

Chapter 1

Positioning Preservice Teacher Formative Assessment in the Literature

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ABSTRACT

This text explores Formative Assessment Practices (FAP) for Preservice Teacher Practicum Feedback and focuses on emerging opportunities from a study conducted in Australia over four years. This study comprised Participatory Action Learning Action Research (PALAR) that involved six cycles (Dann & Allen, 2015). The emerging opportunities discussed here are drawn from the data of this PALAR study and the current literature about formative assessment of preservice teachers during practicum experiences. Professional practicum experiences are a central component of initial teacher education programs where today's providers are endeavoring to increase their quality (Beauchamp, Clarke, Hulme, & Murray, 2013; Cohen, Hoz, & Kaplan, 2013; Ingvarson et al., 2014).

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INTRODUCTION

The review of literature here illuminates current knowledge in relation to the following questions from a *Participatory Action Learning Action Research* (PALAR) research study conducted between 2012-2016 by the first author of this chapter (Dann & Allen, 2015). It investigated the formative assessment practices of supervising teachers when they were given a bespoke mobile video capture system. This PALAR study responded to one central question, which was: “To what extent can disciplined and structured use of mobile technologies on practicum impact on pedagogy and assessment in professional experiences of pre-service teachers?” and the following five guiding questions:

1. To what extent can the current pedagogical approach to practicum assessment by supervising teachers be improved by the introduction of iPhone and tablet technology?
2. To what extent are the reflective practices of preservice teachers impacted by feedback about performance delivered via mobile and web technology?
3. To what extent can the capabilities of mobile technologies enhance the ability of supervising teachers to provide formative assessment and feedback to preservice teacher students on practicum?
4. Can information collected on video-enabled mobile and web technologies for assessment of preservice teachers be used to support more fine grained analysis of their performance than would be possible using paper-and-pencil approaches?
5. Does formative assessment using mobile technologies impact on summative judgments about professional preservice teacher standards and national curriculum outcomes throughout the learning process?

While it is not the purpose of this book to specifically answer these questions, they are an important consideration as the research presented here draws on this PALAR research and builds upon it, seeking to more deeply illuminate the value of video feedback to improve the practicum experience, and particularly from the perspective of formative assessment.

Assessment in Higher Education

Practicum assessment is an integral and significant component (Wilson, 2006) of assessment used in higher education. Initial Teacher Education (ITE) courses and programs draw on assessment strategies that include testing, essay

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