyond questions about the efficacy of a practice to critically examine values and how that practice can lead to change.
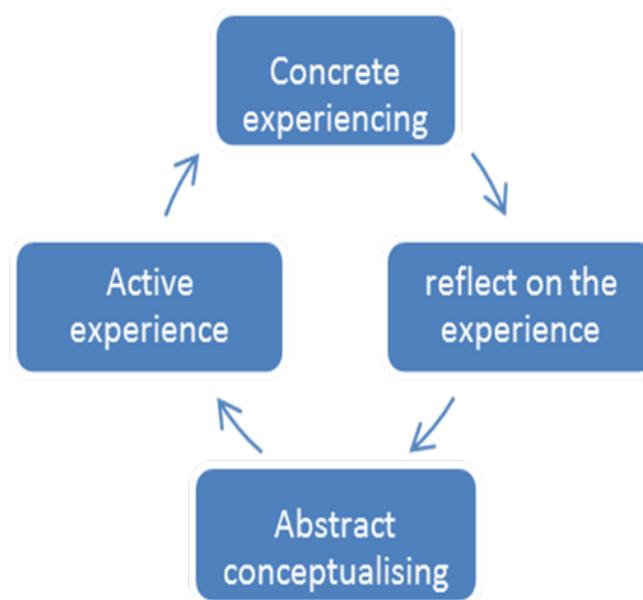
Figure 3.1. The Kolb learning cycle (Moon, 2001).

Models that encompass further and different levels of reflection are more likely to align with different levels of learner needs (Finlay, 2008). In early work in this context, Boud, Keogh and Walker (1985) noted that experience alone is not sufficient for learning; rather,

structured reflection is required in order to learn from experience. Boud et al. (1985) confined reflective activities to three stages in experience-based learning: preparation, engagement and processing. They recommended that learners should include reflective activities at each stage but acknowledged that this could be difficult: 'Perhaps if we can sharpen our consciousness of what reflection in learning can involve and how it can be influenced then we may be able to improve our own practice of learning and help those who learn with us' (1985, p. 8).

The model recognises different levels of reflection, and some studies have noted a tendency to focus on menial individual activity rather than on sharing in a reflective dialogue with practitioners in a wider social context (Finlay, 2008). However, Boud et al. (1985) attributed this to the interaction between emotions and cognition, making the reflective process more complex. They noted that learners with a positive view of themselves are more likely to persevere with reflective activities (Finlay, 2008). A question then arises: how should feedback to facilitate reflection be given to encourage practitioners to build a positive view of themselves?

Joins' model (2000) sought to structure reflection to guide analysis of critical incidents or for general reflection on experience. Joins acknowledged the learner's need to work with others as part of their learning experience. The model requires 'looking in and out the situation' and then writing a description based on five sources of knowledge. Joins employs Carper's (1978) four patterns of knowing—aesthetic, personal, ethical and empirical—and adds a fifth pattern: 'reflexivity'. While this model refers to the development of an epistemological grounding for reflection (Platzer et al., 1997), Rolfe et al. (2001) criticised the limitations of the reflexive pattern as responsive only to a situation that has been resolved. In other words, if the situation remained ongoing, the practitioner would want to know 'How can I take this forward?'

For that reason, Rolfe, Freshwater and Jasper (2001) proposed a framework that uses Borton's (1970) developmental model, which they named the 'What' model, on the basis that 'the advanced practitioner is not only conscious of what s/he is doing, but also of how s/he is doing' (Rolfe et al., 2001, p. 128). They advocated the use of simple questions (e.g. What? So what? Now what?) which, they claimed, can stimulate reflection from novice to advanced level. At the first level, the individual reflects on the situation in order to describe it. They then construct their own personal theory to understand the situation and learn from it. At the final level, the practitioner reflects on action and considers ways of improving

the situation, as well as the consequences of any such action (Surgenor, 2011). Rolfe et al. (2001) viewed this final stage as making the greatest contribution to practice.

From these examples of reflective models, it might be argued that the underlying theoretical framework informs the practitioner literature (Jackson, 2004). Yet, despite the availability of numerous tools and practices, 'there is no simple practical model of how reflecting itself plays such an essential part of the learning process', or of how experience becomes knowledge that adds value for the individual (Jackson, 2004, p. 61). While research has tended to produce more models or typologies of RP, there is less concern about how to use it in real contexts. This can render practice more mechanical, in contrast to the 'professional arteacherstry' of Schon (1983).

3.3.3.3. Level of reflection

The literature frequently distinguishes between reflective practice and non-reflective practice. For example, Zeichner and Liston (1996, p. 1) claimed that 'not all thinking about teaching constitutes reflective teaching', and many theoretical frameworks have been proposed to analyse the level a reflective reaction belongs to. According to McKenna,

> …current theory and research efforts in the development of teachers' capacities as reflective practitioners attempt to further describe and delineate RP through the development and application of typologies of reflection, outlining the many dimensions and settings which characterize its practice. (1999, p. 9)

In this respect, Van Manen (1977) identified three levels of reflection. At the first level, 'technical reflection' emphasises the achievement of curriculum objectives without questioning their worth or value. At this level, the teacher is more concerned with means than ends, and the context of classroom, school, school, community or society tends to be problematic (Zeichner and Liston, 1987). Van Manen viewed this as the lowest level of reflection. At the second or 'practical' level, the teacher goes beyond technical rationality to engage in a process of analysing and clarifying the assumptions and meanings that underlie practical actions. At this level, educational choices involve value judgments, based on interpretation. At the third level, 'critical' reflection is regarded as the highest form of reflection, where teachers consider the value and worth of knowledge, encompassing the social, moral and ethical aspects of schooling (Van Manen, 1977; Wunder, 2003; Zeichner and Liston, 1987). In Van Manen's classification, this level is considered the most desirable form of reflection (Brookfield, 1995), in which teachers are concerned with the creation of a democratic classroom and therefore question and communicate the rationale that

underlies their teaching. In this way, teaching becomes an ethical tool, involving social and personal values (Gelter, 2003). Nevertheless, Liu claimed that this level of reflection is hardly expected from PSTs because 'the pool from which teacher education programmes overwhelmingly draw does not demonstrate the kind of diversity visible in the public schools' (2015, p. 141).

While most researchers value reflection at its highest level, Brookfield (1995) claimed that teachers need to make a large number of technical decisions on a daily basis, rapidly and instinctively and without having time to think them through. Additionally, Hatton and Smith (1995) noted that the reflective progression of teachers is developmental, in that they may begin by reflecting on technical actions before being able to weigh the value of educational goals.

Larrivee (2008) developed a tool to assess teachers' levels of reflection (see Appendix E), classifying these as superficial, pedagogical and critical reflection. Larrivee argued that those three levels are preceded by a non-reflective level, where teachers react to situations without 'conscious consideration of alternative responses' (2008, p. 342). While Larrivee believes that RP is developmental, she argues that teachers may reflect on different levels at the same time.

3.3.3.4. Components of reflection:

In considering reflection as a learned process that requires encouragement, support, supervision and practice (Dewey, 1933; Schon, 1987), a number of methods have been proposed to assist teacher educators in the development of STs' reflective thinking. These include reflective writing, storytelling, reports, portfolios, diaries, journals and, more recently, e-mails. All of these can be used to help PSTs to reflect on their experiences (Langer, 2002; Spadling and Wilson, 2002; Brookfield, 1995; Wenzlaff, 1994; Zeichner and Liston, 1987).

Considered in the context of Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development[11] (ZPD), reflective dialogues play a fundamental role in PSTs' reflection. These dialogues are shaped within different frameworks, such as seminar instructions (Zeichner and Liston, 1987), peer discussion of videotaped teaching (Hatton and Smith, 1995) or after-class teaching (Kaminski, 2003). Among those who acknowledge the vital role of questions in reflective dialogue, Ross (1990) noted that questions should encourage dialogue and awareness of multiple perspectives rather than assessment of PSTs. Friendly discussion

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[11]ZPD is the distance between independent and aided accomplishments (Manning and Payne, 1993). More detail is provided in section 3.3.4.2.

should encourage participants' communication of shared experiences and build mutual trust, both of which are crucial elements in developing effective reflective conversations (Labrie et al., 2000, p. 28). Through critical questioning during reflective dialogue, practitioners can become more aware of their beliefs and assumptions and question their grounds (Erginel, 2006).

3.3.4. Theoretical conceptualisation of reflection

Historically, reflection is associated with thinkers such as Plato, Aristotle, Galileo and Newton. In education, the concept of reflection emerged principally from the work of Dewey, who claimed that 'we do not learn from experience' but from 'reflecting on experience' (p. 78). Dewey described reflective thought as an 'active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and further conclusions to which it tends' (Dewey, 1910, p. 6). He also argued that, by using reflection, people can move from 'routine action' guided by tradition, habit and authority towards 'reflective action' based on constant self-appraisal and development (Killen, 2006). Dewey's ideas have subsequently been extended by researchers including Van Manen (1977), Valli (1997), Zeichner (1981, 1985, 1987), Schon (1987) and Korthagen (1999).

Clearly, much has been written and said about the theoretical and practical value of reflection in teaching. This study focuses on experimentation of reflection as a way to improve trainees' teaching in Saudi context. For this particle reason, this study will rely on the views of Schon, Vygotsky, Lave and Wenger whose ideas have can be useful to sort out this practical issue of using reflection from social culture view rather that linguistic side. Their view that explain the role of social and cultural interaction in human learning seem more relevant to obtain the possible answers for research questions that aim to question the potential of reflection to apply and improve trainees' teaching in one of Saudi university as be explained in Chapter Five. Further explanation will be provided in next sections.

3.3.4.1. Schon on 'Reflection'

Following Dewey's emphasis on action as an integral part of reflection, Schon (1983) introduced the concept of 'reflective practice'. His book, *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*, discusses two types of reflection: reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action (see Figure 3.2). While both types involve similar activities, in which problematic situations are shaped and reshaped, they occur in different timeframes (Killen,

2006). In reflection-on-action, the reflective practitioner engages in self-evaluative thinking and tries to understand past events in order to build a new understanding that will shape future action. In reflection-in-action, practitioners think while doing; Schon considers this to be central to the 'arteacherstry of practice' (Schon, 1983), as practitioners gain awareness (knowing-in-action) that allows them to make changes as they proceed (Schon, 1983).
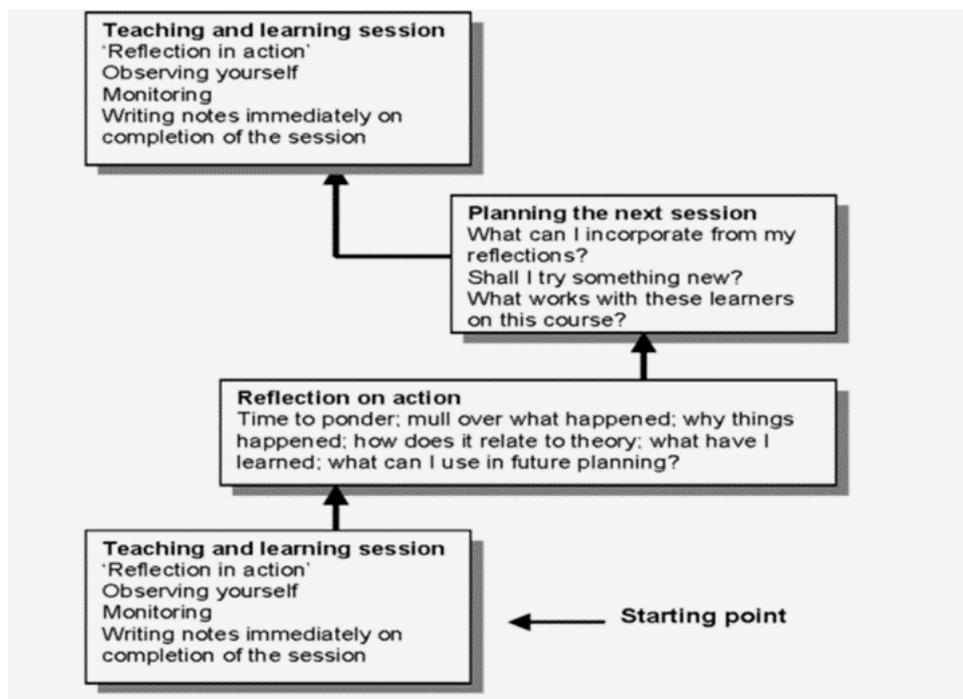
Figure 3. 2. Using reflection in and on action to improve teaching and learning (Scales, 2013).

A further contribution of Schon's work is the distinction between 'technical rationality' and 'tacit knowledge'. Scales (2013, p. 11) refers to this as the 'theory-practice gap', explaining that Schon sees reflection as a practice that starts once one is working (in this case, teaching), especially when new and confusing circumstances arise:

> Teachers may have acquired the theoretical knowledge (technical rationality) of their subject and practice of teaching, but whilst this might explain their classroom practice as it should be, it might not explain it as it actually is. From these real life- experiences, teachers can develop [tacit knowledge]. (p. 11)

It follows that, rather than merely following set procedures, professionals should use practical experience and theory to extemporize while thinking about their reality (Finlay, 2008).

Donald Schon is one of the most widely cited authors in the reflection field. However, he does not see himself 'as saying anything really new at all'. Instead, he admits that his work is based on 'a tradition of reform and criticism which begins with Rousseau and goes on to Pestilotsy and Tolstoy and Dewey and then… Alfred Schultz and Lev Vygotsky and Kurt Lewin, Piaget, Wittgenstein and David Hawkins today' (1987a, p. 602). However, this study puts more emphasis on his ideas, even as it has cited other key figures in the area of reflection, such as Dewey, Shulman, Stonehouse, Elliott, Van Manen.

One of many reasons for Schon's influence is his early claim to have identified 'an epistemology of practice' (Schon, 1983a, p. 49), which has now become generally accepted (Newman, 2006). This identification relies on avoiding the prevailing 'positivist epistemology of practice' that resulted from three kinds of separations: the separation of 'means from ends', 'research from practice' and 'knowing from doing' (Schon, 1983a, p. 165) (see Chapter Four).

Therefore, Schon's ideas on the importance of practical knowledge are potentially attractive to any researcher interested in the field of teaching. As a Saudi researcher who is aiming to improve the reality of initial teacher education in the KSA, I found the critical reconsideration underlying the professional practice of 'technical rationality' that Schon raises in his book to lie at the heart of the Saudi educational context (see Chapter Two). Schon's message about 'technical rationality' and the 'untouchable nature' of many practice problems in real classrooms accorded with my belief as a teacher and supervisor regarding the main weakness from which Saudi TE programmes have suffered (Staller, 2009, p. 2099; see Section 1.2).

However, some consider that Schon's concept of 'reflection-in-action' is unachievable (e.g. Moon, 2001; Eraut, 1994), and Van Manen (1990) and Ekebergh (2007) have emphasised the need to step out of a situation in order to reflect on it. A further addition to types of reflection was 'reflection-for-action', linking reflection with awareness of metacognitive elements in experience and future action and viewing reflection as an ongoing process (Collier, 1999; Farrell, 1998).

Although this classification of types of reflection is helpful in understanding the timing of reflective activity, 'it does not shed much light on the conceptualization of reflection for the researcher interested in pursuing the phenomenon' (Scanlan, et al, 2002, p.137). In particular, the literature on preservice teacher education to develop more reflective teachers seems to lack any theoretical explanation of how persons learn from experience (Copeland and Birmingham, 1993; Oser, 1994; Chitpin, 2006; Romano, 2006). One current challenge for educational research, then, is to identify relevant theory and interventions that can be used to guide the development of reflection (Reiman, 1999).

3.3.4.2: Vygotsky on 'Reflection'

While Dewey shows why reflection is important for teachers, Vygotsky provides a theoretical framework to aid this reflection (Kaywork, 2011). Claiming that people develop within their social world, Vygotsky stresses the importance of social interaction as a means of fostering higher cognitive levels. The goal of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory is to gain a better understanding of mental processes so that educational programmes can maximise the potential of all learners (Manning and Payne, 1993). Lantolf (2000) claimed that Vygotsky finds a significant role for what he calls 'tools' in humans' understanding of the world and of themselves. According to Vygotsky, these tools are created by humans 'artefacts' under specific cultural and historical conditions, and as such they carry with them the characteristics of the culture in question. He argues that cognitive development involves both social support for interaction and improvement of skills in the use of sociocultural tools. The skills needed to use cultural tools such as language must be developed through interaction with others (Rogoff, 1993).

In addition, Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), has important implications for concepts in teacher education such as peer coaching and mentoring. Vygotsky believed that improving ZPD relies on the quality of 'the actual verbal interaction with a more experienced member of society' (Manning and Payne, 1993, p. 364). In a TEP context, these may include supervisors, mentors, teacher educators or peers at a more advanced level (ibid.).

According to Nardi (1996), sociocultural theory is useful for understanding historically what was wrong rather than in predicting what may go wrong. In particular, it is useful for understanding why activity systems do not always achieve the desired outcome, or even the same results in different contexts. Cole (1996) illuminates this issue, claiming that sociocultural theory 'rejects cause and effect, stimulus response, explanatory science in favour of a science that emphasises the emergent nature of mind in activity and that acknowledges a central role for interpretation

in its explanatory framework' (p. 104). Case studies that pursue a deeper understanding of the history and development of practice accord with the overall aims this theory.

In seeking to enhance PSTs' reflection through oral and written interaction as a tool to improve teaching, Vygotsky's framework seems useful as a basis for analysing participants' reactions while paying due attention to the cultural scope of the phenomena (Jonassen, 2000; Nardi, 1996). Noting the popularity of RP in Western education research, Williams and Burden (1997) observed that sociocultural theory emphasises that education is informed by cultural values and beliefs constructed by explicit and implicit messages and practices. Consequently, the interaction between teachers and students in the classroom (and in the study case between supervisor and trainees) should embody those beliefs.

There seems little point, then, in attempting to improve on current approaches without taking account of the social structures that influence the use of particular tools, leading in turn to particular styles, methods and pedagogies. In the context of teacher education, the sociocultural perspective can support analysis of the outcomes of different professional development approaches (Edwards, 2010). For present purposes, this perspective serves to highlight the current potential of RP in the contribution of supervision and other contextual elements of teaching practice to professional development of trainees.

3.3.4.3. Communities of Practice (CoP)

In recent years, the concept of CoP has increasingly provided a foundation for the continuous professional development (CPD) of in- and pre-service teachers. This concept of learning was first introduced by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger in the late 1980s and early 1990s(Lave and Wenger, 1991). Their view of education differed from the prevailing idea of learning as an individual process. They also reframed the assumption that learning 'has a beginning and an end; that it is best separated from the rest of our activities; and that it is the result of teaching' (Wenger 1998, p. 3). Instead, in their book Situated Learning (Lave and Wenger, 1991), they proposed that learning involves a process of engagement in a 'community of practice'. Wenger later expanded significantly on the concept in his book *Communities of Practice* (Wenger, 1998).

CoP are formed by people who wish to engage in a process of collective learning in a shared domain of human endeavour. CoP share a concern or a desire for something they do and seek to learn how to do it better through frequent interaction (Wenger, 2007). In our case, STs, teachers and supervisors are engaged in such a learning process, working on similar problems in pursuit of effective teaching approaches.

The characteristics of CoP vary. While some are quite formally organised, others are fluid and informal. CoP must exist in real life, where 'members are brought together by joining in common activities and by what they have learned through their mutual engagement in these activities' (Wenger, 1998, cited in Smith, 2009). According to Wenger (2010), three key features distinguish CoP from other groups and communities: domain, community and practice. That is, each member of the group should have an identity defined by a shared domain of interest and must engage in joint activities, discussions and information sharing. Moreover, CoP members are practitioners who share stories of addressing and resolving their problems through sustained interaction with others (Wenger, 2010).

3.3.4.4. Lesson Study

More recently, a form of collaborative teaching practice has emerged as a school-based professional development initiative. Called Lesson Study (LS), it aims to improve teaching and learning through the methodology of professional sharing of practice (Burghes and Robinson, 2009). According to Dudley (2013), LS involves a group of teachers seeking to enhance their approach to teaching a particular item or concept, or to improve how learners learn it, by collaboratively analysing how this can be done. Having put their analysis into practice in the classroom, they document what happened and what they found and then pass this on to other interested teachers. This can be done either through demonstration of the new practice or by publishing their findings.

LS apparently draws on aspects of reflective practice and communities of practice. For instance, the framework supports reflection on pedagogy and encourages PSTs to shift from 'teaching as telling' to 'teaching for understanding' (McDowell, 2010). Additionally, teachers are encouraged to generate new knowledge in their interactions within the LS group. These interactions are crucial for the development of insights that may inform future practice (McDowell, 2010).

One of the main advantages of the LS approach is that it expands PSTs' pedagogical content knowledge (Sibbald, 2009) through 'reflective immediacy' (Shulman, 2003) while sitting in a classroom, immersed in a teacher's practice (Wagner, 2003). It can be argued that this systematic approach to learning can only show teachers how to teach a particular topic to a particular class in a particular school, and that the professional knowledge of teaching so generated is therefore no more than a case study (Elliot, 2009). According to Stenhouse's idea of 'the teacher as a researcher,' this is not only an epistemological problem but also a psychological and social issue because teachers need to able to handle both self-criticism and criticism from others (Elliot, 2009). It follows that 'in order for teachers to capture and

express their emerging insights to each other, they needed to develop a common vocabulary of concepts and a syntax of theory. Such a theoretical framework of concepts should be testable by teachers and open to the development of new concepts and theory' (Stenhouse 1975, cited in Elliot, 2009, p. 1)

In turn, this process can create a rich knowledge base that can inform and support innovative educational practice. Both CoP and LS approaches can be strengthened by the participation of researchers and teacher educators, teachers, supervisors and trainees, 'thereby stimulating the interchange of theory and practice and hence increasing the potential for learning and development' (Alenizi, 2012, p. 68). These arrangements differ substantially from the dominant theory-practice relationship in KSA, where PSTs and even ISTs are commonly provided with ready-made answers by so-called 'experts', based on theoretical or technical solutions to complex classroom issues (Alenizi, 2012, p. 68).

Chapter summary.

This chapter has examined three aspects of the relevant literature: teacher education, supervision of PSTs and theoretical perspectives on reflection. The first section explored the concept of critical reflection as a model of teaching that aligns with contemporary views of the teaching process as always requiring new initiatives (Shulman, 1987). There is growing evidence of the value of such reflection, especially in its compatibility with modern constructivism, which has significantly influenced trends in teacher education. Current teacher education in KSA appears not to follow this trend (see Chapter Two).

This section also highlighted the long-running debate about how good teachers are made— through theory-based education in universities or practice-based education in schools. Granted international differences in this regard, there is a general desire to close the gap between theory and practice in teacher education, but this seems more difficult to achieve because of the current separation between universities and schools. In recent times, there have been increasing calls for the participation of teachers in the core process of producing teaching knowledge.

The second section discussed the importance of the supervision process for trainees' teaching. Among the main challenges for supervisors, a conflict was identified between the two main functions of supervision (evaluation and development), yielding varied classifications of supervision models and supervisors' roles.

The idea of reflection in teacher education was considered under two main headings. First, a general literature review examined the concept's definition, its importance to teachers, and models, levels and components of reflection. There followed a theoretical conceptualisation of reflection on which the present study is based, encompassing Schon's distinction between reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and the concept of communities of practice. All of these influenced the selection of methods of data collection and analysis and interpretation of findings as presented in Chapter Four.

Chapter Four: Methodology (1) - Methodological Framework

This chapter outlines the underpinning philosophy, methodology and my positioning in the research. The chapter is divided into two sections. The first section explains the worldview of research and how it guided me towards the qualitative paradigm. The second section describes the research design for exploring the potential of RP to improve trainees' teaching. It includes justification for selected methods and their suitability to achieve the research aim. It also elaborates on potential issues in my decisions about my research design, such as the research validity and the possibility of generalisation.

4.1. My worldview of research:

By 'worldview'[12] I mean 'a general philosophical orientation about the world and the nature of research that a researcher brings to study' (Creswell, 2014, p.6). I prefer to start by presenting my philosophical worldview because, as Creswell suggested, this information will help to explain why I chose to use a case study of participatory action research conducted within a qualitative research paradigm as a methodology framework for my research. Scott and Usher (1996, p. 13) emphasised that 'methods are embedded in commitments to a particular vision of the world (an ontology) and ways of knowing that world (an epistemology)'. Thus, the following paragraphs will explain my philosophical worldview proposed in this study.

For many years, epistemology[13] and ontology[14] took the position of the positivist view that universal laws govern social behaviour and that treated knowledge as an objective and 'a free-standing unit with an existence of its own' (McNiff & Whitehead, 2002, pp. 17-18; Braun and Clarke, 2013; Pring, 2015). In the educational research, positivism understands human behaviour through a scientific hypothesised description. Concentration on using the scientific method can be seen as the way to guarantee 'true and certain knowledge' (Scott and Usher, 1996, p. 26, Braun and Clarke, 2013). This view tends to assume that there is

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[12] Others have called epistemologies and ontologies (Crotty, 1998) 'paradigms' (Mertens, 2010).
[13] Epistemology is concerned with knowledge and how it can be acquired (Sprague, 2010).
[14] Ontology is a set of beliefs about reality and refers to whether reality is objective and external to human beings or whether it is created by one's own consciousness (Heigham & Croker, 2009)

only one correct version of reality or knowledge and thus seeks to remove subjective influences on knowledge production as much as possible (Braun and Clarke, 2013).

There must therefore be no contradictory explanations; instead, there must be a convergence on a single explanation that leads to research generalisations (Usher 1996, Creswell, 2014). Usher (1996, p. 14) was wary of using a natural science method in educational science because ontological assumptions underpinning the scientific view of the world as 'orderly, lawful and hence predictable, are highly problematic'.

However, in my research, I did not believe in a singular truth in the social sciences. From my reading into research, I came to understand that knowledge is subjective and evidence established in research is imperfect and fallible. Thus, there is not a single understanding or static system of thoughts a researcher can stand on. It is rather, as Usher and Edwards described, 'best understood as a state of mind, critical, self-referential posture and style' (1994, p.2). I believed that human nature had 'multiple realities' which were 'socially defined' (Creswell, 2007). Based on this belief, I was neither seeking an objective reality nor a universal generalisation of my findings. Rather, I was looking to explore the introduction of RP to the supervision of a girls' teacher education college in Saudi to see what possible interpretations might come out of this experiment.

Thus, although the effectiveness of using RP with PSTs has been researched widely in western countries such as USA and the UK, with mostly positive findings (see Chapter Three), from my worldview I suppose that there will be multiple realities (findings) when RP is applied in different contexts because individuals and their experiences in cultural contexts are different (see Chapter Two).

Law (2004, p. 3) encourages us to question and reconsider 'how far whatever it is we know travels and whether it still make sense in other locations, and if so, how'. Griffiths (1998) and Lather (1994) explain the importance of seeking that local and particular knowledge. Of course, this may challenge policy makers, who might prefer the dominant view that supposes truths about technical knowledge and 'what works'. But particular knowledge values that knowledge and can be illuminated from the positions of individuals' specific situations and contexts (Cotton & Griffiths, 2007; Griffiths & Macleod, 2008). As Griffiths (1998) argues, this kind of knowledge is needed together with questions that probe specific cases and situations to know what is happening here, why and what is it like.

However, I have to mention that as my worldview of research accepts 'incredulity towards meta narratives' which allow us to recognise knowledge as subjective and situated (Griffiths, 1998, p. 72; Kvale & Brinkman, 2009; Usher & Edwards 1994), I should recognise the danger of accepting an 'anything goes' attitude that leads to what Usher and Edwards (1994, p.27) describe as an 'irrationality and paralysis'. Instead, I tend to believe Richardson and Adams St Pierre, who claim 'we can know something – but the critical point is recognising that this knowing is 'partial, local and historical' and 'recognizes the situational limitations of the knower' (2005, p. 961).

Another part of my worldview is that knowledge is an existential, constructivist and ongoing activity, rather than a 'fixed body' (Stake, 2010). This view had influenced my research, which could be seen as involving interactions with others. Therefore, I should not, as a researcher, embrace a belief of formulating one single understanding. Rather, my participants – trainees, teachers, supervisors and I – co-construct knowledge together through this research. In other words, I took the view that reality was constructed in collaboration with my participants, and that I constructed meanings in interaction with others. This worldview explained above had guided me towards a specific research paradigm, which was interpretive research. The following section justifies this positioning.

4.2. Interpretive research

One may set against the positivist approaches to research another tradition: that of interpretive research (Pring, 2015). The assumption underpinning the epistemology of this kind of research matches my worldview, for the most part, namely that human action is variable, meaningful and has to be interpreted and understood within the context of social practices (Usher, 1996, p. 18). In an interpretive research, human action is given meaning by interpretive frameworks. The researcher's role is to understand the meanings that are formed by interactive social behaviour (Pring, 2015).

A researcher, in this stance, is a key instrument of the research process as his/her knowledge is critical to understanding what participants share. However, that does not mean the researcher should ignore or minimise participants' involvement in the process of creating knowledge, but rather place their views and experiences at the centre of the research (Mills, 1959, Creswell, 2007). To further explain, knowledge is constructed within participants rather than outside of them, but through researchers' understanding (Saldana, 2011). Researchers start with understanding individual experiences to build their analysis

and findings from what data yields (Cohen et al., 2007). This individual's experiences have to be understood in relation to the culture they live in and through the interactions between those connecting inside it (Crotty, 1998). This view widely traverses fields such as phenomenology, ethnography and hermeneutics.

Creswell (2007) defined the research which focuses on inquiring about the meanings individuals or groups have in their specific context as qualitative research. The purpose of using a qualitative approach, as Morrison (2002; p.18) describes, is to "explore the meaning" of events or phenomena from subjective perspectives by recognising the integration of research within the research environment. Thus, it might contribute to a more holistic perspective from different contexts in which to examine complex phenomena.

Considering the importance of fitting specific philosophies and selecting a suitable approach for research, qualitative research basically linked to my intent to explore and understand the participants' experiences of using RP as a supervision model through Vygotsky's theory of socio-culture. I tended to work with the idea of RP as situated in practice; acting interacting, explaining human exchanges in transforming social contexts, rather than focusing on the notion of a generalizable theory. Berg and Lune (2012, p.3) recommended that researchers interested in exploring and understanding people's experiences should use qualitative research. They argued that 'certain experiences cannot be expressed by numbers'.

4.3. Overall Research Design:

For that reason, this was a case study of participatory action research conducted within a qualitative research paradigm, with data collected from multiple sources: individual and focus group interviews with several trainees, teachers and supervisors; the reflective journals from trainees; and researcher's diary (see Figure 4.1 Methodological framework). Next, I will explain the framework of the research methodology.
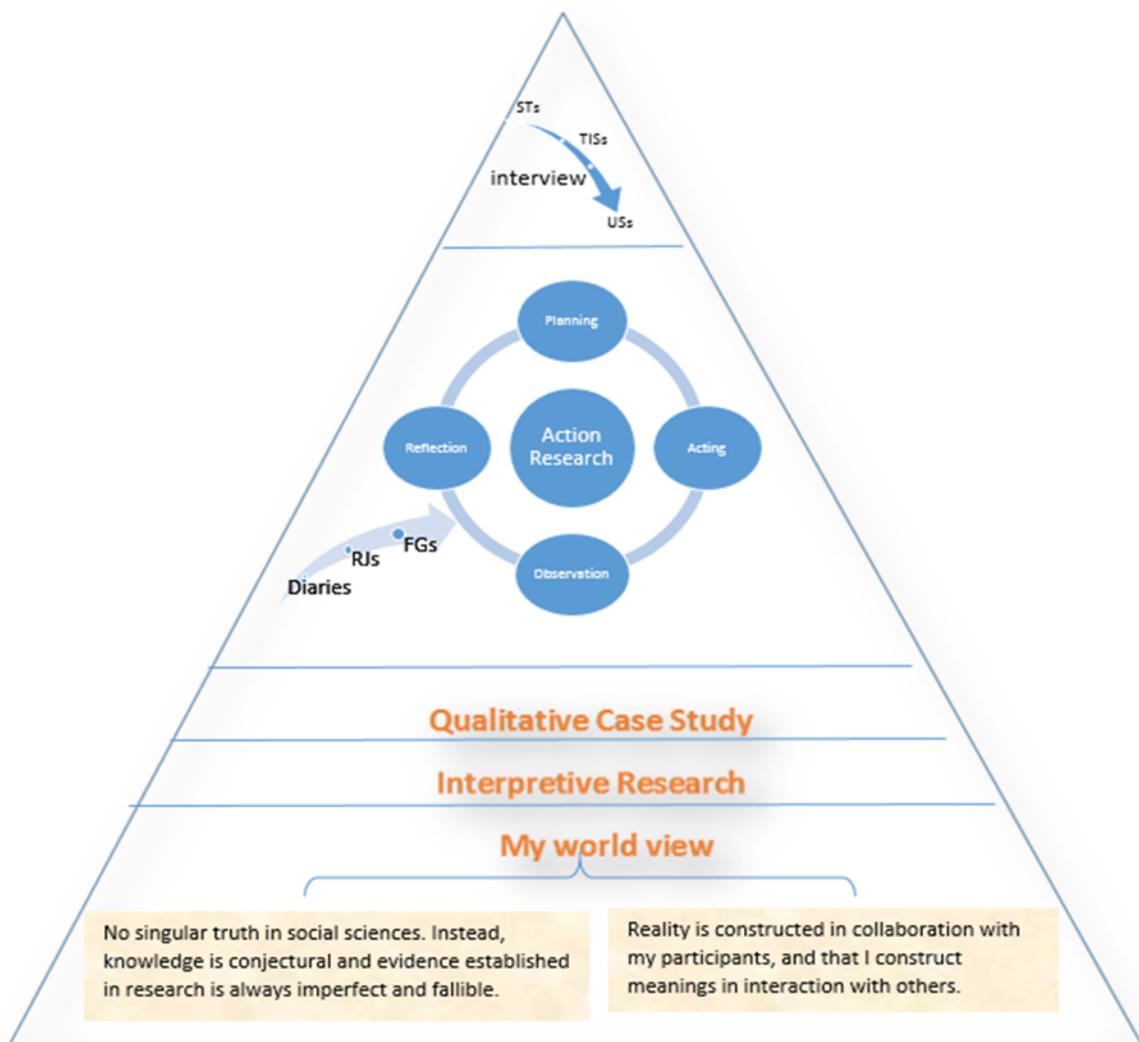
Figure 4.1. Methodological framework

4.3.1. Qualitative case study approach

This research explored trainees ' use of the RP in their practicum period during a supervision programme as a case study of an educational intervention. The participants in this research were viewed as an example, rather than a sample, in this exploration. A case study approach respects and uses the uniqueness of an example to explore the case in-depth. Depth requires details; thus, a case study is 'a very detailed research enquiry into a single example' (Payne and Payne, 2004, p.31).Yin (2002, p.14) defines a case study as 'an all-encompassing method, covering the logic of design, data collection techniques, and specific approaches to data analysis'. (Yin, 2006).

A case study can be employed within a qualitative or quantitative study, or a combination of the two. However, due to qualitative tendency to interpret and attempt to gain multiple perspective from participants, qualitative methodology seems more suitable for case studies (see section 4.1). Case studies are able to provide the researcher with rich and detailed data, which enables the researcher to understand phenomena through 'how' and 'why' questions (Patton, 1987). It focuses on 'the uniqueness of events or actions, arising from their being shaped by the meaning of those who are participants in the situation' (Pring, 2015, p.54).

I understand a case study to be in-depth empirical research that enables understanding of human activity within its complex, real-life context and where boundaries are essential, yet problematic to define (Gillham, 2000; Stake, 2005; Stark & Torrance, 2005). Case studies are commonly undertaken to get a more holistic and dynamic view of the phenomenon being investigated—in this case, using RP to improve the teaching performance of trainees. Case studies have the potential to provide an understanding of a phenomenon from the participants' standpoint and to provide insights into their beliefs, assumptions, values and actions (Pring, 2000). Thus, I considered the case study be a suitable approach for developing a picture of 'what using RP in KSU is like', and to build an understanding of participants' experiences and actions (Cohen et al, 2000).

In order to gain a comprehensive and detailed view, I focussed on the experiences, actions and beliefs of the participants, as well as on the context in which they existed. Creswell (2007) and Pring (2000) argue that context is the gateway for understanding any phenomenon or human activity. Therefore, this research was conducted in the school, because what distinguishes a case study is not just the focus on the particular, it is that the focus is studied in the unique context in which the case is embedded (Cohen et al, 2000).

The contextual conditions of any case are valuable in developing an understanding of the meaning. However, the value derived from the context is complex. My observations helped me define the broader political, cultural, historical and societal contexts, among others which, I believed, shaped and informed using RP to improve trainees' teaching. This study did not consider the trainees as cases; rather; it might be more beneficial to think of this research as a case study of an educational intervention. That was because the inquiry of this study was not a focus on an individual trainee in a specific period within a specific context. Instead, it focused on the feasibility of using reflection in a real context to improve trainees' teaching. Thus, the investigation of this single case focused on the process of using

reflection on trainees' teaching within the group described above. The embedded units of analysis were the stages of each of the reflective activities, which took the form of focus groups, individual interviews, reflective journals and the researcher's diary.

With regard to the complexity of the contextual conditions of case studies, I did acknowledge that an in-depth study of these multiple influencing contexts of each individual trainee was not possible within the scope of this study. Instead, I chose to view all trainees as a group within one institution as one contextual boundary for the case study. However, included in this is the need to explore and be aware of any relations that shape action and consciousness (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2005).

The RP as a concept has evolved out of the teacher education field (see Chapter Three), as well as my interest as a teacher, supervisor and researcher (see Chapter One). However, such clear standards or applications of reflection seem not to even exist in the Saudi teachers' education context yet (see section 8.2.3in Chapter Eight). While the research findings almost support using RP in teacher education, I was curious about applying it in a Saudi context and seeking meaning. Therefore, I had an interest in investigating the potential of RP to improve female Saudi trainees. The research investigated different viewpoints from trainees, teachers and supervisors. It also required careful attention to the social, cultural and political context of this study. These purposes provided further justification for the use of a qualitative case study approach (Yin, 2013; Stake, 1995).

4.3.1.1. Limitations of case study

I was aware, as a researcher, that the contextual conditions of any case were complex. I had tried to seek to the broader political, cultural, historical and societal contexts that, I believed, shaped and informed the meaning. Therefore, it was important to recognise the near impossibility of drawing generalisations (Pring, 2015). Pring discusses the difficulty of generalising in the following passage:

> Since an 'educational practice' is where individuals 'make sense' (starting
> from their different perspectives) of experience, struggle to understand and
> come to find value in different things and activities, then it cannot be grasped
> within general laws or theories' (p.45)

A case study, particularly the single study, is often criticised as having difficulty with generalisations (Ruddin, 2006). However, before we discuss whether generalisations can or cannot be based on single case study, it may useful to explain what is meant by

generalisation. According to Robinson and Norris (2001, p. 303), it is 'an inference of applicability to far more cases beyond the data or the study'. In this respect, it seems there is more than one way to justify generalisation.

Firstly, 'classical generalisation' (Robinson and Norris, 2001) is what Stake (1978) calls 'formalistic' and Hamilton (1979) calls 'logical'. It comes from the philosophy of science in which more attention is paid to prediction and control of the study in order to justify its generalisation in other contexts (Lincoln and Guba, 1979, Robinson and Norris, 2001). Thus, researchers seek to obtain 'assertions of enduring value that are context-free' (Lincoln and Guba, 1979). Consequently, generalisation seems more relevant to the type of validity called 'internal validity' (Robinson and Norris, 2001, Schofield, 2000), in which the researcher is concerned about procedures, instruments, sampling and so on. In this regard, criticism towards the case study centres around questioning its ability to 'provide trustworthy information about the broader class' (Ruddin, 2006).

However, Ruddin (2006, p.722) links criticism toward a single case study to five misunderstandings about the nature of the case study as a research method:

1. 'Misunderstanding 1: Theoretical knowledge is more valuable than practical knowledge.
2. Misunderstanding 2: One cannot generalize on the basis of an individual case; therefore, the case study cannot contribute to scientific development.
3. Misunderstanding 3: The case study is most useful for generating hypotheses, that is, in the first stage of a total research process.
4. Misunderstanding 4: The case study contains a bias toward verification, that is, a tendency to confirm the researcher's preconceived notions.
5. Misunderstanding 5: It is often difficult to develop general propositions and theories on the basis of specific case studies'.

Nevertheless, the claim was not that a single case study was intended to be representative of whole populations and contribute to the development of theory (Stake, 1995). However, it seemed misleading to treat the case study as 'a pilot method to be used only in preparing the real study's larger tests, systematic hypotheses testing, and theory building' (Caporaso et al., 1997 cited in Ruddin 2006, p.799). This view seemed to be derived from viewing the case studies as a scientific method to achieve 'generalizable knowledge' (Elliott, 2007, p.186), rather than a tool to meet 'the individual practitioner's everyday experience' (Elliott, 1991, p.46). In this regard, a case study should be seen as a strong form of

hypothetic-deductive theorising, not as a weak form of statistical inference (Ruddin, 2006, p. 800).

In addition, while 'internal validity' appears to be an important condition to validate research findings, it is still inadequate 'for establishing the generalisability of a cause and effect relationship' (Robinson and Norris, 2001, p. 305). Feldman (2007, p. 22) rejects using the term 'validity' to define 'how well measurements correspond to what is being measured'. He attributes his rejection to two reasons. First, qualitative studies aim to describe, interpret and understand, not to measure; second, the realist epistemology of qualitative studies cannot be defined equally as a validity. In addition, Cronbach (1983) point outs that through researchers' attempts to prove the validity of their work, they pay more attention to the quality of 'internal validity' at the expense 'of providing the conditions to make judgements that go beyond the study' (cited in Robinson and Norris, 2001, p. 305).

Nevertheless, while most researchers are wary of generalisation in order to establish the value of their work, 'particularization does deserve praise' (Stake, 1978, p.22). This claim has stemmed from a conception of generalisation that is called 'naturalistic generalisation' (Lincoln and Guba, 1979; Robinson and Norris, 2001; Stake, 1978). It is characterised by 'recognizing the similarities of objects and issues in and out of the context and by sensing the natural co-variations of happening' (Stake, 1978, p. 22). Thus, it is produced through experience and related to 'the tacit knowledge of how things are, why they are, how people feel about them and how these things are likely to be later or in other places with which this person is familiar' (Stake, 1978, p. 22).

Therefore, Robinson and Norris (2001) argue that 'naturalistic generalisation' is associated with narrative case study and, thus, it is more appropriate for qualitative educational research. Lincoln and Guba (1979) make similar claims about the great ability of the case study to help the reader deal with 'naturalistic generalisation'. This ability comes from 'the thick description necessary to enable someone interested in making a transfer to reach a conclusion about whether transfer can be contemplated as a possibility' (Lincoln and Guba, 1985 cited in Robinson and Norris, 2001, p. 306). However, considering the potential of case studies, Stake (1978) concludes his view by saying that the case study could not provide generalisations but rather, provides an explain to capture its unique features.

This study was conducted among six trainees who were in the final year of their bachelor's programme of Arabic literature in the educational college of KSM University, and among

two teachers in one school. Therefore, the findings were limited to this context. However, from the perspective of 'naturalistic generalisation', the results of this case study might provide insight into the phenomenon under investigation. Moreover, the potential impact of cultural factors on the development of the trainees' skills in reflection was considered in the data analysis. Thus, generalisations beyond this study depended on 'context rather than universal and practical over theory, using the power of examples in case studies with a consideration of the perspective "user"' (Ruddin, 2006, p. 807).

The aim of my research in the educational field was to improve education as well as to contribute to knowledge. I considered my research an attempt to improve Saudi teacher educators' supervision by using reflection, so the research findings could better support the educational reform in the PSTs area in Saudi education. In exploring the potential of reflection to improve Saudi trainees' teaching, my research design was clearly influenced by the research aim. Therefore, in order to achieve my research aim – to improve trainees' teaching – it was necessary to see classrooms as 'laboratories... [where] [d]eliberation and judgement in the light of evidence, and critical reflection in the light of observation and analysis, reappraisal in the light of discussion and advice' took place. This seemed, as Pring suggested, 'more appropriate than the application to particular cases of general principles' (2015, p. 145).

According to Tooley and Darby's report (1998), one of the main elements that decreases the value of some education research findings is its removal from real-world educational practice. They claim that most research is conducted 'broadly in fields of contentious discussion or debate'. Thus, their arguments are presented 'incoherently, illogically or simply rel[y] on the opinions of others' (Bennett, 2013, p. 51-52). However, this does not mean that empirical research findings must be valuable. Instead, the report reveals that most studies in the field of education include empirical research, are partisan to their hypotheses and refer to the universal laws that govern social behaviour. They seek, consciously or not, to confirm their preconceptions, rather than keeping an open mind and thoroughly exploring 'the negative hypotheses. Thus, their hunch as to what might make things better is not, in fact, improving things (Bennett, 2013). (More about my plan to manage this issue is outlined in Section 5.3.2.1).

Referring to the nature of the enquiry of this study that aimed to incorporate change in live action, this case study was conducted as action research. It aimed not to provide the

educational field with the best pedagogical teaching methods that could help trainees in their teaching or judging the quality of these pedagogical methods. Rather, it sought to improve ST's practice by using RP where 'realities were not objective "out there" but constructed by people as they attempt "to make sense" of their surrounds (which surrounds did not exist independently of them anyway)' (Pring, 2015, p.62-63).

4.3.2. Action research (AR):

The literature discussing the nature, purposes and process of doing action research is huge. Many frameworks and models have been created to help understand AR, although these are not always made clear. I did not intend to provide a comprehensive account of the multiple conceptions of AR. Instead, I briefly described some major issues and present the main features of AR, which I used in this study for improving PSTs' teaching, specifically participatory action research (PAR).

4.3.2.1. What is Action research?

A number of other terms are often used synonymously with action research. Under the term of 'practitioner inquiry' that Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2004) use, a wide range of practitioner-based research activities can be included: 'action research', 'self-study', 'professional inquiry/enquiry', 'practitioner research', 'practitioner enquiry' and 'teacher research'. However, more important than which specific term we should use is what is meant by action research, such as the underpinning assumptions, beliefs and processes involved. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2004, p. 602) suggest starting with what can be known, by whom, and for what purposes.

AR can be defined as the 'systematic investigation by a practitioner into his or her own practice for the purpose of understanding and improving that practice' (Lattimer, 2012, p.2; McNiff, 2002; Shagoury and Power, 2012). It promotes inquiry-based and contextually-driven professional development (Crow & Spencer, 2003). AR is process that involves an action researcher and community or organisation members who are seeking to improve their situation. In this regard, knowledge is uncertain and is created through an active process (Whitehead & McNiff, 2006).

Although multiple models of AR have been articulated, most possess the same core elements (Goodnough, 2011). AR is a systematic study that includes several main steps; in fact, it is more of a cycle than steps. The process of AR begins with the identification of a

concern and an investigation into the causes of that concern, for example, identifying a problem or question. The practitioner then plans and implements a change designed to address the concern, namely determining the method and data collection needs. The implementation of the change is carefully monitored, and data is collected and analysed to understand the impact of the change (reporting findings and a plan for future action) (Johnson, 2002). (See Figure 4.2)
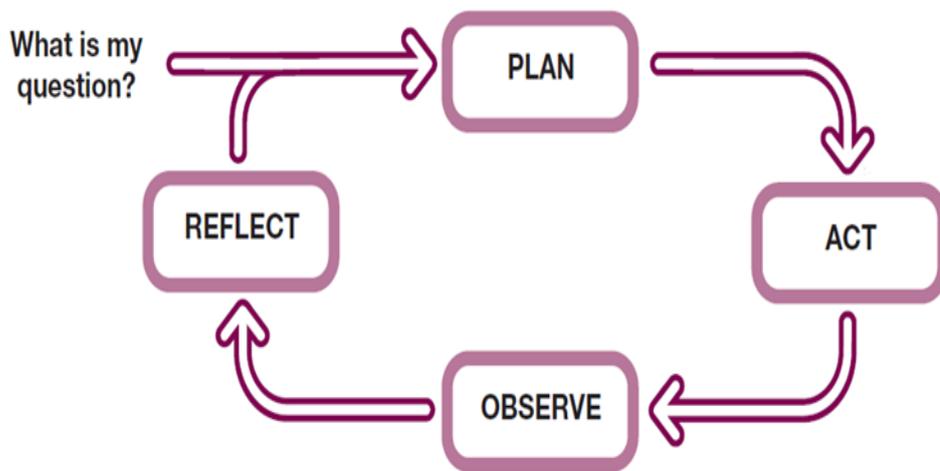
Figure 4.2: The action research process (Coats, 2005)

AR has a recursive nature; with each cycle, the change is refined in response to the data gathered from the previous implementation (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005; Riel, 2007; Stringer, 2007). The cyclical process in AR provides practitioners with a high priority in reflection to explore what they are doing, why they are doing it, and what the impact has been (Mertler, 2012; Parsons & Brown, 2002). These reflective questions that continually refine and improve the practice are expected to impact the professional orientation of the practitioner (Mills, 2011; Whitehead, 1989). (See figure 4.3).
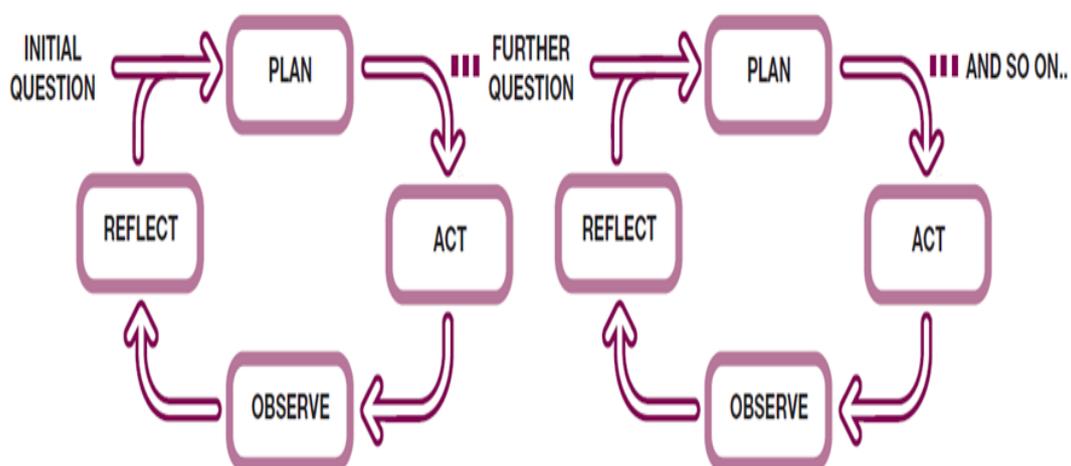
Figure 4.3: Action research moving forward (Coats, 2005)

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) situated action research within the qualitative domain due to it 'largely rely[ing] on methods including observation, interviewing, and document analysis' (Sited in Vaughan and Burnaford, 2016, p.283). However, AR is significantly different from traditional university-based forms of research (Anagnostopoulos, et al., 2007; McLaughlin, Black-Hawkins; McIntyre, 2007). Elliott (1997; p.25) identifies the 'transformative intentions' of action research as its difference from other forms of enquiry. Distinguishing between action research and other forms of research, O'Brien (2001) details three main dimensions: a) collaboration, in which according to Oancea and Furlong (2007, p. 14) 'people work together in a combination of mutual support and mutual criticism or challenge' (Oancea and Furlong, 2007, p. 14); b) the social dimension, in which the research takes place in real-world situations, and aims to solve real problems; and c) the subjective dimension, in which researchers have not claimed to remain objective, but rather openly acknowledge their subjectivity.

