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The Impact of Normative Assumptions on Research and Development: A Commentary

Abstracts

EN

This commentary article reflects on the various research projects and approaches presented in Section 4 of this book. It adopts a contrastive and analytical lens to examine the diverse perspectives embraced by the researchers, highlighting the challenges and advantages of the methods employed in researching and developing the lessons. Particular attention is given to the impact of normative assumptions on both research and development processes.

DE

Dieser Kommentarartikel reflektiert die verschiedenen Forschungsprojekte und Ansätze, die in Teil 4 des Buches vorgestellt werden. Er verwendet eine kontrastierende analytische Sichtweise, um die verschiedenen von den Forscher:innen eingenommenen Perspektiven zu untersuchen, und hebt die Herausforderungen und die Vorteile der bei der Erforschung und Entwicklung des Unterrichts eingesetzten Methoden hervor. Besondere Aufmerksamkeit wird den Auswirkungen normativer Annahmen auf die Forschungs- und Entwicklungsprozesse gewidmet.

PT

Este artigo de comentário reflecte sobre os vários projectos de investigação e abordagens apresentados na Secção 4 deste livro. Adota uma lente contrastiva e analítica para examinar as diversas perspectivas adoptadas pelos investigadores, destacando os desafios e as vantagens dos métodos utilizados na investigação e desenvolvimento das aulas. É dada especial atenção ao impacto dos pressupostos normativos nos processos de investigação e desenvolvimento.

JA

本コメント論文では、第4部で検討された研究プロジェクトとアプローチを省察する。その際、各論文がどのような視角のもとに議論しているのか、比較対照しながら分析し、授業の研究と開発に用いられるそれぞれの方法の課題と強みを浮きあげる。研究そして開発のプロセスに対する規範的な前提の影響にとくに留意する。

1 Synergies and boundaries between research and development of educational practices: Dialogues, interprofessional collaboration and pedagogical innovations

Chapter 4 of this book brings together three articles that share a common focus on the development of practice through research. As Einsiedler (2010: 60f.) points out, these approaches pertain to two distinct reference systems: school practice and scientific research (see also Hallitzky, Kinoshita, and Spensdrin in this volume). Meseth captures this position by stating that within developmental research, one is effectively a “servant of two masters” (Meseth 2016: 487f.). In the dialogue between theory and practice, or between researchers and practitioners, various assumptions, representations, and expectations emerge regarding what is considered desirable or acceptable in both research and practice. In the context of educational development, normative representations or judgments about what constitutes effective or successful teaching can shape the process of educational research and development. These preferences, beliefs, or value-laden perspectives may influence decisions made by teachers, researchers, or educational institutions, thus affecting lesson design, the selection of teaching methods, the setting of objectives, and even the evaluation of teaching and learning processes. In (qualitative) research on teaching, such normative assumptions may also shape the interpretation of pedagogical practices and influence how future teaching and learning approaches are developed.

The three articles explore different aspects of educational research and practice through case studies and interprofessional collaborations. In the first article, Yoshida and Miyamoto examine Lesson Study, a Japanese approach to qualitative research in education. This method is grounded in collaboration between teachers and researchers, aiming to improve both teaching practices and scientific research. The authors trace the history of this method, focusing on its development at Hiroshima University and illustrating its application through a concrete example. The second article, by Hallitzky, Kinoshita, and Spensdrin, describes an interprofessional dialogue between a teacher and re-

searchers centred on classroom practice. This collaborative process enables the teacher to reflect critically on her practices by engaging with the researchers' analyses, leading to an examination of the implicit norms guiding teaching. The exchange takes place through the analysis of videos and transcripts, providing a foundation for improving teaching practice. Finally, in the third article, Kinyanjui analyses the impact of learner centred pedagogy in Kenya as part of the *Girls' Education Challenge Transition (GEC-T)* project. This pedagogy is viewed as a tool for improving girls' education in a context shaped by cultural norms and socio-economic challenges. The study shows that the application of this approach varies across regions but has a positive impact on girls' enrolment, despite obstacles such as early marriage and poverty.

