ORIGINAL ARTICLE

How Did Vietnamese Teachers Observe Lessons?
Active, Passive, and Middle Voices in Classroom Observation

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ABSTRACT
This study aims to identify the characteristics of Vietnamese teachers' classroom observations. The analysis was conducted using data from the ten teachers who struggled to introduce the new curriculum during the 2000s. The analysis applied from the literature on the teachers' video reflection revealed that those who participated in weekly sessions of Lesson Study for Learning Community (LSLC) tended to identify students' knowledge formation better than those who did not participate in the lesson study. The second qualitative analysis, focusing on effective and attitudinal aspects in observation, indicated that the teachers in LSLC schools could accept and respond to the classroom event by positing themselves in the seat of actors. The discussion is devoted to the application of the concept of middle voice to the LSLC teachers' observation, to examine a possible extension of the literature which mainly relies on teachers' active cognitive processes.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the learner-centered curriculum, which is spreading globally, teachers have to respond to diverse student learning needs that change by the minute during a lesson (Arhar & Buck, 2000; Craig, 2010; Darling-Hammond & Snyder, 2000; Rodgers, 2002; Saha & Dworkin, 2009; Vescio et al., 2008). This signifies the need for teachers to understand individual students and their learning (Borko, 2004; Putnam & Borko, 2000). With the development of video technology, research on teacher classroom observation has developed to explore how teachers can observe individual students' learning (Gaudin & Chaliès, 2015; Marsh & Mitchell, 2014; Sherin & van Es, 2009), which now forms part of the studies of "teacher learning" (Darling-hammond & Bransford, 2007).

In Vietnam, a new learner-centred curriculum was introduced in 2000 (The government of Vietnam, 2000). However, Vietnamese teachers preferred to teach by "complying with the plan' (Tsukui et al., 2017) given by the authority, making it difficult to take into account the diverse responses from children. Today, 20 years later, the new curriculum 2018 has been introduced (MOET, 2018), but overcoming the teacher-centred classroom remains a major challenge for teachers (Do, 2015). Aside from this, it should be highlighted that the research into and practice of teacher learning, especially the teachers' ability to understand individual students' learning, has not taken root in Vietnam.

During the educational reform in Vietnam, the teachers in Bac Giang province in Vietnam were undergoing a unique experimental practice to become teachers who could respond to diverse students (Saito et al., 2012; Saito et al., 2008; Saito & Tsukui, 2008). They participated in school-based training by the Lesson Study for Learning Community (LSLC) from Japan (Saito et al., 2014). LSLC is an approach toward school reform through lesson study to realize learner-centred education. The teachers in the pilot schools conducted weekly lesson study sessions to reflect their students' learning, with videos and photos of their students.

This study aims to identify the characteristics of classroom observations by Vietnamese teachers who have received training in LSLC. From this analysis, first, the author examines the challenges of Vietnamese teacher education in implementing child-centered curricula. Second, by comparing the results of this study with the findings of studies on classroom observation, this study focuses on the possibility of extending the current theories that rely on cognitive approaches.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The term *classroom observation* can be understood as a teacher's activity, which involves producing professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes by seeing (Eisner, 1976; Gaudin & Chaliès, 2015; Nemirovsky et al., 2005; Sato et al., 1993; Sherin & Russ, 2014; Sherin & van Es, 2009; van Es & Sherin, 2002). Studies on classroom observation have a history with consisting of strands: the theory of learning to notice (LTN), connoisseurship, and observation by teachers' inherent values.

First, the theory of LTN has focused on teachers' cognition of teaching subjects to students and developing their ability to "notice" by watching videos (Sherin & Han, 2004; Sherin & van Es, 2005; van Es & Sherin, 2002, 2008). According to LTN, the teacher would (1) identify what is important or noteworthy about a classroom situation, (2) make connections between the specifics of classroom interactions and the broader principles of teaching and learning they represent; and (3) use what one knows about the context to reflect on classroom interaction (van Es & Sherin, 2002). The practice of "video club" by Sherin and van Es was considered one of the initial studies in classroom observation (Darling-Hammond & Brandsford, 2007); subsequently, over the last two decades, research on the development of a video observation program for teacher learning has emerged (Admiraal et al., 2011; Baecher & Kung, 2011; Danielson, 2012; Fadde et al., 2009; Masats & Dooly, 2011).