4.3.2.2. Action research in teacher education

The literature that discusses the purposes of AR in education are very diverse (Vaughan and Burnaford, 2016). However, it can largely be identified by these issues:

• Empowering and encouraging teachers to challenge and transform education.

• Providing a way for teachers to monitor and develop their own practice.

• Testing new strategies and initiatives through practices.

•Enabling teachers to make more professional and autonomous judgements by increasing their knowledge of teaching and learning.

•Enhancing teachers' self-esteem and professional identity.

(Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2004; Kincheloe, 2003; Lankshear & Knobel 2004; Zeichner 1993).

The literature reports many benefits from using AR as a model for professional development. Raudenheimer (2003) concluded that AR in faculty professional development improved skills, enhanced collaboration and interpersonal relationships with colleagues, and increased teacher credibility. Teachers believe that engaging in AR enhances their personal and professional growth. Additionally, participation in AR can improve teachers' confidence in themselves and their teaching abilities (Neapolitan, 2000).

AR is a form of research in which teachers review their practice in light of evidence (Pring, 2015). As a methodology, it provides them 'with opportunities to build and sharpen the disposition that creates reflective and collaborative teachers and leaders'. The results of AR studies show that teachers feel they become more autonomous, have a higher level of problem-solving skills and an increased ability to use classroom data more effectively (Neapolitan, 2000). This is perhaps the most valuable reason for the increased importance of using AR with PSTs as they can continue to help themselves in developing their teaching knowledge (Vaughan and Burnaford, 2016, p.286).

Gilmore et al. (1986, p. 161) attribute the uniqueness of AR to its simultaneous contribution to two aims: 'the practical concerns of people in an immediate problematic situation and to further the goals of social science'. However, there is the possibility of an emerging tension regarding the researcher's situation as both 'action research facilitator' and socially critical political actor (McWilliam, 2004). Elliott (1988, p.165) highlights this tension through his description of the function of the facilitator of AR:

> Unlike the critical theorist, the action research facilitator does not assume that
> dialogue between insiders produces a consensus as a basis for collective action
> . . . he or she is tolerant of divergent outcomes of debate and the expression
> of individuality in decision-making. The facilitator also believes in the power of
> insiders to generate their own critiques of the ideological structures which
> distort their self-understandings. The task of facilitator is not to generate
> critical theories but to stimulate the process of reflection which will enable
> insiders to generate their own.

Nevertheless, achieving the dual commitment described above is not an easy task; it involves an active collaboration between the researcher and the other practitioners who have to be willing to learn by their practice (O'Brien, 2001). Bogdan and Biklen (1982) highlight the importance of honesty in reporting what the researcher finds as a means to address questions related to research integrity.

However, with regard to the advantages that AR offers to educational research, the legitimacy of AR as a part of educational research has been challenged. The next section discusses the issue of assessing AR as a legitimate approach.

4.3.2.3. Action research as an approach

In reviewing AR as a kind of practice-based research, the challenges of considering AR as a legitimate type of research in the academy seem unavoidable (Vaughan and Burnaford, 2016). Most of these challenges resulted in continued suspicion regarding two main areas: a) its little stories (Gray 2004) or what Frankel, Wallen and Hyun called 'merely anecdotal data' as they cannot be generalised depending on 'only one classroom' (2015, pp. 592-593); and b) the importance of teachers' knowledge in light of a lack of authentic information about classrooms and schools among university professors (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 2009). Gray (2004) argues that there is scepticism about the possibility of generalisation of findings from AR. The reason is the limitation of the sample size and the uniqueness of the problem being addressed.

Nevertheless, with the balance between 'quality' and 'relevance' required in the public assessment of research, applied and practice-based research find themselves under threat (Oancea and Furlong, 2007). The threat comes from a tightening of the 'official' concept of quality in scientific and instrumental strands (ibid.). Therefore, applied and practice-based research need a new concept of 'quality' which takes into account the nature of both inquiry and knowledge in the field (ibid; Feldman, 2007).

Elliott (2007, p. 230), referring to Stake and Schwandt (2006), mentions two views of quality: 'quality-as-experienced' and 'quality-as-measured'. On one hand, the evaluation of quality-as-experienced involves 'grasping the subjective and intersubjective meanings that the evaluand attaches to events, personal encounters and places and their sensitivities to virtue and trauma'. On the other hand, the evaluation of quality-as-measured involves the 'explicit comparison of the object in question with a set of standards for it'.

'Criterial thinking to reduce the number of views of what quality is in pursuit of a composite score that all evaluators might agree with' (Elliott 2007, p. 230) affects both of these views of quality. For example, quality-as-measured is reduced to a single measure, whereas quality-as-experienced considers the most valid experience as the universal (Elliott, 2007). Thus, in order to inform critical thinking about quality-as-experienced, Elliott (2007) suggests clearly presenting the narrative experience. The narrative experience should concentrate on 'its potential value and on the openings that it provides to realize that potential' (Oancea and Furlong, 2007, p.129). As a result, the criteria for quality-as-experienced – 'always multifaceted, contested, and never fully representable' – will increase (Elliott, 2007, p. 230).

However, this does not mean subscribing to a radical constructivist perspective (Von Glaserfeld, 1993), which believes there is no way to know what is real. Rather, AR could somehow build, through its narrative, what we can accept as 'criteria, such as credibility, persuasiveness and verisimilitude' (Feldman, 2007, p.24). Therefore, the action researcher will emphasise the role of detailed descriptions in reports, which explain how and why data were collected (Feldman, 2007; Oancea and Furlong, 2007). Moreover, combining multiple perspectives to represent the same data could effectively increase the narrative validity (Feldman, 2003, 2007).

Pring (2014) evokes an important matter to emphasise in the possible issue of generalising the findings that result from the AR approach:

> Although such a practical conclusion focuses on the particular, thereby not justifying generalization, no one situation is unique in every respect and therefore the action research in one classroom or school can illuminate or be suggestive of practice elsewhere. There can be, among networks of teachers, the development of a body of professional knowledge of 'what works' or of how values might be translated into practice, or come to be transformed by practice (Pring,2014, p. 153).

Based on this understanding, this study adopted the notion that AR is not separate from theory or context, but rather, 'it is part of educational research, not apart from' (Vaughan and Burnaford, 2016, p. 294). The quality of AR should not be totally assessed with a scientific measurement or treatment, which tends to focus on the quality of the report rather than the quality of the research (Feldman, 2007, p. 22). Instead, we should consider

the nature of enquiry and knowledge of this research, which is summarised by Feldman (2007, p. 22) when he says:

> (...) action research is ultimately concerned with the betterment of human situations; it requires a set of criteria that accurately tells us how well its outcomes lead to the improvement of those situations. And, because what one means by 'better' is tied to moral and political views, action research is inherently moral and political work.

4.3.2.4. Participatory action research (PAR)

Various forms of AR have relied on the collaborative dimension that characterises the relationship between researcher and participants (Robson, 2002). PAR is considered one of the most widely practised types of participatory research. Bradbury and Reason (2003, p.156) define PAR as a non-traditional research method 'grounded in lived experience' and 'developed in partnership' which 'addresses significant problems, works with people, develops new ways of seeing/interpreting the world . . ., and leaves infrastructure in its wake'.

According to Foeday (2011), PAR is a type of action research consisting of three recycled phases: planning, implementation and evaluation. First, the participants plan for research and problem-solving; then they implement the plan and measure results; finally, they discuss, criticise and evaluate the results of their actions.

The aim of this study was to improve trainees' teaching abilities by trying to change the way they has learned—specifically, by having them engaged in reflection. The three dimensions of AR mentioned earlier—collaboration, socialism and subjectivism (O'Brien, 2001)—had been considered in conducting this study. However, this study did not adopt a classical view of PAR, which requires participants to be involved at every stage of the action research cycle. Instead, the participation of trainees and teachers was restricted to the implementation and evaluation stages, without planning. It borrowed the soul of PAR, which is 'changing by doing' by repeating, in order, these cycles: observation, teaching and post-teaching.

This customised model was justified by several circumstances. First, while the planning stage in AR could be used to discuss, theoretically, what might be best practices for teaching materials, I was not addressing this as a goal of my study. My aim was to improve trainees' reflection on teaching materials over that which had been used (i.e., reflection in/on

action), as a suggested way to improve their teaching. Thus, including the planning stage for discussion about what might be best practices for a specific teaching issue might do not service to the aim of this study.

In addition, at this time, KSM University did not support the idea of engaging in preparation of lessons during practicum. Practicum was seen as the time of practeachersing teaching in schools (acting teaching), whereas lesson preparation was seen as the trainees' tasks based on theory they had been taught in the University (see section 2.2.3.2). Thus, the trainees' participation in the planning stage in AR cycles would likely be difficult to apply. Moreover, the trainees were presenting lessons in various Arabic subjects at various levels in schools to which we were assigned. So, it would be difficult to participate in the planning stage.

4.3.2.5. The procedures of the suggested model:

The orientation stage: First of all, there was an orientation period which took two pathways, namely, the theoretical and practical routes. The starting point of this stage was one week before the observation time. The orientation stage took the form of a seminar. The researcher in this seminar I explained to the trainees the new structure, aims and procedures that were followed in this course – for example, the content of the reflective teaching model and its implications. She also provided them with the tools they should use in their reflection and illustrated how to use them, including the points that should be observed and reflective writing guidelines – in other words, she taught them how to be a critical observer and what their responsibilities were during the class (Gethals et al., 2004). In this context, the trainees were given a notebook (see appendix D) containing selected readings on reflection to guide them in their task in this study. The second part of the orientation programme was conducted on the second day with the aim of familiarising the trainees with the school as a working community. (For more about the orientation programme, see appendix C). The completion of this stage faced some challenges, which were narrated in Chapter Five.

The observation stage: The second stage was students' observation of ISTs in their regular classroom. Trainees conducted four classroom observations in the first two weeks. In their observations, student teachers had to be active observers by filling in the observation checklist about what they observed and how they felt about it.

The teaching stage: The third stage involved trainees' teaching in a real classroom. Trainees had to teach three or four full lessons in the classroom. They received their timetable for

teaching (updated every week) from their supervisor. Three of the students had to teach one day each week, and the title of the lesson was given to trainees at the end of the school day so that they had enough time (one week) to prepare the lesson. The trainees had a chance to ask for any support they might need, or to check with the supervisor at the university or with the teachers. In the classroom, one of the trainees had to teach while the others observed her with the supervisor and the teacher/s.

Post-teaching stage: After the trainees had taught their lessons, the reflective process took place in two ways: reflective dialogue that took the shape of a focus group (FGs) and reflective writing formulate in reflective journals (RJs). Both of them were viewed as what Stillman and Anderson (2011, p. 30) refer to as 'tools (not goals) and guides (not rules)'. Figure 3 highlights the mechanism of applying the RPC.

These steps were applied in this order; however, excepting the first stage (orientation), the last three steps repeated every week as a first phase in the methodology research process (see figure 4.4). The actual practice of these steps are narrated in chapter Five: the methodology 2-process.
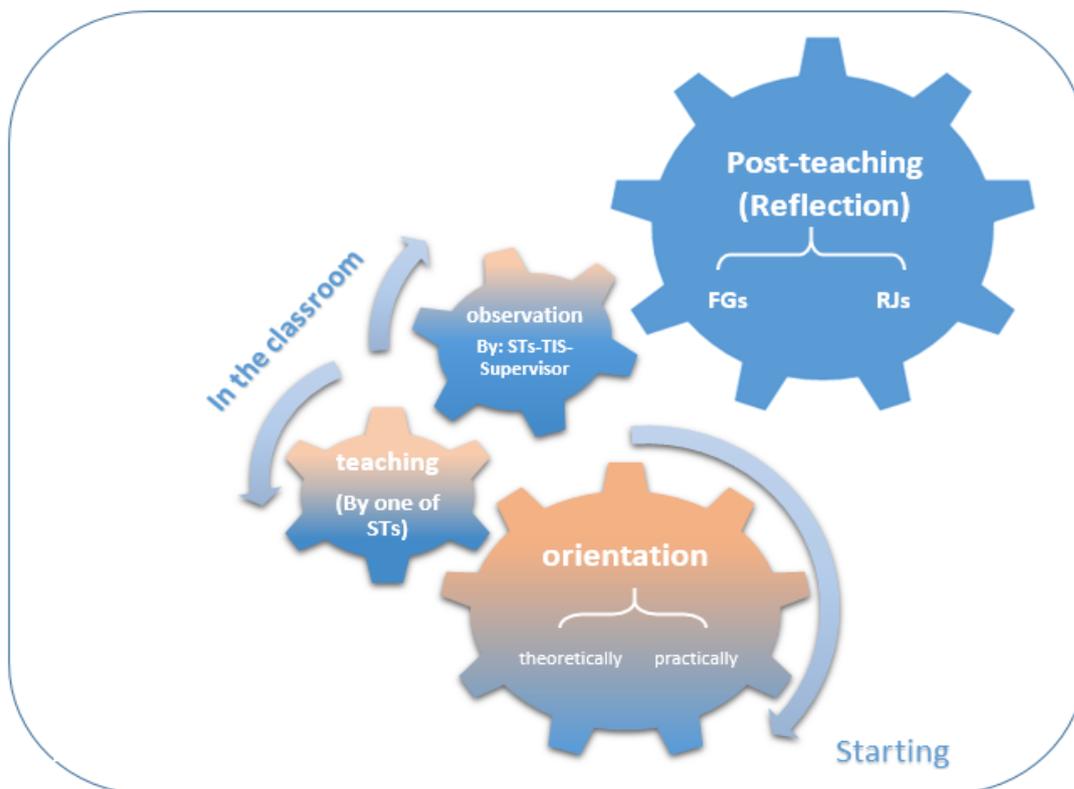
Figure 4.4: the process of the procedures of the RPC

4.4. Data Sources:

Case studies are usually based on two or more methods of data collection (Gill and Johnson, 2010). A triangulation of multiple methods contributed to increased validity of results, while limiting the context to one school and the participants to just Arabic Literature teacher trainees made a case study approach more appropriate. In order to develop a holistic view of the potential of using RP, I focused on the participants' experiences and beliefs. I also concerned myself with the context in which they operate. It was very important for me to ensure that my study was comprehensive and detailed in the sense of looking at it not in the size of sample, but in term of perspective of the supervisors, trainees and teachers.

Thus, the case study was formed from multiple sources, thus delivering rich descriptions of the phenomenon. Findings were derived from individual interviews, focus group interviews, the researcher's diary and the participants' reflective journals. Multiple methods and sources of data were an important issue to decrease the subjectivity in the research and necessary to ensure that sufficient, extensive and detailed data were created (see section 5.3.2.1 in Chapter Five). Also, they helped to build 'a comprehensive picture, addressing the complexity and ensuring the depth of study required' for this case study research (Williamson, 2010, p.67).

My methodology research design followed four phases of data collection (see Figure 4.5). In each phase, the data led to growing the participants' understanding about using reflection to improve their teaching. The process of each phase was explained in the following sections.
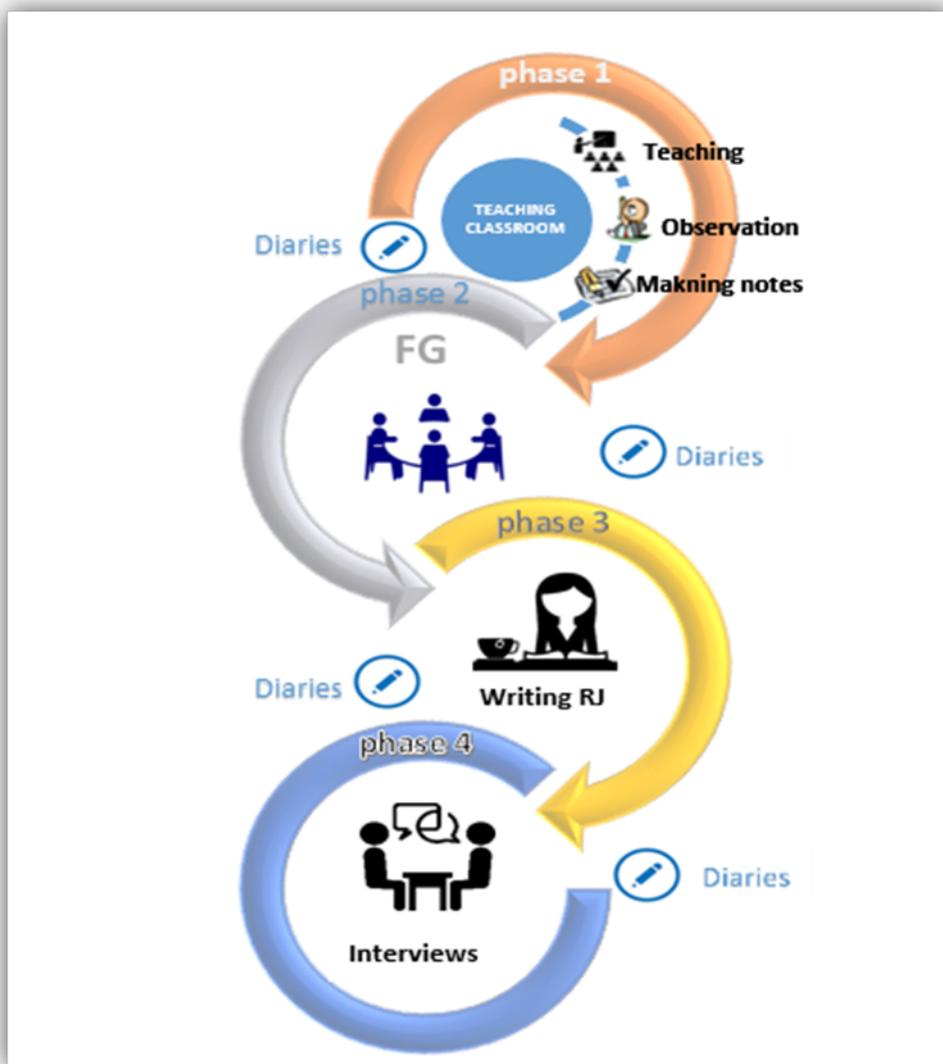
Figure 4.5: Methodology research process

4.5.1. Focus group (FG):

Morgan (1996, p. 130) defines focus groups as 'a research technique that collects data through group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher'. It requires a person, usually called a moderator, to interview, facilitate and guide the participants to achieve a purpose (Berg, 1998; Braun and Clarke, 2013). A moderator's main duties are time management, ensuring that relevant questions are addressed, encouraging all participants to respond and paying attention to participants' responses and associated body language (Litoselleti, 2003; Braun and Clarke, 2013) while refraining from sharing his/her own views about any issue under discussion.

This study relied on the reflective dialogue, conducted in the school after lessons, on each training day during the practicum, as a source of collecting data. This dialogue encouraged participants to reflect on their teaching by discussing what happens in the classroom, why and how to improve it. Throughout the discussion, it was important to pay attention to how participants responded in this reflective process in terms of their answers, questions, observations, body language, attitudes, beliefs and motivations. A focus group seemed to be an appropriate forum for this process. In addition, though FG rules stress that the moderator should refrain from expressing his/her views, the moderator in this study – was the supervisor expected to support trainees – was an active participant.

4.5.1.1. Interactive process in focus group:

After the lessons (usually three) had finished, the trainees discussed, in a quiet place and as a focus group, the way the lesson had been handled. The one who has just taught begins with a self-evaluation, presenting her own strengths and weaknesses, and providing the group with the reasons behind them. The others then shared their thoughts about the teaching experience (Collier, 1999), after which the teachers and supervisor divided their feedback into 'strengths' and 'suggestions'.

This feedback focused not only on teaching issues, but also on the level of reflection in terms of the challenges posed, and the alternative perspectives revealed through the questions and comments (Bain et al., 2002, p. 29). Moreover, the feedback was presented by indirect guidance, which was considered a cornerstone in reflective conferences; the supervisor and the teachers avoided direct suggestions and instead, present their indirect suggestions through questions and constructed their recommendations from empirical research (Strong and Baron, 2004). Ross (1990) places great importance on questions in reflective dialogue, emphasising that questions should not be used to assess trainees, but to encourage dialogue and awareness of multiple perspectives. However, direct feedback is sometimes unavoidable, such as when school rules are broken.

The discussion tone should be friendly, encouraging the communication of shared experiences and trust among participants, which are crucial elements for developing effective reflective conversations (Labrie et al., 2000, p. 28). Through critical questioning during reflective dialogue, practitioners have a greater opportunity for self-awareness of the beliefs and assumptions, and for questioning their ground (Erginel, 2006). This study conducted at least eight audio-recorded Reflective Dialogues, later transcribed verbatim for data analysis.

4.5.2. Weekly reflective journals

Trainees were asked to write their reflections for each day in the school in the form of reflective journals. According to Nunan (1992, p. 118) 'diaries, logs and journals are important introspective tools in language research', which can make reflection more explicit and readily available to inform action.

In this study, the format for the reflective journals was open-ended. However, the participants answered the questions 'What did I do?', 'Why did I do it?' and 'How can I do it better? They were provided with a guideline of what reflective journals are and how they should be completed (see p.4 in Notebook. Appendix D).The trainees were asked to write their reflections on the three lessons every week in a Microsoft Word document, which they emailed to the researcher at the weekend. Each reflective writing piece was ordered by date, with each month's writings clipped together.

4.5.3. Research Diary:

In academic research, diaries had great potential to capture rich data on participants' practice and interactions, their thoughts, feelings and reflections (Wang, 1999), providing the researcher with the 'view from within' (Zimmerman and Wieder, 1977, p. 484). Elliott (1997) supports using diaries when the phenomena are internal, situational or ordinary, which might be neglected by single-recording methods such as interviews. Moreover, although the diary is considered a sufficient method in itself, following it with an interview is a good method of obtaining rich data (Conti, 1993).

Nevertheless, the diary method has various constraints, being time-consuming (Rieman, 1993) and tedious, especially if following a structured form. Therefore, some researchers suggest limiting the diary period (Rieman, 1993). Moreover, strict protocols about content may inhibit the recording of some responses (Sheble and Wildemuth, 2009).

In this study, the researcher kept a daily diary, written at the end of every school day in 'free form', but readable, descriptive and reflective, containing a summary of the key events called 'critical incidents', which were narrative descriptions of important events with a significant impact on personal and professional learning (Hughes et al., 2007). John Flanagan, who pioneered the 'critical incident technique' (CIT), describes it as 'a set of procedures for collecting direct observations of human behaviour in such a way as to facilitate their potential usefulness in solving practical problems and developing broad

psychological principles' which 'outline procedures for collecting observed incidents having special significance and meeting systematically defined criteria' (Flanagan, 1954, p. 327).

4.5.4. Interviews:

Interviewing is commonly used in case studies to explore how people's experiences shape their view of the world, and it allows researchers to seek clarification when necessary (Bryman 2001; Neuman 2003; Cohen et al., 2011; Stevenson, 2008). An interview can be a conversation 'initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information, focusing on content specified by research objectives of systematic description, prediction or explanation' (Cohen and Manion, 1994, p. 307).

Interviews are a useful tool for gaining rich, in-depth insights into individuals' lived experiences. They are particularly useful for gathering information about unobservable things, such as interviewees' attitudes, beliefs and understandings of their own context (May, 2001; McMillan & Schumacher 2006). Additionally, interviewing can reveal what interviewers and participants bring to the interview, such as the way things are expressed and body language that may convey 'correct responses' (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009, p.31; Charmaz, 2006).

Of the three types of interview formats – structured, unstructured and semi-structured – the latter was the most appropriate for this study, especially because of its facility for asking additional 'funnelling questions' (Oppenheim, 1992, p. 111) around the same theme. The researcher identified a number of key questions that might not only provoke direct answers, but also acted as prompts (Patton, 1987). Semi-structured interviews can clarify questions or issues to ensure that interviewees understand them. In addition, they 'ask respondents to extend, elaborate, add to, provide detail for, clarify or qualify their response' (Cohen et al, 2011, p. 278).

Interviews do have disadvantages. They are time-consuming in terms of formulating the research instrument, conducting the interviews, transcribing them, and analysing and interpreting the results. Additionally, avoiding subjectivity and bias during data collection, and when analysing and interpreting the data, can be difficult. Moreover, limited anonymity (as in this case) may make some participants uncomfortable (Cohen, et al., 2011). Therefore, it is my ethical responsibility to be reflective about the process of conducting the interview (see Chapter Five).

Through individually conducted semi-structured interviews with trainees, teachers obtained in-depth information about their perceptions of using the suggested model, as well as mitigating the challenges posed by this model's relatively nascent status and the cultural factors which might influence participants' views. Moreover, other supervisors experienced in trainees supervision at KSM University also were interviewed for obtaining clear insights into their awareness of reflection, their beliefs and practices, and their views about the current supervision(interview questions are provided in appendix B).

Chapter Summary

This chapter has outlined my methodological framework relating to my research worldview. My worldview of knowledge in human lives is that there is no one absolute truth, but rather multiple truths. This view influenced my understanding of the process of creating knowledge as a result of interaction between researchers and participants. As a researcher, my worldview guided me to the qualitative paradigm where the meanings are interpretive, not collected.

Thus, referring to the nature of the enquiry of this study that aimed to incorporate change in live action, the research design was a case study of participatory action research conducted within a qualitative research paradigm. Research data was collected from multiple sources: individual and focus group interviews with several trainees, teachers and supervisors; the reflective journals from trainees; and the researcher's diary.

This study was conducted among six trainees who were in the final year of their bachelor's programme of Arabic literature in the educational college of KSM University, teachers in one school and supervisors (see Chapter Five). Therefore, the findings were limited to this context.

Chapter Five: Methodology (2) - Process

This section explains my process of generating data regarding the application of reflection as a model of supervision to improve teaching in a Saudi context. It is divided into five units. Firstly, it describes the initial stage of data collection, which takes places before the trainees start their practice of teaching. It includes the journey of finding participants and conducting an orientation programme in both stages: theoretical and practical. The second unit clarifies the process of data collection and provides details about the data collection methods: focus groups (FGs), Reflective journals (RJs) diaries and interviews. Next, it outlines the participants of this study and thus includes my position as an insider, researcher and manager of this study. Section four highlights the ethical considerations of this research. Finally, the fifth section explains the process of data analysis and interpretation.

5.1. Orientation stage

The aim of this study was to explore the effect of using reflection in the Saudi context to improve students' teaching. This study was initiated in the first semester of the academic year (September 2014–January 2015). This semester was the second part in teaching training programme for trainees, who had just finished their first teaching experience in school in the previous semester and were ready to continue their teaching training programme in the next semester. Bringing in the procedure for the RPC – orientation, observation, teaching and post-teaching (see Chapter Four) – here, I will narrate the actual implementation of the RPC within the trainees' teaching training programme at KSM (name of the university).

In Chapter four, I mentioned that orientation was the first stage in the procedure of applying this study. This stage was fundamental because it did not only aim to introduce the idea of reflection to participants, but also to find the participants themselves. Thus, I can say that the possibility of completing this study depended on this stage. I planned to complete the orientation programme in two parts, namely a theoretical and a practical part. However, the actual implementation of the theoretical part was extended to three attempts, as narrated below.

5.1.1. Orientation stage: Theoretical part:

Frist attempt: the journey of finding participants: First attempt

As noted in my diary concerning my attempt to recruit participants, 'marketing my idea of reflection to attract participants consumed more time than I expected' (diary 1). As my aim was to introduce the idea of RPC to the largest section of trainees possible, I decided to run a public lecture in the auditorium at the university. This was open to all trainees and supervisors, who were provided with a wide selection of reflective ideas and a handbook to inform them about the reflective teacher module, including the learning outcomes, course content and resource materials (see a copy of the handbook in Appendix D). The lecture was presented in PowerPoint and covered the main contents that were planned for the presentation (see the 'Orientation stage' section in Appendix C). The lecture lasted around 2 hours and was scheduled at the end of the working day. I chose this time to ensure that all trainees would be able to attend. Unfortunately, only 23 trainees attended, and none of them wanted to participate in the study.

Second attempt

I found myself in trouble, facing the following question: How could I motivate trainees to agree to participate? The short timeframe that I had to recruit participants was not in my favour; thus, I decided to more closely focus on the category to which my participants should belong, namely fourth-year students (level 7) in the Arabic literature department. I arranged a time with the head of the ARABIC LITERATURE DEPARTMENT to meet with these students, and I sought to 'market' my reflection idea. This time, I made the lecture more informal by giving students a chance to discuss the challenges they had faced in the previous practicum. Then, I presented my concept of reflection as a possible way to support their teaching. This was not viewed as a guarantee but rather as an attempt to improve. At the end of this meeting, I managed to obtain consent from 13 trainees to participate in the RPC.

Third attempt

After the second attempt, I scheduled another meeting with the 13 trainees who had agreed to participate to raise their awareness of some issues related to their participation in the RPC. However, only eight trainees attended this meeting; the other five sent their apologies and withdrew from the study. However, I completed my orientation programme planning by carrying out the activities in the handbook, observing teaching videos and

analysing the pedagogical apparatus that teachers used through discussion groups, amongst other measures. I also raised issues related to risk taking in discussion that I anticipated from my experience as a supervisor, such as accepting feedback and taking responsibility for learning. At the end of this meeting, I could say that the theoretical component of the orientation stage of my research had been completed. I made extensive efforts to ensure that the remaining participants would not withdraw their consent before the end of the course (see Chapter Six). At this time, I was ready to start the practical component.

One more difficulty: Finding teachers participants

Before we finished our meeting, I asked my participants to arrange a time to start the practical component in the orientation stage, which needed to be done in a school (see Chapter Four). I suggested a school where I had worked as a supervisor, making me familiar with its staff. Also, I had already contacted a teacher at this school, who had agreed to participate in the RPC. However, my trainees voiced disagreement with my suggestion and instead suggested a school where I had never been. Although I anticipated possible difficulty in finding teachers who would agree to participate in the RPC, I accepted the trainees' suggestion because I wanted to ensure their continued participation in my study. Thus, I worried that I might face difficulty in convincing teachers to participate because of the lack of time and the absence of a culture that encourages cooperative learning and development.

5.1.2. Orientation stage: Practical part

I met with the head of the school that my participants had suggested to arrange my visiting time with my trainees to carry out the practical part of the orientation programme. Then, I went to the teachers' rooms and spent 3 hours introducing myself and introducing my idea. I discussed my concept with the Arabic subject teachers and requested their participation. I attempted to clarify the importance of teachers in the process of students training. Perhaps surprisingly, two of the teachers – Adiba and Badria (pseudonyms) – agreed to participate immediately. They would participate in the observation stage, when one of the trainees was teaching and in the reflective discussion after the lesson. They asked me to attend one lesson instead of all three and to attend only the discussion that followed this lesson. I could not negotiate with them to do more because they were busy with the new student exam that the Minister of Education had recently put in place to measure students' average academic achievement in Arabic.

I came to the school with my trainees to apply the practical component of the orientation stage. They were taken on a quick tour by a teacher to acquaint them with the building (see appendix C). Then, the trainees and I attended two lessons in a classroom, and the trainees were asked to take notes on what they observed. After the lessons, we planned to meet together (me, the teachers and the trainees) to discuss what had taken place. Unfortunately, the teachers did not enjoy these meetings due to their teaching load as they told me. Thus, I discussed the observations with the trainees, thereby emphasising the importance of linking the action of teaching and the students' reaction. However, while 'the trainees seemed unfamiliar with exchanging ideas/views with their supervisor in the discussion, their enthusiasm for engaging in the RPC increased' (see Chapter Six).

At the end of this day, the trainees – who would teach the following week – received their lesson topics and we spent the last hour of our meeting discussing possible ways of teaching these lessons to the students. Due to the short time that the trainees spent at the school (one day per week), I attempted to open more channels of contact with the trainees and teachers to support the concept of a community of practice (CoP). I told them to feel free to come and discuss any issue with me on the university campus; moreover, I established a group using the WhatsApp application to open a communication channel for all group members to discuss any issues regarding their teaching and to exchange any useful links or ideas that might help in increasing trainees' reflection (more discussion on the preparation of the CoP is given in section 6.1.1, Chapter Six).

5.2. Actual practice

We continued to visit the school every Thursday for almost 3 months; the school staff was collaborative and friendly. Moreover, the school gave us a room on the ground floor, which was far from the classes and teachers' room, to allow us more freedom and a quiet space. In this room, we met at the beginning of the school day at 6:30 am (me and the trainees), shared breakfast and generally observed three lessons in different classrooms. Following this, we discussed observations in classrooms that had taken place previously. In the first week of our practical component, two student teachers withdrew from participation in the RPC, one due to special circumstances that forced her to drop the whole semester and the other withdrew without providing a reason. Thus, trainees participated in the RPC were six; fortunately, I was successful in retaining them until the end of the course. Unfortunately, however, the engagement of teachers was delayed until the third week because they were busy with the new student exam mentioned above.

5.2.1. Getting Started with the Data Collection:

5.2.1.1. Focus group process (FG):

As mentioned in chapter Four, I used the FG as an appropriate forum for the reflective dialogue conducted in the school after teaching lessons. In this post-teaching stage, we discussed as group (teachers, trainees and me) what had been taught in the classrooms by trainees. In this discussion, the trainees were encouraged to reflect on their teaching by discussing what happens in the classroom, why and how to improve it. The FGs ran every Thursday after the lessons and usually lasted more than one hour. This process was the main method used to collect my data. It helped to observe the actual practice of the trainees addressed in their reflections, including their responses, levels of reflection, challenges and benefits. Although there were some data I anticipated from my experience as a supervisor – such as the resistance of accepting feedback and taking responsibility for learning – other data were unexpected, such as the practical levels of reflection that some trainees reached, which were eventually enriched through focus group discussion (see Chapter Six).

The FGs were conducted as planned, in terms of purpose, place and procedures (see section 4.5.1.1. in Chapter Four). As a supervisor, I was eager to build a strong relationship with the trainees that would encourage trust and the communication of shared experiences. I also tried to avoid, as much as possible, direct suggestions or summative assessments. However, these relations were not always harmonious, and I noticed that I sometimes rushed to make direct suggestions during the discussions (see section 6.1 in Chapter Six).

All FGs had been done with trainees and teachers and were recorded and transcribed week by week. That gave me an opportunity to re-evaluate my role as a supervisor in 'clinical supervision' rather than in a 'directive' model (see section 6.1 in Chapter Six). The audio recorded for FG discussions lasted approximately an hour and a half. All FGs were transcribed in their original language (Arabic). Due to the difficulties faced in transcribing a large amount of data, I decided to keep the transcriptions in Arabic form, and I only translated the texts that were used in the data analysis process. However, full translated FG transcripts have been provided to demonstrate how the FGs were conducted (see appendix A).

5.2.1.2. Reflective journals

The journals represented an individual/private form of written reflection. In the orientation stage, I provided trainees with general guidance in the form of reflective journals in which the trainees were encouraged to reflect on the 'what', the 'why' and the 'how' as was explained in their notebook (See Appendix D). I supposed that the reflective journals would be much easier for the trainees due to the privacy in the RJ, which may grant the writer more space and freedom than the oral interaction through the FGs.

However, the early versions of RJs in the first weeks looked more like descriptive reports rather than RJs; only a few of the trainees grasped the idea of RJs. For example, Olla wrote in her first RJ that:

From the name of Alla,

In Thursday day, the first of Jomada Alakher, I started my teaching in the practicum course in the ... school. I was thinking about this day since I was in my first semester in the university. It comes now. This is my first day in my practice in the high school. I taught a grammar lesson which is my favourite subject. I trained and worked so hard, I was also scared and nervous, but at the same time I had confidence in my performance and belief that my God will support me ... When I entered the classroom I was scared by the students' reaction, but fortunately I forgot about that and I felt I was their teacher for a long time. I was satisfied with my teaching. I love the interaction with the other STs, and my supervisor praised me ... (Olla's RJ1).

Figure 5.1: Example of early version of trainee's reflective journal

The above text does not reflect any points that I mentioned in the notebook guidelines; rather, it seems like a brief report of what happened and what she felt. Instead of writing about why her teaching went well and how she could improve more, she attributed her success to vague factors like 'I planned, trained and worked so hard' and her faith in God (see section 6.2.1.3. Resistance to self-reflection in Chapter Six).

I found it was necessary to re-explain the purpose of the RJ and how it should be done. I also asked some trainees, whose RJs seemed to grasp the target, to help the others understood the idea of the RJs. Later, their RJs seemed much better than before in terms of providing more details of 'what' it looked like and 'why' and 'how' they could improve. For example, Olla wrote in the fifth week what happened and why, with evidence to support

her belief (see Figure 5.2). For more about that, see section (6.2.2: Later Stage in Chapter Six).

> ... After Moteah's lesson, I believe that teacher interaction and vitality are the main reasons for the positive reaction of students. Moteah today seems to be happy and to love what she does; consequently, the students seem very active, whereas when she is disappointed or unconfident, she transmits her feelings to her students and, to be honest, to me as well ....(Olla's RJ 5).

Figure 5.2: Example of improved vision of trainee's reflective journal

Most of trainees sent their RJs in by the weekend following the practice day. They emailed their RJs in Word format. The length, level of detail and depth of reflection varied from person to person and week to week.

5.2.1.3. Research Diary

I chose to keep a research journal beginning at the orientation stages of this study. I used the diary to keep a log of my thoughts, ideas, evaluation, planning and general notes. Thus, it was a tool for documenting my own reflections and observations, forming a continuing record of the day-to-day research activities (Flick, 2002). I wrote down my reflections about my feelings at the end of every FG, interview and any hanging out activities related to my research topic. I usually wrote my diary in the car on my way home after finishing the school day. This benefitted me throughout the data collection process, as it helped me to ask for more clarification with later activities such as later FGs and interviews.

I recognised that my writing style in these diaries was similar to a 'thinking aloud' approach, which enabled me to listen to my own thoughts (DaSilva, 2000). Reicks et al. (2003, p.154) defined thinking aloud as a process of 'document information that is in focal attention and therefore is actually being used to make the decision'. Thus, it is useful to track the process of collecting data 'through verbalizations concurrent with task performance as it is involved in decision making' (Reicks et al., 2003, p.154). This benefitted me later in dealing with insider research issues (see section 5.3.2.1).

I wrote my diary manually in my diary book, which I kept with me most of the time. It included critical thinking about what I was experiencing at the time. As I did with the FGs, I kept my diary in the original language and only translated the text that I used in the data

analysis stage. The length of the diary entries varied, depended on the actions of the day and the capacity of my thinking.

As the trainees' RJs improved through time, so did my own diary. The early version of my diary recorded my own reflection on what we did and the feelings that resulted from my interactions with the participants (Arnold, 1999). As Figure 5.3 shows, the diary documented my reflections on what happened and why, as well as suggestions to improve our performance.
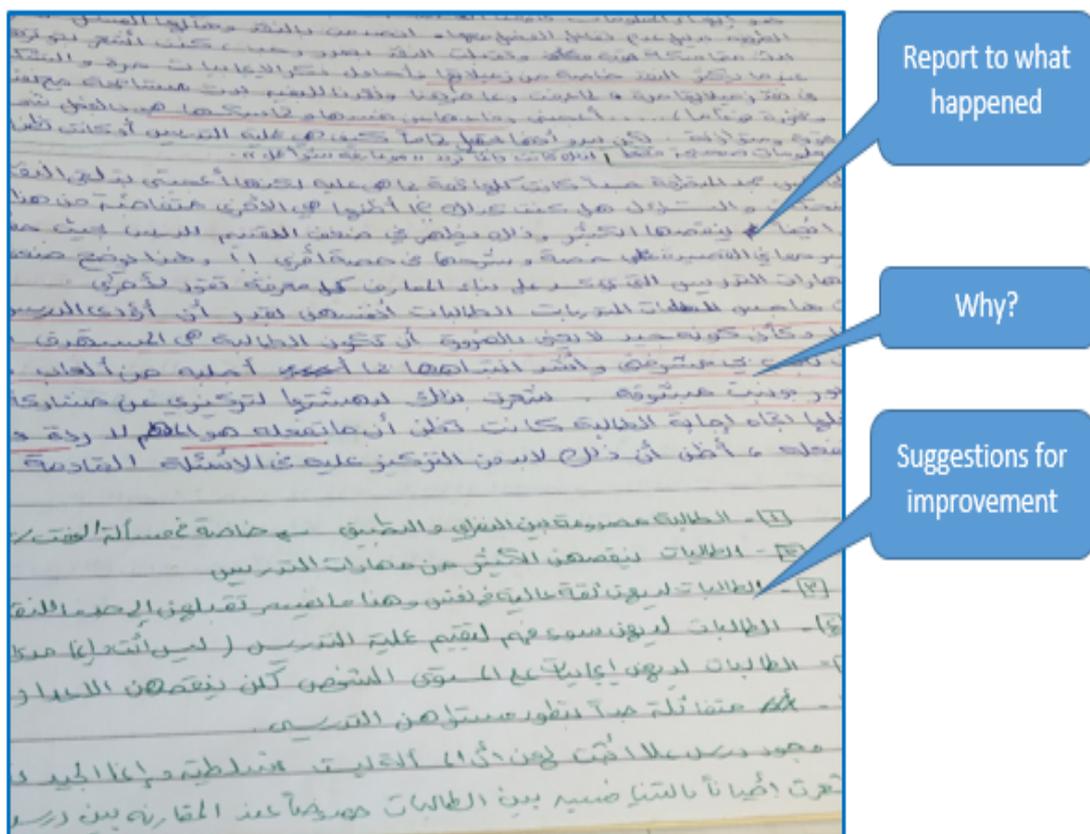
Figure 5.3: The early vision of the researcher diary

Over time, when I was able to gather some data about the situation of our practice, my diaries were improved by making links between ideas as an essential attempt of creating codes (See Figure 5.4).
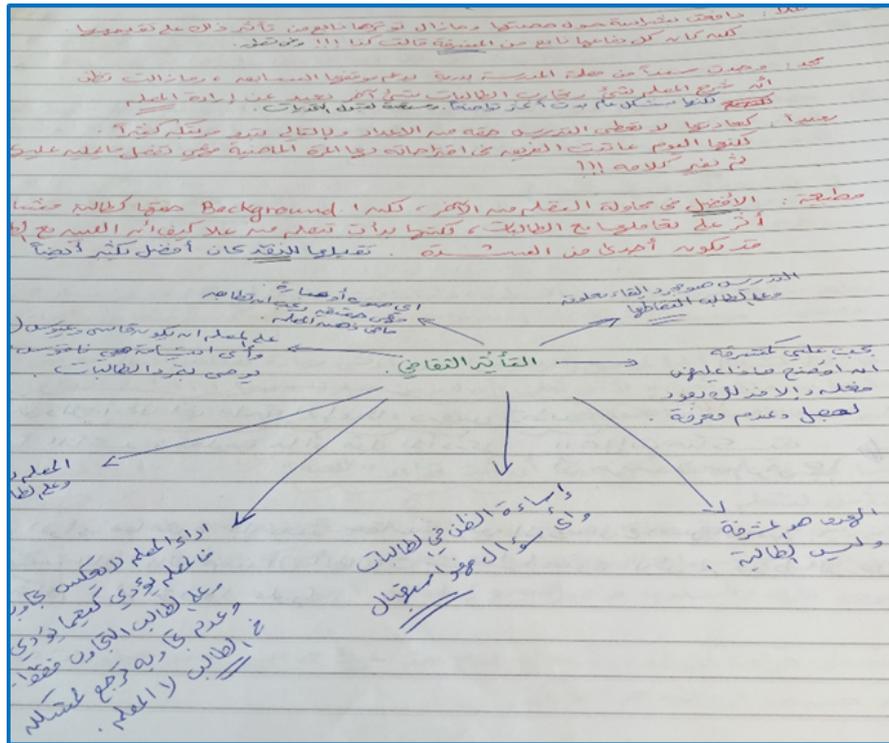
Figure 5.4: The improved version of researcher diary

5.2.1.4. Interview

As I mentioned in chapter four, I planned to use interviews in the last quarter of my study field period to give the participants enough time to develop their understanding of using reflection as a supervision model. The interviewing process took place relatively informally. Fourteen individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with five trainees, two teachers, six supervisors and the head of the practical education office. Two forms of questions were prepared to be asked, one for the participants in RPC (trainees and teachers) and one for the supervisees and the head of the practical education office (see appendix B). Each audio-recorded interview lasted about 30–40 minutes.

The interviews were conversational and flexible, giving participants sufficient time to formulate their opinions by providing the gist of the questions in advance. The key questions should contribute toward the 'richness, depth of response, comprehensiveness and honesty that were some of the hallmarks of successful interviewing' (Cohen et al., 2011, p.278).

Although I had a question guide prepared ahead of time, I did not wish to conduct the interview with a set of uniform questions, as I believed this would be incompatible with my understanding of the nature of individuals' stories. Instead, I conducted the interviews a

little more like a 'professional conversation' (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 2). In other words, even though I prepared questions, the interviews were open and flexibly designed in order to explore with participants their experiences, views and beliefs. Most of the time, the interviews did not completely follow the sequence of questions as I prepared them. The participants, especially the supervisors, voluntarily covered some areas that I had intended to explore with them later.

Nevertheless, in some parts, participants were more conservative in deciding on how much of themselves they should reveal (Fontana & Frey, 2005, p.712). They answered 'Yes' or 'No' with little explanation. That was critical for me, particularly in the initial interview, as I deliberately did not want to enforce my own ideas about things, such as my view of the current supervision model. I found myself being vague in response to these comments. However, as Kvale and Brinkman suggest, I must be 'curious and sensitive' to what was – and was not – said in the interview and, at the same time, be cognisant of my assumptions (2009, p.31). Therefore, I tried to prompt the participants to continue sharing their existing practices and views as to what, how and why they believed (see Figure 5.5).
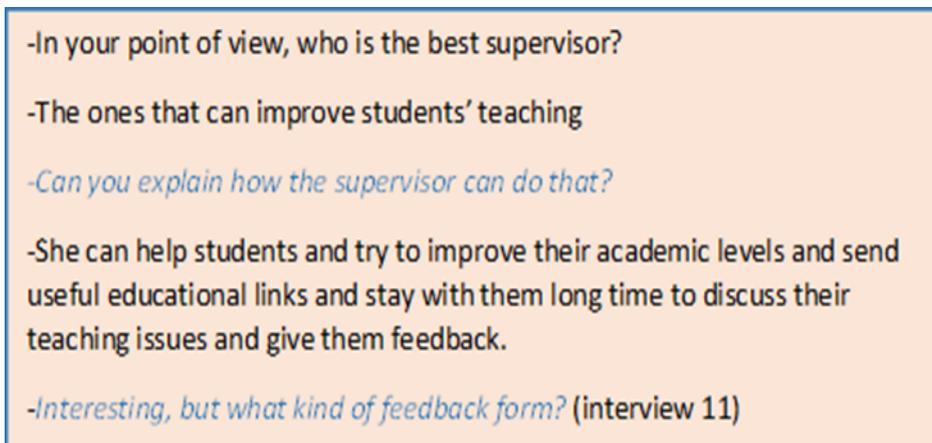
> -In your point of view, who is the best supervisor?
>
> -The ones that can improve students' teaching
>
> *-Can you explain how the supervisor can do that?*
>
> -She can help students and try to improve their academic levels and send useful educational links and stay with them long time to discuss their teaching issues and give them feedback.
>
> *-Interesting, but what kind of feedback form?* (interview 11)

Figure 5.5: Clarifying questions

I also used probing questions and phrases as well as the subtle use of body language that encouraged an individual to continue talking or perhaps clarify the point they were making (for example, 'How is it going?' and 'It is really interesting'). Moreover, through my experience in the interviewing process, I noticed that I had to change the form of the questions or add questions in later interviews with other participants (see Figure 5.6). I made this change with the same person as I recognised, from her non-verbal cues and debating, that this change was necessary; the question 'Are you satisfied?' may put the focus of evaluation on herself, whereas transferring the focus to the current supervision makes discussion easier. Later, I asked the same question again after it was reformulated, and I obtained a different answer.

