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# CHANGES IN PARTICIPATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF A LEARNING COMMUNITY FOR ENGLISH TEACHERS IN A VIDEO CLUB IN ALBANIA

Zachary S. Blehm

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CHANGES IN PARTICIPATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF A LEARNING  
COMMUNITY FOR ENGLISH TEACHERS IN A VIDEO CLUB IN ALBANIA

By

Zachary S. Blehm

A REPORT

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

In Applied Science Education

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This report has been approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of MASTER OF SCIENCE in Applied Science Education.

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## List of Abbreviations

|      |  |
|------|--|
| DAR  | <i>Drejtoria Arsimore Rajonale</i> (Regional Directorate of Education) |
| EFL  | English as a Foreign Language  |
| ELTA | English Language Teachers Association                                  |
| MoE  | Ministry of Education (and Sport)                                      |
| PC   | Peace Corps  |
| PCV  | Peace Corps Volunteer  |
| TEFL | Teaching English as a Foreign Language                                 |
| VC   | Video Club   |
| VC # | Video Club meeting # (e.g. VC 1 is Video Club meeting one)             |

## **Abstract**

This study investigated a group of English teachers' interactions watching video of their classrooms, in what is called a video club, for the purpose of professional development. Changes in both what and how teachers discussed, along with how the club developed as a learning community were investigated using recordings of their conversations in two early and two late video club meetings. The focus of what teachers discussed changed from the early to the late meetings and a pattern of discussion emerged in the later meetings. Significant changes in the number of ideas teachers put forth for discussion and the number of clarifying comments teachers provided were noted. The video club developed some aspects of a learning community, particularly in participants' ability to focus their discussion on the specific issues of teaching and learning in the video, but either failed to develop or showed cyclical development in other ways.

# **1 Introduction**

Albania, once one of the most isolated nations in the world, has and continues to experience rapid change and development in many aspects of society, culture and government. Within the education sector there has been a realization that the old systems are no longer adequate, resulting in a desire to modernize both curriculum and equipment, and change to a student-centered methodology that promotes active learning (Whitehead, 2000). Specific to the area of English education this means a shift from a teacher centered, grammar-translation based approach to a more student centered and communicative style with greater use of technology. But while such ambitious goals are easy to put on paper, actual reforms and improvements are much harder to achieve. One of the obstacles is the English teachers themselves, who are expected to carry out such reforms by making drastic changes to their practice, often without training or guidance. This report examines one small effort to address the shortcomings of teacher training and professional development in the face of changing expectations. Specifically this report analyzes teacher change and the development of a learning community within the context of a video club.

## **1.1 Secondary Education in Albania**

Education in Albania is usually divided between nine year schools (1<sup>st</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup> grade) and secondary schools (10<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade). As my work was limited to secondary schools I will limit the discussion to that level of education, although some of the information is applicable to nine year schools as well. It should be noted that the

information provided here is generalized from my personal experience and accounts from other Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs) and exceptions most certainly exist.

The school year is from September to May or June (teachers work through July), with a two-week break over New Year's and a week-long spring break in March or April. The school day consists of six or seven periods, each 45 minutes in length, beginning at 8 a.m. and finishing at either 1:10 or 2 p.m., while the school week is Monday to Friday. The exception to the daily schedule are schools that have a second group of students come in the afternoon, after the morning group of students have finished. The situation of two groups of students is usually due to facilities being inadequate for having the entire student body attend at the same time. There is a five minute break between classes and a longer twenty minute break between the third and fourth periods.

Schools are limited resource environments; classrooms are usually cramped and may not have enough chairs or desks for all students. Classrooms can be very cold in the winter; as a result the school day may be shortened if it is deemed that the school is too cold for a full school day. Schools may have photocopiers and printers but the cost of using such equipment is born by the teacher, or frequently by students who are asked to pay a "printing fee" to the teacher at the beginning of the school year. Students themselves may not have purchased textbooks or have a notebook or a writing instrument. Computer labs do exist, but are usually poorly maintained and rarely utilized for fear that the students break something, although this is changing with a new initiative that is providing schools with high tech classrooms including Wi-Fi, SMART boards, enough tablets for a class of students, and learning management software.

Students are divided into classes at their grade level, designated with letters, based on general ability as determined by a placement exam taken at the end of 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Thus the 10<sup>th</sup> graders at a secondary school are divided into 10A, 10B, 10C... with the A class being comprised of the “best” students, the B class the “second best” students and so on. The class will remain together through the three years of high school (10A becomes 11A the next year and 12A the final year of high school). Each class has, what in Albanian is called a registrar, which is a combined attendance, lesson plan and grade book shared by the subject teachers for each class. Classes at schools in my community were comprised of approximately 25 students on average. Each class has their own classroom and stays together as a group for all subjects, while teachers move from class to class throughout the day.

Full time teachers teach eighteen to twenty-four periods per week and have official working hours from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. although in my experience teachers sometimes did not arrive at school until their first lesson of the day and usually left after their last lesson of the day regardless of the time. It is also common practice for groups of teachers to leave the school and go to a cafe if they are not teaching. Teaching is often straight from the book without supplementary material and is mainly teacher centered. The system for assigning teachers to classes varies by school. In one school in my community English teachers taught certain grade levels, while at another all English teachers had a mixture of classes at all three grade levels. However, in both cases the teachers stay with the class throughout the three years of high school, thus a student will have the same English teacher for all three years of high school.

Because teachers move from class to class, the classroom is very much the realm of the student. This can be seen in the state of the classroom and its contents (desks, chairs, and blackboard) in terms of graffiti and vandalism. Teachers must return to the teachers' room between periods to exchange registrars. The bell signaling the beginning of the period in actuality signals teachers to wind down their conversations, begin searching for the registrar they need for the next class and then go to and gain control of the classroom. This results in significant loss of time for instruction.

Retention happens at the grade level, rather than at the individual subject level, even if failure is in a single subject. For example, a 10th grade student could pass 10th grade math, science, history etc. but fail 10th grade English; as a result, they would have to repeat all the 10th grade subjects the following year. In reality, though, students rarely fail as cheating is not uncommon, standards for passing are low, teachers see no incentive to fail a student who will just be a trouble maker at the school for another year, there are "second chance" final exams given to students before the following school year, and corruption (paying for grades) exists within the education system.

In general the education system in Albania is disorganized as compared to a typical school in the U.S. One example is that although the school year begins in September, the schedule is not finalized until sometime in October; as a result the class schedule is made on a day to day basis for the first four to six weeks of school. Other interruptions and scheduling changes are common. A macro level example is the renovation of one of the secondary schools in my community beginning in October of my first year of service. As a result of the renovation, the students and staff used another school in the community during the afternoon, but classes for both the regular morning

students and visiting afternoon students were shortened to 35 minutes for the remainder of the school year. This constitutes more than a 23% reduction in instructional time for the majority of the school year. A micro level example occurred during one of my visits to a school when it was suddenly decided between the first and second periods that the school would hold parent-teacher conferences that afternoon. As a result the school day needed to be shortened and classes would only be thirty minutes from then on. During the second period the plan was again changed back to the normal schedule. The result was that a class was changed from what the teacher thought would be thirty minutes, to forty-five minutes in the middle of the lesson.

## **1.2 Role of the Volunteer**

Volunteers in the Peace Corps (PC) Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) program in Albania are classified in three ways. The majority are assigned to schools as co-teachers. These volunteers can work at nine-year schools (1<sup>st</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup> grade), *gymnasi* (10<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade) or combined schools that have 1<sup>st</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The second category are teachers assigned to a university. The final group is composed of volunteers that work as English teacher trainers assigned to a Regional Directorate of Education which in Albanian is *Drejtoria Arsimore Rajonale* (DAR). I was part of the third category and as such it was my job to work with English teachers on professional development to reach PC-specified goals that had been developed in conjunction with the Ministry of Education (MoE).

The goals of the PC TEFL program are derived from MoE teaching reforms focused on the need for student centered lessons using a communicative approach and fall into three categories related to teachers, students and the community. The goal concerning teachers is “English teachers and instructors will improve their English language proficiency, teaching methods, and resource development skills” (Dyrmishi, Shtjefni, & Wagner, n.d.). This goal is broken down further into two objectives with similar wording, specifying the need for communicative lessons and materials. See Appendix A for full details of the TEFL goals and sub-objectives. There is little guidance as to how a teacher trainer might accomplish these objectives, therefore it is up to the volunteer to understand the needs of the DAR and the English teachers in their community and develop and implement a plan for English teacher professional development.

### **1.3 Teacher Professional Development**

A system of lesson observation by administrators and requirements for ongoing professional development does exist in the Albanian education system, but leaves much to be desired. Although instances of useful feedback from observations must exist, the experiences conveyed to me by PC staff and volunteers and the teachers I worked with painted a much different picture. An observation can mean an official from the local DAR or national MoE showing up to check which page in the text the teacher is covering that day and then berating the teacher if the “correct” answer is not given. Or an observation could mean the observer simply goes through a check list of required items



without regard to whether or not the items are applicable to the specific lesson or teaching point. Based on my own experiences accompanying my coworkers in the Department of Training and Development to schools in order to check the registrars I find such accounts credible.

There is also a system whereby teachers must meet minimum ongoing professional development requirements, but many of the professional development opportunities available to English teachers in Albania have shortcomings in terms of relevance and/or affordability. In the worst case this means teachers simply pay a private company in exchange for the necessary professional development credits without receiving any actual training. In the best case teachers might attend a professional conference; for English teachers this would mean one of the English Language Teachers Association (ELTA) meetings held four times a year. Even in this case teachers would require time off from school and have to pay their own registration, travel, meal, and accommodation expenses.

Although as a PCV I was not able to provide teachers with the credits necessary to fulfill their professional development requirements, I was tasked with creating professional development opportunities. Based on observations and conversations with teachers, in my first year of service I created a professional development project focused on developing the teachers' ability to self-reflect using video from the teachers' own lessons in a one-on-one discussion based setting. There were several reasons for this decision. First, criticism—even constructive criticism—is not well received in Albania and is usually met with denial. I hoped the unbiased record of teacher and student actions and speech in a video recording would allow teachers to more quickly move past the

denial stage and help lead to a change in behavior. Second, I thought the ability to self-reflect would prove useful for teachers in working to improve their practice in the long term, especially considering the absence of support systems. Having video of each teacher and meeting one-on-one to watch and discuss would also allowed me to tailor the training sessions to each teacher's individual needs.

In my second year of service I wanted to continue building teachers' ability to self-reflect as well as develop collaboration amongst teachers, something sorely lacking in Albanian schools, thus the video club project was developed. Although all nine teachers I had worked with at three different schools during my first year were invited to participate in the project, only three teachers, all from the same school, initially agreed. One of the teachers withdrew after the fourth meeting, from which she was absent. The two remaining teachers continued to participate for the remainder of the school year.

#### **1.4 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the way in which teachers' participation in a video club changed over time as well as to analyze the video club as a learning community. Specifically, the following questions were asked:

- 1) Does the way in which teachers participate in a video club change over time and, if so, how?
  - a) Does the subject matter that teachers discuss change over time and, if so, how?
  - b) Does how teachers discuss the video change over time, and if so how?
- 2) To what extent does the video club develop as a learning community?

## **2 Literature Review**

The use of video has a long history as a training tool in education (Fukkink, Trienekens & Kramer, 2011) and has become an increasingly used element in teacher training and development both for pre-service and in-service teachers (Gauding & Chaliès, 2015). Video can be used in many different ways and for a variety of purposes, including but not limited to: watching model video or video of less successful classrooms, watching video of one's own classroom or that of another teacher, and using video individually, one-on-one with a trainer, or in a group setting. As a result of these variations there exists a large body of research surrounding the use of video in teacher education. For example, Gaudin and Chaliès (2015) summarize the results of 255 articles about studies in two dozen countries in a wide variety of content areas in their literature review of articles related to using video with pre-service and in-service teachers. Because of such breadth of research it is necessary to focus on the research most closely related to the purpose of this study, which is the use of video to prompt discussion and promote the formation of a learning community for teacher professional development. Therefore this literature review focuses on the use of video for prompting discussion in a group setting and the relationship of learning communities to teacher professional development.

### **2.1 Video Clubs**

Before examining specific results related to professional development in video clubs or frameworks for evaluating video clubs it is necessary to define the term, discuss how video clubs can be conducted and examine the motivation for their use. Sherin and Han

(2004) describe *video clubs* as, “meetings in which groups of teachers watch and discuss excerpts of videotapes from their classrooms” (p. 163). The term *video study group* is also used to describe such a meeting (e.g., Shanahan & Tochelli, 2014; Tochon, 1999), but is less common than the term video club. While a video club is a simple concept there are a multitude of ways to implement a video club. The video to be viewed by the group of teachers may be selected by the teachers themselves, as was the case with Frederiksen, Sipusic, Sherin and Wolfe (1998), by a trainer or academic researcher, who might also act as a facilitator for the group (van Es & Sherin, 2008; van Es 2009) or by a teacher and researcher together (Sherin & Han, 2004). The number and experience of participants can vary; on the low end Shanahan and Tochelli (2014) divided nine teachers into three groups of three teachers for their video study groups, while Sherin and Han (2004) formed a video club with four teachers (only two of which chose to share their video with the group). Video clubs with seven or eight teachers participating are more common (Borko, Jacobs, Eiteljorg & Pittman, 2008; van Es & Sherin 2008). All of these studies, except Shanahan and Tochelli (2014), involved teachers ranging from one year or less of experience to more than twenty years of experience. When video clubs are formed for research purposes they typically meet eight to ten times over the course of an academic year. The meetings last from forty to seventy-five minutes which allows the club to watch one or two clips, each of which is less than ten minutes in length. A transcript of the video clip is provided to participants in many cases (Sherin & Han, 2004; van Es & Sherin, 2008; van Es, 2009).

The theoretical grounding used by Borko et al. (2008) and van Es (2009) to justify the use of video and video clubs as tools for professional development comes from the

*situative perspective of learning* (Lave & Wenger, 1991). In simple terms, this perspective says that teachers learn from situations that allow them to build comprehension through active deliberation and participation in a group, rather than by being directed in the use of an alternative techniques or strategies. In so far as video and video clubs can be used for promoting discussions related to teaching and learning, video and video clubs are potential tools for such active building of understanding, or in simpler terms, teacher learning (Borko et al., 2008; Sherin & Han, 2004; van Es, 2009). As van Es (2009) writes,

Video can capture much of the complexity of classrooms, providing teachers with a record of what occurred. Furthermore, a group of teachers can view the same clip and have a conversation around a common artifact of practice. Additionally, video can be reviewed several times from multiple perspectives, allowing teachers to gain deeper insight into important teaching and learning issues (p. 101).

This is not meant to imply that video in and of itself promotes teacher learning, rather it is a means by which a clear goal may be accomplished in conjunction with facilitation of the viewing and discussion (Borko et al., 2008; Le Fevre, 2004; van Es, 2009).

## **2.2 Video and Video Clubs for Professional Development**

In general, video and video clubs have several features that make them particularly effective in relation to teacher professional development. Several authors conclude that video can be a powerful tool for promoting self-reflection (Harford & MacRuairc, 2008; Marsh & Mitchell, 2014; Xu, 2009). Video clubs can bring teachers

together as a community, promote analysis of learning and teaching through critical discussion, focus on improving practice and stimulate teacher learning (Borko et al., 2008; Marsh & Mitchell, 2014; Sherin & Han, 2004).

Harford and MacRuairc (2008) used a scaffolded approach to using video designed to help student teachers achieve a deeper level of reflection. They found that student teachers watching their own practice in a group setting shifted their focus from the instructor to the impact of instruction on the pupils, specifically to pupils' activities and responses. Stockero (2008) reported that while the percentage of classroom events (e.g., a student explaining their solution, or a teacher's decision about student participation) analyzed at the describing level remained constant, there was a shift from evaluating to theorizing and confronting during whole group discussions for mathematics education students watching video cases, although the change was found to be statistically insignificant. However, a shift from students needing to be prompted to provide evidence to providing unprompted support of their statements by reference to the video being discussed was found to be statistically significant (Stockero, 2008).

As for specific benefits of video club participation with in-service teachers, much of the relevant research has been conducted within the discipline of mathematics teaching and has focused on the attention teachers give to student thinking and mathematical reasoning. These studies have concluded that over time teachers shift their focus from the teacher to students' actions and ideas, initiate more of the conversation within the video club and shift from describing and evaluating the video to interpreting (Sherin & Han, 2004; Sherin & van Es, 2009; van Es & Sherin 2008; van Es & Sherin, 2010). Similar results were reported by van Es (2009) in a study that focused on changes in the roles

teachers assumed over the course of ten video club meetings, finding that teachers took on the prompter role more often; that is, they initiated and invited others to join the discussion, and focused on student thinking in this role. Moreover, Sherin and van Es (2009) examined the effect a shift to focusing on students had on classroom practice and concluded that the shift in professional vision, defined in part as “the ability to notice and interpret significant features of classroom interactions” (p. 22), displayed in the teacher’s classroom paralleled the change within the video club. The change in teachers’ focus has been found to follow several different developmental paths: a direct path toward interpreting student thinking, a path that cycles between using descriptive or evaluative language and focusing on student thinking or teachers/student actions, or an incremental path that sees a change in a singular area, for example from teacher to student followed by a change to interpretive reasoning in a later meeting (van Es & Sherin, 2008).

