Suisse. Evaluer et s'évaluer grâce à des films sur ses propres pratiques

Nathalie Frieden, didacticienne de la philosophie, Université de Fribourg

Dans une vie d'enseignant, il est important de savoir s'évaluer[1]. Si, pendant une formation il existe des moments d'entretien d'explicitation, durant tout le reste de la vie professionnelle, le professeur est seul dans sa classe, et en sortant d'un cours, il n'a pas le temps et souvent les moyens, d'avoir plus qu'une impression plus émotive que distincte, de ce que son cours a été en bien et en mal, en efficace et en vide.

Yves Clot nous propose d'utiliser un film de notre propre activité professionnelle, afin de le regarder seul pour apprendre à se connaître, et en collectif professionnel, de façon à voir, analyser et comprendre les actes professionnels qui constituent le métier, avec des collègues.

L'avantage de cette méthode est aussi de dépasser l'attention portée à soi-même et à sa profession, pour analyser plusieurs actes professionnels et leurs effets sur les élèves. Qu'est ce que je dis quand je parle aux élèves ? Quel(s) effet(s) a ce que je dis aux élèves ? Cela permet aussi de travailler les interventions, d'en faire une typologie, et de comprendre leur(s) effet(s) possible(s).

Le film permet de voir quelles sont les habiletés intellectuelles et les compétences cognitives et/ou langagières développées chez les participants pendant une animation ou un cours.

Le film forme une analyse complexe d'un cours, une analyse qui aborde plusieurs couches de réalité, présentes dans un moment court, couches indéchiffrables autrement que par un arrêt sur l'image-son, et un décorticage rationnel avec des collègues.

Beaucoup d'exercices peuvent être construits à partir de et sur ce travail.

Co-assessing future animators through filming their practices

This conference's leaflet declares the conference topics focus to be within school and university curricula. As a professor of didactics of philosophy, I teach in university, to future teachers of philosophy at school. These students will be teaching to classes of seventeen to twenty years old young people. They will teach how to practice philosophy through writing, reading and discussing philosophy[2]. I will present some of the challenges in their training, and one of the methods I use to work with them.

One of the problems I have to deal with when I train future teachers[3], is to help them to become reflexive practitioners in their class, that is, to be able to self-assess their practice. Indeed, although during their training, they are followed by many professors (of general didactics, specific didactics, pedagogy, methodology, etc.), in the future, during the years of teaching ahead, they will be on their own in class, both to animate a discussion and teach. Hence the importance of drilling efficient and

useful self-assessment during their training year, but also of getting future teachers into the habit of asking other professionals like them for help. If a teacher does not progress in his profession, he does not stagnate but regresses, and therefore might get lonely, tired, stubborn, cynical or even depressive. There is a lot of depression among the teachers in Europe, and I feel it is my responsibility to participate in preventing this fact, with the means I create in my methodology.

One of the methods I have begun using is a method invented by Yves Clot4 in his researches in the ergonomics of different professions. The method he invented was created to analyse any profession from driving trains to working in a post office, and putting the mail in the most rational order. He suggested to film and self-assess the action one has to evaluate, in our case of a discussion (or of a lesson of philosophy, or a conversation with students, or a maieutic moment).

First the film is analysed by the future-teacher who animated the session that was filmed. He looks at it all alone so as to handle his relation to him-self, as a body, as a person, and as a teacher. Afterwards, he can see it again (and again) to evaluate his professional choices.

Second, the professor of didactics views the film with this student teacher. It allows the evaluation to be confronted with a professional point a view. It creates a moment of confrontation between a theory and a practice. It also helps the professor of didactics to evaluate the training he gave.

And finally, the group of students teachers in animation watches the film and analyses it according to different angles, so as to build a professional evaluation together, which allows the group of students to create a social relation among themselves as future teachers. It creates a professional team. (Yves Clot calls it un collectif professionnel). This experience of belonging and sharing is essential for the evolution of a profession and of school.

Furthermore, each viewing provides time to analyse the same video through different focus (and different gazes). In the third viewing, I ask each student to analyse another aspect of the discussion, a different skill the pupils participants are using, and what are the teacher's actions that allowed this skill to be developed.

