Teacher Development or Teacher Training? An Exploration of Issues Reflected on by CELTA Candidates

--Manuscript Draft--

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Response to Reviewers:	Comments to the author (if any): Reviewer #1: - The revised version addressed most suggested revisions. However, minor grammar errors were spotted, e.g., please double check page 5 and page 17 the use of prep "on" vs "in". Author response: A colleague and myself checked pages 5 and page 17 thoroughly, and could find no issues with the prepositions. However, several minor errors were corrected throughout the manuscript. - Spell out LFCA to make it clear Author response: This is spelled out on page 3, but it is highlighted again in the title on page 5 for the sake of clarity. - I wonder why the author didn't reference any discussions from a much related recent study "Investigating reflection in written assignments on CELTA courses" by Lee Mackenzie Sept. 2018 ELT Journal. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccy037 Author response: Reference has been made on page 16 to the recently published

article in the ELT Journal.

Reviewer #2: Comments
The revised version of the manuscript titled "Teacher Development or Teacher Training? Investigating Reflection in Written Reflective Assignments on English Language Teacher Education Courses" has shown much progress since the previous draft. The author's efforts are recognized and appreciated. Although several APA format and punctuation errors are still spotted, the overall quality is apparent elevated. The revisions, especially the additions regarding the subjects' background, do address my previous concerns and strengthen the rigorousness of the research method section. This research is grounded on the improvement to make in CELTA. I would think that this manuscript is ready to be published.
Review decision: Accepted
Author response: A colleague and I have thoroughly proofread the manuscript again, and rectified several issues with punctuation and APA format. We hope these address reviewer 2's concerns.

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Abstract

The current study aimed to investigate whether the intensive Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CELTA), which certifies teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), is better viewed as a teacher development or a teacher training course. Qualitative content analysis was carried out on the written reflective assignments of CELTA course participants on several courses where the researcher worked as a tutor. The data was subsequently triangulated using semi-structured qualitative interviews. From these data, four main themes emerged as significant: Teacher Learning; General Pedagogic Knowledge; Teaching Skills and Teaching Language, and the Learner Element. A closer analysis of the categories within these themes reveals a tension between a view of teacher development as "training" and a view of teacher development as "education". To ensure that the course places a greater emphasis on teacher development, CELTA tutors can encourage less focus on the teaching techniques acquired during the course and more focus on the appropriacy of such techniques with particular classes and in certain contexts by redesigning the reflective prompts which form the basis of the written reflection assignment on the course, and by modelling reflective practice throughout the course.

Keywords: CELTA, reflection, reflective teaching, teacher development, teacher education, teacher training

1. Introduction

English has become the world's first truly global language [Crystal 2006]. This has led to a huge global demand for qualified English language teachers [Bradford 2004]. As a result, intensive pre-service English Language Teaching (ELT) courses such as the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Certificate (UCLES) certified Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages course (the "CELTA") have mushroomed with over 1,500 courses held each year in over 70 countries worldwide [UCLES 2015].

The CELTA was originally conceived of as a means for native-speakers of English with limited teaching experience to gain a teaching certificate [Anderson 2016; Ferguson & Donno, 2003] and aims to meet the staffing needs of private language schools around the world. As such the award is "market driven" [Borg 2002, p. 425] and is typically self-funded [Roberts 1998]. The CELTA includes the planning and execution of six hours of assessed teaching practice (TP). It is this practical component which trainee teachers tend to find most valuable [Borg 2002], and which allows for reflection on actual teaching experiences.

1.2 Lack of Reflection

Several studies have concluded that novice teachers lack the experience and knowledge considered necessary for in-depth reflection [e.g. Lai 2008; Lee 2005; Watts & Lawson 2009]. On CELTA courses several reasons for this lack of reflection have been identified. For example, since reflection is assessed candidates engage in "strategic" or "display" reflection [Hobbs 2007a p. 410] by only saying or writing what they think course tutors expect to hear [e.g. Borg 2010; McCabe, Walsh, Wideman & Winter 2009; Watkins 2011]. A second reason for the lack of reflection on CELTA courses has been articulated by Borg [2002] who found that a lack of appropriate terminology impeded in-depth reflection. As a consequence, in their desire to become part of the discourse community, candidates referred to concepts before they had fully grasped their meaning. Indeed, for beginning teachers, their relative newness to the profession may prevent theorizing at any significant level because their experience is too restricted by issues such as class management and pupil behaviour [Watts & Lawson 2009]. Such teachers are arguably more concerned with learning the skills necessary to "survive" in the classroom [e.g. Borg 2002; McCabe et al. 2009; Watkins 2011] which may help explain why "an emphasis upon reflection too soon in their preparation may be alienating to neophytes" [Hatton & Smith 1995, p. 36]. Another reason for the perceived lack of development of in-depth reflection by CELTA candidates is the course's length. Since the intensive version of the CELTA is usually four weeks long and requires candidates to have only 120 hours of contact time with course tutors [UCLES 2014a], it has been argued that the CELTA places an emphasis on the acquisition of "formulaic moves that are replicated through practice" [Stanley & Murray 2013, p. 112], and that the course is "overly prescriptive... offering a superficial quick fix 'toolkit' of classroom skills" [ibid.]. With typically only an hour scheduled for TP feedback on the assessment of three candidates' lessons, time may preclude a focus on anything else. Finally, due to the fractious nature of some post-observation feedback sessions [Watkins 2011], it should come as no surprise that many tutors tend to restrict feedback to candidates on measurable and observable aspects of teaching practice since feedback is "more convincing and useful if data-based" [Roberts 1998 p. 160].

1.3 The CELTA: Teacher Development or Teacher Training?

Richards and Farrell [2005] and Richards and Nunan [1990] outline two approaches to teacher education in ELT: teacher training and teacher development. The former reflects a "an analytical approach that looks at teaching in terms of its directly observable characteristics. It involves looking at what the teacher does in the classroom" [ibid. 1990, p. 2]. Richards and Farrell elaborate on this definition as follows:

> Typically aimed at short-term and immediate goals. Often it is seen as preparation for induction into a first teaching position or as preparation to take on a new teaching assignment or responsibility. Training involves understanding basic concepts and principles as a prerequisite for applying them to teaching and the ability to demonstrate principles and practices in the classroom… The content of training is usually determined by experts and is often available in standard training formats or through prescriptions in methodology books [2005, p. 4].