Original question

-That's great, but to what extent are you satisfied with the current supervision provisions?

-OH, for me, no not bad...yes I am satisfied...honestly we always try to do our best, and there are new plans to improve the strategies (interview: 6)

Reformulated question

-Are the current supervision provisions adequate? Is there need to improve? Or change them?

- Of course there is need to improve in some aspects and change in others.

-Could you explain which these aspects are? (Interview: 6)

Figure 5.6: Reformulated questions

Furthermore, sometimes participants' answers (those of teachers and supervisors) digressed from the questions' purposes, especially when I asked them about the challenges of their jobs: teaching and supervision. They spent more time talking about things outside of my research focus. However, as DeLyser (2001) noted, this divergence is very common in the interviewing process when the researcher is an insider in research journey. Over time, I learned to manage these tensions by giving more prompts and probing to direct my participants' conversation towards my research focus. Also, on the side of trainees, I needed to bear in mind the possibility that they were over-eager to please me, especially on these questions that required their views about the reflection. This made a position of objectivity difficult. For this reason, Scheurich (1997, cited in Fontana & Frey 2005, p.62) described interviews as 'persistently slippery, unstable, and ambiguous from person to person, from situation to situation, from time to time' and it is for that reason they are so rich. I learned to manage these tensions by asking trainees for more justifications, explanations and examples to avoid misleading answers.

5.3. Participants

The participants in this study comprised three categories: trainees, teachers and supervisors. The trainees were in the final year of their Bachelor's programme for teaching Arabic literature in KSM University's educational college. My own background as an Arabic literature teacher should benefit my supervision because I used to work with trainees' Arabic literature.

These trainees had finished Part One of their practicum period in secondary schools, and would conduct Part Two in high schools. Thus, they had some knowledge of traditional supervision, which would enable them to make comparisons between that and my different method of supervision. The participant group that conducted the RP programme included six trainees, two teachers and one supervisor.

Some supervisors from KSM University with at least three years' experience in the supervision of trainees were interviewed. Both of these samples had been chosen through a non-probability sampling technique where the selection had relied on the ready availability of willing participants (Frey et al., 2000), (see section 5.1.1.1.-5.1.1.3).

In contrast, teachers had been selected purposively; one of them, identified as an effective teacher by the head teacher, had shown her readiness to cooperate with the university where I used to be a supervisor. Using the snowball method[15], other like-minded teachers who wish to improve trainees teaching will be selected. However, the actual process did not fit with this plan, because my trainees voiced disagreement with my suggested school where teachers had been selected purposefully and instead suggested a school where I had never been (see section 5.1.1.4).

My trainees seemed to know each other; some of them were friends. They were similar in age, between 21 and 24 years old. Most of them had reached a good level of academic achievement, which might affect their reflection (see Chapter Six).

5.3.1. The role of teachers

KSM University does not normally use school teachers in supervision programmes (see Chapter Two). However, this study involved working cooperatively in a group (consisting of the supervisor from the university, who is the researcher, teachers and trainees) to improve supervision during practicum. This required the teachers in the practicum school to join the

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[15]Group members identify additional members to be included in the sample (Henry, 1990).

trainees and supervisor. They attended at least one of three practice day lessons, observing trainees in the classroom and taking their own notes. After the lessons, they participated in the discussion, exchanging their views and questions on their observation with trainees and the supervisor providing trainees with indirect suggestions. It was important that the trainees developed a sense of community and mutuality for fully participating in these group discussions (Marshall and Rossman, 2006). Unfortunately, the engagement of TEACHERSs was delayed until the third week because they were busy with the new student exam mentioned above.

5.3.2. The roles of the researcher

Simon (2013) suggests that the researcher has a full understanding of whether s/he is a full participant (insider) or an objective observer (outsider). The researcher in this study adapted the insider position where she was one of the participants. Innes (2009) defined insider-researchers as those who conduct research about home communities, for example their own workplace, society and culture or as Jenkins (2000) suggests, those who share experiences with the research participants. Through my insider researcher's position, I shared and lived – as a supervisor – the experience of using RP to improve trainees' teaching by doing action research with trainees and teachers.

One of the main advantages of the insider research position was that it helped to expand preconceived notions of scholarly knowledge by enabling the researcher to understand complex issues and contextual understanding (Innes, 2009). Living among the participants and experiencing the culture and environment of the research provided them with direct access to the data sources and could help them interpret a phenomenon effectively (Gardiner and Engler, 2012). Gardiner and Engler (2012) admitted that accessing data with the research participants might be easier as an insider. This ease can be attributed to what Burns et al. (2012) called 'professional insider knowledge', which is a researcher's general knowledge or the research context (Coghlan, 2007). In my case, I had this 'professional insider knowledge' from both my experience working as a supervisor of trainees and as a Saudi researcher in a Saudi university.

However, I realised that insider participant-research was not a 'soft option' in supporting the research validity. I acknowledged that my background as a teacher, lecturer, supervisor and researcher shaped and influenced any interpretation. I was aware of how my own understandings and assumptions necessarily affected the ways in which I interpreted the data of participants. It also influenced the way in which I interacted with them and the how

they viewed me. How I evaluated myself as a supervisor who encouraged trainees' reflection was also under considerations.

Based on this awareness, subjectivity was the main challenge that might limit the validity of the insider research findings, 'as does all qualitative research' (van Heugten, 2004, p.207). However, in the social sciences world, subjectivity is 'no longer eschewed' as before. Instead, there is a strong demand to use human tools in human research, such as using the researcher as a research instrument (Reinharz, 1979). This does not mean I support 'over-involvement' and 'over-identification' with subjects. Instead, I believe that 'the researcher's subjectivity must be open to intensive scrutiny', and it is still necessary for me to take advantage of my position as an insider researcher (van Heugten, 2004, p.208). Thus, as Janesick (2000) suggested, I require trustworthiness in the research process through my journey in generating knowledge.

5.3.2.1. Managing Insider Issues

I used some techniques to deal with 'the spectre of insider 'bias'' that might address the tension between an insider and an outsider research position (van Heugten, 2004, p.207).

First, I used self-reflexivity techniques in order to separate my own background knowledge from the knowledge which would be created between the participants (me, trainees, teachers, supervisors) and me (the researcher). This should contribute to a rise in the credibility of the qualitative research (Bott, 2010). Lincoln et al. (2011) claimed that reflexivity helps the researcher to become conscious as a researcher and a participant. The essential part of explaining the degree of reflexivity was describing the research journey in terms of its details of collecting and analysing data, and the challenges the researcher experienced in the process (Ellingson, 2009).

Thus, I had made efforts to ensure that I had acted reflexively throughout this research. The best example was what I recounted in section (5.1.1.1.) about the challenges that I faced in finding participants. I also did this when describing more fully my offers to build relationships with trainees and to break the stereotype of the traditional Saudi supervisor as a part of evaluating my supervisory skills to support my trainees' reflection (see Chapter Six).

In addition, I had made explicit my own interpretations as well as the influence and impact they had on the decisions I made. Specific examples of this included using a thinking aloud method as a style for my written diaries. As I had mentioned early in section (5.2.1.3), I used

thinking aloud to document my thoughts on what had been done through the data collection process: FGs, interviews and RJs (see section 5.2.1) in this chapter. Also, I used this method as a way of sharing information with others, for example, in conversation with my friends (who are doctoral students) and my sister, who had experience in the supervision of trainees. That helped me hold tightly to my identity as a researcher and to develop some objectivity about my data.

According to Shank's claim (2006), reliability in qualitative research can be demonstrated by asking other people to review multiple data sources to ensure accuracy. In order to meet these criteria, I used a peer reviewer (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009; Maxwell, 2005). I asked one of my friends, who completed her PhD in education, to review my scheme of themes and a selection of my data, and provide me with feedback.

Finally, triangulation of the information from all of the data sources could improve the validity of this study, providing it with 'multiple perceptions' of the phenomenon in order to clarify meaning (Stake, 1995; Given, 2008). Simply, the triangulation provides 'corroborating evidence from different sources to shed light on the theme or perspective' Creswell (2007, p.208). Thus, it is 'a form of confirmation and validation' (Stake, 2010, p. 123). Due to the nature of my enquiry, I used various data collection methods: FGs, RJs, diaries and interviews. The data from these different methods allowed me to 'cross-check the accuracy' of the data collected (Goetz and LeCompte, 1984, p. 9).

5.4. Ethical considerations

Before I applied my RPC, I had obtained approval from three organisations: The Ethics Committee of Scientific Research in the Faculty of Social Science, School of Education and Lifelong Learning at the University of East Anglia; the public high school where the study took place; and KSM University where the study was located. I informed these institutions about the purposes, design and methods of my research and sought their permission. Participants in this study received a consent form to sign and an information sheet informing them of the nature and purpose of the study and indicating that their participation was voluntary and withdrawable at any time; their anonymity was assured; any information given was treated under the scope of the ethical codes of the Briteachersh Educational Research Association (BERA, 2014); and they could freely express their views on the issues examined and gave their honest opinions about the supervision process with

no negative consequences. At the end of this study, they received an email containing the executive summary of findings and appreciation of their participation.

Apart from ethical considerations taken into account during the research process, I also maintained confidentiality and anonymity issues in this research. Wiles et al. (2008) describes confidentiality as keeping shared experiences and information between the researcher and the participant, whereas anonymity seeks to protect the identity of participants. To do so, I made ethical decisions on several issues that I encountered during my data collection. First, I did not disclose any original names of institutions or participants to fulfil my ethical obligation toward them. However, this did not appear to be good enough to preserve confidentiality and anonymity. Wiles et al. (2008) indicated another accidental mode of disclosure that may arise due to situations or incidents in which the researcher unintentionally violates the confidentiality of participants: They advised researchers to be vigilant in preserving participants' confidentiality and anonymity by not accidentally 'letting something slip' from conversations.

Due to my position as an insider researcher, participants in my study openly discussed many personal matters not necessarily related to my research (see Section 5.2.1.4). I believed that most of those conversations- which resulted from stress, helpless feelings, and workload- could violate participant confidentiality. Therefore, I ensured that these conversations remained confidential.

In addition, It should be noted that the researcher also bore in mind possible risks to the reputation of participants and herself, and to the reputation of the supervising university and the university where the research was conducted, in case there was the possibility that findings might reflect negatively as a criticism of 'an inferior national system', rather than as a means of further enhancing the effectiveness of the system facing the same challenges as many other educational jurisdictions in their attempts to improve the quality of their initial teacher education systems. Thus, in addition to ensuring the anonymity of participants, the concluding chapter stresses the formative and developmental nature of the findings and suggestions for improvement.

According to Macfarlane (2009), ethical considerations do not end in simply gaining ethics approval for conducting a research study. Rather, they include how researchers conduct and manage their research issues, which Dahlquist (2006) called 'researchers' ethical'. While research ethical involves considerations such as approval to conduct research, researcher's ethics relates to researchers' moral obligations. In this research, I tracked

Macfarlane's (2009) six core virtues: courage, respectfulness, resoluteness, sincerity, humility and reflexivity. The next paragraphs shall look briefly at my own understanding and action on each of the virtues.

Courage means 'taking risks and risking failure' (Macfarlane, 2009, p.50). I understood this about my own courage to pursue this enquiry because I believe reflection ideas – rather than studies in reflection – are rare in Arabic countries; there are almost none in a Saudi context. I was taking the risk of being a supervisor to encourage trainees' reflection with almost no previous background of reflection on the participants' parts, except what they were provided with through the course of this study. Indeed, I had found my own thinking and practice of being a supervisor in a RPC to be constantly challenged and revised throughout this research (see chapter six). Also, I believed it was courageous to choose to apply reflection in a real context rather than asking people about their views about using reflection. I never forgot my supervisor's advice making me aware of the difficulties that surround applied-research and giving me enough time to make my decision. I was very grateful for his encouragement in guiding this research to completion.

Seeking consent and treating participants 'as people not resources' is not enough to be a respectful researcher (Macfarlane, 2009, p. 63). My study goal was to improve the trainees' teaching through the use of reflection. I believed that good relationships, which made participation interesting and enjoyable, facilitated the development of a CoP for the exchange of ideas about teaching (Wenger et al 2011). Thus, I was assiduous in building strong relationships with the trainees, whom I had met during the orientation stage, as well as the teachers I worked with (TEACHERSs), as well as others who were kind enough to share with me some of their previous experience with ST training. This had included keeping in touch with them beyond the formal space of FGs or interviews, for example, at informal and unplanned meetings during their breaks and conversations over coffee (see Chapter Six).

A commitment to resoluteness was, I believed, fundamental to any research work. As my research hit the heart of my interests and worked, I believed it was my responsibility to do this applied research and committed to ensuring that it was of the highest standard of which I was capable. I was reminded of the importance of this when I was felt that my research might not ever be done due to the challenge of finding participants, both trainees and TEACHERSs (see section 5.1.1.1). I contacted my supervisor by Skype and told him I was

demotivated by my six current trainees. He enquired into the progress of the study and recommended keeping the trainees on as long as I could. I was surprised by this, but it was at that moment that I realised the need to complete this research and found ways to keep trainees and shared the findings meaningfully with those interested in improving PSTs.

Sincerity was critically important in any research. As I had mentioned earlier in this chapter (section 5.3.2), I was aware as a qualitative researcher that my own understandings and assumptions might necessarily affect the ways in which I interpreted the participant data. However, I was also acutely aware of the need to present my data in such a way that it did not misrepresent participants' perspectives. Therefore, I addressed some of these issues that I had already raised in the above section on Managing Insider Issues (5.3.2.1.).

A researcher's humility is another critical issue. In my case, I had not attempted to glorify or overstate my research findings. Instead, I was aware that the thesis itself was not sufficient for this purpose. Therefore, I had already committed to sharing this research in a range of settings, including academic research conferences; UEA educational school conference (2015), Developing Supervision: A study on Improvement Reflection in PSTs in KSM University; 9th SSC Saudi students conference-UK (2016); Applying reflection with trainees in the Saudi context: Is it worthwhile?; 5th ICLEI (International Conference on Language, Education &Innovation) (2016), Developing Supervision: A study on the Improvement of PSTs by Using elements of Lesson study in Saudi context (KSM University).

Finally, it had been crucial that I acted in a critically reflexive way. Simons (2009, p. 81) highlights the importance of acting reflexively within case study research. He states that:

> to be fair to those within the case, we need to be clear how our values
> and judgements affect our portrayal of them but we also need to examine
> how the specific context and topic of the research shapes the story we
> come to tell.

I had attended to some issues of reflexivity in a specific section above (5.3.2.1).

Having explored some of my ethical considerations in this research, it is now appropriate for me to explain in more depth the process of analysis and interpretation in this study.

5.5. The process of analysis and interpretation

5.5.1. Thematic Analysis

While there are many types of qualitative analysis, in this study thematic analysis was used as a method for analysing the data. In this section, I will present a brief theoretical description of what is meant by thematic analysis and offer insight into how I applied it to this study on a practical level.

Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 6) identify thematic analysis as 'a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data'. It is one of the types of qualitative data analysis that is most commonly used (Braun and Clarke, 2006). However, there are some researchers who claim that it is not a method in itself, but rather a tool to use in conjunction with different methods (Ryan and Bernard, 2000).

The main benefit of thematic analysis is its flexibility. For example, it can be used to answer almost any type of research question and any kind of data collection method. Themes can be identified in different data-driven ways: 'bottom-up' or 'top-down' (Braun and Clarke, 2013). This flexibility in thematic analysis offers theoretical freedom to researchers. In other words, they can learn only 'basic data-handling and coding skills, without having to delve deep into theoretical constructs' (Braun and Clarke, 2013, p.178).

Given the advantages of this flexibility, it is important to have clear and concise guidelines around thematic analysis in order to avoid viewing it as a disadvantage (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Therefore, a variety of analysis strategies were used in order to obtain meaning from the data. These strategies were:

Organization of Data: Both my written and verbal data were carefully documented in order to capture the actual understanding and meanings elicited from the participants. Thus, I recorded all spoken data (FGs and interviews) using a recorder. Then, I downloaded the recordings to a hard drive. I organized the data into separate files, for instance, trainee interviews, supervisor interviews, TEACHERSs interviews and FGs. Then, I gathered all the interviews in one folder. While the interviews were organized according to the type of the participant, trainees and RJs were classified by the number of the week. Each week included all RJs that were written in that week to track any change in trainees' responses through the reflective journey in their teaching. Only my diaries were kept as they were, in my notebook.

Transcription and translation: Organizing data and making it accessible for both reading and exploring is a key element of the analytical process (Cohen et al., 2011; Miles and Hamberman, 1994). Therefore, the procedures of preparing all the data sources for the analysis process started with oral data. Thus, the oral data were listened to and transcribed into written data using Microsoft Word. In Word, I divided the page into two sections; one for the oral text and the other for comments or phrases that came into my mind through the transcription process (Figure 1). Due to the large amount of data collected, I decided to keep my transcript in Arabic and translate only the text that I used in my data-analysis dictations. In order to ensure the validity of the translation, I asked my friend, who is a Saudi student in the UK, to compare the original texts and the translated texts identify any missing or misleading information. However, to help the reader understand how the FGs operated, one of the FGs is translated (See Appendix A)

Figure 5.7: piece of transcription from the third FG

Coding, Categorising and Mining the Data (Manually): While the data was accessible for reading, several steps were taken in order to extract meaning from the data. Firstly, I immersed myself in the written data and noted any general themes that I noticed. Initially, I started with the FG's transcripts, the RJ's observations, interview transcripts and then the

diaries. I tried looking in order to generate possible categories on whatever I found interesting, such as trainees previous experience, perceived benefits, challenges, and ways of using reflection. I did that by highlighting words within the text and also noted some comments/memos in the margin alongside the text in the section that I created in the transcription process. These memos and comments helped me to capture ideas and internal thoughts through my analysis of the data (Charmaz, 2006; Richards, 2009). In other words, memos help the researcher to identify the reasons for selecting specific codes for specific conversations, which gradually generates explicit stories (Charmaz, 2008). For example, in the next Figure I highlighted in red colour the word (test) and I wrote as a memo that; (teachers main concern is the test and what should be provided to the students to pass it, without any consideration to bettering the students' understanding), then I wrote and put between brackets (Challenge) (see Figure 5.8).
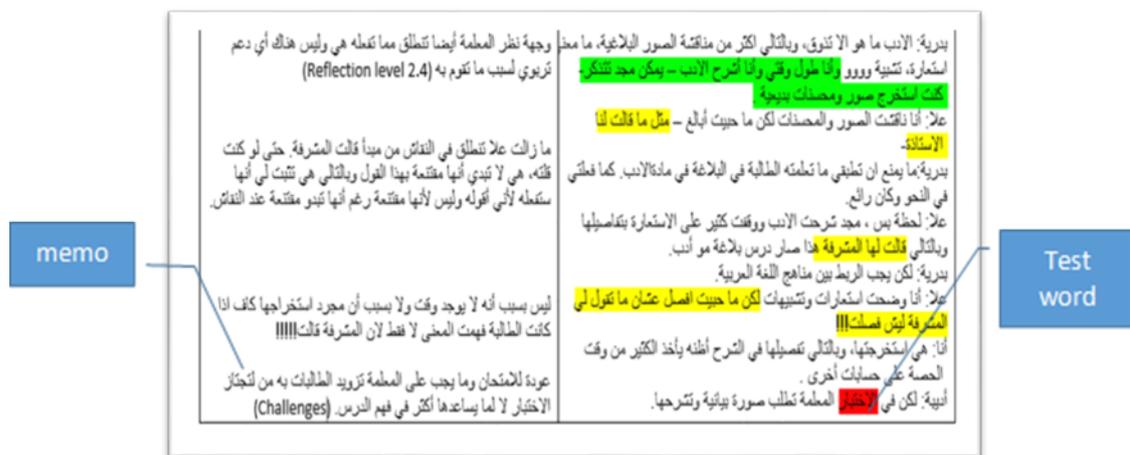
Figure 5.8: piece of transcription from the third FG

Import data sources to MAXQDA: With a large amount of my data, I decided to use MAXQDA (QDA digital tool). I chose MAXQDA because it is one of the QDA digital programmes that accepts importing of non-English text. Thus, I imported all data sources to MAXQDA; transcription of audio recordings of interviews with trainees, teachers, supervisors, FGs, and trainees' RJs. I kept my diaries in my notebook and using MAXQDA helped me to manage all data sources in one place and make the triangulation with the different sources much easier. For example, in the code 'focusing on the test' I highlighted

words and phrases that indicated it was from different sources; RJs, interviews, FGs, or my diaries, and I linked them in this code.

In addition, as Creswell (2007) believes, the process of creating codes and themes in a digital analysis programme assists in coding data by reading line by line, in a more systematic manner, than coding manually. Thus, using MAXQDA late in the process gave me a chance for a third reading, which yielded a look back to the prototype of my manually applied codes and themes in the previous reading, and comparing them with those produced from the third reading to see if they could be refined and described more accurately. Also, using MAXQDA made the process of revising codes and themes much easier for my friend when I asked her to match the quotes with suitable codes and themes. Using MAXQDA, she had to read transcripts alongside the list of codes and themes and check the coherence between them, as Norson (2009) suggested (seeFigure 5.9).
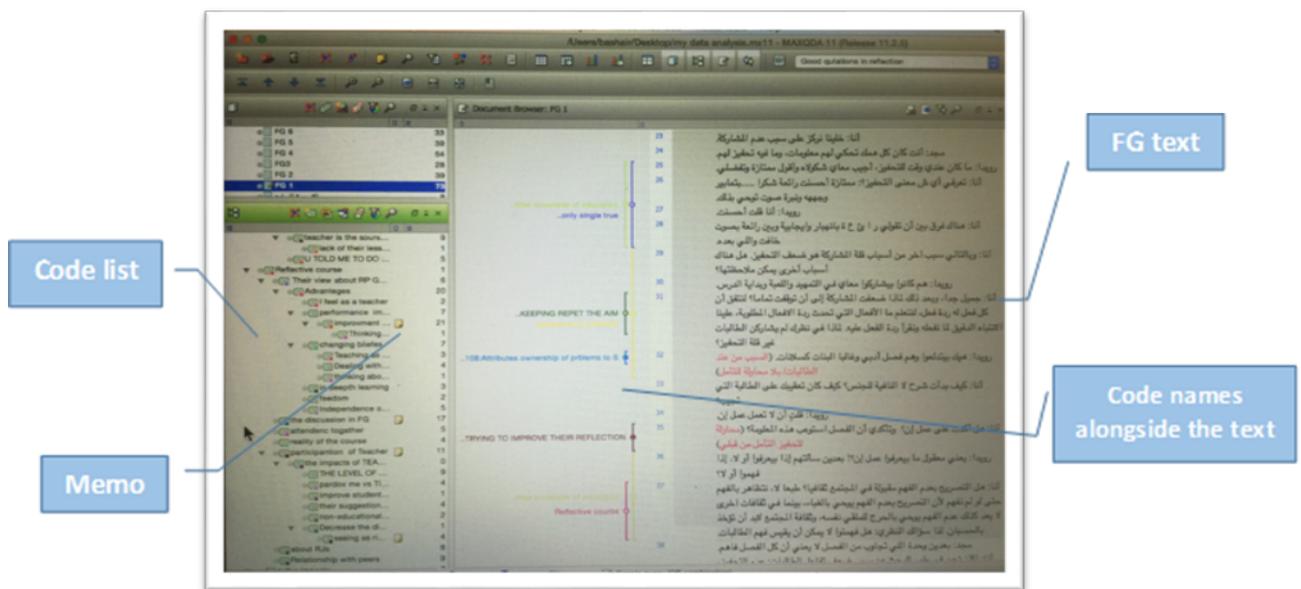
Figure 5.9: Import data sources to MAXQDA

Connect the 'building blocks': This was the most difficult part, which was linking themes by illustrating the analytic points, going 'beyond their specific content, to make sense of the data, and told the reader what it did or might mean, not to analyse the data at all, but simply to describe it' (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 49). A more developed and measured comment would rather stress that the code and memos did not in themselves provide an immediate or fully formed explanation of the effectiveness of using reflection to improve trainees' teaching in the Saudi context. They were needed to connect of what Dey called 'building blocks' when taken together and considered in relation to each other, the codes

and themes could help to provide insight onto the research questions posted (Dey, 2003, p. 48).

In qualitative analysis, generating the big picture of the research story by connecting meanings and concepts is inherently important (Dey, 2003). Thus, in yielding my story it was necessary to create some matrixes. For example, in order to track the reflective thinking of the trainees, I found myself in need of a matrix of reflective levels, according to Larriveé's tool (2008). I read again every piece of my data that referred to the actions of trainees and teachers, and attempted to classify them in such a level of reflection (see Figure 5.10). Through this matrix I was able to recognise the changing of trainees' reflective practices over time, as well as the reflective levels that teachers applied.

	Position	Parent code	Code	All coded seg...
	0	Reflective course	Their view about RP GENERAL	6
	1	reflection levels	1-10; Victim	11
	0	101 survival m...	101 but in action	2
	0	reflection levels	101 survival mode	10
	2	reflection levels	1012 Does not connect teaching with S...	5
	11	reflection levels	102;Enforces standards without adapti...	1
	9	reflection levels	103; Dose not support beliefs	3
	10	reflection levels	105 BUSY WITH CLASS MANAGMENT	7
	15	reflection levels	107:S & CR beyond the teachers' control	14
	18	reflection levels	108:Attributes ownership of prblems to S	16
	7	reflection levels	109 Fails to consider differing needs of...	1
	16	reflection levels	202; Modifies teaching strategies witho...	2
	17	reflection levels	204: support bliefs with evidencw from ...	5
	6	reflection levels	205 provides limited accommodations f....	1
	13	reflection levels	209; Makes adjustments based on past....	1
	8	reflection levels	301; Analyzes relationship teaching &st....	5
	5	reflection levels	305 criticism of own teaching	3
	14	reflection levels	306;Adjusts methids based on S'perfor....	2
	4	reflection levels	307 Analyses the impat of task	1
	12	reflection levels	309:has commitment to continuous	1

Figure 5.10: a matrix of reflective levels

While the stage of creating building blocks was fundamental in the data analysis process, '[b]ut building requires more than blocks, the blocks must be brought together' Dey (2003, p. 48). Through my writing, as Richardson (2005) suggested, I tried to make connections between concepts in order to theorise and conceptualise in-depth understanding. I wrote stories with a reasonable link to my research questions (Norson, 2009). In this stage, I often returned to the original transcripts and memos, as well as data from other sources.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided details about the process of research data collection and analysis. It also clarified some challenges and limitations which occurred during the process. It started with the orientation programme, which was the first stage in applying the reflective course. Through this stage, I outlined some challenges that were faced in finding participants. This was followed by a description of the data collection process through multiple methods: FGs, RJs, dairies and interviews. Next I illuminated the participants in this study: their number, ages and roles, including the limitations of the insider research position. Some techniques were also mentioned in order to examine the research credibility and validity issues by addressing three elements: reflexivity, thinking aloud, peer reviewer and triangulation in my research process. Then, I explored some of my ethical considerations in this research. The chapter concludes with an explanation of the analysis steps and how the themes of the research findings were generated.

Chapter Six: Data analysis-How do the participants perceive a RPC?

This research aims to explore and examine the potential of using RPC to improve Saudi female trainees in KSM University. In order to achieve this aim, I sought to answer the following main research questions:

1-How do a) trainees, b) teachers and c) the supervisor perceive an RPC?

2- What advantages and disadvantages might an RPC offer?

3- What are the main challenges involved in implementing RPC?

This chapter answers the first question by analysing and providing some interpretations of the data collected for the study. This analysis uses participants' responses as its primary research data source, which includes reflective journals (RJs), interviews and focus groups (FG), in addition to the diaries I kept throughout the data collection process. The chapter is divided into three sections to address each of the participants' roles: the supervisor, trainees and teachers. First, it explores the potential of using reflection in Saudi context through evaluating my supervisory skills in support of the trainees' reflections. The second section aims to understand how the trainees perceive reflective practicum courses. The third section describes and discusses how the TEACHERSs perceive RPC (see Figure (6.1.)).
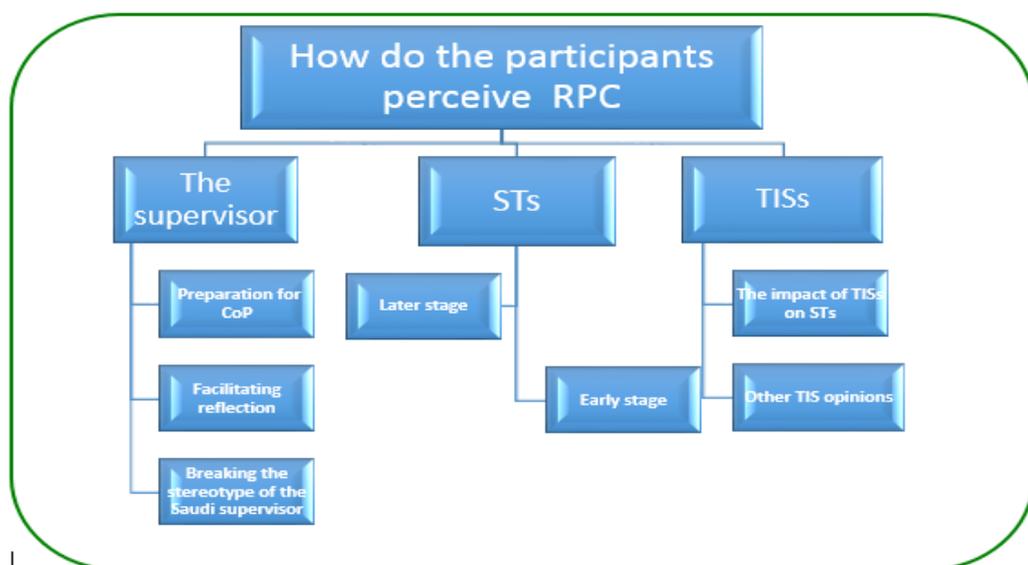
Figure 6.1: The outline of Chapter Six

Before I start my analysis, I would like to mention that I acknowledge that the way I sought and interpreted data was influenced by my subjectivity, and I attempted to mediate these effects by amalgamating my data sources throughout the data analysis and interpretation process. Thus, I examined my different sources and tried to analyse how they interact with each other (see Chapter Five).

6.1. Does a RP approach improve the quality of supervision?

The main aim of my study was to improve trainees' teaching skills by providing them with a framework that encourages them to reflect on their teaching performance. This aim required fundamental change to the traditional supervision of trainees in the Saudi educational context (see section 2.5 in Chapter Two). The present 'directive' model of teacher supervision, in which 'the role of the supervisor is to direct and inform the teacher, model teaching behaviours, and evaluate the teacher's mastery of defined behaviours '(Gebhard, 1984, p.502), must be changed to that of 'clinical supervision', in which the university supervisor (US) and trainees have a cooperative relationship and discuss lesson planning, teaching observations and learning assessments (Goldhammer et al, 1980). (See section 3.2.3 in Chapter Three)

Accomplishing this change required modifying the traditional relationship between trainees and USs. For example, in this traditional relationship at KSM University and, to some extent, at most Saudi universities, the US tells trainees what they should and should not do (see section 2.2.2in Chapter Two). The aim of this study, though, was for trainees to gradually step into the role of teachers and leave that of students. For this purpose, building a relationship between trainees and their supervisors that encourages trust and the communication of shared experiences was crucial to the development of effective reflective conversations (Labrie et al, 2000, p. 28; Smith and Abouammh, 2013).

Therefore, I employed AR for a twofold goal. First, it enabled examining my effectiveness as a supervisor at achieving the desired change. Second, it aided me in better understanding the role that reflection can play in improving my trainees' teaching. To achieve this first goal, I need to ask myself: as a supervisor, how effective am I in assisting trainees to be reflective? To answer this question, I needed to bring 'to the forefront the importance of self and be critical of my role' as a supervisor and to 'construct and codify' categories that emerged from the data (Feldman, Paugh & Mills, 2004, p. 11). To assess my supervisory

practice, I categorised my effectiveness at assisting trainees to be reflective into three main codes: establishing an interactive community of practice (CoP), facilitating reflection and breaking the stereotype of the traditional Saudi supervisor.

6.1.1. Preparation for community of practice:

My study involved a group at a school (teachers, trainees and myself) who shared a concern or desire to learn how to improve their teaching by practicing any suggestions that might emerge from their discussions. I applied the concept of the CoP in which group members engage in joint activities and discussions and share information (Wenger, 2007). CoPs often focus on creating new knowledge by sharing best practices between the participants. Interaction on an ongoing basis is an important part to advance a domain of professional practice (Ashcroft. et al, 2005). Moreover, the successful emergence and growth of CoPs, as social structures, requires 'cultivation' (Wenger et al 2011, p: 6) (see section 3.3.4.3 in Chapter Three).

My goal in building a CoP was to foster participants' reflective skills in order to improve their teaching. I believe that good relationships which make participation interesting and enjoyable facilitate the development of a CoP for the exchange of ideas about teaching (Wenger et al 2011). As a supervisor, I cultivated our CoP by building strong relationships with trainees, whom I had met during the orientation stage. I offered free coffee and breakfast every Thursday morning to create an informal meeting at which group members could become familiar with each other and so better work together (see section 5.2 in Chapter Five).

In addition, I aimed to create a learning environment that fostered reflection and was based on trust, respect and a desire to learn. Establishing such an environment was crucial as the learning value of this course 'derive[d] from the ability to develop a collective intention to advance learning in a domain' (Wenger et al, 2011, p.10). Over time, such an environment might help trainees mentally change how they learn, rather than just 'change their minds in the sense of changing perspectives' (Tremmel, 1993, p.441).

I also emphasised that we should work as a learning group. All groups member should participate in joint activities and discussions and share their stories of collaboratively addressing problems through sustained interaction with other. The group should see their joint history of learning as a learning resource (Wenger, 2007; Wenger et al, 2011).

Additionally, I used the 'WhatsApp' application to open a communication channel for all group members to discuss any issues regarding their practicum and to exchange any useful links or ideas that might help in increasing trainees' reflection. However, I believe that use of this tool went astray from its goal, and I found that in this context it was an ineffective tool to increase trainees' reflection. For example, in first three weeks, the trainees used WhatsApp to ask me general questions about their teaching preparation, seeking answers only from me - 'tell me'. To return them to the purpose of using this tool, I forward these questions for all group members to encourage reflection through the WhatsApp discussion. Over time, the trainees' communication via WhatsApp decreased because they thought that its function was to receive directives, rather than to serve as a communication channel which enhances reflection. Thus, WhatsApp was used by the group members to arrange lesson times and to inform the group of any changes in the lesson or time.

These were my views of my work as a supervisor, but how did others see my work? Participants' responses in my data sources—RJs, interviews, FG and diaries—provided the perceptions of the trainees and teachers of whether my supervisory practice effectively created a CoP.

Based on the data, the trainees seemed satisfied with working together as group. For instance, Olla states in an interview that 'most of the time, I felt comfortable with our group. Maybe in the beginning, I felt a bit nervous, but through the time, this feeling disappeared'. Moteah expresses similar feelings, writing in her fourth-week RJ, 'Now we know each other, and that makes the understanding of our views in discussions better'. In a sixth-week RJ, Majd describes the Thursday morning breakfast meetings 'Even this group make me feel stress the whole week, thinking about what I will do this morning, but to be honest, I love to be in this group, teachings, discussions and the breakfast, the smell of the coffee. Maybe I will miss that in future'.

Roida sheds light on the difference our group and ST groups at other schools. From her perspective, 'It is a new feeling that could not be described if you were not inside this group. When I told my friends what has been done in our discussion, they say, "Oh, that's so accurate. How you tolerate/bear that"? But they did not know how we do it and how we learn from it'. (Roida's RJS, fourth week)

In interviews, teachers also describe the special relationship they built with trainees. Adiba, a participating teacher, expresses this point when she states, 'I was surprised when I attend our first discussions. My attention was caught by your method of discussions and criticism

and how to deal with the resistance of criticism. I was wondering how you could build this relationship. They almost did not feel that you are a supervisor'.

Badria, another teachers, describes our group as a 'real group of work. … It is not about group of people sharing one place, but instead, I feel that they share the same concerns and they help each other to be successful'.

Both Roida and Adiba touch on the perspective learning of the CoP that I am eager to cultivate in the RPC. From the CoP perspective, learning is inseparably related to the process that helps trainees to gradually step into the role of teachers and leave that of students (Correa et al, 2015). Learning through discussions and sharing information may be hard to implement if the relationship between trainees and their supervisors is not strong enough to encourage trust and the communication of shared experiences (Labrie et al, 2000, Correa et al, 2015).

Developing trainees' reflection skills requires engaging in the practices of teaching and sharing a common repertoire with other members of their CoP, but I also made other efforts to facilitate trainees' reflections. These are discussed in the next section.

6.1.2. Facilitating reflection

To facilitate and support trainees' reflection, I paid special attention to ensuring that the course aims, procedures and expectations were clear to every member of the group. I gave trainees individual copies of written guidance (See Appendix D) which they could have at hand at any time. Olla, in the interview with her, explains her opinion about the clarity of participants' roles in this course: 'There is no ambiguity in what we should do. In contrast, you explained clearly what you requested from us at the beginning of the course, and even when I asked you about what I have to write in my RJ, you explained it very well'.

To facilitate reflection, I aimed for trainees to take part in discussions after their lessons. Reflecting and asking questions about one's practice is 'a powerful process with great formative value which can help teachers become more reflective' (Cyr, 2005, p.6; Correa et al, 2015). I took various measures to encourage trainees to be more active in discussions. Firstly, as in the following quotation, I reminded them the course aim and reinforced their desire to learn.

> Researcher: The purpose of being here is to try to grasp the reasons for good
> or bad performance. It is about the 'why' with specific details and learning
> from these details, not just general evaluation. (FG 2)

Secondly, to keep trainees engaged in process of reflection, I asked questions aimed at exploring the reasons for their judgments of their teaching practices, in other words, asking them to give evidence supporting their judgments. For instance, in the first FG, Moteah describes Olla's lesson:

Moteah: The class was very interactive, and the students were good.

Researcher: Why?

Moteah: Because she asked various questions.

Researcher: such as?

Moteah: What, why, think about…..

Researcher: We can ask these questions without receiving the same student interaction, so what were the main reasons for this good interaction?

Moteah: Her teaching was good.

Researcher: Why do you say her teaching is good? What are the actions that she did to deserve your judgement that her teaching that is good?

Roida also saw improvement in trainees' reflection when she compared her teaching before and after the course.

When we started this course, we gave general judgments —her teaching was good, her strategy was suitable— without any consideration of what she did or what was students' reaction to her action. … This course made me more aware about what I do, why I did it' (the interview with Roida).

Moreover, I sought to support the increase in reflection in some students' teaching practice. For example, in FG5, I commented on Olla's discussion of her colleague's teaching: 'Well done Olla, your reasons are very specific, like what we need, linking the action that the teachers did and the students' reaction'.

As well, I aimed to reduce trainees' sensitivity towards their mistakes in order to continue the discussion and facilitate trainees' reflection process. When trainees can reflect upon their own mistakes and proactively correct them, they can develop teaching proficiency (Ornstein, 1995). Therefore, I attempted to change some of trainees' beliefs about making mistakes as trainers. For example, I repeatedly stated that 'the mistakes are not unexpected. … In contrast, your awareness of your mistakes is the first step to learning'

(FG2). This strategy seems to have worked sometimes. For instance, Roida, in her fifth-week RJ, states, I was surprised by how my sensitivity towards my mistake was reduced. … Now I need to know my mistakes to learn from them'.

However, not all my trainees responded like Roida, so I attempted to express my feeling of caring and my main interest in helping them succeed by recognising their mistakes. For example, in the first FG, Majd was shocked by her teaching performance. She was very nervous and struggled with what others said.

> Researcher: Shall we start with Majd? Majd, can you talk about your lesson?
>
> Majd: I have no ideas about my lesson.
>
> Researcher: Share your feelings about your lesson, whether good or not. We are here to learn how we teach, and we never expect that you are ready to teach. If we were ready, this course is not designed for you.
>
> Majd: I have nothing to share.
>
> Researcher: I know you have. We will try to learn from each other. We are here to help each other improve your teaching. Come on. Be self-evaluative. This is the most important source for learning.

I found that facilitating trainees' reflective skills, especially in FGs, is more difficult than I thought. Arguably, I used Schon's concept of 'reflecting in action', 'thinking on [my] feet' during my journey of facilitating trainees' reflective skills in FGs (1983, p.54). I paid full attention to any action that could delay, hinder or prevent trainees' reflection and acted immediately to fix it. As well, I fostered any action that created, supported or improved their reflection. My role in facilitating the reflective skills of trainees seems to fit Tremmel's description: being 'aware of what is happening while it is happening and able to respond directly to transform the situation' (1993, p.437). For example, when the discussion became more probing and the intensity of criticisms increased, I shifted to positive aspects in order to reduce the influence of criticisms. At other time, I preferred to support the criticisms with evidence, especially when trainees seemed to reject any criticisms through denial of its occurrence, often without providing any evidence to support the denial (diary 1, 3, 5, 6).

6.1.3. Breaking the stereotype of the traditional Saudi supervisor

While the stereotype of a Saudi supervisor is that of an authority figure (see chapter two), I consider myself to be a liberal supervisor who accepts any evidence-based opinion as a source of learning (diary 2, 4). I consciously presented myself as a member of the group with the same powers as everyone else. This new positioning of my status as a supervisor might have been necessary to grant the trainees freedom that could enhance their reflection on teaching (Labrie et al, 2000, Correa et al, 2015). For example, I wrote in the second week of my diary:

> I feel that I broke the stereotype of the traditional supervisor. … They [trainees] trust me and treat me as one of them. … They did not hesitate to defend their views, even with their lack of experience and educational knowledge'

Moreover, I endeavoured to break free from the stereotype of the Saudi supervisor as a source of knowledge by avoiding giving direct suggestions. Instead, I attempted to present suggestions indirectly through asking questions and drawing out trainees' recommendations for practicing teaching (Strong and Baron, 2004). For instance, in the discussion of Moteah's lesson in the fourth FG, we attempted to identify the reasons underlying students' lack of understanding of the grammatical rule covered in the lesson. Moteah tried to persuade us that the problem was in the students themselves:

> Roida: You are better than last week. You preparation seems very good. You link your lesson to the previous one, but although you explain the grammatical role well, I feel that there is something wrong in your method of teaching.
>
> Researcher: Could you explain what is wrong?
>
> Roida: Umm, I don't know, but I don't like explaining everything together. There are many details in the grammatical rule which should be separated.
>
> Researcher: She separates the grammatical details, but there is something else missing.
>
> Olla: Yes, she did—her idea was to explain the whole grammatical rule theoretically, then practice it in the sentences.

Moteah: Yes, there is no problem in my teaching method. The level of the students in grammar is very poor.

Researcher: Is the grammatical rule in the lesson simple, or does it have many details?

Olla: Many, but that is an acceptable method in teaching grammar. It is the inductive method.

Researcher: The point is not about the method; it is about how to practice this method with complicated grammar. Do we think it is suitable for students' understanding to explain theoretically this complicated grammar for around 15 minutes?

Roida: Yes, she did, but she did not practice every detail separately. Her lesson has a lot of details, and I find that is very hard to understand these details together in theoretical way, all together at the same time.

Majd: Yes, the theoretical details make me lost. She should break them up by practicing after each detail.

In trying to break the stereotype of the Saudi supervisor as a source of knowledge, I also had to deal with direct requests from trainees to 'tell me what to do'. I handled with this cultural issue by repeating the course aim for the trainees to take responsibility for their learning. For example, in the fourth FG, Majd was frustrated after receiving our criticisms of her teaching of three lessons in Arabic literature.

Majd: OK, if I try to ask many questions in one point, you will say that you lost the complete set of the text's meaning. As well as, if I do not ask, you will say that I do not list the meaning. We have spent three weeks running around this point. Tell us what we should do. … I am tired.

Researcher: I can't say what you should do. I am not the source of knowledge. We work as group to find this answer by practicing any suggestions or ideas, and I give you the freedom to choose any, and thus, you have to be responsible for your choices.

However, the trainees' lack of teaching experience and educational knowledge, as well as my unusual role as the supervisor in the course, seem to make the avoidance of direct suggestions difficult, especially at the beginning of the course. I suffered from holding back

making direct suggestions to improve trainees' teaching. In my diary of the first week of teaching, I write:

> It is very surprising to me how it is difficult to avoid some direct suggestions, especially with the current mixture of my sample, who seem to have weaknesses in their educational knowledge and overconfidence in themselves. I have to be aware of my new position as a facilitator of reflection and focus on asking questions of 'how' and 'why'.

As well, I recognise that my belief in my ability to do something did not guarantee that I did it well. I notice that I sometimes rushed to make direct suggestions throughout discussions. I noticed this tendency when I listen to the recorded discussions in order to transcribe them. Fortunately, transcribing the FG weekly allowed me the opportunity think loudly on my research (Charters, 2003). I reproach myself for not asking questions instead of directly making suggestions. Subsequently, to limit my interference, I used a reminder card stating 'avoid direct suggestions'. One example of my direct suggestions happened during the discussion of Mariam's lesson in the first FG:

> Roida: You address the meaning of words very well.

> Researcher: How?

> Mariam: Giving them the meaning.

> Researcher: Does that mean addressing or telling facts? Teaching is not an exam. Your subject knowledge is about how to shift the knowledge to be understandable.

> Mariam: How I address then? [Tell me]

> Researcher: There are several methods, such as putting the word in a sentence
> …

This conflict between what I aimed to do and what I actually did decreased over time as the trainees and I became more familiar with what this course involved (diary. 3). Moreover, the trainees also became familiar with me more as a member of the group than as a supervisor, especially with the participation of teachers in FGs. That familiarity helped me in two ways: First, it made my interference merely suggestions which could be helpful or not (diary. 5). Second, it decreased trainees' tendency to make 'tell me' requests to me as a supervisor.

6.2. How do trainees perceive trainees?

My AR study was conducted as an attempt to learn how using reflection may help trainees to improve their teaching. In section (6.1), I tried to present and analyse the first part of achieving the above goal, which focuses on my effectiveness as a supervisor in assisting trainees to be reflective. In this section I will try to analyse the second part of the goal, which is to understand how the trainees perceive the reflection.

When reading and rereading my data, I was struck by the fact that the trainees' reflections seem to have changed since we started our course. Therefore, in order to understand how the trainees respond to the reflection, we should answer the following question: How do the trainees' reflection change over time? In term of answering this question, my data sources revealed that there is a change in trainees' responses towards the reflective activities that were conducted in our course. Thus, it is possible that dividing trainees' responses into two stages, early and later, may be useful to give the reader a comprehensive picture of how the trainees' reflective practices changed over time.

6.2.1. Trainees' responses at early stage in the intervention.

6.2.1.1. Reality shock

In the early eighties, Veenman defined a 'reality shock' as 'the collapse of the missionary ideals formed during teacher training as a result of the confrontation with the harsh and rude reality of everyday classroom life' (Veenman, 1984, p. 143). Although this definition seems to be an acceptable description of my traine' feelings after their teaching, this definition of reality shock should be updated so that it is a 'more accurate representation of the dilemmas, doubts, tensions and emotions teachers experience in their first years of teaching' (Correa et al., 2015).

A strand of research studies documented the phenomenon of the reality shock faced by new teachers and reported many causes for this phenomenon. For example, Veenman (1984) found that the unrealistic optimism of trainees during training is one possible explanation for reality shock. Other researchers highlighted the gap between theory and practice in trainees' experience as a direct reason for this this shock (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Ganser, 2002; Hegstad, 1999).

I believe that my trainees suffered from reality shock especially in the first three weeks. Their shock was expressed in a variety of ways: disappointment, surprise, confusion, anger and despair (Diaries 1 and 2). In her interview, Majd said the following:

> To be honest with you, the first two weeks in this course were the worst experience in my life, because I am not the person who admits that she cannot do something, but I feel I cannot teach. I was looking at the mirror and simply said I do not have the innate character of a teacher.

To provide some context, Majd is trainee who believes she has a good amount of knowledge of her subject. Therefore, she may think that good knowledge is a strong indication that she will be a good teacher (see next section, False Expectations). The above interview excerpt not only reveals the difficulties she encountered in improving her teaching but also indicates her despair regarding the process of becoming a good teacher.

However, the reasons underlying my trainees' 'reality shock' seems to vary. Some of these reasons are common and have been reported in the results of studies on PSTs around the world, while other reasons are likely unique to the Saudi context in general and KSM university in particular. Arguably, that may refer to the gap between the old and new learning culture that the trainees are experiencing. Their new culture i.e. learning through discussion and reflection are radically new and do not have any common components with the old one (the 'tell me' approach). Thus, the dissonance may appear overpowering (Sztompka, 2000).

Regarding the data that was collected, the following codes and sub-codes may explain the reasons underlying my trainees' shock during the early phase of their teaching.

6.2.1.1.1. False expectations

False expectations refer to particular views of the teaching profession that students acquire during childhood (Stokking et al, 2010). These views are found in children's literature, toys, TV shows and movies (Weber & Mitchell, 1995). Thus, these false expectations seem to be good sources to give us 'a glimpse of our cultural understanding of teachers, their roles and expectations we have of them' (Rhem, 2015, p. 10). Unfortunately, most of the studies in teaching education admit that the reality of teaching is significantly different when seen from the teacher's perspective (Britzman, 1986; Bullough, 1997).