Eisner (1979, 1995) used the term "connoisseurship" from the field of fine arts to formulate an educational critique that entails an observation without the a priori structured perspective of the observer. While LTN assumes that teachers' rational thoughts as an engine for observation, studies on connoisseurship rely on their intuition or improvisation. Sato et al. (1991) conducted an empirical study of teachers' connoisseurship and indicated that experienced teachers created and modified their original observational framework of observing and interpreting the lesson continuously. The strand of the study suggests a theoretical challenge to posit the function of intuition.

Cole (2012) challenges a theoretical problem within LTN, claiming that a new quality of observation cannot be found if the research categorizes the domains of teacher knowledge a priori. According to him, "for van Es and Sherin, there are particular aspects of the video (students' mathematical thinking) to which they want teachers to attend and hence which they (pre-) judge to be particularly significant" (Coles, 2012, p. 169). There is another challenge against LTN, which concerns teachers' negative emotions toward the lesson (Frank & Uy, 2004; Hammer, 2000; Jaworski, 1990; Kleinknecht & Schneider, 2013; Lortie, 1975; Richardson & Kile, 1999). Nemirovsky et al. (2005) distinguished two types of teaching episodes, that is, "grounded narrative" and "evaluative discourse", and concluded from their qualitative discourse analysis that evaluative discourse occupied the majority of teachers' comments, which impeded teachers' learning. A theoretical issue arises here: how can we identify teachers' observations which are not yet classified? As a response, Sherin and Russ (2014), in their later research, expanded their interpretive frame of teachers' observations into 13 categories, including emotional domains (i.e., affective, anomaly) and, rhetoric domains (i.e., storytelling, perspective taking). These new domains have been added to the conventional categories of teachers' rational thoughts (i.e., generalisation, metaphor).

In summary, studies on classroom observation have achieved a complete set of cognitive categories for what teachers see and how they interpret it. The studies that began with teachers' reasonings of student learning later included teachers' unconscious emotions and attitudes in the framework of its examination. The latter will be referred to in this paper as the affective and attitudinal aspects of classroom observation. The theoretical and practical challenge, however, is to integrate cognitive, affective, and attitudinal aspects in the theory of teacher observation. How teachers develop their connoisseurship, including controlling and utilizing emotions and attitudes for observation, is a matter for future research.

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Lesson Study for Learning Community

Part of the research participants joined LSLC every week during the academic year 2006-2007. The activities of LSLC are similar to Vietnamese conventional professional teachers' meetings (PTM; "sinh hoạt chuyên môn" in Vietnamese), comprising lesson observation and reflection meetings among schoolteachers. While PTM is aimed toward teacher evaluation or modelling good teaching methods by excellent teachers, LSLC has a completely different purpose. LSLC is the practice to ensure that every single student and teacher can learn in their school; the teachers try to listen to every student's and colleague's voices to learn from students and colleagues (Saito et al., 2014; Sato, 2018). In every session of LSLC, the teachers observed every student, subsequently commenting on their own ideas on students' learning and listening to each other, and the school managers sustained this system to ensure every teacher was able to learn (Saito et al., 2014).

Data collection

The author collected data from primary schools in five districts in Bac Giang province (Bac Giang city, Viet Yen, Luc Nam, Yen Dung, and Hiep Hoa districts). The data comprises (i) video of ten Vietnamese teachers' lessons and the video of the interview with them on these video lessons (all video clips were transcribed), and (ii) the author's field notes. Out of 10 teachers, five teachers were selected from the LSLC pilot schools by the author, and another five were selected from the non-pilot schools by the local education offices and schools (Table 1). The interview data were collected using the following process: (1) All ten teachers conducted their lessons in 2005, before the introduction of LSLC; the lesson was videotaped, and the video mainly captured students' actions; (2) The five teachers attended weekly LSLC sessions for one year (2006-2007) under the author's and his colleagues' supervision; (3) The author conducted in-depth interviews with all ten teachers in 2007 in such a way that they reflected on their past lessons together, answering typical LSLC questions, such as, which student(s) they observed, and when and how did s/he or they learn. The questions were answered while watching the videos of their lessons.