Teacher training includes a focus on the teaching of discrete skills and techniques such as how to give feedback to learners; how to use materials and resources; how to implement questioning techniques; and how to make use of group tasks [ibid.]. This approach perpetuates the behaviouralist influenced craft model of teacher training which sees knowledge as the transfer of discrete and unanalysed competencies from experts to novices [Wallace 1991]. By contrast, teacher development is a "macro-approach" to teacher education [Richards & Nunan 1990, p. 2] which refers to "general growth not focused on a specific job" [Richards & Farrell 2005, p. 5]. As they explain:

> It serves a longer-term goal and seeks to facilitate growth of teachers' understanding of teaching and of themselves as teachers. It often involves examining different dimensions of a teacher's practice as a basis for reflective review [ibid.]

Teacher development involves a consideration of one's personal views on language teaching and teaching styles; an understanding of shifting teacher roles depending on the different kinds of learner; and an understanding of learner perceptions and the language acquisition process [ibid.]. Key to teacher development is the teacher's ability to reflect on one's beliefs, values and practices [ibid.].

In light of concerns about the lack of reflection on CELTA courses and its focus on "formulaic moves", some have therefore argued that the CELTA promotes such a "transmission-based approach" [Hobbs 2007b, p. 4], which would run counter to the constructivist goals of reflective teaching. Given such an approach, candidates would struggle to make informed decisions in their own classrooms after the course. Indeed, since UCLES [2015] considers the CELTA an entry-level qualification, the award is typically described as a "teacher training" course rather than a "teacher development" course [e.g. Anderson 2016; Ferguson & Donno 2003]. At the same time, an increasing number of CELTA candidates are experienced teachers, many of whom are non-native speakers [Anderson 2016]. Of these NSSs, 74% claimed to be taking the course "for professional development" [ibid. p. 264]. Moreover, the CELTA places a strong emphasis on reflection to the extent that it forms part of assessment by means of post TP evaluation forms and a "Lessons from the Classroom" written assignment (LFCA) of 750-1000 words [UCLES 2014a]. Indeed, reflection is now taken into consideration when allocating final grades to course participants [UCLES 2014b].

In light of the above, does CELTA now reflect a view of teacher education as teacher development or teacher training? The current study attempts to explore this area by answering the following research question:

- Which issues do intensive CELTA candidates reflect on?

This paper examines the issues that trainee teachers reflected on in the context of intensive CELTA courses in various locations. The results and conclusions, however, are applicable to other pre-service teacher education courses.

2 Methodology

2.1 Participants

The LFCAs in the current study were all written by CELTA candidates on courses where the researcher was course tutor. **Tab.2.1** gives an overview of the study's participants. Four of the participants were trained in South America on three separate courses (Lily and Ricky took the same course), while John was trained on a course in Europe. Although the research participants were known to me and were therefore not strictly anonymous, I did, as far as possible, try to ensure confidentiality and non-traceability by using pseudonyms and "crude report categories" [Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2005 p. 63]. Any sensitive or potentially embarrassing information which did not relate to the research questions was omitted.

This paper reports on part of a larger study which was granted ethical approval from Sheffield Hallam University.

Table 2.1: Profile of participants

	Lily	Miki	John	Ricky	Dave
Date when they took the CELTA	August 2012	January 2015	July 2014	August 2012	May 2013
Amount of pre-CELTA ELT experience	3 years	None	3 years	2 years	6 years
Years of other pre-CELTA teaching experience / Subjects taught	None	10 years / singing	2 years / Literature	1 year / Spanish	5 years / primary school
CELTA grade[1]	PASS	PASS	PASS A	PASS B	PASS
L1	Spanish	Portuguese	Czech	Spanish	English

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[1] Provisional grades for candidates are decided at a provisional grade meeting which typically takes place in the latter stages of the course. The meeting is attended by the course tutors and an external assessor, approved by Cambridge English, who moderates course tutors' grading decisions [UCLES 2014a]. The grade descriptors for candidates who are between grades (i.e. Pass B / Pass A; Pass / Pass B, or Fail / Pass candidates) assume greater importance, and the steps that such candidates must take to obtain the higher grade before the end of the course are recorded. From the participants in this study, only Ricky (Pass / Pass B), and John (Pass B / Pass A) fell into this category.

2.2 The Lessons From the Classroom Assignment (LFCA)

The LFCA is one of four written assignments that candidates must complete during the CELTA. As with the other three assignments on the course, it is marked by CELTA tutors and receives either a "Pass", "Pass on Resubmission" or a "Fail on Resubmission grade" [UCLES 2014a, p. 18], which means candidates are given one opportunity to resubmit. Candidates can fail one assignment and still obtain the CELTA, however a fail grade for two assignments results in a fail grade overall for the course. If a candidate fails one assignment, they cannot be considered for the Pass A grade for the course. A stipulated number of written assignments are double-marked and also constitute part of trainees' portfolios, which, along with lesson plans and self-evaluation of taught lessons, are read by an external assessor sent by Cambridge English to moderate the course.

The design of the pro forma for the LFCA are the responsibility of individual tutors and centres but must allow for:

- candidates' identification of their own teaching strengths and development needs
- reflections on their own teaching
- reflections on the implications for their own teaching from the observations of experienced ELT professionals and colleagues on the course

[UCLES 2014a, p. 18]

Research has confirmed the usefulness of reflective writing for developing teacher [e.g. Bruster & Peterson 2013; Mann & Walsh 2013]. Thus, the LFCA may not only foster professional development, but can also be used to document the issues that CELTA candidates can reflect on.

Although the researcher worked as CELTA tutor on all of the courses in this study, choice of LFCA pro forma are determined by the main course tutor, and sometimes the centre. The researcher was only main course tutor on one of the four courses from which the LFCA were taken. Therefore, candidates' written reflection was in response to different prompts. The key similarities and differences between the LFCA pro forma are presented in **Tab.2.2**.