Most of my trainees entered our programme with 'fixed conceptions, perceptions, and beliefs about teaching' and about themselves as teachers (Chong & Low, 2009, p.61). One

of their belief is teaching seems to be seen as telling facts; furthermore, the teacher is viewed as the owner of knowledge and the students as an attentive audience (Smith and Aouammh, 2013) (see Chapter Two). However, Barlowe and Cook (2015, p.222) noted that 'the classroom heroes featured ... would probably fare poorly in the current public school environment. Thus, when my trainees practise their teaching profession activities, they found themselves in conflict with the current realities of the teaching profession. For example, Moteah described her shock after observing her friend's lessons in her RJ during the first week:

> Majd is a very clever student; she is one of the best students in [Arabic] grammar subject ... I know her, and she always explains to me some difficulties that I face in some lessons in the university. I enjoy and understand her explanations. I supposed she will be the best, because her knowledge of the subject matter is very good and she has confidence to teach ... but after her lesson I realised that good knowledge is not enough to be a good teacher.

Here, Moteah expects Majd will be a good teacher, because 'her knowledge of the subject matter is very good and she has confidence to teach'. These two conditions initially seemed sufficient to Moteah, and I suppose to many other trainees as well. However, after Moteah attended Majd's lesson she changed her mind. Moteah also mentions that teaching experience in the real classroom seems absolutely different than other types of teaching, such as micro teaching or teaching with friends. She admits that although 'she [Majd] always explains to me some difficulties that I face in some lessons in the university [and] I enjoy and understand her explanations that does not mean she will be the same in the real classroom.

While Moteah experiences shock when she discovers her own false sense of experience through her reflections on her friend's teaching, Ruida also has a similar realization through her reflection on her own teaching. She described another 'false expectation' that she discovered in her first lesson when she was in shock from the classroom's behaviour. Ruida said the following:

> As a teacher I was concentrating on the authenticity of what I was saying and I expected to find students listening to what I said ... So they should respond ... I was surprised when you discussed the weakness of the students' responses as a critical point in my performance in the lesson! [laughing] I thought that is unfair, because as I am a teacher I supposed you will criticise what falls inside

my responsibility of teaching … I am not responsible for the students'
response; you have to criticise them instead! (Interview with Ruida)

Ruida's shock comes from her false expectation that the teaching is 'telling facts', as
evidenced by her statement that 'As a teacher I was concentrating on the authenticity of
what I was saying'. Therefore, she thought the critical point must refer to the extent to
which she stated facts. Moreover, she also has a false expectation that she will 'find listener
students to what I said'. Thus she was shocked when she was criticized for 'students'
responses as a critical point' because she thought she was 'not responsible for the students'
response' due to her false expectations.

6.2.1.1.2. Insufficient preparation

Another possible explanation for 'reality shock' is that trainees receive insufficient
preparation (Stokking et al, 2010). Many studies prove that there are complaints about the
irrelevance of teacher preparation to the reality of everyday practice in schools (Barone,
Berliner, Blanchard, Casanova, & McGowan, 1996; Sandlin, Young, & Karge, 1992).
Veenman (1984) cites the following eight problems that new teachers face: classroom
discipline, motivating students, dealing with individual differences, assessing students'
work, relationships with parents, organization of class work, insufficient and/or inadequate
teaching materials and supplies, and dealing with the problems of individual students.
Moreover, some studies found that trainees seem to experience a 'washing out' effect of
the insights gained during teacher preparation (Cole & Knowles, 1993; Zeichner &
Tabachnick, 1981). However, this 'washing out' has raised 'doubts about whether the
insights from teacher education had actually been achieved' (Korthagen et al, 2006,
p.1012).

From the early days of our course, I noted that the trainees have suffered from a serious
weakness in terms of their educational knowledge. This gap appears in various forms:
shortage in their teaching plans; an inability to define the main advantages or disadvantage
in their lessons; a lack in providing alternative suggestions through discussion; an inability
to deal with differences between pupils; a lack in working with the materials at hand and
coping with the problems of pupils (Diaries 1,2,3,4 and 7).

In her interview, Majd admitted the following:

My college did not provide me with sufficient preparation. … Also, the
practical course is too short. In the Arabic literature [subject] I find myself

unable to plan my first lesson; even if I have some ideas I could not incorporate them into the lesson plan. I never learned how to deal with teaching materials and what procedures that I have follow to increase students' understanding (Interview with Majd).

The quotation seems to indicate the main challenges that most trainees face during practicing their teaching, i.e. insufficient preparation (Mertz & McNeely, 1991, Sutherland & Markauskaite, 2012). Majd expresses her lack of preparation in a variety of ways: an inability to make lesson plans, difficulties to deal with teaching materials and a general lack in teaching and assessing students. Moreover, Majd mentions the shortage of the training time in the practicum course as another challenge. Further explanation regarding the reasons underlying the lack of trainees' educational knowledge and other challenges will be provided in Chapter Eight.

Furthermore, our discussions in the FGs reveal the lack in the trainees' preparation, especially in terms of educational knowledge. For example, in the first FG we discussed the reasons underlying the shortage of students' response in Roida's lesson as follows:

Researcher: Why do you think there were only a few students that can respond to your questions?

Ruida: They are very lazy.

Researcher: How did you start your explanation of the role of grammar in your lesson?

Ruida: I said that it works like the previous role and I asked them what it is and one girl answered.

Researcher: What about the other girls? Did you make sure they recognized the previous role? It is the base that you build all explanations on.

Ruida: Oh come on, it is very simple; of course they know what it is.

Researcher: Did you make sure? Did you repeat it again to make sure everyone remembers it? Did you write it on the board?

Ruida: I cannot believe they did not recognize it, and I asked them if they know the previous role and they said yes.

Researcher: That is not the perfect question to make sure they know, especially if the culture does not support a student who says 'I do not know'. Come on, if a student said, 'I do not know', the cultural interpretation is 'I am stupid' (FG 1).

Although Ruida tried to connect new concepts to students' prior knowledge, it seems she lacks knowledge of dealing with differences between students and assessing learning results. She supposes when one student can answer her question that this is evidence of all of the other students' understanding. Also, she seems to assess students' learning based on her own guesswork when she said 'come on, it is very simple, sure they know what it is'. She also used a direct question to measure their understanding: 'I ask them if they know the previous role and they said yes'. Moreover, the above quotation may have possible link to the pedagogy teaching problem. Brookfield suggests teachers must learn how to encourage their students to question their assumptions 'in a way that does not imply that they are enemies or idiots' (1995, p. 29).

6.2.1.2. Reflective supervision

Despite the fact that providing reflective space for trainees in their practicum might helping them to develop healthy and realistic expectations of the teaching profession (Delamarter, 2015), we have to admit that it is not easy to cultivate such a space (Liu, 2015). When we started our courses, I supposed that by clearly explaining the reflection practeacherse to the trainees during the orientation stage, we would all soon be smoothly immersed in the reflection process. However, it is clear that theoretical explanation does not guarantee smooth practicing.

While I tried to assess my supervisory skills to support trainees' reflection in section (6.1), here I will focus on analysing my trainees response towards the reflection process. I used Larrivee's research instrument (2008) to measure the trainees reflective response and to assess their development as reflective practitioners. Larrivee's instrument identifies the following four levels of reflection: pre-reflection, surface reflection, pedagogical reflection and critical reflection (See Appendix E).

6.2.1.2.1. Trainees' reflective levels

In the early practice of reflection, I was shocked by the trainees' low level of reflection during our discussions after lessons. During the discussions, I was trying to reinforce their reflection to explore the reasons for good or bad teaching practices (see section 6.1). According to Larrivee's (2008) tool to assess reflective teaching, I can say that most of the

trainees' reflective responses in the early stage of our course centred on the level of pre-reflection. Below I will describe some of the indicators under the pre-reflection level that describe my trainees' attitudes regarding reflection.

- Operates in survival mode

During the first two weeks, I observed that their teaching performance operates in survival mode, reacting automatically without consideration of alternative responses, which is the first indication that they are in the pre-reflection level.

After her first teaching session, Olla said that 'I expect the students to be more active in my lesson. I don't know why they are so negative… yes, I myself feel so bored in the class but I do not know how I can change that…' (FG 1)

Furthermore, Maryam wrote in her RJ that 'when I was teaching in class I could feel that the lesson did not go well, but that does not annoy me because the lesson went as I planned' (Maryam's RJ 2).

Although both of these excerpts indicate that the trainees prioritize doing the lesson as they plan without considering alternatives, their reaction towards this survival mode varied. In the first quotation, Olla seems unsatisfied about the connection between her teaching actions with student learning, but she does not have any alternative plan. However, Maryam seems satisfied about her teaching actions, even though she admits that 'her lesson does not go well'. Apparently, Maryam's satisfaction comes from her ability to do what she planned regardless of whether or not this plan fit well with her classroom.

Olla admits her shock from her 'false expectation' about students' interactions with her teaching. She reflects on her teaching in order to find any indication that her teaching itself caused less interaction. Thus, she admits that 'I myself feel so bored in the class…' However, even though she identifies this possible reason underlying the problem, she cannot identify the problem accurately and make appropriate adjustments during the lesson. Moteah also seems to reflect on her teaching when she observes 'when I was teaching in class I could feel that the lesson did not go well', but her reaction towards this feeling differs from Olla's. Because her priority is to implement her plan, Moteah seems to have ignored this feeling during her teaching and continued with the lesson as planned, even while knowing that some of the students are not grasping the concepts.

Moreover, trainees have trouble determining when the students understand the material and they have to decide to continue with a lesson as they plan or going ahead to other

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activities. They may not be able to stop what they are doing in order to provide additional examples, practice or experiences for their students in order to ensure that they meet their objectives. For example, Majd wrote in her RJ during the fourth week as follows: 'I talked a lot and repeated myself a lot. I felt it when I was doing it but I could not stop. I was like someone who is starting a motor and then loses the key to stop it' (Majd's RJ 4).

Nonetheless, the quotations also show that there is a positive signpost in the trainees' feeling that something went wrong. This can be considered an encouraging sign to improve their reflective level (Diaries 1 and 2). Liu (2015, p. 148) asserts that keeping 'an open mind toward different alternatives when confronting an educational problem' is a crucial element of critical reflection. He argues that if the teachers do not reflect on their teaching in order to explore alternatives, there is no opportunity to challenge 'our prevailing ways of knowing'. Consequently, the teachers will think their teaching is politically correct, whereas 'the students will feel indoctrinated rather than educated' (Liu, 2015, p.148).

However, reflection in/ on teaching, followed by immediately making adjustments, seems a very challenging task for trainees. Trainees, or even novice teachers, are concerned with following lesson plans in order to achieve the lesson objectives. Thus, they are not as willingly able to enhance the opportunities gained from reflection (Hattie et al., 1996; Schon, 1987). Delamarter (2015, p.2) claimed that 'a number of pre-service teachers are able to reflect on and attempt to resolve the disparities between expectation and reality only after they leave their preparation programmes' (also see Chong, Low, & Goh, 2011).

- Beliefs without evidence

- Willing to take things for granted without questioning

Regarding the lack of educational knowledge and teaching experience in this early stage of teaching (see Chapter Eight), trainees could rarely support their beliefs with theory or research (indicator 3 in pre-reflection in Larrivee's tool). Alternatively, trainees tended to support their beliefs with evidence from their experience as a student. Hence they seem not to consider whether their beliefs were research-based or not. For example, in her comment on Maryam's lesson, Maha (FG 2) said the following:

Maha: She did not use the board.

Researcher: So?

Maha: She has to use it in her teaching.

Maryam: I hate using the board. My handwriting is so poor.

Researcher: Why do you think she has to use the board?

Maha: Because she is a teacher and a teacher should use it.

Here, Maha criticizes Maryam for not using the board while teaching in her classroom. She believes that good teachers should use the board in their teaching. Her belief, I suppose, might come from her repertoire teaching as a student or from some images during childhood. Thus, I think they may have been surprised when I asked them the reasons underlying their beliefs about some of their teaching methods, such as using the board, textbooks, games or even changing their voice or characters (Dairies 2 and 4). For example, in the second FG, I asked my trainees the following question:

Researcher: Why do you have to waste this time on this irrelevant introduction? The lesson was so relevant to the previous one that your quotations seem to be enough. I was confused and I assume the students were as well.

Majd: I would like to say that, this is our problem, yes, we think we have to follow some protocols when we are teaching. We just do it without thinking about the rationale behind what we are doing (FG 2)

Majd admits her willingness to believe in something without thinking about the rationality of doing it. This attitude in which one is 'willing to take things for granted without questioning' is considered the fourth indicator of pre-reflection in Larrivee's tool. In her RJ, Olla, who taught the lesson that was mentioned in the previous quotation, noted as follows: 'I was surprised when my supervisor did not like my introduction … next time I have to think carefully about why I have to do my teaching in this way' (Olla's RJ2). That is, as Olla said 'I have to think carefully about why I have to do my teaching in this way'. According to Dewey (1933), Reflective teachers, should pay carefully considering the consequences of their actions on their students in a broad sense. Zeichner & Liston (1996, p. 11) add that teachers ask 'are the results good, for whom and in what way, not merely, have my objectives been met?'.

However, we can arguably attribute the students' willingness to holding beliefs without evidence and to taking things for granted without questioning their lack of educational knowledge (see the section 6.2.1.1.2 insufficient preparation). Also, it may be possible to link the trainees' willingness to take things for granted without questioning to the cultural influence that does not support questioning as a learning method. Alrasheed (2012, p. 23),

who is a former Minister of Education in KSA, said that 'apparently we have little tolerance for the questioners … we think about them as sceptics in our knowledge more than they are asking for clarification' (see Chapter Two).

- Victims

One of the most common feelings among my trainees is that they see themselves as victims of the circumstances around them (indicator 10 in the pre-reflection lever in Larrivee's tool). These circumstances could be related to the university, schools, teachers and students. For example, they believe themselves to be victims of teaching preparation that does not offer enough support (Interviews with Majd, Moteah and Olla). Therefore, they think the blame must be assigned to the theoretical way that they received knowledge during their teacher education programme. In the second FG, Majd complained along these lines when we discussed Ruida's lesson:

> Majd: She was better than last week: her voice was louder, she kept track of students' answers and she used the board.
>
> Researcher: Did she use the board?
>
> Ruida: Yes, I did.
>
> Researcher: What did you write on the board?
>
> Ruida: The two sentences that students said when we started the lesson.
>
> Researcher: And then?
>
> Ruida: Hhh, I forgot to use it.
>
> Majd: Of course we forget … the problem is the theoretical way they tell us we have to use the board. How do we use it effectively? Or when? Why does nobody tell us that (FG 2)?

Although the trainees' complaints about the insufficient preparation they received during their studies seem valid, it also seems to be a hindrance in their reflection on teaching. Since they were trained under the technical rationality model of teaching, the trainees may believe that the contractor must tell teachers how to teach their subject without encouraging them to modify their teaching to reach out to their students. Thus, this is a large obstacle to reflective teaching (Almazrawi, 2014).

One of the most remarkable points in my trainees' reflection is their concern about control of classroom management and student behaviour. Given their lack of multicultural competence in 'classroom management' (Weinstein et al., 2004), my trainees' classroom management concept seems to be rooted in cultural views that view the teacher as an authority figure who has to be able to control student behaviour (see Chapter Two and Eight). Almazrawi (2014, p. 66), who is a female Saudi researcher, claimed that 'teachers tended to be firm about developing a quiet classroom environment that helped them to deliver their instruction without any interruption'. Hence, classroom management -as it is understood in the context of Saudi culture- was reported as a feature of a good teacher in four interviews (67%).

As a result of this cultural view, the trainees limited their assessments of the success of classroom management to the obedience of the classroom. With regard to the lack of trainees' teaching experience, they expected that once they became teachers the students should listen attentively to whatever they say, react positively to whatever they do and comply to whatever request they make of them (Diaries 2,3 and 5). However, while the current classroom has different features than what the trainees had supposed, they were preoccupied with their observations of unexpected student behaviours. For example, in the early weeks of our course, most of my trainees made the following types of observations:

> -There are some whispers and laughter in the back, and she had to
> change their places because they whisper all the time (FG 1).

> -The group in the back is very rude and they speak sometimes so that I
> cannot hear you (FG 1).

> -There is one girl in the back that is laughing all the time (FG 2).

> -Why did you not do anything to the girl who closed the air condition
> without asking for your permission (FG 4)?

> -I like when you did not allow this girl to go out; she planned to meet
> her friend (F G2).

Remarkably, the trainees' concern about classroom behaviours did not have a positive impact on their teaching. Instead, it seems to have a negative impact on their teaching. They become angry with students and lose the concentration needed to successfully teach their lesson. Moreover, the trainees' concerns about classroom behaviours have a negative

impact on their reflection on teaching. They seem to attribute their teaching problems to students' behaviour which hampers their reflection to find the deeper reasons underlying their problems. Thus, instead of thinking about how to improve the classroom management situation, they view the students and classroom circumstances as beyond their control.

- Attributes ownership of problems to students or others

In the first three weeks I was frustrated with trainees attributing ownership of their teaching problems to students or others (indicator 8 in the pre-reflection level in Larrivee's tool). In our post-teaching discussions, I was trying to build their reflective skills by linking between teachers' actions and their students' reactions towards their actions. During this process of building, the trainees' emphasis on the following reasons seemed to obstruct their ability to reflect and thus improve their teaching: the students have a low level of learning, they are very rude and/or lazy or there is not enough time. The trainees seemed to find it hard to blame themselves or critique their own teaching practices. After the discussion of the less successful points in her lesson, Majd still attributes all of her problems to her students. She wrote the following in her RJ:

> This time I feel better. I started my teaching with enthusiasm and good preparation, but the students' reaction bothered me … I was standing in the front looking at more than 30 students and when I asked an easy question that did not require any thinking, I found that only one or two students raised their hands. That made me so angry, so I spoke slang … in seconds I thought that I may speak another language … I lost hope in my students understanding and I completed the lesson. The students' reaction made me disappointed and affected what I think and said (Mjed's RJ 2).

Although we discussed the possible reasons that may underlie the lack of the students' participation, she seems to still believe that the problem belongs to the students who decided not to respond to her questions. She seems to be looking at the students as people working against her efforts to be successful. Thus, she may believe that all her teaching problems, including feeling angry and losing her concentration to speak correct Arabic, are a result of the students' unwillingness to respond. trainees with this belief may never be able to critically question their own teaching. For example, were my questions clear? Was my way of dealing with the students repellent? How do I deal with this problem?

In the fourth FG we discussed why the students could not understand the meaning of some of the pictures in Maha's lesson.

Maha: This class could not help you to do anything. When you showed them the picture and asked them about what they saw in this picture, all their answers were rubbish.

Researcher: Rubbish! Just because their ideas did not match with what you expect! To be honest, I could not see the idea that you tried to convey with the picture.

Maha: Because there is not enough time to discuss the meaning that students took away from it.

Researcher: Then why did you use open questions about the picture if you did not have time?

Mjed: Learning through pictures is an acceptable way to learn.

Researcher: Yes it is, but the problem is not with using the picture in learning; it is with how to use it.

Maha: My sister, who is an expert teacher in another school, uses the same the picture in the same lesson and everything goes well. I feel that the students in my class challenge me (FG 4).

Again, in this quote, the trainee gives three reasons to justify her unsuccessful approach to explain the meaning of the picture. The first reason is the low level of students' learning. The second reason is the lack of time, while the third reason is the bad relationship between the trainee and the students in this class. No one refers to her teaching, which of course negatively influences their reflection. They did not seem able to see all the aspects of their problems in teaching and instead attributed ownership of their problems to the students or to someone else.

- Trainees view students and classroom circumstances as beyond their control

The trainees appear to believe that students and classroom circumstances are beyond their control (indicator 7 in the pre-reflection level in Larrivee's tool). As I tried to push my trainees to find the reasons underlying their teaching problems, three of my trainees (50%) mentioned the low level of students as the main reason that directly influences their teaching in every post-teaching discussion. Interestingly, they appear to consider the students' level of learning as something beyond the scope of their duties. For example, in the discussion of Maryam's lesson, I tried to encourage the trainees to rethink the reasons

why the students cannot answer the trainee's questions. However, throughout the discussion the trainee could not stop considering the students as the main reason for their teaching problems or from viewing them as something out of their control. Thus, I decided to encourage them to continue to reflect to find a solution to their chronic problem:

> Researcher: OK then, if we suppose that the problem is the students themselves, are there any suggestions to raise their level of learning? Or do we have to leave them?
>
> Moteah: No, she did not leave them, she keep repeating her explanation.
>
> Researcher: Yes, exactly, in the same way as you mentioned. She kept repeating the same explanation.
>
> Maryam: I did not prefer asking them who can explain. I have to deconstruct the meaning.
>
> Researcher: What was the result? Nobody answers your questions.
>
> Moteah: Because they did not want to understand.
>
> Researcher: How do we reinforce their desire to understand?
>
> Maryam: I cannot do that. The students have to have their own desire to learn. They should have this desire by entering their class…this generation is very lazy. They want the teachers to do everything for them (FG 2).

At the end of this quote, Maryam admitted that she believes the students should enter the class already fully prepared to learn. It appears that my trainees do not believe that their role as a teacher includes enhancing their students' desire to learn. Hence, they feel it is unfair to blame them for their students' lack of interaction because they seem to believe that this is something beyond their control.

Nonetheless, the above excerpts not only indicate the level of reflection that can be achieved, but also point to the influence of the educational context on the trainees' thinking. Applying a RPC in an educational context that does not support reflection in its curriculum design may produce a conflict between what trainees are familiar with and what are expected to do from them in this course. In KSA, the applied teaching model is 'behavioural objectives model' under the umbrella of 'technical rationality', which is

presumed to give 'the teacher technical control over the learning process and renders him/her responsible/accountable for its outcomes' (Elliott, 2015). Moreover, according to the trainees' transcripts with respect to educational subjects in the educational college of KSM University, there is a serious lack of providing reflection materials. (Additional explanations are provided inChapter Eight).

Thus, the low level of reflection among the trainees seems to be a logical result of the teaching model that those in the Saudi context are familiar with. Brookfield (1995) argues that in order to teach teachers how to reflect critically, we must enable them to practice the discipline of open-mindedness in which they can reflect on their teaching and ask questions such as 'are the results good, for whom and in what ways' (Zeichner & Liston, 1996; cited in Liu, 2015). Moreover, Russell also stresses the link between producing reflective teachers and the material that they are studying at university: 'Reflective practice can and should be taught – explicitly, directly, thoughtfully and patiently – using personal reflection-in-action to interpret and improve one's teaching of reflective practice to others' (2005, p. 203).

Nevertheless, in the above excerpts, we encounter an analysis of teaching practices that is limited to technical questions about teaching techniques. For example, trainees made comments about using a board during teaching, using correct Arabic language when speaking and classroom management. All these comments indicate the second level of reflection according to Larrivee's tool (2008) which is referred to as 'superficial reflection'. The following excerpt may provide the reader with a clearer picture regarding how the trainees were concerned with superficial teaching techniques in the first FG:

Researcher: Shall we begin with you Olla?

Olla: Yes of course, she did not introduce herself to students.

Researcher: That is not important in her teaching. She said hello and that is enough.

Moteah: They were laughing and there was a mess in the group at the back.

Researcher: Did they? I did not see anything, and the students' whispering was very subdued. Come on, they are teenagers.

Moteah: No, they were so disorderly… [describes how they were so silly].

Olla: Shall I finish? She did not make much effort to encourage the students

to actively participate, and she did not speak good Arabic all the time.

Comments like 'she did not introduce herself to students', 'they were laughing' and 'she did not speak good Arabic' are the actual information that the trainees recalled about the lesson. These comments fall under what Van Manen (1977) called 'technical rationality' which is the lowest level in reflection. However, although the research studies have focused on fostering critical reflection, which is the highest level in many layering reflective lists (see; Van Manen, 1977; Sparks-Langer & Colion, 1993; Larrivee ,2008), that does not imply that lower levels of reflection are unimportant (Liu, 2015). Brookfield (1995) asserts the necessity of the large number of technical decisions teachers make on a daily basis rapidly and instinctively without having the time to think them through.

6.2.1.3. Resistance to criticism

When I conducted research on supporting my trainees to become reflective practitioners, I emphasised the meaning of being reflective: 'looking at the things that go well, as well as the things that do not go well' (Liu, 2015). However, in the beginning of our course, my trainees very rarely admitted that there were some points in their teaching that did not go well. As the following interview excerpt illustrates, Olla admits her resistance to criticism during the FGs and indicates that it was worse in the beginning:

In general, it goes up and down, but I am sure we are better than when we

started … I have always blamed myself when I get angry from negative

feedback, but I reflected on myself and I said that is not a fundamental point,

I should not do that (Interview with Olla).

In the interviews with Majd and Ruida, they attributed their resistance to criticism to the human aversion towards receiving negative feedback: 'It is normal that I did not like receiving criticism, of course...come on, we are a human' (Interview with Majd). Ruida also describes the good feeling evoked by receiving good feedback: 'I hate receiving negative feedback…I was so happy the whole week when I received positive feedback and vice versa' (Interview with Ruida).

However, this innate reason does not seem to justify the high rate of resistance to criticism among the trainees. In the research field, some researchers attribute this tension to the mismatch of the assessment and development roles that the trainer must perform (Brandt, 2008; Holland, 2005). In my case as a supervisor, my main concern was to support the

trainees' reflection as a method to develop their teaching, and all assessment roles were performed by other staff. Thus, I suppose that there is less incompatibility among various roles. Nevertheless, in order to provide an explanation, we have to look beyond this linguistic data to the ethnographic data (Richards, 2006), which provides rich contextual detail. By closely examining my data, it seems there are two sources of tensions that gave rise to the resistance which I shall discuss further below.

6.2.1.3.1. Resistance to peer feedback

Throughout our course, the trainees were required to provide positive and negative feedback to their fellow trainees after they taught lessons (see Chapter Four). I supposed that the trainees would cope well with delivering and receiving peer feedback after I had explained the purpose of reflection. However, the early discussions revealed that trainees struggle with negotiating their teaching with peers (Diaries 1, 2 and 5). For example, in the second FG, we discussed Moteah's grammar lesson. To provide some context, Moteah seems to have less academic knowledge than her peers, and thus she feels that the negative feedback on her teaching was based on this aspect of her background.

> Researcher: Majd, how did you see Moteah's lesson?
>
> Majd: Um…OK, she was good when she started with the name of the subject, but there was something wrong in her grammar role.
>
> Moteah: What!...I said exactly what it says in the school book.
>
> Majd: Listen…
>
> Moteah: I will listen and discuss.
>
> Majd: Please, I would like to finish and then you can discuss as you want …. [Majd indicated the grammatical points that she claims Moteah did not mention]
>
> Moteah: I did, I did, I did.
>
> Majd: Even if you did, that means you did not because I did not understand.
>
> Moteah: This is your problem, not mine.

From the above excerpt it seems that Moteah immediately rejects Majd's point even before she knows what she did wrong in her grammar role. She then strongly rejects Majd's explanations about what went wrong by claiming that she did it (which she repeated three

times). At first glance, I supposed that Moteah's relationship with Majd was poor. However, nothing in my data suggested that this was the case. In contrast, Moteah calls Majd her 'best friend' in the RJ that she wrote during the same week that this tension in their relationship surfaced. Moteah wrote as follows:

> Through our discussion I was so annoyed by one of my best friends … I ignored her point because it is false. If it is Olla's lesson she [Mjed] does not have the courage to talk about the roles … she is not my supervisor and her way of communicating feedback is so silly; even my supervisor did not do `that (Moteah's RJ 2).

Moteah appears to attribute her attention in the above quotation to the following two reasons: (a) the way that she thinks the feedback system operates among her peers; she seems to believe that the background that they know about each other influences the amount of negative feedback that is received; and (b) she may still have tacit beliefs that the supervisor is the only person who has the authority to pass on negative feedback. Therefore, her resistance to peer feedback seems to be the highest among the trainees.

6.2.1.3.2. Resistance to self-reflection

While the previous kind of resistance seems to have emerged from the peer feedback, i.e. from 'outsiders', the second kind appears from the trainees themselves, i.e. from 'insiders', particularly in terms of how they understand the concept of self-assessment. This took place during the first FG, when I asked one of the trainees to talk about her strengths and weaknesses in her lesson. Maryam did not do well in her lesson. She struggled with time management and the lesson time finished just when she had finished the first part out of a total of three parts in her plan.

> Researcher: Now let's start with Maryam's lesson. Maryam, how do you feel about your lesson?
>
> Maryam: I do not know, umm, I think my teaching was good, the questions were fine.
>
> Researcher: Could you explain how your teaching was good?
>
> Maryam: I mean; I did as I had planned. I divided the lesson into three main tasks, and I asked questions.
>
> Researcher: OK, are there some things you were not happy about?

Maryam: Umm, just maybe I took a long time in the first task, 15 minutes, but, umm, I could not override the first task. I tried but I could not; however, I almost finished all of the tasks in the lesson.

Researcher: Oh, are you sure? Are you satisfied with your performance?

Maryam: Yes, I am satisfied, but, umm, I am disturbed because I used some slang language during the lesson.

Researcher: Do you have anything else to add?

Maryam: No.

At first glance, it seems the ST answers the questions appropriately. I ask her about the advantages and disadvantages in her lesson. However, a closer look at her answers reveals a reliance on vague terms, such as 'I do not know', 'I think', 'good' and 'fine'. Moreover, I had to prompt her to expand and provide more detail. The detail she provided in response is also quite vague: 'I did as I had planned'. Nevertheless, Maryam's reticence may result from her own communication style or from not understanding her role in this section of the feedback.

Moreover, some of my trainees find that criticising themselves is too difficult, especially when their background as a student in the university gives rise to great expectations regarding their ability to be good teachers. For example, Majd is one of my trainees who other trainees describe as having 'wider knowledge' (Moteah's RJ 1). She was shocked with her first teaching performance. She was very nervous and struggled through the process of self-assessment, in which the trainees has to provide a detailed description of both her strong points and her weaknesses (Hymes, 1986):

Researcher: Shall we start with Majd? Majd, can you talk about your lesson?

Majd: I have no ideas about my lesson.

Researcher: Share your feelings about your lesson, whether good or not. We are here to learn how we teach, and we never expect that you are ready to teach. If you were ready, this course is not designed for you.

Majd: I have nothing to share.

> Researcher: I know you have something to share. We will try to learn from each other. We are here to help each other improve your teaching. Come on. Be self-evaluative. This is the most important source for learning (Frist FG).

Majd may find self-evaluation of her teaching is too hard because she is frustrated by the mismatch between her expectations of her teaching performance (and, perhaps, the other trainees' expectations as well) and her actual performance (Copland, 2010, p. 231). Delamarter (2015, p. 2) argues that trainees who expect that they are ready to teach 'will find themselves confronted with a very different reality'.

However, regarding the difficulties that trainees may face to engage in self-assessment with other peers during FGs, the trainees' RJ did not seem to make a significant difference. Most of the trainees' RJ focused more on a description of what happened than on the process of active reflection. For example, Olla wrote as follows:

> This is my first day in my practice in the high school. I taught a grammar lesson which is my favourite subject. I trained and worked so hard, I was also scared and nervous, but at the same time I had confidence in my performance and belief that my God will support me … When I entered the classroom I was scared by the students' reaction, but fortunately I forgot about that and I felt I was their teacher for a long time. I was satisfied with my teaching. I love the interaction with the other trainees, and my supervisor praised me … (Olla's RJ1).

In the above quote from her RJ, Olla provides the reader with descriptive details to document what happened. Her RJ is like a film recording of our FGs, and when I read her RJ I feel I am repeating this film. In the explanation of self-evaluation that I provided for the trainees in the orientation stages, I stressed the importance of providing a detailed description (what), that includes both the 'how' and 'why' of their strong points and their weaknesses. However, understanding the norms of self-evaluation discourses in this context may have eluded or challenged my trainees. Korthagen (2004) emphasises that the skill of reflecting on practice does not come easily to some. It may be that Olla (and, perhaps, the other trainees in the early stage) is unsure of what she is supposed to say or how she is supposed to say it, even though I thought I had explained it to them and they admitted that it was understandable.

6.2.2. Trainees' responses at a later stage in the intervention.

6.2.2.1. Improvement in the trainees' resistance to criticism

In her interview conducted in the last quarter of the course period, Ruida stated as follows:

> In the beginning of this course we gave a general judgment of the lesson;
> the language was good, the teaching was fine… just like that, it is not about
> what exactly she does or how the students respond to it or if she does that,
> what will happen. Yes, just like that, and thus I was so nervous from
> negative feedback because it is only judgment, and there is nothing to learn
> from it … but with our discussions I became more aware about other things
> I never thought about before. I learned from mistakes, not because you tell
> me it is wrong or right, but because, umm, I do not know, through
> discussing them, without these discussions I think I will never know
> (Interview with Ruida).

According to the above interview excerpt, in the early stage of conducting this study, the trainees seem to be unclear about feedback processes, peer assessment and self-assessment. They thought their role in the discussions that incorporate feedback processes was to provide 'a general judgment of the lesson'. This limitation of their understanding of the discussions' purpose negatively impacted on trainees' ability to accept criticisms; as Ruida said, 'I was so nervous from negative feedback because it is only judgment, and there is nothing to learn from it'. Through practicing, the trainees appear to gain greater clarity about the purpose of the discussions which, in turn, reinforced their reflections on how they can improve their teaching. The new insight into feedback processes, which Ruida expressed as 'I leaned from mistakes', enables the trainees to better understand what self-assessment requires, as well as the type of feedback they may receive from their peers. Thus, this seems to contribute to alleviating the trainees' resistance to criticism.

As a supervisor I expected that my trainees would grasp the importance of self-reflection immediately after it was explained to them in the orientation stage. Thus, I was surprised by their tension while exchanging feedback. However, it seems they could not grasp it theoretically without practice. We can arguably say that the trainees' tension in giving and receiving negative feedback in the early stage may arise 'from a mismatch in expectations between the trainer and trainee of participatory structures and discourse practices in the feedback session' (Copland 2010, p. 470).

Furthermore, the relationship between the group members became stronger than it was when we started. This may be another factor that contributed to reducing trainees' tension when receiving criticisms. They shared their breakfast together and they attended each other's lessons. Also, I noticed that they created a group discussion online to discuss their preparation of lessons. This also seems to have had positive impacts on trainees' capability to accept their peers' feedback. Majd, Moteah, Maryam and Olla indicated in their interview that the good relationship between the trainees to a large extent facilitated the feedback processes.

In the following excerpt, Moteah mentions another reason which made the feedback processes less embarrassing.

> Moteah: Sometimes our resistance to criticism is strong, especially in the beginning, but when we discovered that all trainees were receiving criticism and that the teaching level of trainees was quite similar, that made us comfortable.
>
> Researcher: Interesting. Can you explain more regarding what you mean by all trainees were receiving criticism?
>
> Moteah: [laughing]… I mean, umm, maybe, you know, they are better than me in their academic achievement, and I expect I will receive more negative feedback than them. When my turn came, I supposed you would barrage me with criticism [laughing], because I am less capable than them and they [the trainees] have that in their mind (Interview with Moteah).

In the early stage of this course, Moteah appears to have a higher level of peer feedback resistance because she believes that the trainees' background has influenced the amount of negative feedback that they receive (see section 6.2.1.3.1). According to the above interview excerpt, however, her belief has changed when the practice proved the opposite. Thus, her resistance to both self and peer assessment seems to have decreased some since the beginning of the course.

However, that does not mean the resistance to criticism disappeared altogether, but rather that it takes different forms than just rejection. When the trainees understand the rule of the discussions regarding 'reasons towards action', they still try to resist the negative feedback by finding reasons to justify their action even when these reasons seem invalid. For example, in the FG during the sixth week, we spent more than 15 minutes discussing one point of Maha's lesson. To the best of our knowledge, we (me and the other trainees except Maha) think Maha's explanation was wrong. However, Maha is sure it is right because her

father, who is an expert in grammatical issues, said it is right. We asked her to explain, and she read one line from a note from her dad, but we still could not understand it:

Maha: I will explain it again (she reads the note again).

Researcher: Sorry Maha, the note does not explain anything to me, so leave the note and could you answer my simple question regarding if you understand it?

Maha: I understand it but I cannot explain it to you.

Researcher: If you could not explain it to me that simply means you do not understand it even if you thought you did. Furthermore, how you could explain it to the students?

Maha: This is my way to explain.

Ruida: Do you think the students can understand it?

Maha: Yes (she read the note again). It is very clear. I do not know why you cannot understand it.

Mjed: Explain it then. We need to understand, if your dad says that, with all due respect to him, that is not enough for it to be true.

Maha: (She hits the desk and begins speaking in a loud voice) Yes, it is true because my dad said it is true, and I have enough confidence from his understanding of the meaning (FG 6).

Despite her confidence, understanding the norms of self-evaluation discourses in this context may have challenged Maha. Roberts and Sarangi (1999) argue that 'not knowing in which mode to answer questions, in their case professional, institutional or personal, can disadvantage an applicant in a gatekeeping situation' (cited in Copland, 2010, p.470). Therefore, the problem may not be that Maha is disinclined or even unskilled, but rather that she is highly strung/ nervous. She admits this in her RJ during the sixth week and attributes it to the bad mood she was in at the time:

I started the discussion on my lesson in an unsatisfied mood … the worst thing that happened was when I lost my self-control. I know I am a bit nervous, but I thought I had it under control. How it triumphed over me I do not know. I still feel bad (Maha's RJ 6).

Moreover, we can argue that the high level of resistance that Maha showed in the above excerpt may possibly be linked to the Saudi culture. I suppose Maha's tension does not emerge from her resistance to self-assessment but rather from our assessment of her father's knowledge. Maha's father seems to represent an 'authority' in two ways: as a father and as an expert in a particular subject matter. Allamnakhrah (2013, p. 205) argues that 'In Saudi Arabia, the culture is predominantly one of uncritical submission to authority. For example, children are discouraged from questioning their elders and from challenging their educators'. Therefore, in this context, the higher resistance to feedback seems not to be related to Maha's skills or willingness but rather because accepting this critical point collides with the cultural milieu. (For more explanation see Chapter Eight).

6.2.2.2. The trainees' reflection levels

While the trainees' reflection levels in the early stage seem to fall in the pre-reflection level according to Larrivee's tool (2008), over time, the trainees became more familiar with the requirements of engaging in our RPC, such as concentrating during the observation, trying to find the reasons that may underlie the observable actions and providing details that support their views when giving feedback regarding both their peers' and their own performance (Diaries 5 and 7). However, most of this improvement is grounded in the second level of Larrivee's tool (2008) which is superficial reflection. There are a few indications that their reflection may have reached level three which is pedagogical reflection. In the following paragraphs I discuss these indications in both levels, i.e. superficial and pedagogical reflection. However, in this study I do not analyse the trainees' teaching actions but rather their improvement in reflecting on their actions.

Superficial reflection level

Make adjustments based on past experience

As I described in the early stage of doing this course, the trainees seem to attribute the ownership of problems to students. At the same time, they view students and classroom circumstances as beyond their control as teachers (see section6.2.1.2.1.). However, over time they experienced a remarkable transition from looking at students as the main problem beyond their control to thinking about them as a teaching problem that needs to be solved. For example, Moteah had a strong tendency to attribute any problem to the students when we started our course. She thought that the disconnection between her, as a teacher, and the students was solely the students' problem. However, her belief appears to have changed to some extent. Moteah wrote the following in her RJ during the fifth week:

This Thursday morning seems good … After our discussion about students last week I was thinking the whole week about ideas to make my connection with my students better. I learned from Olla's lesson that the personality of the teacher may help in reducing the tension between me and the students. So I decided to start my lesson by smiling at every student. I pretended that I am a nice person and I asked them if they prefer to do the lesson in their classroom or in the resource room. I also spoke politely with one student in the class who I thought has a big influence on other students in our classroom. I said to them I was happy to be their teacher today; however, I did some things I never thought I will do (Moteah's RJ 5).

Moteah's belief about the students being out of her control was hindering her reflection on how to improve her teaching. The reflection has to be active in order to understand the confusing situation and find a solution or achieve improvement (Almazrawi, 2014; Ericsson and Smith, 1991). Thus, when the trainees interpret the confusing situation by blaming students or others, their reflection become less active or may stop. Therefore, Moteah could engage in reflection in order to solve her problem with the students by changing her belief about her students being beyond her control. Thus, she reflected on Olla's lesson to find the reason underlying the good connection between the teacher and the students. Then she plans to imitate Olla's personality, which Moteah thinks is the reason that she has a good connection with her students, in order to achieve the same result.

However, while the adjustments that Moteah made can be seen as an indicator of the superficial level of reflection, she is still preoccupied with management, control and student compliance (pre-reflection level). Thus, Moteah did not reflect on her teaching to make it better because she seems to have a strong belief that the problem is not in her teaching but rather in the students who decided not to interact with her. Therefore, she tries to be nice to them in order to encourage them to be more active.

Supports beliefs only with evidence from experience

Commenting on Moteah's lesson, in which the students were very active, Olla wrote as follows:

… After Moteah's lesson, I believe that teacher interaction and vitality are the main reasons for the positive reaction of students. Moteah today seems to be happy and to love what she does; consequently, the students seem very active, whereas when she is disappointed or unconfident, she transmits her feelings to her students and, to be honest, to me as well (Olla's RJ 5).

I wrote the following about Olla in my diary:

> Olla does not have any problem with the classroom management. She has a very nice personality and is always smiling. She also has a high level of academic and educational knowledge. She makes extra effort to attract students with her voice. She always talked about how to avoid the usual boring Arabic lesson (My diary 3).
>
> She seems to believe in the importance of teacher interaction and vitality in the success of the lesson (My diary 5).

Through her reflection on her and other trainees' teaching, she finds evidence to support her belief.

Given the limitations of trainees' educational knowledge as well as their lack of real teaching experience, practicing and observing teaching in the classroom seems to create a source to support trainees' opinions (Mcalpine &Weston, 2000). Elbow (1996, p. 254) claimed that when the trainees enter the teaching experience, the 'believing and the doubting game' seems to begin. Thus, through continued practice, the trainees seem to have teaching experiences that enable them to make adjustments in their teaching depending on their reflection results.

However, not just any practice can be considered as valuable experience. Chi et al. (1988) and Ericsson and Smith (1991) distinguish between mere exposure and continued practice. They indicate that only continued practice can create experience. Also, they emphasize the importance of long and continued practice to develop skills. However, while I do not claim that the several weeks in the course can be considered as 'long and continued practice', it appears to have had a positive impact on the trainees' reflection on their teaching in terms of changing or supporting their teaching practice (see Chapter Seven).

Moreover, experience alone may not be sufficient to become a skilful teacher. Analysing experiences through reflection 'which enables one to detect patterns that then lead to knowledge' may also be necessary (Mcalpine &Weston, 2000, p. 367); in other words, 'learning [in our case about teaching] requires feedback in order to be effective' (Ericsson & Smith, 1991, p. 27).

Pedagogical reflection level

In Larrivee's tool (2008), pedagogical reflection is the third level. It represents the developmental feature of the RP from reflecting on technical aspects of teaching, i.e. 'surface reflection', to the level

where the teachers reflect on the educational goals and the connection between theory and practice (Manen, 1977). The pedagogical reflection in Larrivee's tool (2008) consists of fourteen indications (see appendix E). However, it is noted that most of my trainees were considered to be in the pre-reflection and superficial level, while two of them, Ruida and Olla, showed a higher level and seemed to have demonstrated some indications of pedagogical reflection (which are discussed further below).

Analyses the relationship between teaching practices and student learning

Through our dissection of Ruida's lesson in the FG during the sixth week, Ruida complained about one student. At the end of the lesson Ruida was playing a game with the students. The game required the participants to stand in front of the students and choose random cards to read and answer the questions on the cards. If a participant correctly answers a question, they will receive a random reward. One of the questions asks about a specific word inside the Arabic text that the lesson deals with.

> Ruida: The student made me nervous when she said, 'Which text'?

> Mjed: Me too, as if there are other texts!

> Ruida: She made me nervous and I did not know how to answer her.

> Olla: Can I say something? The girl really could not answer the question without the text in front of her.

> Ruida: What was the question?

> Olla: Find a metaphor from the text.

> Ruida: Ok, we did that in the lesson.

> Olla: I know, but you asked her to find one from the text and the question does not have any text, so how could she find one? So she asked you which text she had to find it from. She is not silly.

> Ruida: But other students have the same quotation and they tried to take the book from the students who are in the front.

> Olla: Yes, but this student maybe could not remedy the situation.

> Ruida: She can do it in her mind.

> Olla: No, she could not even if she tried.

Here, Olla seems to reach the pedagogical reflection level when she tried to link between teaching practices and students' learning. From Olla's perspective, the teaching activity does not lead to the students' learning. From Ruida's perspective, the question that the student asked ('Which text?') seems so silly because the lesson is only built on one text. The difference in analysing this situation locates these two trainees, i.e. Olla and Ruida, in different levels of reflection. Ruida's behaviour suggests the 12th indicator from the pre-reflection level ('Does not thoughtfully connect teaching actions with student learning or behaviour'), whereas Olla's behaviour suggests the first indicator from the pedagogical reflection level of Larrivee's tool (2008) ('Analyses relationship between teaching practices and student learning').

Strives to enhance learning for all students

Moreover, the above excerpt may suggest another indication in the pedagogical reflection level: 'Strives to enhance learning for all students'. While Ruida refers to what other students did ('they tried to take the book from the students who are in the front') in order to answer the question as evidence of the validity of her teaching practice, Olla does not. She seems to demonstrate a belief in the importance of considering differing needs of learners when she said 'but this student maybe could not remedy the situation'. Thus, Olla seems to strive to enhance learning for all students by taking their differing needs into considerations during the teaching. In contrast, Ruida appears to 'fail to consider differing needs of learners', which is the ninth indication in the pre-reflection level in Larrivee's tool (2008).

Analyses the impact of task structures, such as cooperative learning group, partner, peer or other groupings, on students' learning

Although my trainees entered their teaching practice with a serious lack in educational knowledge, they seem have acquired more knowledge through their practice of teaching and by trying to build their knowledge via exchange. Consequently, this positively affects their ability to raise their reflection to the level of pedagogical reflection in which they can analyse the impact of task structures on students' learning. Ruida seems reach to this level in our dissection of Majd's lesson:

Ruida: You did not explain all examples.

Majd: Yes, because they were similar.

Moteah: But she explained the role in the end in the paperwork.

Ruida: Yes, in the end, in the paperwork, umm, I have a comment here. I preferred to replace this paperwork with cooperative learning group to make them interact more.

Olla: Yes, I agree with you, because the students seemed very quiet and bored.

Ruida: Not just that, but also to make sure that you cover all the examples without wasting much time, especially if the examples were similar, and the students know this strategy because they are familiar with it.

Majd: I have no problem with the time (FG 6).

What is apparent in the above excerpt is the improvement in the trainees' reflection. Ruida seems able to make a suggestion to improve Majd's teaching. Her suggestion was using a cooperative learning group as a better strategy in Majd's lesson case. She did not share her suggestion as a personal view, but rather justified using a cooperative learning group 'to make sure that you cover all the examples without wasting much time, especially if the examples were similar, and the students know this strategy because they are familiar with it'. She seems able to analyse whether such a strategy should or should not be used in this situation.

To summarise the outcomes of this section, we can argue that there was a change in trainees' responses towards the reflective activities that were conducted during our course. This change was remarkable in that it attracted the trainees' practice from the early stage of the course through to later ones. However, we cannot say that the trainees are functioning completely as reflective practitioners; rather, the RPC has affected the trainees' thoughts about the idea of teaching.It is important to also note that some trainees were responsive to RP than others. Their practice was not equally transformed

6.3. How do the teachers perceive a reflective practice course?

In a number of countries, cooperation between teacher training institutes and schools have been offered as a potential way to improve the teachers' preparation programmes (Stokking et al, 2003; Buchberger et al, 2000; Wilson et al, 2002). For example, in the United States, a remarkable shift in responsibilities is taking place in the education of public school teachers (Cope & Stephen, 2001, The National Research Council (NRC), 2010). In England, the national policy makers have supported schools that wish to train their own teachers

(Townsend, 1994; Stokking et al, 2003; Roberts & Foster, 2016; DoE, 2016[16]). As schools' responsibilities increase, university partnerships are growing as well (Goodlad, 1994).

However, increased responsibility for teacher education on public school has had difficulty achieving its objective of systemic change. Many researchers claim that the coherent vision between learning, teaching and learning to teach is almost lost (Tardif et al. ,2001; Darling-Hammond and Lieberman, 2012; Dean et al., 2005; Korthagen et al., 2006; Valencia et al., 2009; Zeichner, 2010; Burns and Richards, 2009). They also indicate that 'staff continuity' weakens cooperation between teacher training institutes and schools. Moreover, Stokking et al argue that schools 'cannot be simply expected to take on the training of new teachers on top of their own jobs' (2010, p. 332), but rather, they must put their own pupils first. (See Chapter Three).

Nevertheless, these offers of cooperation are still far away from the present state of educational reform in KSA (Alrasheed, 2012) (see Chapter Two). From my experience as a teacher and then as a university-supervisor, I can say that university staff and teachers in schools are clearly isolated. Also, as one interviewed teachers admitted, 'We have become very familiar with this isolation between the university staff and teachers. It seems like there should be a separation between them; thus, to be honest, we cannot feel it should not be like this'.

 Thus, one of the aims of this study is to attempt to explore the effect of closer integration of school and university contributions to teacher education. The rationale from working cooperatively with current teachers and PSTs is to gain a greater sense of reality of their practicum, reduce the gap between theory and practice and benefit from 'the teacher's practice wisdom' (Shulman, 2004, p. 2). Also, I intend for the trainees to have the opportunity to build a sense of belonging and commitment to being teachers and to teaching education, which is the basis for forming a community of teaching practice (Wenger, 1999; Correa et al, 2015).

In this section, I will describe how the teachers in our group (my trainees and I) were engaged in dialogue. The data suggests the following categories:

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[16]https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/508447/Educational_Excellence_Everywhere.pdf

6.3.1. The impact of teachers on trainees

When I decided to conduct a study that requires ISTs engagement, I had in mind one of the best teachers with whom I had worked as a supervisor. I contacted her before the delivery of my transfer paper from M.Phil to PhD, and I accepted her agreement with that of another teacher to participate in my research project. However, their agreement could not be used because my trainees preferred to implement their teaching in a different school than where I would be present, and I did not know anyone from the teaching staff of that school (see section 5.1.1.4 in Chapter Five).