These three moments pursue many different aims. Each viewing and analysis is recorded, (or better filmed) so that one can compare the evaluation in these three (or more) moments or levels of assesment, and learn from the evolution of the different evaluations and the various points of view discovered, and the several experiences shared and the diverse personalities in the team. It allows one to progress from a more emotional reaction to a cooler headed more rational one, from a very self centred point of view to a more common one, from a personal approach to a public one, from a private experience to a professional one... It allows each person to overcome their shyness about mistakes, their modesty about what went wrong. And it builds on the difficulties everyone shares. It creates a more objective perspective on the work. It creates a new perspective on common mistakes

I have been working progressively more with this technique for 6 years, changing some aspects to adapt the method to philosophy and to P4C. And the more I use it the more I see its immense potential and the variety of wealth you can take advantage of, in this approach. It is these discoveries that I want to share with you.

Analysis of the method

As seen from the point of view of the future teachers, of the pupils participants in the discussion, of their skills that are developed and of the professor of didactics

The film allows a discovery of oneself, as a physical person in a situation, moving, talking, and interacting, and, as a personality who has his own characteristics in his own ways of reacting. These are essential aspects of the self that have positive and negative sides to them, and that one must accept to face and somewhat to tame. Visualising one's own animation allows one to encountera stranger: the self as others see it. It is not the limited self the mirror reflects, but the alive self, moving and working in a public space, seen from outside and not from within as we always experience our self. I know the first impact to be (quite) disagreeable because of how difficult it is to recognize one self in the person that one sees. It is unpleasant to accept that one does not know that person. People experience a physical embarrassment and a very strong shyness. Some students tell me they would like to forget it, or erase it (erase themselves!). This is why the first viewing should be individual. Before any form of assessment takes place, the first step is the mere acceptance of oneself as an objective complete reality, and the following mourning of a better look, or even of liking oneself "from the outside". After this acknowledgement, work can be done on the first thing we notice as disturbing or a little ridiculous: some distracting gestures, repeated useless words, mannerisms or verbal tics. The improvement that stems from these observation is done on the "theatrality of teaching"[5].

A second visioning that is done alone allows the future teacher to begin to build a first self-assessment. This means at first that he must compare and contrast what he wanted to do in this discussion (his aim), what he had constructed as a plan of the discussion, and the actual discussion, while also comparing skills we had learned about during didactics class (those he values as useful) with those he has managed to use. He can thus observe and analyse different aspects of his performance: what he says when he talks, the effect it has on the pupils participants, the variety of his interventions, the level of these (more or less demanding), the skills that he stimulates in the participants, the quality of his language, the intelligibility of his position, his capacity of listening.

But the work on how to become a reflexive practitioner must go through what Schön[6] calls the passage from a "Reflection-in-action" to a "Reflection-on-action". When faced with a professional issue, a practitioner usually connects with his feelings, emotions and prior experiences to attend to the situation directly. In our context, this "Reflection-in-action" is the feelings 'felt-knowing' of what was good or bad in ones animation. In a way we can say that while the practitioner is performing a professional task, he is always feeling, judging, evaluating and correcting what he is doing. This

means that coming out of a lesson or the animation of a discussion, he has a broad evaluation of what he has done, and this is the overall basis on which he will decide what he will do next. But films of ones class can prove one's overall emotion to be exaggerated, especially when the discussion (the lesson) was not too good. It is difficult to understand what the "not too good" is made of, because the feeling of it is stronger than the capacity of analysing and it overshadows any rationality. On the other hand, the Reflection-on-action is the possibility after the experience, for a practitioner to analyse all his "reaction to the situation" and explore the "reasons around", and the consequences of, his actions. I have found the second form of reflection much richer, more analysable, differentiated, deep, and accurate if a film of the lesson was made. This is all the more true since a recording allows to come back to it as many times as necessary, to change and enrich the understanding of what happened. This process goes from the confrontation to what one remembers of one's often confused emotions, to an analysis that can be much more precise and much more subtle of all the different moments of the hour or so that was filmed. Eventually, it is important for the student to name why his emotions made him judge his performance so differently from the reality of what happened. He can thus learn how to deal with himself in his work and put into perspective his work. Lately one of my students future teacher emerged rather happy from an animation she had done. She had read with her class, many texts on freedom, and had made her pupils discuss about the topic: "are we free?" She said, evaluating her first general feeling: "The participants have made some progress, they managed to articulate many arguments". However, when we studied the film of her discussion with the other student teachers, we discovered first that there were very few real arguments. Most of the time the participants just declared statements, in a not too convincing way. Those statements were borrowed from philosophers more or less well understood and not at all "used" to analyse reality. Putting in perspective the aims of her discussion, this student professor discovered that she followed two different aims, one explicit and one unexpressed. The first was to do a discussion on what the pupils participants thought about whether they were free, and the second to verify if her students had understood all those texts. But the pupils participants had feltthat the unexpressed aim was more important than the explicit one. And they had tried to quote ideas, so as to please the teacher. But as they were mostly supposed to reflect on whether they were free, they did neither task with much conviction. Why had she felt rather satisfied? Because they had been quoting philosophers. So that aim had actually been her real one, and her pupils participants had somehow felt it and had tried to satisfy her expectations. The film allowed her to discover it. And she realised that she should have been more explicit, asking clearly to try and quote the philosopher's ideas so as to understand the reality of their life.