Tab 2.2 Differences in candidates' pro forma

Candidates should...	Dave's LFCA	Ricky & Lily's LFCA[2]	John's LFCA	Miki's LFCA
...make explicit reference to the CELTA criteria	✓	✓	✓	✓
...explicitly comment on effective classroom management[3]	x	✓	x	x

...use direct quotes from peers, TP students & trainers when referring to strengths & weaknesses	x	x	x	✓
...reflect on their strengths & weaknesses	✓	✓	✓	✓
...specifically state how they will continue to develop their teaching skills after the course	✓	✓	✓	✓
...refer to strengths observed in other people's teaching	✓	x	✓	✓
...refer to observations of others' teaching	✓	✓	✓	✓
...provide a rationale for why specific techniques or practices are beneficial	✓	x	✓	✓
...refer to feedback from peers and tutors when considering strengths & weaknesses	✓	✓	✓	✓
...refer to their self-evaluations[4] when considering strengths & weaknesses	✓	x	✓	x
...refer to feedback from TP students when considering strengths & weaknesses	✓	x	x	✓

2.3 Triangulation

Triangulation was achieved by conducting focused interviews with the participants from whom the initial data was gathered [Lincoln & Guba 1985], and then transcribing and coding these data under the categories that emerged from the initial content analysis of the LFCAs. As Cohen et al. make clear, this approach "is a powerful way of demonstrating concurrent validity, particularly in qualitative research" [2005, p. 112]. Not only did questions in the interview act as a reliability check on the interviewee's previous answers [Berg 2001], but viewing the same phenomenon from different standpoints [Bell 2010; Dörnyei 2007] also helped me to provide a thick description of the research.

2.4 Semi-structured Interviews

After a consideration of different kinds of interviews, I opted for a semi-structured design since, although there is a basic script to follow which allows the researcher to effectively cover all of the important themes [Bell 2010], emerging issues could be explored further [Dörnyei 2007]. This format also allowed for rapport to develop between the interviewer

and the interviewee, which is important since I wanted respondents to feel they could answer honestly and openly.

Further steps that were taken to increase the trustworthiness of the data included the use of an interview guide [Dörnyei 2007] and a pilot study [Cohen et al. 2005]. The data obtained from this pilot study did not have to be discarded and were subsequently used "for the final analysis" [Dörnyei 2007, p. 75].

2.5 Data Analysis

Reflection is associated with constructivist and humanist paradigms which emphasise subjective experience and self-realization [Roberts 1998]. Thus, qualitative research methods are more appropriate for investigating such a complex person-centered phenomenon. Qualitative content analysis also analyses data in its original "context of use" [Krippendorf 2003, p. 18]. This sets it apart from many other methods and "allows the researcher to process as data texts that are significant, meaningful, informative, and even representational to others" [ibid. p. 41] thereby capturing more vividly the unique perspectives of individuals. Contextual factors such as the discrepancies between the LFCA pro forma, the reflection assessment criteria, and intended audience of the LFCAs were taken into account when coding. Key literature on teacher education also proved instructive in this process.

3. Findings

The qualitative content analysis of the LFCAs revealed that the issues candidates reflected on could be coded under four major themes, which comprise ten subcategories. The results of this content analysis are shown in **Fig.3**. Each category and subcategory is explained in the APPENDIX with reference to examples from the LFCAs and the interviews. The section below presents the research findings case by case and includes key quotes from the interviews and the LFCAs. Examples are taken from the LFCAs unless otherwise stated.

A. Teacher Learning

A1. Individual Strengths, Learning & Weaknesses

A2. Learning from Others

A3. Difficulties & Challenges on the CELTA

B. General Pedagogic Knowledge (GPK) [Roberts 1998]

B1. Managing Tasks

B2. Planning & Resources

C. Teaching Skills & Teaching Language

C1. Language Practice & Communication

C2. Introducing & Clarifying Language

C3 Content Knowledge

D. The Learner Element [Akbari, Behzadpoor & Dadvand 2010]

D1. Affective Factors
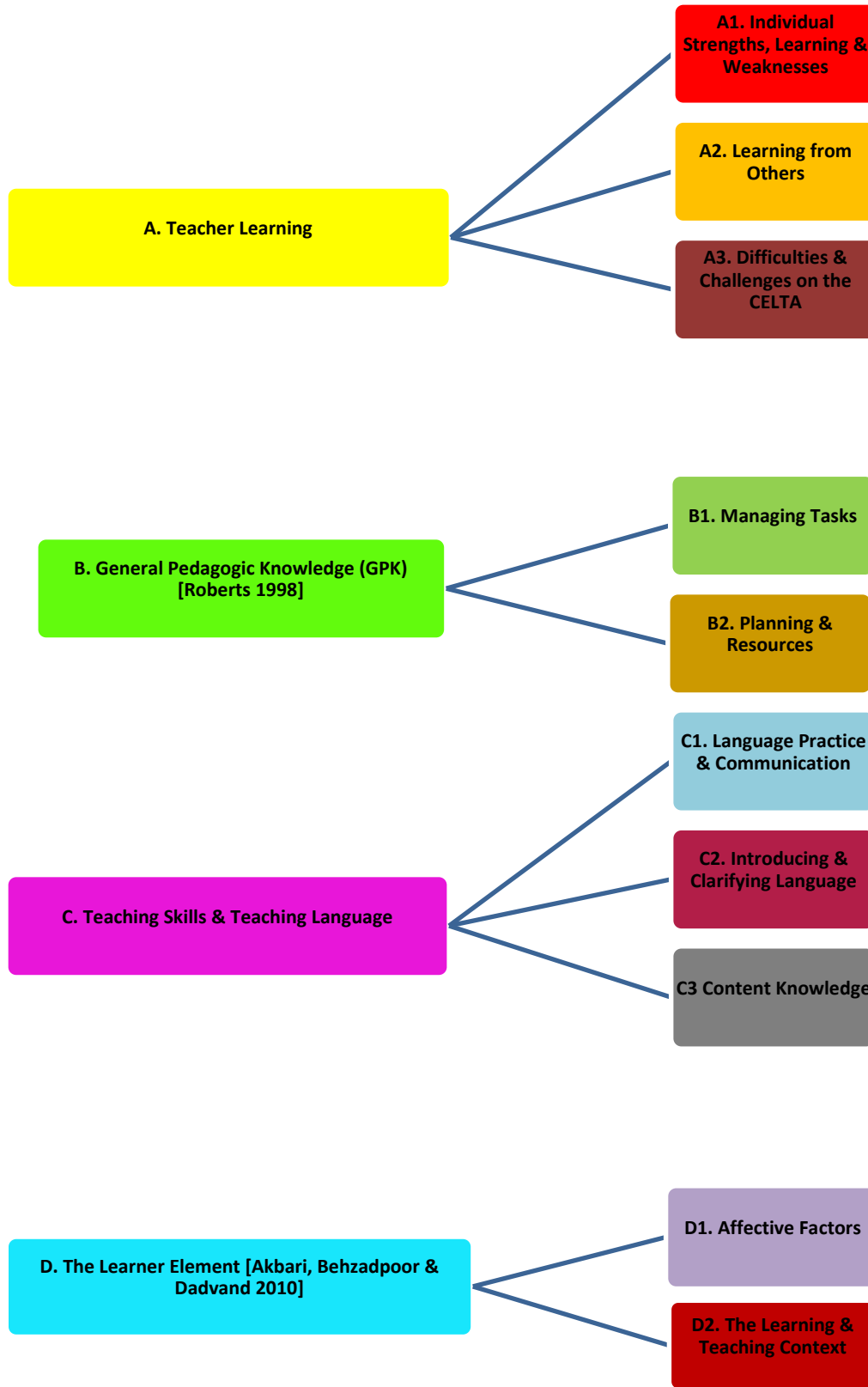
D2. The Learning & Teaching Context