The teachers' engagement started in the third week of our course. They participated in a total of five lessons, observing the lesson and engaging in the discussions after. Both of them attended the first three lessons and participated in the discussions. Of the other two, only one teacher attended and participated with our group. In the following section, I will analyse the teachers' participation in the RPC.

The engagement of teachers with our group (trainees and me) was delayed until the third week (see Chapter Five). That delay may help when remarking on the main impacts that the teachers may have had on the trainees and the researcher. My data sources suggest indicators of the impact of teachers' participation, which are our status as sojourners, differences in feedback processes and issues with teachers' reflection. Each of these three indicators will now be discussed in detail.

6.3.1.1. Sojourner status

Although the trainees and I spent almost three months visiting the schools every Thursday, and the school staff was very collaborative and friendly, I felt that we were part of a different community than that of the school. We stayed in a room in the ground floor, but the classrooms and the teachers' rooms are on the second and third floors. I wished we stayed closer to the teachers' room and classrooms to plunge ourselves into the real school environment, such as experiencing the noise of classrooms, seeing students everywhere, making informal conversation with teachers, sharing their problems and learning from their experiences in indirect ways (diary, 3). This experience did not happen, and the way we interacted with teachers was still very formal. I never saw the teachers unless I needed to ask them about something. For example, I had to go to the teachers' rooms every morning and ask them to choose which lesson they preferred to have us participate in.

Given the delay of teachers' engagement until the third week, as well as their participation in only one lesson per day, the teachers might best be considered guests of honour rather than participants (diary 5). Ruida supported this perspective when she described the teachers as 'guests':

> Ruida: I like the idea of teacher's participation; also, they seem happy for us to be hosting them.
>
> Researcher: Hosting? Do you consider or feel they are one of our group?
>
> Ruida: Yes, they are [laughing], but I think of them as guests of our group, because they are not always with us (Ruida's interview).

Moreover, the trainees seem more reticent in term of self-assessment when the teachers attended the discussion with us. For instance, in the third week, when the trainees should have been more familiar with our procedure in FG, i.e., self-assessment, then peer-assessment, Maryam reacted strangely when asked to assess her teaching:

> Researcher: Welcome Teacher Adiba and Teacher Badria to our discussion. Ok, then shall we start with you, Maryam, because the teachers have not had time to discuss all the lessons.
>
> Maryam: To be honest, I have no idea what to say.
>
> Researcher: Nothing?! Ok, give me any positive or negative points in your lesson.
>
> Maryam: I have no idea.
>
> Olla: Are you serious?
>
> Ruida: Nothing?! Come on.
>
> Maryam: Sorry about that. [Quietly] I feel I am unable to think. I do not know what happened, and everything was [trails off].
>
> Researcher: Do you think the students understand the lesson?
>
> Maryam: I cannot say that. The problem is not like that.

The above quotation about self-assessment in our discussion seems a little bit strange, especially when the trainees had, over time, become familiar with the requests of the RPC as well as with each other as a group. Therefore, for the other trainees and me, Maryam's

lack of contribution to her self-assessment seems unusual, and, perhaps, even unwelcome. Moreover, Maryam responded to critical questions by apologizing. However, it is significant that this apology was delivered quietly, and vague reasons were given for the lack of contribution to the discussion: 'I am unable to think. I do not know what happened'. This seems to undermine, to some extent, her sincerity and also signals Maryam's nervousness (Copland, 2010).

Although the trainees already have tension from self-assessment (see section 6.2 in the early stage), one possible explanation for Maryam's rejection of her self-assessment is the attendance of teachers who had not been there before. The trainees might appear uncomfortable with the participation of the teachers (diary, 3). Supporting this explanation, Olla wrote in her RJ in the third week:

> This week, two teachers in the school joined with us in Maryam's lesson; they mentioned useful points. I wish they could attend my lesson to know their views about it, and at the same time, I pray they do not, because I will be so confused and nervous.

However, that does not mean that the trainees did not find the participation of teachers useful. As Olla indicated, they made helpful points, and she hoped that they could attend her lesson, as well. But, being assessed by expert eyes seems to be an uncomfortable situation, even if in the observation does not influence the trainees' evaluation; as Olla said, 'I pray they do not, because I will be so confused and nervous'.

The point I have been making in this section is that the aim of engaging the trainees with teachers to have the opportunity to build a sense of belonging and commitment to being teachers and to teaching education seems to have a les positive effect than it should be. Alternatively, it apparent that the trainees still feel like visitors more than like a part of the school.

6.3.1.2. Differences in feedback processes

In the discussion stage after observing the lesson, it seems there are some differences in the ways of providing feedback that my trainees and I did, compared to what the teachers did. These differences take various forms, which are described in the next sections.

6.3.1.2.1. Lists of feedback

Through the orientation stage, I thought I put more emphasis on explaining the way that the feedback processes should be conducted in our RPC, including the phases, participatory

structures and discourse practices which trainees, teachers and I engage in and perform during feedback (see orientation stage in Chapter Four). I considered how that process will be different from what we are familiar with. Thus, through practicing our discussions, my trainees and I tried as much as we could to keep ourselves in the general framework that could be applied in day-to-day negotiation, exchanging ideas, linking the actions with reasons and supporting the suggestions with evidence (Copland, 2008). However, I do not claim that our ways of dealing with feedback in reflective dialogues were ideal, but it was different than the way that was teachers dealing with feedback.

Teachers tended to give the trainees who taught the lesson feedback in the form of a list of suggested points, without any attempt to give the trainees a chance to think about the lesson or to encourage them to discover by themselves (diary, 4, 5). For example, in the fourth FG, we discussed Majd's lesson:

> Adiba (the teacher): Today, you started your day with a smile.
>
> Majd: Yes, the students were so nice.
>
> Adiba: No, your mood was much better that before. Your introduction was good, and your explanation also good, but I would prefer more emphasis on the meaning of the grammatical role, because your lesson is the first one in this unit. You should repeat the meaning to be sure all the students understand it; also, you should provide students with other examples because the Quran text in the textbook is so difficult for the students to understand.
>
> Ruida: She showed other examples.
>
> Adiba: Even then, it is not enough. You should emphasis the main idea of your lesson, and also, it would be better to explain why we have to delete the letter at the end of the word. And, it would be better to divide the words into what works and what does not.

The above excerpt shows a general judgment of 'good' from teachers on some points in Majd's teaching. Also, there is a list of direct suggestions that the teachers provide the trainees with that absolutely does not support the trainees' reflection. For example: direct instructions such as 'put more emphasis on the meaning of the grammatical role', 'repeat the meaning to be sure all the students understand it', 'provide students with other examples', 'explain why we have to delete the letter at the end of the word', 'divide the words into what works and what does not'.

These instructions do not give the trainees the opportunities to practise their reflection. But rather it seems to contribute more to the passivity of the trainees toward their learning and increase their demand for 'tell me what to do'.

Moreover, while the teacher follows some of her suggestions, such as 'because your lesson is the first one in this unit' and 'you should repeat the meaning to be sure all the students understand it', 'repeat the meaning' seems to be supporting the traditional role of teachers in Saudi as 'subject experts' rather than 'facilitators of learning', which does not fit with our RPC (Stephens & Samuel, 2000).

Therefore, after I observed the teachers in our discussion, where they presented their suggestions as a list, I contacted the teachers to explain, again, the idea of our RP, which was to provide the trainees with opportunities to question their ideas and practices of teaching (Talvitie et al, 2010) rather than to tell the trainees what to do. The teachers mistakenly think that their views about the trainees' teaching do not hinder their reflections but rather makes them more aware in their next plan. Also, the teachers believe that the trainees will never know these practical views by themselves, so providing them with the suggestions keeps them from wasting their time engaging in reflections (Diary 4).

With regard to the lack of a clear definition of 'reflection' in the literature review of teaching (Zeichner, 2008), Liu argues that there is 'a gap between the understandings of prospective teachers and teacher educators [about their understanding of reflection]: teacher educators show a more sophisticated understanding … while prospective teachers' understanding is very general' (2015, p. 136). However, while Liu seems to describe what I thought after my short conversation with teachers, there are still important questions about the competence of teachers to enhance trainees' reflection in our RPC.

Interestingly, some of my trainees agree with the above teacher's views about the advantage of a 'points list'. For example, Maha indicated the teacher listed suggestions as a positive point in her interview: 'I benefit from teachers' participation, especially Adiba, because her comments were very focused, and she did not does like us, i.e., 'running around the issue'. Also, Olla admitted, 'When the teachers attended my lesson, she listed fundamental points as 1, 2, 3, which is very useful'.

However, the trainees' satisfaction with the teacher's listing direct suggestions is hardly unexpected. The trainees tend to do what is familiar (Slater, 2008), which in our case, means being provided with direct suggestions. Their comments about 'running around the

issue' and 'fundamental points as 1, 2, 3' suggests that the trainees were unfamiliar with having to reflect on their teaching to identify their weaknesses and strengths. However, if this was the case, it would suggest that directive styles of teaching that both teachers and students practise in the Saudi educational system may serve as a direct challenge to RP (see Chapter Eight).

6.3.1.2.2. Practical advice

Another feature of the teacher's feedback is their near-exclusive focus on practical advice about the classroom situation. The quotes earlier also demonstrate that most of Adiba's suggestions seem examples of pedagogical teaching advice. For example: 'provide students with other examples', seems as general teaching advice to make sure the students understand the point. However, in this context is a practical advice. The examples provided in the school book seem too difficult for students understanding, because they are taken from the Quran text. Thus, the teacher suggests providing students with other examples out of the Quran text to facilitate learning.

The teacher's tendency to provide practical advice is not unexpected. Some research indicates that the role cooperating teachers usually take in practicum focuses almost exclusively on actual classroom activities, whereas university supervisors are actively involved in both the classroom and academic settings (Guillaume & Rudney, 1993; McNamara, 1995).

teacher's practical advice, or what Shulman (2004) calls the 'wisdom of practice', is a brief of what the teacher needs to know in order to teach well, which seems fundamental for the trainees. However, this wisdom comes through continuous practice of teaching to understand critical educational activities and to solve problems creatively (Shulman, 2004). Therefore, giving practical advice to the trainees, rather than engaging them or helping them to discover by themselves, may not encourage reflection or development of the trainees' capacities to continue to steer their own developments as teachers (Korthagen, 2001). Moreover, this capacity is not only important for the trainees themselves but also for changing educational practice when educational reforms are introduced (Griffiths, 2000).

6.3.1.2.3. Preoccupation with student tests

The following dialogue took place in the fifth week during our discussion of Maha's lesson:

Badria (one of the teachers): You should clearly explain the statement of linking pronouns with the noun in each example.

Maha: I did.

Badria: That was not enough. You should spend more time explaining it because we usually ask them [students] in the exam which nouns can be linked with pronouns?

Also, in the sixth week, we discussed Olla's lesson:

Adiba: It would be better if you tidy the board; make a section for the meaning of words and another for the ideas, and give the students time to write it in their notebook.

Olla: I wish, but writing on the board takes me a long time. I prefer to spend it on explanation.

Majd: Yes, spatially you present the text by the data shown. Your explanation was very clear; I like you when you use your body language to explain the meaning [laughing].

Adiba: Even though it was clear, the main thing for me was that the students must have something written with them in order to refer to it at exam time. Yes, they may understand what you say now, but they absolutely forget it after. They must have some written material with them.

Given the increasing prevalence of considering the student test marks as a standard to assess their learning, it is not surprising that the teachers were concerned about the test marks of their students (Ward et al, 2004). In Adiba's quotation, the teacher suggested writing on the board and having the students write up to their notebooks, not because the meaning is unclear, but so that the students have the information 'to refer to it at exam time'. van den Bergh et al (2015, p.143) claim that 'In the workplace, however, teachers' goals are usually more focused on the achievement and well-being of their students than on their own learning'.

Considering test scores as standards for students' learning and outcome assessments seems to obscure the value of reflection (Ward et al, 2004). Limiting the measure of teaching mastery on students' tests scores may make the teachers unable to reflect or

improve their teaching and to focus only on improving student test scores. In the above quotes, the teachers suggest some modifications: more emphasis on the meaning that will appear in the exam, and writing on the board for the students to copy and use during the exam time. These modifications do not seem to improve the students' learning in the sense of trying to ensure and check for maximum understanding but rather to achieve better scores in their exams (diary, 6).

However, the emphasis on student learning related to their exam scores does not always have a negative impact on teacher reflections; rather, it can be an excellent vehicle for reflection. That only will happen when teachers' examinations of student learning become 'the very fabric of reflection, rather than the barrier that precludes it' (Ward et al, 2004, pp. 244-245). 'The good news' is that the trainees can be expected to relate their teaching activities to student learning rather than to their own performances. That means that they are better able to link their teaching practice to students' learning in the reflection process (Ward et al, 2004).

6.3.1.3. Teacher Reflection

6.3.1.3.1. Lack of reflective knowledge

In interviews, the teachers indicated that they did not know about reflection at all and had not engaged in reflective teaching before. Adiba, with her 17 years of experience in teaching, admitted: 'It is my first time hearing about reflection, which looks good to turn to the teachers as a source of knowledge… but I suppose there are many difficulties to applying it here'.

Badria, another teacher with 23 years of teaching experience, agreed with Adiba about her ignorance of RP in teaching:

> We do not know about RP as a possible way to learn how to teach. How can
> it be possible to consider my decision of teaching as a theory of learning!!
> Ok, maybe I can do it now with my experience, but how can I do it if I do
> not have any experience teaching?

What is apparent in the above quotations is that the teachers lack educational knowledge about RP. Also, they seem doubtful about the potential for reflection to be adopted in the Saudi educational context in general: 'There are many difficulties to applying it', and in the context of PSTs in specific, 'How if I do not have any experience in teaching?'. However, the weakness in RP among teachers seems not only in KSA. Korthagen (2004) admitted that

reflection about good teaching, which is central to teacher improvement, is rare among teachers. Thus, Talvitie et al assert that 'the choice of cooperating teachers should fall on those who are model teachers according to the philosophy of the programme has been questioned in various studies' (2010, p. 80).

Although the interviews with teachers reveal their lack of educational knowledge about the idea of reflection, they seemed happy about participating in the RPC. They were joyful about the idea of 'teacher as a researcher', where teachers' performances in their classrooms were viewed as producers of knowledge, not the researchers at their desks (diary 2, 7).

6.3.1.3.2. Teachers' reflective levels

According to Larrivee's (2008) tool to assess reflective teaching, most teachers' comments on trainees' teaching was on the second level, which is superficial reflection. Indications of this level of reflection follow.

- Analysis of teaching practices limited to technical questions about teaching techniques.

The teachers see themselves more as 'practitioners' who have to follow the teaching techniques. Thus, most of their feedback on trainees' teaching was focussed technical advice about teaching techniques. For example, in FG fourth week, Bardia suggested:

> As a teacher, you should enforce student participation in the lesson by asking specific students; please answer that even if she do not arise her finger. Thus, the teacher must be sure that all the students participate by the end of the lesson. Do not wait to the student to raise her finger or focus on the students who are in the front; do not give the students in the back a chance to chat or niggle.

While the quotation could be a good example of the previous code, which is teachers providing the feedback as a direct suggestion ('you should', 'you must'), it may simply indicate the teaching techniques that should be followed to increase the student responses. However, I do not aim to determine whether her suggestion is appropriate or not but rather to reveal the level of reflection that the teachers reach in their analyses of trainees' teaching.

Moreover, from the above quotation, it seems that the teachers were preoccupied with management, control and student compliance. This indication, which matches the trainees' reflective level, refers to the level of pre-reflection according to Larrivee's (2008) tool.

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In the above quote, Bardia presented her suggestions without supporting them with evidence from theory or research. Instead, she seemed to support her view from her own experience, which is the fourth indication in Larrivee's (2008) tool. The teachers' attitude of providing their views without supporting with evidence from theory or research seems comment in their discussion. For example:

- Adiba: I like your introduction and how you present your ideas (FG, 4).

- Badria: I like your linking with the Quran text (FG, 5).

- Badria: Your dividing of the author's life story was good, but why didn't you write it on the board (FG, 7)?

What is apparent in these quotations is that feedback from teachers appears as judgment of the trainees' teaching activities. Thus, to avoid that, I tried, as a participant researcher, to improve the discussion from 'a mode of reasoning that is appropriate for making activities…[to] the mode that is appropriate for doing things well' (Elliott, 2015, p. 6). I demonstrated this approach in the following exchange:

> Researcher: Ok, if you were the teacher for this lesson, what would you change?
>
> Adiba: The main thing in the lesson is reading the text. We must give the students enough time to read and encourage them to understand the general meaning.
>
> Majd: [Interrupting] But this is the third lesson in this unit.
>
> Badria: You should read it at least one time. The students are very bad in reading, and you should keep asking them to read. (FG,5)

- Failure to connect specific methods to underlying theory.

The teachers tend to make judgments without evidence, and they also seem unable to connect their views with theory or research, which is indicates the superficial reflection level in Larrivee's (2008) tool. That seems to be apparent when the trainees have other views of the same point; for example, in the sixth FG, we discussed Olla's lesson:

> Adiba: You should present the ideas on a piece of paper and give it to the students at the end of the lesson to make sure all students have the ideas of the text. Or you can instruct them to take notes during the lesson.

Olla: I should not do that. They can write it by themselves; I did that when I was a student. Also, we discussed that last time; that makes the students too lazy, right?

Majd: Yes, that is students' efforts, not ours. We should treat them as independent learners; they have to take some responsibilities toward their learning.

Adiba: Our students are familiar enough to do that. They expect that from the teachers.

Here, Adiba unwilling to connect her methods to any underlying theory. She believes that the students should receive the explanation of the text ideas on paper or by having them write it themselves. However, Adiba tries to support her method with evidence from her experience. Moreover, the trainee (Olla) supports her argument in two ways. First, like teachers, she provides evidence from her experience: 'I did that when I was a student'. The second type of support comes from her knowledge from reflective dialogue, indicated when she said, 'We discussed that last time'.

6.3.2. Other teachers' opinions engaging in mentoring and the teacher education process:

At the end of the course, I went to the teachers' room to meet others teachers who were not engaged with us in the reflective course. I asked them what they thought of their engagement as teacher educators or mentors. The teachers seemed very open to having the conversation, but they did not allow me to record it. The conversation was informal, with interactions between the teachers' answers. It looked like a focus group conversation more than an interview. I only asked one question, and then I received many answers. Their answers were based in real stories, which affect their validity.

Unexpectedly, there were a number of teachers who had previous experiences with trainees mentoring (see section 2.5 in Chapter Two). Most of them described their mentoring experiences as unhappy. They admitted that they would never do that again, due to the lack of moral and material stimulus. I asked them, if the university asked for nominations of teachers to be teaching mentors, will you do it? They answered that they would never do it again under the same conditions, because their teaching loads have their schedules full enough. Their answering does not seem unexpected, Talvitie and his team (2015, 87) indicate to the limited of time of teachers to help to help trainees as a main

challenge to provide, support and guidance for student teachers to help them integrate theoretical and research-based ideas from their university courses into their teaching'. Thus, this finding is in line with the results of Talvitie et al study (2015) and also with Consuegra et al study (2014, p. 86) when they find that 'Teaching full-time does not leave any space for peripheral participation'

However, they explained that if there were offers made in exchange for mentoring tasks, they would be more interested in mentoring trainees. These offers might include reducing the teacher's time table, going back home early when they finish their job and being exempt from some school work. They mentioned that, because my group took the lessons of the two teachers who engaged with me in the reflective course, Bardia and Adiba, the teachers agreed to participate in the course; otherwise, they would not have done so. They never negotiated any financial benefits to be mentors in the future. They seemed tired from their teaching loads and found the conversation with me to be an outlet for their complaints (diary, 8).

Nevertheless, it would appear that engaging teachers with a supervisor from university on the reflective supervision course on trainees would be an attempt to create what Sandholtz and Finan (1998, p. 24) call 'boundary spanners'. However, simply engaging with teachers for only one day, as is presently done, and occasionally meeting with them for one post-teaching discussion does very little to improve the situation of the isolation between the university staff and the teachers in schools.

Moreover, given the increasing importance of field-experience in teacher education, it is important to ask if the teachers in schools are ready to be responsible for beginning teacher development. Good teachers are not necessarily good teacher educators (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Indeed, teachers may even 'withhold assistance due to the enduring belief that teaching is a highly personalized practice of finding one's own style' (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p. 1033) (See Chapter Nine).

Also, given the lack of teachers' reflective knowledge and the low levels of reflection that are apparent in their post-teaching discussion, it would appear that teachers engagement in the RPC could hinder the trainees' reflection rather than support it. For example, most of teachers activate such as making general judgment on the trainee teaching, providing feedback as a list rather than discussing the ideas and failings in supporting method with theory, do not actively support the idea of reflection (see section 8.2.3 in Chapter Eight).

Chapter summary

This chapter has presented and discussed the major findings related to the first research questions. The discussion was divided into three sections, each of which addressed a specific category of research participants through generated themes. As a supervisor, I found that being a facilitator in RPC was not an easy task, and that having a strong belief in doing something was no guarantee that I would do it well. However, time appears to have the potential to fix this weakness.

Furthermore, my trainees likely shared both my sense of the difficulty in being reflective teachers and its amelioration over time. The trainees' improvement in their performance as reflective teachers can be tracked from their earliest stages to the later ones. There was remarkable progress in trainees' reflection in terms of the reflective levels that could be achieved, and their resistance to criticism – to some extent – was both lessened in quantity and modified in content. Arguably, the development of trainees' responses towards RPC increased in direct proportion to the strength of the relations between the members of the group. The trainees showed that they could do better in learning from each other. However, some trainees were more open to reflection than others.

Finally, regardless of the increasing importance of the teacher roles in TE, the study questioned whether the current situation of Saudi teachers offered them the potential to support trainees' reflection.

Chapter Seven-data analysis part 2: trainees' positive aspects about their participation in the reflective practice course.

In this study, I aimed at obtaining insight into the effectiveness of adopting reflection among a group of trainees. From the data analysis of how the trainees responded to the RPC, which is shown in two stages, one thing was apparent: early and later, the trainees feeling that they have gained a range of different advantages from their participation in our course (see Chapter Six). In this chapter, I will present these advantages. To see the themes which emerged, see next figure: The outline of chapter seven:
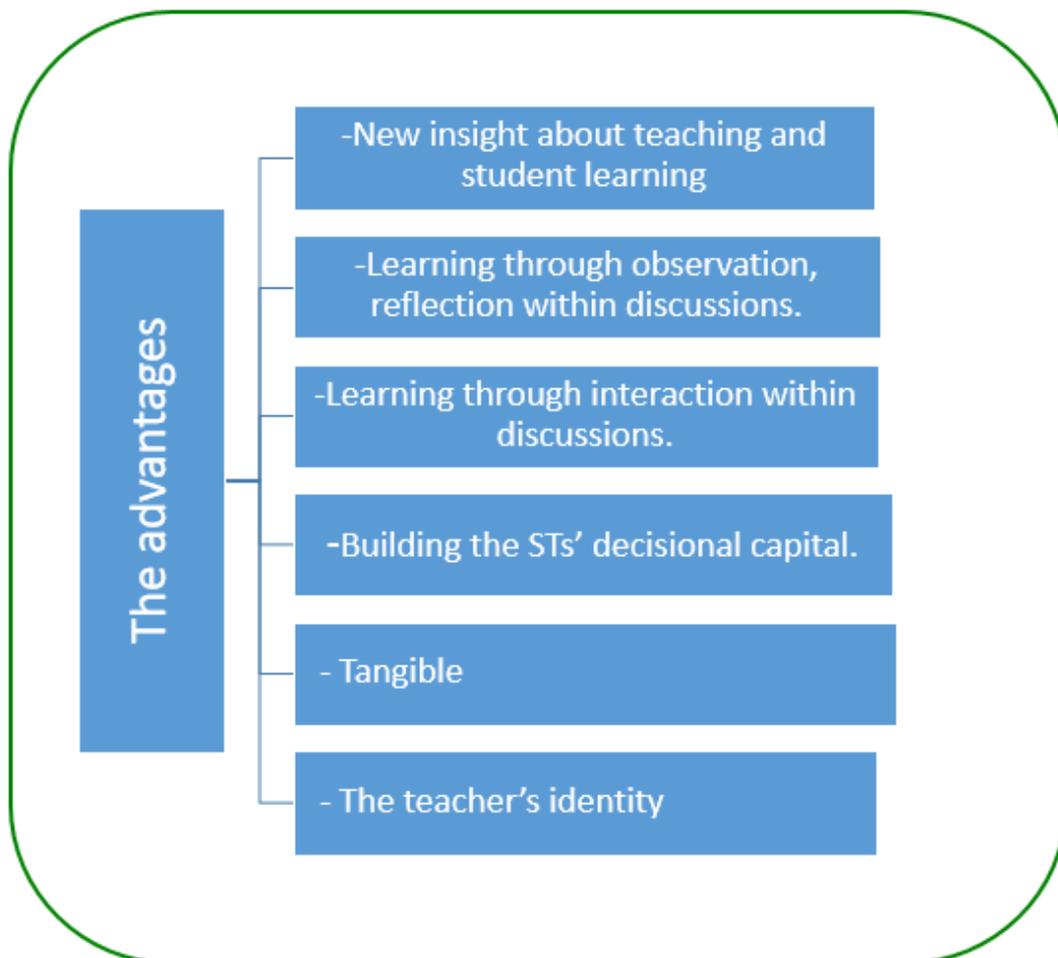
Figure 7.1: The outline of Chapter Seven

7.1. New insights about teaching and student learning:

As I described in the early stage of applying the course, the trainees entered the practicum with particular beliefs about teaching. For example, most of my trainees had a strong belief that teaching consists of a process of telling facts or possessing a kind of natural talent (see section 6.2.1.1.1 in Chapter Six). For example, Majd said in her interview:

> Before, I did not understand how the act of teaching is a complex task. I had the belief that the ability to teach is a talent or an instinctive ability that comes from willing to be a teacher. I was very angry towards those who work as teachers and do not have this talent.

Also, they looked upon the process of students' learning as something the students themselves have to take responsibility for. However, the trainees' preconceptions about teaching and student learning act as what Hollingsworth (1989) called 'culturally-based filters' about teaching and learning (see section 6.2.1 in Chapter Six).

Nevertheless, the later stages of data analysis suggest that the trainees undergo some changes in their beliefs about teaching and student learning during the course. Also, they try to use their reflection on their own and their colleagues' teaching. Thus, with regard to the claim of Zeichner and Liston (1996, p. 1) that 'not all thinking about teaching constitutes reflective teaching', I can say that some of the trainees can reach 'the third level of reflection' according to Larrivee's tool (2008). That is, 'pedagogical reflection' in which the reflection 'moves . . . from a largely personal response to an intellectually rigorous analysis of the context, the issue and possible impacting factors' (Ryan, 2013, p.19). Accordingly, that might be a good indicator for improving their understanding of the concepts of teaching and classroom management (see section 6.2.2 in Chapter Six).

Supporting this view is what the trainees admit in their interviews about how their understanding about the idea of teaching has changed (see the above quotation). Also, Ruida explained her preconception about teaching and student learning as follows:

> As for the knowledge to be taught, I have to know it and understand it and tell it to the students. I never thought that student responses can be an indication of their understanding. I was very surprised when you negotiated that with me; I thought that if two or three students can be understood, that is enough to indicate my teaching is successful.

Maryam added:

> I know now what the teaching career is, and how the teachers are
> teaching. I even worked as a supplementary teacher in a private nursery,
> but I never thought that the teaching would be like that: hard thinking
> about how to make these materials understandable for the students.

The above quotation clearly show that the trainees have gained a new insight into the nature of teaching and students' learning through practicing their teaching. They described their previous views of teaching as 'a talent or an instinctive ability' and 'I have to know it and understand it and tell it to the students'. Also, Ruida indicated her misunderstanding of the concept of students' learning when she said 'I thought that if two or three students can be understood, that is enough to indicate my teaching is successful'. However, these misconceptions about teaching and students' learning seem to have changed to the teaching task that Maryam describes as 'hard thinking about how to make these materials understandable for the students'.

With regard to these changes, the question that arises here is whether we can attribute the trainees' new insights about teaching to the new method of supervision (RP) that was the basis of the field-work in this study. Therefore, I needed to look at two elements: the trainees on the one side and our RPC on the other. On the trainees' side, I looked at the trainees' teaching backgrounds in order to find any indicators that could support or refute attributing their new insight to the RPC. One of the main areas that I looked at is if they have faced teaching experience before. If they have not, we can refer the trainees' new insight of teaching to their first teaching practice. In other words, if the trainees have no experience in teaching and this course was their first confrontation of 'theory with practice', the possibility will be strong that this new insight can be attributed to this new experience.

However, the trainees' backgrounds reveal that they finished their first practicum last semester, and this course was the second one (see section 5.3. in Chapter Five). That means that this course is not their first encounter with teaching. Also, two of the trainees, Olla and Maryam, have taught as supplementary teachers in schools during the summer holiday. This may mean they have more teaching practice than the other trainees. Despite that, Maryam admits that 'I even worked as a supplementary teacher in a private nursery, but I never thought that the teaching would be like that'. So, what seems clear here is that even with her previous experience in teaching, she did not experience this change in her belief about teaching as a result of being in the course. However, that does not guarantee that

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the change in the trainees' thinking of the concept of teaching and student learning resulted from their participation in the RPC. However, it might increase the chance of referring to this change as the result of practicing this new method.

Furthermore, Ruida described her previous belief about teaching 'As for the knowledge to be taught, I have to know it and understand it and tell it to the students'. She has also practised teaching in her previous practicum, and indicated that she got her new insight about teaching through 'when you negotiated that with me'. Thus, what is clear here is that Ruida shows more awareness about the new way of teaching that she has acquired. This way of discussion will be further covered in the learning through observation and reflective discussions section.

Also relevant to the question whether I can attribute the trainees' new insight about the concept of teaching is the new method of supervision for the potential of RP. Based on the belief that the initial development of teachers is not a natural process but rather 'a matter of programming' (Stokking et al., 2003), it is possible to attribute the trainees' transformative learning/change to the new learning activities that the trainees practised in their RPC. Mezirow (2009, p. 92) identifies transformative learning as 'the process by which we transform problematic frames of reference – sets of assumption and expectation – to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, reflective, and emotionally able to change'. Therefore, in order to achieve this change, he identifies two fundamental elements: 'reflecting critically on the source, nature, and consequence of relevant assumptions . . . [and] participating freely and fully in an informed continuing discourse' (p. 94).

Referring to the design of this study, it could be argued that both of Mezirow's ingredients should be practised as new learning activities in a RPC. These activities are learning by interaction and by reflection on one's own practices. '"Learning by interaction" refers to talking or sharing with others or participating in, for example, a group discussion . . . [while] "Reflection" refers to consciously thinking about the strengths and weaknesses of one's practices' (van den Bergh et al., 2015,P. 143). In this study, both of these activities were practiced in our RPC; interaction within group discussion and reflection about the strengths and weaknesses of trainees' teaching.

However, because they are applied together; reflection and interaction in the reflective discussion stage, it seems hard to separate these two activities. Thus, I try in the follow sections to discuss both of these new learning activities as ways that the trainees may obtain new insights about teaching and students' learning, as well as the advantages that the reflective course of supervision might offer.

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7.2. Learning through observation, reflection within discussions.

Chapter six described how the trainees discover and assess their teaching through the discussion session, which is usually held soon after the teaching practice. As it was applied, the trainees not only engaged in the observation stage, during which all the trainees observe their colleagues when each teaches, but rather they were required to provide themselves and peers with positive and negative feedback about their own and their lessons (self- and peer-assessment). The data suggested that some of the trainees in the early stage faced difficulties to engage in self- and peer-assessment in the post-teaching discussions. Later, to some extent, they seemed to be better at receiving and giving feedback and dealing with the requirements of being in the RPC, although perhaps some had moved further than others in this respect (see section 6.2.1.3 in Chapter Six).

Both of these kinds of assessment that take place in the reflective dialogues appear to be a fundamental factor in improving the trainees' teaching (the interview with trainees). For example, in her interview I asked Olla about the main advantage of her participation in this RPC that is meant to have an effect on her view about teaching, and she said:

> First is the discussions. Through our discussions, the questions about what we do and why and how to make it better to facilitate the students' learning emerge. . . I was surprised when I discovered that there are reasons and roles for every activity . . . and one method may be better or worse, depending on the situation.

As I described in the design of this study, we as a group, myself, the trainees and sometimes the teachers, went to the classroom in which one of the trainees was teaching to observe that lesson and take notes. Then we discussed the positive and negative points of the lesson that had been taught by the trainees (see Chapter Four). As a supervisor, I tried to stimulate the trainees' reflection by asking further questions about what, why and how rather than giving direct answers (see section one in Chapter Six). Here, Olla seems to gain her new insight about teaching, which is 'I discovered that there are reasons and roles for every activity . . . and one method may be better or worse, depending on the situation, from the discussions that took place after teaching'. Supporting this claim is what Ruida admitted when we discussed the main advantages of the reflective course:

-Researcher: Ok, I understand, but you have previous experience in your first practicum. Why did you find this course to be more effective?

-Ruida: I learned from mistakes, not because you tell me it is wrong or right, but because, umm, I do not know, through discussing them. Without these discussions I think I will never know such things as the students' response (interview with Ruida).

Moreover, the new insight of teaching that the trainees gain from discussing their mistakes seems to come not only from discussing their own mistakes but also from their observation and the discussions that follow their peers' teaching. Moteah mentions that in her interview:

Even when I came back to my home, I felt that my head would split, but all the development that I had reached, is the result of my observations of my colleagues and the discussions that followed.

This extract from the transcript appears to help to support using RP in teaching education. Moteah admits that there has been an improvement in her teaching, which she attributes to her observations of her colleagues and the discussions that followed. Chassels and Melville (2009) claim that the opportunity to observe the lessons of colleagues provided the trainees with enhanced skills in critiquing lessons as well as exploring effective and ineffective teaching strategies. This opportunity to observe lessons and reflect on the effectiveness of teaching strategies is what Schon (1987) called refection-on-action. Through the trainees' observations of their peers' teaching, they can build some teaching repertoires that enable them to be more open to different teaching and learning styles (Carrier, 2011; Chassels & Melville, 2009). Moreover, Sims and Walsh (2008) indicate another critical aspect of the trainees' learning through observation and reflection, which is that the knowledge that their lessons improve from observation and feedback is more likely to allow them to accept and learn from constructive criticism.

However, not every thought concerning what we observe can be considered as a reflection-on-action. According to Schon (1991), reflective thinking should be related to particular beliefs about facts, which may include emotions or experiences. Thus, the reflective thinking that does not have relevance to judgments or emotions and unconscious processes is non-reflective thinking. Therefore, reflective thinking is an active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge that supports it and the further

conclusions to which it is likely to lead (Dewey, 1933, p. 6). That means that the trainees should first open their minds to recognising additional strategies for teaching various concepts and skills rather than their traditional ones (York-Barr et al., 2006).

Nevertheless, working to build new insight/consciousness through reflection is not an easy task. The trainees enter the practicum course with preconceptions about teaching and the role of teachers that can be assumed to be affected by cultural dimensions (see Chapter Two and Six, section 6.2.1). Thus, in order to create new insight, Shulman (2000, 133) suggested that the first step will be to make 'the internal external', and then to work on being able to 'put what has been external back inside'. In this context, what happened in our course seems to have followed Shulman's learning steps. Through the teaching and post-teaching discussions, the trainees appear to have had a chance to reveal and examine their conceptions about the teaching issues that are usually considered to be misconceptions (see section 6.2.1.1 in Chapter Six). Thus, it becomes apparent that the reflective discussion about their teaching 'triggers the need to reconcile inconsistencies and conceptual misconceptions during mutual discussion and leads to a restructuring of existing knowledge', which results in their new insights about teaching and the students' learning (Paus et al., 2012, 1127).

Furthermore, even though the reflective dialogue in our group focused on the trainees' learning more about their content and how to teach it, they also are learning about their students' thinking. In this context, Ruida mentioned 'the students' response' (see the later stage in Chapter Six). These findings fit well with Hiebert and Stigler's (2000) study as well as Sibbald's study (2009), when they explore that the reflective dialogue with trainees provides them with some educational knowledge about their students' learning parallel with their content teaching. Thus, engaging trainees in meaningful discussions about teaching is more importantly about the professional growth that PSTs experience through collaboration and discussion of instruction (Chassels & Melville, 2009; Groth, 2011; Post & Varoz, 2008; Tolle, 2010).

However, although the trainees developed seem supportive of discussion as a way they learn and from which they have got some benefits, their previous experience of learning through direct suggestions seems to have limited the efficiency of learning through reflective discussion. For example, their resistance to the self- and peer-assessments, their insistence on requesting direct guidance and their doubts about my attempts to promote their reflection as a weakness in my knowledge (see Chapter Eight).

Yet, with regard to the idea that reflection is how an individual learns about his or her actions during a particular experience individually (Manouchehri, 2002), research findings have also shown that individual conceptual understanding can even be enhanced by collaboration with others (Paus et al., 2012). In the next section, I try to explain how the trainees have gained new insights about teaching through their interaction in the reflective dialogue.

7.3. Learning through interaction within discussions

The variations of the trainees in their 'human capital' in teaching, which is the talent of individuals, can explain the better abilities of Olla and Ruida for discussing and making decisions to improve their teaching than their colleagues in engaging post-teaching discussions. Both Olla and Ruida clearly showed a willingness to learn, plus they have some basic educational knowledge on which, to some extent, the early teaching experiences could be grounded. Also, they have enough confidence to discover new practices, and in return they seem more open to experiences and to the input of their colleagues, the supervisor and the teachers (see section 6.2.2 in Chapter Six). However, other trainees, especially Moteah and Maryam, seemed deficient in their educational knowledge when compared with Ruida and Olla (diaries: 2, 3, 5, 6). Also, Moteah and Maryam appear less trusting to learn by new ways, and rather they seemed to adhere more to the traditional Saudi way of learning (tell me). Consequently, Moteah's statement that 'all the development that I had reached, is the result of my observations of my colleagues and the discussions that followed', surprised me.

However, despite individual variations in my trainees' reflective levels, what is clear from the observations of their teaching is that there were no major differences in their average teaching improvement, especially in the later stages. In other words, even in cases where some of my trainees did not appear to have been engaged in self-reflection, they still benefited from their interactions with one another.

Thus, the similarity of the average improvement that trainees achieved at the end of our course can be attributed to the collaborative power of the group, which is called 'social capital'. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) argue that human and social capital are both fundamental in the development of 'professional capital'. But 'social capital' is 'a lead strategy' (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2013, p. 37). 'Social capital' can reduce the variation in effective teaching among teachers by increasing their knowledge through giving any

member of the group the access to the others' human capital. Or, as Hargreaves and Fullan explained, they 'use the group to change the group' (2013, p. 37).

While there are different theoretical ways to frame learning of social capital (for example, see the social-behavioural, socio-cognitive approach based on Piaget's theories and cognitive elaboration), Vygotsky's theory (the socio-cultural) has been used regularly in teacher practice research (Barker, et al., 2013). According to Vygotsky's theory, learning is a 'social enterprise where meaning is constructed in social relations and dialogue' (Barker et al., 2013, p. 412). Thus, according to this theory, the trainees improve their new consciousness about teaching through contacts and interactions with others (colleagues, supervisors, teachers) 'as the first step (interpsychological plane), then later assimilates and internalises this knowledge adding his personal value to it (intrapsychological plane)' (Vygotsky, 1978, cited in Turuk, 2008, p. 246). Also, sociocultural theory is advocated to mediate learning. It stipulates that 'learners learn most when they interact with a more capable partner'. That is because learners, from the view of sociocultural theory, need help from others to succeed in performing a new task. According to Vygotsky the transformation of learning 'is not a mere copy, but a transformation of what had been learnt through interaction, into personal values' (Turuk, 2008, p. 246)

However, learning through interaction seems difficult to achieve without some implementations /conditions that support social communications (Barker et al., 2013). For example, social skills. The trainees have developed their procedures by becoming members of a community of practice (CoP) (Lave & Wenger, 1991), in which the notion of a zone of proximal development (ZPD) can be applied (see Vygotsky, 1978). That means that the trainees need to share in the communication and work as a group to connect with their colleagues to reach to 'agreement' as a prerequisite for learning. Thus, through group communication that lead to agreement, 'the object of knowledge emerges simultaneously' and learning in terms of ZPD occurs (Barker, et al., 2013, p. 412). Therefore, for a ZPD to be created, the trainees need to be prepared to enter into a shared world of significations (Roth & Lee, 2007).

To this end, the other conditions for learning will be to avoid thinking of knowledge as a kind of 'concrete substance that can be transmitted', but rather that such an 'activity is fundamentally tied to the notion of agreement' (Barker et al., 2013, p. 413). Therefore, seeing knowledge as something that 'you should do' or 'tell me', which is the case in the Saudi educational context, does not match with the way of creating new knowledge by

interaction, but rather results in it being viewed as strange knowledge from strangers (Hodkinson et al., 2008). Thus, it is vital that the knowledge should occur under the persuasion in which 'the possibilities that become available to the participants for thinking, reflecting, arguing and acting in a certain historically contingent cultural practice' (Roth and Radford, 2010, p. 305).

Nevertheless, what is apparent is that the Saudi educational context is less supportive of the previous conditions of the process of learning according to socio-cultural theory, where the knowledge is seen as a 'concrete substance' and the individualistic approach is prevalent. Thus, both of these conditions will be major challenges to RP to improve teacher education in KSA (see Chapter Eight). Therefore, while the data in the later stage clearly indicates the positive change in the trainees' perspective of the teaching process and students' learning, I have to admit that the impact of the implantations of interaction and reflection were limited (see section 9.6, in Chapter Nine).

7.4. Building the trainees' decisional capital

While both human and social capital are a fundamental element in transforming the learning of teaching every day, something to achieve professional capital of the trainees is still missing. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) called this aspect 'decisional capital'. Simply stated, it is the teacher's capacity to judge. This capacity is a crucial skill for all teachers because in a teaching career, teachers frequently encounter situations and circumstances that require the exercise of judgment. Thus, 'decisional capital' will 'enable them to make wise judgment circumstances where there is no fixed rule or piece of incontrovertible evidence to guide them' (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012, p. 94).

In the traditional supervision system, one of the significant problems is the centralisation of decision making. This problem can be considered as an echo of the culture of authority that the supervisors own in the teacher educational programmes. This authority establishes the supervisors as sources of the instructions to make the trainees' teaching improve (see section 2.2.3 and 2.5 in Chapter Two). Consequently, the trainees rarely actively reflect on their teaching and discuss their thinking about on what basis the decision capital is built (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Instead, they must wait for the supervisor's feedback, which includes the decisions that should be applied in order to improve their teaching. Ruida said:

> I was supposed to follow my supervisor just to know my positive and
> negative points; there was no discussion between us. Sometimes the
> supervisor sends emails after one week (Ruida's interview).

Also, Olla in her interview claimed that:

> When I was in a previous course I did some group work with the students,
> but I did not call this a 'workshop'. The supervisor asked me to conduct a
> workshop, and I said I had, and the supervisor said: 'No, you did not'. That's
> just her judgment without any discussion of what I did and why. Also, there
> is no training side but rather only judgment . . . do that, do not do that.

However, what we did in our course seems different. The trainees have a plan for their
teaching, as well as attending and observing their peers' teaching. Then they have to engage
in the reflective dissection stage, which involves the judgment of what were seen as positive
or negative points in their teaching. Through these 'instructional rounds', the trainees
viewed different cases of teaching and teaching problems upon which to build their
repertoire. So, when the trainees have to discuss their and their peers' classroom lessons,
they adapt these cases so as to be able to 'judge good or bad instruction when they see it'
(Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012, p. 94). Sparks-Langer et al. (2004) argue that RP allows time for
teachers to reflect on their instructional decisions by taking the following into
consideration: individual student needs, content to be taught, teachers' knowledge of the
content and teaching pedagogy and the context of the learning environment (Sparks-
Langer et al., 2004). Thus, through reflective discussions, the trainees gain a good chance
to build their capacity to judge, especially when 'the evidence and the answers aren't
incontrovertibly clear' (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2013, P. 37).

7.5. Tangible changes

Another advantage of applying the RP is making the classroom a place where professional
conversations about teaching and learning can occur (Takahashi & Yoshida, 2004; Tolle,
2010). As I mentioned before in section (6.2.1) in Chapter Six, my trainees suffered from
their false expectations about teaching and the role of the teacher. Thus, they found
themselves in conflict with the current realities of the teaching profession. In their study,
Alhammed et al. (2004) report on the gap between theory that is taught in teaching
institutions and the actual classroom practice. Also, Feiman-Nemser et al. (1989, p.1)
argued that 'unless teacher educators help their students surface and examine initial beliefs

and assumptions, these taken-for-granted ideas may distort the lessons taught and learned during teacher preparation'.

However, the later data analysis suggests that the trainees seem able to attempt to resolve the disparities between expectation and reality through practice teaching, observation, reflection, discussion and interaction (see section 6.2.2 in Chapter Six). For example, Majd wrote in her RJ third week that:

> In our teaching we feel like an actor who performs fictional roles that do not belong to their reality, but they have to do it because the roles should be like that . . . we pattern/mould ourselves after what we believe at the time is an ideal teacher.

Majd, in the above quotation, points to an important point from which almost all teacher preparation programmes suffer, which is the disparity between expectations and reality (see section 6.2.1.1.1; false expectations in Chapter Six). She describes her false expectations that refer to her cultural life and studying in the university as 'fictional roles'. However, her point is not unexpected. Correa et al. (2015, p. 68) claimed that:

> What must be taught in schools no longer fits within a profession that can be learned at university, where teachers work in idealized schools that are secure, controlled and predictable, with (linguistically, ethnically or geographically) homogenous groups of students that learn the basic skills of reading, writing, arithmetic by memorizing well-defined content.

We have addressed this issue in our course by, as Delamarter (2015) suggested, providing trainees with the reflective space and structure to process their changing expectations of teaching and themselves. We do not inquire into the solutions that can be applied in 'idealised schools', but, rather, we want to delve into the real trainees' teaching experience. We counter the trainees' problems with their teaching by reflective discussions on their real challenges and try to help them to be able to make a decision to maintain, initiate, adjust or terminate their actual classroom teaching.

In the trainees' interviews, they express the reality of training in our course as an advantage of doing RP. For example, Olla said:

> The reality of what we do: no theories about, no "you should do that", yes, of course there are some things we should do then, but I mean, we should

do it because the situation requires that particular response, not because of the references.

Majd also commented on this point when she said:

> The problem was that we thought we have to do somethings because all the teachers have to do them. The biggest problem is that what we thought is far away from a way to serve the current situation. Here the case is different: what I have to do is what will serve my lesson; either there is a match or there isn't with what the prof in my university said.

The tangibility that the trainees feel in our course occurs when they find a link between what they have to do in their teaching and in their classroom. In other words, they have to do what works in their classroom; 'what I have to do is what will serve my lesson'. Not what they thought will work because 'all the teachers have to do them', which seems 'culturally based filters' about teaching, or 'what the prof in my university said'. This new insight of viewing teaching as an interactive living organism seems to be an advantage of providing trainees with the reflective space and structure to process their changing expectations about teaching and themselves (Delamarter, 2015). However, while the trainees' changing expectations about teaching is discussed in this section, their changing expectations about themselves will be discussed in the next section.

7.6. The teacher's identity

In her RJ, Maryam writes:

> We keep ourselves in unrealistic scenarios and dialogues to preserve the stereotype of the traditional teachers, because we thought we knew what they look like . . . We speak differently, we behave differently; we even walk in the corridors of the school in a different way . . . No more. What I have learned from our discussion this week is the importance of keeping myself as Maryam and teach.

What is apparent from the above quotations of Majd and Maryam is that not only were the trainees suffering from unrealistic expectations about teaching in their practicum, but also the conflict between their expectations and reality may precipitate an identity crisis (Chong & Low, 2009). Delamarter (2015, p.p 2–3) identified an individual's identity as 'a construct of the self in relationship to others. It is a function of how I view myself and how I act in

relation to the social and physical institutions and structures that surround me'. According to Meijer et al. (2011, p. 116), one's identity is never attained but is a state of the ongoing 'interpretation and re-interpretation of experiences' that is usually brought about by changing circumstances. Also, Delamarter (2015, p. 3) claims that 'Sts' idealistic expectations of teaching are misaligned with reality may also bring about an identity crisis'.

The trainees enter their practicum with the identity of the 'stereotype of the traditional teachers'. However, that no longer applies because this stereotype did not match their expectations. Thus, even these mismatched expectations that led to an identity crisis and its resulting unhappiness (Hastings, 2010) is necessary for revising these ill-equipped identities (Delamarter, 2015). Thus, when the trainees experienced different circumstances – in our case, RP as a new style of supervision – It seems to actively promote some form of identity crisis. However, through day-to-day identity negotiations that should be the result of the reflective discussions, any identity crisis experienced by the trainees can be reduced by gaining a new identity, which is, as Maryam expresses it, 'the importance of keeping myself as Maryam and teach'.

Therefore, using a RP appears to have a positive impact on the trainees' identity by helping them to develop healthy and realistic expectations about their teaching. Teachers' professional identities and expectations play a fundamental role in their long-term career development (Cooper & He, 2012; Kirbulut et al., 2012). Cole and Knowles (1993, p. 460) claim that the trainees 'who entered field experiences with images of teaching and teachers more congruent with the realities of the classrooms were able to adjust to and learn from the problems they encountered'.

