



Teacher Participation In Video Clubs And Impact On Practice

What does the research say about the structure of video clubs?

In the study “How Different Video Club Designs Support Teachers in ‘Learning to Notice,’” Elizabeth Van Es and Miriam Sherin (2006) investigate how the structure of two different teacher video clubs impacted the focus of what teachers noticed in their videos. The Mapleton Video Club (MVC) was made up of seven teachers within a similar grade range, who met ten times over six months (longer term, lower frequency) and focused on math instruction. This focus was directed by a researcher who filmed club members’ classes, selected a specific clip dealing with student thinking, and facilitated club discussion. The Wells Park Video Club (WPVC) was less structured: six teachers in a range of grades and subject areas met six times over as many weeks. WPVC teachers filmed their own lessons, selected clips, and facilitated discussions without guidance from the research team. Teachers were interviewed and asked to interpret video clips pre- and post-intervention, and changes in their comments were analyzed using qualitative coding. Results indicate that MVC teachers were able to narrow their focus to issues of mathematical thinking in students, and tended to interpret the events they noticed in the clips. MVC teachers were more likely to hold a uniform analysis of the video, which may be a result of the research team-facilitation or the longer period of meeting together. In contrast, WPVC teachers shared a diverse range of perspectives both pre- and post-intervention, and were more likely than MVC teachers to notice broad subjects, or to shift their focus to different players or themes rather than focusing narrowly on a particular event. WPVC tended to describe or evaluate rather than interpret events, unlike MVC teachers. Neither approach is inherently more valuable than the other. Depending on a teacher’s developmental needs, either design may be appropriate.

How do video clubs influence teachers’ ability to “notice” significant classroom interactions?

Van Es and Sherin (2008) also investigate the influence of video clubs for mathematics teachers, with a focus on the use of these video-based professional development environments to develop teachers’ professional vision. Teaching professional vision is defined as the “ability to notice and interpret significant features of classroom interactions.” The data and findings from the study come from observations and interviews with members of the two video clubs facilitated by the researchers. Nile Video Club was composed of four middle school math teachers of varying years of teaching experience, who met seven times over a year. Mapleton Video Club was composed of seven elementary teachers who met ten times over a year. Analysis of the video club meetings and interviews, using qualitative coding, examined changes in discussions over time. The data from these analyses reveal similar observable development in selective attention to student mathematical thinking. Another development can be observed in the participants’ knowledge-based reasoning. Thus over time, participants “not only paid more attention to student mathematical thinking [...] but they also came to discuss this issue in a new way.”

Read the Studies

van Es, E. A., & Sherin, M. (2006). How Different Video Club Designs Support Teachers in “Learning to Notice.” *Journal of Computing in Teacher Education*, 22(4), 125-135.

van Es, E. A., & Sherin, M. (2008). Mathematics teachers’ “learning to notice” in the context of a video club. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24(2), 244-276.