Figure 3: Issues reflected on by intensive CELTA candidates

Lily

Prior to the CELTA, Lily had been working as an English language teacher for three years in Venezuela. For two of these years Lily worked in a state-funded secondary school, and spent the other year as a teacher in private language schools. Despite this experience, the CELTA appears to have had a big impact on her teaching:

> My teaching has changed a lot since the beginning of the CELTA course. First of all, my talking time has decreased; now my classes are much more student-centered. This allows students to have more opportunities to practise the language.

This change is corroborated by comments in the interview regarding how several things on the CELTA were new for her, such as drilling, transitioning between lesson stages and teaching grammar in context.

Although she found many things to be unfamiliar, Lily also wrote that, "I did my CELTA in Venezuela, so I knew the culture and the way students would react depending on the way I taught". This should have made the CELTA easier for her, but Lily admitted in the interview that she struggled a great deal on the course:

> Let's say cause I did it [the CELTA] when my English level wasn't that good. I was like in upper intermediate at that time…I found it really difficult to work with…the level I was teaching because I was working with upper intermediate and the students were like my same level.

The difficulties that Lily faced, however, did not mean that she was unable to reflect, but it appears that this reflection only occurred when she felt comfortable: "I felt quite comfortable…doing reading lessons because I did it several times so…I was able to…reflect on the kind of things I was doing…" [Lily: interview].

At other times, as she admitted to me in the interview, she felt nervous or lacked confidence, partly as a result of her language level, but also because she was implementing unfamiliar techniques:

> I think having students to work in pairs always was quite uncomfortable for me because it's…I wasn't used to it and…it was kind of…it's not the way the whole school system works in Venezuela.

For Lily, then, there appears to have been a conflict between the methods she was learning and her previous teaching experiences in Venezuela.

Besides working in pairs, Lily reflected on other teaching techniques as the following quotes from the LFCAs reveal:

1. Imperatives should be used when giving instructions

2. I will ask students what they have to do every time I set an activity
3. The students appreciate when the teacher monitors them, especially at the elementary level, since they can see the teacher's interest regarding their progress
4. Language should be graded depending on how much vocabulary and how many grammatical structures students know, otherwise getting the message across will be impossible.

Here the techniques in question are giving instructions (quote 1); instruction checking questions (ICQs) (quote 2); monitoring (quote 3); and language grading (adjusting one's language to the level of the class) (quote 4).

Miki

Miki took the CELTA course in Brazil. She was the only CELTA candidate on her course who had no prior ELT experience before starting the CELTA. Previously she had worked as a singer and singing teacher. Perhaps this accounts for why she found the CELTA so intense, as the following quotes reveal:

1. I've been told that it was a very intense course, but I couldn't imagine that it would be so demanding.
2. Actually it was so intense and I was so…erm…scared that I couldn't feel any strengths at all…[Miki: Interview]

Despite this intensity, her interview shows evidence of reflection:

When I studied English in the past…it was different the way that teachers taught…and…I've learned but now the things changed. The way I teach students is more student-centered not teacher-centered so it was kind of confusing for me because I didn't learn that way.

As the quote above demonstrates, her experience as a learner clearly informed her views about what she was learning on the CELTA. As with Lily, Miki also reflected on CELTA teaching techniques:

1. I've never thought about all the criteria and techniques that you are supposed to know as a teacher.
2. After some tasks and mainly after the controlled practice, I find it really important to check if they understood the lesson and also try to clarify doubts.

Criteria are used on the CELTA as part of the assessment of observed lessons. These are quoted in tutors' feedback to candidates, and are also referred to in the tutorials which are carried out during the course. For each criterion candidates receive a grade of "above standard", "to standard", or "not to standard" for their stage two tutorial, and also have to grade themselves on their performance in each criterion. The second quote above refers to controlled practice, which is a typical stage in a CELTA systems lesson when the students

practise the language that has been taught in a restricted context. The checking of understanding typically refers to concept checking questions (CCQs), which are taught on the CELTA as a means of checking the meaning of language items.

John

John was the most experienced participant on his CELTA course. Not only did he have considerable teaching experience, but he was also in the final stages of his MA in English. The most useful aspect of the CELTA course for John was the feedback from tutors. As he explained to me in the interview:

> Up until that time I hadn't ever received any feedback on my work and that particularly helped me to improve my teaching skills because up until then I hadn't been aware of mistakes that I've done before. And that helped me a great deal.

According to John, two such "mistakes" were giving clear instructions, and reducing TTT (teacher talking time). CELTA trainers typically highlight the importance of reducing the TTT to maximize the student talking time (STT), thus fostering a student-centered learning environment. The CELTA course also appears to have motivated John to take a more proactive approach to his teacher education, as he mentions in the LFCA:

> I would like to try team-teaching to learn from my peers and apply what I have learned immediately in class. I believe that I can improve and develop my way of deploying positive feedback more efficiently if I am engaged in the teaching process with my peers. It will allow me to react more actively and adopt their techniques and perspectives.

As with Miki and Lily, John also referred to techniques used on the CELTA, as the following quote demonstrates:

> Another strength is my decisive classroom management. I am able to deliver clear instructions, manage the pace and students efficiently and grade my language appropriately. My ability to set up tasks clearly helps students get engaged in the activities without any delays.

Here again language grading is mentioned, but also lesson pace. If the teacher is moving through the activities too slowly for learners, this can affect student engagement. Interestingly, although John mentions clear instructions as a strength in his LFCA, in the interview he told me that:

> I had difficulty er handling clear instructions at the beginning er up until that time didn't have any idea of giving clear instructions it didn't occur to me that it was an issue and...the CELTA course helped me a great deal with realizing er this this problem and then ...I was managed to address it appropriately. I...left out all the unnecessary babble and focussed on the essential information that the students needed to know and...I also cut down on

teacher talking time and managed to increase student talking time.