To conclude this section, we can argue that trainees gain some advantages through the reflective journey in which the trainees engage in their practicum. During this journey, the trainees engage in the 'instructional rounds' that include teaching, observation, reflection, discussion and interaction. Inside this cycle, the trainees gain opportunities to test their preconceptions about teaching and the issues that are related to it, such as the role of teachers and the students' capacities for learning.

Moreover, the reflective course may provide the trainees with good opportunities to practise their teaching skills, such as making decisions, thereby linking their teaching and identities as teachers to the real classrooms. The data analysis also shows that when trainees seem able to reflect before, during and after their lessons, especially in the later stage, they appear to have the potential to grow and improve their methods and stimulate

more learning within the classroom (Schon, 198; Zeichner & Liston, 1987). However, the data analysis show that some of trainees show more ability to be reflective and learn about their own practice than others in their using reflection.

Yet, despite the advantages that the trainees appeared to gain through practicing reflection, using RP as a way to improve their students' learning has recently been questioned. Traditional teaching methods, or what Christodoulou called 'mindless rote learning', have advocates who believe that the human learning process does not thrive under limited guidance. Thus, they support ongoing 'teacher instruction' that fosters independent learning (Christodoulou, 2014, p. 38; see Section 3.1.1). However, this raises further questions about short courses of reflection and suggests that a closer look is needed regarding whether reflection can be achieved as a learning process (see, for example, Hobbs, 2007; Yoshida, 2005; 2012; Lewis et al., 2006; Watanabe et al, 2008)

However, while the data in the later stage clearly indicate positive changes in the ST's perspective of the teaching and the students' learning, some challenges limited the effectiveness of applying the reflection process. The next chapter will discuss the main challenges in detail.

Chapter summary

The chapter discussed the major advantages that trainees feel that they gain from RPC. The advantages were divided into six sections. The first section reveals that the trainees have gained new insight into the nature of teaching and students' learning through practicing their teaching skills in this course. Sections two and three discuss two possible ways that the trainees may obtain their new insights about teaching and students' learning: learning through observation and reflection, and learning through interaction, both of which can be applied through reflective dissections after trainees' teaching sessions. The fourth section highlights the potential of reflective discussions for building 'decisional capital' in trainees as an important skill for teachers. Another advantage of applying the RP is tangible, in that it makes the classroom a place where professional conversations about teaching and learning can occur. The last section discusses how using a RP appears to have a positive impact on trainees' identities as teachers, which can be seen as an advantage to the practice.

Chapter eight: Challenges

In chapter seven, I discussed the main advantages that the trainees obtained from their engagement in the RPC. However, the data analysis also shows that there are many challenges that limit the trainees' benefits from this course. As these sections attempt to argue, most of these challenges relate to the Saudi culture of learning, while others relate to the Saudi educational system. An overview of the themes is shown in the next figure: The outline of chapter eight:
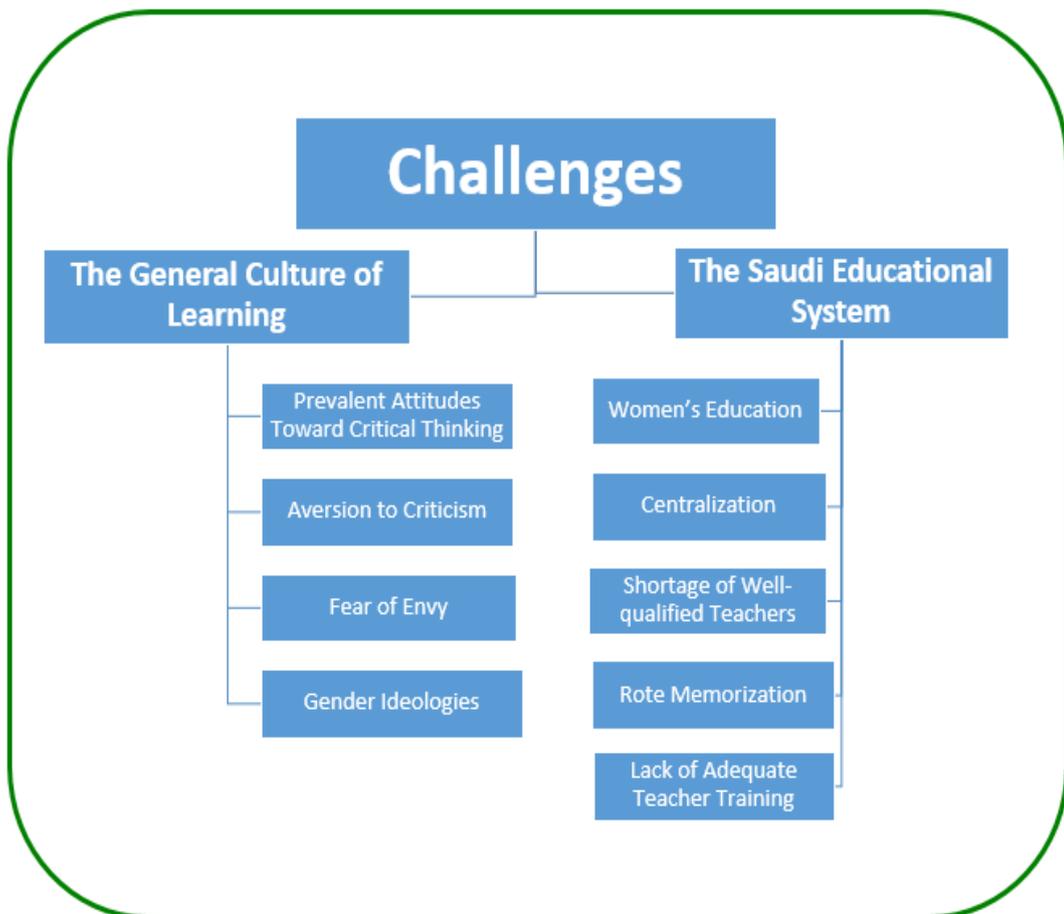
Figure 8.1: The outline of chapter eight

8.1. The General Culture of Learning

8.1.1. Prevalent attitudes toward critical thinking

Learning culture is, as James and Biesta define, 'the social practices through which people learn' (2007, p. 23). In the case of KSA, the essential cores of learning are social and religious. Thus, Saudis have values and beliefs that are taken as coming directly from the Quran and Mohammed and these cannot be changed or even be thought about critically (Alenizi, 2012). Thus, since religious views have a strong impact on Saudi social life (Profanter, 2014), it can be argued that critical thinking skills are less cultivated in Saudi culture (Allamnakhrah, 2013).

Chapter Two argued that the attitudes against both criticism and the individual autonomy of thought are deeply prevalent in Saudi culture. Schon (1987) contends that the formation of reflective thinking hinges on the experience of surprise, since 'previously held ideas involve questioning earlier traditional models of teaching' (Talvitie et al, 2010, p. 86). However, a questioning mind needs a supportive culture that sponsors individual autonomy and accepts differences. Since the individual autonomy of trainees' thinking is not supported, and neither is their questioning of situations where conflict takes place, the formation of reflective thinking is less likely to occur (Hollingsworth, 1989).

In this study, the transcript data points to this prevalent attitude in Saudi society, which seems less likely to create an environment where reflective thinking can be cultivated. For example, Ruida, in her RJ, pointed at this as the main cause of the trainees' initially low levels of effectiveness in the post-teaching discussion.

> I love the idea of reflection, observation and discussion. When the supervisor explained it to us, that is what I dreamed of doing and learning in university. I love to have discussions about anything and my friends know that about me…. But I feel sometimes I could do that especially when the teachers is with us, I have something to say, but I feel they will think I am rude, stupid or maybe I will take a long time and my colleagues will blame me later (Ruida's RJ,3)

Although in her RJ, Ruida expresses her enthusiasm for participating in the reflective discussions, she seems under the influence of the prevalent attitudes of Saudi culture. These prevalent attitudes are enforced by what Allamnakhrah (2013, p. 205) calls 'social and academic ostracism.' Ruida reflects this when she says, 'they will think I am rude, stupid or may I will take long time and my colleagues will blame me later.' This may mean that,

even though the teacher programme encourages the trainees to discuss and practise their reflective skills, the society around them holds a different view of learning. This agrees with Delamater (2015), who claims that putting new learning activities into place in teacher preparation programmes does not guarantee their success.

8.1.2. Aversion to Criticism

With respect to the natural human aversion to criticism, one of the main challenges experienced in applying this course is the trainees' high resistance to criticism (see section two in Chapter Six). However, while this resistance seemed to lessen over time from how it was in the beginning of the course, it existed throughout. Thus, it can be argued that regarding the prevalent attitudes in Saudi culture that do not support critical thinking, society's aversion to criticism seems to be a logical result. For example, Moteah said in her interview about the disadvantages of this course:

> Moteah: To be honest, the discussions take a long time, I wish they could say it to me as a small point. If I agree that is fine, but if not, that does not matter. Especially if it is a negative point, they repeat their explanations again and again. Ok I know it is wrong, shall we stop now!

> Researcher: Maybe they think you did not understand what they said or they are trying to persuade especially when you disagree with them or be silent.

> Moteah: It is not necessary to say, 'Yes it is wrong, yes, yes you are right' I will lose face, sorry I can't.

While Ruida seems to be breaking with the cultural role and, thus, is likely vulnerable to social ostracism, Moteah appears as a typical Saudi who expresses an aversion to criticism. Moteah mentions some challenges with applying our course, such as time, something that will be discussed later. As I described before, the trainees show a high rate of resistance to criticism in the post-teaching discussion stage and they take different approaches than just rejection (see section 6.2.1.3 in Chapter Six). Here, Moteah does the same, she seems dissatisfied with her received feedback in discussion and would prefer to receive her feedback individually as a list of points. She describes that as 'saving time' since receiving feedback through discussion 'takes a long time.' However, saving time seems an unconvincing explanation for her discomfort with her peers criticising her teaching performance (diary, 5). Ironically, she elsewhere describes the time that she spent in

discussions and interactions as a 'time of real learning' (Moteah's interview) (See the advantages of RPC in Chapter Seven).

Thus, while learning through discussion and interaction employs the consciousness as a source of knowledge (see Chapter Seven), culturally, Moteah finds herself struggling when she has to admit that what she did was wrong or even inappropriate. She seems to interpret this admission as shame; 'I will lose face.' Hence, she prefers to receive her feedback as a list, not to save time, but rather to save face, since admitting a mistake is interpreted culturally as 'losing face.'

In my experience as a woman who belongs to the Saudi culture and then as a supervisor working in a Saudi university, I can say that Moteah's aversion to criticism is not unrepresentative of Saudi culture. Allamnakhrah, who is a Saudi researcher, admits that 'we are living in an uncritical society' (2013, p. 205). He blames the Saudi environment that does not encourage discussion for the lack of a critical culture in Saudi society. This lack has its roots in the early stages of Saudi childhood when the child learns that questions are seen as a sign of stupidity or a lack of manners (Al-Essa, 2009; Bin laden, 2014).

Moreover, some researchers, such as Weston (2008); Elyas et al, (2010) Almziny (2010) and Alenizi (2012) try to link this uncritical tendency in Saudi culture to the Islamic religion which 'permeates every aspect of life and at times cannot be separated from – what we would call – the secular aspects of life' (Profanter, 2014, p. 214). Simply put, this can be traced to the traditional conversation between Saudi parents and their child as Allamnakhrah describes:

> If I have to think about my future, most of my family says, 'don't worry,
> God will guide you.' We fully agree with that expression, and I fully trust
> in my God's guidance, but we should also be given the opportunity to
> think. (2013, p. 205)

Hence, this religious view which ascribes all thoughts to God seems to limit the potential of thinking and contributes to producing more of a 'blind herd' in society where individual independence is seen as rebelling against God and the community (Notohara, 2003).

Nevertheless, Hamdan (2005, p. 53) stands against linking the negative aspects of Saudi culture to religion. He describes these views as 'too facile.' He claims that most researchers who blame religious views for limiting critical thinking in Saudi society are western scholars who are unfamiliar with Islam as a religion. They assume that Islam, as the dominant religion of Saudis, is the key culprit behind any weakness. However, in terms of understanding the cultural context in order to interpret any phenomena in Saudi,

Allamnakhrah, Alenizi and Almziny are all Saudi researchers. Moreover, Hamden himself, and many researchers, admit that Saudi culture is deeply entrenched in religion (Al-Essa, 2009; Almziny, 2010; Profanter, 2014; Al-Sadi & Elyas, 2013). Thus, one must expect to connect any phenomena in KSA to the dominant factor in Saudi life, which is religion.

Notwithstanding, in order to reconcile the two views, the current Islam that is dominant in Saudi life is what is called 'Wahhabi Islam.' Rubin (2006, p. 101) claims that Islam is distorted by Wahhabi Islam as it makes 'most Muslims remain conservative and traditional believers.' Wahhabi Islam, which includes the mutawwi[17] , considers any critical thinking and criticism toward this religious system to be a criticism of god (Albeshr, 2012). Almziny (2010) advocates linking the aversion to critical thinking and criticisms in Saudi society to religious culture, stating that the lack of critical thinking is inextricably bound up with Saudi religious culture although 'the Quran' encourages people to think and reflect critically. However, whether the religion has influenced critical thinking or not, the current study considers the question: If 'Saudi remains a very traditional, conservative society where new concepts are not easily implemented' to what extent can reflection be a successful method of learning? (Profanter, 2014, p.220).

Interviews with supervisors provide some answers. Soad, one of the supervisors who practises teaching in the schools, is a teacher and a supervisor of trainees at KSM University. In the interview with her, I described what I had done with the trainees in my RPC, including the discussion of their teaching and learning from one another through interaction. After that, she said,

> Soad: Did you really do that! That is very difficult.

> Researcher: Why do you think it is difficult?

> Soad: First the classrooms are very tight, also the time table of the lessons, but yes, it can be managed, but what is difficult is that the trainees do not accept receiving criticism with others… I mean that the environment does not encourage discussions and the respect of other views. The supervisors will find themselves in trouble if they apply this. Many of supervisors see trainees crying when they criticize their teaching individually, never mind with their peers.

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[17]Mutawwi or Mutwwaa is a member of the police force, especially in Saudi Arabia, charged with enforcing adherence to Shari'a law, notably in regards to public conduct and dress (the free dictionary. http://www.thefreedictionary.com/mutawa).

According to what Soad knows about the Saudi culture of learning, as a teacher then as a supervisor, she seemed very surprised when she heard what we had done. She mentions the Saudi environment that 'does not encourage discussions and respecting other views' as a challenge to applying the RPC. In addition, she refers to the trainees' aversion to criticism, even 'trainees crying,' as another difficulty with reflective discussion.

Moreover, Nadia, another supervisor who showed her enthusiasm for the reflective idea, shares Soad's view that Saudi culture's attitude toward criticism is a challenge. She says:

> I like this idea but give me an atmosphere that respects other views or
> even simply allows others to say critical things without any problems. We
> need to address the society culturally, only then can we say, 'Welcome to
> the new method of learning.

8.1.3. Fear of Envy

Also, Nada's other supervisor, who has 11 years in supervision, suggested another cultural aspect that may hinder applying the reflection among trainees, 'fear of envy.' She said:

> There is also another impediment to applying your reflective course, which
> is the close culture that we live in, for example, 'fear of envy'. When I asked
> good trainees to allow others to attend to her, she rejects that because she
> fears their envy. Therefore, it is a cultural problem.

The culture of the 'fear of envy' seems very common in Saudi society where a person fears 'being envied for what he has, and wishes to protect himself from the consequences of the envy of others' (Foster, 1972, p. 166). Consequently, the trainee may simply refuse to allow other trainees to attend her lesson because she believes that she will be envied.

Nevertheless, in light of socio-cultural theory, Saudi culture bears responsibility for many of the challenges trainees face in applying the RPC. One of the vital concepts of socio-cultural theory is that the human mind is mediated (Lantolf, 2000). Vygotsky (1987) named this mediation as one of the 'tools' of understanding the world and humans themselves. These tools are created by humans within specific cultures. This means that humans carry with them the characteristics of the culture. With regard to Vygotsky's view, it seems that what the trainees face as challenges in applying the RPC 'is not confined to Saudi universities; this merely reflects prevalent attitudes in Saudi culture' (Allamnakhrah, 2013, p. 205). For example, some of these challenges were: the trainees' resistance to criticism that shows in their post-teaching discussions; their lack of critical thinking and their

difficulties in reaching a high level of reflection, which seem as a result to the Saudi culture. Moreover, while these findings seem strong in the Saudi culture in general, some traditional ideologies about gender have also affected women's position in Saudi society, which will be discussed next.

8.1.4. The Position of Women in Saudi Society and Gender Ideologies

As I described in chapter two, it is clear that gender ideologies are deeply embedded in Saudi society. Thus, Saudi women's position should be taken into account in the study analysis. In Saudi society in general, it is believed that the role of women is that of mothers and homemakers. Therefore, a woman's identity is seen as an extension of her male guardians, i.e. in relation to her father's family's identity. When she marries, she will be added to her husband's identity (Hamdan, 2005, p. 45).

Thus, with this social situation of Saudi women, women face a few key challenges in their ability to engage in reflective thinking, which involves being an independent person who feels a responsibility toward her teaching and thus her society. Socially, Saudi women seem to be treated unprofessionally and often excluded from social leadership practice. Consequently, Saudi women are not advancing enough to leadership roles or contributing to influential decision-making roles (see Chapter Two). Instead, they are often challenged to find opportunities to practice reflection in their lives and to trust their personal decisions. This lack in Saudi women's social leadership and decision-making experience seems very clear in my trainees' practice in the post- teaching discussion, where their skills of negotiations, opinion support and decision making were weak (diary 2 ,3,5).

8.2. The Saudi Educational System

The previous section highlights some features in Saudi society that challenge reflective thinking and thus reflection among trainees. However, since 'education cannot be separated from the larger socio-political circumstances' (Islam, 2014, p.76), in this section I will discuss the main features of the Saudi educational system that might have a direct influence on the limitations of RP potential to improve my trainees' teaching in their practicum course. These system features are centralization, rote memorization, a shortage of well-qualified teachers and a lack of adequate teacher training. Also, women's education will be highlighted due to the gender ideologies that dominate Saudi culture and thus influence women's education.

8.2.1. Women's Education

While education in Saudi is an area in which women have experienced significant progress (AlMunajjed, 2009; Alenizi, 2012; Almazrawi, 2014) the religious-social view of women has deeply affected women's education. Hence, even the considerable increase has 'not resulted in an equal increase in women's production output.' In turn, most of the effort in women's education is paid to a quantitative expansion of the number of girls' schools, with less consideration of the quality provided and the skills developed (AlMunajjed, 2009). Thus, at the primary, intermediate and secondary levels, religious studies and Arabic language are the dominant subjects for girls, and mathematics, sciences, foreign languages, and information and communication technology (ICT) are lagging behind. Also, fieldwork, teamwork, and innovative research based on evaluation and brainstorming are lacking in the girls' curriculum, as well as (AlMunajjed, 2009).

Moreover, at the higher education level, the situation does not change substantially. Girls receive knowledge in the traditional way, 'based on repetition and memorization instead of analytic research methodology, creative thinking, personality development, and the development of skills' (AlMunajjed, 2009, p.12). Also, general health education and extracurricular activities are missing in most of the girls' curricula; educational and cultural trips to museums are rare. High academic qualifications, such as the ability to use a computer, are not part of the requirements, and the concept of lifelong learning, which is essential to updating knowledge and skills, is broadly missing (AlMunajjed, 2009)(see section 8.2.4).

In addition, gender ideologies deeply influence the Saudi public education system, which treats males, and females differently based on expectations in society (see Chapter Two). As Saudi society expects women to be good mothers and homemakers, the curricula in girls' schools stresses courses that are suitable to these roles (Hamdan, 2005; AlMunajjed, 2009; Almazrawi, 2014). Consequently, physical education is non-existent for Saudi girls in schools at all educational levels (AlMunajjed, 2009). Furthermore, at the higher education level, enrolment of women in the fields of science and technology is low, and the fields of engineering and agriculture remain predominantly male territory. There is a high concentration of women in education, as teaching among Saudi women has been 'strongly encouraged by their illiterate mothers' (Hamdan, 2005, p. 58; AlMunajjed, 2009). However, teaching, which is generally perceived as a female job, also suffers from a shortage of well-qualified teachers in girls' education (see section 8.2.3).

In light of a socio-cultural view of learning, these social and academic shortages in Saudi women's education seem to have shaped women's skills of thinking, working and even their views about themselves as people with less eligibility and ability to take responsibility for themselves. Thus, skills such as confidence, independence, decision-making, dialogue ability and critical thinking appear as weak areas in Saudi women (Badriah, 2016). Unfortunately, since most of these skills are needed to apply RP successfully, the current skills of Saudi women pose a real challenge.

8.2.2. Centralization

One of the significant problems with the Saudi education system is the centralization of decision making (see section 2.4 in Chapter Two.). This problem is due to the restrictions enforced by the Ministry of Education to teach a standard curriculum in every classroom in KSA. Thus, evaluating the teachers on their compliance to these restricted rules leaves no room for teachers to be creative (Almazrawi, 2014; Alswalim, 1996). In the focus group with schoolteachers, they complain about this centralization. They find that this centralization limits their ability to improve their teaching. That is because the suggestions that come from their reflections on their teaching are often inconsistent with their supervisors' suggestions, which the teachers have to apply (interview with teachers)[18].

This centralization of the Saudi educational system and keeping teachers away from educational decision-making is in tension with Stenhouse's ideas of curriculum reform. Stenhouse sees 'teachers as researchers,' or research-based teaching, as part of the curriculum solution, which poses a problem by confronting teachers in the real classroom. According to Stenhouse, the curriculum solution 'was cast in the form of a pedagogical experiment.' Thus, his idea represents a significant shift in educational debates from 'a traditional instruction-based towards a more discussion-based pedagogy. In other words, from the researcher's desk to the teachers' classroom (Elliott, 2006, p. 408). Moreover, Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) emphasize the importance of providing an opportunity for teachers to talk about educational reform because the most useful professional development should be linked with active teaching, assessment, observation, and reflection rather than abstract discussions.

Nevertheless, as the aim of this study is to provide teachers in schools a space to improve the pedagogical knowledge of the trainees in their practicum, the current position of Saudi

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[18]The interview was not recorded due to the teachers' requests.

teachers seems too distant from spaces where the educational policy is decided (Alsalahi, 2014). For example, Alkatheeri (1995) criticizes the rigid centralized system, which is too inflexible to allow teachers to influence the curriculum or modify it to fit their school situations. Thus, to address this situation, first we should raise awareness of the importance of the pedagogical experiment in which teachers accept the fundamental need for tangible reform in the Saudi educational system (Wenglinsky, 2000; Darling-Hammond and Richardson, 2009; Alsalahi, 2014).

Furthermore, the centralized control of the government over classroom materials extends to university curricula ensuring that universities also function according to the country's laws and ideology. Therefore, any attempt to adapt methods, conduct research or test the effect of different approaches is circumscribed. This limits inquiry (Elyas & Al-Sadi, 2013). For example, in order to conduct this study, I waited more than 6 months (from December 2013 to June 2014) to gain a permit the permitting to apply my new method of supervision to trainees. However, I was lucky enough to obtain access to trainees as a supervisor in the university; otherwise, my chances of applying my study would be almost none.

Inevitably, with this centralization of decision-making in the Saudi educational system, it seems difficult to apply or even test new ideas such as RP. The centralized control of the Ministry of Education over classroom materials really challenges any attempts to improve the situation. Also, the lack of general awareness of the importance of the 'teacher's tacit knowledge, individual-based and context- specific' in educational reform leads to missed opportunities 'to contribute unique insight to both the academic research community and the community of teachers' (Liu, 2015, p. 150). However, this leads not only to a culture of ignorance among teachers, but also to a low level of competence in teachers to take on educational reform. This challenge will be explained more in the next section.

8.2.3. Shortage of well-qualified teachers

Notwithstanding this, while the idea of 'teachers as researchers' seems fundamental in any educational reform attempt, teachers' competence is a key factor in the success of reflection as an idea. Michael Barber support this view, starting 'the quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers' (OECD ,2010, p.4) A general assessment of the qualifications of Saudi teachers to perform this role is alarming, and Almazrawi (2014) claims that most Saudi teachers suffer from a lack of sufficient knowledge about student learning, and they need professional training in classroom management and assessment.

Moreover, the traditional method of teaching still dominates in Saudi schools, with teachers' resistant to any updating changes (Alsalahi, 2014; Krieger, 2007).

Furthermore, with regard to Saudi Arabia's non-co-educational system, girls' education also suffers from a shortage of well-qualified teachers. AlMunajjed (2009) criticizes the performance of teachers and expresses the need to formulate new programmes for teaching. Interestingly, this criticism of the quality of Saudi teachers rises proportionally with the increasing number of female teachers in the public system of education (at all school levels). For instance, the number of female teachers 'has increased from 185,956 in 2001–2002 to 250,000 in 2012–2013 (Saudi Press Agency, 2012)

In accordance with international research supporting the benefits of teacher cooperation(Zembal-Saul et al, 2002, Consuegra et al., 2014; Hascher, 2006; Talvitie et al.,2015), this study aims to use teachers' pedagogical knowledge to help trainees to improve their teaching. Most of these studies mention that cooperating teachers have the strongest influence on PSTs' attitudes and learning during their practicum. In addition, some of them indicate the importance of pedagogical feedback of teachers. According to the current study, the findings reveal that the trainees obtain some benefits from the teacher's feedback in its near-exclusive focus on practical advice about the classroom situation. This result seems parallel with Consuegra et al (2014), Hascher (2006) and Talvitie et al. (2015) whose study reports that the feedback provided by the mentors was considered an important source for the development of teaching skills.

However, despite these positive findings, this study also finds that the teachers are suffering from a lack of updating teaching methods as well as educational knowledge. Also, the findings indicate that most of teacher's feedback is characterized as 'controlling,' and 'traditional,' with little support of trainees' autonomy in their learning by reflection and discussion (see section three in Chapter Six). Thus, with the traditional teaching methods that the teachers' have, using teachers' knowledge seems less supporting of the trainees' reflection. This finding is consistent with prior research that indicates that the trainees can apply inappropriate teaching methods by following the cooperating teachers' teaching advice (Ronfeldt & Reininger, 2012; Consuegra et al., 2014). Also, this study finds a tension between teachers and trainees autonomy in their learning, which influences trainees' reflection. Valencia et al. (2009) claim that only cooperating teachers who provide autonomy to trainees can develop alternative instructional practices.

In the end, while the trainees gain some benefits from the trachers' participation in the post- teaching discussions, it could be argued that using teachers in this study would appear to handicap the trainees' reflection rather than support it. This refers to the lack of teachers' updating of their educational knowledge as well as the limitation on the autonomy that the teachers provide trainees. However, while the Saudi culture of learning seems the first contributor to the tension between teachers and trainees' learning autonomy, which is not only the case in KSA. This finding also appears in line with the findings of Consuegra et al (2014) in their study in Belgium (Consuegra et al, 2014)

8.2.4. Rote Memorization

Although the Saudi government has gone to considerable effort to increase girls' access to education, the traditional teaching methods still dominate in schools (AlMunajjed, 2009; Alenizi, 2012; Almazrawi, 2014). AlMunajjed, who is a researcher of Saudi women, describes the teaching situation in Saudi girls' schools:

> Methods for teaching girls still tend to focus at all educational levels on
> the traditional way of learning, based on repetition and memorization
> instead of analytic research methodology, creative thinking, personality
> development, and the development of skills. (2009, p.12)

Many researchers note the dominance of traditional forms of teaching and learning with a strong emphasis on memorizing and repetition. They have linked these traditional forms of teaching to historical roots extending to the early years in Qur'an schools, a form called 'Kuttabs' (Krieger, 2007; AlMunajjed, 2009; Alenizi, 2012; Almazrawi, 2014; Elyas & Picard, 2010). (See section 2.2 in Chapter Two).

Nevertheless, although the above studies indicate the limits of the traditional way of learning, based on repetition and memorization, in the Saudi public schools, higher education seems hardly to be different. Krieger (2007, p. 4), who evaluates Saudi education reform in his study, mentions the 'outdated teaching methods' as dominant even at the university level. Therefore, while higher education in Saudi does 'not reflect the development in the early history of KSA, there are traces of these rooted pedagogies in modern day KSA, and in this case even in the higher education' (Elyas & Al-Sadi, 2013, p. 59).

Moreover, at the Fourth Cultural Forum of Education Colleges, held in Jeddah in 2011, female academic staff reported that 'higher education in Saudi Arabia is not up to the

required level because the teaching methods generally adopted depend on filling the minds of students with theoretical information' (Smith and Abouammoh, 2013, p. 58).

The trainees, in their interviews, support this view. They mention that traditional methods are based on telling and memorising facts (Ruida, Mjed and Maryam's interview) and that they had never experienced learning through discussion and interaction. Ruida said:

> We listen to the lecture about teaching methods, and memorise this information to pass the exam... in the previous practicum I ran behind my supervisor to know my positive and negative points, there was no discussion between us, sometimes the supervisor sends emails after the week.

Also, Olla in her interview claims that:

> When I was in a previous course, I did some group work with the students but I did not call it a 'workshop.' The supervisor asked me to do a workshop, and I said I did, and the supervisor said, 'No you did not.' That's just judgment without any discussion of what I did, how or why. Also there is no training but rather only judgment . . . my supervisor said to me in the second visit, "You are perfect".

Moreover, in the interview with other supervisors, some of them admit that they do not discuss the positive and negative aspects of the trainees' performances with the whole group, but rather they do it individually, almost as private instruction. For example, I asked Tahani, one of the supervisors, about her supervision methods of trainees' teaching, and she said,

> Tahani: I attend to the trainee then I give her the feedback after the lesson... I give her the positive and the negative points.
>
> Researcher: Did you discuss or tell them the positive and the negative points?
>
> Tahani: What is different! I tell her what I think, yes the positive and the negative points and she can discuss what she cannot understand.
>
> Me; I see, but when do you give the ST her feedback?
>
> Tahani: Immediately after the lesson, I tell her what went right or wrong in her teaching.
>
> Researcher: How many lessons do you attend in a day?

Tahani: We are so busy with the big groups, I have to attend all the lesson times.

Researcher: Oh, that means you are busy with observations of the lessons all the time. That's really tiring but how can you find a time to discuss the trainees' teaching?

Tahani: At the end of each lesson I take between 5-10 minutes . . . ask the ST to come out of the class and I give her feedback.

Researcher: How do you give her the feedback?. . . As a list or do you ask her what she thinks or what?

Tahani: Yes I tell her the positive and the negative and I tell her to work on improving them.

Researcher: If the ST thinks something is not negative and she wants to further discuss it or even if she asks you how to improve, what do you do when the next lesson runs?

Tahani: Umm, that has never happened but if she wants I can discuss it with her after by email or phone.

There are many issues that can be drawn from the above statement. One of them is the way of providing trainees with feedback, which is 'I tell her the positive points and the negative.' Also, this 'telling' occurs in 5-10 minutes outside the classroom during the lesson time. Thus, it must be concise instructions with little explanation of the rationale of doing something or not. Also, this may reflect the supervisor's lack of educational knowledge about the importance of feedback in improving trainees' teaching. Moreover, 'that has never happened' may also indicate the passivity of trainees toward their learning, something supported by the authority of the supervisor as the owner of knowledge.

In addition, the above extract may also reflect the absence of cooperative work and group learning in the culture of learning in the Saudi supervision system, where the method of discussion usually occurs at the individual level between the trainees and the supervisor. Solaf, another supervisor, who is young, stated:

Researcher: Do you ever provide trainees with feedback through discussion groups or through peer feedback?

Solaf: It is impossible; my trainees are very scared and unwilling to have any discussions. They prefer to receive their feedback directly and individually.

> They do not want to learn from their peers and they reject any comments
>
> from them. . . They say "They [my peers] are not my supervisor".

This suggests that Solaf does not support learning through discussion, group learning or even peer coaching. She attributes that to the trainees themselves, whom she describes as 'very scared and unwilling.' Of course, learning through discussion 'requires hard work.' As well, 'many students would prefer that teachers just give them answers to complex questions" (Williams, 2005, p. 182). However, 'to blame students themselves is a rather simplistic argument as it fails to take into account how or why this situation arose, whether as a product of educational systems in specific cultural and social contexts or for other reasons' (Allamnakhrah, 2013, p. 206).

Nevertheless, previous discussion indicates that Saudi schools and universities rely heavily on traditional teaching methods based on memorization. This is essential to an understanding of Saudi's education system, and, thus, for forming expectations about the cultivation of a new learning method. Since applying reflection methods demands previous learning skills such as learning through discussion and interaction, the dominant of memorization method in Saudi educational system can be seen as a key challenge in the way of RP.

8.2.5. Lack of adequate teacher training

The limited quality of the education system in general, and Saudi teachers' training programmes specifically, has been noted by many Saudi researchers (Alhamed et al 2004; AlMunajjed, 2009; Alenizi, 2012; Alsalahi, 2014, Almazrawi, 2014; Krieger, 2007) (see section 2.2.3 in Chapter Tow). While this study applies reflection in a teacher-training programme as an attempt to improve it, the pre-existing nature of Saudi teacher training poses a challenge to the success of PRC. The follow sections will discuss some issues that limit Saudi teacher training and that challenge applying reflection.

-Rapid historical change.

KSA has undergone rapid economic and social changes. Thus, Saudi implemented the 'rapid expansion policy,' which emphasized quantitative rather than qualitative expansion in education (Jamjoom, 2010). Therefore, the priorities lay in developing books, establishing schools and finding teachers (Abd-el Wassie, 1970).

Moreover, the education of Saudi females only began in the 1960s, late compared to neighbouring countries such as Egypt, Jordan and Syria. Due to the non-co-educational nature of education in KSA, the government found itself in urgent need of Saudi female

teachers (see Saudi women education in Chapter Two). To address this, the Ministry of Education (MoE) imported teachers from other Arab countries, particularly Egypt and Syria. In addition, the MoE implemented 'a two-year diploma programme for teacher preparation. The participating teachers were only required to have completed an elementary school degree' (Jamjoom, 2010, p. 548).

Today, owing to the increasing number of Saudi graduates and continued importing of non-Saudis for work, unemployment has increased among Saudis. To address this problem, the country has established a policy known as 'Saudization,' which means Saudi graduates are given priority for job placements over non-Saudis (Jamjoom, 2010). This policy has been strongly implemented in the education sector, as it has traditionally been a female field. Hence, as a result of increasing of girls' education in both enrolment and graduation, as well as the pressing demands of the 'Saudization' policy, many Saudi females have found work as teachers in schools or senior lecturers in the university regardless of their competencies and qualifications (see Chapter Two).

These historical circumstances led to a lack in basic educational knowledge and a lack of supervisory competence, further contributing to the weak basis of the teacher education system. The next section will provide details on these weaknesses.

-Absence of reflection in Saudi teacher standards.

While any discussion of teacher education (TE) needs to consider the standards of teachers for the country, such clear standards seem not to even exist in the Saudi context yet. However, according to UNESCO's (2011, p. 13) report on World Data on Education in Saudi:

> The universities in the country accept their full role in preparing and training teachers. The faculties of education instituted in these universities have among their objectives the following: prepare and graduate qualified staff; upgrade the educational and professional standards of the current general education teachers, principals and administrators by offering various training courses in cooperation with the Ministry of Education.

Hitherto, the only requirements to be a teacher in KSA are those found in the guide of educational careers under the section entitled, 'The Conditions and Regulations for Teachers' Recruitment.' The conditions are as follows:

Candidates must have:

• a Bachelor's degree in Education from an authorised university or college as a full-time student,

• an educational diploma from an authorised university or college for those who graduated from non-educational colleges, and

• passed the teachers' competency test.

The regulations stipulate that a candidate must:

• apply for a position and stage compatible with his/her specialisation and in accordance with the Saudi Ministry of Education Guide for Degrees and Specialisation in general and special education;

• pass the personal interview, which measures the following aspects:

i) Behavioural aspects: emotional, social, kinetic behaviour and the elements needed to be a role model.

ii) Sound senses: a candidate should not have impairments or physical injuries (special education candidatesare an exception).

iii) The ability to communicate, organise and sequence ideas.

iv) Visibility of the candidate's mission to join the teaching profession their commitment to self-development.

v) A candidate should show some indication of leadership ability and a cooperative attitude for developing advancements in the educational fieldand updating the system.

• pass the physical and psychological test;

• not have a criminal record;

• abide by the requirements for the assigned position and place; and

• pass the formative year report.

What is apparent from the above document of educational careers is that it the requirements are more like general conditions to do any job except the educational certifications and the teachers' competency test. Standards are 'clear descriptions used to define and measure quality expectations'. Many countries already have their own standards for teachers that can be refined and developed. They have considered the importance of developing teachers' standards and ensuring teachers understand these and consider when they planning lessons (Stobie, 2015 p.52). One example for this is teacher's standards in UK, which provided in Figure(8.2).

Department for Education

Teachers' Standards

PREAMBLE

Teachers make the education of their pupils their first concern, and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge, keep their knowledge and skills as teachers up-to-date and are self-critical; forge positive professional relationships; and work with parents in the best interests of their pupils.

PART ONE: TEACHING

A teacher must:

1 Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils

- establish a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, rooted in mutual respect
- set goals that stretch and challenge pupils of all backgrounds, abilities and dispositions
- demonstrate consistently the positive attitudes, values and behaviour which are expected of pupils.

2 Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils

- be accountable for pupils' attainment, progress and outcomes
- be aware of pupils' capabilities and their prior knowledge, and plan teaching to build on these
- guide pupils to reflect on the progress they have made and their emerging needs
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn and how this impacts on teaching
- encourage pupils to take a responsible and conscientious attitude to their own work and study.

3 Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge

- have a secure knowledge of the relevant subject(s) and curriculum areas, foster and maintain pupils' interest in the subject, and address misunderstandings
- demonstrate a critical understanding of developments in the subject and curriculum areas, and promote the value of scholarship
- demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject
- if teaching early reading, demonstrate a clear understanding of systematic synthetic phonics
- if teaching early mathematics, demonstrate a clear understanding of appropriate teaching strategies.

4 Plan and teach well structured lessons

- impart knowledge and develop understanding through effective use of lesson time
- promote a love of learning and children's intellectual curiosity
- set homework and plan other out-of-class activities to consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding pupils have acquired
- reflect systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching
- contribute to the design and provision of an engaging curriculum within the relevant subject area(s).

5 Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils

- know when and how to differentiate appropriately, using approaches which enable pupils to be taught effectively
- have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils' ability to learn, and how best to overcome these
- demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support pupils' education at different stages of development
- have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs; those of high ability; those with English as an additional language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them.

6 Make accurate and productive use of assessment

- know and understand how to assess the relevant subject and curriculum areas, including statutory assessment requirements
- make use of formative and summative assessment to secure pupils' progress
- use relevant data to monitor progress, set targets, and plan subsequent lessons
- give pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage pupils to respond to the feedback.

7 Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment

- have clear rules and routines for behaviour in classrooms, and take responsibility for promoting good and courteous behaviour both in classrooms and around the school, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy
- have high expectations of behaviour, and establish a framework for discipline with a range of strategies, using praise, sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly
- manage classes effectively, using approaches which are appropriate to pupils' needs in order to involve and motivate them
- maintain good relationships with pupils, exercise appropriate authority, and act decisively when necessary.

8 Fulfil wider professional responsibilities

- make a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the school
- develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, knowing how and when to draw on advice and specialist support
- deploy support staff effectively
- take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues
- communicate effectively with parents with regard to pupils' achievements and well-being.

PART TWO: PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:
  o treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
  o having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
  o showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
  o not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
  o ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.

- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.

- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

Figure 8.2. Teachers' Standards in

UKhttps://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards (DFE, 2016)

As they appear today, the teaching standards in the UK provide teachers with an outline of the duties that the institutions expect of them. Moreover, these standards are regularly revised and updated (See for example, DfE, 2016)[19].

Thus, the lack of clear educational standards for Saudi teachers probably reflects the vagueness of the Saudi educational mission toward the teaching model. It may also reflect the lack of a general acknowledgment of the importance of teachers' potential in the educational process (Alhammed et al 2004; AlMunajjed, 2009). Alsalahi (2014) mentions the lack of awareness of the value of Saudi teachers within the overall reform implemented by the MoE through numerous projects.

Nevertheless, there is a joint project in KSA between the MoE, represented by the Project of King Abdullah to Reform Education (PKARE), and The National Centre for Assessment in Higher Education to attempt to establish teacher standards in KSA. This project will be based on the results of many workshops; these standards are still in process. However, the copy of Saudi teacher standards in progress has no evidence of reflection. Even though reflection has become widespread and is even a buzzword in the education world lately, the current situation of both in- and pre-service teachers in Saudi is in fact far away from the idea of reflection. Consequently, the absence of reflection in the in-progress standards copy may exclude the possibility of its application in the near future.

-Lack of basic educational knowledge

As mentioned in the early stage of applying the RPC, the trainees often suffer from a serious lack of educational knowledge. This seems clear when they plan their lessons, deal with individual differences, create teaching materials and assess their students. Also, the trainees rarely provide themselves or peers with feedback. They appear to have little ability to support or refute their claims in the post-teaching discussions (see section 6.2.1.1.2 in Chapter Six). Definitely, this will directly affect their efforts to improve their teaching through reflection. In other words, their lack of basic educational knowledge makes the trainees less able to assess their own teaching thus understand how to improve it.

Causes contributing to the trainees' lack of educational preparation may be found by examining the transcripts of the subjects the trainees studied in university. The low number of instructional hours on education is evident. Educational subjects comprise less than a

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[19]https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/536891/Mentor_standards_report_Final.pdf

quarter of the lesson content. Moreover, educational instruction is not provided until the fifth semester. That means that the trainees receive only a basic educational knowledge during and after their practicum. For example, trainees take the subject of pedagogical knowledge the sixth and seventh semester. Educational assessment lessons are provided in the last semester after the trainee has finished his or her practicum.

Also, it seems that the trainees experience a lower quality training as a result of receiving educational knowledge mostly from lectures. Alnassar and Dow (2013) claimed that 'lectures, what is called 'large group teaching', the traditional centre of university teaching' (edited by Smith and Abouammoh, 2013, p.53). Moreover, Al-Ghamdi and Tight (2013) assert that traditional teaching methods, such as lectures, are still in use, even though they do not enhance students' skills and abilities (edited by Smith and Abouammoh, 2013). As lectures are a teaching method that uses one-way communication, they do not cultivate educational principles related good practices, such as promoting student interaction and collaboration, encouraging reflection and facilitating different learning styles (Prince, 2004). Learning by involving students in doing something and stimulating their thinking has been found to be effective and 'probably superior to lectures in promoting the development of students' skills in thinking and writing' (Bonwell and Eison 1991, p.iii; Goldman et al, 2008).

With all of the criticism of lectures as 'boring and repetitive', 'good lectures can be inspirational' by including some activities that maximise the potential for lectures as a teaching method (Smith and Abouammoh, 2013, p. 53). For example, using 'introducing activities, film clips, use of the Internet and ending with valuable condensed summaries which give students an overview and perspective they don't get elsewhere' (Smith and Abouammoh, 2013, p. 53). However, this ideal vision of lectures might be not the case in KSA (Smith and Abouammoh, 2013; AlMunajjed, 2009; Alenizi, 2012; Almazrawi, 2014).

My educational college, where traditional models of teacher education are applied, appears to view lecturing as an appropriate form of teaching about teaching, while teaching practice is usually seen as an opportunity to apply previously learned theories (Carlson, 1999; Clandinin, 1995) (see previous section 8.2.4). However, this theory-into-practice view of teacher education 'is increasingly being challenged for its many limitations and inadequacies' (Korthagen et al., 2006, p. 1012). Korthagen (2006, p. 1022) indicates that 'claims about what works often lack sufficient empirical support.' Thus, to help trainees learn how to teach 'in ways that develop higher-order thinking and performance . . .

education systems must offer more effective professional learning than has traditionally been available' (Darling-Hammond and Richardson, 2009, p.1; Alenizi, 2012; Alnassar and Dow cited in Smith and Abouammoh (2013).

Furthermore, while the trainees attribute their lack of education knowledge to their insufficient preparation (see section 6.2.1.1.2 in Chapter Six), the interviews that I conducted with the supervisors from the university reveal that the trainees have a shortage in their preparation to teach. Soad, one of the supervisors, states that

> The lack of the educational knowledge with the ST is very clear, and the policy makers in the university know that and they have prepared other plans in hopes that they will work… by increasing the educational hours in their transcript subjects.

Also, Nadia (another supervisor) supports Soad's view about the lack of educational knowledge. She says the following:

> The trainees were not sufficiently qualified; therefore, I volunteered to teach them the basic educational knowledge that they should have learned in their class in the university, such as framing the lesson aims, linking between the procedure and aims . . . so therefore my role as a supervisor is teaching, not supervisory.

However, while it seems that there is a general agreement among supervisors about the trainees' insufficient educational knowledge, there is also a problem with the level of the supervisors' knowledge. This weakness is found in their understanding of the requirements of their supervisory role. As Nadia states, the supervisor role seems more to be an assessment role rather than a training one. Thus, Nadia understood her work in addressing the trainees' poor preparation as being a 'volunteer,' as opposed to being a part of her job requirements. More discussion of the lack of supervisors' competence will be provided in the next section.

-Low competence in supervisors.

The literature review of teacher education shows the importance of the quality of the supervisor on the education of the trainees (Hatton & Smith, 1995; Sparks-Langer & Colton, 1991; Weshah, 2007). Also, it stresses the unique position of supervisors to foster critical reflection in trainees, and to 'raise the level of discourse' during feedback (Richardson-Koehler, 1988, p. 28). Hence, the lack of a well-qualified supervisor leads to a general

weakness in the teachers' educational programme (see for example Grossman et al., 2008; Valencia et al., 2009). This problem seems more dramatic in the Saudi context as a result of both the policies of 'rapid expansion' and 'Saudization.' (See Chapter Two). Consequently, Saudi universities have appointed supervisors regardless of their qualifications (Aenizi, 2012; Zeyada, 2007). For example, only two of the six supervisors interviewed had experience of teaching in schools; the rest had just finished their undergraduate degree and were already employed at KSM University as senior lecturers, with one of the requirements of their job to supervise trainees.

Thus, with the absence of clear standards for teacher training, educational knowledge in the pre-service teaching programmes, and teaching experience, the supervisors find themselves in need of help with monitoring work. Aziza is one of the supervisors who has not had any teaching experience in schools at all. She graduated from KSM University with high marks and, thus, she is employed as a senior lecturer. In her interview, she admits her lack of competence to be a supervisor of trainees:

> Aziza: I always complain that I have not enough experience to monitor trainees ... they think that I was shirking my responsibilities... thus I always ask my God to forgive me, all of us enter the supervision and they did not know what to do, then over time we learn.

> Researcher: Did you attend any conferences or workshops to qualify you as a supervisor?

> Aziza: Yes, there is, but as you know, it is only three days with theoretical information.

Even Nada, the Saudi supervisor with seven years' experience teaching in schools, then working at KSM University after obtaining her Master's degree in educational leadership, complains:

> Nada: Yes I used to be a teacher, but as you know my field of study was different, my knowledge is in leadership in education, not pedagogical and theoretical teaching methods. Maybe I can help trainees in their class management, but in their teaching methods, I do not think so, my knowledge in this field is so old.

Both of the above quotations reveal the lack of supervisors' competence for the supervision of trainees in their practicum. This lack may be due to the limitations of the supervisors' teaching experience, as in Aziza's case, or, as in Nada's case, the lack of the required

knowledge to guide trainees. However, even while admitting this weakness, supervisors are not given enough training in supervision in order to be able to help the trainees. Alenizi (2012, p. 86) claims that 'Saudi teacher supervisors rarely get any training to empower them in their roles.' Thus, 'the major concept of current supervisory behaviour is its undue emphasis on reactive performance - doing things as a result of crisis orientation - rather than through careful, logical planning and preparation' (Daresh, 2001, p. 25).

Employing supervisors with no teaching experience seems to be a great challenge for teacher training reform in KSA. Further, it seems to go against the mainstream methods of teacher education around the world. For example, in the UK, the government published an education white paper, *Educational Excellence Everywhere*, on 17 March 2016 that continued the move toward an increasingly school-led initial teacher training system (Reberts and Foster, 2016). Under the plan outlined in the white paper, current schools' teachers act as supervisors for trainees and take on the responsibility of training them how to teach. This seems the antithesis of the prevailing policy of teacher education in the Saudi system, which has been adapted from university-led training (see Chapter Two).

According to Aziza, KSM University offers 'one-off workshops' to prepare new supervisors for their work, which appears as some progress toward improving the supervision system[20]. However, Aziza seems dissatisfied with this, calling them 'only three days with theoretical information.' Her dissatisfaction is in line with Consuegra et al. (2014, p. 81) who claims that the situation of development 'needs to surpass the predominant model of listening to inspirational speakers and one-off workshops. It is not sufficient to ensure the presence of and access to external expertise'.

However, with respect to supervisors admitting their lack of supervisory requirements, they seem not to take any responsibility for this lack. I expected to see a little bit of denial due to their cultural aversion to criticism. Unexpectedly, they seem completely satisfied, and frame it as a complaint about their extra job requirements. In addition, they portray themselves as victims in a situation that does not listen to their complaining (diary, 7). Reference to socio-cultural theory may help to interpret this unexpected admission. From my experience as a supervisor, the supervision of trainees was culturally regarded as less important than other academic requirements in the university such as teaching, researching, or any leadership work. This may explain their lack of concern about their low competence as supervisors. Also, supervision costs the academic staff a lot of time in

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[20]When I used to work as a supervisor, there was no training programme for supervisors.

travelling between university camps and schools. Thus, that may be help to explain the supervisors' casual admission of their lack of skill in this area.