Table 1. List of the interviewees with their age

LSLC Pilot school teachers	Non-pilot school teachers
Manh (20s), Ha (30s), Hao (30s), Moi (30s), Ngang (40s)	Dang (20s), Bay & Hue (30s), Phuong (30s), Vui (40s), Lien (50s)

*All names changed
*The study counts Bay and Hue as one teacher since they jointly taught one lesson.

To collect the above data, the author participated in the entire process of (1), (2), and (3). During in-depth interviews, the author asked open-ended questions, such as, "What did you observe in this video clip that was just shown?" and "What caused you to pay attention to it?" Each interview session lasted between 1 hour and 1.5 hours. The number of words used in each interview varied from 1,800 to 4,000, with the number of topics ranging from 15 to 30.

Despite the data being collected over 15 years ago, its significance and the relevance of the analysis are as follows. First, at that time, teachers were struggling with the introduction of a new learner-centred curriculum, and the data in this study is valuable for examining teacher education in the other countries that are attempting similar curriculum reform. Second, teacher-centred classroom practices were still reported in Vietnam in the 2010s (Tsukui et al., 2017: Do, 2015), and the issue of professional teacher observation at that time is still considered to be a challenge in Vietnamese teacher education.

Data analysis

Data analysis was conducted in two phases: Analysis 1 was conducted to identify the ten teachers' characteristics of classroom observation by applying a method from the strand of LTN in the literature (Colestock & Sherin, 2009), and Analysis 2 was conducted to examine their affective and attitudinal aspects in their observations by applying the emerging design of the grounded theory approach (Creswell, 2014). During Analysis 1, a preliminary analysis was performed in preparation for Analysis 2. The detailed processes of the two phases are as follows:

Analysis 1. To obtain the unit of analysis, the interview transcripts were divided into segments according to the pause intervals of the video. That is, the video was shown for a certain amount of time and then paused, followed by an interview and a discussion. Each footage and concurrent discussion was considered a *segment*. In one segment, the author specified a *topic* as the unit of one discussion point. If a new topic or idea was introduced during a segment, it was recorded as a new topic. On the other hand, if the discussion in the next segment still carried the same ideas as the earlier segment, then it was considered as part of the earlier topic.

Based on the contents mentioned by the teacher, the topic was classified into the six coding topics in Table 2 (Colestock & Sherin, 2009; Frederiksen et al., 1998). To test the reliability of coding, the two raters (the author and a Japanese professional interpreter who could interpret Japanese, Vietnamese, and English), first coded the three teachers' interview transcripts individually. They then discussed the results to arrive at a common code after resolving disagreements. The rate of agreement for the individual results was 65%. Once the code was finalized, the author coded the transcripts of the remaining seven teachers. Finally, the teachers were grouped according to the similarity of the category distribution.

Table 2. The definition of coding topics

Category	Definition	Example
Student Demeanor*	Refer to the specific student's actions and demeanor in a video clip.	"There is a student who does not concentrate really in the introduction of the lesson." "The two students show their apparent facial expressions." "In this group, the three students voluntarily extended their hands to the tray to classify the objects."
Student Knowledge **	Refer to the ideas and skills on the teaching subject indicated by students.	"That student answered an excellent sentence." "Being nominated, that student told that the sand was the liquid object." "The student solves the problem by himself but the student on the other side has not yet asked this student."
Pedagogy	Refer to the teacher's decisions and actions and the teaching strategies used.	"Thereby, providing this idea to see if the other groups have any opinion for it." "I could not concern all the students." "In order for a student not to be bored, I should change my instruction."
Climate*	Refer to the classroom atmosphere and the way in which teachers and students interact.	"Students learn in an unnatural manner." "Students are very attentive during instruction." "But they are not active in this activity."
Material circumstance ***	Refer to the physical features in the lesson.	"But the desks and chairs could not allow the group work." "The U-shape seating arrangement made a space, which affords me to approach them." "Those who do not have textbooks or learning tools should borrow from others."
Management	Refer to the pace and timing of the lesson, the general organization of activity in the class or disciplinary issues.	"The teacher does not have time to remind them many times." "They have to do it, so they concentrate." "From here, the task is to seek whether or not the liquid in different positions changes its shape."