These texts highlight the importance of collaboration, critical reflection, and adapting teaching methods to cultural and social contexts. They demonstrate how interprofessional exchanges and interactions can enrich both research and teaching by bringing diverse perspectives into dialogue and fostering continuous development. I will now deepen this reflection by examining the expectations and normative orientations underlying the described approaches, as well as their impact on the research and development process.

2 Normative assumptions in research and development: Insights from the three approaches

The expectations and normative orientations of the various methods of developmental research on teaching explored in Section 4 reveal diverse perspectives on the relationship between theory and practice, power dynamics, and the roles of the actors involved. They also raise questions about the significance of professionalisation, reflection, and reflexivity in the contexts of developmental research.

2.1 Navigating between theory and practice: Bridging subjective intentions and analytical methods

In a study conducted by Hallitzky et al. (2021), the authors systematised "Lesson Study" projects in German-speaking countries and examined how these projects relate to the two above-mentioned reference systems. They classified the projects based on their primary focus: some aimed directly at improving lessons and teacher training, while others concentrated on studying classroom interactions or the effects of research-based teaching methods. While Kinyanjui's text can be classified in the first category, the approaches of Hallitzky, Kinoshita, and Spendrin, as well as that of Yoshida and Miyamoto, do not favour one reference system over the other, but seek

to combine the advantages of both. According to Hallitzky, Kinoshita, and Spendrin, in projects that aim to balance these two objectives, two approaches can be distinguished: (a) joint lesson development, where teachers and researchers collaborate directly on lesson planning, and (b) the mutual observation of practice within a dialogue, where interactions are analysed. While the approach described by Yoshida and Miyamoto falls within the tradition of joint lesson development, the approach of Hallitzky, Kinoshita, and Spendrin aligns with the second research posture.

In their article, Hallitzky, Kinoshita, and Spendrin explore the complexity of developmental approaches aimed at establishing a link between school practices and scientific research. It emphasises the value of collaboration in which the contributions of teachers and researchers are interconnected, allowing for a deeper understanding of teaching practices. The methodological approach adopted by the authors shows how a collaborative approach can lead to more comprehensive insights, combining practical observations with rigorous scientific analysis. It fosters joint reflection that enriches both teaching practice and academic research, creating a dynamic dialogue between theory and practice. However, the absence of joint planning and analysis – as is typical in the Lesson Study approach in Japan – could be seen as a limitation if the goal is to develop teaching practices collaboratively. The authors acknowledge the need to change this approach in response to teachers' desire to work more closely with researchers during the planning phase. It is, however, necessary to critically reflect on whether, by becoming involved in the planning process, the 'research' dimension and in-depth analysis, which require considerable time, might be neglected. Alternatively, these could be reserved for a separate development cycle or for other research projects that the authors could pursue in a different framework, independent of the lesson development cycles. This is reflected in the current projects undertaken by the Leipzig team, which aim to collaboratively plan and analyse lessons with teachers (see Schweder & Herfter forthcoming).

Yoshida and Miyamoto describe their Lesson Study approach as a method specific to Japanese schools, where theory and practice are mutually enriching. The metaphor "*Stay between a dictionary and a tape recorder*" illustrates this approach, with theory represented by the "*dictionary*" and practice by the "*tape recorder*". Unlike other qualitative research methods, which maintain a distance between the researcher and the practitioner by limiting themselves to passive observation, Lesson Study actively involves the teacher in the research process. This approach establishes a space for experimentation where researchers and practitioners can collaborate to plan, observe, analyse, and jointly develop classroom practices. Given the active participation of researchers and practitioners throughout the development cycle, and in con-

trast to the forms of dialogue adopted by Hallitzky, Kinoshita, and Spendrin, a methodological question arises: How do the different actors manage the dichotomy between normative expectations and the empirical analysis of observed practices?

