

# Virtual Gaming Simulation (VGS) in the Teacher Training Program

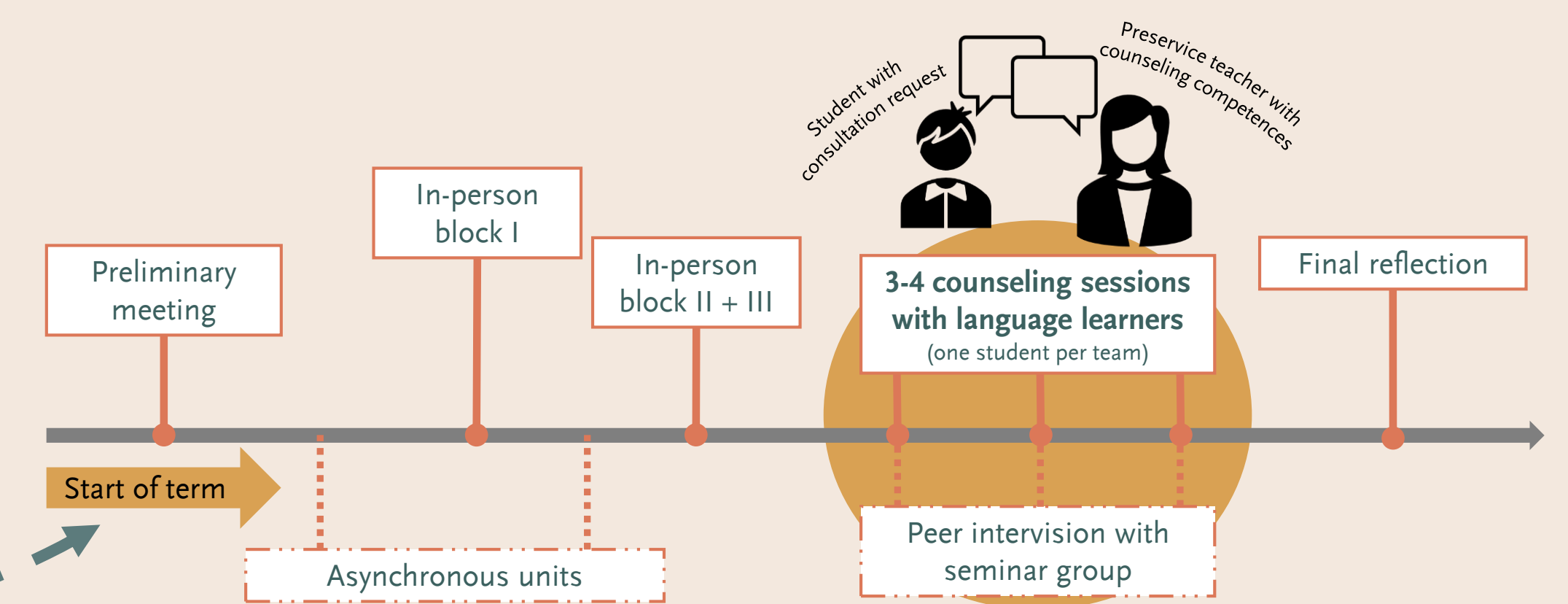
## Fostering Counseling Competences in L2 Teachers