Although this contradicts what John wrote in his LFCA, it provides further evidence of learning on the CELTA.

Ricky

As mentioned, Ricky had three years of foreign language teaching experience in Venezuela prior to the CELTA. In addition, Ricky holds a degree in English and Education. The CELTA caused Ricky to reflect upon ths previously acquired knowledge and experience:

> When I took the CELTA I was not aware of certain things I was not doing properly and... basically my tutors erm made me reflect on these things...like yes you have the strengths but you need to work on these areas and…that was like erm...a reflection process I had to go through like really realise like okay stop a second and... doublethink things…it was really really curious after the final teaching practice...erm...my reflection about the first one was like wow that was completely wrong {laughs}. It was like, yeah I came here with an idea of what teaching was...and...well effective teaching or more effective teaching in the after CELTA I think. Like, yeah I was doing things wrong. Or not properly or...not in the best way.

As with Lily, Ricky's teaching seems to have changed a great deal as a result of the CELTA. Indeed, it appears that the CELTA had a major impact on Ricky's beliefs about teaching. This is corroborated by his observation in his LFCA that his teaching had become more student-centered as a result of the CELTA. It is also interesting that Ricky, when reflecting on his reflection at the beginning of the CELTA was able to engage in "meta-reflection":

> I think my reflection was not as deep due to fact that I hadn't had many input sessions at the moment. So... I didn't have any... theories to base my reflection on so...in comparison to the last one in which I had seen all the input sessions already so...you know I really had a base for to...erm...relate my reflection on so I didn't I think I could have done this better because I didn't follow this or...you know I...I really had more information to base my reflection on. [Ricky: interview]

As with the aforementioned participants, Ricky also discusses teaching techniques employed on the CELTA course, such as in the following quotes:

1. The teacher talking time...should be lower than the students talking time.
2. Depending on the level of students and the complexity of the task it is necessary to give an example in open class or demonstrate the exercise.

The second quote again discusses the importance of clear task-setting. Besides ICQs, giving or doing examples of activities (for example, by eliciting the first answer to a question in a controlled practice task) and doing demonstrations (for example, reading a

dialogue with a student to show other students that this is what you want them to do) are other ways of ensuring learners have fully understood a task.

Dave

Before doing the CELTA Dave had had more than 10 years of experience in various teaching roles, particularly with young learners. Six of these years were as an English language teacher. Despite this, he freely admitted, "my weaknesses from the beginning came from not having much in the way of teaching grammar". At the time of the interview, Dave was completing his MA in Applied Linguistics. During the interview he compared what he was learning on the course to what he had learnt on the CELTA. From my interview with Dave, it became clear that he had struggled a great deal on the course although this was only alluded in the LFCA:

> I had never been trained with the idea of never giving the definition of a word to students who did not know it, nor letting them utilize a dictionary.

The significance of this quote only became apparent in the interview when Dave was more vocal about the conflict between his beliefs and those of one of his tutors:

> 1. <name of tutor> didn't allow people to use bilingual dictionaries which I'd never...heard before...erm...so that was...a little bit...and also the eliciting...erm…of new things...was erm...it was kind of a drawn out process there...as I recall...the eliciting process.
> 2. There were some of <name of tutor> it seemed like personal maybe ideas that really were significantly different from what I'd done before and that I didn't really...see erm...it for me personally as a need…even if it's different from what I believe if I can understand the reason for it, I'll do it. But if I don't that for me is read as a critique or whatever on me, then I'll have a hard time doing it or I won't ((?)) so I think that that was kind of a problem there.
> 3. The correcting of people was really something <name of tutor> you two had a very different take...on that... even directly even asking a student a question <name of tutor> significantly would say no you know don't do that it's gonna embarrass erm somebody.

It is understandable that Dave did not mention in his LFCA that the main reason he felt he was struggling was as a result of a perceived conflict with one of this tutors since tutors are responsible for marking assignments.

4. Discussion

4.1 The CELTA as Teacher Training

So is the CELTA a teacher training course or a teacher development course? As the themes and categories from the qualitative content analysis show, CELTA candidates reflect on a

wide range of issues. However, the themes of *General Pedagogic Knowledge* and *Teaching Skills & Teaching Language* in particular reveal a concern with the "acquisition of formulaic moves" which could be said to represent a "toolkit of techniques". These include a focus on the discrete skills which Richards and Farrell [2005] say are indicative of teacher training such as questioning techniques (ICQs and CCQs); feedback techniques; and techniques for setting up and managing tasks such as task-setting, examples of tasks, language grading, lesson pace, and monitoring. These issues seem to reflect a view of teacher education as teacher training rather than teacher development.

In addition, Dave's comments in the interview regarding his conflict with a course tutor reveal evidence of the "overly prescriptive" nature of the course. As he told me in the interview, this conflict arose due to differing ideas about teaching. Because the tutor in question did not provide a rationale for the techniques that Dave was supposed to implement, he had a hard time taking them on board, and appears to have taken the feedback personally. Such conflicts have been reported more extensively by Yuan [2016], who shows that mentors can negatively impact pre-service teachers' identity formation.

Further evidence for the CELTA as a teacher training course is revealed in the following quotes (emphasis added):

> 1. Imperatives *should be* used when giving instructions [Lily].
> 2. I will ask students what they have to do *every time* I set an activity [Lily].
> 3. The teacher talking time...*should be* lower than the students' talking time [Ricky].
> 4. It is necessary to take into consideration that all instructions *must be* in imperative. [Ricky].

As Richards and Farrell have noted, "training involves understanding basic concepts and principles as a prerequisite for applying them to teaching and the ability to demonstrate principles and practices in the classroom". It certainly seems the case on the basis of the quotes above that candidates were more concerned with demonstrating principles and practices rather than reflecting on them. In addition, in these examples, participants' use of the language of obligation indicates that they see certain behaviour and practices as "non-negotiable" [Hobbs 2007a, p. 4]. The second quote is particularly interesting since Lily is asserting here that ICQs be used "every time" she sets an activity regardless of the type of task or learning context. However, it is possible to think of many situations where getting students to parrot an instruction that the teacher has given, aside from being inauthentic, might be patronising or unnecessary. Similarly, always giving instructions using "the command form" as Ricky suggests in quote four takes no account of context or culture either. These findings echo criticisms of the CELTA's lack of context-specificity [Anderson 2016; Ferguson & Donno 2003; Hobbs 2013], and provide further evidence for the CELTA as a teacher training course.