Finally, last but not least: the film is a nice way to avoid the sentence: "My discussion was a total failure!" There is no discussion that is a total failure, it is therefore interesting to analyse it bit by bit and discover the "good" bits and why, the less good bits and how they arrive, why this happens, when exactly we change the good direction... Sometimes students are too positive, sometimes far too negative.

Other benefits: The film can be stopped at any moment so as to observe and understand one aspect in the development of the discussion. The film is a means to analyse the intellectual skills the pupils participants use in different moments of the discussion (Sasseville and Gagnon[7]. To discover the multiplicity of skills is enriching for it allows us to move beyond our bias on the few obvious ones that interest us. Most new student teachers of philosophy appear to be mainly fascinated by arguments. And they tend to mistake convincing sentences with arguing ones. Analysing this dimension of a discussion helps my student teachers to differentiate convincing attitudes of charismatic pupils with logically built arguments. An argument is a way of thinking that bases statements on a reason. It is not just a way of looking in a convincing (or charming) way at a group when one talks! This is just one example of how the systematic pausing of a movie helps observing one by one the overlapping dimensions and skills and see what they are made of. Within this rigorous fragmentation of the movie into extracts watched with a specific purpose, one can analyse what in the intervention of the animator and of the pupils participants has stimulated this skill and that reaction in the pupils participants. Therefore it is a means of evaluatingthe skills ofthe pupils. Only if the work of the pupils participants is evaluated can one be sure to understand one's practice, and the quality of one's work as a discussion animator. Our work is constructed on a social interaction and the interaction itself can be the focus of this professional assessment. For example: there are many words that can be interpreted by the animator in a completely different way than by the participants. Lets give an example of a contradiction: a learning teacher was endlessly punctuating her student's talk with words such as: "Good, Good, ok, perfect, true, nice, correct, good for you, mm, yeah, etc.". We calculated she had proffered about 32 such harmless phrases in the course of 50 minutes. Harmless? What did these noises mean for her? They could have meant many things all at once in fact: "how nice of you to participate", or "you see, it's not so difficult to join in the discussion", "nice try!" , "thank you for eventually joining the group", but it could also have meant "what you said is correct, logical, sensible or reasonable" or "what you said is consistent in philosophy" or "how interesting!". Within all these interpretations, what did the pupils participants who were addressed understand? Not only are these mono-syllables ambiguous, they actually give a very wrong idea of a philosophical discussion, as if an answer could be correct, philosophy could be just, true, good, and perfect... This makes the discussion appear like a lesson to learn, with good answers to good questions and not a difficult research of the truth that people must build together. The implicit meaning is wrong. And the real revolution that should be any philosophical discussion has not happened, we are back in school!

In the analysis of films we can focus on what the teacher says. We can discover and learn to differentiate varied types of interventions, analyse their efficiency (how do participants understand them and how they react to them), compare them to the ones of Lipman or Tozzi or others, we can try to imitate, and discover what each of us does easily or not. We can develop exercises so as to drill the use of other questions... I ask future teachers to partake in " cafés philosophiques". There, I make them observe the interventions of the animator. The future teachers do a typology of those interventions, and try to analyse how to learn from this. The more students observe discussions, the more they see the interesting personal mix of each animator between the use of memory, the

reminders ("in this discussion, three point of view have been expressed"), of triggering phrases ("if I well understood, you said... correct me if I am wrong"), of questions stimulating skills ("can you prove what you have just said?, or "What do you think could be the effect of what you said", or" can you give an example") and so on.