Source: adapted from Colestock & Sherin (2009)

Notes: * If the statement about a student's demeanor does not specify the student in the video, then it shall be classified in Climate. If the statement signifies an individual student's affective aspect, then it shall be classified in Student Demeanor.

** If the statement includes words from a specific student's learning, idea, wonder, question, knowledge or thought or a specific students' discussion or mutual action, then it shall be classified in this category. The study regards the attention on students' mutual actions involving observation of the exchange of students' knowledge. If the teacher states his/her knowledge of the topic, it shall be discarded.

*** If the statement includes the use of teaching tools, such as a blackboard and ruler, then it shall be classified in this category.

Analysis 2. This analysis is derived from the same segments of analysis as Analysis 1, but is processed separately from Analysis 1. The author has read all the segments of analysis and extracted the teachers' specific speeches that indicated their affection and attitudes toward classroom phenomena. Subsequently, the author conducted a constant comparison among these extracted speeches to identify the characteristics of their affections.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis 1: Characteristics of classroom observation by grouping

The number of observation segments and topics for each teacher varied from 10 to 25 for segments and from 16 to 45 for topics (Table 3).

Table 3. Number of segments and frequency of topics by the teachers

	LSLC	Age	Number of segments	Number of topics
Manh	X	20s	18	45
Hao	X	20s	25	38
Bay/Hue		20s	14	28
Dang		20s	12	16
Ha	X	30s	13	21
Moi	X	30s	14	62
Phuong		30s	13	23
Ngang	X	40-50s	20	32
Vui		40-50s	12	17
Lien		40-50s	10	16
Total			151	298

Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of observational topics by individuals. The distribution of each individual varied. According to the literature, teachers' concerns transformed from the matter of teaching (Climate, Pedagogy, and Management) to student knowledge as they went through teacher training with video reflection (Colestock & Sherin, 2009; Sherin & van Es, 2009; van Es & Sherin, 2008). Following this finding, Figure 1 indicates that Dang, Ngang, and Vui were more concerned with pedagogy and management, which indicates that they are novices in terms of classroom observation. In contrast, Manh, Hao, and Moi were more concerned with student knowledge, which shows that they have more expertise in observing students.
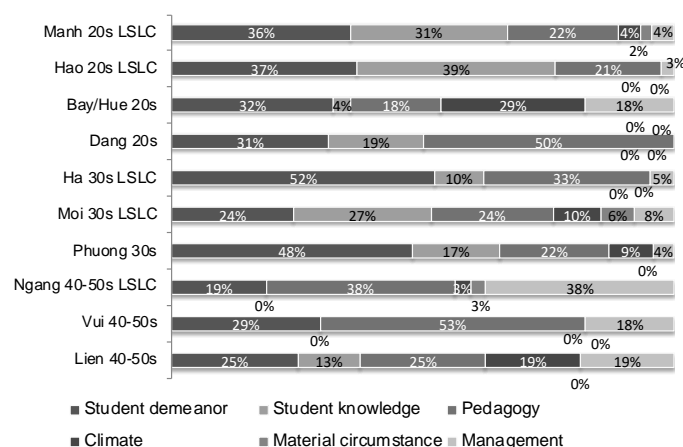

Figure 1. Distribution of the topics by individuals

Next, the author organized the 10 teachers into groups according to their attributes, and arranged the results by generation (Figure 2) and LSLC experience (Figure 3).
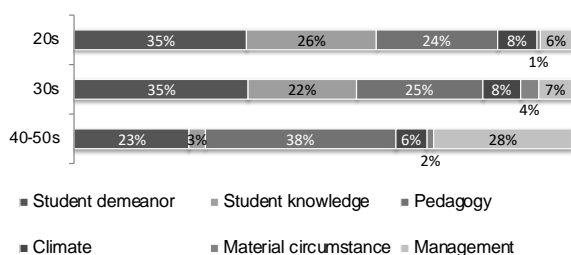

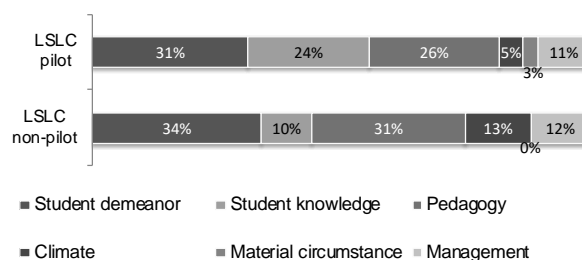*Figure 2. Distribution of the topic by age*

Figure 3. Distribution of the topic by LSLC experience

In Figure 2, there is a big gap in the topic distributions between those in their 20s-30s and those in their 40s-50s. Teachers in the 40s-50s provided more comments on pedagogy and management and less on student demeanor and student knowledge than younger teachers. The 20s and 30s show similar distributions. With respect to LSLC experience, those with LSLC experience indicated more topics on student knowledge than those with non-pilot teachers.