Although research outside the discipline of mathematics is more limited, analysis of a multi-discipline *video-reflection group* found self-reflection through video helped teachers recognize a need for improvement, identify possible improvements, implement those ideas and evaluate the outcomes associated with the changes (Tripp & Rich, 2012). These results were accomplished using a method that had participant teachers self-identify improvement goals and select clips of their own teaching for group viewing. In an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) setting, video club participants were found to shift their focus from the teachers to the aim, content and context of the lesson video (Minaříková, Píšová, Janík, & Uličná, 2015). In this case the focus of the video club was on developing teachers’ professional vision in relation to students’ communicative competence.

Based on their review of literature focused on the use of video for professional development of both pre-service and in-service teachers, Marsh and Mitchell (2014) concluded that "... there is reason to believe that video viewing and accompanying discussion between teachers and their coaches, mentors and/or tutors provides a platform for constructing group and individual theorisations of practice, which can in turn potentially promote teacher learning" (p. 413).

### **2.3 Frameworks for Evaluating Video Clubs**

The different foci or purpose of video for professional development necessitates different frameworks for examining the changes teachers display as a result of their engagement with video, but research concerned with using video to prompt discussion in a group setting can generally be classified in two ways, focusing either on what teachers discuss, or how teachers discuss. Most research focuses on the former. An early example of a framework that examines what teachers discuss is the *Learning to Notice Framework* created by van Es and Sherin (2002). Although this early study dealt with written reflections of individual-based video reflection, the *Learning to Notice Framework* has been developed and applied to group discussion of video in subsequent research (van Es & Sherin, 2008). The framework focuses on distinguishing among ways teachers discuss video. At the lowest level (level 1) teachers describe or evaluate the lesson video. At the highest level (level 4) teachers create *analytic chunks*, defined as the identification of an event related to teaching or learning and the use of the video as a source of evidence to interpret rather than judge. Furthermore, the highest level requires that the teachers make



connections between events and propose possible solutions. Between these two extremes teachers can be classified as producing incomplete analytic chunks or complete analytic chunks mixed with descriptions and evaluation at level 2, or complete chunks and evaluation, but no description, at level 3 (van Es & Sherin, 2002).

Another early framework that has undergone development can be found in a study investigating teacher learning in a video club (Sherin & Han, 2004). The four categories of student conceptions, pedagogy, discourse and mathematics were used to classify the focus or topic of the discussion in the video clubs they examined. Further distinctions were made in some of these categories; for example, three subdivisions were used in the category of student conceptions: quoting, exploring meaning and synthesizing ideas. Comments concerned with pedagogy were divided between the teaching strategy used and alternative techniques suggested. Each of these subdivisions was further divided as either being related to, or independent of, student thinking.

Several studies have used some of the same categories and sublevels as the previously mentioned research—for example the categories of stance (subdivisions: describe, evaluate and interpret) and mathematical thinking (subdivisions: restate, investigate meaning and generalize/synthesize multiple ideas)—but have also expanded the frameworks by considering the actor under discussion (teacher, student or other) and modifying the topics of discussion (management, climate, pedagogy and mathematical thinking) (Sherin & van Es, 2009; van Es & Sherin, 2008; van Es & Sherin, 2010). Two of those studies also examined the specificity of teachers' comments and whether evidence (video or non-video based) was provided (van Es & Sherin, 2008; van Es & Sherin 2010).

In the previously mentioned research, stance has often been subdivided between describe, evaluate and interpret, but this is not the only way to interpret reflection. Manouchehri (2002) identified five levels of reflection in her examination of student teacher journals: describing, explaining, theorizing, confronting and restructuring. Although this study does not deal with video, the framework has been applied to prospective teachers discussing video of mathematics lessons (Stockero, 2008).

The framework used by Minaříková et al. (2015) in an EFL video club context consisted of six categories; teacher, pupil(s), aim, content, process and context. Considering the categories are not mutually exclusive there is clear similarity to the categories of actor and topic (and their respective subdivisions) used by Sherin and van Es (e.g., 2009).

An example of how teachers discussed video is provided by van Es (2009) in a study that examined the roles teachers assume in a video club discussion. The roles fell into two general categories: organizational, which provided a foundation for the conversation to take place, and discussion which related to the topic of the conversation, and introducing or developing ideas. The organizational roles category had three subdivisions: coordinator, clarifier and mediator, while the discussion role had seven subdivisions: prompter, proposer, supporter, critic, builder, summarizer and blocker.

Borko et al. (2008) developed a framework that addressed both how and what teachers discussed in a video club as well as who made the comment and when the comment was made. How teachers discussed was categorized as the type of conversation with six subdivisions: setting up the discussion, suggesting, questioning, identifying with the teacher in the video, describing, or critiquing the video. What was discussed is

covered by the content category with four subdivisions: teacher's thinking, students, pedagogy, and math. Who and what were subdivided between facilitator, teacher in the video, or other teacher and before, during or after watching the video respectively.

## **2.4 Learning Communities**

Research on teachers working together in a group context exists under many different names, for example: community of practice (Servage, 2008), professional learning community (Verbiest, 2011) and community of inquiry/enquiry (Cassidy, Christie, Coutts, Dunn, Sinclair, Skinner & Wilson, 2008). The problem of describing such a group is further complicated in that there is no absolute definition of a professional learning community (Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace & Thomas, 2006; Verbeisst, 2011); however, it is important to have a general idea of what the phrase *learning community* means before proceeding. Wenger and Snyder (2000) define communities of practice as a collection of people coming together to share information and expertise in order to solve problems. Skerrett (2010) makes a distinction between communities of practice and learning communities, noting that the latter stresses the examination of teaching and student learning, whereas this may not be the case with the former; for example, a monthly meeting of an academic department that focuses on administrative issues could be termed a community of practice. Dobie and Anderson (2015) identified the theme of “teachers collaborating and reflecting on their teaching with the goal of learning” (p. 231) as encompassing many of the terms mentioned, although the

examination of the daily issues of teaching is also an important aspect of learning communities (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999).

Teaching is traditionally an individual activity. As such, teachers work in isolation unless an effort is made to break from such isolation. One way to accomplish this is through the establishment of learning communities that allow for questioning and dialogue (Hadar & Brody, 2010; Snow-Gerono, 2005). One benefit of participation in a learning community is that, as Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) write, "...teachers learn when they generate local knowledge of practice by working within the contexts of inquiry communities to theorize and construct their work..." (p. 250). The similarity between this idea of teacher learning and the idea of teacher learning in video clubs discussed above (e.g. Borko et al., 2008; van Es, 2009) reveals a connection between video clubs and learning communities, a point discussed below. It is also important to note the connection that exists between learning communities, teacher professional development and student learning. Several studies have found that teachers most effectively develop professionally within a supportive community and that development can enhance student learning (Borko, 2004, Servage, 2008; Stoll et al., 2006; Verbeist, 2011).

An important point to remember when examining learning communities is the diverse nature of such communities. As Grossman, Wineburg and Woolworth (2001) write, "Researchers often implicitly treat professional community as generic, but teacher community differs—just as teaching does—by grade level, subject matter, and student population. A model of community developed for one population of teachers may not work for others" (p. 29). Clearly then not all factors related to assessing the creation and

development of learning communities are necessary applicable to a particular learning community. That being said, several traits of successful learning communities recur in the existing body of research and should be viewed as prerequisites or key factors of learning communities. Not surprisingly these recurring traits also appear throughout several frameworks used to evaluate the development of learning communities. These factors and related frameworks are discussed in the following section.

## **2.5 Frameworks for Evaluating Learning Communities**

One idea common to many of the frameworks for evaluating learning communities is the need for the creation of discourse norms (Cassidy et al., 2008; Grossman, Wineburg & Woolworth, 2001; Little, 2002; van Es, 2012), which is not surprising given the need for any group to have effective ways to communicate if it is to be functional. The *Framework for Development of Teacher Learning Community in a Video Club* created by van Es (2012) focuses on norms in terms of the productive discussion they generate. In evaluating norms in this way van Es (2012) used a three tiered scale: beginning, intermediate and high-functioning. At the lower end of the scale discussions involve only one perspective and lack elements of critical discussion (evidence, elaboration and explanation). Discussions involving different perspectives that begin to incorporate elements of critical discussion are classified as intermediate, while at the highest level group member begin to question one another and require each other to exhibit the elements of critical discussion (van Es, 2012).

As the name would imply, another aspect of learning communities common to several frameworks is the focus on teaching and learning (Little, 2002; van Es, 2012), especially the learning and development of the community as a whole (Grossman et al., 2001; Verbiest, 2011). In evaluating schools as learning communities Grossman et al., (2001) describe development of a focus on teaching and learning in terms of breadth, depth and anchoring. Breadth and depth relate to the number of teachers participating in the school as a community and the way in which they do so, respectively. More teachers attending teaching conferences would be an example of what they call broadening, while an individual teacher's increased drive to improve student learning is an example of deepening. Anchoring involves connecting the focus on teaching and learning to the school as a learning community, for example by connecting teacher professional development to school policy (Grossman et al., 2001). The focus on teaching and learning that takes place on a smaller scale, for example a video club, must be evaluated in a different way. The Focus on Teaching and Learning category of van Es's (2012) framework uses the same three tiered scale previously discussed, but is centered on the specificity with which participants discuss the video in relation to their teaching. Conversations that focus on broad issues and issues outside the clip shown to the video club are at the beginning level. Intermediate level conversation focus on individual teacher's practice as seen in the video, but may also include issues outside of the clip. At the high-functioning level, the specifics of teaching and learning within the video are the focus of a sustained conversation over the course of the meeting (van Es, 2012).

Another aspect of learning communities addressed by several authors is that collaboration in learning communities need not always take place in an environment of

total agreement. It is a natural and important part of a learning communities that members are able to express contrasting or opposing ideas and that the reflection be of a critical nature (Cassidy et al., 2008; Dobie & Anderson, 2015; van Es, 2012). Furthermore, according to Grossman et al. (2001) understanding and responding to differences and conflict is a key area in which communities develop. In order to evaluate such development the ideas of differences and conflict are combined in the *navigating fault lines* category in the framework of Grossman and her colleagues (2001). Similar to van Es (2012), Grossman et al. (2001) use a three tiered scale (beginning, evolving and mature) to evaluate communities in term of how differences and conflict are addressed. At the beginning level differences and conflict are not addressed. At the evolving level differences are downplayed as small deviations from a unifying idea, while conflict that does enter the community, an inevitability according to Grossman et al. (2001), is dreaded. Finally at the mature level of community differences and conflict are addressed openly and are used constructively (Grossman et al., 2001).

Synthesizing the existing literature in a way similar to that done above, Cassidy et al. (2008) specifically tried to establish a framework of communities of enquiry to be used in future investigations. They identified seven themes (dialogue and participation, relationships, perspectives, structure and context, climate, purpose and control) that are key in the development of communities. Although Cassidy et al. (2008) did not provide a differentiated way to evaluate development in the seven areas in the way other studies have (e.g. Grossman et al., 2001; van Es, 2012) they did provide advice and considerations to take into account when attempting to build a learning community. For example when the theme of *control* is discussed, Cassidy and her colleagues (2001) noted

that control and authority within a group is not a static concept, but that the amount of flexibility is a complex issue and is different for every community.

Other conditions necessary for a learning community to exist, but not part of an evaluative framework, are the need for a sufficient amount of time for a community to develop (Grossman et al., 2001; Skerrett, 2010), trust between teachers and facilitator (Tripp & Rich, 2012; Verbeist, 2011) and enough participants in order to make the group sustainable (Cassidy et al., 2008). Together, the ideas of sufficient time, trust among member and a critical mass of participants constitute a set of prerequisite traits for a community to form.

## **2.6 Video Clubs as Learning Communities**

Although the idea that video clubs can function as learning communities has been hinted at, it should be made clear that there is an explicit connection in the existing literature. Sherin and Han (2004) note that video clubs are designed to function as communities, while van Es (2009) notes that ten meetings over the course of eight months gave video club participants the time and continuity necessary to develop into a community. Neither of these studies specifically examined such a development however. Borko et al. (2008) went a step further to conclude that the teachers involved in their video club formed a “supportive community” (p. 435) and there was “ongoing development of a strong professional community” (p. 432) but failed to provide insight into the criteria used for drawing these conclusions.



Working to fill in the gaps in understanding of video clubs as learning communities, van Es (2012) proposed and applied the *Framework for Development of Teachers Learning Community in a Video Club* to a video club. The framework consists of three categories: Collegial and Collaborative Interactions, Participation and Discourse Norms for Productive Collaboration and Focus of Activity on Teaching and Learning, each of which can be classified as beginning, intermediate or high-functioning. Applying this framework to the video club revealed that participant teachers were able to move from the beginning stage of each category to the high-functioning stage by the ninth or tenth meeting of the video club, although the development from intermediate to high-functioning was not always a one way process (van Es, 2012).

## **3 Methods**

### **3.1 Context of the Study**

The present study took place at a secondary school (10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade) with approximately 450 students, located in Albania, during the 2015-2016 school year. The school had three English teachers, all of whom taught classes at all three grade levels. The teachers had worked with the researcher/video club facilitator over the course of the previous academic year on a one-on-one professional development project utilizing video of their classrooms. All three teachers were invited, and initially agreed, to participate in the video club in the current study; however, Teacher 3 was not present at the fourth video club meeting and formally withdrew from the project before the fifth meeting. The two teachers that remained in the study had different teaching backgrounds. Teacher 1 had approximately thirteen years of EFL teaching experience at the high school level and had been chosen as a teacher leader at the end of the previous academic year. Teacher 2 had approximately eight years of EFL teaching experience as a lecturer at the local university, however it was only her second year as an EFL teacher at the secondary level. The teachers involved in the video club were not typical in that they were the only two teachers (out of eight teacher total) to initially agree to participate in the one-on-one video reflection project the previous academic year, seemed more interested in professional development, tried to use student centered activities, created their own materials or used supplementary materials in their lessons and, in the case of Teacher 1, incorporated technology in the classroom.

The procedure for the video club used the following approach: the recording of a teacher's lesson, the facilitator watching and selecting a short clip, and finally, meeting with teachers to watch and discuss the clip. The cycle was then repeated. More specifically, the facilitator video recorded a participating teacher's lesson using a single video camera located on a tripod in the back of the classroom and positioned in such a way as to record the blackboard at the front of the classroom and as many students as possible. The facilitator then viewed the video and selected a clip or two totaling five to ten minutes in length in the days following the recording. The selection of the clip was guided by which part of the video would provide the best learning opportunity for teachers in relation to Peace Corps program goals (see Appendix A). Teachers took turns having their classrooms video recorded, with each of the three teachers having their lesson recorded over the course of the first three meetings. After Teacher 3 withdrew from the study, Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 alternated being recorded for meetings four through eight.

The video club met during the school day during a period in which none of the teachers were teaching, usually the same week or the week following the recording, to watch and then discuss the clip or clips. At the beginning of each meeting teachers were told the video could be paused if they had a comment during the clip, but they never exercised this option. For the meetings in which teachers did not initiate a discussion after viewing the clip, the facilitator prompted them with a general question about what the teachers noticed, what stood out or any comments they might have—questions similar to those used in previous research on video clubs (Sherin & Han, 2004; Sherin & van Es, 2009; van Es, 2009).

Video club meetings were held once a month from October to April, with the exception of two meetings in November and January and no meeting in December. Teachers 1 and 2 attended all the meetings. Classes in Albania last 45 minutes; therefore, each meeting was constrained to this amount of time, although in most cases the meetings finished before the end of the period. The schedule of recordings and meetings, which teacher's video was viewed, information about the type of activity viewed during each meeting, and a description of an issue the facilitator planned to discuss, if teachers did not raise the issue on their own, during the second part of the meeting when the facilitator made a shift to acting as a teacher trainer, are outlined in Table 3.1.

The foci of the clips used in the video club varied both in subject (teacher or students) and topic, for example: discussion, classroom or time management, or pedagogical issues. All of the clips, however, were generally focused on student centered learning activities and increasing student communication. The reason for the variation in topic was that only one lesson was recorded for each video club meeting which considerably limited the topics available for discussion. The facilitator also had an obligation as a Peace Corps Volunteer working as an English teacher trainer to select topics that would be most beneficial to the teachers and meet program goals.