The findings in this section resonate with a considerable body of research in support of the view that in-depth reflection rarely, if ever, occurs on short-term intensive SLTE courses [e.g. Brandt 2006; Stanley & Murray 2013; Watkins 2011]. Nevertheless, it is worth considering that the intended audience are the CELTA tutors who assess candidates'

contributions. As a consequence, candidates might be tempted to write what they think their tutors will approve of thereby engaging in "display" or "strategic" reflection in order to pass the course [Borg 2010; Hobbs 2007a; Watkins 2011]. Indeed, triangulation revealed several inconsistencies between the two data sets. For example, comments by John in the interview contradicted those made in his LFCA regarding his strengths and weaknesses. In addition, for obvious reasons Dave's true feelings regarding the conflict he experienced with one of his course tutors was only hinted at in the LFCA. Similarly, in the case of Lily, one of her biggest weaknesses on the CELTA – her language level – was omitted completely from her LFCA. This omission may have been because Lily did not want to acknowledge openly to her tutors that she thought her level was upper-intermediate (B2 according to the Common European Framework) since a C1 level of English is supposed to be a requirement for acceptance on the course.

4.2 The CELTA as Teacher Development

Despite evidence that the CELTA is a teacher training course, several categories suggest that the CELTA courses in which these candidates participated also showed a concern for teacher development. In particular, *Theme D: The learner element,* contains many subcategories which are not easily quantifiable, as the following quotes reveal (emphasis added):

> 1. Establishing rapport is an essential part for the setting and development of the activities in the classroom *because this is the fuel for students to learn* [Ricky].
> 2. My ability to set up tasks clearly *helps students* get engaged in the activities without any delays [John].
> 3. *The students appreciate when* the teacher monitors them, especially at the elementary level, since they can see the teacher's interest regarding their progress [Lily].

These quotes include references to aspects of teaching/learning such as learner motivation/engagement, rapport and the classroom dynamic. They therefore seem to contradict the claim that CELTA candidates merely acquire "formulaic moves" since these processes are complex, and their observation involves making inferences beyond "what can be observed directly" [Richards & Nunan 1990, p. 2]. Moreover, candidates in the above quotes also provide justifications for particular classroom practices that they employ on the course, which suggests that they are not merely concerned with demonstrating them but also reflect on the rationale behind such practices. Indeed, by personally speculating on reasons for behaviours or practices, these candidates are engaging in "dialogic reflection" [Ward & McCotter 2004, p. 252], which involves the student-teacher taking more account of the perspectives of peers and learners, and maintaining a constant questioning attitude to their practice [ibid.]. However, what is particularly interesting about these findings is not that these teachers provide a rationale for certain teaching practices but that the *learner* is given as justification.

Besides providing the learner as justification for particular techniques, candidates also made some reference to the appropriacy of certain techniques in particular situations (emphasis added):

> 1. *Depending on* the level of students and the complexity of the task it is necessary to give an example in open class or demonstrate the exercise [Ricky].
> 2. Language should be graded *depending on* how much vocabulary and how many grammatical structures students know, otherwise getting the message across will be impossible [Lily].
> *3. After some tasks and mainly after* the controlled practice I find it really important to check if they understood the lesson and also try to clarify doubts [Miki].

By considering techniques in light of contextual factors, not only do these quotes appear to contradict the claim that the techniques learned on the course are "non-negotiable", but they could also be viewed as examples of in-depth reflection [van Manen 1977]. This is at odds with previous research which suggests that meaningful reflection on CELTA courses is not possible [e.g. Borg 2002; Stanley & Murray 2013]. At the same time, though, additional evidence for in-depth reflection on CELTA courses has been documented more recently by Mackenzie [2018], which also contradicts earlier research.

In addition, with the exception of John, who reflects primarily on classroom practices, all participants reflect on their beliefs and practices. This is consistent with a view of teacher education as teacher development. Specifically, Miki and Lily reflect on student-centered teaching and how this differs from their previous experiences. In Lily's case, this approach contrasted with her experiences in the public school system in Venezuela, while Miki reflected on how this was different from what she had learned during her "apprenticeship of observation" [Lortie 1975]. Miki's reflection is particularly interesting since this contradicts Watts and Lawson's assertion that being new to the profession impedes reflection [2009]. Indeed, it appears that as long as there is a basis for reflection – be this a teacher's apprenticeship of observation or actual teaching experience – then reflection on one's teaching beliefs is possible. As for Ricky, he also discussed how his teaching had changed a great deal because of the CELTA, and in the interview was able to engage in "meta-reflection" by reflecting on his reflection during the CELTA. For Dave, it is unclear to what extent his teaching changed as a result of the CELTA, but he does reflect in detail on how his beliefs and practices differ from those of his tutor. In all these cases, candidates had a better understanding of teaching and themselves as teachers as a result of taking the course. This corroborates assertions made in previous studies that a change in the beliefs of teachers on pre-service teaching programmes is possible [e.g. Borg 2009; Yuan & Lee 2014], which in turn suggests that the CELTA goes beyond "teacher training".

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

By reflecting on a "toolkit of classroom skills", and by using the language of obligation to discuss teaching techniques, the LFCAs and interviews with participants in this study show evidence of a micro-approach to teacher education. One striking example of this is the

conflict Dave experienced between his beliefs and practices and those of one of his tutors, which suggests that, at least for the tutor, such techniques are "non-negotiable". At the same time, by considering skills and practices in light of contextual factors, by providing the learner as a justification for such practices, and by discussing changes in their beliefs and practices as a result of the instruction they have received, the CELTA participants provide evidence that the course also focuses on teacher development. As a consequence, there appears to be a tension on the CELTA between behaviouralist-influenced models of teacher education and models that take account of cognitive and collaborative processes. Stated differently, if we view teacher education on a continuum between teacher development and teacher training, the issues reflected on by participants in this study would suggest that the CELTA falls somewhere between these two poles. Thus, it seems inaccurate to describe the CELTA, as some have done [e.g. Anderson 2016; Ferguson & Donno 2003; Hobbs 2007b], as purely a "teacher training" course. However, in light of the small sample size, which is clearly not representative, further research into CELTA in a variety of contexts would be needed to support the conclusions of this study. Indeed, since all but one of the teachers had years of teaching experience when this research was conducted, it remains unclear how far the issues reflected on in this study mirror those reflected on by novice teachers.