Considering the exploratory analysis above, the author consequently determined three groups for Analysis 1: the LSLC group, consisting of Manh, Hao, Ha, and Moi; the non-pilot group, consisting of the Bay/Hue, Dang, and Phuong; and the senior group, consisting of the 40s-50s teachers of Ngang, Vui, and Lien (Figure 4). Ngang (LSLC teacher in 40s-50s) is grouped in the senior group as the individual results of Ngang were more similar to those of Vui and Lien (senior teachers) in terms of proportions of pedagogy and management. This means that a senior LSLC teacher showed conventional classroom observations, although she had LSLC experience.
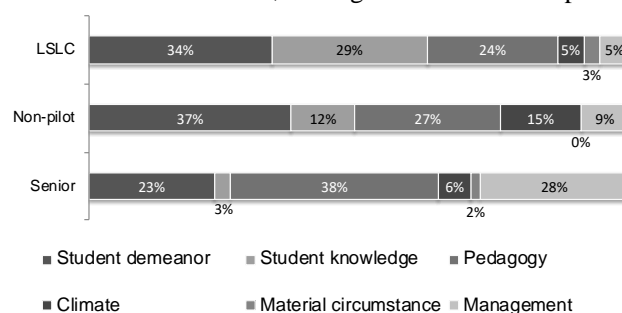

Figure 4. Distribution of the topics by the three groups

The differences in the proportion of the six categories among the three groups were obtained as follows. First, the LSLC group was more concerned about student knowledge (29%) than the non-pilot group (12%) and senior group (3%). Regarding the portion of student knowledge, although the boundary of the age 40 dividing senior and non-pilot teachers is a large gap (3% and 12%), the gap between the LSLC and non-pilot groups (29% and 12%) is larger than the age. Second, the percentages of student demeanor and pedagogy are similar in LSLC (34% and 24%) and non-pilot (37% and 27%) and are dominant topics in their observation, which implies that both LSLC and non-pilot groups describe both students and teaching methods. Third, the non-pilot group focused more on climate (15%) and management (9%) than the LSLC group, indicating that non-pilot teachers are more concerned about these topics than student knowledge, which is the primary concern of the LSLC group. Referring to the findings of previous research (van Es & Sherin, 2008), the current study indicates that a year's experience of LSLC helped teachers to learn to notice student knowledge.

Analysis 2: Affective and attitudinal aspects in classroom observation

Analysis 1 presented the results of the categorization based on the object that the teachers saw. Subsequently, they described the objects in which they expressed their own emotions and attitudes. Table 4 lists the samples.

Table 4. Sample of the comments presenting affective and attitudinal aspects in the teachers' observation

A	This student is quiet by nature, even when presenting in front of others. I think *the class would have been more enjoyable if I had appointed another student* instead of this student. [Bay-18]
B	But since the student over there is answering and the other students are listening, *so, this student must understand, right?* [Hao-22]
C	I, now feel that I couldn't see the whole class from where I stood [in the video]. Especially these students *behind me. I feel sorry for these students as they have to tilt their heads around to look at me.* [Moi-13]

* Italics are provided by the author.

For instance, the teacher in A in Table 4 describes a quiet student, which is classified as a student demeanor in Analysis 1, while in interpreting the scene, she understands that it was her mistake to nominate the quiet student and that she should have nominated a student who would make the classroom enjoyable. This is an expression of her attitude toward the desired classroom and an expression of her own way of approaching a quiet student. The teacher in B expressed confidence in her interpretation of the student in describing student knowledge. The teacher in C describes a situation in which the students were unable to see her face to face as they were behind her (student demeanor).