Because of the dual role as a researcher and teacher trainer, the facilitator usually used the first part of each meeting to help teachers clearly express what they had noticed in a video clip and develop their own thinking, and the second part of the meeting raising an issue, presenting alternatives or giving advice. This transition often occurred quite naturally as teachers asked the facilitator his opinion after they had expressed their own ideas and opinions. Many times the issues the facilitator wished to discuss as a teacher

Table 3.1 Summary of Video Club Meetings

| <b>Video Club Meeting</b> | <b>Recording Date</b> | <b>Meeting Date</b> | <b>Teacher Video</b> | <b>Activity of Video Clip</b>  | <b>Training Focus</b>  |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| 1                         | 10/30                 | 11/3                | 1                    | Group activity for module review   | Improving group interactions (spatial considerations)        |
| 2                         | 11/16                 | 11/17               | 2                    | Whole class discussion of a gap text                                     | Noticing and scaffolding students' ability to justify        |
| 3                         | 11/23                 | 12/3                | 3                    | Group activity summarizing a paragraph, moving to whole class discussion | Student Centered Activities                                  |
| 4                         | 1/11                  | 1/13                | 1                    | Giving advice using "should"   | Reinforcing Target Grammar and Error Correction              |
| 5                         | 1/21                  | 1/27                | 2                    | Brainstorming and comparing information from a text                      | Connecting the lesson to student experience                  |
| 6                         | 2/19                  | 3/9                 | 1                    | Module review done in groups (vocabulary, grammar, writing etc.)         | Improving student attention through an assigned task.        |
| 7                         | 3/15                  | 3/23                | 2                    | Choose a title for a reading (textbook activity)                         | Increasing student participation and higher level activities |
| 8                         | 4/4                   | 4/6                 | 1                    | Brainstorming pros/cons of traditional and online learning               | Time management and higher level activities                  |

trainer were discussed in the first part of the meeting; therefore, the second part of the meetings lasted only a few minutes and at most constituted ten percent of the total meeting time.

### **3.2 Data Collection**

The first, second, seventh and eighth video club meetings were audio recorded using a digital recorder which was placed on a desk near the computer on which the teachers watched the selected clip. The audio recordings were later transcribed and the transcripts provided the main source of data for the current study.

Following the final video club meeting the two remaining participant teachers met with the facilitator individually for an interview which was audio recorded and later transcribed. On average the post video club interview lasted approximately fifteen minutes. The post-video club interview was not originally part of the study, but was added when the teachers expressed a desire to have a forum in which to express their thoughts and feeling concerning the video club. From the researcher's perspective the interviews provided an opportunity to better understand the teachers' reaction to participating in the video club and the teachers' perception of how participation had affected them professionally.

The interviews began with an open ended question about the teacher's thoughts and feelings related to the video club, but also included more pointed questions. Some of the later type of questions were similar to those asked by Sterrett, Garrett Dikkers, and Parker (2014) and included; What did you like/dislike about the video club?; Do you

think you developed as a teacher?; Is there anything you would change about the video club? Other questions followed up on issues teachers raised when answering the previous questions or asked for specific examples. An example of the former was the question, “Is there a reason you didn’t mention things sometimes?” when the teacher mentioned she sometimes didn’t “express herself freely” during the video club meetings. An example of the later is asking for specific examples when a teacher said that participation in the video club led to changes in her teaching.

### **3.3 Data Analysis**

The eight step process for analyzing qualitative data as outlined by Chi (1997) was used as the basis for analyzing the video club meeting transcripts in relation to each of the research questions. The steps of this process are given below in Figure 3.1, followed by a brief explanation of each step, including an explanation of how the steps were carried out for this project. Two points should be noted; the first is that analysis was conducted independently for each research question (and sub-question). The second point is that the final step of Chi’s (1997) process is to repeat the analysis process, adjusting coding categories, grain size and other aspects of the analysis based on what has been learned through previous iterations. Such an iterative process was used both for the development of coding categories and finding the best way to segment the data. The analysis described below represents the interaction of the process which produced the categories and segmentation that best suited the data.

The first step of Chi's (1997) process is reducing and/or sampling the data. In this study sampling was predetermined in that the design of the study was intended to compare the first two meetings of the video club to the final two meetings. As a result only meetings one, two, seven and eight were audio recorded. In terms of reducing this data, one constant for all research questions was that the second part of each video club meeting, when the tone of the meeting changed from the Peace Corps Volunteer acting as a conversation facilitator to a teacher trainer, was disregarded. As previously noted the second part of the meetings often lasted only a few minutes and at most constituted ten percent of the total meeting time.

- 
1. Reducing or sampling the protocols
  2. Segmenting the reduced or sampled protocols (sometimes optional)
  3. Developing or choosing a coding scheme or formalism
  4. Operationalizing evidence in the coded protocols that constitute a mapping to some chosen formalism
  5. Depicting the mapped formalism (optional)
  6. Seeking pattern(s) in the mapped formalism
  7. Interpreting the pattern(s)
  8. Repeating the whole process, perhaps coding at a different grain size (optional)
- 

Figure 3.1 Method of Coding and Analyzing Verbal Data (Chi, 1997, p.8)

The second step in the process is to segment the data that remains after the initial step of reducing or sampling the data. There are several ways to segment the data, but the main considerations for segmenting are the size of segmentation, referred to as "grain size", and how grain size relates to the research question. For this study several different grain sizes were used, depending on the research question under consideration. A detailed explanation of the way this step was carried out for each research question is given below. It should be noted that sometimes segmentation is not necessary; instead the data



can simply be searched for the relevant information, which was the case for analyzing the post-video club interviews conducted with the teachers.

Following segmentation, a coding scheme must be developed. For this project, prior research (Manouchehri, 2002; Sherin and Han, 2004; van Es 2009; van Es, 2012) informed the creation of coding categories. However, the categories themselves were developed through an emergent coding process in the case of the first part of the first research question. The second part of the first research question used the roles defined by van Es (2009), which sufficiently described how teachers participated in the video club without the need to create new roles. In the case of the second research question the *Framework for Development of a Learning Community in a Video Club* (van Es, 2012) was used, with minor adjustments made to the coding framework to account for the differences (number of participants, focus of the club and academic subject) between the two video clubs. Appendix B reproduces the framework of van Es (2012).

The fourth step of the process is to create a mapping from the verbal data to the coding categories. In other words, it is necessary to answer the question: Which comments and questions lead to which coding categories? When this question is answered the data can finally be coded. Examples of the mappings used in this study are given below in Tables 3.2 and 3.3 for research questions 1a and 1b respectively. In Chi's next step, a visual representation of the mapping scheme is created, but as noted in Figure 3.1, this step is optional and was not carried out in this study. In steps six and seven patterns in the data are sought and then interpreted, with the connected consideration of the validity of the interpretation. According to Chi (1997) there are two ways to increase the validity of an interpretation, by substantiation with other evidence or by arriving at

the same results after recoding the data. The former method was used with the second research question by considering the post-video club interviews conducted with the teachers along with coding of the video club meetings. The second method was not used in a rigorous sense, but the data was coded several times before searching for patterns in the coded data, thus there was an attempt to remove flaws in any patterns that might emerge because of faulty coding. The final step in the analysis process is to repeat steps one through seven. As Chi (1997) writes, “Although it may seem masochistic, it is often necessary to repeat the entire process over, from Step 1 to Step 7. This need arises often, for example, if one wants to recode the data at a different grain size or if one wants to address a different question (p. 21).” Both of the example reasons for repeating the process apply to this study. The analysis process was repeated several times in search of the most fitting grain size and in developing the coding scheme for each of the research questions.

### **3.3.1 Research Question 1a Analysis**

In relation to research question 1a, the subject matter the teachers discussed, the transcripts were segmented in two ways during different iterations of the analysis process. The initial segmentation was on a sentence basis, while the second segmentation was based on semantic aspects of the conversation, specifically a major shift in the conversation which divided the conversation into portions. Several features signified a transition from one portion to the next. For example, a summarizing comment could signify the end of a portion, but more often the start of a new portion was signaled by the facilitator prompting the participant teachers for new ideas with a question such as “Any

other ideas?” The following portion would typically involve a teacher offering a new idea for the group to consider, a teacher disagreeing with a point made in the previous portion, or the facilitator asking the teachers to examine an idea being discussed from a different perspective. The initial method of segmentation was used to develop the coding scheme in step three of Chi’s (1997) process, while the final method of segmentation was used to reach a final classification for the subject matter teachers discussed.

The creation of subject matter categories was informed by prior research (Manouchehri, 2002; Sherin and Han, 2004) but the subject categories used in this study were created through successive readings of the meeting transcripts segmented on a sentence basis. The categories are presented in Figure 3.2 along with a category description and example statements for each subject category from various meetings. Coding was carried out multiple times. First, comments for both the teachers and the facilitator were coded on a sentence level (the first method of segmentation). Because the subject of discussion often changed quickly and was cyclical, sentences proved to be too small of a grain size for categorizing the subject of conversation. Therefore, the data was recoded using the portions (the second method of segmentation). The subject of each portion was then determined in two ways, first by qualitatively considering which subject was most prevalent in the portion as a whole and second by considering which subject was most prevalent quantitatively on the sentence level. This process resulted in four discrepancies between the two methods of coding, one for the first meeting, two for the second meeting, and one for the seventh meeting. The discrepancies in the final coding were resolved on a case by case basis, but in all cases the resolution favored the larger grain size. The larger grain size was preferred because quantitative results were skewed

by tangential comments on subjects that were subordinate to the main subject of conversation.

| <b>Subject Category</b>       | <b>Description</b>   | <b>Example Teacher Comments</b>  |
|-------------------------------|--|--|
| Activity                      | Lesson objectives and the tasks assigned by the teacher and completed by students to achieve those objectives during the lesson  | VC 7 - The idea was to talk about compound nouns, but I wanted to relate it to the text.<br>VC 8 - I had planned brainstorming and then coding the text.   |
| Alternative Teaching Strategy | Suggestions related to changing an activity or teacher's actions in order to improve instruction.                                | VC 1 - Maybe smaller groups.<br>VC 7 - Yes, a jigsaw or just having this group, members of the group work together and then have that specific information. Or maybe they can exchange their own information and maybe say yes this is part of day 1, this is part of day 2.                 |
| Teacher Actions               | Teacher's behavior or interactions and communication (verbal or written) with students during the lesson.                        | VC 1 - The teacher asks them to assess or evaluate each groups' answers or ideas.<br>VC 7 - I wrote day 1, day 2 just for the beginning. Which means that I thought that there was no need to write day 3, day 4 because I wanted them to turn to the lesson.                                |
| Teaching Methods              | Instructional strategies that provide a background for the lesson, but are not explicitly stated or presented during the lesson. | VC 2 – I have told them when there are gaps or gap filling they have to read the word which comes before and which comes next. Which means that they have to find the relation and pay attention to the sentences or the words that have been removed and find the connections between them. |

Figure 3.2 Subject Categories with Descriptions and Example Teacher Comments

| <b>Subject Category</b> | <b>Description</b>   | <b>Example Teacher Comments</b>  |
|-------------------------|--|--|
| Student Actions         | Students' behavior or interactions and communication (verbal or written) with the teacher or other students that is "on task" and related to participation in the lesson.  | VC 1 - But in fact, all the answers...all the questions were not just answered by one student. All the students answered the questions as you see.   |
| Student Abilities       | Student learning, skills, skill development or understanding   | VC 1 – I think [students] are not used to this thing so much, working in groups.<br>VC 2 - She agreed but she couldn't justify [choice] "D".   |
| Classroom Management    | Issues related to the time requirements of an activity, the physical space of the classroom, the number of students in a class, or student behavior that is "off task" and not related to participation in the lesson. | VC 1 - When there are too many students I think that is better not to organize them in groups.<br>VC 7 - Because if you remember there were some students who didn't pay attention to the lesson.<br>VC 8 - But I didn't have enough time to do all of them. |

Figure 3.2 (continued) Subject Categories with Descriptions and Example Teacher Comments

### 3.3.2 Research Question 1b Analysis

Analysis of the transcripts in regard to research question 1b, the ways in which the teachers discussed the video, took place in several stages. In the first stage basic quantitative data regarding the number of speaking turns taken by teachers and the facilitator were counted in order to identify general trends in participation. In the second stage Chi's (1997) process was employed with segmentation on a sentence by sentence basis, but with consideration of related sentences. This method of segmentation allowed for a single speaking turn to be classified in multiple ways while recognizing that a

teacher might continue to discuss in the same way over several sentences. Considering related sentences had two effects on the way a teacher acting in each role was tabulated. First a switch from one role to another and then a second switch back to the original role would only be counted as one instance of the original role so long as the topic remained the same. Second, a teacher speaking in one role for several sentences is counted as only one instance of the role, rather than an instance for each sentence in that role.

Similar to the analysis for the previous question, the categories for considering the way in which teachers discussed the video was informed by previous research, in this case van Es (2009), although some of categories had very few instances for the four meetings and are therefore not included in the results. The resulting categories are presented with descriptions and examples in Figure 3.3. The number of speaking turns for each category was then tabulated. The different number of teachers participating in the early and late meeting was accounted for by considering the quantitative data on a per teacher-meeting basis, thus averaging the number of comments in each category for the early and late meetings by the number of teachers present. Analyzing the data by quantifying the qualitative categorizations revealed several changes in the way teachers participated in the early and late meetings. Although most categories showed at least a small variation in frequency of instances coded in that category between the early and late meetings, only two significant changes were noted for further investigation. Specifically, the change in the number of *proposals* and *clarifying* comments made in the early and late meetings were further analyzed. The change in the number of *proposals* was further investigated because *proposals* form the basis for generating conversation in that *building*, *support* or *criticism* can only be done if an idea has been put forth. The

change in the number of *clarifying* comments was large, nearly doubling in the later meetings, and was therefore seen as a significant change.

| <b>Role / Comment Type</b> | <b>Description</b>   | <b>Example</b>  |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| Clarifier / clarify        | Asks for or provides background or other additional information                | Teacher 3: Yes, I think it's not a class of high level because I know some of those students. (VC 2)                              |
| Proposer/proposal          | Introduces a topic of discussion, usually by making an assertion or suggestion | Teacher 2: I think that the students who discussed, who talked, I think that I...maybe I convinced them. (VC 2)                   |
| Supporter / support        | Agrees with a proposal   | Teacher 1: Yes of course, yes a difference. (VC 8)  |
| Builder / build            | Elaborates on a proposal   | Teacher 3: And we all know this gap filling text are very difficult. Yes you can find the answer, but you have to justify. (VC 2) |
| Critic / criticism         | Disagrees with a proposal  | Teacher 1: I was not doing evaluation in fact. (VC 8)   |

Figure 3.3 Roles / Comment Types with Category Descriptions and Examples

### 3.3.2.1 Proposals

The *proposals* made by the teachers were further examined by first categorizing each *proposal* as an original or a repeat *proposal*. In a repeat *proposal*, an idea that had already been put forth for discussion is stated again. The number of original and repeat *proposals* in the early and late meeting were tabulated and compared. The idea of a *discussion* was also used to analyze the number of *proposals* that resulted in an extended conversation. The term *discussion* will be used to denote a part of conversation that

begins with a *proposal* (by a teacher or the facilitator) and is followed by at least one *building* comment or *criticism* by another teacher. Using this definition means that a *discussion* involves at least two participants of the video club. One of the participants in a *discussion* may be the facilitator, but only in making the original *proposal*, not developing the idea through *building* comments or countering the *proposal* with a *criticism*. The facilitator is limited in this way so that the teachers are required to carry the cognitive load necessary to create a *discussion*. The number of *discussions* in the early and late meetings were then tabulated and compared by calculating the percentage of *proposals* that led to a *discussion*.

#### 3.3.2.2 *Clarifying Comments*

Examination of the change in the number of *clarifying* comments resulted in the *clarifying* comments being classified in three ways. The first category of *clarifying* comments was *clarifying discourses*, which involved two or more participants (one of whom may have been the facilitator) and were either coded exclusively as *clarifying* over several (four or more) speaking turns, or involved several (four or more) speaking turns coded as *clarifying* mixed with other types of comments. The second category of *clarifying* comments was *clarifying monologues* in which a single teacher spoke for two or more sentences in the *clarify* role. The final category of *clarifying* comments, *stand-alone clarifying comment*, are single sentence comments or questions coded as *clarifying* that arose within a larger conversation not coded as *clarifying*, or quick exchanges (three speaking turns or less).



The number of *clarifying* comments involved in each *clarifying discourse* was counted and then the numbers were summed for the early and late meeting, respectively, in order to compare the total number of *clarifying* comments contained in the *clarifying discourses* of the early and late meetings. The tabulation and summation was done to identify a possible change in the number of *clarifying* comments within the *clarifying dialogues* between the early and late meetings. Classification of *clarifying discourses* takes into account the speaking turns of the facilitator for classification purposes, thus a *clarifying discourse* may be two teacher speaking turns and two facilitator speaking turns all in the *clarifying* role. However, when counting the number of *clarifying* comments for each *clarifying discourses* the facilitator's contributions were not included in the tabulation of the number of comments made by teachers.