Carmen Herrmann

Kompetenzzentrum Beratung im schulischen Kontext

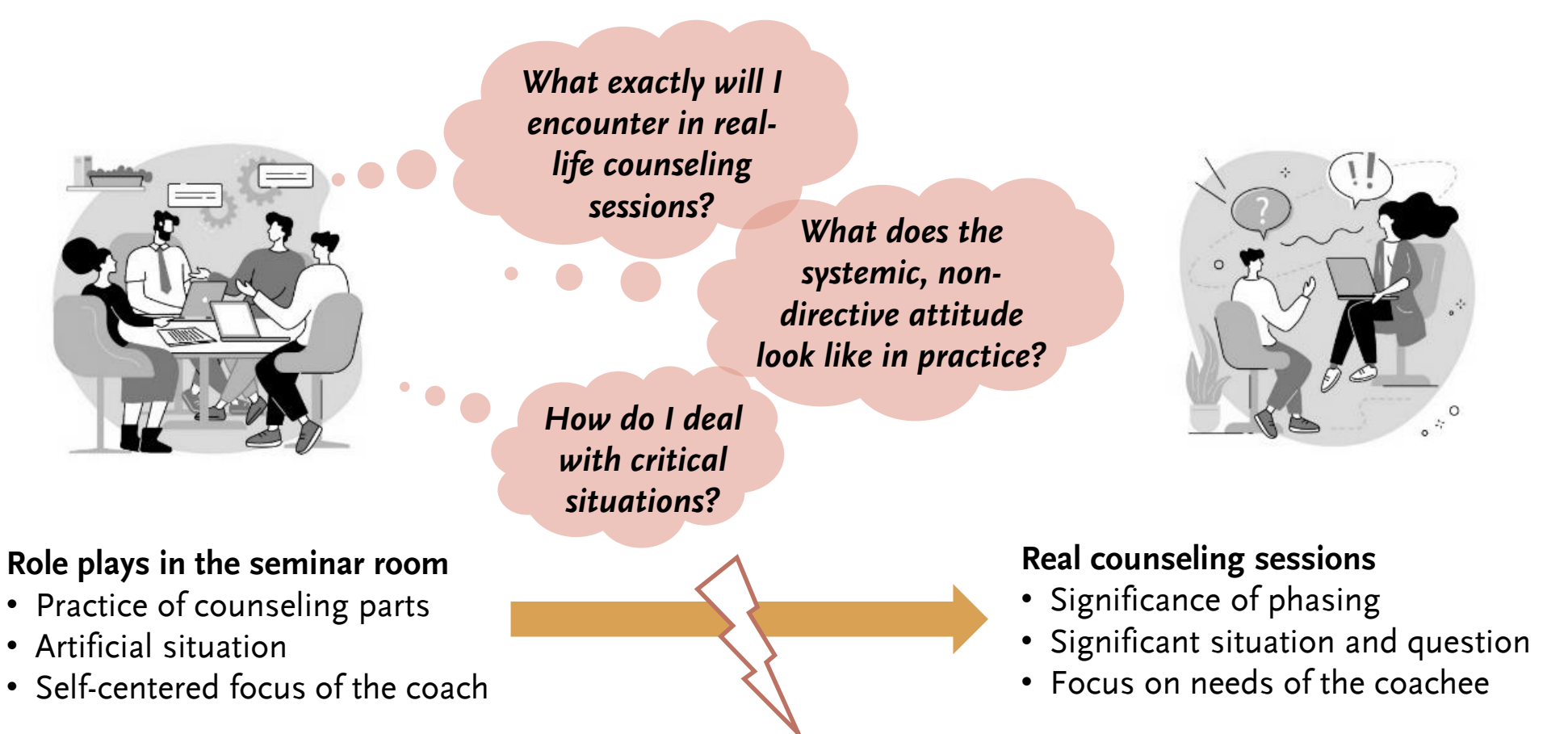
### Teachers, let's counsel language learners!

- **Status quo:** counseling learners as a “tailored approach” (O'Reilly, 2012, p. 440) for strategy instruction in L2 classrooms.
- **Goal in the teacher training program:** enabling preservice teachers through counseling competencies to promote students' language learning autonomy.
- **Implication:** conceptualization of a theory-practice seminar, training preservice teachers in systemic-constructivist counseling before they conduct actual online coaching with school students.
- **Seminar structure:** Blended learning
  - ❖ Asynchronous units (learning theories and strategies, learner variables, motivational theories, and the systemic approach)
  - ❖ Practice-oriented in-person lessons with a focus on self-reflection and exercises, in which the participants encounter the effect of systemic conversational techniques, and practice sequences from the counseling process

