A Study of the Development and Implementation of the Graduate-Level Teacher Training: In Collaboration with the Prefectural Programme

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0. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to introduce and discuss the development and implementation of the graduate-level teacher training, in collaboration with the prefectural programme. In doing so, this study focuses on the attempt of developing and implementing the graduate-level teacher training programme named the “Educational Issues Training (Implementation of “Learning Cycles for Teachers”),” which was organised by the Hyogo University of Teacher Education (HUTE), in collaboration with the Hyogo Prefectural Institute for Educational Research and In-service Training (HPIERIT) in 2019.

According to Sadayuki Yada, it is crucial for universities and boards of education to collaborate in order to create a structure for supporting “teachers who continue learning,” which was proposed in the report by the Central Council for Education (Japan) in August 2012. Additionally, he indicates that the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT)’s reply as to why teachers need to continue learning is because there is a requirement for advanced teachers in the society. Yada also mentions that when considering MEXT’s definition of the necessary quality and ability of the present day teachers, the teachers of today need to be able to address the tasks related to such as special needs education and an increase of foreign pupils and students in Japan. Furthermore, he argues that there is a request for present day teachers to function as advanced professionals in order to correspond to those tasks by equipping themselves with the necessary knowledge and skills – in other words, there is a demand for teachers to continue learning (Yada, 2015, pp.71-72). Thus, this study suggests that there is a need to develop and implement graduate-level teacher training in Japan, in collaboration with local educational institutions.
1. Explanation of the Training Programme

The above-mentioned training programme focused on teachers who were expected to become middle leaders, in an effort to solve critical issues by improving the quality as “teachers who continue learning” based on graduate-level knowledge. In particular, with the training, we positioned the “learning cycle (experience-based)” for identifying and solving issues based on personal experience as the basis of the “teachers who continue learning.” The model for “reflection” indicated by Fred Korthagen named the ALACT model was referred to as the “learning cycle.” In the ALACT model, there are five processes for reflection; (1) Action, (2) Looking back on the action, (3) Awareness of essential aspects, (4) Creating alternative methods of action, and (5) Trial (cited in Yamabe, 2019, p.16). The vital thing to note about this cycle is how important issues are identified by reviewing one’s actions, leading to new perspectives and ideas and expanding oneself.

The significance of the model is considered to be its introduction of “an awareness of essential aspects” as opposed to simple reflection and countermeasures (cf. Yamabe, 2019, pp.15-17).

With their busy routines, it is not easy for teachers to reflect on their own actions to analyse essential issues and create new teaching methods. It is believed that there is a need for theoretical and collaborative training through lectures and various forms of active learning. We therefore developed a training programme for mid-career teachers to experience the reflection cycle.

The training was conducted in Kobe as a kind of educational training of HPIERIT’s 2019 mid-career teacher training programme. The two major aims of the training were as follows:

(1) Establish a “learning cycles for teachers” that involves uncovering modern educational issues through routine school activities, discovering new ways of thinking and finding solutions to these issues, and repeated implementation of these in the field.

(2) Through the “learning cycles for teachers,” the participants deepen their understanding of modern educational issues (any one of inclusive education, disaster prevention education or education for multicultural coexistence), and implementing new practices at school.

The outline of the training is shown in Table 1(1). There were 13 participants (seven for “inclusive education” and six for “multicultural coexistence”) who were high school teachers; “disaster prevention education” was not offered because fewer participants picked the course. In line with the schedule, the intentions and ideas of the training can be summarised in three points shown below.

(a) Awareness of the Differences between the Two Types of “Reflection” (“Reflection” for Immediate Solutions and “Reflection” for Teachers Continuing Their Learning)