The following are the findings of such affective and attitudinal aspects in observation shared with the teachers in each group. The senior group tended to persist by explaining their teaching plans when they were asked to describe the student and indicate their disposition to discipline students. In a similar manner, the non-pilot group explained what happened in the classroom by tracking what was visualized in the video, and they tended to focus on the students' emotions, resulting in less attention to observing student knowledge. The LSLC group tended to find processes of students' knowledge formation in video scenes of the interactions between students and themselves.

This result was obtained by constant comparison, and in fact, these aspects were not clearly manifested in each group. It should be noted that even senior group members commented in a way that was characteristic of LSLC teachers and vice versa.

Drive towards inspection by the senior group. First, the senior group used the unique rhetoric of "student in the lesson plan," that is, they tended to talk about the expected students within their lesson plan rather than the actual students in the video. When asked leading questions by the author, they could watch students in the video; however, they talked about fictitious students. It would be partly due to the fact that they had never been asked for feedback on individual students by watching a video recording. Hence, while they observed the students, their comments focused on the teacher's intention.

The author	How is this pair's work influence the two students?
Vui	This pair's work helps them to understand the lesson. They are encouraged to share their knowledge with one another and to acquire [new] vocabulary when they ask each other. [V-8]

Vui, in [V-8], and the author had observed the scene of a pair of students who did not talk or interact with one another during the time for pair-work. However, Vui described the scene as if they had been communicating with each other. This feature of classroom observation appeared ten times in a total of 42 topics for the senior group.

Second, as a natural outcome of the feature above, the senior group is more concerned with discipline - what students should do. This may lead to a relatively high rate of pedagogy (38%) and management (28%) in Figure 4, as illustrated in [Ng-14].

The author	How does the chorus of the students affect his [a student in the video] learning?
Ngang	This student has finished composing letter blocks to make the word, he has completed the task, and then he is listening to confirm if the word that the classmates speak out is the same word he made. However, there were some students who did not pay attention to the activity.
The author	For those who listen to others' chords, what were they thinking?
Ngang	They have to pay attention to the chorus of words; otherwise, they may not notice the word and miss their turn when they have to speak out. [Ng-14]

Pre-established harmony and focus on emotions by the non-pilot group. The non-pilot teachers tended to describe the visible features of what they perceived in the video in a straightforward manner [Da-3]. While the senior group sometimes describes the fictitious students by the rhetoric of "student in the lesson plan," this group describes the real activity but only for those students who fulfil the expectations of the lesson plan. This type of narrative appeared 17 times in the 52 topics provided by the non-pilot group.

The author	How do the students use the four pictures?
Dang	They choose one picture that illustrates windy weather and one that illustrates not-windy weather. In the picture for weather without wind, the plants do not move, while for windy weather, the kites float at a higher position or the flag moves.
The author	The next activity, drawing the tree.
Dang	My intention is to assess them how they understand the lesson. Based on their ability to draw a picture and their knowledge, they draw a picture of the weather with or without wind.
The author	How do the students draw the picture?
Dang	In terms of visual arts, their drawings are not appropriate, but the tree in the weather without wind picture is drawn as standing still. They draw the leaves of a tree fluttering for the weather with the wind. [Da-3]

Second, the non-pilot group tended to connect their descriptions of events with students' emotions rather than their knowledge. The group indicated the largest portion for student demeanor in Figure 4, which is probably ascribed to such rhetoric. The following [Ph-5] is a typical example:

The author	You have watched the scene; how do the two students learn?
Phuong	After the boy that I nominated couldn't respond, I thought that this student was a bit weak. Subsequently, I nominated the girl, and she could respond, I was pleased. Now I again watched this boy—he was not a slow learner, he might have been able to respond to the question but he was quite a shy boy. The atmosphere in the classroom was not strained, but when he responded in a not fluent manner, the eyes of his classmates on him made him unresponsive. [Ph-5]

Reflexive positioning by the LSLC group. A unique observational attitude of the LSLC group concerns the interactions between specific students and themselves as agents in the context. The group considered students' knowledge to be co-constructed with classroom actors, while the senior group hardly talked about the knowledge itself, and the non-pilot stated the knowledge as if it deserved to be obtained.