The authors argue that qualitative research should investigate both the manifest and latent aspects of a phenomenon, while also involving participants in data analysis. They emphasise that, in Lesson Study, the research considers the subjective intentions and strategies that shape the behaviours being observed. This is based on the understanding that education is intrinsically linked to internal cognitive processes, which emerge from the interaction between teaching and learning. Their critique of *"sociologically disciplined researchers"* who are *"fanatically faithful to the premise that researchers must not contaminate the object to be observed"* (see Yoshida and Miyamoto in this book) highlights a key normative orientation within Lesson Study. At the university level, this method allows students in teacher training to analyse videotaped lessons in collaboration with schools. At Hiroshima University, it serves as a focal point for research, as well as initial and in-service training. However, on examining the results described by the authors, a contradiction emerges between the normative assumptions outlined and the way in which the observed teacher's actions are analysed. As described by the authors, students often analysed the teacher's actions based on their own expectations and presuppositions, focusing more on what the teacher did not do, rather than what they actually achieved. The authors also point out that, some students sought a deeper understanding of the pedagogical approach by requesting follow-up interviews, indicating that the analysis was not limited to actions but was particularly interested in understanding the teacher's intentions in order to better grasp the situation. In contrast, Hallitzky, Kinoshita, and Spendrin's approach reveals a distinct separation between the precise scientific observation and analysis of teaching practices and the teacher's pedagogical intentions. However, as the authors emphasise, it is only through dialogue that a connection between these perspectives emerges. In the analysis, the teacher makes a point of explaining her pedagogical aims and the objectives she had set for herself.

The criticisms raised by Yoshida and Miyamoto highlight an underlying tension in the normative assumptions of the Lesson Study practiced at Hiroshima University. On the one hand, this method emphasises analysing teachers' subjective intentions. On the other hand, it seeks to incorporate the analytical approaches of qualitative reconstructive methods, which aim to examine the actions that are concretely carried out in order to uncover their deeper meaning, independently of the verbalised and verbalisable intentions. For example, objective hermeneutics explores *"latent structures of meaning"* (see Mbaye & Schelle in this volume; Wernet 2021), while the documentary method distin-

guishes between “*communicative and conjunctive knowledge*” (see Martens & Kinoshita in this volume). Although it is possible to gather teachers’ subjective intentions and strategies using techniques such as stimulated recall (e.g., by watching videos or analysing transcripts), establishing a direct link between teachers’ in-the-moment cognitive reflection and their subsequent interpretation remains challenging. Additionally, their involvement in teaching and a tendency toward socially desirable responses for self-protection (cf. Begrich et al. 2017) must be considered. Moreover, it is questionable whether teachers’ intentions alone are sufficient to capture the complexity of classroom interactions. Such a perspective risks an excessive focus on the teacher’s will, neglecting essential aspects such as openness, contingency, tensions, antagonisms, as well as the complexity and multimodality of pedagogical interactions. An overly intention-focused analysis might reduce the study to an exploration of the teacher’s selective subjectivity, excluding learners’ perspectives. Thus, rather than focusing solely on the teacher’s intentions, a deeper analysis of the complexity of classroom interactions within the Lesson Study framework would provide a more comprehensive understanding of teaching and learning.

In contrast to these two approaches, in the Kenyan project, there is a greater separation between theory and practice. These two dimensions are not brought into direct contact but are instead linked through an “semi-structured observation schedule”, with the data analysed using a tool. The primary aim of the project described by Kinyanjui is the professional development of teachers through structured in-service training with clearly defined normative expectations. The project addresses several key areas: lesson preparation and planning, teaching methods for Mathematics and English, integration of information and communication technologies (ICT), gender responsive/sensitive pedagogy, and classroom management. The project’s normative expectations shape the content and methods of teacher training, defining precise objectives based on the theoretical, didactic, and pedagogical understandings of the actors who designed the observation grid. This structured framework ensures a degree of uniformity in training, but can also limit the flexibility needed to adapt teaching practices to the individual needs of learners and the diverse contexts of educational institutions. In terms of research, the normative orientations influence the methods associated with the project, particularly through the observation and evaluation grid, which focuses on specific aspects of teaching. Although this grid establishes clear standards and guidelines, it may pose challenges related to rigid compliance, favouring measurable indicators at the expense of a deeper understanding of teaching practices. The methodological approach described by the author, while useful for guiding public and educational policy (see, for example, Minnamaier et

al. 2023)), does not always capture the complexity of school interactions or the depth of pedagogical practices. For instance, a high rate of use of learner centred pedagogy does not necessarily guarantee effectiveness or a positive impact on learners' engagement (see Kinyanjui in this book). To address these limitations, it is essential – as the author herself states – to incorporate more nuanced theoretical and contextual analyses and to maintain methodological flexibility to ensure a more comprehensive and relevant analysis of pedagogical practices and their effects on learners.