The training programme involved a form of “reflection” that was different from routine “reflection,” where the individual quickly reached a resolution through a “that didn’t work, so I’ll try something else” thought process. The reflection assumed stages two to four of the ALACT model where the individual could review his/her actual practices, and considered future actions
Table 1  Overview of the Training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date and time</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Until the training day</td>
<td>Preliminary assignment</td>
<td>Participants watched a video that provided an overview of the ALACT model and contemporary issues (inclusive education and reasonable accommodation; sustainable society and disaster prevention education; multicultural coexistence in a global age).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First day</td>
<td>General course</td>
<td>(1) Participants engaged in a self-introduction activity. (2) They watched a video and analysed the intentions of the teacher and the pupils using “eight questions”, and exchanged interpretations with each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(30/7/2019)</td>
<td>Individual course</td>
<td>(3) Each participant looked back on his/her experience as a newly appointed teacher. (4) Participants noted inclusive education/multicultural experiences (educational opportunities). (5) Participants questioned themselves in a group with members asking each other “eight questions” in the training session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a.m.</td>
<td>Individual course</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p.m.</td>
<td>Individual course</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second day</td>
<td>Individual course</td>
<td>(1) Lectures and training exercises on inclusive education or multicultural coexistence (including social background, global trends, and historical transitions) were held, with participants encouraged to think about future practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(20/8/2019)</td>
<td>Individual course</td>
<td>Continuing the lectures and training exercises, (2) participants considered the future of them 10 years ahead, and considered the inclusive/multicultural education through macro-level reflection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a.m.</td>
<td>Individual course</td>
<td>(1) Participants wrote a report on the issues that should be addressed at school and recalled what they had learnt over the previous two-and-a-half days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p.m.</td>
<td>General course</td>
<td>(2) An explanation regarding the structure of the training was provided. (3) A workshop on realistic approaches was conducted. (4) Individual workshops were held allowing participants to consider how to engage in group reflection with their colleagues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third day</td>
<td>Individual course</td>
<td>(1) Participants engaged in a self-introduction activity. (2) They watched a video and analysed the intentions of the teacher and the pupils using “eight questions”, and exchanged interpretations with each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(21/8/2019)</td>
<td>General course</td>
<td>(3) Each participant looked back on his/her experience as a newly appointed teacher. (4) Participants noted inclusive education/multicultural experiences (educational opportunities). (5) Participants questioned themselves in a group with members asking each other “eight questions” in the training session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a.m.</td>
<td>Individual course</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p.m.</td>
<td>Individual course</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on new interpretations of these practices. In addition, the intention here was not simply to impart knowledge regarding reflection to participants but rather to provide them with a sense of “creating knowledge from their daily experiences.” Furthermore, the emphasis was on calling into question “assumptions” cultivated over 10 years until the individual becomes a mid-career teacher in an effort to re-discover the teacher’s own (core) beliefs.

We devised the following three points as the main measures for the reflection: (1) On the first day of training, we indicated Korthagen’s “eight questions” reflection method that delved into experiences. (2) At p.m. the same day, using these “eight questions,” the participants reviewed each other’s experiences. (3) To help the participants learn about the creation of knowledge based on their experiences, we explained the structure of the three-day training period and the framework of reflection at p.m. on the third day without revealing anything about reflection on the first day.

(b) Panoramic Reflection (Reflection based on Social, Global and Historical Perspectives)
The training programme aimed to create continuous learning cycle through reflection on contemporary educational issues. We therefore aimed to cultivate a perspective that provided a panoramic view (meta-cognition) by alternating between micro- and macro-level reflection, daily practice perspectives, and wide temporal and spatial perspectives. Moreover, the training was developed with the aim of re-examining the perspective of inclusive education/multicultural coexistence itself, rather than immediately seeking a solution.

As a measure of the reflection, we devised five major points: (1) We took up inclusive education/multicultural coexistence as a contemporary educational issue that could be considered based on social background, global perspective, and historical background; (2) On the second day, rather than solutions, we tackled global trends and the historical background consisting of graduate-level content where the participants could gain panoramic self-views; (3) At p.m. on the second day, the participants reflected on society 10 years ahead based on global trends/historical backgrounds; (4) Based on lectures in each area, at a.m. of the third day, the participants reflected on their practices, incorporating activities that envisioned the issues that should be addressed at school and how these might be solved. Moreover, during the training; (5) Instructors in charge of the various lectures given on the first and third days attempted to link the general course to each course.

(c) Continuous Reflection (Continuing Individual/Collective Reflection)

The training programme was aimed at mid-career teachers, as part of efforts to develop middle leaders. Thus, we established an individual reflection cycle and envisioned a training method so that participants could learn the importance of reflection. Moreover, through the training, we aimed to not only reflect on past actions, but to also allowed participants to utilise methods involving future “experience-based learning.” Therefore, the following two points were devised: (1) Performing work on how to best continue reflection on the third day and (2) Creating opportunities for group and overall learning exchanges and increased reflection activities with others.