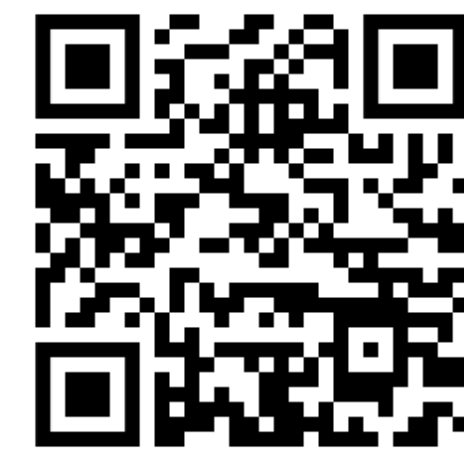


### Argh, that's challenging.

- **Discrepancy** between artificial role-plays during seminar sessions and actual, meaningful counseling sessions with children.
- **Difficulty** of promoting comprehensive reflection of conversational techniques in class.



Check out the VGS yourself!  
(language: German)  
Password: VGS



### Will VGS do the trick?

- **The idea:** creation of a *virtual gaming simulation* (VGS) via Branching Scenario of H5P of a counseling session where preservice teachers are guided through different conversation phases.
- **VGS's functionality:** at meaningful moments during the simulation, the video stops, and the student – taking in the counselor's perspective – is asked to consider and choose the most appropriate behavior towards the coachee from a pool of possible reactions. Subsequently, the resulting flow of the conversation will help them to evaluate the suitability of the reaction.
- **Benefits:** learning inductively and autonomously about the functionality of conversational techniques; expanding counsellors' interactional scope as they begin to anticipate the consequences of their actions (Brookfield, 2017).
- **Realization:** development of a VGS-prototype of a counseling session, including 18 single video clips and 4 branches in total.
- **Implementation Nov 22 – Feb 23:** VGS in 4 counseling courses at the U of Bamberg: For homework, students were assigned to work their way through the VGS while filling in their observations and reflective thoughts on a worksheet.

