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## PEER-EVALUATION AS A TRIGGER TO SELF-REFLECTION IN TEACHING PRACTICUM OF PRE-SERVICE ENGLISH TEACHERS

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**Аннотация:** Мазкур мақолада бўлажак инглиз тили ўқитувчиларини тайёрлаш тизимида назарда тутилган педагогик амалиётда peer evaluation моделининг рефлексив амалиётга туртки бўлувчи компонент сифатидаги салоҳияти муҳокама қилинади. Мақола муаллифи, шунингдек, педагогик амалиётда тадбиқ этиш учун мўлжалланган peer evaluation моделини яратиш масаласини кўтаради.

**Калит сўзлар:** педагогик амалиёт, рефлексия, peer evaluation, бўлажак ўқитувчилар

**Аннотация:** Автор статьи обсуждает потенциал взаимной оценки, реализуемой в педагогических практиках в рамках учебной программы для будущих учителей английского языка, как механизм, который побуждает студентов-учителей практиковать саморефлексию. Автор также предлагает разработать модель взаимного оценивания, определяющую определенные стандарты проведения экспертного оценивания на педагогических практиках.

Ключевые слова: педагогическая практика, рефлексия, взаимооценка, будущие учителя

**Abstract:** The author of the article discusses potential of peer evaluation implemented in teaching practicums within pre-service English teacher curriculum as a mechanism that encourages student teachers to practice self-reflection. The author also proposes that there is need to develop a model of peer evaluation that stipulates certain standards of carrying out peer evaluation in teaching practicums.

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**Keywords:** teaching practicum, pre-service teachers, reflection, peer evaluation

In Uzbekistan, where rapid reforms on publicizing learning foreign languages are taking place, rethinking and upgrading the system of foreign language teacher education system deserves a special attention too. In the context of the reforms, training future teachers of foreign languages is not only about developing their linguistic, communicative and professional competences, but also promoting their capacity for reflective thinking, autonomous learning, and self-assessment, which eventually lead to enhancing their capacity for lifelong learning and continuing professional development. Special attention is paid to “developing fundamental, applied and innovative scientific works, preserving the existing scientific schools and establishing new ones, increasing their cadre potential and engaging talented young people in science” [1]. In this respect, it is appropriate to carry out wide-scale research studies on utilizing best practices in teacher education, and implementing them in the system of foreign language teacher education.

Teaching practicum is one of the most important stages in pre-service teacher education. In teaching practicums student-teachers have an opportunity to apply their pedagogical and content knowledge in teaching contexts where they are exposed to various teaching and learning situations. Teaching practicum is in fact a period when students start developing their identities as teachers and when a student’s theoretical knowledge is tested.

In Uzbekistan’s higher education institutions that specialize in teacher education, students’ teaching practicum is scheduled to take place during the final two semester of their study. Recently, according to the resolution of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovations, university curriculum is put in practice based on a 4+2 principle where students should attend university formal classes for four days a week and the rest two days, they spend acquiring practical skills in industry settings. In teacher education programs industry is normally pre-school education institutions, schools, or specialized schools. Ideally it is good when students are exposed to their future professions as early as possible, because it will help them learn practical aspects of their future professions and focus on skills

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development and see the real-life application of content and theoretical knowledge they acquire in the university settings.

Practicums encourage reflective practice, which is crucial in teacher development. Pre-service teachers can reflect on their teaching experiences, identify strengths and weaknesses, and seek ways to improve. According to J. Dewey [5], reflective thinking is an "active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it, and further conclusions to which it leads." Dewey and other scholars who investigated the role of reflective thinking emphasize that reflection is related to personal learning, and thus its role in learning should not be ignored. Reflective thinking entails recall of experience in learning, thinking about self as a learner, and therefore regarded as a subject of studies on metacognition, self-assessment, and mental processes in learning. Scholars as A. Rieger et al [7], C. Corcoran, R. Leahy [4], C. Rodgers [8], S. Afshar and M. Farahani [8] agree on the benefits of reflective thinking in pre-service teacher education and that it must be part of all teacher education programs because reflection enables prospective students to make sense of the theoretical material learned. In CIS countries, scholars as Y.V. Romanova [12], T.A. Bondarenko [10], O.B. Modulina [11], and Z.M. Hutyk [13] investigated the role of reflective thinking skills development in training teachers for their future pedagogical practices.

Peer evaluation has long been discussed as one of the effective techniques in raising students' awareness of their learning and of how they build their understanding of the world that surrounds them. According to literature peer evaluation's conceptual frameworks are constructivism, cognitive learning, social constructivism, and zone of proximal development [2]. Students involved in peer evaluation get an opportunity to learn from each other and get feedback from each other on their progress. As stated by W. Cajkler and P. Wood [3] one of the benefits of peer evaluation is that unlike teacher's evaluation students feel less defensive when they hear about their performance from their peers, they feel more comfortable in receiving their peer's constructive feedback. In peer feedback students act as mentors and mentees which means they go beyond their learning relationships. However, in order to make peer evaluations an effective tool of learning from each other there should be certain rules established, standards set on how to evaluate each other's performance. In this regard, developing a

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framework that sets out the principles and procedures of peer evaluation in teaching practicums is very relevant.

We propose that peer evaluation can serve as a trigger to self-reflection in teaching practicum in several ways. For instance, student teachers observing each other's classes usually find reflection a difficult task because self-reflection may sometimes imply comparative and contrastive analysis of one's actions in light of other people's activities and achievements. Therefore, in the process of observing and giving feedback to their peers, students can be exposed to an active practice of reflection where they compare their skills and knowledge in teaching to that of others, set benchmarks for their development and evaluate their own practice in light of their peers' performance. In other words, while acting as an observer and feedback provider of their student peer's, student get involved in active reflection of their own performance in comparison to their peers. Let us look at the example of peer evaluation of student teachers' lesson planning activities. As it is widely known, planning lessons and sequence of activities require certain knowledge about foundations of lesson and curriculum development, learning theories and teaching approaches that lay behind each type of activity, task, and exercise development. In Pre-Service English Teacher Training (PRESETT) curriculum of our country students are taught how to design lessons and lesson activities. The modules provide pedagogical content knowledge on planning lessons and offer hands on activities and tasks that ask students to practically apply those knowledge and skills in planning lessons. By encouraging peer evaluation and assessment of each other's lesson plans students tend to acquire more profound knowledge of lesson planning, revise their activities and materials they learnt in the modules and compare their own lessons plans with that of their peers. This puts the students in the process of active reflection where they try to identify their own strengths and weaknesses in planning lessons.

Peer evaluation can be seen as one of the mechanisms that may ensure quality delivery of teaching practicums in pre-service English teacher training. To achieve this a model of peer evaluation should be developed where underlying principles, standards, and procedures of conducting peer evaluation during a teaching practicum are stipulated. Moreover, active experimentation with peer evaluation by teacher educators over the course of pre-service English teacher

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training in various modules may ensure that student teachers are ready to carry out objective and fair-minded peer evaluation.

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