2. Analysis Results
(1) Survey Overview and Analysis Viewpoint

Before and after the programme, it was planned to evaluate the characteristics of the programme by attempting to conduct both qualitative and quantitative research. Specifically, in addition to questionnaires that contained queries related to the training programme and the qualifications of participants which were administered in the beginning of the first day of the training started (hereafter called “pre-training questionnaire”) and in the end of the third day of the training ended (hereafter called “post-training questionnaire”), semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants. Moreover, the instructor survey was conducted after the completion of the entire training programme (third day) through a group interview (unstructured interview method) to
review the overall training.

As mentioned earlier, there were 13 participants, of which 12 agreed to take part in each questionnaire, with eight participating in the interview as well. In addition, the group interview of instructors covered three of them who lectured in the training programme as respondents, with four others who were involved in the development and implementation of the programme, not lecturing but participating as researchers. We should note that, in this paper, analysis results of the interviews of the eight participants and the group interview of the three instructors are analysed based on transcripts of recorded data(3). The data obtained through the survey will be analysed in accordance with the three intentions of the training programme described above. It is worth noting that, in this paper, amongst these narratives, we conduct analysis and discussions focusing on characteristic narratives obtained from instructors and participants related to those viewpoints.

(2) **Instructors’ Perceptions of the Training Programme**
(a) **Awareness of the Differences between the Two Types of “Reflection”**

Regarding the work of reflection, which was at the core of the training programme, the instructors reported during the introduction on the first day that participants had difficulties with the subject matter, but by the third day, it was sort of apparent that they had somehow gained a better understanding. For example, Instructor A said the following when sharing impressions after the completion of the training programme:

“In short, because the subject of reflection remains a mystery, on the first day, ah, well, [the participants] were not sure what they were supposed to be learning, and because this feeling didn’t go away, ah, well, there seemed to be a certain anxiety. I think [participants] first came to understand the meaning on the third day.” (Instructor A).

Given this narrative, despite the fact that it seems that the concept of reflection was not well communicated on the first day, if you look at the entire three days, we could see that the instructors became aware that this had been communicated effectively.

Moreover, while Instructor C revealed that the participants struggled to work on the tasks about their reflection on the second day, this proved to be a sign that usually participants were not consciously engaged in reflection, and thus indicated that undertaking the training programme resulted in an increased awareness of reflection. Next, let us look at what Instructor C had to say while sharing his/her impressions after completing the training programme.

“In the afternoon on the second day, when I had participants think 10 years ahead by reflecting 10 years back into the past, [Omitted] I thought it was a little difficult for the participants at the beginning. However, after listening to [the name of one of the instructors]’s final reflection today, [Omitted] I think it was good that everyone was aware of whether they were able to reflect or not, or, conversely, whether it was meaningful that they could not..."
immediately recall things that happened some 10 years ago.” (Instructor C)

Based on this instructor’s perception, the fact that reflection, which was addressed on a trial basis in the training programme, is an activity generally unfamiliar to teachers, and can be considered as having a certain significance when taken up as a teacher training programme.

(b) Panoramic Reflection

When discussing the topic with regard to the significance of conducting the training programme combining general course with individual courses, for example, Instructor B said, “Because, well, I don’t think there’s an opportunity to think deeply about inclusiveness nor this multicultural coexistence in the days that remain, when I look at this particular inclusive team, well, they recall, look back and write down which they had never really thought about before” (Instructor B). Instructor B continued with the theme that there is no real opportunity to consider this matter seriously, indicating a perception that while “there may have been some difficulties,” participants were probably more engaged due to this being a “non-mainstream topic [Omitted] that one did not usually think about” (Instructor B). In light of this, it can be indicated that, similar to the reflection that is mentioned above, the two topics of contemporary educational issues covered in the training programme were meaningful in the sense that they provided opportunities for participants, who usually do not have a chance for deep reflection, to provide some careful thought to the topic. Similarly, Instructor C mentioned being aware of the fact that participants were not usually conscious of this by broaching the topic of modern educational issues and the possibility that they had been given an opportunity to recognise what they did not fully understand.