### Workflow

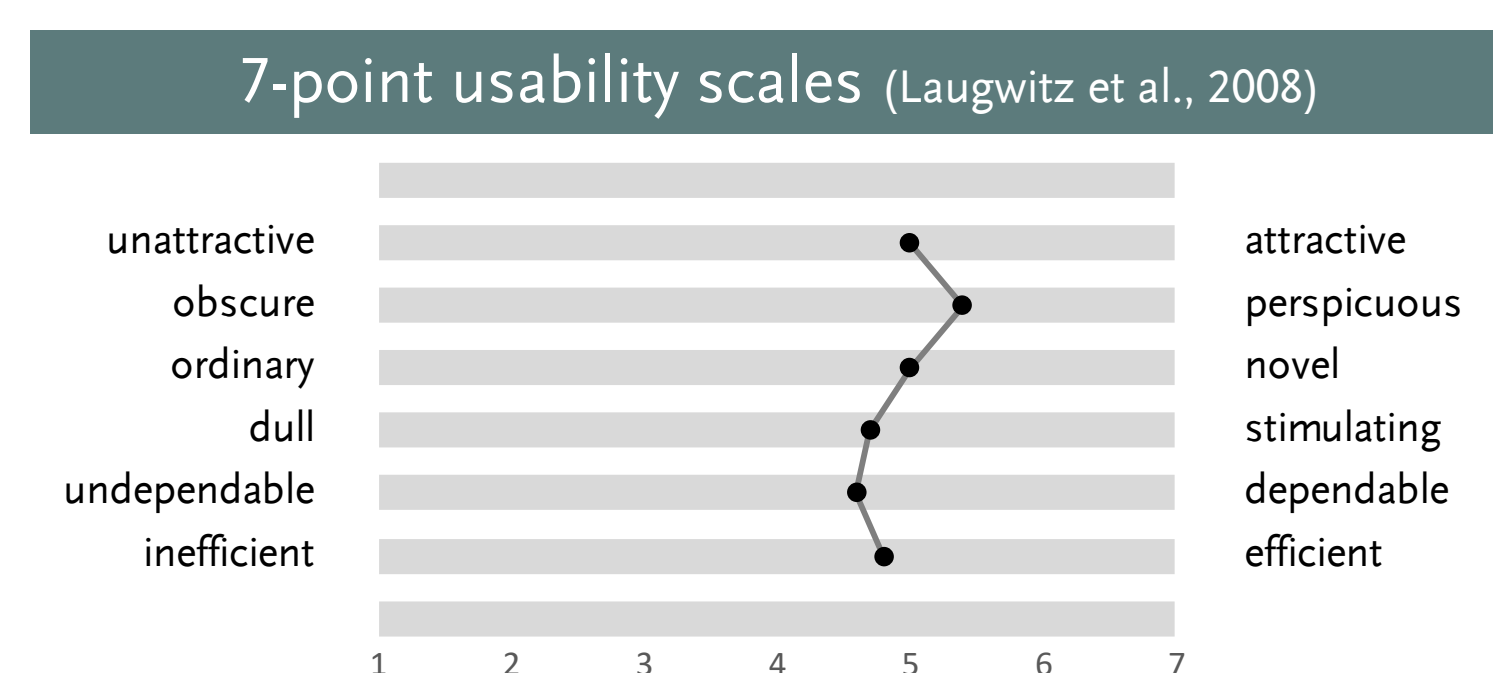


- Inductive learning of conversational techniques and phasing of a counseling session
- Step by step practice (Bradley, 2020)
- Mistakes allowed! (Akahori, 2005)
- Expansion of interactional scope (Brookfield, 2017)

### What preservice teachers think of VGS

#### Quantitative evaluation of the application:

- $N = 20$  preservice teachers ( $\bar{X}$  6<sup>th</sup> semester) played the simulation and 18 (17 female) took part in the online survey.
- Interest scales: the VGS *triggered* ( $M=3,2$ ;  $SD=0,7$ ) and *maintained* ( $M=3,0$ ;  $SD=0,9$ ) situational interest (Seidel et al., 2022, 4-point scales). In addition, the participants found that the simulation promoted their *topic interest* (Staufenbiel, 2000; 6-point scale;  $M=4,8$ ;  $SD=1,3$ ).
- Finally, preservice students assessed the *perceived utility* of the VGS positively.



#### Qualitative in-class evaluation:

- ☺: “motivating”, “activating”, enjoyment of autonomous learning process and the choice of possible reactions.
- Room for improvement: Even deeper level of interactivity, longer video sequences for observation purposes, and some rearrangements of the application's settings.

### Tbd: The future of VGS

- **Conclusion:** VGS in counseling seminars provide a promising way for preservice teachers to gain close to practical experience in a protected setting without ‘harming’ the school student body. With VGS, they feel better prepared for actual counseling sessions than through mere role-playing.
- **Further development** of the application necessary
- **Time-consuming** shooting of the video clips
- **Sustainability of the application:** ease of implementing the application in other courses.
- **Attractive teaching method** for psychological counseling skills not only at university, but also during all phases of the teacher-training program.

#### Sources

Akahori, K. (2005). The Features and Roles of Simulation Software in the Classroom. In R. Shiratori, K. Arai & F. Kato (Hrsg.), *SpringerLink Bücher. Gaming, Simulations, and Society: Research Scope and Perspective* (pp. 81–90). Springer Tokyo.

Bradley, E. (2020). Introduction. In E. Bradley (Ed.), *Springer eBook Collection. Games and Simulations in Teacher Education* (pp. 1–5). Springer International Publishing: Imprint Springer.

Brookfield, S. D. (2017). *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher* (2nd ed.). John Wiley & Sons Incorporated.

Laugwitz, B., Schrepp, M. & Held, T. (2008). Construction and evaluation of a user experience questionnaire. In: Holzinger, A. (Hrsg.), *USAB 2008, LNCS 5298*, pp. 63–76.

O'Reilly, E. (2012). Language Counseling Trends: Implications for Beginning Language Learner Strategy Instruction. *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal*, 438–451.

Seidel, T., Farrell, M., Martin, M., Rieß, W. & Renkl, A. (2022). Developing scripted video cases for teacher education: Creating evidence-based practice representations using mock ups. *Frontiers in Education*, 7, Artikel 965498.

Staufenbiel, T. (2000). Fragebogen zur Evaluation von universitären Lehrveranstaltungen durch Studierende und Lehrende. *Diagnostica*, 46(4), 169–181.