The author	When the second student came to the blackboard, did you notice if this student had any difficulty?
Hao	I guess, at the moment, the boy understood the answer, but I [in the video] concerned myself about the fact that he could not say how to confirm the answer. Students know how to do it: they know how to use the ruler and apply the angle. But the problem here is he cannot show how to confirm it. [Hao2-13]

Hao, in [Hao2-13], focuses on the student's act of dealing with rulers to assess the student's knowledge, implying that knowing how to use the ruler relates to how to obtain a type of mathematical knowledge. Though the student in the video failed to learn proper knowledge, Hao noticed the critical moment of forming knowledge by the student in the context. The excerpts also indicate that Hao could sit on the student's seat and observe the event as the student saw. Changing position from the teacher to the student side is a feature of LSLC teachers, except Ngang. Phuong, in [Ph-5], also takes the perspective of the student; however, she did not connect this perspective to knowledge formation but to the affective matter of classroom management.

Moi's statement represents his reflexive thinking ([Mo-8]). He states that his intentions are different from the consequence of the student's activity in the video and that their learning is not well-achieved. At the same time, he depicts this consequence as a result of his actions toward the students.

Moi	I never thought about their level of understanding. I was expecting them to learn by touching their bones. They did so but did not examine them. After touching their bones, the children wanted to discuss how it felt and wanted to learn more. However, I was not attentive to that event. I thought that they had done the activity well enough. [Mo-8]

Lesson Study for Learning Community and Observational Topics

In Analysis 1, which relied on previous research (Sherin & van Es, 2008), the characteristics of Vietnamese teachers' classroom observations were presented. LSLC teachers who conducted frequent (video) reflection in lesson study differed in the frequencies of student knowledge, pedagogy, and management from those who did not experience LSLC. LSLC teachers tended to observe students' learning more intently, while non-pilot teachers tended to look at students' behaviors and emotions. It can be suggested that the practice of lesson study has had an effect. However, there is a possible interpretation that the results were driven by sampling, that is, that the pilot teachers were, from the beginning of this research, better at observing student learning and not due to the effects of the lesson study. Further research is needed to clarify this point.

A practical issue arose regarding how to ensure learning for the senior group: Ngang was an LSLC pilot teacher who had experienced a year of lesson study but had a little perspective from the other pilot teachers. The other senior teachers were also looking specifically at management and pedagogy and were likely to perform more managerial observations and conduct more managerial lessons than younger teachers. Senior teachers' learning needs to be secured for child-centred education.

Affective and Attitudinal Aspect of Classroom Observation

During the observations, LSLC teachers were able to introduce reflexive positioning in their own practice. They situated themselves in an individual student's seat to see their lesson. They also positioned themselves in their own seat in the video scenes, where they were facing such students. This positioning is essential for child-centred education; however, studies on LTN have not been properly theorized. The approach from LTN has explored "teacher cognition" by structuring and extending the elements of the teachers' observations. These elements of observation, according to Sherin and Russ (2014) are the person of focus (e.g., teacher or student), the topic (student knowledge or management as seen in this study), the stance of interpretation (e.g., description, evaluation), teachers' method of understanding students (e.g., search for meaning in students' opinions, generalization), and the emotions during observation (e.g., compassion, anomaly).

However, the difference in the quality of the observations between LSLC teachers and non-pilot teachers in this study appears to lie in phenomenological rather than cognitive dimensions. The LSLC observations represent the relationships that teachers develop with individual students (Koenen et al., 2022). In child-centred education, the LSLC teacher's receptivity to reflexively view herself or himself and the class from the pupil's point of view is the most significant and important, which differs fundamentally from the non-pilot teachers' observation. A theory is needed to explain this. It is not enough to place such reflexivity in one item in the list of teachers' "interpretive frames" (Sherin & Russ, 2014).

Passive, Active and Middle Voices in the Conduct of Observation

How can we theorize such reflexive and phenomenological involvement with the practice indicated by LSLC teachers in the studies on observation? Firstly, Sato (2000) presents the concept of "passive-activeness" and explains it by giving an example of teachers' appreciation of students' learning rather than their understanding of students. At the base of learning (by students and teachers), there is a passive response to people and things (Sato, 2000). Student learning (and teacher learning) is founded, at its root, on responding to somebody and something; learning requires passivity (Sato, 2000). Sato (2000) asserted that:

What are the activities of a teacher who establishes "passive-activeness = response"? The first requirement is to engage each child with her/his body that is always humbly listening to the "voiceless voices" of the children in the classroom… A teacher who enriches learning is aware of his or her own narrative when speaking to children and chooses the words he or she speaks. At the same time, they focus on listening to the voices of the children. The act of telling is also an act of listening (p. 39).