Based on these Instructor B’s and C’s opinions, it can be assumed that the topics of inclusive education/multicultural coexistence as contemporary educational issues may encourage participants to become aware of issues that they do not usually pay attention to, and, in the process of creating this awareness, it is possible that they gain a panoramic view (metacognition) of their perceptions.

(c) Continuous Reflection

By organising the characteristic narratives of the instructors from the viewpoint of continuation of reflection, the following interactions are presented. On the topic of the significance of the training programme combining reflection and modern educational issues, the following is an information exchange on the diversity of participants’ main subjects (subject backgrounds).

Instructor C Well … Subject backgrounds [of the participants] were certainly diverse.
[Omitted]

Instructor C Such people do not usually meet in training sessions.

Instructor B That’s certainly true.

As shown here, with all participants focusing on modern educational issues in the training programme, it can be pointed out that the instructors recognised that it was meaningful in that
teachers with different subject backgrounds could avail training opportunities. As a result, it can be inferred that participants will be aware of the importance of having diverse perspectives. Also, if we delve into this deeper, this can be seen as possibly leading to learning the benefits of reflecting with colleagues, in addition to individual reflection.

(3) Participants’ Perceptions of the Training Programme

Next, we analyse participants’ perceptions of the training programme. Let’s begin by looking at the basic attributes of participants prior to the analysis. Based on responses to the pre-training questionnaire, the following points are noteworthy. First, participants who had a relatively strong desire to learn are considered based on the number of participants who have acquired a master’s degree (degree; three Bachelors, seven Masters, no Master of Education (professional), two did not respond) and the number of trainings that they have voluntarily participated in (the number of training sessions that they participated voluntarily in the last ten years; one participated in no such sessions, four participated in one to four sessions, three participated in five to 10 sessions, four did not respond). Second, participants included teachers with diverse subject backgrounds (major subject areas; four Japanese languages, five mathematics, two sciences, one English).

(a) Awareness of the Differences between the Two Types of “Reflection”

The following narratives from the participants speak to the fact that, in the design of the training programme, there were many exercise-type activities in which the participants took the lead. The following narrative was obtained as a result of asking for opinions on the training programme.

“[As with the paper task from a.m. of the third day.] I thought it was good that it was summarised in [participants] own words. As with the [Omitted] results, other training courses provide little room in which to take notes.” (Participant No.3)

Similarly, looking at a response where one participant was asked to share his/her opinions on the fact that the training programme was held for three days, he/she had the following to say: “In the lecture part, I also learned a lot, got to practice and, also listened to others’ opinions. Yes. [Omitted] I think it was good” (Participant No.6). Given these responses, we can see that when it came to teacher training, participants seemed to desire to some extent an exercise format. In this respect, the training programme can be regarded to have been in line with participant expectations.

Meanwhile, when asked about problems, etc. with the training programme as a whole, some participants presented challenges such as finding enough time for activities. This sentiment can be summed up by the following comment: “For improvements, what I thought was pity was the fact that this morning [third day] during the summary, there was not enough time for everyone to share his/her thoughts” (Participant No.11). From this comment, we can see that, rather than individual work, we need to establish more time for participants to share their opinions during the exercises.

So, what were the participants’ perceptions of their learning experiences during the training
programme? As mentioned earlier, in the training programme, the details of reflection were not clarified at the beginning on the first day, but, rather, the overall picture of the training programme and the framework of reflection were finally unveiled at p.m. on the third day. However, when asked what could be improved, etc., one participant admitted to a certain anxiety about goals not being specified on the first day, as indicated by the comment: “I was not sure what was the purpose nor the flowchart of the three days [of the training programme].” (Participant No.3).

Conversely, it can be indicated that there were also aspects in which it was recognised that some participants gained an understanding of the purpose of the training programme through the entire session. For example, when one participant was asked what he/she learned in the training programme, the following comment was given after mentioning that he/she usually looked back at his/her own lessons by taking notes, etc.:

“[Like the task of looking back over 10 years] I’ve surely not been looking back to long ago. Thinking as much, I thought [by attempting to look back] I might uncover some problem areas. [Omitted] I usually think of how to deal with the situation in front of me.” (Participant No.10)

Following this admission, the participant said, “it was good to know, well, about kind of new methods” through the training programme. Given all of these, in other words, there is a possibility that some participants were aware that the reflection technique taken up on this occasion was different from the simple task of looking back that they had engaged in, during their regular classes.