### **3.3.3 Analysis Example**

An excerpt from the second video club meeting, along with the classification of the subject of each comment and the role teachers assumed (the way teachers discussed), is given in Figure 3.4 below. The figure is followed by a description of the way the excerpt was analyzed for both parts of the first research question. The purpose of the excerpt and description of the analysis is to provide the reader with a better understanding of a typical video club discussion and how the subject matter and way teachers discussed were coded. One point to note is that the facilitator's comments are coded as *Prompter* defined as: asks questions in order to generate topic for discussion or further elaboration. This category was not included in Figures 3.4 because the category applied almost exclusively to the facilitator with only three teacher instances for the four meetings.

| <b>Speaker</b> | <b>Dialogue</b>   | <b>Subject</b>                                       | <b>Role</b>          |
|----------------|---|--|----------------------|
| Facilitator    | What do you notice from this? Any comments?   |  | Prompter             |
| Teacher 3      | Yes, I think it's not a class of high level because I know some of those students there, but they found the right choice, but they couldn't justify. The teacher is very active, she tries to all the time just to give the reason why. | Student Abilities, Student Actions & Teacher Actions | Clarifier & Proposer |
| Facilitator    | You said the students couldn't justify. Could you explain that more, what you mean or something specific?   |  | Prompter             |
| Teacher 3      | Yes, the teacher is always asking them why why why and no answer is given.  | Teacher Actions & Student Actions                    | Builder              |
| Facilitator    | OK.   |  |                      |
| Teacher 3      | And we all know this gap filling text are very difficult. Yes you can find the answer, but you have to justify.   | Activity   | Builder              |
| Teacher 2      | Give reasons.   |  | Supporter            |
| Teacher 3      | And the students must be more active, but it's not a class of high level so we all know the difficulty we have in these cases. We all have classes of low level.  | Student Actions & Student Abilities                  | Proposer & Clarifier |
| Facilitator    | Thank you. Anybody else?  |  | Prompter             |
| Teacher 2      | The good thing was they gave alternatives.  | Student Actions                                      | Proposer             |
| Teacher 3      | Yes.  |  | Supporter            |
| Teacher 2      | The good thing, they talk, D, C, G. But it was something else the reasons   | Student Actions                                      | Builder              |
| Facilitator    | What do you mean, it was something else?  | Student Actions                                      | Prompter             |
| Teacher 2      | I mean that they gave alternatives and maybe the other students or the class, even me, I had to help them.  | Student Actions & Teacher Actions                    | Builder              |
| Teacher 1      | It is difficult even for high level students to justify.  | Student Abilities                                    | Builder              |

Figure 3.4 Example Subject and Role Summary

The excerpt is from the beginning of the second video club, meaning the participants had just watched a video clip. The selected video clip for this meeting was from Teacher 2's class and showed the teacher and students discussing the correct answer for a multi-paragraph gap text. Each paragraph had a missing sentence and the correct missing sentence was one of several sentences given as a multiple choice answer.

In this excerpt teachers discussed several topics and made different types of comments. As was the case in all the meetings, the facilitator *prompted* the initial discussion after teachers watched the video segment when he asked, "What do you notice from this? Any comments?" Teacher 3 began the discussion with *clarifying* comments when she provided additional information about the *Student Abilities* with her statement that she knows the students are not high level. She goes on to make a *proposal* related to the subjects of *Student Actions* and *Student Abilities* by stating that the students "found the right choice, but couldn't justify." She then makes another *proposal*, but changes the subject to *Teacher's Actions* when she comments that the teacher is active and tries to provide the justification.

Following these initial comments, the facilitator again acts as *Prompter* by asking Teacher 3 to expand on the idea that students couldn't justify. Teacher 3 *builds* on her previous *proposal* when she comments on, and connects the subjects of *Teacher Actions* to *Student Actions* and then focuses on the *Activity* as the subject by noting that gap texts are difficult. Teacher 2 acts as a *Supporter* of Teacher 3's position by restating part of Teacher 3's comment. Teacher 3 resumes the role of *Proposer*, focusing on the subject of *Student Actions* and then *Student Abilities* by saying "the students must be more active..." and then "...but it's not a class of high level so we all know the difficulty we

have in these cases.” The comment, “We all have classes of low level.” is *clarification* of *Student Abilities* if only for the benefit of the facilitator.

The facilitator *prompts* other teachers to comment, which was followed by a *proposal* comment by Teacher 2 on the subject of *Student Actions* when she said, “The good thing was they gave alternatives.” Teacher 2’s comment garnered *support* from Teacher 3 with a simple “Yes.” Teacher 2 follows up her *proposal* with a *building* comment on the subject of *Students Actions* when she notes the specific answer alternatives stated by the students in the video.

After the facilitator’s *prompter* comment asking for more information in regard to the comment that the justification “was something else” Teachers 1 and 2 act as *Builder*, focusing on the topics of *Student Actions/Teacher Actions* and *Student Abilities* respectively.

### **3.3.4 Research Question 2 Analysis**

#### *3.3.4.1 Essential Elements of a Learning Community*

The analysis of the video club and meeting transcripts in relation to the second research question took place in three phases. First, the characteristics of the video club itself were compared against criteria that had been identified in the literature as being prerequisite for the establishment of a learning community. The criteria used in this phase were: (a) a critical mass of teachers in order to sustain the community (Cassidy et al., 2008), (b) sufficient time for the formation of the community (Grossman et al., 2001; Skerrett, 2010) and (c) trust between teachers participating in the video club and the trainer (Tripp & Rich, 2012; Verbeist, 2011). Additionally, the post video club

interviews were used to examine the level of trust that existed between the facilitator and participant teachers.

#### 3.3.4.2 *Learning Community Framework*

The second phase of analysis used the *Framework for Development of Community in a Video Club Context* (van Es, 2012) to classify the video club as either a beginning, intermediate or high-functioning learning community in relation to three central features of learning communities: Collegial and Collaborative Interactions, Participation and Discourse Norms for Productive Discussion, and Focus on Teaching and Learning. Modifications were made to van Es's (2012) original coding framework in order to account for the fewer number of participant teachers involved in this study, English rather than mathematics as the subject and the varied focus of the meetings as discussed above. The unsegmented transcripts were coded independently for each framework category and resulted in a categorization of each meeting as either being a beginning or intermediate learning community within each category. No meetings were found to be high functioning in any of the three categories. Coding at such a large grain size was necessary because participants would often cycle through topics, and returning to a topic often meant different participants presented an alternative opinion, or expanded on previous thinking, something that was not accounted for by earlier attempts to code at a smaller grain size.

The final phase of the analysis considered the results of the first research question (both sub-parts) in relation to the second research question. An example of the general nature of this phase is analyzing how the development of a pattern in the subject matter or

the number of *proposals* made by teachers during the meetings reflects on the video club as a learning community. Consideration of the data in this way is given in the final discussion rather than more formally in the results section.

## 4 Results

### 4.1 Research Question 1a.

Research question 1a focused on the topic of the participants' discussions. The initial meeting conversation primarily focused on two topics: *Students Actions* and the *Activity* shown in the clip. The second meeting conversation also focused primarily on students; the dominate topic was *Student Abilities*, but *Student Actions* was also the subject of one conversation portion. Taken together half of the portions (seven out of fourteen) in the initial two meetings were coded as *Student Actions* or *Student Abilities*. Another similarity in the two initial meetings was the lack of discussion focused on *Alternative Teaching Strategies*. Although one segment was coded in this way for the first meeting, the suggested changes to the lesson were minor, with the suggestions of smaller groups, and changing a group from seven to four or five students.

There were dissimilarities between the early meetings as well. The first meeting had a heavy focus on *Activity*, while none of the portions for the second meeting were coded in this way. The second meeting had two portions coded as *Classroom Management*, while the first meeting had no portions with this coding. The overall structure and development of the conversation in terms of the subject discussed was also dissimilar, and as a result there was no clear pattern for the subject of these early discussion. One possible explanation for the observed differences in subject matter is the content of the videos the teacher viewed in the early meetings. The video for the first meeting showed groups in competition, while the second meeting showed a whole class

discussion, although in both situations the respective teachers used an IRE approach with very little group to group or student to student communication. Although the specific activity in the clip may have affected the topic teachers chose to discuss, each clip was open to discussion from multiple angles. For example, the discussion in VC 1 which focused on *Student Actions* could just as easily have been about how the *Teachers Actions* influenced students. Similarly the discussion of students' justification of their choices (*Student Abilities*) in VC 2 could have focused on *Teacher Actions* in relation to helping students justify.

In contrast to the initial meetings, the final video club meetings were more consistent in the subject of the conversation and how the subject changed over the course of the meetings. The conversation portions in these meetings were categorized as focusing almost exclusively (ten out of eleven portions) on the *Activity*, *Teacher Actions* or an *Alternative Teaching Strategy*, with more than half (eight out of eleven) of portions being coded as *Activity* or *Alternative Teaching Strategy*. The final meetings also displayed a recognizable pattern for development of the subject of the conversation, with an initial discussion of the *Activity* and *Teacher Actions* (in that order or reversed) followed by a longer discussion focused on *Alternative Teaching Strategies*.

Based on this analysis there was a clear change in the subject matter teachers discussed. Specifically, the early meetings focused on discussing students (*Student Actions* and *Student Abilities*), while the final meetings shifted focus away from students and toward the lesson *Activity*, *Teacher's Actions* and *Alternative Teaching Strategies*. A pattern of discussion also emerged; the in-many-ways dissimilar discussion of the first two meetings was replaced by a clear pattern in the later videos of *Teacher's Actions* and



*Activity* as the initial subjects, followed by a discussion of an *Alternative Teaching Strategy*.

Table 4.1 represents the subject matter discussed over the course of each of the four meetings being investigated—the first two and final two discussions in which the teachers participated. As discussed above, the subject matter and the way the subject matter changed over the course of the meetings differed between the early meetings and the late meetings. The early meetings showed a greater focus on the subjects of *Student Abilities* and *Student Actions*, but the data did not show a clear pattern in the way the subject changed over the course of a meeting. In contrast the late meetings focused more on *Teacher Actions*, *Activity* and *Alternative Teaching Strategies*. A pattern also emerged in that the two former topics were the subject of the initial conversation (in the order given, or reversed) while the later portion or portions focused on *Alternative Teaching Strategies*.

Table 4.1 Summary of Video Club Discussion Subject Matter

| <b>Video Club Meeting</b> | <b>Conversation subject matter</b>  |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1                         | Student Actions → Student Actions → *Activity → *Student Actions → *Alternative Teaching Strategy → Activity → Alternative Teaching Strategy                    |
| 2                         | Student Actions → *Teaching Methods → Classroom Management → Student Abilities → Student Abilities → Student Abilities → Classroom Management                   |
| 7                         | Activity → *Activity → *Teachers Actions → Classroom Management → Alternative Teaching Strategy → Alternative Teaching Strategy → Alternative Teaching Strategy |
| 8                         | *Teacher’s Actions → Activity → Activity → *Alternative Teaching Strategy   |

\*Subject matter topics introduced to the conversation by the facilitator

It is worth noting that while the facilitator started each discussion after the initial viewing of the lesson video with a general question, more pointed and directed questions were part of the discussions. An asterisk is used to indicate those portions in Table 4.1 in which the facilitator influenced the subject of discussion through the questions he asked or statements he made. Such questions and comments were not preplanned, but in some cases related to a specific issue that motivated the selection of the lesson clip and was therefore something the facilitator wished to discuss. Directed questions were also used to draw teachers' attention to subtle features of the video that might be difficult for the teachers to recognize and understand after just one viewing of the video. An example from VC 2 of this sort of steering is when the facilitator asked, "Tell me more about how you explained, because you said you insisted on explaining, so what was your approach? What were you thinking about when you were explaining?" This questioning led to the teacher talking about the *Teaching Methods* she had used in past lessons by saying, "I have told them when there are gaps or gap filling they have to read the word which comes before and the word which comes next." She continued with a comment related to her initial statement, "Which means that [students] have to find the relation and pay attention to the sentences or the words that have been removed and find the connections between them." Although the portion containing this exchange also contained teacher comments coded as *Teacher Actions*, *Activity*, *Student Actions* and *Student Abilities*, the overall coding of the portion was *Teaching Methods*. A later meeting example from VC 7 is when the facilitator said, "But I want to focus on the activity, rather than students' perception of the lesson or something like that... So how about the board?" This line of questioning led to a dialogue between the teacher and facilitator about the teacher's board

work and her decision process as the lesson progressed. The exchange lasted several speaking turns and had many comments focused on *Teacher Actions*; for example, the teacher said, “I wrote day 1, day 2 just for the beginning. Which means that I thought that there was no need to write day 3, day 4 because I wanted them to turn to the lesson.” Similar to the previous example, the portion contained comments on other subjects, in this case mostly *Activity*, but the overall classification of the portion was *Teacher Actions*. These examples illustrate how and to what extent the facilitator influenced the topic of discussion for the marked portions.

Although the facilitator influenced the topic of discussion, all such instances of the facilitator directing the conversation were in an attempt to refocus a tangential conversation, include other participants or *clarifying* questions or comments and therefore were much less direct than a *proposal* stating a certain opinion or position. This is an important distinction in that prompting allowed teachers a greater freedom in responding, particularly in being able to state their own opinion, whereas a *proposal* would have asked teachers to address the specific position put forth by the facilitator. Additionally, the number of segments whose subject matter was influenced by the facilitator remained constant over the early and late meetings with four instances in each case.

## **4.2 Research Question 1b.**

Related to the second part of research question 1, teachers demonstrated changes in the way they participated in the video club in several key areas. First, teacher

participation as measured through speaking turns increased from the early to the late meetings. Second, the number of *proposals* and *clarifying* comments also changed from the early to the late meetings—the former decreased, while the later nearly doubled.

The first step in the analysis of the data in relation to changes in the way teachers discussed over the course of the video club was a basic quantitative analysis of the number of speaking turns taken in the early and the late meetings. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 4.2 both as number of speaking turns and as a percent of the total speaking turns. The analysis revealed that the percent of teacher speaking turns decreased from 63.6 % in the early to 58.5 % in the late meetings, while the percent of facilitator speaking turns increased. However, when the reduction in the number of teachers participating in the video club is taken into account, the percent of speaking turns taken by each teacher, increased from 21.2% to 29.3%, an increase of approximately 8.1%. The facilitator’s percentage of speaking turns increased by 5.1%. This shows that teacher participation slight increased from the early to the late meetings.

Table 4.2 Number & Percent of Speaking Turns by Video Club

|                     | <b>Teachers<br/>(Number/Percent)</b> | <b>Per Teacher<br/>(Number/Percent)</b> | <b>Facilitator<br/>(Number/Percent)</b> |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| VC 1                | 89 / 68.5%                           | 30 / 22.8%                              | 41 / 31.5%                              |
| VC 2                | 91 / 59.5%                           | 30 / 19.8%                              | 62 / 40.5 %                             |
| <b>VC 1 &amp; 2</b> | <b>180 / 63.6%</b>                   | <b>60 / 21.2%</b>                       | <b>103 / 36.4%</b>                      |
| VC 7                | 78 / 57.8%                           | 39 / 28.9%                              | 57 / 42.2%                              |
| VC 8                | 74 / 59.2%                           | 37 / 29.6%                              | 51 / 40.8%                              |
| <b>VC 7 &amp; 8</b> | <b>152 / 58.5%</b>                   | <b>76 / 29.3%</b>                       | <b>108 / 41.5%</b>                      |

The way in which teachers participated in the video club was also examined by categorizing and then quantifying the type of comments teachers made on a comments-per-meeting basis (reported as an average per teacher), again accounting for the

difference in the number of teachers participating in the initial and final meetings. The type of comments made by the facilitator was also calculated on a comments-per-meeting basis. Comparing rates for the early and late meetings revealed changes in the way teachers discussed over time. The results of this analysis are given in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Types of Comments Made by Teachers and Facilitator (per meeting)

| Comment Type | VC 1 & 2 |             | VC 7 & 8 |             |
|--------------|----------|-------------|----------|-------------|
|              | Teachers | Facilitator | Teachers | Facilitator |
| Clarify      | 9.7      | 14.5        | 18.0     | 19          |
| Proposal     | 8.6      | 6.5         | 5.0      | 5.5         |
| Support      | 4.8      | 4           | 3.3      | 1           |
| Build        | 8.3      | 8           | 10.3     | 9.5         |
| Criticism    | 1.2      | 0           | 1.5      | 2.5         |

One change between the first meetings and final meetings of the video club related to the way in which teachers discussed was a reduction in the number of *proposals* or ideas for discussion put forth by the teachers. In the first two meetings there were a total of 52 *proposals*, an average of 8.6 *proposals*-per-meeting for each teacher, while in the final two meetings teachers made 20 *proposals*, an average of 5.0 *proposals*-per-meeting for each teacher. The facilitator showed a slight decrease in the number of *proposals* made, from 13 *proposals* in the early meetings to 11 in the late meetings.

Another change between the early and late meetings was an increase in the number of *clarifying* comments made both by the teachers and by the facilitator. In the case of the former the number of comments nearly doubled from an average of 9.7 to 18.0 *clarifying* comments-per-meeting for each teacher, while the later increased from 14.5 to 19 per meeting. The changes in the number of teacher *proposals* and *clarifying* comments was

further investigated in order to more fully understand the change in the way teachers discussed.