2.2 Power Relationships in context of research and development

In their article, Yoshida and Miyamoto argue that much qualitative research in education does not reveal genuine '*educational ideas*' but instead highlights social structures such as power relations and patterns of social interaction. According to the authors, these aspects are being "*heard for the umpteenth time*" and are "*less related to the educative process*" itself. However, it is questionable whether it is possible to separate the educational process from the way teachers manage power relations and modes of social interaction. In fact, education and teaching always take place in a social context which constitutes an essential and determining framework for the negotiation of social relations and the object of teaching and learning. Social interactions between the teacher, individual learners, and the class are central to the teaching and education process (Petillon 1980). It is within this 'social triangle' that the mediation processes between institutional requirements and personal needs take place. As expectations, norms, structures, and the social climate (see Petillon 1980) continually vary from one teaching and learning situation to another, excluding relationships and modes of interaction from the analysis would oversimplify the observed pedagogical and educational activities.

It is also important to note that other levels of power relations can be observed in the three articles. Rather than focusing solely on power relations within the teaching process (those between the teacher and students), all three texts highlight different power structures that come into play in the approaches described by the authors. While the texts by Yoshida and Miyamoto, as well as the one by Hallitzky, Kinoshita, and Spendrin, reveal interdisciplinary, interprofessional, and methodological power relations, Kinyanjui's article sheds light on more complex and global power relations, touching on pedagogical and social dimensions. Although these relationships can also be detected in the other texts, a broader analysis is required for a comprehensive understanding.

In the research project described by Hallitzky, Kinoshita and Spendrin, teaching and learning are observed from an external perspective, based on scien-

tific standards, while the teacher adopts this external perspective to reflect on their own practice. This approach underscores the potential tensions between the normativities of the two reference systems. Even when observations are presented as particular points of view rather than as facts or recommendations, established social hierarchies and historical misunderstandings between scientific research and school practice can shape perceptions and interactions (see also Hallitzky et al. 2022). The text of Hallitzky, Kinoshita and Spendrin reveals implicit power dynamics between the researchers and the teacher. On the one hand, the researchers position themselves as scientific or empirical observers, allowing them to define the terms of the analysis and determine which aspects of the lesson are relevant for examination. However, this stance of doing scientific research can also be perceived as a form of power, as it grants the researchers control over the interpretation of teaching practices. The researchers' analysis highlights aspects of teaching that the teacher may not have fully recognised. By pointing out tensions and dilemmas, the researchers impose an interpretative framework that can be perceived as a form of scientific authority. Although the teacher acknowledges the value of this analysis, she feels pressured to address aspects of her teaching that she might have previously overlooked. This situation illustrates how the researchers' authority influences the teacher's perception of her practice and the adjustments she might make. In response to the researchers' analysis, the teacher maintains a degree of autonomy by reinterpreting the conclusions in light of her own teaching context and professional goals. She uses the researchers' insights to deepen her reflection and consider changes in her practice, demonstrating a subtle resistance to their authority and an active control over how their conclusions impact her teaching. Finally, the question posed to the teacher – *"What do the interpretations mean to you? Do they have any relevance for you?"* – shows an attempt to re-establish a dialogue with her and recognise her expertise. However, this approach may also be seen as a means of validating the researchers' analysis by seeking the teacher's approval, thereby reinforcing the power dynamics between the researchers and the teacher (see Spendrin, Mbaye & Hallitzky 2023). The text by Hallitzky, Kinoshita, and Spendrin illustrates how, despite their efforts to minimise normative influence, the researchers exercise power by defining the framework of the analysis and inviting the teacher to respond to their interpretations. This dynamic highlights the complex power relationships and challenges involved in reconciling academic research with teaching practice.

Given the complexity of power relations in the joint development and analysis of lessons between researchers and practitioners and considering Yoshida and Miyamoto's questioning of the need to analyse power relations, one might question whether, in the educational situations analysed by Yoshida and

Miyamoto in Lesson Study, power relations and forms of social interaction are so formalised and standardised that they do not require in-depth analysis. However, an examination of the authors' analysis of the teacher's communication style reveals a contradiction between the description of the normative hypotheses in Lesson Study (see "*attributes of Lesson Study*" in the text of Yoshida and Miyamoto) and the process of analysing the observed lesson. Although the authors criticise methods that focus on forms of communication and power relations, their analysis¹ shows that considering forms of communication is essential in analysing school interactions. Therefore, integrating both the professional and social dimensions of teaching is crucial for a nuanced understanding of teaching and learning situations, even when the primary emphasis is on analysing the lesson content.