Reinforcing such narratives, for example, in the post-training questionnaire, one can cite respondent answers to the question: “Did you understand the training content of the ‘Learning Summary and Construction of the ‘Learning Cycles for Teachers’’?” where four selections were available: “I understood everything,” “I understood almost everything,” “I didn’t understand much,” and “I didn’t understand.” All 12 participants responded that they understood the training content (one “understood everything”, while the other 11 “understood almost everything”). Based on this, while not revealing the aim of the training programme in detail on the first day may have helped alleviate participant anxiety, it can be interpreted that such anxiety may have dissipated during the three-day training programme – the aim of the training may have become apparent to participants.

Meanwhile, another participant’s comment indicates that difficulties experienced during the training programme may have fostered a new awareness. The following narrative was obtained in an exchange over a question about what impression, etc. the training programme had left.

“When it comes to my non-consciousness, well, I thought it was very difficult to look back on, or verbalise it. [Omitted] But, I understood that if I don’t do it, [Omitted] I wouldn’t make any progress.” (Participant No.6)

From this comment, we can see that, through uncommon tasks as introduced by the training programme, the participant could gain a sense of awareness. Also, with the tasks completed in the
programme, it is clear that becoming conscious of something that one was not previously aware of, may have resulted in the creation of an opportunity for the participants to understand reflection.

(b) Panoramic Reflection

As mentioned above, one contrivance used in the individual courses of the training programme was dealing with historical backgrounds, etc., rather than solutions, in an attempt to transform this into a graduate-level training. As symbolised by the following narrative, given the circumstances, we can see that the subject matter covered in the individual courses was received positively from the viewpoint that participants could satisfy their intellectual needs. For instance, the following comment was gained when hearing a participant’s opinions about improvements of the contents.

“It [the individual course] was fantastic in terms of the opportunity it presented. [Omitted] I really didn’t have much interest in, or, rather I was not familiar with the field of multicultural coexistence at all. [Omitted] It [the individual course] provided me with a great opportunity to think about various matters.” (Participant No.10)

It is evident from this narrative that, with the training programme, some participants were capable of considering modern educational issues that they usually would not have the opportunity to think about profoundly, and that this may have some significance from the viewpoint of improving the participants’ willingness to learn.

Meanwhile, from the comment below, we can see that it is possible that the contents covered in the training programme’s individual courses were at the graduate-level, and was based on the historical background and theory. It also had a certain significance when it came to providing participants with new learning possibilities. The following narrative was obtained when we asked a participant what he/she perceived his/her learning through the individual course.

“We looked back on history, well, [the instructor] said it was important to incorporate [Omitted] applied behaviour analysis into inclusive education. [Omitted] Learning about the theoretical parts, [Omitted] I came to understand that I could figure out the causes.” (Participant No.6)

It is also evident that such new learning methods may vary with regard to quality and quantity depending on how knowledgeable each participant is. This can be pointed out by the case where we asked one participant the improvements, etc. of the overall training programme. The participant answered: “There was just so much. I think for me, too much, as least at times. [Omitted] Yesterday [the second day] when I got home, my head was crammed with information, and I just couldn’t put it all together. [Omitted] It was actually a little too much” (Participant No.9). As can be seen from this, for some participants, the amount of works covered in the training programme was excessive.

However, when we analysed the results of the post-training questionnaire, it became apparent that the participants, on the whole, by no means failed to understand the training as presented in the
individual courses. Specifically, when asked: “Did you understand the training content of the individual courses (inclusive education and reasonable accommodation/sustainable society and disaster prevention education/multicultural coexistence in a global age)?” with four choices: “I understood everything,” “I understood almost everything,” “I didn’t understand much,” and “I didn’t understand.” All 12 participants replied that they understood the training content (two “understood everything”, while the remaining 10 “understood almost everything”).

Analysing this result along with the previous participant’s narrative, even if it was difficult for some participants to understand all training subject matter as presented in the individual courses, it can be inferred that, upon completion of the entire training programme, enough learning had taken place to provide for an understanding of the content.

Outlined above are some aspects of the learning that the participants engaged in during the individual courses. From the testimonials of the participants, however, we discovered that there was an instance where a participant understood not only the content of the individual courses, but also the relationship between the general and the individual courses. Following is what one participant said when asked about the improvements, etc. of the training programme.