#### 4.2.1.1 Research Question 1b: Proposals

The change in the number of *proposals* made by teachers over the course of the video club was examined from several angles in an attempt to discover related areas of change and better understand the full nature of such the change. Examination of the *proposals* revealed that especially in the early meetings, the teachers had a tendency to repeat their *proposals* or the *proposals* of another video club member (exclusive of the facilitator). Table 4.4 shows the number of original and repeat *proposals* made in each of the meetings and the early and late meetings combined.

Table 4.4 Number of Original and Repeat Proposals Made by Teachers

|                    | VC 1 | VC 2 | VC 1 & 2 | VC 7 | VC 8 | VC 7 & 8 |
|--------------------|------|------|----------|------|------|----------|
| Original Proposals | 22   | 18   | 40       | 11   | 8    | 19       |
| Repeat Proposals   | 5    | 7    | 12       | 1    | 0    | 1        |

Considering the *proposals* as being either an original *proposal* or a repeat *proposal* showed that the number of *proposals* that were repeated was reduced from 12 in the early meetings to only 1 in the late meetings. Since the total number of *proposals* also changed from the early to the late meetings, the change can be considered as a percentage of the total number of the teachers' original *proposals* (exclusive of the number of *proposals* made by the facilitator). Examining the *proposals* in this way revealed that the percentage of *proposals* repeated was 30% in the early meetings but only 5% in the late

meetings. If the repeat *proposals* were omitted, the number of *proposals* made per meeting was 6.7 in the early meetings and 4.8 in the late meetings (averaged over the number of participating teachers), a much smaller change than previously noted. This leads to the conclusion that the greater number of *proposals* on a per-meeting basis in the early meetings was partly due to teachers restating *proposals* that had already been stated, leading to a single idea being counted multiple times.

The change in the number of *proposals* from the early to the late meetings was also considered in relation to other types of comments that helped to develop the conversation, specifically *building* comments and *criticisms*. As defined in the methodology, the term *discussion* is used to denote a conversation that started with a *proposal* and then had at least one *building* comment, a *criticism* and a *building* comment, or a repetition of the *proposal* and a *building* comment by another teacher. A *discussion* involves at least two participants of the video club, one of whom may be the facilitator, but only in the role of making the original *proposal*, not developing the idea with *building* comments or countering the idea with a *criticism*. The number of *discussions* increased from nine *discussions* in the early meetings to ten *discussions* in the late meetings. Although the increase in the number of *discussions* in the later meetings is slight, the number of *discussions* as a percentage of the *proposals* (original and repeat) made shows a greater increase, from approximately 14% of *proposals* leading to *discussions* in the early meetings to 32% in the late meetings. These calculations include the facilitator's *proposals*, since by definition a *discussion* may start with a facilitator's *proposal*.

There are multiple ways to interpret this result. The decrease in repeat *proposals* and the increase in *discussions* might show that teachers listened more carefully to each other in the later meetings, thus the teachers felt there was less need to repeat their ideas. It may also be the case that teachers gained a sense of the type of *proposals* that would elicit a response from another member of the video club. Such an interpretation would suggest that the teachers in the video club became more efficient in producing *proposals* that would lead to *discussions*. The small increase in the number of *building* comments supports the idea that teachers spent more time developing ideas; that is to say, the conversation changed from teachers putting forth several ideas for consideration with little development, to fewer ideas put forth with greater development.

The relation between a *discussion* and the distinction between original and repeat *proposals* was also considered and proved useful in offering a possible explanation for the reduction in the number of teacher *proposals* from the early to the late meetings. Only one of the twelve repeat *proposals* in the early meetings was part of a *discussion*, while no repeat *proposals* were part of *discussions* in the later meetings, which shows that if an idea did not generate a *building* comment or *criticism* the first time it was stated, there was very little chance that restating the idea would lead to a different result. Teachers may have developed a sense that if a *proposal* did not generate a response from another teacher in terms of a *building* comment or *criticism*, repeating the *proposal* would not produce a different result and was therefore either not worth the effort or not productive for the conversation, resulting in fewer repeat *proposals* in the later meetings.



#### 4.2.1.2 Research Question 1b: Clarifying Comments

The change in the number of teacher *clarifying* comments was also examined in depth to better understand the increase in such comments that was noted. Three types of interactions were noted for the *clarifying* comments: *clarifying discourses*, *clarifying monologues* and *stand-alone clarifying comments*. As defined in the methodology section, the idea of a *clarifying discourse* was used to denote pieces of conversation that involved two or more participants (one of whom may have been the facilitator) and were either coded exclusively as *clarifying* over several (four or more) speaking turns, or involved several (four or more) speaking turns coded as *clarifying* mixed with other types of comments. Instances in which a single teacher spoke for two or more sentences in the *clarify* role were classified as *clarifying monologues*. Single sentence comments or questions that were coded as *clarifying* that arose within a larger conversation not coded as *clarifying*, or quick exchanges (three speaking turns or less) were classified as *stand-alone clarifying comments*. These were not found to change significantly and are therefore not included in the following discussion.

The early and late meetings had 10 and 11 *clarifying discourses* respectively. The *clarifying discourses* in the early meetings had 34 *clarifying* comments while those in the late meetings had 51 *clarifying* comments. In terms of comments-per-meeting averaged by the number of teachers this comes to 5.7 and 12.5 *clarifying* comments-per-meeting in the early and late meetings, respectively, an increase of 6.8 comments-per-meeting. Since the increase in total *clarifying* comments from the early to the late meetings was 8.6 comments-per-meeting, this increase accounts for approximately 79% of the total increase in *clarifying* comments from the early to the late meetings. This result is difficult

to interpret without further investigation, but Jaworski (1990) notes that viewers of video such as that used in a video club will always have unanswered questions concerning the background of the clip. The increase in the number of *clarifying* comments within *clarifying dialogues* from the early to the late meeting may simply be the result of the specific videos being watched. That is to say, the videos viewed by the teachers in the later meetings may have been less understandable for the teachers compared to the videos viewed in the early meetings which led to more *clarifying* comments (and questions).

The early video club meetings had six *clarifying monologues*, while the later meetings had only one. However, it was noted during the examination of the clarifying comments that one of the *clarifying discourses* in the last meeting of the video club would have been classified as a *clarifying monologue* if not for the facilitator interjecting in an attempt to focus the conversation. This led to what might have been one speaking turn classified as *clarifying*, to be counted as four speaking turns. This may seem like a small difference, but because of the small number of teachers involved, a change from one to four speaking turns would account for approximately 9% of the increase in *clarifying* comments.

In summary most of the increase in *clarifying* comments can be attributed to an increase in the number of speaking turns teachers used for *clarifying* within *clarifying* discourses, while a small part was due to a change in the how the meetings were facilitated. Why teachers actually increased the number of speaking turns coded as *clarify* remains an open question.

## **4.3 Research Question 2**

### **4.3.1 Essential Elements of Learning Communities**

Analysis of the data in relation to the second research question revealed that the video club mostly satisfied the essential requirements for the formation of a learning community and in some ways developed as a learning community as measured by van Es's (2012) framework.

The specific attributes and context of the video club were used to understand if the video club satisfied the essential characteristics of a learning community. One of the essential characteristics is an adequate amount of time for a learning community to form. The video club met eight times over the course of an academic year; given that other studies related to learning community formation occurred over a similar timeframe and with a similar number of meetings (Sherin & Han, 2004; van Es, 2009; van Es, 2012) it is reasonable to conclude that the video club had an adequate amount of time and number of meetings for a community to form. Thus the essential characteristic of sufficient amount of time for the formation of a community was deemed to be satisfied.

A second attribute of the essential characteristics is trust between the facilitator and the participant teachers. Teacher participation in the video club was completely voluntary, and teachers were free to withdraw from the study at any time. Teachers' understanding of the voluntary nature of participation is evidenced by the fact that six teachers from two other secondary schools chose not to participate in the video club and that Teacher 3 withdrew from the video club. Therefore, the voluntary participation of

Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 in the video club, with an understanding of the project based on having already worked with the facilitator on a similar project over the course of the previous academic year, implies a high level of trust.

Comments made by teachers in the post video club interviews lend support to the claim that a trusting relationship existed between the facilitator and the participant teachers. For example, when asked if she would participate in another video club, Teacher 1 responded by saying, “Why not? Or even in other activities.” When Teacher 2 was asked if there were any specific parts of the video club she liked she responded by mostly talking about the facilitator, noting that the facilitator paid close attention to her teaching, saying, “I think that [the facilitator has] a really sharp eye. [He] watched everything very carefully.” She also touched on the subjects of her personal feelings in the video club and the way advice was given by saying,

[The facilitator] didn't make me feel embarrassed about something, but really paid attention to the way how I organized the class, I talked to [students]. Or some advices which were really useful, for example you have to organize like this, there is another strategy, another method. Let's say it was not an order, it was just collaboration.

The interview transcripts also provided instances of the teachers talking about trust in a way that could be interpreted as referring to the facilitator, the other teacher(s) or both. When asked about being critiqued or having weak points pointed out both teachers responded that they were open to such comments. Teacher 1 said, “I don't think it makes someone bad. I think that critiques are always for good, for the improvement of someone. Because I don't quarrel with anyone. I don't compete with anyone. I just want to improve

myself.” Teacher 2 noted, “I would accept. I would accept. Yes, I would say... Yes, for example [Teacher 1] has done.” Both teachers also spoke of the collaboration involved in the video club. Teacher 1 said, “[The video club] was really great because we had great collaboration together...” Similarly, Teacher 2 spoke of collaboration saying, “[The video club] was good collaboration...” and “...I need this kind of collaboration.” It’s difficult to imagine a group in which an openness to critical feedback and “great collaboration” could exist in the absence of trust between the members.

Although the post video club interviews did not include direct evidence to contradict the idea of a trusting relationship between the participating teachers and facilitator, some teacher comments could be interpreted as calling into question the extent of the trust that existed. Teacher 1 was not willing to speak on the record about an issue which affected her and her participation in the video club. Teacher 2 said she would not voluntarily participate in another video club, nor work with another PCV because she doubted another PCV would have a new idea. This might call into question the relationship she had with the PCV she did work with, the facilitator. Additionally, some of Teacher 2’s comments contradict the idea of trust among the teachers. When asked to explain a comment related to not expressing herself freely in the video club she said, “I didn’t want to argue.” In regard to giving feedback to others teachers, Teacher 2 said, “Yes, I held back...” and “I think [Teacher 1] will feel embarrassed.” This calls into question the conclusion that the facilitator had a trusting relationship with teachers and that such a relationship also existed among the teachers. Trust exists on a spectrum rather than as a black and white issue. Given the evidence both for and against trusting

relationships in the video club it is reasonable to conclude some trust existed and that the video club functioned in the grey area between absolute trust and absolute distrust.

The final essential characteristic is a sufficient number of participant teachers to sustain the community. Three teachers initially formed the video club and two teachers continued to participate through the final meeting near the end of the academic year. This suggests that some type of temporarily sustainable relationship existed among two participants of the video club. On the other hand, all three teachers had worked at the same school during the previous academic year (for much longer in the case of Teachers 1 and 3) and interacted on a daily basis. Thus, the video club did not create new relationships between the teachers, but it did offer these teachers a new way in which to interact and develop the relationships that already existed. The video club was also a project conceived of and implemented with an expiration date. The teachers never showed an interest in continuing the video club on their own or even continuing to meet on a monthly basis for the purpose of professional development, which might call into question the level of community, and as previously noted, Teacher 2 said she would not participate in another video club. On the other hand, no community persists indefinitely. Given that the video club continued to meet over the planned timeframe, it seems there were a sufficient number of teachers to sustain some form of community for a given timeframe, but it does not appear that the community was sustainable without a facilitator organizing the work.

### 4.3.2 Learning Community Framework

Table 4.5 displays the extent to which the video club functioned as a learning community in the four meetings being investigated in relation to the modified learning community framework. The way in which the group developed was unique for each category of the framework. Within the Collegial and Collaborative Interactions category a cyclic development was present, with the group moving back and forth between the beginning and intermediate levels over the course of the four meetings. No development was seen in the area of Participation and Discourse Norms as each meeting functioned at the beginning phase of the framework. The greatest development was seen in the area of Focus on Teaching and Learning. In this category the video club quickly moved from the beginner to the intermediate level in the first two meetings. The final two meetings were also at the intermediate level for this category, but showed some elements of a high functioning community, a point which will be discussed later. In order to better illustrate the development (or lack of development as the case may be) in each category, excerpts from each of the meeting transcripts are presented and examined in relation to the learning community framework (van Es, 2012). For ease of reference each speaking turn has been numbered in the excerpts.

Table 4.5 Classification of Video Club as a Learning Community

| <b>Category</b>                             | <b>Meeting 1</b> | <b>Meeting 2</b> | <b>Meeting 7</b> | <b>Meeting 8</b> |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1) Collaborative and collegial interactions | Intermediate     | Beginner         | Intermediate     | Beginner         |
| 2) Participation and discourse norms        | Beginner         | Beginner         | Beginner         | Beginner         |
| 3) Focus on teaching and student learning   | Beginner         | Intermediate     | Intermediate     | Intermediate     |

Analysis of the first meeting revealed that the video club functioned at the beginning level for the Participation and Discourse Norms and the Focus on Teaching and Learning categories, but at the intermediate level for the Collaborative and Collegial Interactions category. It may be surprising that the group functioned at the intermediate level in the initial meeting, but it should be remembered that the participating teachers were co-workers and had previously worked with the facilitator. In the first meeting the teachers watched a clip of Teacher 1's lesson, a module review using group competition. The excerpt in Figure 4.1 comes midway through the first meeting and shows the group functioning at the specified levels in the various categories. Prior to the excerpt the group spent time discussing which students belonged to which group, student participation, and the lesson objectives. The discussion has now returned to the issue of student behavior and participation in group work.

- 
- 1 Teacher 1: I think they are not used to this thing so much, working in groups. And here is let's say, a way of treating working in groups, when someone is answering the question the others are doing something else. Someone is answering right now, so I can see the other thing, just to answer and get the mark and that's all.
  - 2 Facilitator: You mentioned that earlier, that you were having to tell them to listen several times.
  - 3 Teacher 3: You can't practice group work a lot because there isn't enough room.
  - 4 Teacher 2: This is a problem with the groups, they are not all attentive.
  - 5 Teacher 1: Even in this one there isn't enough room. It is a small one.
  - 6 Teachers 2: This is the problem, this is the problem with the groups they are not all attentive.
  - 7 Facilitator: OK.
  - 8 Teacher 1: But I think the students like it.
  - 9 Teacher 2: They are not all attentive. Not all of them accept the leader's ideas or suggestions.
  - 10 Facilitator: Ok, it seems like we...
  - 11 Teacher 2: Not all of them are concentrating on some points.
  - 12 Facilitator: So maybe there is a common issue for the three of you in your teaching.
  - 13 Teacher 1: But we have to do it, we have to challenge ourselves.
- 

Figure 4.1 VC 1 Discussion Excerpt 1



- 
- 14 Facilitator: The space itself, there is nothing we can do about that, right? We can't somehow make the classroom bigger.
- 15 Teacher 2: Yes.
- 16 Facilitator: Is there, lets focus on things we can change, so is there anything that could have been done differently here? To solve those issues?
- 17 Teacher 1: Yeah
- 18 Facilitator: What idea do you have?
- 19 Teacher 1: Mostly when I ask the students, I feel them equal and I don't like to say in an obligatory way, you for example, [name] stand up and answer the questions. I don't like this traditional way. But I think that if the opposite is going to happen maybe some or a member of the group is going to stand up and answer the question just to attract the attention of the others. Or no?
- 20 Facilitator: Have either of you tried that, having the students stand while they're speaking?
- 21 Teacher 1: Or how to organize it in another way? I thought of this way of revision because it is routine just to read the exercises. Someone do this and someone the other one. They had prepared all the exercises as I ask them do you have any questions about this or that and so on and so forth. They said no everything is clear, we have prepared all the exercises.
- 22 Facilitator: OK.
- 23 Teacher 3: Group work is better, we must choose the students who can talk, not them themselves.
- 24 Facilitator: OK.
- 25 Teacher 3: Because one of the students may talk more and the other is just doing something else.
- 

Figure 4.1 (continued) VC 1 Discussion Excerpt 1

Following the final comment by Teacher 3 in the Figure 4.1 excerpt, the conversation changed topic to the issue of student behavior during group work, but the facilitator was able to return the conversation to the issue of student participation during group activities, which provided Teacher 2 an opportunity to make an additional contribution to the conversation as shown in the excerpt contained in Figure 4.2.