While the first two approaches examine power relations among learners, teachers, and researchers, Kinyanjui's article uncovers the various power dynamics influencing education in Kenya. Contributions from the *Department for International Development (DfID)* and partner organisations such as *I Choose Life Africa* and *SOS Children's Villages* illustrate how external power shapes local education policies across several African countries. International recommendations, centred on pedagogies and so-called 'quality' standards (see also Tabulawa 2013), impose norms that can be viewed as a form of neo-colonialism, where global educational practices overshadow local contexts. However, traditional cultural structures retain significant power, making it difficult to change established cultural norms despite reform efforts. There are also power relations between practitioners and education authorities. Learner-centred pedagogical prescriptions, along with teacher training, exemplify a top-down process where educational authorities exert influence to reshape classroom practices. This shift aims to promote more participatory and inclusive methods, thereby altering how teachers exercise their authority in the classroom. Such changes can create tensions between traditional methods and new practices imposed from above. Another crucial power relationship is the distribution of resources. Geographic and economic inequalities reveal how disparities in economic power and resources impact access to education. Additionally, there is a power dynamic among practitioners, coordinators, and data collec-

1 Yoshida and Miyamoto's analysis highlights several forms of teacher communication, with a particular focus on physical presence, verbal interaction, and indirect communication via materials. The authors note that the teacher's tendency to remain at the front and lead the conversation created an impression of limited interactivity. Additionally, the teacher's physical orientation and focus on materials rather than on learners reinforced the perception of being "less communicative." However, on closer inspection, the teacher demonstrates indirect communication by engaging with materials, thereby creating an interactional style where teaching aids act as intermediaries between the teacher and learners (see Yoshida and Miyamoto in this volume).

tors. The training and protocols followed by coordinators and data collectors reflect a power structure that directs data collection and analysis. Their roles in evaluating the effectiveness of interventions and implementing prescribed standards grant them significant control over these processes.

From the perspective of power theory, the three articles demonstrate how different forms of power interact in observing, analysing, and developing education within the contexts described. Educational interventions must navigate these complex dynamics to understand and enhance pedagogical practices and research approaches within specific settings. This requires reflection on one's own role and the development of a critical and reflective attitude.

2.3 Reflection, reflexivity and professionalisation in context of research and development

Developing and enhancing reflective competencies is a core objective in observing, analysing, and discussing lessons, both with prospective teachers in teacher education and with in-service teachers in professional development programmes. In examining the debates surrounding professionalism and professionalisation in Germany, several theoretical approaches² emerge (see Helsper 2021). In contrast to rigid normative approaches, structuralist theories of professionalisation, for example, perceive teaching as a complex and ambiguous event. As a result, the practitioner is expected not to blindly follow a prescriptive recipe, but to adapt his or her action to the specific requirements of each situation. This difference between professional practice and the application of scientific knowledge is well explained by Helsper (2016: 107), who argues that the scientific knowledge of professionals differs from the technical knowledge applied by engineers, for example. Whereas engineers can apply scientific knowledge in a direct and standardised way, professional action is more complex. The professional, particularly in teaching, interacts with human beings who have their own will and capacity for interpretation, which makes it impossible to apply knowledge mechanically (Helsper 2016). Teachers are therefore called upon not to apply recipes, but to reflect on their actions. This perspective is widely represented in debates on professionalisation from the structuralist point of view. Ulrich Oevermann (2002), a central figure in this approach, argues that certain professions, such as teaching, cannot be regulated by bureaucracy and from outside. According to Helsper, any attempt

2 Among these are, for example, the "structuro-functional approach", the "perspective of power theory", the "sociological approach to knowledge", the "personality approach", the "expert competence model", the "systems theory perspective", the "symbolic interactionist approach", the "structural theory of the profession", and the "biographical professional perspective" (see Helsper 2021).

of administrative, organisational or economic control could compromise the logic, flexibility and adaptability specific to professional action (see Helsper 2021: 103). Based on the technological deficit theory (see Luhmann & Schorr 1982), there can be no technology sufficiently advanced to prepare teachers for every situation they might face in the classroom. Teachers are therefore expected to think more carefully about their own actions, to understand individual cases, to be attentive to learners' needs, to be able to interpret what they perceive and to develop a "pedagogical tact" (for the theory of the "*pädagogischer Takt*", see Herbart 1802).