“Well, one thing, in the guideline or rather the paper we received at the beginning. I think it presented the theme as considering multicultural coexistence through the ‘learning cycle for teachers’; however, it was actually the opposite, wasn’t it? It was considering the ‘learning cycle for teachers’ through lessons on multicultural coexistence, wasn’t it?” (Participant No.10)

Given this comment, it can be surmised that the participant recognised that both the general and individual courses were connected from the perspective of reflection. Therefore, we can assume that some participants were able to recognise the association between the general and individual courses as intended by the training programme.

(c) Continued Reflection

It is believed that building relationships is important when reflecting with others. The training programme was conducted in a small group, so it can be inferred that it was easier to build relationships between participants. In fact, the small class size may have resulted in participants recognising that they could express their opinions and participate in activities with ease. Following is what a participant had to say when asked of the improvements, etc. of the training programme.

“Well, with such a small number of people, but, the atmosphere was harmonious, so nobody hesitated to ask questions and share their opinions with others. [Omitted] Well, it was really nice to be able to spend three days with this small group. [Omitted] We had time to go way beyond scratching the surface, and really delved deep into things.” (Participant No.10)

Considering the statement presented by this particular participant, the small class sizes were viewed as a positive, providing the participants with ample discussion time.
Furthermore, another participant mentioned that while the limited number of participants in the training programme allowed for more substantial learning, a larger number of participants might allow for even more substantive learning. For example, when asked about the improvements, etc. of the training programme, one answered: “Although even with six teachers [participants], I was able to understand a lot through their opinions, I feel that it would have been better if there were a few more participants” (Participant No.9). Taking into account the various backgrounds of the participants, we can surmise from this narrative that the opportunity to hear a variety of opinions may result in diverse discussions, despite the fewer number of people, and can be interpreted as being salient to the substantial learning that the participants experienced.

Moreover, it can be inferred from the following narrative that the learning engaged in the training programme may be put to practice by the participants. Following is what a participant said when asked if he/she had learned anything new regarding education, etc. during the training programme.

“Today, I learned from discussion about the ’Doubting Assumptions’ and how others think. [Omitted] Since I usually think of something through my perspectives, [Omitted] I’d like to improve that and [Omitted] incorporate the perspectives of others more.” (Participant No.11)

We can interpret this as the participant being aware of the importance of thinking outside the box and incorporating various perspectives, and being willing to engage in continuous reflection.

3. Discussion

The purpose of this paper is to evaluate the graduate-level teacher training programme jointly developed and implemented by HUTE and HPIERIT based on instructor and participant perceptions. In conclusion, we discuss the analysis results of this paper, while focusing on common points of perceptions between the instructors and the participants, and then, based on the discussions, we present three hypotheses regarding the graduate-level teacher training programme.

With the training programme, the participants were not presented with the significance of the overall training on the first day; instead, it was emphasised that they would not understand it until the third day, when an explanation would be provided. Under these circumstances, with the analysis results of this paper mentioned above, while both sides, the instructors and the participants, recognised that the first half of the training programme was difficult for the participants, by the end of the third day, these difficulties had been resolved, with the participants finally able to comprehend the purpose of the training programme. Based on these results, it is possible to present the idea that “by establishing learning content that participants felt that they ‘do not understand’, it is possible for them to cultivate an attitude befitting teachers who continue learning” as Hypothesis (1). Moving forward, with regard to Hypothesis (1), it will be necessary to confirm the establishment of learning content that participants do not initially understand along with
a time period (although not set in stone, this was generally from the first to the second or third day) from the perspective of whether in the end reflection can be enhanced or not. In other words, it is necessary to further analyse and consider the learning content and structural design when developing and implementing a training programme based on reflection.

