Chapter 6
How to Encourage Reflective Practice With the Help of Collaborative Video Annotation:
Social Video Learning in Teacher Education

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ABSTRACT

The concept of Social Video Learning (SVL) marks the shift from a passive-receptive to an active-productive or active-constructive exploration of video material in learning groups and emphasizes the sharing of experiences and knowledge in a situational context. The objective of this chapter is to give a brief overview of this phenomenon within an EU-funded project. It is the intention of the authors to, on the one hand, provide some initial orientation and deeper insight into the complex subject matter of collaborative video annotation exemplified by SVL. On the other hand, based on quantitative and qualitative data from two case studies, they try to explore its potential for teacher education.

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INTRODUCTION

In many European countries, education is still guided by traditional educational and cultural issues, while - in regard to implementation - it is ruled and regulated by curricula. The individual promotion of learners in the context of competence-oriented education, which has been postulated in recent years, often remains wishful thinking. One reason for this is that educational institutions as well as teachers do not really focus on what learners can do individually in a particular training phase, which competencies they need in a targeted field of activity (study or professional context) or how learners entering this field of action deal with the requirements regarding specific situations (cf. Arnold, Gröschner, & Hascher, 2014).

The EU-funded project PREPARE[1] (Promoting reflective practice in the training of teachers using e-portfolios) aims at an innovative solution to the problem mentioned above, i.e. the focus of teaching on other things rather than on simple lack of awareness of teachers of how best to promote individual learners. This solution consists of a digital learning environment (*PrepareCampus*), including an annotation platform for video analysis (*edubreak*®[2]) and an e-portfolio application (*Mahara*[3]). This kind of learning environment is used in the practical training of student teachers. The video platform enables student teachers to watch and comment on their lessons in a timestamp-based way and, subsequently, to analyze their professional experience on the basis of peer and expert feedback (Vohle & Reinmann, 2012). The experience they gain this way forms the basis for the creation of their individual electronic portfolios and is used for the development of further tasks within the framework of longer-term assignments focusing on a didactical writing approach (Bräuer, 2004).

Against this background, the objective of this chapter is to give a brief overview of how the video annotation functions of the annotation platform edubreak® help teacher students within their practical training, i.e. to explore their own classroom practice (reflection upon what they were doing, when they were doing it and why). According to the saying "We do not see things as they are, we see them as we are", attributed to the prominent writer Anaïs Nin (1961, p. 124), it is the intention of the authors to illustrate the benefits of communication *in* instead of *about* a video sequence that shows the behavior of student teachers in a specific classroom setting. This is mainly due to the fact that the preconceptions of novice student teachers can dramatically influence the way they perceive the world of education. Student teachers can stop a video at a particular point in the timeline after having identified a moment they feel is important and essential for their professional advancement as future teachers. By leaving a short comment directly in the video and by sharing it with their peers and/or mentors they become much more aware of what they are actually looking at.