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| **IATEFL Research SIG PCE Liverpool 2013****Researching Professional Talk****Steve Walsh, Newcastle University & Steve Mann, University of Warwick** |

**Session 4 Discussion of research questions and research opportunities**

**TASK 1**

(from Mann, S. and Walsh, S. (forthcoming) ‘RP or ‘RIP’: A Critical Perspective on Reflective Practice’ *International Review of Applied Linguistics*.)

Look at the following extracts of professional talk. For each one comment on:

* The main issue or ‘puzzle’
* Evidence for new understandings or insights
* Evidence for collaborative dialogue

How might you use spoken data like this for professional development?

**Extract 1**

(Two teacher-trainers are using transcripts of their feedback sessions as an impetus for reflection).

A: It was really interesting looking closely at this one (.) I’m beginning to think it might be useful to look again at the way we use observation and discussion tasks (.) th- (.) sometimes think they get in the way of the trainees (.) too much our agenda maybe=

B: =you mean in the actual feedback sessions

A: yeah (.) the focus needs to come from them more often (.) if they were more involved in choosing the focus of the observations they’d get more out of it (.) I might suggest that they use some of Pebblepad discussions to choose an observation focus (.)

**Extract 2**

(Two teachers (T1 and T2) on an in-service teacher education programme are discussing their use of ‘teacher echo’ (repetitions) in an ESL context involving a group of multilingual adult learners)

T1: I was struck by how much echoing I did before and sometimes there was a justification for it .... but a LOT of the time.... it was just echo for the sake of echo so I was fairly consciously trying NOT to echo this time

T2: And what effect did that (**reduced echo)** have on the interaction patterns or the involvement of learners in the class, did it have any effect that you noticed?

T1: I think that it made them more confident perhaps in giving me words because it was only going to come back to them if the pronunciation WASn’t right rather than just getting ((1)) straight back to them. When you’re eliciting vocabulary if they’re coming out with the vocabulary and it’s adequate and it’s clear, there’s no need for you to echo it back to the other students .... you’re wasting a lot of time by echoing stuff back.

**Extract 3**

(In extract 3 below, the teacher, Joy, has analysed her teaching using the SETT framework and is talking about her evaluation with a colleague, Mike. Both teachers are using the framework as part of an INSETT programme and working towards their DELTA (Diploma in English Language Teaching for Adults) qualification).

Mike: Is scaffolding something you think you do more of in that type of mode for example you’re in a skills and systems mode here. Do you think it’s something that happens more in some modes than others or is it maybe too difficult to say at this stage?

Joy: My first feeling would be yes because it’s so focused on language that anything they give me that might not be correct and not clear then I’m going to re-formulate it or anything they don’t understand I’m going to give them a lot of examples so that’s all scaffolding isn’t it?

**TASK 2**

Make a list of those aspects of teaching and learning which could be investigated through observation and compare with Wallace’s list below.

(Wallace, 1998, *Action research for language teachers*, chapter 6)

Looking at teachers:

* opening procedures
* closing procedures
* critical incidents
* use of aids and resources
* patterns of movement
* questioning strategies
* management routines
* discipline
* learner involvement

Looking at learners:

* learner involvement
* use of L1 and L2
* quality of learner talk
* relationship of task to talk
* learner perceptions and expectations
* learner-learner interaction
* learning styles and strategies

**TASK 3**

Working in small groups, devise a series of action research questions which could be answered through the use of professional talk. Consider what data you would need to collect to answer your questions and outline the steps you might take to collect and analyse the data with the goal of facilitating professional development.