In the context of this study, when teachers learn from classroom observations, they passively receive the students' verbal and non-verbal messages in the context, as LSLC teachers did, and then reflexively position themselves and respond to students. Tsukui et al. (2017), in the study of Vietnamese teachers' classroom observations, describes "passive-activeness" as "a body of receptivity in "seeing', such as accepting and welcoming what is contingently going on in classrooms, different from the body of acting aggressively during inspection" (p. 177).

Next, there is a linguistic concept of the middle voice (Benveniste, 1971; Kokubun, 2017) that can be referred to as the quality of teachers' passive-activeness in observation. During observation, LSLC teachers welcome classroom actors and phenomena in such a way that such practices appear as they are *aboard* the observer's native sensation. Benveniste (1971) introduced the concept of the middle voice:

In the active, the verbs denote a process that is accomplished outside the subject. In the middle, which is the diathesis to be defined by the opposition, the verb indicates a process centering in the subject, the subject is inside the process…here the subject is the seat of the process, […] the subject is the center as well as the agent of the process; he achieves something which is being achieved in him (Benveniste, 1971, p. 148).

Borrowing the middle voices, LSLC teachers' quality of observation can be settled in their way of having ties with practice. When she or he is an insider relying on and responsible for the practice, then she or he achieves the insider's perspective on the practice. She or he appreciates it so that it evolves on *the seat of* (Benveniste, 1971) her/his recognition as it is. As an insider who shares interests and problems with practitioners, she or he cannot evaluate it but receives, follows, and accepts the practice as it is, eventually conceiving a new idea. The observation in the middle voice echoes connoisseurship (Eisner, 1997) and passive-activeness in the teaching profession (Sato, 2000, 2006) in the literature.

When looking at the LSLC teachers' comments in the Results section, we see an instance where Hao recounts a situation in which a student has difficulty expressing his knowledge [Hao2-13]. What is depicted here differs from

Hao's mere active capturing of students' knowledge. Hao is, in observation, experiencing trouble that the student is facing and the uneasiness that she is feeling from it. Moi describes himself in the video as not realising that his students are beginning to learn and subsequently regret it [Moi-8]. As his narration progresses, the student's learning and his own regrets emerge in his subjectivity. Through such experience of undergoing classroom phenomena, Hao and Moi's subjects are settled in the seat of the observational process, which represents the middle voice in observation—*they achieve an observation which is being achieved in them*. The commonalities among connoisseurship, the observation in passive-activeness and middle voice is that the object appears in front of the observer, rather than the observer seeing the object. The observer actively looks at the object, but in terms of sensation, the observer is requested to look at the object by it.

In contrast, non-pilot teachers observe and reflect on practices by firmly gripping her/his subjective frame and evaluating the practice against it. Such activeness in observation prevails the teachers' receptivity and makes them become outsiders who are independent of and dissociated from practice. That is why they could narrate the view of "students in the lesson plan".

5. CONCLUSION

The classroom observations of the teachers who participated in the LSLC for a year had some characteristics that are desirable in child-centred education. One was their observation of students' knowledge formation, and the other was their willingness to put themselves in the position of the practitioners (students and themselves in practice). In this study, these are called the observation in the middle voice, and they are discussed in relation to connoisseurship and the observation by passive-activeness of teacher attitude in previous studies. Teachers perform their observations through their own initiative, but rather, as a sense, they passively receive events - they undergo *the object appearing in front of them*. Such a phenomenological definition of observation brings a new research agenda to the current theories of classroom observation.

One of the challenges for Vietnamese teacher education is to address teachers' competence to better understand students' learning, as examined in Analysis 1. Teacher education must be constructed based on what teachers specifically see and understand. In addition, and more importantly, it is necessary to develop training programs for classroom observation that enable teachers to take reflexive positioning, which is represented as the observation in the middle voice. The limitation of this study is that it did not reveal the process by which the LSLC teachers came to have features of observation. This awaits further research.

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