In Yoshida and Miyamoto's text, the programmatic presentation of their approach can be interpreted as a counter-position to the professionalisation approaches described above. From the perspective of teacher professionalisation, the Lesson Study proposes, according to Yoshida and Miyamoto, a new approach to professionalism as opposed to the notion of the 'reflective practitioner'. While the authors acknowledge the value of reflective practice, as articulated by Donald Schön (2017), they critique the prevalent expectation for teachers to engage in constant and intensive reflection. They argue that such excessive reflection can lead to a detachment from the 'pedagogical and scientific orders of education'. Instead, the authors advocate for an integrated, collaborative model of reflection within the Lesson Study cycle. In this context, the teacher's role shifts towards aligning their teaching with predefined pedagogical, educational, and scientific guidelines, or with a group consensus, rather than engaging in continuous reflection throughout the teaching process. The authors assert that this normative orientation ensures reflection which is not limited to individual judgement but is enriched by collective insights. Consequently, the teacher is viewed as a practitioner who implements pedagogical decisions collaboratively developed within the Lesson Study cycle, adhering strictly to the established framework. As the authors note: "*Professionals as strong independent self-judging people have no reason to authorise themselves in Lesson Study*". Thus, individual autonomy is subordinated to the collective decisions and recommendations of the group. In contrast to Yoshida and Miyamoto's normative description of Lesson Study, the example used to illustrate their approach shows that the teacher prepared his lesson individually and autonomously. While group reflection is prioritised in the Lesson Study cycle over continuous individual reflection, it is important to note that teaching and learning are both active, individual actions and co-constructive processes (see for example Fauser 2009). However, it remains challenging to distinguish between reflective processes and collective actions from individual actions, whether in Lesson Study cycles or in the teaching and learning process. There is also a noticeable lack of a description of researchers' roles in the reflection process, along with an examination of their positions and actions within the

Lesson Study cycle. This aspect is crucial within the context of developmental research. By revisiting and recontextualising Reichertz's (2014) insights, it can be argued that analysing teaching and learning situations is inherently a social practice that requires positioning oneself within the relevant field. A case analysis is not simply a means of acquiring knowledge; it also represents a social action within a specific area of activity, revealing who we are, who we aspire to be, and what matters to us and to others (Reichertz 2014: 25).

In contrast to the normative orientations in the text of Yoshida and Miyamoto, the approach described by Hallitzky, Kinoshita and Spendrin puts forward the reflection of normativity and a reflective attitude on the part of the various players in teaching practice and research. Reflection and reflexivity are presented in the text by Hallitzky, Kinoshita, and Spendrin as individual actions rooted in a dialogue between the researchers and the teacher. In this context, it can be viewed that the detailed and methodological analysis based on the verbatim from lessons, constitutes an attempt by the authors to engage in reflection at various stages of the deferred (textual) dialogue between researchers and the practitioner. Regarding the teacher's reflexive attitude, the authors noted that she navigates her practices between strict adherence to institutional norms and a more personalised approach focused on the needs of the learners. This process highlights the complexity of normative orientations and their impact on teaching practice. In their descriptive analysis of the lesson, the researchers highlight the tension between the openness of classroom discussion and the subtle direction that the teacher attempts to impose in order to achieve expected learning outcomes. They avoid prescribing methods, focusing instead on how the interaction between teacher and students develops. Although the researchers avoid explicit normative judgments, their analysis highlights underlying values such as student autonomy and independent thinking. The teacher recognises the value of this detailed analysis in understanding the dynamics of her practice. She reflects on how the tensions between her roles of authority and her pedagogical goals influence learner participation and learning. By incorporating the feedback from the researchers, she is seeking to adjust her methods to achieve a better balance between openness and guidance (see Hallitzky et al. 2022).