- 
- 1 Facilitator: Anything else? About how to get the groups to interact better.
- 2 Teacher 2: Maybe smaller groups.
- 3 Teacher 1: But there is not enough space.
- 4 Teacher 2: But they need to spread.
- 5 Facilitator: Seven is maybe is a little bit big.
- 

Figure 4.2 VC 1 Discussion Excerpt 2

- 
- 6 Teacher 1: I know that the way we have to work in the classroom in pairs, four members of the group, that is enough or individually but I did it because there was no space there.
- 7 Teacher 2: When there are too many students I think that is better not to organize them in groups.
- 8 Facilitator: OK, could you talk more about that? Why?
- 9 Teacher 2: I don't know yet, but I think that they are so motivated in participating in the lesson because there are too many. Seven in a group, and four groups or five?
- 10 Teacher 1: Only three.
- 11 Teacher 2: Three
- 12 Teacher 3: Three groups, for a competition it is enough I think.
- 13 Teacher 1: Pedagogically, we have to organize the classroom as far as I know we have to organize the classroom in pairs. In groups of four and individually at the same time.
- 14 Teacher 2: Yes I agree
- 15 Teacher 3: For a competition three groups is enough.
- 16 Teacher 1: If I was going to make four or five groups here they needed time just to find the answer of that question.
- 17 Teacher 3: You can't find the winner.
- 

Table 4.2 (continued) VC 1 Discussion Excerpt 2

In the excerpts above all teachers are participating and the conversation shows evidence of teachers listening to each other, a characteristic of the intermediate level of the Collegial and Collaborative Interactions category. In Turn 1 of Excerpt 1, Teacher 1 initially introduced the issue of how students participate in group work, an issue addressed by all three teachers. Following the *proposal* regarding student participation in groups, Teacher 1 goes on to suggest the idea of having students stand when speaking in Turn 19 of Excerpt 1. Later in the excerpt, Teacher 3 makes the alternative suggestion that the teacher should call on students to speak in order to better distribute speaking time (Turn 23). In Turns 2 and 9 of Excerpt 2, Teacher 2 suggests smaller groups because some students may let others do the work in a big group. The fact that all three teachers made suggestions related to the issue of student participation in group work shows that they have heard and considered Teacher 1's *proposal*. In Excerpt 2 there is additional

evidence that the teachers listened to each other when Teachers 1 and 3 disagreed (Turns 3 and 17 and Turns 13 and 16, respectively) with Teacher 2's suggestion of smaller groups in Turn 2. However, there is also evidence that teachers are only beginning to listen rather than listening carefully to each other. Following Teacher 1's *proposal*, the teachers spend several speaking turns talking at cross purposes (Excerpt 1, Turns 3-13). During these speaking turns Teacher 2 repeated several times the problem is that students are not attentive, while Teachers 1 and 3 took issue with the size of the classroom. Moreover, although all the teachers made relevant follow-up comments to the *proposal*, Teacher 1's suggestion that students stand when speaking and Teacher 3's suggestion that the teacher should choose which students speak, are not developed or even addressed by another teacher. Collectively, this evidence shows that the teachers began to collaborate and listen to each and that the conversation was not dominated by one member, meaning the group functioned at the intermediate level in the Collegial and Collaborative Interaction category.

In terms of the second category of the framework, Participation and Discourse Norms for Productive Discussion, two main reasons resulted in a beginner classification. First, although all three teachers are participating in the conversation there is a lack of elaboration on ideas and suggestions, which is at the beginning level of the category. When elaboration does exist (e.g., Turn 25, Excerpt 1; Turn 17, Excerpt 2), it is almost exclusively provided by the teacher that originally stated the idea or made the suggestion and does not constitute evidence so much as simply being an explanation. On a related note, teachers were not examining each other's ideas and sometimes even went so far as to block others from commenting on their ideas, for example the beginning of Turn 21 in

Excerpt 1 when Teacher 1 moved the conversation away from the facilitator asking the other teachers about the suggestion of having students stand when speaking. This type of interaction fails to meet the requirement of the intermediate level for participants to question each other and require evidence and is therefore at the beginning level. Also many of the issues raised, for example the size of the classroom, are outside the control of the teachers, making a productive conversation difficult.

In relation to the Focus on Teaching and Learning category, the issue of student behavior during group work was raised in a very broad sense, an aspect of the beginning level. An example of this is in Turn 1 of the Excerpt 1 when Teacher 1 says, "...when someone is answering the question the others are doing something else." This shows Teacher 1 grouping all the students together, rather than seeing students as individual learners. As noted previously, teachers often focused on issues unrelated to the video being watched. These issues were also often unrelated to teaching and learning; again the size of the classroom is an example. In Turns 6 and 14 of the Excerpt 2, Teacher 1's comments regarding having students working individually, in pairs and in groups of four is another example of comments unrelated to teaching and learning in that she is referring to the way teacher's lesson are evaluated during formal observations. These examples from the excerpt are demonstrative of the general nature of the first meeting of the video club as teachers repeatedly brought up issues outside the scope of the clip the teachers watched. The result is that the meeting functioned at the beginning level for the Focus on Teaching and Learning category.

Two changes were noted in the way the video club functioned as a learning community in the second meeting. The group functioned only at the beginner level for

the Collegial and Collaborative Interactions category but developed to the intermediate level in the Focus on Teaching and Learning category, a change that would remain in the final two meetings. The Participation and Discourse Norms category remained unchanged at the beginner level. To illustrate, two excerpts are again considered. The first excerpt comes midway through the second meeting. The teachers have noted that students selected several different answers for the missing sentence in the second paragraph of a gap text, but that students were not able to justify their answers. The facilitator has just asked the teachers if there were any exceptions to the conclusion that students were not able to justify their answers. Teachers re-watched a part of the clip during the conversation in the excerpt (denoted by [VIDEO]) in order to see the student's nascent justification.

- 
- 1 Facilitator: Are there any exceptions to that though, or do you think all the students had the same problem?
  - 2 Teacher 3: In this classroom?
  - 3 Facilitator: Yes. We can watch it again if you want.
  - 4 Teacher 1: I don't think they have the same problem because I see some girl raise their hands but the teacher didn't see them. This girl here.
  - 5 Teacher 2: Yes.
  - 6 Facilitator: In the front here?
  - 7 Teacher 1: This one, she is able just to answer.
  - 8 Teacher 2: Yes but they talk all the time. And I didn't want to let them talk all the time because the girl here, here and the girl whom I was talking to they talked all the time. This is the reason. Because the girl in the middle she is a good student, she talks all the time. And I had problems with the boys at the end of the class.
  - 9 Facilitator: At the back?
  - 10 Teacher 2: Yes at the back, they talk all the time.
  - 11 Facilitator: Amongst themselves? Chatting?
  - 12 Teacher 2: Yes, yes and they were laughing.
  - 13 Facilitator: I was counting how often they participated in the class and two of the boys participated quite a bit.
  - 14 Teacher 3: They are very active.
  - 15 Facilitator: Not just chatting, but relevant conversation.
- 

Figure 4.3 VC 2 Discussion Excerpt 1

- 
- 16 Teacher 2: Because I told them, “stop laughing, be attentive” and then I made them a question and they answered. Because here, romantic dinner, where are the predictions made, [he] was the one who chose romantic dinner.
- 17 Facilitator: Which one is [he]? The one next to me or?
- 18 Teacher 2: No the other one.
- 19 Facilitator: The other one, in the middle.
- 20 Teacher 2: The boy who was laughing all the time. Yes he made the predictions.
- 21 Facilitator: Yes in the part right before we started watching he had made a prediction and the prediction was correct. But the reason I ask about justifying is because I think your right, I agree there is some difficulty for students to justify. But I also think there were a couple of examples were students were getting started giving a justification. The boy sitting next to me, let’s see if we can find it here.
- 22 Teacher 1: No we can see it and understand.
- 23 Facilitator: Well because I think it’s important that you actually listen to what he says. If you missed it the first time watching, that’s maybe also something you miss in the classroom.  
[VIDEO]
- 24 Facilitator: That was a little bit after. He was talking about why it wasn’t D. And he said it’s not related...
- 25 Teacher 2: It’s C.
- 26 Facilitator: He said C later, but he was commenting on this girl who said D and the other boy who said it was D.
- 27 Teacher 2: Yes there were the boy and the girl who said D.
- 28 Teacher 3: Disagreeing, yes.
- 29 Facilitator: And he said it wasn’t related. His justification was that their choice D wasn’t related to the paragraph. So that’s the beginning of a justification.
- 30 Teacher 3: Yeah.
- 31 Facilitator: You mentioned before about keywords, you could push him a little bit more. What do you mean, what’s not related?
- 32 Teacher 2: Yes, maybe I don’t think I have heard him.
- 33 Facilitator: Sometimes it’s hard in the moment.
- 34 Teacher 2: Maybe I haven’t heard him, however yes. If I...
- 35 Teacher 1: Next time you will do it.
- 36 Teacher 2: Yes
- 37 Facilitator: That’s why we discuss this so maybe you can notice this.
- 

Figure 4.3 (continued) VC 2 Discussion Excerpt 1

Following this exchange, the conversation got off topic, when Teacher 2 talked about her perception of the student in question in a very general way. The facilitator then had the teachers re-watch another section of the clip in order to see an opportunity to help scaffold another student’s ability to justify. The conversation developed around the

*Student Actions* and *Teachers Actions*, with specific reference to the video on the part of Teacher 2, and an observation by Teacher 3 that although the student in question said she agreed with the correct answer, the student still did not have a justification for changing her answer. The following continuation of the conversation took place near the end of the meeting.

- 
- 1 Facilitator: Would you say all the students get it now, do they understand that the answer is F.
  - 2 Teacher 1: As there are no objections it's OK.
  - 3 Teacher 2: Not all the students participated.
  - 4 Facilitator: Yeah, not all of them participated.
  - 5 Teacher 2: But those who participated...
  - 6 Teacher 1: Understood.
  - 7 Teacher 2: They understood.
  - 8 Facilitator: Why do you say that? Is there evidence?
  - 9 Teacher 2: That not all the students participated?
  - 10 Facilitator: No that they understand. Why do you reach that conclusion?
  - 11 Teacher 2: Some of them. Who talked, who participated? I think that the students who discussed, who talked, I think that I...maybe I convinced them.
  - 12 Facilitator: Now I'm asking you to justify your answer. Why do you say that?
  - 13 Teacher 2: Because they discussed, they talked. This is the most important thing. And they thought before speaking which means that everything they said, although they said D, C, they give their own reasons.
  - 14 Facilitator: Or tried to.
  - 15 Teacher 2: They tried to yes. This was the most important thing. No matter if it was F, C, G, they tried.
  - 16 Teacher 3: Yes and talked in English.
- 

Figure 4.4 VC 2 Discussion Excerpt 2

These clips illustrate the main aspect of VC 2 that led to a beginner classification in the Collegial and Collaborative Inquiry category. In the excerpts and the meeting as a whole, Teachers 1 and 3 contributed much less to the conversation than Teacher 2.; in fact, Teacher 2 took more speaking turns than Teachers 1 and 3 combined. Teachers 1 and 3, the much more experienced teachers in the group, showed very little commitment to helping Teacher 2 with the issue of developing students' ability to provide reasoning

for their ideas, opinions or answers. The lack of commitment to the development of other teachers is seen not only in the lack of participation by Teacher 1, but also in the way she did participate. In Turn 22 of Excerpt 1, Teacher 1 tried to speak for all the teachers when she expressed disapproval with the facilitator for replaying the video, something that might have helped the other teachers better understand students' ability to justify. This type of interaction is in contrast to the more distributed participation of the first meeting, and the example of teachers beginning to listen to each other presented in the VC 1 excerpts. Thus, the video club changed from teachers starting to listen to and collaborate with each other and all members participating—that is to say the intermediate level—to only a few members (Teacher 2 and the facilitator) participating and a lack of commitment to the development of other participants, which is at the beginning level of the modified framework.

Similar to the first category, classification of the Participation and Discourse Norms was also at the beginner level in VC 2. To reiterate, the conversation was very one sided, with the facilitator and Teacher 2 taking almost 74% of the speaking turns. The conversation was also deficient in constructive inquiry. Similar to VC 1 teachers did not press each other to explain or provide evidence to support their *proposals*. In the few cases where evidence or explanation was given at the prompting of the facilitator, the argument made was highly questionable. For example, Teacher 1 reasoned that some students could justify simply because they raised their hands to be called on by the teacher, even though the teacher never called on them and the students did not actually speak (Excerpt 1, Turn 4). The teachers also agreed in Turns 11-16 of Excerpt 2 that students simply speaking during the lesson implied understanding.



The Focus on Teaching and Learning category developed to the intermediate level in the second meeting because much of the conversation focused on two students in particular and the specific issue of their ability to provide reasoning for their answers. The facilitator helped to focus the group on the two particular students, but the teachers also contributed in their own way. In response to the initial question of exceptions to the idea that students couldn't justify, Teacher 1 noted a possible exception in Excerpt 1, Turn 4. Although the questionable nature of this comment in terms of evidence was noted above, the comment is specific and makes reference to student actions as seen in the video. It should also be noted that this comment came before the facilitator gave his examples of students' beginning justifications and replayed parts of the clip for the teachers. Teacher 2 was able to make reference to the clip by quoting students and herself throughout the meeting, for example in Turn 16 of Excerpt 1. This sort of direct reference to the video was absent from the previous meeting and shows the group started to focus on students individually and specific issues from the video. However the second meeting of the video club still had moments when teachers talked about students very generally. This is seen in Turns 5 and 6 of the second excerpt when teachers agree that all the students who participated in the lesson understood the correct answer. Another example from the beginning of the meeting is when Teacher 3 said, "... [the students] found the right choice, but couldn't justify the answer." Teachers also used personal experience rather than evidence again. Turn 4 of Excerpt 1 demonstrates this; Teacher 2 said of one student, "He is a boy who likes talking all the time but sometimes he has difficulty in finding the right words, or sometimes I think he is a dreamer..." As noted above there were also instances when the conversation was thrown off topic by comments made by

the teachers. The mix of both general and more focused conversations shows the group began to focus on specific students and teaching practices, meaning the video club was at the intermediate level of the Focus on Teaching and Learning category.

The seventh meeting of the video club was classified at the intermediate level in the Collegial and Collaborative Interactions and Focus on Teaching and Learning categories, classifications similar to the first and second video clubs, respectively. Similar to both of the early meetings, the penultimate meeting of the video club was classified at the beginner level for Participation and Discussion Norms. The excerpt in Figure 4.5 illustrates these levels of classifications. The activity shown in the clip for VC 7 was a whole class activity in which students were asked to find the main points of each paragraph for a reading about a vacation in Mexico that involved extreme sports. The discussion that led up to the excerpt focused on a noticeable change in teaching strategy during the lesson in that the teacher abandoned recording students' responses on the blackboard. Teacher 2 said that she changed course because a group of three boys sitting in the back of the class was not participating, which is a common occurrence in an Albanian classroom. In some cases, the boys can be disruptive so the situation can become a classroom management issue, although that was not the case for the lesson the group viewed. Teacher 2 had made an initial *proposal* of group work, which was followed by Teacher 1 *building* on the group work idea by suggesting a jigsaw activity. The excerpt picks up with the facilitator asking Teacher 1 to expand on her idea of a jigsaw activity. The discussion below starts midway through and continues to near the end of the meeting.