I would like to go on presenting other important aspects of observations, as in a progressing P4C. Within the animation styles I teach, one consists of the division of a class in two groups, one group discussing and one group observing the other's discussion, in turns. This method was created by Michel Tozzi[8]; and presents many benefits from observation[9]. After they have observed each other, and discussed about their observations of different skills they are taught to observe, pupils participants often ask a theoretical support from the teacher so as to progress through the errors or difficulties of their classmates. If a film is made of such a discussion, I have found it to be fascinating to compare the future teachers in animation and professor of didactics' joint assessments of the film with the notes the pupils have taken of arguments, definitions, synthesis, reformulations and other skills. It is a lesson in humility to see some times the pupils observers analyse more and better than the professional team. In fact the film of the discussion and of the following feedback by the pupils observers is also something we can use with the class itself, to make them realise that what they thought good or bad was or was not observed or just did not exist. For them too, watching themselves can be very stimulating.

For the professor of didactics, a film is a wonderful means. First the co- and auto-evaluation that other future animators do of each other lightens the work of the coach, it gives new ways of evaluating, it shows also what was clear and what was not in the lessons that were taught about this subject, it shows also what future teachers really need. But it allows also discovering different ways of animating. You could call this the style, the way, the personality the animator gives to the discussion. Students-animators look and imitate each other. And the professor of didactics can learn from them too!

I would now like to reflect on the relationship of the practitioners together, as a professional team. Indeed, teachers and future teachers of animation constitute a group, a community of research that is a professional collective. As a group of people who have the same profession, these teachers look together at aspects that they are all confronted to. So they discuss about how each of them reacts to the same difficulties of any professional task. They can also share their thoughts on their work, the efficiency of certain methods and the ethos of the profession. This unites future teachers who are likely to stay in the same region and become colleagues and creates solidarity between them for the better and the worse moments of their professional life. They will help each other in difficulties and successes. To work together is to work better and to feel less lonely and helpless in a very demanding work. It also means to share their inventions, and help each other to be creative. Such open relationships can start from the rewarding task of co-assessing each other. Indeed assessing, co-assessing and self-assessing are not meant to destroy animators but to help them build an efficient practice. Indeed, assessment both alone and together is a means to discover everything an animation

is made of, and to discover it for oneself and others. As they observe they learn what they have to do. Sharing feed-back allows the experience of a singular animator to become shared knowledge within the group, at a faster rate than a reflection by oneself. This co-evaluation is full of positive moments because each animator has different qualities that others don't have. Obviously my students will move on to varied realities and challenges but I believe they have learned to work together and that this makes such a difference in teaching that they are likely to recreate new solidarities in their new surroundings. To give an instrument of objectivity, and sharing the vision and analysis of the film, allows the teachers to put their failures and shortcomings in perspective. They discover they are all limited and all in progress and all gifted. On the long term discussion about avoiding or approaching difficult situations builds self-confidence. It plays down the importance of all our limits.

Furthermore, Yves Clot analyses the reasons why so many professions are unhappy places. He thinks that if many workers suffer, we must "heal" them. He considers that we must approach a profession considering also how and why it is the source of suffering. One of his books is called: Le travail à coeur. Pour en finir avec les risques psychosociaux [10]. In it, he examines the risks common to all professions today. He claims the right to be happy in one's job, and he believes one has to study the ergonomics of each profession with the help of films, and the help of professionals so as to understand what is a professional action or gesture. He is convinced that this exploration must be carried in a group of people sharing the same profession. He considers that there is no "well being" without a "well doing", which accounts for the necessary analysis of all the tensions underlying one's working routine. In particular, he names and analyses the frequent tension between what is perceived as a prescribed task, and what is lived as the real activity, and what one would rather do instead of this task. He shows that in his work the individual always produces a meaning for each one of his actions, all the while striving for a certain efficiency. Clot shows that such tensions on professionals are between their priorities and the priorities of society and/or the priorities of the school directors in the case of schools. Clot argues too that it is necessary to the practitioners' survival to form a group, assess real life case studies through film. This again provides both a sense of cohesion and solidarity, and allows people to learn from each other. And save the work!