The discussion of the current supervisors' competence weakens the likelihood of their potential to apply reflection. Thus, with respect to the main role that supervisors play in enhancing trainees' reflection on their practice, the current supervisors' weakness poses a challenge to applying reflection as a method of supervision in Saudi universities in the future.

-Time

Another challenge the trainees express in their interviews is the short time that the trainees spend at school, which appears not to be enough to improve their skills of teaching as well as reflection. In the interviews with trainees, they describe this shortage of school time as a vital challenge to their benefits from the RPC. For example, Olla says:

> One day [per week] in school is not enough to build new communities in
> the school, to communicate with students, or even to see the effect of
> our teaching on their learning.

Here, Olla mentions the negative effects of the shortage of time on her relationship and communication with schools and thus with students. Ruida also points to the lack of time as a main challenge in her grasping of the RP idea:

> I really get benefits from the RP idea but we have not enough time,
> if we had another term the result would be more effective.

The short length of time that the trainees spend in schools does likely present a challenge. Correa et al (2015, p. 67) describes the difficulty that trainees face in their practicum when they are required to become 'part of different communities for a very short period of time.' Thus, that reinforces their feelings as 'sojourners' in the schools. Consistently, the findings from this study record this feeling within the sample group (see Sojourner status in Chapter Six).

However, while the lack of time that trainees spend in schools is one of the main factors that negatively affect trainees in their training, Ronfeldt & Reininger (2012, p. 1103) claim that:

> [T]he policy trend toward increasing the length of student teaching may not alone have a substantial impact on teacher preparation. Rather, policy changes targeting the quality of student teaching are likely more promising.

Chapter summary

Although the Saudi government invests heavily in education, the notion of educational reform is not a simple matter (Profanter, 2014, Alrashidi and Phan, 2015) (See Chapter Two). In their study, Alnassar and Dow (2013) argue that the responsibility for improving teaching and learning must be a 'shared partnership between individual teachers, department heads, college and institutional leaders and the national government itself, through its Ministry of Education' (edited by Smith and Abouammoh, 2013, p. 6).

The literature clearly outlines a strong relationship between education and culture (Gay, 2010; Notohara 2003; Delamarter, 2015). Gay (2010) claims culture shapes people's values, beliefs, insights, roles and responsibilities. Thus, in order to improve any educational system, attention should be paid to understanding the culture rather than to 'ready-made recipes' from other cultures (Notohara, 2003). While KSA is unlike western societies that encourage critical thinking and individual autonomy, most of the challenges to applying RP are actually based on the teachers' lack of the necessary knowledge to implement it effectively (Allamnakhrah, 2013). In addition, Saudi culture seems unsupportive of ideas involving reflection, such as critical thinking and individual autonomy. Also, gender ideologies that can be attributed to traditional and socio-religious values make the situation worse for women in education in terms of their ability to take responsibility and develop decision-making skills.

Hence, with regard to Rogoff and Morelli's claim that 'learning and development occur as people participate in the socio-cultural activities of their community' (1994, p. 204), Saudi culture heavily influences the educational system in general and teacher's pedagogical and technological practices in particular. Thus, with the features of the Saudi educational system such as centralization, rote memorization, a shortage of well-qualified teachers and a lack of adequate teacher training, the success of using reflection seems limited.

Chapter nine: Conclusion

The concluding chapter is divided into three sections. The first summarizes the aims and findings of the study and some of its implications for teacher education. The second summarizes the intended contribution of this thesis to the fields of teacher education and educational research. Finally, the third section considers the limitations of this study and some suggestions for future research.

9.1. Summary of the Research

My interest in this area of research arises from my personal experiences and my reflections upon my own work as a university supervisor and teacher over the course of my fifteen years of teaching (see section 1.2 in Chapter One). Weaknesses in the practicum at KSM University inspired the goal for this research of exploring the potential inherent in using reflection to improve trainees' teaching within the context of teacher education in KSA. Accordingly, I designed and applied a reflection course as a way to improve the development of the supervision system in the pre-service practicum course within the girls' educational colleges at KSM University.

While the literature indicates 'the strong connection between teachers' culture and their conceptualisation of pedagogical practice' (Adam, 2015, p. 204; Almazrawi, 2014), the potential for using reflection to improve Saudi trainees' teaching during their practicum cannot be guaranteed by other research findings around the world. Instead, it should be explored during an ongoing experimental process in one or more Saudi educational institutions and the results studied.

Also, this study was based on exploring how to use teachers' pedagogical knowledge to help trainees improve their teaching as suggested by prior research (Cook, 2007; Smagorinsky et al., 2006; Zembal-Saul et al, 2002, Consuegra et al., 2014; Hascher, 2006; Talvitie et al.,2015).

Accordingly, my main questions regarding the application of reflective practice with trainees in Saudi context are:

1. What are the participants' views about the current system of supervision?

2. How do trainees, teachers, and their supervisors perceive a RPC?

3. What advantages and disadvantages might a RPC offer?

4. What are the main challenges involved in implementing a RPC?

The sample consisted of a group of six trainees and two teachers, with myself as supervisor. This sample was used to explore the trainees ' use of reflection in their practicum period. I also interviewed six university supervisors, as well as the head of the practical education office. This case study was conducted as AR and aims to incorporate change in live action. In order to answer my research questions, I used a multiple-methodology approach for gathering data, including interviews, observations, FG, as well as writing diaries and RJs prepared by trainees every week. I engaged in a process of reflection by making notes and memos detailing my thoughts and questions regarding every piece of data acquired until I developed the main themes (see Chapter Five). The answer for each research question is briefly summarized below.

9.1.1. What are the participants' views about the current system of supervision?

My study indicates that the trainees describe their previous practicum course as a less effective experience than the reflective one. Most of their criticisms focused on lack of support from the supervisor as the trainees learned how to teach. This lack of support is demonstrated by the short amount of feedback time that each ST received (5-10 minutes). In most cases, this feedback time was taken from the lesson time. During feedback time, the supervisor presents the trainees with feedback in the form of a list of suggestions with less importance allotted to giving the trainees a chance to think about the lesson or encouraging them to discover by themselves (see -for example- section 6.2.1.1.2. and 6.2.1.2.1. in Chapter Six). The authority and power that the supervisor holds leads trainees to pay careful attention to her instructions in order to achieve a good final mark. However, in most cases, these instructions are just a shorthand way to evaluate trainees' teaching. In her interview, Olla says:

> When I was in a previous course, I did some group work with the students
> but I did not call it a "workshop." The supervisor asked me to do a
> workshop, and I said I did, and the supervisor said, "No you did not." That's
> just judgment without any discussion of what I did, how or why. Also there
> is no training but rather only judgment . . . my supervisor said to me in the
> second visit, "You are perfect."

This comment highlights a serious weakness in the current preservice training in KSM University: It is the authority and power that the supervisor holds that led to the passivity of trainees toward their learning which influences their subsequent quality- as teachers. RP is the suggested model to improve this deficiency. In this model, the trainees develop a plan for their teaching beyond just attending and observing their peers' teaching. They must engage in the reflective dissection stage, which involves a judgment of perceived positive or negative points in their teaching, as well as providing possibilities for improvement. All these things were done with help from the supervisor and teachers. In this way, it is hoped that the trainees' teaching is likely to improve as considerable literature pertaining to trainees learning has suggested. But is that what happened? The next sections address that question.

9.1.2. How do trainees, teachers and the supervisor perceive a reflective practice course (RPC)?

9.1.2.1 How does the supervisor perceive a RPC?

The aim of the study is to improve the teaching skills of trainees by encouraging reflection upon their teaching performance. This requires a change from the directive model of teacher supervision to one in which the trainees and USs cooperate and discuss lesson planning, observations, and learning assessments. It was important to avoid the traditional university supervisor's role of only telling trainees what they should and should not do; instead, it was important to focus on building a trusting relationship in which trainees are encouraged to criticise themselves and to enhance their desire to experiment. In this setting, experiences can be shared and reflective conversations developed.

It was important for me to critically examine my own effectiveness as a supervisor in facilitating reflection, in establishing an interactive CoP, and in breaking the stereotype of the traditional Saudi supervisor (see section 6.1 in Chapter Six). The CoP concept - engagement in joint discussions and information sharing - was applied to the group of trainees, teachers and myself, all of whom shared a desire to learn and improve. My aim was to foster our reflective skills. To that end, I tried to build a strong relationship with the trainees, including an informal weekly breakfast meeting. Furthermore, I tried to create a learning environment based on trust, respect, and a desire to learn. I thought that this type of environment would help the trainees to change how they learned. The study also made use of the WhatsApp application, but I found it to be ineffective as a reflective tool, as

trainees tended to use it only to seek answers or receive directives (see section 6.1 in Chapter Six).

The data collected from RJs, interviews, FG, and diaries suggest that the trainees were satisfied with their work as a group. They were nervous at first, even of the informal meetings, and there was initially some resistance to the process (see section 6.1.1 in Chapter Six). The level of reluctance diminished with time and familiarity with one another and the methods used. One teacher noted that the trainees had stopped feeling that I was a supervisor.

> I was surprised when I attend our first discussions. My attention was caught by your method of discussions and criticism and how to deal with the resistance of criticism. I was wondering how you could build this relationship. They almost did not feel that you are a supervisor.

To facilitate reflection, I ensured that the course aims were clear and unambiguous, providing written guidance and reinforcing the group's desire to learn as necessary, keeping the group engaged in the reflective process, supporting their improvement, and encouraging them to recognise and address their own mistakes (see section 6.1.2 in Chapter Six).

While this was more challenging than expected, I was able to break the stereotype of the authority figure and become part of the group by encouraging trust, presenting suggestions indirectly through questions, and eliciting teaching recommendations from the trainees themselves. In dealing with trainees' requests to be told what to do, I gave them the freedom to choose and encouraged them to take responsibility for their learning and choices (see section 6.1.3 in Chapter Six).

However, I became aware of my tendency to make direct suggestions during the discussions, although this decreased as the trainees and I became more familiar with one another and with what the course involved. The trainees also made fewer "tell me" requests (see the end of section 6.1.3 in Chapter Six)

Overall I have been able to draw many conclusions which offer insight into the use of reflection by Saudi supervisors in my study. To summarize, the promotion of professional development through reflection depend on USs' abilities to:

- Break the stereotype of the traditional Saudi supervisor as an authority figure who is the source of the knowledge.

- Support the trainees ' role as facilitator of learning rather than just the subject expert.

- Enhance the cooperative work among the trainees with the aim learning more rather than just trying to pass the assessment.

- Engage in dialogical reflection with trainees to give them an opportunity to become aware of the impact of their teaching actions.

-Look to the acquired knowledge as a gradual tentative and constructivist process rather than a "right or wrong" answer.

9.1.2.2 How do trainees perceive a reflective practice course?

The findings demonstrate that trainees' views on reflection changed over time, dividing the responses into early and later stages in the intervention. From the initial "reality shock" period, during which trainees' levels of reflection were low, responses developed as more reflective activities were undertaken. Trainees became better able to give and receive criticism and to focus on ways to improve their teaching and student engagement and understanding.

The "reality shock" experienced during the early stage of this course may, in part, be due to unrealistic optimism and discrepancies between theory and practice, leading to a variety of emotions, including disappointment, anger, confusion, surprise and despair (see section 6.2.1.1. in Chapter Six). False expectations of the role of the teacher may derive from childhood experiences of teachers on TV and in literature. Some may be specific to Saudi culture, where the teacher is considered the owner of knowledge and the giver of facts (see section 6.2.1.1.1 in Chapter Six). One trainee was shocked that excellent subject knowledge and confidence were not enough to make a good teacher. Concentrating on the teacher as "one who tells facts" led to the false expectation that the teacher was not responsible for students' responses. Insufficient preparation may also lead to "reality shock". The trainees in this study lacked educational knowledge (see section 6.2.1.1.2 in Chapter Six), and, according to their RJs, this led to poor planning and an inability to deal with differences between pupils or to cope with pupils' problems.

In time, providing a reflective space may help develop healthier, more realistic expectations. I was shocked, however, by the initial low level of reflection, which reached only the pre-reflection level according to Larriveé's research instrument (2008). During the first two weeks, trainees were clearly in "survival mode," reacting automatically and unable to consider alternative responses and persisting with plans even when they were not going well. By the

fourth week, though, trainees were beginning to recognise that things were going wrong, although making adjustments remained challenging (see section 6.2.1.2 in Chapter Six).

In addition, unsupported beliefs about teaching were often accepted unquestioningly. For example, trainees believed that teachers must use the board, perhaps due to childhood images, lack of educational knowledge, or a cultural reluctance to question. Trainees also saw themselves as victims, attributing blame to the theoretical nature of their training or to the laziness or poor behaviour of students. They tended to focus on issues of classroom management and discipline rather than reflecting on their teaching and how they should deal with problems, apparently not regarding their role as being to enhance students' desire to learn (see section 6.2.1.2 in Chapter Six).

There was also an initial resistance to both criticisms from others and self-criticism in the FGs, while the RJs were more descriptive than reflective. However, this improved in the later stages as the relationships between group members strengthened. Trainees even began to discuss lesson preparation online. However, some resistance remained. In one example, a trainee became nervous and angry when she felt that knowledge gained from her father (culturally both an expert and an authority figure not to be questioned) was being criticised. (See section 6.2.1.3 in Chapter Six).

Nevertheless, there were some indications that trainees reached the pedagogical level of reflection in the later stages of the course. Indeed, in a remarkable transition, some trainees moved from seeing the students as a problem to considering the teaching problems which needed to be solved. At times, however, trainees in some discussions were on different levels of reflection. For example, one trainee strove to enhance learning for all students (pedagogical level) while another still failed to consider learners' differing needs (pre-reflection level).

The change from the early stages of the course where trainees showed poor responses to the reflective exercises to the later stages where reflection had begun to impact positively on their teaching was noticed (see section 6.2.2.in Chapter Six). While the trainees had not become completely reflective practitioners, the reflective course did influence their ideas about teaching (see section7.1 in Chapter Seven). This finding raised a number of implications to teacher preparation programmes including:

- Providing reflective skills in the teacher preparation programmes so that trainees are better equipped to handle these situations and events effectively in order to positively impact on their teaching.

- Improving critical thinking and questing among trainees by including curriculum development within Saudi educational reform, which likely contributes to promotion of both self-assessment and peer assessment.

 - Creating a space for group activities through trainees' learning so as to reduce sensitivity about peer-assessment.

- Building a learning culture among trainees that can open opportunities for discussion and reflective dialogues.

9.1.2.3. How do teachers perceive a reflective practice course?

Currently in KSA, university staff and teachers remain isolated from one another despite attempts to move towards greater cooperation (Alrasheed, 2012), (see section 6.3 in Chapter Six). In examining teachers' participation in the RPC, it became clear that they were unfamiliar with RP (see section 6.3.1.3.1. in Chapter Six).

I was unable to work with my first choice of teachers, and their engagement was delayed for three weeks which may have had some impact on the relationships (see section 6.3.1 in Chapter Six). The trainees and I were also kept physically separate from the other school teachers which prevented us from experiencing the reality of every day school life. Attending just one day a week does not encourage the trainees to feel part of the community (see section 6.3.1.1 in Chapter Six).

The presence of teachers in reflective discussion sessions had a detrimental effect on trainees' reflections which increased their unease and nervousness even once they had become accustomed to the process. Teacher feedback was given in the form of judgements, lists, and prescribed courses of actions which failed to support trainees' reflections. However, some trainees appreciated the teacher approach as it was more in line with culturally familiar educational methods. In addition, teachers were concerned about student note-taking and exam preparation which may impede reflection unless the real focus is upon student learning. (See section 6.3.1.2 in Chapter Six).

Furthermore, the two teachers, who had 17 and 23 years teaching experience, had not previously engaged in reflection and their interviews revealed a lack of educational

knowledge of the practice. Most of their comments reached only the level of superficial reflection. Their frequent preoccupation with management, control and student compliance refers to the pre-reflective level and matches the trainees' own level. In addition, teachers supported their beliefs from personal experience, had a tendency to make judgements without evidence, and did not connect their views to theory or research (see section 6.3.1.3 in Chapter Six).

In an informal conversation with other teachers who were not involved in the project (and which I was not permitted to record), it became apparent that most of them who had previous experience of mentoring were unhappy with it and would not wish to repeat it. Mainly, this was due to time constraints, the pressures of full-time teaching, and the burden of their teaching loads. However, some incentives, such as time table reduction might encourage them to reconsider. Nevertheless, current levels of trainees – teachers' engagement (one day a week) are too low to improve the sense that teachers are isolated from university staff.

However, if teachers are to be more involved in beginning teacher development, it is important to ask if they are ready for this responsibility, as good teachers do not always make the best teacher educators (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Since the teachers in this study, lacked reflective knowledge and displayed low levels of reflection in the post teaching discussions, they might hinder rather than help trainees own reflection. Hence, while this finding suggests that it is less beneficial to use teachers in supporting trainees' reflection, it also gave rise to several suggested recommendations/contributions to improve the current situation of teacher education. These included:

- Updating teachers' educational knowledge through ongoing effective teacher professional training programmes.

 - Spreading the idea of reflection in teaching through ISTs professional training programmes as a way of self-improving their teaching.

- Building a research culture that uses teacher knowledge for examining and updating pedagogical teaching strategies and demonstrating how their practices affect their students' learning.

- Granting teachers financial or moral incentives to persuade them to enter into co-operative work with the universities' staff in team of trainees' training.

- Enhancing the cooperative working between the teachers in schools and supervisors' universities for better understanding of how trainees learn to teach.

9.1.3 What advantages and disadvantages might the reflective practice course offer?

My study indicates that participation in the RPC benefited the trainees, giving opportunities to address the mismatch between their expectations about teaching and its reality, providing new insights, and challenging restrictive cultural attitudes to the learning process. It enabled trainees to work as a group, to learn from one another, and to develop as teachers through individual reflection, practice, observation and discussion (see Chapter Seven).

Many of the trainees embarked upon their teaching practice believing that teaching is simply the transmission of facts by one who has natural talent. However, my interviews indicated that through "pedagogical reflection", their understanding about teaching had changed. They began to focus more on the teaching task and how to make materials more accessible to their students (see section 7.1 in Chapter Seven).

It was not merely the teaching practice itself that fostered these changes. The trainees were all on their second practicum and two had previous experience of teaching, yet this was the first time their preconceived ideas of teaching had begun to change. Although there is no guarantee that the changes resulted from participation in the RPC, it is nevertheless likely that their transformative learning could be attributed to the activities that were a part of it.

Despite the initial reluctance among trainees to engage fully in self- and peer-observation and post-teaching discussions, these activities are fundamental to improving an trainee's teaching. Through stimulating reflection with questions rather than with direct answers, I was able to encourage new insights as indicated by the interviews, thus supporting the case for reflection. The trainees were able to build on their teaching repertoires by observing one another, and reflection opened their minds to non-traditional strategies and helped them to examine preconceptions, reconcile inconsistencies, and engage in professional growth (see section 7.2 and 7.3 in Chapter Seven).

Moreover, reflective activities allowed variations in the "human capital" and educational knowledge within the group to be reduced through collaboration, which gave every group member access to the others' capital. The trainees made use of this "social capital" to

improve their teaching through interaction with one another (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2012, p. 94).

However, the trainees' previous experiences of learning through direct suggestion may have restricted their capacity to learn through reflective discussion, and the "concrete substance" and individualistic approach within the Saudi educational context may have limited the impact of the interaction and reflection (Barker et al., 2013, p. 413). Equally, traditional supervision systems with centralised decision-making may limit trainees' "decisional capital," making it difficult for them to judge wisely in a situation where there is no definitive rule or guidance available. (See section 7.4 in Chapter Seven). However, direct feedback is sometimes unavoidable, such as when school rules are broken.

Although there can be no doubt about reflective practice's importance as a means for enabling both pre- and in-service teachers to examine their preconceptions about teaching and their effect on classroom decisions, there is some question as to 'whether or not RP can, in fact, be a required component of a course and still retain validity as genuine reflection' (Hobbs, 2007. P. 406). As I reflect on my supervision of trainees and as a facilitator of their reflection, I was very conflicted when asking trainees about their views based on their reflection and, at the same time, looking for a particular answer. I felt, as Hobbs described, 'resentment towards a stipulation that asks one to be open and honest about one's beliefs whilst implying that a certain response is preferable (2007. p. 4013).

Hargreaves (2004) claims that there are many problems associated with assessed reflection. Most of these problems stem from a lack of advice in the literature regarding how best to assess reflection. She suggests that:

> Reflection in isolation is a fairly ambiguous moral exercise, but not when it is used explicitly within professional education as a medium for developing the affective professional and personal attributes associated with being a competent and acceptable practitioner. (p. 200)

This gap raises certain moral and practical issues that almost cannot be avoided. Most trainees believe that the tutors were 'looking for certain answers and that providing such answers would result in a better mark' (Hobbs, 2007. P. 405). Thus, Fernsten and Fernsten (2005) argue that required reflection can be an effective learning process in a safe and supportive environment. However, there are some attempts to create this safe environment by focusing on evidence of quality insights for learning and teaching issues

(Hobbs, 2007). It is interesting to note that, while this tension between reflection and assessment should not be present in this study because I did not assess trainees, it was, indeed, present (see Chapter Six).

Yet, despite the advantages that the trainees appeared to gain through practicing reflection, using RP as a way to improve their students' learning has recently been questioned. Traditional teaching methods, or what Christodoulou called 'mindless rote learning', have advocates who believe that the human learning process does not thrive under limited guidance. Thus, they support ongoing 'teacher instruction' that fosters independent learning (Christodoulou, 2014, p. 38; see Section 3.1.1). However, this raises further questions about short courses of RP and suggests that a closer look is needed regarding whether reflection can be achieved as a learning process (see, for example, Hobbs, 2007; Yoshida, 2005; 2012; Lewis et al., 2006; Watanabe et al, 2008)

Nevertheless, by providing both space and structure for professional conversations about teaching and learning, for coping with real challenges, and for addressing false expectations, this course enabled trainees to:

- Make genuine connections between teaching and the reality of their lessons, rather than merely doing something because they had been told to or because they believed it be what all teachers do,

 - Overcome the Saudi stereotype of the teacher as the source of knowledge.

 -Deal with the resulting identity crisis, and

- Discover their own teaching identities.

9.1.4. What are the main challenges involved in implementing a reflective practice course?

Looking at the data which emerged from the study, particularly in terms of trainees testimony, I felt that The trainees on the RPC gained a great deal, but they faced a number of challenges related to two main areas, one arising from the general Saudi culture of learning with respect to religion, society and culture and the other from the Saudi educational system itself. These are briefly outlined as follows:

Religious, Social and Cultural Challenges

Cultural issues certainly create many of the challenges faced by participants in RPC. Religion has a strong impact on Saudi culture, and Saudi religious beliefs are often seen to restrict the cultivation of critical thinking skills. Embedded attitudes about autonomy of thinking and criticism are potential challenges to reflection. Whether religion has restricted critical thinking or not, Saudi culture is certainly conservative, and this makes it difficult to implement new concepts which possibly limits the success of reflection. A questioning mind needs a culture which supports it, and while the trainees showed enthusiasm for participation in the course, they were nevertheless under the influence of prevailing cultural attitudes. One trainee expressed her fear of being thought rude or stupid if she spoke up in the discussions.

> I love to have discussions about anything and my friends know that about me…. But I feel sometimes I could do that especially when the teachers is with us, I have something to say, but I feel they will think I am rude, stupid or maybe I will take a long time and my colleagues will blame me later (Ruida's RJ,3)

Some trainees showed a high level of aversion to criticism in post-teaching discussions, and some struggled to admit they were wrong and feared "losing face". Likewise, fear or envy may have deterred some trainees from welcoming others to attend their lessons (see section 8.1.3 in Chapter Eight). These issues are representative of Saudi culture, with the lack of critical discussion being rooted in childhood where questions are seen as stupidity or bad manners. One supervisor recognised the challenge of applying this practice in an environment that does not foster discussion and respect for the views of others: 'I mean that the environment does not encourage discussions and the respect of other views' (see section 8.1.2 in Chapter Eight).

In addition, the status of women in KSA's male-dominated culture with its deeply-embedded gender ideologies makes it challenging for women to practice reflection and to trust their own decisions.

The Saudi Educational System.

Some of the features of the Saudi educational system and of women's education in particular, pose challenges to RP.

First, religious and social attitudes towards women ensure that religious studies and Arabic are the primary subjects for girls, while courses in science, mathematics, and foreign languages are lacking. Innovative, analytical, or creative approaches are not used, and knowledge is transmitted by repetition and memorisation. The concept of lifelong learning is absent. Thus, education for Saudi women leaves them weak in the very skills needed for successful reflection (AlMunajjed, 2009) (see section 8.2.1 in Chapter Eight)

Furthermore, the centralised nature of the Ministry of Education and its control of teaching materials distances teachers from the decision-making process, restricts teacher creativity, and imposes a curriculum which is too inflexible for teachers to modify (Almazrawi, 2014; Alswalim, 1996). Thus, new ideas such as reflection are difficult to apply. Moreover, traditional teaching methods, such as rote learning and memorization mean that many trainees have not previously experienced learning through interaction. The dominance of such old-fashioned methods is a major challenge to reflection (see section 8.2.2 in Chapter Eight).

There is also a shortage of well-qualified teachers, and teachers suffer both from a lack of educational knowledge and a failure to update their teaching methods (Almazrawi 2014; AlMunajjed, 2009; Alsalahi, 2014). Involving them might therefore hinder rather than help trainees' reflective practices. Equally, teacher training is generally inadequate (see section 8.2.5 in Chapter Eight and section 2.2.3 in Chapter Two). Supervisors may also lack competence and experience and rarely receive training for the role, making them less able to engage in RP (see section 8.2.3 in Chapter Eight and 2.5 in Chapter Two). In spite of reforms and worldwide support for reflection, there is little to no evidence of it in the standard Saudi teaching curriculum. An additional challenge to the application of reflection is the short time trainees spend in school, although simply extending teaching practice may not in itself be enough (see section 8.2.3 in Chapter Eight).

The challenges facing reflection in Saudi teacher education are considerable, covering cultural, social and religious issues, as well as attitudes within the traditional education system. However, the findings of this study suggest some recommendations for the Saudi educational system, such as:

- Considering the local culture before making assumptions about educational reform pertaining to the transferability of a particular education initiative from one country to another.

- Reflecting on teaching techniques to be introduced into the curriculum of Saudi teacher education as a standard for Saudi teachers both at the in-service and pre-service levels.

- Encouraging critical thinking and questioning in educational institutions by considering their applications in the teaching methods through discussions, seminars, lay groups, and other means rather than just providing them in a theoretical way.

- Expanding the time that the trainees spend in their practicum to make sure they can gain the basic skills to enter a teaching career.

- Updating the educational knowledge and teaching method for both teachers as well as supervisors by running compulsory ongoing teaching training courses.

-Shifting the supervision style from directive (where the supervisor's role is to direct and inform the teacher on what to do) to a more clinical supervision based on a cooperative relationship between the supervisors and the trainees involving discussion about lesson planning, observations of teaching, and assessments of learning.

- Making a list of educational standards that focus on quality of supervisors and which stipulates and insures that supervisors will have experience in teaching and sound educational knowledge.

- Addressing issues of supervisors' preparation for the practicum by running compulsory ongoing supervision training courses, followed up with teaching practice and active involvement of placement schools.

9.2. Contributions to this study

The primary goal of this study was to explore the impact of practice and theory while exploring the effectiveness of using reflection in the trainees' training programme in KSM University in KSA. The main contribution to knowledge of the current study is that it is the first such local study which provides research findings on trainees' practicum that is meant to enhance the trainees' reflection. The study's findings can be used to inform present and future educational policy, and the contributions can be highlighted in three ways: contribution of educational knowledge, contribution of educational method, and contribution within the Saudi context.

9.2.1. Contribution to educational knowledge

My research contributes in educational knowledge in three main areas; reflection, supervision and teacher education. Each of these is explained below.

9.2.1.1. Reflection

Achinstein & Barrett (2004) say reflection is a way that humans look at reality to make sense of their everyday lives by negotiating and choosing appropriate actions. In educational contexts, reflection does the same by generating contextual solutions through negotiating and choosing which strategies to apply. Reflection provides opportunities for learners to refine their practices by creating a dialogue between theory and practice (Weshah, 2007). However, while trainees tend to remain unaware of their teaching action and construct reality with a limited view of their classrooms and students (Schön, 1983), supervisors, as more knowledgeable others, can provide the scaffolding needed for trainees to become critically reflective and transformative practitioners (Achinstein & Barrett, 2004; Bates, Ramirez & Drits, 2009; Bean & Stevens, 2002).

This study, which was designed to apply reflective practice as a suggestion model to improve trainees' teaching, is the first such study in KSA. It is also one of the few studies conducted in any Arab country sharing Saudi institutional and cultural features which provides research education with a deep understanding of external factors that potentially impact on the effectiveness of reflection. In other words, the study explored the use of RP in a context different than that of a Westernized nation where the reflective idea appears as a common notion.

Since the culture of learning was the direct focus of this study, it is possible to understand why reflection would be different in KSA. In KSA and other Arab countries, any teaching model that depends on reflection might still be limited because traditional teaching models, such as 'technical-rationality', are still in use (Alansari, 2010). In addition, the culture of learning in Saudi Arabia contributes to a consecutive model of ITE that continues to emphasise the 'teacher as transmitter of knowledge' model (Alenizi, 2012). As a result, while wholesale adoption of RP in the Saudi context achieved some benefits in improving trainees' teaching (see Chapter 7), it would not fit well with the culture of learning and some features of the Saudi educational system that don't seem to cultivate learning through RP (see Chapter 8).

This study clearly demonstrates that although not all participants in the intervention were equally enthusiastic about reflective practice, the majority felt that it had been a worthwhile experiment to be involved with, and that it had benefitted their development as teachers. Nearly all participants regarded participation in the study as worthwhile (see Chapter 7), supporting the tentative hypothesis advanced in the opening section of the thesis, that engagement in reflective practice might offer some potential for further improvements to the quality of supervisory practice and initial teacher education outcomes in KSA.

Moreover, in the field of teacher education, reflection is regarded as an effective way to prepare high quality teaching (BERA, 2014). However, there is insufficient literature on the topic of PST education aimed at developing more reflective teachers, likely due to a lack of pedagogical theory explaining how people learn from such experiences (Copeland & Birmingham, 1993; Oser, 1994; Chitpin, 2006; Romano, 2006). The current study combines educational research with socio-cultural theory and interventions that can be used as a guide for the development of reflection in the context of teacher education (Reiman, 1998).

Socio-cultural theory suggests that a trainee should improve his/her new consciousness about teaching through contacts and interactions with others (colleagues, supervisors, teachers) as a first step (the interpsychological plane). Then, the trainee should assimilate and internalise this knowledge adding his personal value to it (the intrapsychological plane)(Vygotsky, 1978, cited in Turuk, 2008, p. 246). In order to develop reflective capabilities, trainees must communicate and work together as a group to connect with their colleagues and reach 'agreement' as a prerequisite for learning. Through group communication (CoP) that leads to agreement, 'the object of knowledge emerges simultaneously,' and learning in terms of ZPD occurs (Barker, et al., 2013, p. 412).

9.2.1.2 Supervision

There is a dearth of research investigating how university supervisors support trainees in fostering their teaching experiences (Levine, 2011; Hassaram, 2013). However, this study sheds light on supervisor's actual practices by providing readers with descriptions of what the supervisor did to foster the trainees' reflection. Analysis of the post-teaching discussions (FG) gives further insight into how the university supervisor can support trainees in their reflective dialogues.

As most Saudi research to data has been into supervisory techniques conducted in the field of male supervision, this study value is exploring the supervision of women: drawing on the

news of Saudi female supervisors and seeking to explore their competence applying reflection with trainees in their practicum. Also, the study provides insight about female supervisors' beliefs regarding teacher education and their readiness to support trainees in their practicum.

While the aim of this study is to improve trainees' teaching by applying the suggested model of supervision that fosters reflection among trainees, the results suggest that the current situations of supervisors limit their ability to use this a model of supervision.

Most supervisors believe that their task is merely to evaluate trainees' teaching, and they never considered RP to be a method for learning. In addition, they suffer from a lack of teaching experience in schools, so their inability to support trainees through reflective dialogue is far from unexpected.   Moreover, the main purpose of reflective supervision is to provide a platform from which trainees can learn through a cycle of observation and feedback, where they can reflect on beliefs, knowledge, and past actions (Chamberlin, 2000; Nolan & Hoover, 2004; Zeichner & Liston, 1987). However, this research reveals that supervisors continue to believe that their main task as supervisors is to evaluate trainees, rather than learn.

Thus, this finding suggests that supervisors need orientation and ongoing training programmes, both in general supervision tasks and techniques, as well as in supervision that support trainees' reflection. These programmes should focus on building a relationship between trainees and supervisors who create the conditions for self-reflection and dialogue, as well as encourage trainees to be active participants who co-construct knowledge collaboratively with their supervisors (Cogan, 1973; Goldhammer, 1969; Richardson-Koehler, 1988).

9.2.1.3. Teacher education

This study proposes to improve the situation of the PST field by applying a reflective teaching model through the supervision system. The findings showed that the trainees gain a number of advantages through their engagement in reflection. The study further revealed some challenges encountered by Saudi trainees practicing reflection. These findings form the basis for any attempt in educational reform that aims to transform teacher education from the traditional format heavily dependent on memorization into a toolkit format that allows for different teaching approaches.

While the study contributed to the knowledge base for issues in PST field, it also addresses the knowledge base of ISTs by examining their effectiveness at supporting reflection among trainees. One of the goals of the research was to make use of the teachers' pedagogical knowledge in order to help trainees in the context of supporting their teaching (Ma, 1999; Stigler & Hiebert, 1999). Through cooperative work between teachers the trainees, an trainee may gain opportunities to acquire different technical teaching skills and triangulate the perceptions of the trainee and others about teaching to gain a heightened self-awareness as a teacher.

This collaboration is expected to provide an opportunity for communication that allows reasoning and questioning about teaching performance. It should also create a situation in which teachers work with trainees to improve coordination between the university staff and the teachers in schools.

However, the study suggests that engaging teachers in the RPC could hinder the trainees' reflection rather than support it. This finding involves attention to the institutional and cultural context in how teachers teach? What is the model of teaching that they applied? Are they taking part in curriculum development or taking responsibility for their professional development? (Zeichner and Liston, 1996).

9.2.2. Contribution to educational methods

Applying AR methods in an educational context in KSA seems to be rare, and so using AR as a method for conducting this research in the Saudi context makes a contribution through the ability of AR to incorporate change in live action. For example, while the current course of traditional preparation programmes in KSA provides candidates with the requisite knowledge and skills, AR can 'nurture development of the dispositions needed to be an effective teacher in the classroom' (Lattimer, 2012. p .20). The method conducted in this study provide trainees with opportunities to connect with knowledgeable others (peers, supervisors and cooperative teachers), reflect and interpret the knowledge they can acquire, and then use this knowledge to improve their teaching. This chance to negotiate their own professional identities within a reflective and goal-directed framework may help trainees to move away from traditionalism.

Moreover, the integration between RP and AR methods makes reflection a part of AR that is critical for helping trainees to better understand their students' learning experiences and to make better decisions about future classroom instruction. Even trainees can be taught

how to reflect from such theoretical courses. As happened in the orientation stage of this study, AR provided the trainees with a rationale for why reflection was necessary.

Integration of reflective teaching cycles into action research cycles (see Figure 9.1) is likely to give researchers more opportunities to achieve 'the overriding purpose of educational research' which is 'to bring about worthwhile educational change', as well as to direct 'towards realising educational values in practice' (Elliott, 1991, p.4). Both of these assumptions structure my own work.

Figure 9.1. Integration of reflective teaching cycles into action research cycles

Furthermore, this is a case study that explored the effectiveness of using reflection with trainees as a part of their practicum course. The course was designed to feature action research cycles that include three repeated procedures every week. These procedures are, in order, observation, teaching and post-teaching discussion (see section 4.3.2.5 in Chapter Four). Referring to the methodology of professional sharing of practice that this study has adopted, it can be argued that this study is a lesson study experience with trainees (see

section 3.3.4.4 in Chapter Four). That does not, however, mean that my study is formed as a classic lesson study, but rather that it shares the main elements of a lesson study: it involves a group of teachers seeking to enhance their approach to teaching a particular item or concept, or to improve how learners learn material, by collaboratively analysing how this can be done (Dudley, 2013).

Many researchers have asserted the need for a more complete understanding of the potential for lesson studies to prepare teachers 'to learn from teaching' (Hiebert et al., 2007, p.49; Lederman et al., 2007; Lewis, 2002). Thus, this research may contribute to our understanding of how lesson studies can be used to improve trainees' teaching in their practicum.

This study used multiple methods of data collection - RJs, FG, interviews, and writing diaries to gain a more comprehensive and deeper understanding of research phenomena. This study paid careful consideration to structured time and order in conducting these methods (see figure 9.2). For example, the trainees wrote their RJs after their reflective dialogue (FG) to give them more time to reflect on those dialogues in FGs. Also, interviews were delayed until the end of the course to give the trainees enough time to construct their views about the reflective course.
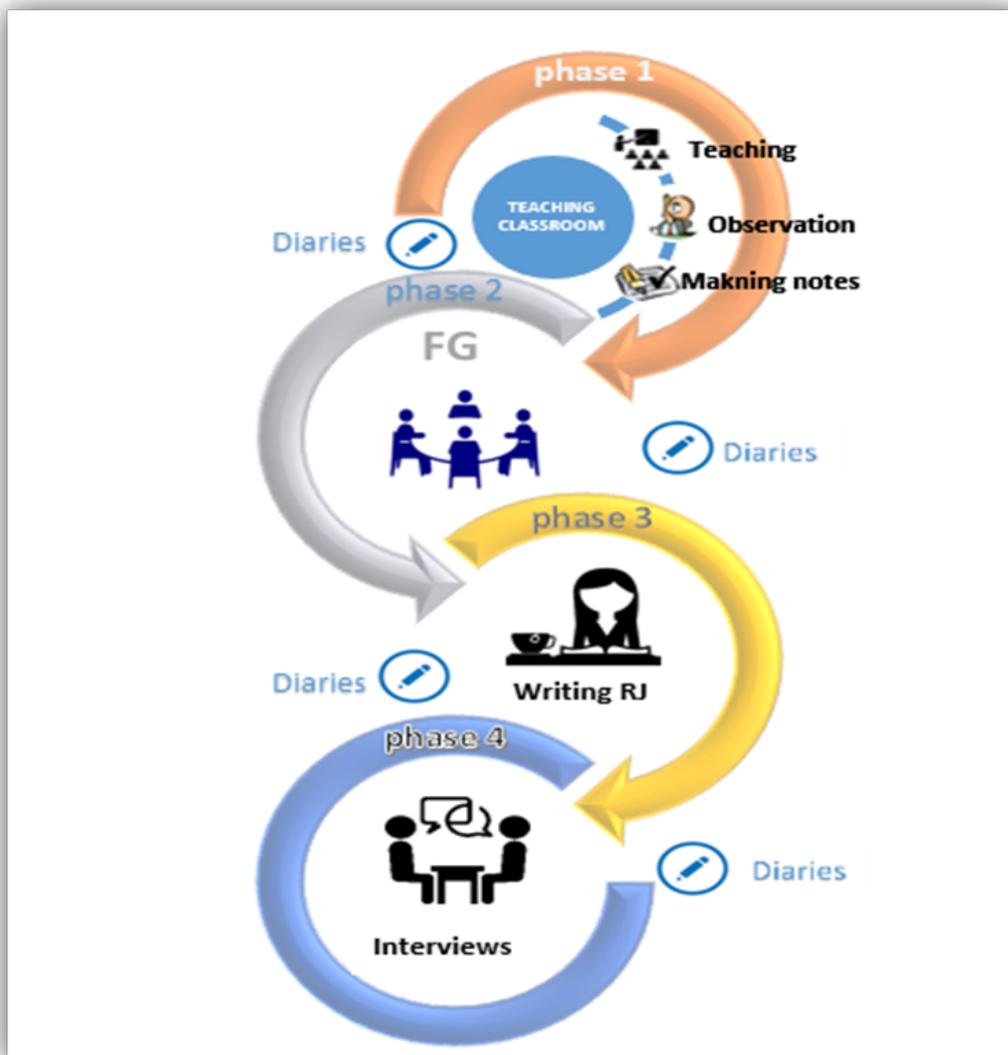
Figure 9.2. Outline using multiple methods in the RP research

The use of multiple methods to reflect (reflective discussions and reflective journals) provided the trainees with opportunities to expand their cognitive processes used to interpret their individual reflections. In the RPC, the trainees engaged with their reflections by both writing and speaking. This offered dual pathways into their thinking that would not have been accessed using one method alone. Using two methods appeared to increase trainees' opportunities for deep reflection.

This study also contributed to a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of reflection in the education of PSTs. This understanding arose from the trainees' perceptions, as well as from their performances which were described through the perceptions of the researcher, the supervisors, and the teachers. These alternative views enrich our awareness about this phenomenon.

In addition, in order to introduce the idea of reflection to the participants in the orientation stage, I designed a notebook containing selected readings on reflection that would guide trainees in their task. The notebook also contained some reflective activities to help participants understand the idea of reflection (see appendix D). The literature on reflective practice studies provides limited explanation of how to introduce and train trainees to be more reflective. This a notebook is thus especially useful for experimental research in reflective practice when participants know little about the context of reflective practice.

9.2.3. Contribution to the educational system of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Regarding KSA's national endeavours towards reforming its education system to cope with the demands of a new era, this research study is only a part of the whole picture. This study can be considered as a preliminary study to adapt RP for teacher education in KSA as a step in education reform. The findings gained from this study include:

- Potentially informing the MoE in KSA of important areas to address when designing professional PST training programmes in order to bring effective change in teaching practices. For example, the study has useful implications for policy reviews, curriculum design, teacher education programmes, and professional development.

- Specifically highlighting the requirement before assumptions are made about the transferability or otherwise of a particular education initiative from one country to another. In other words, the findings of this study can reveal a deeper understanding of what the considerations are before actually applying reflection in teacher education.

- Revealing information about Saudi supervisors and teachers' level of readiness and flexibility to modify their teaching to cope with the new changes in the education world.

- Proposing indications for teacher education programmes to develop more precise plans to promote reflective teaching among their graduates.

- Yielding up-to-date information on PSTs, ISTs and supervisors' perceptions of the use of RP in the classroom as well as identifying those factors either supporting or hindering its use.

- Outlining the impact of Saudi culture on educational system in general and practically on the teacher education.

However, within the reality of the Saudi context, educational system, social valise and expectations about authority, this research suggests that;

It is important for any educational system to establish appropriate teaching standards that inform teachers, schools, universities, and other educational institutions on the vision, mission, and expectations of society (Stobie, 2015). Musharraf (2000) refers to the problem of Saudi teachers' absence from the process of curriculum development: 'Saudi Arabia does not take a firm stand about the importance of teacher participation in curriculum development, and the teachers themselves are missing from the curriculum-development process' (p. 1).

In addition to that, In/pre-service training, teachers should be given a safe environment where they can disclose their classroom problems without being afraid of their supervisors losing faith in their abilities (Miller, 2004). This can happen by no longer viewing teachers as mere practitioners of suggested teaching strategies, and instead view them as participants of and decision makers in the educational context. Telling trainees how to teach their subjects without encouraging them to modify their teaching methods and reach out to their students is a large obstacle to implementing reflective teaching.

This study showed the inadequacy of pre-service training programmes and their narrow scope in supervision fields. The trainees and supervisors complained the short time length of the course and described the issues they usually tackle as less-related to real classroom practices. Therefore, reducing centralisation in the Saudi educational system by giving trainees /teachers more species and confidence to reflect on their teaching abilities -- as well as share their thoughts with their colleagues/supervisors in a safe, encouraging school environment -- would positively impact their learning and make the education experience more relatable to them.

9.3. Limitations of the Research Methodology:

As an initial empirical study exploring the potential use of RP to improve trainees' teaching, this study certainly suffered from some limitations for providing a comprehensive understanding of this research topic. These limitations are briefly outlined below.

- Primarily, this study was conducted as a 'case study' of one group in a specific context in KSM University. I acknowledge that the complexity of a case study's contextual conditions of creates a limitation (see section 4.3.1.1), and the impossibility of attempting of drawing generalisations. However, it is nonetheless important to recognise the overlaps and

commonalities existing among other participants in other universities. Thus, even though the trainees and supervisors are all within this case study's boundary (KSM University), it is likely that there will be some commonalities that apply to other Saudi universities.

Case studies, as I indicated in section (4.3.1), are strong in providing an in-depth view of research experience. The richness and detail provided by delving into the complexity of the experience should be recognised as one of the key strengths of the case study. I have constructed narratives about our practicing in the study as a way of providing what may be described 'thick descriptions' (Lincoln & Guba, 1979). These thick descriptions, which cannot be achieved in a large-scale study, should help to understand and develop a thorough knowledge of the particular (Stake, 1978).

However, whilst it is tempting to try drawing some generalisation from the case study because of its 'thick descriptions', it is vital to keep in mind that it is still just a 'slice of life' (Lincoln & Guba in Merriam, 1998). So, I am cautious about making any claims about generalising my research findings as I am crucially aware of the trap of oversimplifying or overstating the extent of the case (Cohen et al, 2000). Therefore, this study makes no absolute claims about knowledge, but instead it highlights the uncertainties and discusses 'lessons learned' (Bassey 1999; Creswell 2007). There is no intention to generalise the issues raised by using reflective practice and provide pronouncements of 'what works' for improving trainees' reflection. Instead it will address the question of 'what is it like' by telling this 'little story' (Cotton and Griffiths, 2007). It might be best to think of the case study as an educational intervention to create an opportunity for discussion that may illuminate, challenge and disrupt theories and understandings of teachers as researchers doing action research in a different context.

- This study was conducted on only one group, consisting of six trainees, two teachers and myself as the supervisor. In my original research plan, I intended to conduct the RPC on more than one group, but I did not have enough volunteers to provide for more than one group. I realize that the findings of this study would be more significant if there had been two or more groups of participants which would have yielded a more comprehensive understanding of the research topic.

- The participants were all female due to the lack of a co-educational system in KSA. Therefore, I cannot speak to whether the lived experience of learning through reflection is similar or different for male students in comparison to female participants. This may be an area that is worth exploring in future studies.

- The short period of the study time (one semester) is an apparent limitation for this instrumental case study. The RPC in this study has twelve weeks. The first four weeks were spent introducing the idea of reflection after first attracting the participants and starting the orientation stage. The following eight weeks were when the trainees practised their teaching in real class rooms. It would have been of benefit to extend data collection over a longer period of time, ideally one school year, to gain more insight of the potential of reflection to improve trainees' teaching.

- This study focused on understanding the potential use of reflection for improving the teaching skills of a group of trainees' in the light of KSA cultural impact on teacher education. Therefore, the effect of the variation of the trainees' skills of using their reflection to improve their teaching may not necessarily be understood within my research findings.

- This study aims to explore the trainees' abilities to apply their reflection to their pedagogical teaching in order to improve their overall teaching skills. However, analysing these pedagogical teaching skills was not a part of the study's considerations, which focused instead on the trainees' cognitions about their actions.

9.5. Further studies and recommendations for professional practice

Conducting this study revealed an urgent need for further studies in KSA to contribute to the general understanding of professional development for PSTs, and in particular the potential of reflection. Such future studies might help decision-makers to plan and implement effective training programmes for trainees. Therefore, the study highlights some areas for future research. Suggestions for the development of professional practice are noted below. It should be emphasised that this is not a critique of current efforts to improve and develop educational systems in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia, but an attempt to add a further strand of development which might complement other reforms and initiatives in this field.

- Replicating this study on different groups of participants such as other group in KSM University or other universities which can be compared with the presented study to check the accuracy of its findings. It might also be helpful to have a more comprehensive and deeper understanding of how the contextual factors interact with RP ideas.

- Conducting the study for male PSTs in KSM University or other universities to find if the gender factor has any effect on the findings of the study.

- It is recommended to conduct a similar study for a longer period to find out the effectiveness of using reflection over the long term.

- Conducting further research over a period of time longer than one semester to investigate the beliefs and practices about RP among PSTs and ISTs, lecturers, and supervisors.

- As the field of RP in education still in its early stages of implementation, follow-up research studies on its effectiveness should be encouraged.

- Introducing reading materials and lectures and seminars on reflective practice into initial teacher education courses so that there is a higher level of awareness of reflective practice approaches to teacher development.

- Funding rigorous and objective evaluation programmes to examine the effectiveness of reflective practice elements of initial teacher education programmes.

9.6. Final refection

In my own exploration of improving trainees' teaching through the use of RP, the findings of the present study have contributed to knowledge as have been discussed in section (9.2). Also, they contributed to my personal knowledge in several ways.

I have come to understand the connections between the KSA learning culture and our own actions as students, teachers and supervisors on trainees. This has made me realise the importance of addressing our cultural issues as a means of improving the Saudi educational system. Based on my research, I have come to recognise just how much reform is needed in the Saudi system. Teaching methods based on memorisation have dominated not only in school classrooms but also teachers' education practices. Through the course of this study, I have been able to observe how the current TE practices used in pre-service teaching leaves little room for fostering critical thinking. Furthermore, the general awareness of the importance of 'practical wisdom' owned by the teachers still seems limited.

This study revealed that many Saudi teachers and supervisors do not have a strong understanding of content, pedagogy, and working reflectively (see section 8.2.5). That being the current situation, it seems unsuitable for them to engage in development of trainees' learning how to teach. Instead, I believe that in order to improve trainees'

teaching, the majority of teachers and supervisors in KSA need to work together to develop their content, pedagogical content, and curriculum knowledge by developing and enhancing self-reflection on their individual teaching performance and discuss ways in which they can help one another (and themselves) grow throughout their careers.