- 
- 1 Facilitator: Can you go into it more, give me some details. Or [Teacher 1] you mentioned jigsaw, could you...
  - 2 Teacher 1: I think it would be better, as she just mentioned, I don't want all the students just to read the lesson because this is a little bit boring. Not all the students are listening to the others when they are reading the lesson. But in this way it will be better just to read this paragraph that she just said, read thrills and spills, you're the first paragraph, you're the second one then just to choose one student or the leader of the group or number 1s here number 2s here and to exchange their information about the days mentioned there what traveling and then to share their experiences if they had or the opposite or any documentaries or far as they have read or watched or listened to any strange story to add. Maybe or just tell their experience if they had ever had any strange one.
  - 3 Facilitator: OK, anything to say on that idea? You mentioned that a group activity or a jigsaw might be difficult because not all the students were attentive. But do you think if you did a group activity, where they had their own responsibility that would help them be attentive?
  - 4 Teacher 2: Now some of the students that were having test...
  - 5 Facilitator: No, I'm not talking about them.
  - 6 Teacher 2: Just for the rest of the class?
  - 7 Facilitator: I'm mainly talking about the three boys in the back. They were causing you some problems.
  - 8 Teacher 2: Some trouble. In fact they are...
  - 9 Teacher 1: Troublesome.
  - 10 Teacher 2: Troublesome all the time. Which means that no matter a group activity or pair work activity they are the same.
  - 11 Facilitator: So, um...
  - 12 Teacher 2: It was not for them, it was for the rest of the class. Because in the class there are a lot of good students who really, really need to work. While the three boys....
  - 13 Teacher 1: They don't study.
  - 14 Teacher 2: They don't study, they don't work. They don't take books, which means that I have to concentrate them to talk all the time. Because the first time they did have their phones.
  - 15 Facilitator: Yeah, at one point they did have their phones out.
  - 16 Teacher 2: This was the reason that I have to talk to them all the time.
  - 17 Facilitator: OK
  - 18 Teacher 2: Because this is the way they are all the time.
  - 19 Facilitator: But how about when you do talk to them. That wasn't part of the video we watched, but it's in the video. You do interact with them.
  - 20 Teacher 2: Yes, because one of the boys, I think that he is so smart. And I think that he knows English, but he doesn't want to work with it.
  - 21 Facilitator: What do you mean he doesn't want to work with it?
- 

Figure 4.5 VC 7 Discussion Excerpt

- 
- 22 Teacher 2: Which means that when he has a test or exam, he takes his own test and he works on it, he works on it. While during the lessons or classes he doesn't want to participate. And this was the reason why I had a discussion. I was asking him some questions, he answered me "yes" or "no" questions. Or "yes" or "no" even the boy that was in the middle of them, yes/no questions. But in fact this is.
- 23 Facilitator: If you talk to them directly they will participate?
- 24 Teacher 2: They participate or they can answer just the question that I am asking to them but this is all.
- 25 Facilitator: They don't give you any more?
- 26 Facilitator 2: They can put their hands like this, and just put their hands down. They are not so attentive.
- 27 Facilitator: Maybe in...I think what you are saying is that in a group activity they would not participate, so if you did a jigsaw that piece would be missing. Am I understanding you correctly?
- 28 Teacher 2: These three boys?
- 29 Facilitator: Yes.
- 30 Teacher 2: No they were separated, or they were put in different groups. But the problem stands here that these boys even distract the others so I would make the same thing, stop please, listen here, so they are the same no matter if they stand together or not.
- 31 Facilitator: Mm-hmm.
- 32 Teacher 1: May I add something, because I have had some cases from my experience. I have made them leader of the group. They were always making things that were not appropriate for that classroom. I have made them leader of the group, I have given them some worksheets and then some flip charts. To write them on the blackboard or on the flipcharts and they were in the best because I just tell them if they are the leader of the group and if your group participates quite well, are doing the job quite well have to get a ten, not only you but all the members of the group. They worked for all the members of the group to take a ten. They worked hard.
- 33 Teacher 2: Yes this is interesting, but the problem with the two boys, not with this that I consider smart guy...
- 34 Teacher 1: As you said they are smart.
- 35 Teacher 2: Only one, because two others they are smart but in their way which means that one of them tells me that sorry but I can't speak English. I don't know any words in English. This is the problem with two of them.
- 36 Facilitator: I think I know which ones you are talking about, the camera was on the far right.
- 37 Teacher 2: The boy that was on the right?
- 38 Facilitator: Your right, my left.
- 39 Teacher 2: Yes he was the smart one, while the two they tell me that we can't talk in English because we don't know any words. We just know "yes" or "no."
- 40 Facilitator: But the boy that was next to me, very short hair, shaved head...
- 41 Teacher 2: The chubby one?
- 

Figure 4.5 (continued) VC 7 Discussion Excerpt

- 
- 42 Facilitator: Yes, he is a little heavier than the other two. You actually had him read one of the paragraphs.
- 43 Teacher 2: But he is always distracted. He is not so attentive. He says to me “next time” “next time” “next time I will answer” “next time” this is the problem with him. However, OK, this a solution that [Teacher 1] mentioned.
- 44 Teacher 1: No it is not a solution, it is a way. I have tried it with my students.
- 

Figure 4.5 (continued) VC 7 Discussion Excerpt

Although Teacher 1 takes fewer speaking turns than Teacher 2 in the meeting excerpt, her contributions to the conversation demonstrated a level of understanding not seen in the initial meetings. Teacher 1 showed commitment to Teacher 2’s development by first expanding on her group work idea (Turn 2), and then addressing the specific concerns Teacher 2 had with using group work with non-participatory students (Turn 32). The excerpt also demonstrates the teachers carefully listened to and understood each other; again Teacher 1’s comments in Turn 32 is an example as is the exchange at the end of the excerpt in Turns 43 and 44. Listening and understanding are both factors that are part of the high-functioning classification for Collegial and Collaborative Interactions. There is a limiting factor, however, in that the facilitator remains the main driver of the conversation. This is shown in the excerpt by the facilitator initially asking Teacher 1 to expand on her jigsaw idea in speaking Turn 1, and other comments or questions that asked the teachers to develop their thinking, such as in Turn 21 when the facilitator asked, “What do you mean he doesn’t want to work with it?” In contrast, the teachers never pushed each other or the facilitator in this way. As mentioned Teacher 1 had far fewer speaking turns than Teacher 2 and the facilitator; indeed, she had only 11% of the speaking turns for the meeting as a whole. It is worth noting that much of the first half of the meeting centered on understanding exactly what Teacher 2 was hoping to accomplish with the lesson and the reason for the change in teaching strategy, a conversation that

presented barriers for Teacher 1's participation, which helps to put Teacher 1's lower level of participation in perspective. These contrasting qualities lead to the conclusion that although the group showed the commitment to other members' professional development and careful listening indicative of a high-functioning learning community in the Collegial and Collaborative Interactions category, other traits of a high functioning group such as distribution of leadership were missing, leading to the determination that the group was at the intermediate level.

The seventh meeting of the video club displayed some development in Participation and Discourse Norms. Teachers had different perspectives on the use of group work with the particular students being discussed. Teachers also explained in a way that was different from the early meetings. In the final turn of the excerpt, Teacher 1 said, "No this is not a solution, it is a way. I have tried it with my students." This demonstrated that Teacher 1 understood the limitations of her suggestion, that what she said does not lead to an undeniable conclusion, but rather it was explanation open to interpretation. This sort of reasoning was absent from the early meetings. On the other hand, issues outside of the clip continued to enter the conversation. The facilitator was at times guilty of promoting the discussion of outside issues, for example in Turn 19 when he asked questions about the three boys being discussed and noted, "That wasn't in the part of the video we watched..." The facilitator was also the driving force behind teachers explaining their thoughts, even though teachers had opportunities to probe each other's thinking. For example, in response to Teacher 1's explanation of a jigsaw activity, Teacher 2 replied with a concern, phrased as a statement not a question, when in Turn 30 she said "But the problem stands here that these boys even distract the others so I would

make the same thing, stop please, listen here, so they are the same no matter if they stand together or not.” The difference between phrasing this response as a question or statement may seem like a minor difference, but it is demonstrative of a larger issue in the meeting. Teacher 2 passed on an opportunity to ask Teacher 1 to explain her idea, for example with a question such as, “But I think the boys might distract the whole group, how do you deal with that issue?” She instead made a statement that worked to dismiss Teacher 1’s idea. This suggests she did not approach the issue from the standpoint of constructive inquiry. The Participation and Discourse Norms remained at the beginning level—one sided conversations lacking in terms of elaboration and inquiry.

Several aspects of the meeting displayed in the excerpt demonstrate a high-functioning level of Focus on Teaching and Learning. First the teachers and facilitator focused on the learning of particular students, the three boys first mentioned in Turn 7. Also the conversation was specific to the teaching practices of the teachers. In Turn 32, Teacher 1 said, “May I add something, because I have had some cases from my experience?” She went on to share her approach to dealing with students similar to those Teacher 2 struggled to reach (Turns 7-14). These aspects of the conversation point to a high-functioning group, but as was the case with the first category, several aspects are not at the highest level of classification. For example, similar to the early meetings, there was a tendency for Teacher 2 to provide background information that took the meeting off topic, in this case the students’ ideas about Mexico as being an unsafe travel destination. The conversation also became very broad at times. Teacher 1’s comments in Turns 4-14, after the facilitator asked the question, “But do you think if you did a group activity, where they had their own responsibility that would help them be attentive?” is an

example of the broadening of the conversation. These aspects of the conversation make it clear that the group was not fully high-functioning for this aspect of the video club in that the specific conversations were not sustained. In spite of development toward the high-functioning level in examining the particulars of teaching and student learning the participating teachers dealt with, the group was not able to sustain such conversations and was therefore classified at the intermediate level for Focus on Teaching and Learning.

In many regards the video club regressed in the final meeting. The group did not demonstrate the high-functioning features that were present in the previous meeting for the Collegial and Collaborative Interactions and Focus on Teaching and Learning categories. Indeed, the club did not even fully operate at the intermediate level for Collegial and Collaborative Interactions and was, as a result, classified at the beginner level. The group did focus on specific teaching practices, which is at the intermediate level for Focus on Teaching and Learning. Similar to the three other meetings in the data set, the final meeting was at the beginning level in Participation and Discourse Norms. Two shorter excerpts are used to illustrate these results. The first excerpt in Figure 4.6 comes after the initial viewing of a clip. The clip showed a brainstorming activity related to pros and cons of traditional classrooms versus online learning conducted by Teacher 1.

- 
- 1 Facilitator: That's the end of the clip I selected. Any comment? Any thoughts?
  - 2 Teacher 2: I think that [Teacher 1] has wrote what the students said on the board. Everything is presented. Even the students have participated through their own opinions and ideas.
  - 3 Facilitator: [Teacher 1] any comments on the clip we watched?
  - 4 Teacher 1: As I told you at first that this classroom was meant to be done in the lab, as it was busy. It was on Monday the lab was busy because the seniors, the students of the last year had to register. And we couldn't do that class there. And we had to ...
- 

Figure 4.6 VC 8 Discussion Excerpt 1



- 
- 5 Teacher 2: ...to move...
  - 6 Teacher 1: ...practice listening first of all and then they had to complete most of the activities online. But as it was impossible I changed everything at the last moment.
  - 7 Facilitator: You did tell me that before the lesson. But I think we can actually learn a lot from this clip, so let's focus on what you did rather than what you wanted to do in the computer lab.
  - 8 Teacher 1: But I just wanted to say that even the students were not prepared. Prepared just for listening or something else we had prepared the hour before. But let's say we did it.
  - 9 Facilitator: OK. So that's the background for the lesson. But any comments on the clip we watched?
  - 10 Teacher 1: I had planned brainstorming and then coding the text and then in the end I had prepared writing, which means with the methodology called RAFT you know role audience format and the topic at the end. They had to write their profile, but they had invented the online one.
  - 11 Facilitator: You just mentioned the brainstorming which is part of the activity we watched, and the coding of the text came after this clip.
  - 12 Teacher 1: Can you say something more? What's wrong, or something to do?
  - 13 Facilitator: How about the brainstorming? Let's go back and watch like the first two minutes of this clip.
  - 14 Teacher 1: OK, we have seen. We have already seen.
- 

Figure 4.6 (continued) VC 8 Discussion Excerpt 1

Following the re-watching of a segment of the original clip, the facilitator asked Teacher 1 to discuss her response to a student's brainstormed idea as shown in the clip. Teacher 1 responded to this request by delving into the off topic subject of the background of the student in question and the student's history of using technology in the classroom. The facilitator tried to get the conversation back on a productive course by pointing out that the teacher has moved away from simple brainstorming to evaluating the student's response, an idea with which Teacher 1 disagreed. The facilitator also pointed out that Teacher 1 could have asked the students to move from brainstorming to evaluation as a natural progression of the activity. This led to a discussion of the issue of time management. Teacher 1 argued the point that she did not have enough time to have students move from brainstorming to evaluation, but failed to consider that she could

have spent less time brainstorming, which took approximately 15 minutes, and reallocated the time for evaluation by students. The discussion of the brainstorming activity and time management continues in the second excerpt, which occurred approximately halfway through the meeting.

- 
- 1 Teacher 1: I think I am a good listener.
  - 2 Facilitator: Were you happy with some of those responses. Students started repeating each other, at one point you had to tell the girl, yes the boy just said the same answer.
  - 3 Teacher 1: But it doesn't mean I am happy or sad if he or she is saying such kinds of things. They are students, they have to say such kinds of things. They are free to express themselves.
  - 4 Facilitator: That's true but from a teacher's perspective we have a limited amount of time in the classroom.
  - 5 Teacher 1: Yeah, that's why I was just joking right now that I didn't have a clock or a watch.
  - 6 Facilitator: But when students start repeating...
  - 7 Teacher 2: ...the same
  - 8 Facilitator: ...the same answer that a student just said, then we have to think that students are free to speak but this is not the best use of class time. Brainstorming is new idea, new idea, new idea not just say the same thing as the previous student.
  - 9 Teacher 1: They were not saying the same thing. They were saying maybe the same thing but with different words.
  - 10 Teacher 2: Different words.
  - 11 Teacher 1: Different words just to see their vocabulary.
- 

Figure 4.7 VC 8 Discussion Excerpt 2

The functioning of the final meeting of the video club in the Collegial and Collaborative category shows clear similarities with the second meeting. In the second meeting the teacher whose video was being watched engaged in a dialogue with the facilitator, while the other teachers participated at a much lower rate. The situation is similar in the final video club. Teacher 1, whose lesson was shown in the clip, was engaged in a dialogue, or perhaps more accurately a disagreement, with the facilitator. The second excerpt reveals that Teacher 2 did not contribute her own ideas. Rather she

simply repeated (Turn 7), or finished the sentence (Turn 10) of other members. This was the case for the majority of the meeting. This type of participation on the part of Teacher 2 does not support Teacher 1's development. Teacher 1 was seemingly not even committed to her own professional development. One example of this lack of commitment to her own development is her unwillingness to re-watch the video (Excerpt 1, Turn 14). Her creation of lesson objectives post hoc, in order to justify students' repetitive answers during a brainstorming activity, is another example. This is shown in turn 11 of the second excerpt, she said, "Different words, just to use their vocabulary." These factors led to the conclusion that the club regressed from the previous meeting and was operating at the beginning state for the Collegial and Collaborative Interactions category.

The conversation excerpts above also demonstrate the group's lack of development in the area of Participation and Discourse Norms. The teachers did not inquire into the ideas the facilitator raised. This is not to be confused with agreeing with the facilitator's analysis, since disagreement and a certain amount of conflict are normal parts of a learning community. The issue is that Teacher 1's responses to the facilitator's questions are evasive and lack sincerity (Excerpt 2, Turns 3 and 9) in regard to understanding the video and the issues explored. Teacher 1 also tended to change the topic of conversation, for example in the conversation that took place between the excerpts, when the facilitator explained his idea that brainstorming, discussion and evaluating ideas are different activities, Teacher 1 responded with a comment on time management. This is also significant in that the issues the teachers, or more accurately Teacher 1 raised, were outside or irrelevant to the video clip. Issues such as having to

change classrooms, a student's background in using technology in the classroom and not having a way to keep track of time in the classroom are not related to constructive inquiry for this situation. The majority of the meeting conversation was similar to the example conversations presented here, in that the facilitator drove the discussion of events in the video clip, while Teacher 1 introduced tangential issues that precluded the participation of Teacher 2. The standard of a one-sided conversation lacking in elaboration and constructive inquiry for the beginning level of Participation and Discourse Norms accurately describes VC 8.

The classification of the final meeting is slightly problematic for the Focus on Teaching and Learning category. The conversation was generally focused on how Teacher 1 conducted a brainstorming activity, divided time between introductory activities and higher level activities, and how to transition between the two. But these topics were introduced and expanded upon mainly by the facilitator. In order to accurately classify the teachers as a learning community the facilitator's contribution to the conversation must be removed so that the teachers' contribution to the discussion can be considered independently. From this perspective there are a limited number of examples that show the teachers starting to focus on teaching and student learning as displayed in the video. First, Teacher 1 did make reference to the video on three occasions (she referenced what she said to a student in response to the student's brainstorming, noted students weren't repeating each other word for word (Excerpt 2, Turn 9), and stated what she wrote on the blackboard during the lesson). Second, the last topic of the meeting centered on a transitional activity to move students from the brainstorming to answering higher level questions. Although this topic was introduced by

the facilitator, teachers participated in the conversation in a more constructive way and focused on the specifics of the clip. For example, Teacher 1 offers an idea for how to proceed and Teacher 2 relates the facilitator's idea to Bloom's Taxonomy, a topic previously discussed in the meeting. Because teachers began to focus on specific issues within the viewed video clip, the requirement at the intermediate level, the final meeting is classified as such in the Focus on Teaching and Learning category.

## 5 Discussion

### 5.1 Results Summary

This report examined changes in the way teachers participated in a video club and the development of a video club as a learning community. The way teachers participated in a video club was considered in two ways, first in what the teachers discussed and second in how the teachers discussed. In relation to the subject of discussion, teachers changed their focus from *Student Actions* and *Student Abilities* in the early meetings to *Teacher Actions*, *Activity* and *Alternative Teaching Strategies* in the later meetings. A pattern of discussion also emerged in the later meetings in that *Teacher Actions* and *Activity* were discussed (in that order or reversed) before the subject of *Alternative Teaching Strategies* was addressed near the end of the meeting. In contrast, a pattern of discussion for the subject matter was not found in the early meetings.

While the subject of teachers' discussion showed a shift away from discussing *Student Actions* and *Student Abilities* and toward a pattern of *Teacher Actions/Activity* (or vice versa) followed by *Alternative Teaching Strategies*, the subject matter discussed may have been dependent on the content of the video being watched. However, the content of each video did leave room for discussion of different subject matter. In VC 2 for example, the teachers chose to focus on the inability of the students to justify their answers, leading to several conversation portions being coded as *Student Abilities*. Alternatively, the discussion could have been about how the teacher did or did not help students to justify their answers, which would have been coded as *Teacher Actions*. It is

also worth noting that using the final part of the meeting to discuss *Alternative Teaching Strategies*, which was part of the pattern that developed in the final meetings, is the same basic pattern the facilitator used in his first year of working with teachers using video individually. As such the teachers in the video club may have been predisposed to such a conversation pattern.