Again, because it is creating a way of interacting between people who share the same job, this type of exercise provides good habits that allow people to overcome eventually the solitude of the teacher alone in his class, and it can create all types of solidarities and creative projects, in the school. It leads to commitments taken by teachers outside of the curriculum, commitments that both help one partake more democratically within an institution, and also helps experience one's professional life in a more rewarding way. This solidarity creates strength to overcome the ever growing demands of school directions and of society.

Exercises

How can we create exercices on the basis of all that we have discovered with the use of films?

The first exercices are invented by the students teachers: they see their film, and they understand what they want to develop, exercise, correct. Some want to organise as quickly as possible another filming of another discussion. And the preparation is in itself an exercise. Usually this second filming highlights, that new bonds have emerged among the students who will analyse the new film together, since they are counting on each other to help and cooperate, and learn from each other. Each student teacher spontaneously specialises in observing and analysing specific aspects of the discussion, thus some focus on analysing some skills of the future teacher or of the pupils participants, the other on psychological ambiguities, etc.

In my lessons I tend to create new exercices from what we have observed: we can use role plays for example, repeating and studying the interactions between animators' interventions and participants' reactions. We can elaborate exercises so as to study, train and drill an animator's skill. We can also discuss between peers about "case studies", and the foll0wing professional gestures: how do we, as teacher/animators/facilitators, accompany this type of situation. For example: what do we do when a participant says a surprising thing: how do we react, how do we listen to what it really means, how do we accompany without loosing this kairosand/or the rest of the research.

We listen to the video again, focusing on the interaction, and stopping before the animator talks, to exercise together different interventions and new questions, and discuss about their possible effects on the discussion.

We write a transcript of the interactions so as to really understand what is happening.

We do a list of the skills of the teacher, the necessary attitudes, the logic training, the ethical position... And we use different exercices to develop them like those O.Brenifier and I.Millon1 invented to train the future animators.

Conclusion

My communication is the presentation of the theoretical basis, and it focuses on examples of years of training. It also presents exercises created within this type of training, quotes both videos of my student animators and their self-assessments about them, and talk of my empirical observation of the effect this specific method has had on teachers during their first years of teaching, and their use of P4C in their classes.

I hope it convinces my audience of peers that to work together fostering relationships and building solidarity within a group allows any member of the group to overcome the habit of avoiding difficult situations. In the long run it allows people to gain self-confidence. In a co-assessing and constructive group of professionals, the concept of mistake changes, our challenges are tackled with a better awareness of our interests and with a richer (common) knowledge of our tools to handle our common challenges. Eventually the teachers who are involved in such sharing are happier, more committed at school, and more aware of what they like and what is good for them.

(**1**) Conférence donnée à l'Université de Cape Town, le 1er septembre 2013.

(**2**) The PEC (Plan d'étude cadre or the plan regulator of the studies for all the French speaking cantons of Switzerland) describes the subject philosophy as having two aims: to teach the history of ideas and to "philosophize". This second aim is the subject of this lecture. PEC (Plan d'Etudes cadre) : **http://edudoc.ch/record/17477/files/D30b.pdf.**p. 81 à 85.

(**3**) My students in didactics of philosophy are called here "student teachers". When I talk of the kids or young people who participate in a discussion, I will use "pupils participants".

(**4**) Clot, Y., Travail et pouvoir d'agir, 2008, PUF.

(**5**) Runtz-Christan, E. Enseignant et comédien**:** un même métier ?, ESF 2000.

(**6**) Schön, D (1983) The Reflective Practitioner, How Professionals Think In Action, Basic Books.

(**7**) Sasseville, M., Gagnon, M. , Penser Ensemble à l'école, des outils pour l'observation d'une communauté de recherche philosophique en action. Dialogues, presses universitaires de Laval 2012. p12.

(**8**) Frieden, N., "Conference of ICPIC : The variety of schools of philosophy for children in France and in Philolab" , Diotime n° 51, p.16, 1/2012.

(**9**) Frieden, N., "Le rôle de l'observateur. Evaluation, co-évaluation et auto-évaluation de la discussion, en cours de philosophie", Actes du Colloque de l'Admée, Fribourg 2013.

(**10**) Clot, Y., Le travail à coeur. Pour en finir avec les risques psychosociaux**,** Editions La Découverte, coll. "Cahiers libres", mai 2010.