Although the Saudi government invests heavily in education (see Chapter Two), it is imperative to keep in mind that learning through RP requires a cultural shift in how teachers think about their professional development in schools (Chokshi and Fernandez, 2004; Yoshida, 2008, 2012). While bringing about a cultural shift is not a simple matter (Profanter, 2014, Alrashidi and Phan, 2015 edited by Smith and Abouammoh, 2013) and it will take a long time to realize, 'steady cultural change can happen in schools that has a clear, long-term vision of professional growth' (Yoshida, 2012, P.144). Through conducting this research, I found that many teachers and supervisors do not currently have the advanced skills that are required to help trainees become life-long learners. Enhancing learning through interacting, reflecting, stimulating, reflecting and discussing with colleagues is not yet woven into the pedagogical fabric of KSA.

Furthermore, trainees, teachers and supervisors are conducting teaching in a 'silo'. While isolation is an enemy of a professional learning environment in which trainees, teachers and supervisors can learn from one another (Yoshida, 2012), breaking the barrier of isolation must be the first step in building a community of learning by sharing our experiences and knowledge. In other words, teachers in schools and supervisors in the university together should freely communicate and welcome the exchange of ideas in order to help develop better content and better pedagogical-content knowledge. When teachers are ready, then it is important to invite them to engage in observation and collaborative discussion of trainees' lessons with supervisors.

It is imperative to keep in mind that whilst it is tempting to be drawn into supporting reflection as a means for improving trainees' pedagogical abilities—as most research did (see Chapter Three)—this study indicates that the social existence of trainees can play a vital role in providing benefit from their reflection. That is because trainees are constrained by the social world to which they belong (Meierdirk, 2012). For example, the supervisor may, in fact, be part of the constraint. There is no doubt about supervisors' influence on trainees, but to what extent are they actually 'holding them back'? What about the social constraints that push trainees to teach in a certain way, as was seen in the case of TEP in KSA?

From this awareness, I learned how important it is to create a context that cultivates reflection as a way toward professional development. I spared no effort to enhance the trainees' opportunities to discuss and become more tolerant toward criticism (see section 6.1 in Chapter Six). One of the ways that I worked to foster RP was to build good relationships among the group members by providing them with coffee and breakfast every Thursday morning. I could not believe how this small gesture brought about such a huge improvement in the relationships among group members on one hand, and between me and them on the other. They became familiar with each other and worked much better together (see section 6.1.1in Chapter Six).

I discovered the significance of keeping one's mind open for alternative ways to confront educational problems. This, as Liu suggested, is 'a crucial element of critical reflection' (2015, p. 148). As someone hoping to foster reflection in others, I became aware of the importance of encouraging the trainees to recognise additional strategies for teaching various concepts and skills, rather than relying solely on their traditional ones (York-Barr et al., 2006) (see section 6.2.1.2.1in Chapter Six). Through this study, I now recognise that encouraging trainees to keep their minds open to alternative approaches seems to be like a magic wand that causes them to be more reflective. Otherwise, they maintain their passive position and continue doing what were taught.

This experience showed me how difficult it is to adapt and apply new strategies of learning (AR, RP and LS) in the Saudi context. A lack of awareness of the importance of educational research, an unwillingness to participate, a diminished understanding of the concepts of RP and the centralised nature of the KSA educational system makes any change in TEP almost impossible (see section 5.4. in Chapter Five). All of these circumstances required me to make modifications or alterations in this study's methodology to simply conduct it (see Chapters Four and Five). Thus, for some readers of this thesis, the study does not appear to be an AR or a variation of LS due to the fact that it veered from its original vision (see Chapter Four). However, my hope is that this work can benefit other researchers who are interested in applying RP, AR or even LS in a similar context, as well as in shedding light on some factors that seem important in the Saudi context.

As a researcher, I have experienced the need to think of alternative approaches to problems many times. My main experience with this was when I found myself having difficulties when recruiting participants among trainees and teachers (see section 5.1.1). I was grateful to be able to keep trying to market my idea of RP, and I worked hard in my attempts to persuade

the trainees and teachers to participate. Had I not, this study would never have seen the light.

Another way in which I think I have benefitted from applying my research is that I was able to encourage trainees to become reflective learners in ways that might not have succeeded, had I asked them directly. For example, I wanted them to think reflectively and to become more active in discussions and to find critical points. However, through the time I was able to model this by asking more questions to clarify their thoughts or praising trainees' reflective comments (see section 6.1).

When examining the research methodology field, I learned the benefits of adopting various data collection methods. For example, during interviews, I learned how some techniques can help to get more focused data, such as using probing questions, changing the form of the questions and asking trainees for more justifications, explanations and examples. All of these approaches helped me to avoid gathering misleading answers (see section 5.2.1). This newfound understanding will help in my future research career.

Finally, this research made me realise how much I still need to discover about my area of study, specifically about the potential of supervisors and ISTs to support trainees' reflection upon their teaching. I hope to explore reflection further among Saudi female supervisors and teachers, and I aspire to extend my findings to reach the male sector and other Saudi universities.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Focus group example:

Transcription	My comments
This focus group involved the participation of TEACHERS (Badria and Adiba). I (the researcher): Welcome Teacher Adiba and Teacher Badria to our discussion. Okay, then shall we start with you, Maryam, because the teachers have not had time to discuss all the lessons Maryam: To be honest, I have no idea what to say I: Nothing! Ok, give me any positive or negative points in your lesson Maryam: I have no idea Olla: Are you serious Ruida: Nothing?! Come on! Maryam: Sorry about that. [Quietly] I feel I am unable to think. I do not know what happened, and everything was [trails off]. I: Do you think the students understand the lesson? Maryam: I cannot say that. The problem is not like that. Badria:In general the students' performance in this class is weak even with us as their main teachers. I: In general did you find your teaching practice today better than the previous one? Maryam: Of course, I was 'the real Maryam' today. I: In which way 'the real Maryam', clarify. Maryam: I was normal, I didn't prepare much, I excluded everything that was said to me in the past, and it came like that. I: How come you didn't prepare much for your lesson? I felt that your lesson preparation was good; your citations and the links between pieces of information were good.	Maryam still finds it difficult to criticise herself especially in the presence of the school teacher. I believe that her comment was non educational (NON-REFLECTION LEVEL) which might reflect her educational background, i.e. based on the view that mistakes are always made by students not teachers.

Maryam: I mean that I didn't put much effort into my preparation; only reading the lines of the poem, knowing their meaning and referring to some references for citations. I meant I didn't spend much time in lesson preparation and I didn't think of any rules, method or approach.

I: But I found your preparation was good in general. But did you think that the students understood the lesson?

Maryam:Today I thought it was better because even when I discussed the students' groups I felt that they grasped the lesson.

I: Did you come across any steps that you wish you had done any other way?

Maryam: Right now, I know nothing, I am unable to recall things.

I: Ok, let's hear from your colleagues.

Ola: There is a difference between her lesson today and the previous one.

I: Would you clarify the difference?

Ola:Firstly, the students' interaction and her classroom management were better than before. Secondly, her lesson explanation using groups let the students interact with her in an active way rather than by asking them direct questions.

I: Good. Were there any negative points in her teaching practice?

Ola:It would have been better if she had explained the lines of the poem once more. I know time was a problem but it would have been better if she had explained them again.

I: Good, what about Moteah?

Moteah: I like the group discussions. They were far better than the previous ones. Also I like her way of letting ideas emerge from the students' own words.

I think that Maryam complicated things by trying to prove her excellence and ingenuity to the team (her friends and I), but the outcome was below expectation in the two lessons:
(1) I do not know if she benefited from the exercise and realised that keeping things simple is a basic principle in teaching; or
(2) She became frustrated feeling that everything that she did had gone with the wind, and as a result she might come to believe that she will fail in any attempt. Self-assessment becomes so difficult when the

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And,also, I like her linking her ideas with the surrounding environment.	
I:Were there any negative points in her lesson?	
Moteah: Her rushing from one poem line to the next without letting her students fully grasp the main point in each line.	
I: Rewida?	
Rewida:As the girls said… the haste.	
I: Only that?	
Rewida:Still there were dispersions among students.	
I: I remembered from our previous discussion that among the solutions to bring the students' attention to a single item we mentioned the use of a poster (showing the lines of the poem). Did you use it? And did you manage to attract their attention?	
All:Not a lot, because the lines had not been explained on the board.	
I: Exactly.	
Ola:She also did not read the lines with them.	Like Ola's idea,
Maryam: I read four lines and I discussed them … I read them.	
Ola:Right, but before you give them questions you should read the lines for them.	
I:You read the lines after answering the question!	A good question from me which was not direct interference.
Maryam:Yes after answering the questions.	
I:The observation that I want to make to you is that even though we hadn't yet started to interact with the text (and we believe neither had the students), you started to distribute the work sheets.	
Moteah:Truly, to the extent that I believed that she would return back to the text after she distributed the sheets.	
Maryam: I could not read it because the groups had questions about various lines in the poem.	

I:Read all of the lines of the poem with enthusiasm to let students feel that they have been engaged in the battle. And that feeling could be achieved when you express the deep meaning of these lines which help create an atmosphere that reflects the action in a battle.	
I: Teacher Adiba, could you please take part in the discussion?	
Adiba: I believe that Maryam has a strong character that helped her to manage and maintain control over her class, but at the same time she lacked a smile.	
I: I have only seen a smile on her face at the end of the lesson.	Direct suggestion (hard to avoid with the lack of STs' educational knowledge)
Adiba:Also there wasn't sufficient reinforcement of the students' participation. She gave commands such as sit and stand as if they were in a military school.	
Maryam: I said please sometimes.	
Adiba:She also used slang language occasionally. On the other hand, I liked the linking between some expressions in the poem with the Islamic tradition such "nusurt belruab" (have been made victorious with awe: cast in my enemy's hearts).	Good, lets us listen to other opinions.
I: I have a note regarding this; you managed to make the link but you did not clarify what "nusurt belruab" meant.	There was a clear correspondence between my observation and the teachers' observations.
Maryam:That is true.	
I: Adiba, if you were in Maryam's place what are the main things that you would change?	
Adiba:The fundamental issue in a poem is the reading. Students should read the poem and let them immerse themselves in the atmosphere of the poem.	
Maryam: (interrupting Adiba) I read the lines...the main problem was that this was their third lesson and we did not have enough time for the reading.	Defence

Badria:At least read it correctly because students are weak in reading and they should get used to reading. Also you did not discuss the rhetorical expressions.	
Maryam:That is right, last week I spent too much time explaining to them so I decided to explain them at the end of the lesson to save time.	Reducing in her resisting of criticisms
Adiba:You used a good picture (a picture of a book), but it would have been better had you used it in another way, e.g. asking a student what she understood from the picture and using her explanation to bring out the meaning of the line in the poem.	Good question
Maryam: I did not have enough time.	
Adiba:It is very important to infer the meaning from the picture as a teaching method for you and your colleagues, and it is one of the learning techniques.	
Moteah: I liked the use of the picture, particularly when you asked the student to use her imagination.	Maryam's acceptance of criticism was good at this time. I do not know if this was due to the presence of the school teachers or a feeling of success.
I:Imagination here is the target. In general, Maryam, I liked your stand in the class today particularly at the conclusion of the lesson. I felt that you stood with confidence even though you were rushed but we could say that your lesson was integrated. I have a question: why did laugh and command a student to sit down when she mentioned the name of Omar bin Alkhatab (one of the historical leaders in Islam).	
Maryam:They killed with their answer (said nervously)...I did not know what the relationship between Omar and this poem was!	
Adiba:She was nervous!	Defence
I: Let's get back to our conversation…students students...do not let them mock using the wrong information.	

Maryam: I seriously do not like getting the wrong reaction from my students...but this student always does such actions intentionally.	
I:But she participated in the lesson.	
Maryam:No, I think she tried to be funny with her answer.	
I:Her answer was not a disaster. Omar was one of the historical leaders of our history. Do not expect that all the students provide correct information…and you did not manage to handle her in a way which would help her learn.	Direct suggestion (hard to avoid with the lack of STs' educational knowledge)
Moteah: How could she have dealt with her?	
I:You are not meant to give the solution, but you can discuss the answer with her…say yes Omar was one of the leaders of Islam but did Omar live at the time of this poem?	
Adiba:You did not tell the students how the group work would be run…as a result I did not recognise whether your lesson was a traditional lesson or a cooperative one. A cooperative lesson is not limited to work sheet distribution but should include discussions.	
Maryam: I discussed the answers with them.	Tell me
Adiba: I meant before that.	
Maryam:What do you mean before that?	
Adiba:Everything such as the explanation of the poem, meanings …	
Maryam: I did not have time.	
I: I have a lot of comments regarding her explanation of the units, but I found that the time limitation was a valid excuse for her although her explanation was not clear enough for the students…do agree with me teachers?	
Adiba: The general idea of the lesson was clear for the students and their participation supports this claim, but	
	Again!

her dealing of rhetoric images was unclear and she spent a lot of time on that and only covered four lines.

Maryam:It is a matter of time… I only had 45 min.

Badria:When you become teachers you finish that within 30 min.

I:That's what we need to talk about: how a teacher can explain the lesson effectively to her students within the time allotted and with less effort. And this skill should be mastered by teachers.

Adiba: Through practice it could be achieved…exactly like our dealing with computers or any software programme … at the beginning it is slow, but with practice it becomes easier and faster.

I think it is good that they have different opinions, which may reflect the point that what we said were only our views NOT facts.

Let us shift our discussion now to focus on Rewida's lesson

I: Rewida, would please talk a little bit about your lesson?

Rewida: I suggest that you talk about me and then I talk about myself (with smile).

I: Come on, you go first, this is the role.

Rewida: I felt that at the beginning I was fine.

I:At the beginning of what?

Rewida:The lesson introduction and the introduction of the writer.

I:And after that, when you starededthe lesson explanation, what happened?

It is a good recognition from teachers that good teaching is a matter of practice.

Rewida: I do not know...I found that I confused students a lot.

I:The text was very clear and easy!

Rewida: Its explanation became hardbecause it was easy!

Majd: I do not think it was easy, it needed some effort.

She is the best STs in accepting comments.

Ola:In some ways its meaning was not like Abutama's poem.	Reflection in action
Majd:Exactly, but it still needed some clarification.	
I:The difficulty here is if a text meaning is clear you should not stop at just clarifying the meaning, you should work hard to explore something deeper.	
I: Had you planned to split the text in advance?	
Rewida: Yes, I had agreed with the teacher on that.	
I:Go ahead, did you face any problems in your lesson today?	
Rewida: Yes I did, in my explanation.	
I:What was wrong with your explanation?	
Rewida:Even though students responded to my questions, I felt that they were confused.	
I: You asked and they answered, what is the problem?	Good reflection from Rewida as usual.
Rewida: I do not know...but within myself I believed that there was a problem.	
Ola:The problem was you did not explain what "sultan" meant?	
The STs spoke in the same time I can't catch what they said.	
(Majd interjected and insisted that she should clarify what she meant).	
I: Quietly please for everyone's benefit.	Direct suggestion
Majd:You said that he got rid of his belly authority, how? You said that he got rid of the sensible things, what does it mean?	
Rewida: I told them about materialistic things, and how we should control them rather than let them control our lives.	
Majd:Exactly, like how materialistic things such as money and food control our lives instead of becoming a means for improving our lives.	

Rewida: I mentioned that, but 'a means' I did not mention that.	
Ola:You did not clarify what "sultan" means?	
I: I felt as if you were sitting in a circle with kids!	
Ola: Indeed in a nursery!	
Moteah: I wrote in my observation that she was chatting!	
Maryam: I enjoyed it (laughing) but the explanation was lacking.	Good reflection from Ola,
Ola:Her style was not a style of teaching.	
Maryam: I liked the lesson.	
I:Why did we feel that she did not explain?	
Majd: Because she only read the text and gave synonyms for the words.	
Rewida:Not exactly!	Good reflection provided with example
Ola: You asked them and did not comment on their answers.	
I: You have a problem asking questions.	
I:The text was simple, but you dealt with it in non-scientific way, and also there was a problem asking questions, and there were no clear questions, only some hints.	
Ola:When you said that "he only testified in the presence of a justice", you did not clarify!	
Rewida: I clarified that they said a judge who governed with justice.	
Majd:Clarify further.	
I:You really clarified the meaning of a judge, but you did not clarify why he requested to talk only in the presence of a judge.	
I: There was no depth to your explanation even though the text was interesting and related to real life! There were weaknesses in how you asked questions, you sometimes say who can explain, act, or do anything! (All	A good question from me, which may help students to reflect on their performance.

laughed). It seemed that you were surprised in your lesson!	
Rewida: Not exactly, but sometimes I went away from the text.	
I: Do you consider the expression "who explain or I explain" a question?	Victims!
Rewida:Yeah, I said that and I regret it.	
I:That is good, watch your speech.	
Rewida:Indeed I said to myself, what I am saying!	
Ola: And you used slang widely.	
I:And the expression ... "there was"..."repeat anything"... sights… (there were not any useful sentences) (All laugh). Also the meanings that you used were superficial. The whole session was not a real teaching session, it sounded like a public chat. Rewida, did you prepare well for your lesson, did you write down some questions, did you think how to relate one point to another?	Defence
Rewida:Nobody taught us how to carry out all of these steps.	Blame others.
Ola: When you dealt with grammatical expressions which have the same root you did not refer to their grammatical rules.	Good reflection.
Rewida:Because I felt I was wrong.	She realised her mistake…she welcomed criticism more than her colleagues.
I:And I could say the fault in your lesson was its preparation.	
Rewida: I searched the internet and I did not find any useful material.	
I: You are at the final level of your study, you are supposed to prepare the lesson by yourself. The text was simple, you should have divided it into units by applying the skill of summarisation. If the text had been difficult I could excuse you, but it was not.	
Rewida: Its simplicity confused me.	
I: It is very easy to go in-depth with such a text.	

Moteah: Also the students' reinforcement was weak.

Ola: Also she asked students: did you understand?If you ask a question and nobody answers it is enough to infer that it needs further explanation.

I: And we mentioned that earlier.

Moteah: She did not correct students' errors.

Rewida: To be honest I let them say what they wanted to say until they reached a certain point.

Ola's lesson

Ola: Thank God I am sateachersfied with my lesson. It was the matter of time, when you said that the class had started I became a little bit nervous, but thanks to God everything went smoothly.

I: Good, if you decided to repeat the lesson what changes would you make?

Ola: The timings.

I:Do you want to add any things?

Ola: No

I: Moteah, do have any comments?

Moteah: The introduction was nice, she also explained the parts of speech.

Rewida:But she did not explain their actions and meaning, only their names.

Ola:First of all, it was not a grammar lesson (It was literature).

Rewida:Despite that, these points were related to the lesson.

Ola: Secondly, I think they already knew them...I just made a quick revision of them.

Majd:You should have mentioned their action.

Majd still had no faith in the students.

A shift in Majd's thinking. She shifted from the belief that the

Rewida: I believe they were related to the lesson.

I: I agree with you they were related to the lesson and you should say something about their actions.

Ola: I did not like to diverge any more.

I:There was no divergence, only talk about their actions.

Ola:Students asked me what part of speech the terms were, and I answered them.

I: Yes, you said that, but you should also talk about their actions and functions.

Ola: They already knew that!

Majd: They knew nothing!

Moteah: I liked your way of discussing with the students and getting the meaning in their own words. Also, your comments on their replies were very educational. Also, taking the trouble to use the red card was very useful.

Rewida: I wanted to stand and applaud your treatment of the trouble maker, particularly when you gave her a pink card, (pink card instead of red card to reward her for taking part in the lesson).

Majd: I know that this student is good, and for that reason I always ask her some questions but she does not respond to me.

I: Ola knows how to win students over (how to reinforce them).

Majd: I swear to God that I have made great efforts with this group but they do not seem to grasp the information I give them.

Ola: I have a question: does lesson evaluation include the lesson summary?

Majd: I think that the lesson evaluation is the summary.

I: I believe that the evaluation is a concluding activity but the summary is a quick review of the lesson.

Ola: I am aware of that but I did not have enough time.

student was a trouble maker to the perspective that she did not respond to her because of other reasons.

Tell me

Still they repeat "You have saidthat!"

Majd: When you asked them about the rendering and delays and their rhetorical reasons, it seemed like a good way to provoke their thinking. Also your managing of the group work was very good even though you asked too many questions.

I: I did not consider it a negative point.

Moteah: I also did not think that.

Rewida: Because students liked you, especially when you asked who could infer the purpose of the lesson and said that you would help her.

I: But, that is correct.

Majd: And the table was good of course.

Rewida: The blackboard… the marker was not clear…

I: The colour was not clear.

Ola: What was not clear? ... I used the black colour.

I: Maybe its thickness was not suitable or the colour.

I: Why did you write the example twice?

Ola: So it would stick in their minds.

I: You can do that by using the smart board.

Ola: I do not know how to use it, and you said use the blackboard.

I: Your lesson warm up was excellent, excellent, excellent, and so was your presentation, and there was no side chatting among the students. The students were very active with you; I praise your class management.

Appendix B: Questions interviews[21]:

Questions of the interviews with STs/TEACHERSs

Study Questions	Interview Questions
-What are the participants' views about the previous system of supervision?	-To what extent are you sateachersfied with the previous supervision regarding these points? Why? a- Educational support though your practicum. b- The relationship between STs and the supervisor / TEACHERSs. c- The relationship between STs themselves. d- The responsibility/participation of STs in their learning. e- The relationship between STs/Supervisors and schools' staff. -Did you feel that you identified yourself more as a teacher/educator than as a student/just teachers during your practicum? If yes: how did that happen? If no: why not?
-How do pre-service teachers perceive a RPC?	How did you find group discussion for your learning and teaching? Is it useful, not useful, interesting, boring, time consuming…etc.? - Why do think that? - Did you find reflective journals useful for your learning and teaching? If yes: could you explain how? If no: why? Did you find any differences between your previous and current supervision? - If yes, could you explain these differences?

[21]Even though I prepared questions, the interviews were open and flexibly designed in order to explore with participants their experiences, views and beliefs. Most of the time, the interviews did not completely follow the sequence of questions as I prepared them. More about that, see section (5.2.1.4) in Chapter Five.

	-How did you find the participation of teachers from the schools? - Would you consider it as advantage or disadvantage? Why?
-What advantages might a RPC offer?	What are the main positive points that reflective practicum course offers to you? Prompt questions: To what extent are you sateachersfied with the current supervision regarding these points? Why? a- Educational support though your practicum. b- The relationships between STs and the supervisor / TEACHERSs. c- The relationship between STs themselves. d- The responsibility/participation of STs in their learning. e- The relationship between STs/Supervisors and schools' staff -Which one of these two identities had more influence on you during your practicum: as a student/ teacher or as a teacher/ educator? Why?
-What are the main challenges involved in implementing RPC ?	- What are the main challenges that you face in adopting RP? Prompt questions: - How did you find your involvement in interacting with others peers, teachers and supervisors? - What is the main problem with being involved in reflective writing? - Did you find giving or receiving criticism easy or difficult for you? - Did you find the time of implementing RP was enough?

Questions of the interviews with supervisors:

Study Questions	Interview Questions
-What are the participants' views about the current system of supervision?	- What do you think the main role of the supervisor toward STs should be? - How can the supervisor support STs in their about learning how they teach? - What form of feedback do you use with STs to support their learning: suggestions? Instruction? Dissections? - Why did you choose this form? -To what extent are you sateachersfied with the current supervision provisions?
	-To what extent are you sateachersfied with the positivity of STs toward their learning? Why? -To what extent do you think STs can be participants in their learning? Why? - Do you think there is any relationship between the students' participation in their learning and good learning?
How do supervisors perceive a RPC? -What advantages might a RPC offer?	- Have you heard about reflection in teaching/RP? If Yes: - what is it? Its benefits? Weaknesses? If No: I will explain simply what it means. - Have you ever tried to apply RP with your students? If Yes, how does that work? If No, do you think you could apply RP with your students? Why?
-What are the main challenges involved in implementing RPC?	- What are the main challenges of adopting RP? -What do you think, as a supervisor, should be done to enhance the responsibility of STs towards their learning?

Appendix: C

The orientation programme

Implementing a new model in an education system context usually requires an orientation programme. The orientation programme in this project will aim to pave the way for a good and smooth start for the newly implemented model. It will familiarise the participants with the philosophy, aims and procedures of the proposed model, as well their roles, responsibilities and expected relationships with those involved in this project. It will also aim to familiarise the participants with the location and regulations of the site at which they will practeacherse the implemented model. The goal of the orientation programme is to minimise any misconceptions about the ideas and aims related to the proposed model before its introduction; it is intended to increase the participants' confidence at the outset of the project. Although the orientation programme was held before the project begins, the process was an on-going one so that any further queries that might arise during the later stages of the model implementation can be addressed.

The orientation programme was planned to be conducted on KSM university campus and one of the selected public schools in Educational Directorate. The programme's duration was designed to be two working days (7 am–1 pm) during the first week of the first semester, prior to when the student teachers (STs) start their practicum period. In cooperation with the head teacher, the researcher will arrange to book an equipped room for the presentations and seminars; this will later become a permanent venue for discussion of the research programme. Teachers in school (TEACHERS) from the selected school will be invited along with STs to attend the orientation programme, as well as the seminars and workshops planned for later in the course. The orientation programme will be presented by the researcher, with a view to providing the participants with the necessary information about the model to be implemented and answering any further enquiries about it. The orientation programme will take two pathways, namely, the theoretical and practical routes.

The theoretical part

The theoretical part of the programme will be conducted during the first day. The STs and the TEACHERS will be provided with a wide selection and a handbook to inform them about the reflective teacher module, including the learning outcomes, course content and

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resource materials. This literature will be presented in PowerPoint, and cover the following topics: First, a quick overview of the **history** of reflection in teaching will be given, including how it was started and by whom, and how it garnered support in teaching. Then, the researcher will explain the **purpose** of the new model of supervision, which is to develop the teaching skills of STs. The **philosophy** underlying this purpose is to increase the STs' self-awareness about their beliefs and preconceptions about teaching. This will be achieved by reflecting on their teaching, and specifically on 'problematic' teaching in the sense of whether there are different ideas about what makes good teaching.

In considering what we know and what we do not know, we are likely to face inevitable doubts and feelings of inadequacy, which might be embarrassing. For, Doewer, Lewin and Piaget, however, these are key moments for learning: We can reflect on these problems to solve and learn from them (Osterman and Kottkamp, 1993; Ofsted, 2004). For example, Von Wright (1992) claims that if STs reflect on their own teaching, they will develop a deeper insightinto their own beliefs. Some researchers consider these beliefs to be factors influencing teachers' perception and behaviours regarding teaching, affecting the way in which they conceptualise their practices (Erginel, 2006). Thus, when it comes to enhancing the development of STs' beliefs, Tilemma (2000) claims that practice has a crucial role in belief changes and that it is essential to incorporate practice to enable them to reflect on their experiences. While STs lack teaching experience at this early stage of their training, this supervision programme will aim to help them to practice reflecting on their experiences as they develop by working collaboratively with the TEACHERS and university supervisor (US). The TEACHERS and US will give them opportunities to use their reflection to test their preconceptions and beliefs about teaching by practicing theoretical concepts and observing their results in a real classroom.

 Next, the researcher will explain the particular **method or technique** which will be used as a guide to reflection to help STs improve this ability in a systematic way. They will be familiarised with the mechanism of the implemented model, which involves the following stages: the observation stage, teaching stage and post-teaching stage (see the section on the implemented model). Further, they will be supplied with procedures that if followed, should enhance their reflection in teaching; for example, the content of the reflective teaching model usually involves three aspects, namely looking back at something, analysing the event or idea and thinking carefully about what it means for the individual and her progress (Surgenor, 2011). This involves engaging with a series of questions which will help STs to explore and reconsider their motivation or rationale for teaching (Surgenor, 2011).

Some reflective writing tools that will be used in this programme will also be explained, and the STs will be shown howto use them effectively. Two written tools will be involved in this course, as follows: the observation checklist then journal reflections (JRs). In this course, the researcher will use the same observation checklist which is already employed in the practicum course at KSM University. The researcher will illustrate the components of the observation checklist with a standard observation format which addressed strengths, areas of progress, areas needing improvement and even strategies for improvement after each observation. The observers should be aware of a variety of different aspects of lessons, such as teacher questions and student responses, student performance during pair work, classroom interaction, class performance during a new teaching activity, organisation of the lesson and the teacher's time management. The aim is for the ST who is observed to obtain new insights into aspects of his or her teaching, as well as through discussion with other STs engaged in the post-observation discussion (Scales, 2013).The observation checklist will be used for every member of the group in both stages, namely observation and teaching.

The second reflective written tool involved in this course is JR. STs, who are also observers, will have to write their JRs after every lesson they attend. JRs will be used to help STs to gain a number of insights into their own teaching from their colleagues' observations (Richards, 1990). Through their JRs, STs may have a chance 'to stand back from what they had been doing and think about what it meant for their own learning and what it entailed for their work as teachers of others' (Powell, 1985, p. 46). Although the format for these JRs will be open-ended, they should answer the following questions in the reflective cycle: What did I do? Why did I do it? How can I do better? The STs will be required to email their JRs to the researcher at the end of each week (Thursday). In other studies,such JRs have been found to increase teachers' focus on the teaching of specific skills in a particular classroom context and to reflect a wide range of potential teaching practices and behaviours (Richards, 1990). Writing the JRs, the STs might estimate to what extent their assumptions about teaching are reflected in their actual teaching practices (Richards, 1990).

Explanation of the course approach will include discussion of **the structure of responsibilities and relationships** between all member (STs, TEACHERS and US). In order to implement the reflective model of supervision, we need to make some changesin the structure of the nature of traditional **responsibility** between the US, STs and TEACHERS at two levels. First, there is the level of how STs take responsibility fortheir learning. In the existing practicum, STs expect the US to take full responsibility for teaching them how to

teach (Allamnakhrah, 2013). The responsibility can be placed equally with the ST and US within the suggested modifications to the learning process. To achieve this aim, STs need to be prepared to be open and responsive to suggestions, participate in discussions with TEACHERS and the US, and reflect critically on their own progress (Ball and Hill, 2008). Erginel (2006, p.25) states that while engaging in collaborative inquiry, through critical questioning, 'practitioners have an opportunity to become aware of the belief and assumptions that they have, and question the grounds of these assumptions'.

Other changes in the **responsibility** structure occur in the level of the distribution of tasks, for example, decision-making. The traditional practicum at KSM University puts full responsibility for the learning tasks in the supervisor's hands. In this course, we intend to restructure this so that responsibility is shared equally amongst all of the STs, US and TEACHERS, by working in a collaborative way to engage in problem solving through joint decision making and goal setting (McDonald, 2009).

To achieve the above change, we need to alter the traditional **relationship** between STs and US somewhat. The relationship between STs and US in KSM University is still characterised by the traditional relationship between student and teacher, that is, the teacher should tell the student what he or she should and should not do. In contrast, in the practicum course, STs will ideally step into the role of 'teacher' and gradually leave that of 'student'. To help STs make this shift, we should foster a reciprocal relationship between STs and their supervisors, thereby setting up STs as effective participants (Davis and Hall, 1997).This may be achieved by implanting the belief that any member of the group has important knowledge and that we can combine all of our knowledge collaboratively.

The practical part:

The second part of the orientation programme will be conducted on the second day with the aim of familiarising the STs with the school as a working community. The STs will be taken on a quick tour by a TEACHERS to acquaint them with the building, restrooms, supplies, copy machine, resource rooms, library and so on. The TEACHERS will introduce them to staff individually and officially at the staff meeting. They will be shown their safe place to keep their belongings, school rules, materials, a bulletin board to create a schedule and so on.

At this stage of the orientation programme, STs will have an opportunity to apply what they have learnt in the theoretical part. They will attend a lesson in a classroom with a TEACHERS

and given observation checklists. After the lesson, the STs, US and TEACHERS will meet together to discuss what they observed, thereby emphasising the importance of and required standard for the observation checklists. We hope that the group activities will raise consciousness and stimulate joint discussion and reflection via the training.

At the end of the orientation programme, all of the members of the sample will be provided with consent forms which need to be signed if they agree to participate in the project, and they will have the right to withdraw from the programme at any time if they wish to do so.

Appendix D: Reflective practice Notebook.

Notebook of:

Reflective practice

Contents:

❖ What is reflection?

❖ Some theoretical approaches to reflection.

❖ How is Reflective practice done?

❖ Further reading:

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REFLECTION

In basic terms, reflection consists of thinking about things. Most of us spend time thinking both about ourselves and about what we and others do. Thus, we could regard thinking about a disagreement with our parents last night as reflection. It would seem that reflection is a means of working on what we already know. We put into the reflection process knowledge that we already have (thoughts, ideas, feelings, etc.), we add what may be new information, and then we draw out of this mixture something that goes along with the purpose of our reflection (Moon 2001).

However, what we mean by reflection in this programme seems to require additional steps beyond simply recalling and reconsidering our actions. These new steps must go further in planning for future outcomes then merely generating ideas and testing them in real life. Therefore, we will use reflection as a means of helping student teachers in their practicum experience by making connections between their practice and their academic objectives. We will make these connections by reviewing, analysing, and evaluating their teaching practice. 'A simple definition of reflection might be seen as a form of mental processing—like a form of thinking—that we use to fulfil a purpose or to achieve some anticipated outcome. It is applied to relatively complicated or unstructured ideas for which there is not an obvious solution and is largely based on the further processing of knowledge and understanding and possibly emotions that we already possess' (Moon 2001, p.2).

The main features of reflection:

1) "Continuous: Reflection is implemented throughout the course: not just at the end, but before, during, and after.

2) Connected: Reflection activities are directly and intentionally connected to academic course goals and objectives.

3) Challenging: Reflection activities should create an opportunity for students to think critically about their experience.

4) Contextualized: Reflection is meaningful and addresses not just the course content but also the community" (Eyler et al. 1996, p.3).

John Dewey was a leading educational philosopher whose ideas were influential. He claimed that 'we do not learn from experience. We learn from reflecting on experience' (1910, p.78). Dewey described reflective thought as an 'active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and further conclusions to which it tends' (1910, p.6). He also argues that by using reflection, people could move from 'routine action', which is guided by tradition, habit, and authority, towards 'reflective action', which is guided by constant self-appraisal and development (Killen 2006).

Donald Schon produced the notions of reflection 'in-action' and 'on-action'. The simple explanation for reflection-in-action is reflecting while you are in the midst of an activity, whereas reflection-on-action is reflection after an activity (Schon 1983). Scales explains both of these types when he says, 'When the teachers prepare their lesson, they have to be constantly aware of the session as it develops. This awareness allows them to make changes as the session demands. When the session is complete, they can reflect on, analyse, and evaluate the learning and teaching. This post-action reflection then informs your subsequent planning and preparation, leading to a cycle of continuing improvement' (2013, p.11). This is presented in (Figure 1).
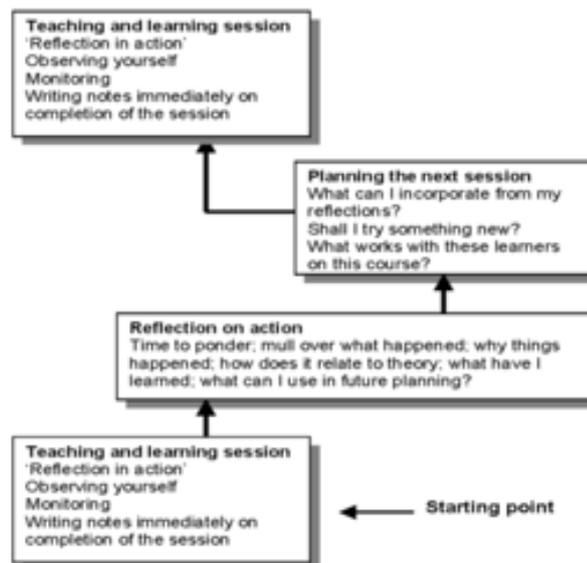

Figure 1: Using reflection in and on action to improve teaching and learning (Scales 2013)

A further contribution to reflection development in Schon's work is the distinction between 'technical rationality' and 'tacit knowledge'. Scales (2013, p.11) refers to this as theory-practice gap, and explains that Schon saw reflection as a practice that begins once work (in this case teaching) begins, especially when new and

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confusing circumstances arise. 'Teachers may have acquired the theoretical knowledge (technical rationality) of their subject and practice of teaching, but whilst this might explain their classroom practice as it should be, it might not explain it as it actually is. From these concrete experiences, teachers can develop (tacit knowledge)'. Scales recommends the recording of these experiences in journals, and their discussion with other trainees, as well as with any mentors or supervisors.

Student teachers might express the opinion that 'this theory stuff is all very well, but it doesn't work in the real world'. Theory is never used rigidly, but rather it is used when it is applied and developed in practice. The real teaching environment is where theory is applied, tested, and evaluated. Reflection in, and on, action allows teachers to continually improve their practice and even to develop practice-based theory (Scales, 2013).

David Kolb (1984) is well known for the notion of reflection linking theory and practice. This was expressed in his development of the Kolb Cycle, which is a cycle of experiential learning. The cycle is also called 'iterative' because it is grounded in a repeating cycle of learning. This, in turn, fosters teaching and learning that is continually evolving and improving (Scales, 2013). This is shown in Figure 2.
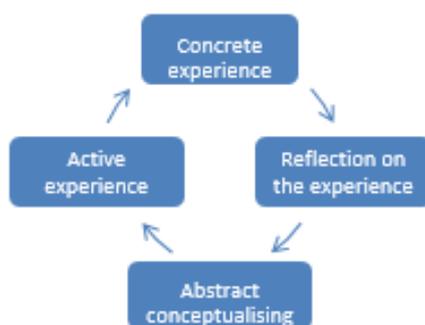
Figure 2: The Kolb Cycle (Moon 2001)

To explain this cycle, it is useful to consider an example. One of the teachers decides to use role playing in a session (concrete experiencing): 'The role play is partially successful. The teacher reflects on the use of this learning method and considers how it could be improved (reflection). She reads up on the use of the role play and talks to more experienced colleagues and, as a result, formulates an improved version of the activity (abstract conceptualisation). Then, when she plans to use the role play, she incorporates her new ideas into the planning (active experience). This leads to a new concrete experience and the repetition of the cycle' (Scales 2013, p.13).

Reflection is a process and an activity which student teachers assume to undertake primarily for themselves. The basis of reflection is a willingness to undertake the process and to value it as a means of development. Reflection can be difficult, even threatening, because it requires us to be honest with ourselves and recognise not only our successes but also areas where we need to improve. It makes us take responsibility for our teaching and learning (Scales 2013). Reflection can be oral, written, or expressed through activities (Eyler et al. 1996).

Written Reflection

There are many forms of reflective writing, but as student teachers the most common form of reflection seems to be the reflective journal (RJ) (Powell 1985; Bailey 1990). Your RJ is a written record of your experiences and feelings about planning, preparing, and delivering teaching and learning. Not only will it contain general accounts of learning sessions, but it will also identify critical indications that can be the basis for continuing development. It will be written by you and for you, but you must remember that the supervisor will make a copy of your RJs, so it pays not to be indiscreet.

Do not worry about what form the RJ should take. Considerations such as whether it should be typed or handwritten, how much you should write, and whether it is correctly written are generally irrelevant. Whenever you write about your experiences honestly, you cannot do it wrong. However, there are several guidelines to help you make your RJs more effective (Scales 2013, p.13):

❖ When you start writing, do not spend too much time thinking about it; let your writing flow and try to capture the experience and some critical indications.

❖ Start with a description of the events (what happened?) and add analysis (how? and why?) and evaluation (how effective was it?), then draw conclusions (suggestions for further practice) (See Figure 3 below).

❖ The writing style should be free, spontaneous, and informal, but at the same time, you must avoid using inappropriate language or too much slang.

❖ Diagrams, drawings, or any other visual modes are always encouraged, particularly those that can help to explore the relationships between ideas.

•**Description of the event:**
•What happened?
•What did I see/ do?

What

•**Analysis of the event:**
•What did I feel at the time?
•What were the effects of what I did/ did not do?

so what

•**Proposed actions following the event:**
•What are the implications of what I have described and analysed?
•How can I modify my practice?

Now what
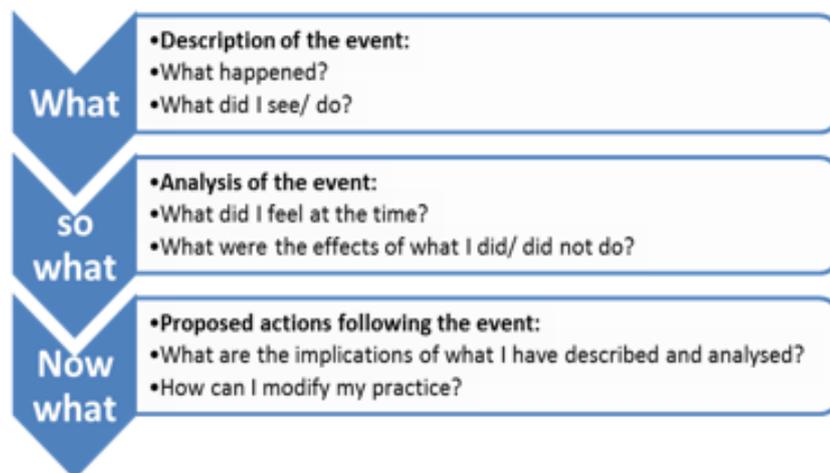
Figure 3: The framework for the reflection (Driscoll and Teh 2001)

Activity 1:

- During your previous practicum, it is assumed that you tried to apply some theoretical knowledge related to teaching and learning. Think back to your days at the school where you did your practicum.

*- **Write** a JR on the best or worst lesson that you did. (15 mins)*
*- **Share** your writing with the colleague next to you.*

Oral Reflection

One of the most common forms of oral reflection seems to be group discussion (GD). 'GD can be either structured or unstructured. A structured discussion involves the instructor guiding the discussion by using specific questions. These questions may focus on how the service experience is connected to the course objectives, readings, assignments, or other academic content. This time may also be used to help students to solve problems and critically examine issues or concerns about their service experience. Unstructured discussion allows the students to guide the discussion based on problems they faced during their service experience or to share experiences that need processing. Depending on the size of your class, group discussion can be with the entire class or broken down into smaller groups' (Eyler et al. 1996, p.7).

In this course, the discussion group will take the form of a focus group. Firstly, the student teacher who most recently taught makes a self-evaluation of her performance. She has to present her strengths and weaknesses and provide the group with the reasons behind them. Then, the supervisor asks the others to share their thoughts about the teaching experience (Collier 1999). Questions should not be used to assess student teachers; rather, they are to encourage dialogue and awareness of multiple perspectives.

The discussion should be done in a friendly way to encourage communication of shared experiences and trust among participants, which are found to be crucial elements in the development of effective reflective conversations (Labrie et al. 2000). While engaging in reflective dialogue practitioners have a greater opportunity, through critical questioning, to become aware of the beliefs and assumptions that they have and to question the grounds of these assumptions (Erginel 2006).

Activity 2:

After watching the short video with your group:
-Identify a problem that you feel needs action and resolution.
-Pose a solution through action.
Each member will be asked to build on this solution until the group feels it has reached a consensus on how the problem can be solved.
Then a facilitator can pose questions, such as the following:
-If the suggested solutions exist, why have they not been implemented?
-Would the people affected by this problem agree with these solutions?
-Who might not agree? (Eyler et al. 1996, p.11) .

Further reading:

Communities of Practice (Lave and Wenger)

One of the theories that seems suitable to what we are expected to do in this course is called community of practice (CoP). This theory of learning emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s and was developed by two researchers: Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger. Their view of education took a different track than those who thought of learning as an individual process. They also reframed the assumption that learning 'has a beginning and an end; that it is best separated from the rest of our activities; and that it is the result of teaching' (Wenger 1998, p.3). Instead, they proposed that learning involved a process of engagement in a 'community of practice', coining this name for the theory in their book 'Model of Situated Learning' (1991). Wenger later expanded significantly on the concept in his book, 'Communities of Practice' (Wenger 1998).

CoPs are formed by people who engage in a process of collective learning in a shared domain of human endeavour. In our case, they are a group of student teachers who are engaged in a learning process in order to survive, working on similar problems and seeking affective approaches of teaching. In other words, CoPs are groups of people who share a concern or a desire for something they do, and wish to learn how to do it better through their frequent interactions (Wenger 2007).

The characteristics of such CoPs vary. Some are quite formal in organization, whereas others are very fluid and informal. However, CoPs must exist in real life, where 'members are brought together by joining in common activities and by what they have learned through their mutual engagement in these activities' (Wenger 1998; cited in Smith 2009, 2003). According to Wenger (2007), three key features distinguish a CoP from other groups and communities: the domain, the community, and the practice. These mean that any member of the group should have an identity defined by a shared domain of interest, and she/he has to engage in joint activities, discussions, and information sharing. Moreover, members of a CoP are practitioners, and they have to share their stories of both dealing with and addressing their problems with others through sustained interaction (Wenger 2007).

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Lesson study:

More recently, a form of collaborative teaching practice has emerged as a school-based professional development initiative. It is called Lesson Study, and it aims to improve teaching and learning through the methodology of professional sharing of practice (Burghes and Robinson 2009).

According to Dudley (2013), Lesson Study consists of a group of teachers seeking to enhance their way of teaching a particular item or concept, or improve how learners learn it, by collaboratively analysing how this can be done. Once they have put their analysis into practice in the classroom, they make a record of what happened and what they found, and they pass this on to other interested teachers. This is done either through demonstrations of the new practice or by publishing their findings.

Thus, Lesson Study seems to rely on some aspects of reflective practice and communities of practice. For instance, the framework of lesson study supports reflection on pedagogy and encourages student teachers' learning of teaching to shift from 'teaching as telling' to 'teaching for understanding' (McDowell 2010). Furthermore, in lesson study, teachers are generating new knowledge in their interactions within the lesson study group. These interactions are crucial for developing insights that can inform future practice (McDowell 2010).

When reviewing lesson study, some may argue that this systematic way of learning can only show teachers how to teach a topic to a particular class in a particular school. Thus, the professional knowledge of teaching that has been generated from lesson study will be represented in the form of a case study (Elliot 2009). However, according to Stenhouse's idea of 'the teacher as a researcher' it is not only an epistemological problem, but also a psychological and social one. This is because teachers need to able to withstand both self-criticism and that of others (Elliot 2009). Therefore, 'in order for teachers to capture and express their emerging insights to each other, they needed to develop a common vocabulary of concepts and a syntax of theory. Such a theoretical framework of concepts should be testable by teachers and open to the development of new concepts and theory' (Stenhouse 1975; cited in Elliot 2009, p.1)

Appendix E:

Larrivee's research instrument (2008) to Assess Reflective Teaching

LEVEL 1: PRE- REFLECTION

-Operates in survival mode, reacting automatically without consideration of alternative responses.

-Enforces present standards of operation without adapting or restricting based on students' responses.

-Does not support beliefs and assertions with evidence from experience, theory or research.

-Is willing to take things for granted without questioning?

-Is preoccupied with management, control and student compliance.

-Fails to recognize the interdependence between teacher and student actions.

-Views student and classroom circumstances as beyond the teachers' control.

-Attributes ownership of problems to students or others.

-Fails to consider differing needs of learners.

-Sees oneself as a victim of circumstances.

-Dismisses students' perspectives without due consideration.

-Does not thoughtfully connect teaching actions with student learning or behaviour.

-Describes problems simplistically or unidimensionally.

-Does not see beyond immediate demands of a teaching episode.

LEVEL 2: SUPERFICIAL REFLECTION

-Limits analysis of teaching practices to technical questions about teaching techniques.

-Modifies teaching strategies without challenging underlying assumptions about teaching and learning.

-Fails to connect specific methods to underlying theory.

-Supports beliefs only with evidence from experience.

-Provides limited accommodations for students' different learning styles.

-Reacts to student responses differentially but fails to recognize patterns.

-Adjusts teaching practices only to current situation without developing a long-term plan.

-Implements solutions to problems that focus only on short-term results.

-Makes adjustments based on past experience.

-Questions the utility of specific teaching practices but not general policies or practices.

-Provides some differentiated instruction to address students' individual differences.

LEVEL 3: PEDAGOICAL REFLECTION

-Analyses relationship between teaching practices and student learning.

-Strives to enhance learning for all students.

-Seeks ways to connect new concepts to students' prior knowledge.

-Has genuine curiosity about the effectiveness of teaching practices, leading to experimentation and risk-taking.

-Engages in constructive criticism of one's own teaching.

-Adjusts methods and strategies based on students' relative performance.

-Analyses the impact of task structures, such as cooperative learning group, partner, peer or other groupings, on students' learning.

-Searches for patterns, relationships and connections to deepen understanding.

-Has commitment to continuous learning and improved practice.

-Identifies alternative ways of representing ideas and concepts to students.

-Recognizes the complexity of classroom dynamics.

-Acknowledges what students brings to the learning process.

-Considers students' perspectives in decision making.

-Sees teaching practices as remaining open to further investigation.

LEVEL 4: CRITICAL REFLECTION

-Views practices within the broader sociological, cultural, historical, and political contexts.

-Consider the ethical ramifications of classroom policies and practices.

-Addresses issues of equity and social justice that arise in and outside of the classroom.

-Challenges status quo norms and practices, especially with respect to power and control.

-Observes self in the process of thinking.

-Is aware of incongruence between beliefs and actions and takes action to rectify.

-Acknowledges the social and political consequences of one's teaching.

-Is an active inquirer, both critiquing current conclusions and generating new hypothesis?

-Challenges assumptions about students and expectations for students.

-Suspends judgments to consider all options.

-Recognizes assumptions and premises underlying beliefs.

-Calls commonly-held beliefs into question.

-Acknowledges that teaching practices and policies can either contribute to, or hinder, the realization of a more just and humane society.

-Encourages socially responsible actions in their students.