The change in the subject of discussion away from *Student Actions* and *Student Abilities* and toward *Teacher Actions* and *Activities* contrasts with several studies (e.g. Sherin & Han, 2004 and Sherin & van Es, 2009) that reported a shift from pedagogy to student conceptions over the course of seven video club meetings and a shift toward students thinking in two video clubs respectively. However, it should be noted that in both of those studies the video clubs were conducted with the purpose of drawing the participant teachers' attention to student thinking. Therefore, the results of this study do not so much contradict as add perspective to prior research by highlighting the influence a facilitator has on what teachers discuss and showing that a shift toward teachers examining student thinking is not a certainty.

The question of how teachers participated in the video club was examined from the perspectives of participation, measured by speaking turns and the types of comments teachers made. Analysis of participation revealed that, when the reduction in number of teachers participating in the video club was accounted for, the teachers increased their participation in the video club from the early to the late meetings. Examination of the types of comments made revealed two significant changes, the number of *proposals* made decreased, while the number of *clarifying* comments increased.

Further analysis of the *proposals* made by teachers revealed that much of the decrease in the number of *proposals* from the early to the late meetings was due to the greater number of *proposals* that were repeated in the early meetings. When the repeated *proposals* were removed from the data, the change in teacher *proposals* was much smaller. The number of *discussions* generated from *proposals* increased slightly from the early to the late meetings, but more than doubled in terms of the percent of *proposals* that led to discussions. Only one repeat *proposal* was a part of *discussions*. The implications of these changes are unclear. It is possible teachers learned that if an idea was not taken up for *discussion* the first time it was proposed repeating the *proposal* would most likely not lead to a different result. It is also possible that the teachers felt that other video club participants were not listening to their ideas in the early meetings, leading them to repeat themselves. The need to repeat a *proposal* may have diminished in the later meetings because of a greater sense that other participants were listening. Further research is needed to generalize the reduction in both original and repeat *proposals*, the increase in *discussions*, and investigate a possible cause for those changes.

The decrease in the number of *proposals* made, even when the repeat *proposals* were removed from consideration, may contrast with van Es (2009), who found participation in the *proposer* role did not change significantly over the ten meetings in her video club. However, the way van Es (2009) measured participation in the various roles is different from the use of comments and speaking turns employed here, which makes comparison difficult.

The video club showed development as a learning community in some ways, but either failed to develop or showed cyclical development in other ways. In the Collegial



and Collaborative Interactions category—which considered participation, commitment to each other’s development and shifts in leadership within the group—the video club showed cyclical development, shifting between an intermediate classification in VC 1 and VC 7 to a beginner classification in VC 2 and VC 8. The Participation and Discourse Norms category, which was concerned with the multiplicity of perspectives and the level of elaboration and support given to ideas, was categorized at the beginner level for all four meetings. The group showed the most sustained and linear development in the Focus on Teaching and Learning category, which examined the specificity with which teachers discussed the teaching and learning shown in the video. In this category the video club moved from the beginner level in VC 1 to the intermediate level for the second meeting and maintained that level in the final meetings.

These results share two very general points of similarity with the results of van Es (2012), but also differ significantly. The first point of similarity to the video club van Es studied is the cyclical development found, although in her study the cyclical development was in all three categories and was between the intermediate and high-functioning levels. The video club in van Es (2012) also showed the slowest progress in the Participation and Discourse Norms category, but again the video club did reach the high-function level in the category, whereas the video club in the current study showed no development. In fact, the video club in van Es’s study reached and ultimately maintained a high-functioning level in all three categories, whereas the video club in this study did not reach this level in any category. The differences between this study and the van Es study must be considered when comparing the results of the two studies. Two major differences were the methods of facilitation and the number of teachers involved. In describing her study,

van Es (2012) writes, “The facilitators focused on helping teachers identify and analyze student thinking by prompting teachers to attend to students ideas, to use evidence to support claims they made about student thinking, and to interpret student understanding about the mathematics” (p. 185). Considering the different methods of facilitation in relation to the results of the respective studies provides a new perspective on the importance of the facilitator in helping a video club develop as a learning community in terms of aligning the purpose of the video club to the ways in which group of teachers can develop as a learning community. Specifically, a group of teachers will not automatically have more sustained conversations over the course of a video club, but if this is a goal of the video club there are ways a facilitator might encourage such a change. The narrower focus of the van Es (2012) study, and the facilitator’s guidance, may have helped participants to have sustained, that is to say deeper, conversations on a more narrowly defined topic. The lack of a central theme in this study may have resulted in teachers trading depth of discussion for breadth. The number of teachers participating in the respective video clubs is another factor that makes comparison difficult. Depth of discussion and multiple perspectives are easier to achieve with a greater number of participants, as are shifts in leadership since the facilitator is more able to blend into a larger group. This raises the questions of group size in relation to learning communities and exactly how small a group could be classified as a high-functioning learning community using the framework of van Es (2012).

## 5.2 Cross Referencing the Results

During the analysis each research question was considered independently in relation to the data. This approach helped to simplify the analysis process and avoided a possible cross contamination issue, whereby the results of one research question would influence the results for another. Now that such a risk has passed it is useful to speculate on how the results of the research questions affect each other, since such insight may be useful for future studies. Specifically, the issue of how the results of the first research question affect whether the video club developed as a learning community is considered.

The later meetings of the video club displayed a pattern in the subject matter teachers discussed that did not exist in the early meetings. The subjects that teachers considered during the initial and final meetings also changed and the later meetings touched on fewer subjects. This could be interpreted as the creation of discourse norms within the video club, in that a standard of which subjects the club discussed (and which subjects it did not discuss) and how those subjects changed over the course of the meeting was created. This is in contrast to the results of the second research question, which classified the video club as at the beginner level of the Participation and Discourse Norms category for all four meetings. This disparate result is not surprising given that the *Framework for the Development of a Learning Community in a Video Club* (van Es, 2012) does not consider subject matter for this category. This suggests there are other ways of evaluating the creation of discourse norms which might have been more appropriate to measuring the progress the club made in this area, especially when the cultural context and the facilitation of the club are considered.

On a related point van Es's (2012) framework required different participants to assume a leadership role in order for the video club to be classified as high-functioning in the Collegial and Collaborative Interactions category. The idea that control and authority are unique issues for every community (Cassidy et al., 2001) along with the traditionally top down approach to professional development in Albania further suggests that the framework could have been modified in ways that would have better measured the formation of a learning community for the video club investigated in this study.

The results related to *discussions* also shed light on the video club as a learning community. The later meetings generated fewer *proposals* than the early meetings, but more *discussions*. Given the requirement of multiple participants for a *discussion*, this result could be interpreted as teachers listening to and collaborating with each other (and the facilitator) more in the later meetings, which suggests the early meetings were at a lower level than the later meetings in the Collegial and Collaborative Interactions category. Recalling previously discussed results, both the early and late meetings had meetings classified at the intermediate level, but the later meetings (specifically VC 7) had characteristics of a high-function video club, which was not the case with the early meetings. Therefore, the general upward trend in this category that the results of research question 1b suggest is consistent with the general upward trend of the highest level of performance of the video club in the early and late meetings as identified in the results for research question 2.

Considering *discussions* in relation to categories in the learning community framework points out the possibility of further modifying the framework to include quantifiable elements, such as the number of *discussions*, or the percent of *proposals* that

lead to *discussions*. This is not meant to suggest that evaluating learning communities is simply a matter of crunching the numbers; quite the opposite in fact. The addition of a quantifiable element is related to the difficulty associated with studying learning communities. The suggestion of marrying qualitative and quantitative analysis in future studies of learning communities simply adds another tool to the researcher's tool kit in order to enhance understanding.

### **5.3 Shortcoming and Limitations**

In the conclusion to her study examining the development of a teacher learning community, van Es (2012) notes two important factors in creating and implementing video clubs. The first is the importance of selecting clips that match the purpose of the video club, and the second is the importance of the facilitator in managing both the social and content aspects of the video club. The video club in this study had inherent shortcomings for both of these factors.

The amount of classroom video from which to select clips for the video club to view was limited, something the facilitator was aware would be the case before the video club began. This led to the preclusion of a central theme around which to organize the video club and the lack of a specific focus of the video club. As a result, the topic of discussion varied greatly between meetings, everything from effective group work, to examining student thinking and scaffolding a student's ability to justify, to classroom management and student participation. An expressed purpose, such as the examination of student thinking (Sherin & Han, 2004; Sherin & van Es, 2009; van Es, 2012) or

“managing student talk” (Coles, 2013 p. 173), gives the viewer of a video a polestar by which to navigate the large amount of information received from even a short video clip. This is true even if the purpose is adopted from the behavior of the facilitator over the course of several meetings rather than explicitly stated. The lack of both a large body of video from which to select a clip and a central theme presented difficulties. For more than one meeting the facilitator had to watch the single lesson video several times before recognizing a subtle issue that might generate discussion and learning. The expectation in the video club was that the teachers would notice something the first time they viewed the video. Because of this, the facilitator sometimes felt like the viewing of a video clip was a guessing game for the teachers. Whereas the facilitator had the opportunity to view the video as many times as necessary to notice an opportunity for teacher development, it was hoped teachers would develop a well formed opinion, with evidence from the video, after a single viewing. On the other hand, events in the classroom happened quickly, without the affordance to replay, so although at times it seemed unfair to expect the teachers to catch subtleties in the clip, the ability to perceive such subtleties has direct applicability to teaching.

Another shortcoming relates to the lack of expertise of the facilitator. The video club examined in this study was the facilitator’s first experience in such a role, and only his second year in any sort of teacher trainer role. Additionally, the facilitator was working in an unfamiliar cultural context, which added an extra layer of difficulty in managing the video club and increased the potential for misunderstanding. The obvious conclusion is that the facilitator’s ability to help the video club develop in terms of the way in which teachers discussed and as a learning community was less than optimal.

In addition to the shortcomings of the video club which created limitations to teacher professional development, some characteristics of the video club itself limit the applicability of the results of this study to other teachers and video clubs. First is the small data set of this study. Two teachers participated in all eight meetings and, of course, these teachers had their own personalities. In a larger group distinct personality traits may have been averaged by the participation of the entire group, but with only two or three teachers such an averaging is difficult, if not impossible to achieve. The unique circumstances of the club, English teachers in Albania, is also a factor that limits the applicability of the results to other groups of teachers. The video clips the video club watched also limits the applicability of the results of this study in that different results may have been achieved had the group watched different video clips. Beyond the already mentioned lack of experience, the facilitator's personality should also be considered a limiting factor.

In other words, the results of this study may be specific to the teachers involved, the clips that they watched and the way the meetings were facilitated. Due to these shortcomings and limiting factors, it is necessary to proceed with caution when considering the generalizability of the results of this study.

## **5.4 Implications**

The context and results of the present study have implications beyond those already discussed in relation to previous research, but the discussion here will focus on two general issues: the use of video in the developing world and facilitating the use of video.

One of the more interesting implications deals with the adoption of video as a tool for teacher professional development in the developing world. The teachers involved in this study and other video based projects conducted by the author had concerns, and given the history of Albania as a police state were understandably apprehensive, about having their classrooms recorded. However, the author of this study was able to use video as a tool for multiple professional development projects in a low resource, developing country. This suggests that video can be introduced and used with teachers to whom the idea of video recording, watching and even sharing their lessons is completely foreign.

In relation to both using video and facilitation, the cultural context in which a video project is conducted should also be a major consideration when designing and implementing such projects. As noted above, the framework used for evaluating the video club as a learning community might have been modified to better fit the context in which the video club existed. Furthermore, the extensive amount of background work that went into meeting with teachers, building trust, and addressing concerns before the idea of a video club was even introduced to teachers has not been fully presented. Such work was essential to this project and will be an essential part of any future studies undertaken in a similar context.

The proliferation of smart phones and similar technologies that allow for the recording and sharing of video means that the obstacles of capturing and watching video are disappearing (van Es, Stockero, Sherin, Zoest & Dyer, 2015). The further implication is that there is great potential for increased use of video for teacher professional development in developing countries. However, the number of teachers that participated in this project and initially agreed to participate in other projects was only about a quarter



of the teachers with whom the PCV worked. This suggests that uptake on the part of experienced teachers may impede the widespread use of video, and that other groups, such as education students or younger teachers, may be a better group on which to focus video based teacher training and development.

Another take away from this project is that much of the current research concerning facilitation may not be directly applicable to using video with teachers using more traditional teaching methods. In order to investigate student thinking through video, a common objective of video based professional development (e.g. Sherin & Han, 2004; van Es 2012), that thinking has to be on display in an accessible way. It is doubtful video of a teacher using traditional lecture-based teaching methods would meet this requirement. But surely such a teacher can still learn from video of their lessons, so the questions becomes: What type of learning objectives can be achieved if not an increased focus on student thinking? Related to this study in terms of PC Albania TEFL program goals and an area of possible future research is the question: Is it possible for a teacher to transition from teacher to student-centered instruction through a professional development program that utilizes video of the teachers own classroom? Such a transition could be the guiding theme of video discussion for teachers not ready to discuss student thinking because student thinking is not yet on display in their classrooms.

On a related point, the initiation of the conversation following the viewing of the video clip is another facet of facilitation that requires reflection. The current study used general questions similar to studies such as Sherin & Han (2004), Sherin and van Es (2009) and van Es (2009) in order to initiate the conversation. But such general questions are not the only way to start the discussion. Jaworski (1990) offered a slightly different

approach, asking video club participants to first describe (without judgement) before delving into deeper explanation and meaning. Given the predilection of teachers in the current study to assess instruction, such a recommendation seems useful both in helping to avoid judgement and smooth the transition from watching the video to a discussion speculating on meaning.

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## **A Peace Corps Albania TEFL Program Goals**

[From Peace Corps Albania TEFL Project Framework (Dyrmishi, Shtjefni, & Wagner, n.d.)]

### **Goal 1: Improve Teaching**

English teachers and instructors will improve their English language proficiency, teaching methods, and resource development skills.

Objective 1.1 Teachers' English language proficiency and teaching methods and practice

By the end of 2018, 750 English teachers will increase their English proficiency and confidence and their competence in instructional methods and practices.

### **Objective 1.2 Resource Development for English Education**

By the end of 2018, 250 local educators /counterparts will increase their ability to develop communicative lessons and materials to complement the national curriculum and school resources.

### **Goal 2: Increase Student Success**

Students will improve their English proficiency, communication, and life skills through English instruction in the classroom or through extracurricular activities.

### **Objective 2.1 English Proficiency**

By the end of 2018, 15000 students will show increased proficiency and confidence in the English language classroom.

### **Objective 2.2: Achievement, Participation and Leadership skills**

By the end of 2018, 5700 students will show improved proficiency and confidence in English, and increased participation and leadership skills through English clubs, camps, or other extracurricular activities.

### **Goal 3: Strengthen School and Community**

Teachers, school staff and administrators and members of the broader community will strengthen collaboration and be more active participants and leaders of their school community.

### **Objective 3.1: School-based Community Projects**

By the end of 2018, 700 school community members will initiate, plan and implement projects through English that address social, health, educational, cultural, environmental issues.

### **Objective 3.2: English Learning for school projects/activities**

By the end of 2018, 500 community members, including parents and community leaders, will participate in activities that increase and support English learning and use in school.

**Objective 3.3: Learning for community members**

By the end of 2018, 500 community members will enhance their personal and professional knowledge and life skills.



## **B Framework for Development of Teacher Learning Community in a Video Club**

[From Examining the Development of a Teacher Learning Community (van Es, 2012)]

| Category                                     | Beginning   | Intermediate  | High-Functioning   |
|--|---|---|--|
| Collegial and Collaborative Interactions     | Participants have little or no commitment to each other's development, and one member dominates group activities and conversations.                 | Participants begin to collaborate to support each other's work, the group's activities become more distributed, and they begin to listen to and understand each other's ideas and perspectives.   | Participants develop sustained relationships and have a shared commitment to support each other's development. Conversations engage all participants, while leadership shifts among members of the group. Participants listen carefully to each other to understand each other's thinking. |
| Discourse Norms for Productive Collaboration | Conversations are one-sided and lack elaboration, explanation, and constructive inquiry   | Conversations begin to become multi-dimensional, with different perspectives and interpretations raised for discussion. Participants begin to probe one another's thinking, calling for evidence to support inquiry into practice, while also providing limited explanations. | Conversations consist of participants raising questions and concerns and constructively pressing each other to explain and elaborate thinking, ideas and perspectives. Discourse norms center on inquiry and evidence-based reasoning.   |
| Focus on Teaching and Learning               | Activity focuses on exploring broad, general issues of teaching and learning, with teachers' personal experiences and intuitions guiding discussion | Activity begins to focus on attending to particular participants' teaching practices and student learning, with both shared images of practice and experiences guiding inquiry  | Activity is centered on sustained inquiry around teachers' practice that they make public to the group. The focus is on examining the particulars of teaching and student learning as it arises in their contexts.   |