Notwithstanding, by providing insights into the issues reflected on by teachers on CELTA courses in different contexts, and by contradicting claims that the CELTA is purely a "teacher-training" course, this study makes a useful contribution to research into reflection and pre-service teacher education courses in general and into ELT preparation courses in particular. Importantly, factors such as the attitude and approach of the tutors and participants impact whether the course is viewed as teacher development or teaching training.

While it is encouraging that CELTA reflects a tension between teacher development and teacher training, more could still be done to encourage a greater focus on the former. For example, although CELTA tutors are limited by the course requirements, there is flexibility in the design of the LFCA pro forma. For example, one LFCA pro forma I have come across required candidates to write from the perspective of a student in their class. Such a prompt could lead trainees to consider the impact of techniques and practices on learners. Alternatively, candidates could write a reflective account to their future self. Reflective tasks such as these require student-teachers to "step back from" and "mull over" [Hatton & Smith 1995 p.42] their own teaching. In addition, pro forma which encourage candidates to reflect on areas such as rapport, the classroom dynamic, and student engagement would also help ensure a greater concern with teacher development on the course. Finally, CELTA tutors can foster development by talking about the appropriacy of teaching techniques with particular classes and in particular contexts, and resisting the urge to be prescriptive. Given the constraints of time and assessment this is no easy task. At the very least however, tutors have a duty to make the "pedagogical reasoning for practice clear, explicit and understandable for student teachers" [Korthagen, Loughran & Russell 2006, p. 1036]. In other words, by having a clear rationale for teaching practice, we encourage candidates to do the same.

On behalf of all authors, the corresponding author states that there is no conflict of interest.

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APPENDIX: EXPLANATION OF THEMES AND CATEGORIES FROM THE QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS

A. Teacher Learning

Robert's definition of process knowledge as "a set of...skills and attitudes that enable the development of the teacher" [1998, p. 105] was instructive in the development of this theme. It comprises the following sub-categories:

A1. Individual Strengths, Learning and Weaknesses

This category includes references candidates make to:

- Their own personal learning and growth
- Strengths and weaknesses
- Reflection and self-appraisal

Examples:
"My teaching has changed a lot since the beginning of the CELTA course" [Lily].
"Yes you have the strengths but you need to work on these areas" [Ricky: interview]

A2. Learning from Others

This category includes any references candidates make to learning from:

- Peers
- Tutors (including in input and feedback sessions)
- Other teachers
- Literature
- Other sources of information (e.g. from YouTube videos, seminars etc.)
- Their learners (either TP students or their own students prior to the course)
- Collaboration with any/all of the above

Examples:
"A peer in my trainee group had planned wonderful activities for her third TP at Intermediate level." [Ricky].
"I shall also try to utilize the example of fellow trainee <name of trainee>" [Dave].
"I've tried to encourage my workmates to introduce peer observations and sometimes I came up against a lack of will to do that" [John: interview]

A3. Difficulties and Challenges on the CELTA

This includes any references the teacher makes to difficulties:

- Learning the techniques that CELTA teaches and any explanations given for these difficulties (e.g. intensity, duration)

- Adapting to the style/method of teaching that is expected of them and explanations given for these difficulties (e.g. contradictions in tutor feedback, prior experience)

Examples:
"I wish I could had (*sic*) had more time to process the huge amount of information that I've acquired" [Miki].
"I've been told that it was a very intense course but I couldn't imagine that it would be so demanding" [Miki: interview].

B. General Pedagogic Knowledge (GPK)

General pedagogic knowledge refers to:

> Classroom management skills: a repertoire of language learning activities appropriate to different learning situations; the use of aids; monitoring and feedback; and formal assessment of learning [Roberts 1998, p. 105].

Following Roberts's definition, this theme also incorporates lesson planning. However, it also comprises the following subcategories:

B1. Managing Tasks

This subcategory covers aspects of classroom management that do not relate to introducing and clarifying language, language practice and communication. It includes any references to:

- Setting up tasks
- Checking understanding
- Interaction patterns before, during and after tasks
- The positioning of the teacher
- Monitoring and pace
- Language grading

Some CELTA terminology relating to managing tasks is explained below:
Instruction check questions (ICQs) are given after an instruction to check understanding of the instruction. The simplest example of this is when the teacher sets up a task and asks students "what do you have to do?" **Doing examples of tasks** and **modelling tasks** with a stronger student are other ways of making tasks clear. **Monitoring** involves ensuring learners are on task, and keeping tabs on learners' progress on tasks. Poor monitoring can affect **pace**. A lesson has a slow pace when the activities and tasks take too long (for example, because the teacher does not know that students have finished), which can lead to boredom. Information gathered while monitoring is used to inform **feedback** on tasks. **Open class feedback** or **whole class feedback** is conducted after an activity. This is when the teacher provides to the whole class the answers to an activity or task either orally or in written form (if there are clear answers); highlights examples of good and bad language used by students during the task, and/or provides feedback on the actual content of the task by getting students to share what they have discussed. **Interaction patterns** relates to

student groupings and teacher-student interaction. Interaction patterns include open class (all students are listening to the teacher or each other); pair-work, individual work, or group work. Finally, **language grading** refers to the language the teacher uses to communicate with learners. The CELTA teaches that this should be largely comprehensible and appropriate to the level, particularly when giving instructions [UCLES, 2014a].

Examples:
"It is important the teacher constantly monitors what students are doing during tasks" [Ricky].
"I also cut down on teacher talking time and managed to increase student talking time" [John: interview].

B2. Planning and Resources

This category covers:

- lesson planning
- task and materials design and adaptation (resources and activities)
- stage and lesson aims
- anticipating problems with language
- anticipating problems with materials, tasks, skills and classroom management
- suggesting solutions for problems
- making assumptions about the learners

Basically this refers to everything teachers do or think about *before* the lesson.

Examples:
"I have to work hard on giving students a reason to listen, talk, and write. I have to think about the purpose of every single task before asking students to do an activity" [Lily].
"I will plan better the stages and their connection throughout the class, so they can connect smoothly" [Ricky].