In Kinyanjui's article, learner-centred pedagogy is described as a universal educational norm, aligned with international standards. However, the absence of feedback to the teachers noted raises the challenge of reflexivity. This lack of feedback calls into question the effectiveness of the form of observation described in the text as a tool for professional development. The development of teaching skills depends on teachers' ability to reflect on their practice and adjust their approach. For lesson observation to be really beneficial for teach-

ers, it must be followed by a constructive discussion offering suggestions for improvement (see the approach of Yoshida and Miyamoto) and/or allow the teacher to reflexively analyse his or her own practice in cooperation with researchers (see the approach of Hallitzky, Kinoshita and Spendrin). Assessment without feedback or support can turn into mere monitoring or inspection. This approach can be perceived as a verification of protocols rather than support for the development of practices. This can lead to mistrust and resistance among teachers, and even to effects such as what the author calls the 'Hawthorne effect'. This represents one of the limitations and challenges associated with this method, which the author has reflexively noted in her text. One can observe her reflexive attitude, recognising the need to improve the approach described. However, unlike the authors of the first two texts, this is not necessarily the approach chosen by her. In fact, it is integrated into a broader pedagogical project with complex power relations (as noted above), where she cannot freely fulfil her role as a researcher.

3 Synthesis: potentials and challenges in the three contexts

The three projects described in Section 4 demonstrate that the development of teaching and lessons is a shared objective among teachers, educational researchers, and other educational and political stakeholders. However, the concrete modalities and normative assumptions of this "development" vary. In the Leipzig project, the research focuses on reciprocal observation between two reference systems while avoiding direct intervention in each other's practice. This dialogue, at the intersection of different professional cultures, allows for cross-reflection without attempting to integrate the two 'fields of practice' (see Spendrin, Mbaye & Hallitzky 2023). In the study presented by Hallitzky, Kinoshita and Spendrin, interaction between researchers and practitioners was shown to be effective in terms of gaining a better understanding of teaching practices. The teacher adjusts her practices based on critical reflection from the researchers' observations, while maintaining a degree of pedagogical autonomy. Researchers, in turn, enrich their understanding through the practical perspectives of teachers, creating a mutually beneficial exchange. It is nonetheless crucial to emphasise that this process does not take place outside, but rather within the power dynamics and social structures. In contrast, the approach adopted by the Hiroshima team transcends these boundaries by considering research and practice as a unified process. Their approach creates a shared space where teachers and researchers observe and analyse classroom practices together, fostering closer collaboration. In the Kenyan context, a major challenge lies in the lack of constructive feedback following classroom observations.

Similar to the reflexive attitude of the researcher, who conducts a form of "commissioned research" in this context and thereby highlights the limitations of the approach she describes, it can be asserted that collaboration among teachers, researchers, education practitioners, and funders must be better coordinated to ensure the achievement of educational objectives while effectively supporting the professionalisation of teachers. Additionally, a more detailed analysis of local contexts and power dynamics is necessary to tailor interventions to cultural and social realities. Similarly, the two other approaches described have both advantages and challenges. In the Leipzig approach, maintaining the boundaries between the two systems may limit the impact on pedagogical practices. In Hiroshima, the close integration of research and pedagogical practices requires more flexible adjustments to account for the normative aspects of different stakeholders, power relations, and the promotion of self-reflexivity (in action and on action).

Considering the overlapping perspectives of the three approaches, it is crucial, within the framework of developmental research, to remain mindful of the necessity to view the teaching and learning process in all its complexity, alongside the absence of technology in educational contexts. A more nuanced approach, paired with an inclusive and reflective research attitude that leverages the strengths of diverse methods and approaches, could lead to a deeper understanding of classroom interactions within the context of developmental approaches. Unlike past dynamics, marked by ideological divides and mutual devaluation between different research approaches, educational research today is undergoing a phase of transition. It acknowledges the legitimacy and usefulness of various approaches, each bringing its own value. This gives mixed-methods approaches particular appeal at present (see Minnamaier et al. 2023). In light of the three approaches presented in this chapter, an integrated approach, combining flexibility and methodological complementarity, seems to be the most promising path for enriching both educational research and pedagogical practices.

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