In the training programme, we have taken up modern educational issues as the subject for learning about engaging in reflection as teachers who continue learning. As a part of this, the analysis results of this paper mentioned above indicated a common perception on the sides of both the instructors and the participants that taking up contemporary educational issues, which participants usually did not have the opportunity to think deeply about, triggered reflection. Based on these results, it is possible to present, as Hypothesis (2), the idea that “by tackling educational issues that one does not usually have an opportunity to think deeply about, it is possible to promote an understanding of the need for engaging in reflection as teachers who continue learning.” Moving forward, with regard to Hypothesis (2), it can be argued that it is due to the very fact that there was a moderate level of understanding with regard to the modern educational issues covered in the training programme – i.e. this is an area where there is still room for more learning – that there was a need to engage in analysis and consideration from the perspective of whether or not the participants had come to an understanding of the need for engaging in reflection as teachers who continue learning. At such times, it can be argued that, for example, in order for teachers in such areas as school subject to receive training, analysis and consideration of differences addressing issues in more familiar fields are critical. This led to an examination of whether it was appropriate to reflect on the ALACT model, which is purportedly mainly utilised in class reflection.

Furthermore, in the training programme, the participants from various subject backgrounds exchanged their opinions in an exercise format. As part of this, the analysis results mentioned above indicated a common perception on the sides of both the instructors and the participants that in the training, listening to the opinions of various people was important. Based on the above, it is possible to present, as Hypothesis (3), the idea that “by providing opportunities for reflection among participants with diverse backgrounds, it is possible to promote an understanding of the importance of listening to the opinions of various people.” Moving forward, with regard to Hypothesis (3), it can be argued that it is critical that analysis and consideration from the same viewpoint be applied to training related to school subjects for people with the same subject background. At such times, the appropriate number of training participants needs to be verified.

4. Research Limitations and Future Challenges

In this paper, we first analysed and considered the perceptions of the instructors and the participants regarding the training programme, mainly focusing on qualitative research methods.
(interviews) to explore issues (hypotheses) related to the development and implementation of graduate-level teacher training programmes. We did not, however, address changes in the qualities of the participants; i.e., we did not verify the “effects” of the training programme. In the future, it will be necessary to work on further analysis and consideration of the learning characteristics of mid-career teachers based on questionnaire data not covered in this paper.

Next, we attempted to develop and implement the graduate-level teacher training programme aimed at upgrading teacher training. However, moving forward, it will be necessary to analyse and consider how such a training is linked to graduate school learning. Even as discussions on recognition of teacher training programmes as credits at graduate schools have just started in Japan, the issues (hypotheses) taken up by this paper can be considered as references for proceeding with these types of discussions. In light of this, graduate school recognition of graduate-level teacher training programmes as credits will need to be examined and discussed in more detail in the future.

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Notes

(1) In developing and implementing the training programme, we mainly referred to REFLECT ed. (2019) and Takeda et al. (2016).

(2) The questions were created by referring to Korthagen’s “eight questions” (cf. Yamabe, 2019, p.17). The “eight questions” were “1. What did the teacher do?” “2. What did the teacher think?” “3. How did the teacher feel?” “4. What did the teacher want to do?” “5. What did the opponent (pupil) do?” “6. What did the opponent (pupil) think?” “7. How did the opponent (pupil) feel?” “8. What did the opponents (pupils) want to do?”

(3) The added texts by authors when quoting the narratives of the interviewees appear in parentheses (e.g. [Omitted]). In this paper, the names of survey respondents have been replaced with alphabetic or alphanumeric characters (e.g. Instructor A).
Abstract
The purpose of this study is to introduce and discuss the development and implementation of the graduate-level teacher training, in collaboration with the prefectural programme. In doing so, this study focuses on the attempt of developing and implementing the graduate-level teacher training programme named “Educational Issues Training (Implementation of “Learning Cycles for Teachers”),” which was organised by the Hyogo University of Teacher Education, in collaboration with the Hyogo Prefectural Institute for Educational Research and In-service Training in 2019. Specifically, this study explains the characteristics of the programme, and discusses the evaluation of it by analysing the interviews with the instructors and the participants, and the questionnaires with the participants. In the discussions, this study addresses the following results; a) the instructors and the participants both believed that it was difficult to understand the concept of the reflection based on the ALACT model on the first day but it was possible on the last day of the programme, b) the instructors and the participants both believed that it was meaningful to use the topics of inclusive education and multicultural coexistence for learning about the reflection, and c) the programme may have been effective in offering opportunities for participants to reflect on their experiences with teachers with diverse backgrounds. In conclusion, this study indicates three hypotheses related to the above three results and points out that it will be necessary to analyse and consider these hypotheses from various points of view in the future study.