C. Teaching Skills and Teaching Language

While most lessons integrate both skills and language, CELTA candidates are taught to try and keep these separate in terms of aims and activities. In order to successfully teach language, CELTA trainees must clarify the target language and provide opportunities for language practice [UCLES, 2014a]. As for skills, the CELTA typically teaches that these are developed through tasks which focus on specific sub-skills (e.g. reading for gist) and by adequate preparation, appropriate set up and feedback on such tasks. I have included feedback as an aspect of general pedagogic knowledge (GPK) since it forms a key part of *B1: Managing Tasks*, but it could also be included under *C: Teaching Skills and Teaching Language* since feedback is invariably given on either skills related tasks or language related tasks.

In terms of teacher knowledge, this category is equivalent to Roberts' definition of pedagogic content knowledge (PCK) as:

> The knowledge of the language we need to teach it. It includes our awareness of what aspects of the target language are more or less problematic for our learners; a personal stock of examples and activities by which to communicate awareness of systems; and a sense of what aspects of the TL system to present now and which to leave for later [1998, p. 105].

It also covers content knowledge (CK), defined by Roberts as, "teachers' knowledge of target language (TL) systems, their TL competence and their analytic knowledge" [1998, p. 105]. Indeed, since without *C4: Content Knowledge*, teachers cannot effectively clarify the language they are teaching, this theme also includes this subcategory.

While CK and PCK are treated as different kinds of knowledge by Roberts, both are necessary for the effective teaching of skills and language, and therefore can be said to be aspects of this higher order theme.

C1. Language practice and communication

This includes any reference to:

- productive skills (either written or oral)
- interaction or communication in the target language
- controlled and freer practice of specific structures
- drilling

Drilling is when the teacher says a word, phrase or sentence which learners then practise saying. This is a way of clarifying the pronunciation of a particular structure or item of lexis but is also a form of **controlled practice**. **Controlled** and **freer practice** are terms used to refer to activities which get students practising the language in a restricted (controlled) or less restricted (freer) context. These terms relate to the amount of control the teacher has over the language output.

Examples:
"I'm also getting really confident about my drilling" [Miki].
"I still need to work on the way how to exploit the communicational opportunities in the classroom" [Ricky].

C2. Content Knowledge

This includes any references to the teacher's:

- Knowledge of or competency in the target language
- Knowledge of how the language works (their "language awareness").

The term **language awareness** is used to refer to CELTA candidates' knowledge of and proficiency in the target language. For non-native speakers language proficiency is an important aspect of content knowledge.

Examples:

"My English level wasn't that good. I was like in upper intermediate at the time" [Lily: interview].

"I really need to feel comfortable again with grammar" [Miki].

C3. Introducing and Clarifying Language

This includes any references to:

- The clarification of the target language
- Techniques used to clarify language such as eliciting, error correcting, or different methods for highlighting or encouraging students to notice something about the target language by use of gestures, tone of voice, fingers, the whiteboard etc.
- Concept checking (e.g. CCQs)

Concept checking questions (CCQs) are generally considered the most common method of checking understanding on a CELTA. These are questions to check that students have understood the meaning of the target language. For example, "does a wasp make honey?" would check understanding of "wasp". As mentioned, **drilling** is a technique for clarifying the pronunciation of the target language but it is also a way of getting learners to practice the language. In either case, it falls under the main theme *C: Teaching Skills and Language*. For this reason, **error correction** (which is one aspect of linguistic feedback) although also considered an aspect of classroom management, has also been coded under this theme.

Examples:

"You can take advantage of this moment and take notes of students' errors and clarify them in the error correction stage" [Lily].

"The correcting of people was something <name of tutor> you two had a very different take on" [Dave: interview].

D. The Learner Element

This theme concerns "those items that deal with a teacher's reflecting on his/her students, how they are learning and how learners respond or behave emotionally in their classes" [Akbari et al. 2010, p. 214]. It often entails seeing things from the learner's perspective. This category incorporates Roberts' definition of contextual knowledge as an understanding of the learning and teaching context and culture which informs teaching decisions [1998].

D1. Affective Factors
This category refers to emotional factors that influence the classroom dynamic and the learning process. CELTA courses place an emphasis on building rapport with learners. This can be fostered, for example, by talking and listening to students, maintaining eye contact and smiling. This category covers references to the following:

- learner motivation
- praising learners

- the classroom dynamic
- learner engagement
- establishing and maintaining a good relationship (rapport) with learners
- fostering and maintaining a positive learning environment

Examples:
"Not establishing good rapport may lead into a bad development of the class" [Ricky].
"I have a good rapport with the class due to my enthusiasm and sensitivity to students' needs" [Miki].

D2. The Learning and Teaching Context
This category includes any reference to specific learning and teaching situations and incorporates reference to the following:

- learning styles
- learners' and teachers' culture or learning context
- learners' language learning needs
- the learners' level
- the impact of a specific technique or behaviour on learners

Examples:
"It would benefit them more if I used an open-handed gesture instead of pointing at them directly" [John].
"Students can have a visual-kinaesthetic example of the task they are asked to do" [Ricky].

Comments to the author (if any):
Reviewer #1: - The revised version addressed most suggested revisions. However, minor grammar errors were spotted, e.g., please double check page 5 and page 17 the use of prep "on" vs "in".

Author response: A colleague and myself checked pages 5 and page 17 thoroughly, and could find no issues with the prepositions. However, several minor errors were corrected throughout the manuscript.

- Spell out LFCA to make it clear

Author response: This is spelled out on page 3, but it is highlighted again in the title on page 5 for the sake of clarity.

- I wonder why the author didn't reference any discussions from a much related recent study "Investigating reflection in written assignments on CELTA courses" by Lee Mackenzie Sept. 2018 ELT Journal. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccy037

Author response: Reference has been made on page 16 to the recently published article in the ELT Journal.

Reviewer #2: Comments
The revised version of the manuscript titled "Teacher Development or Teacher Training? Investigating Reflection in Written Reflective Assignments on English Language Teacher Education Courses" has shown much progress since the previous draft. The author's efforts are recognized and appreciated. Although several APA format and punctuation errors are still spotted, the overall quality is apparent elevated. The revisions, especially the additions regarding the subjects' background, do address my previous concerns and strengthen the rigorousness of the research method section. This research is grounded on the improvement to make in CELTA. I would think that this manuscript is ready to be published.
Review decision: Accepted

Author response: A colleague and I have thoroughly proofread the manuscript again, and rectified several issues with punctuation and APA format. We hope these address reviewer 2's concerns.