

## أثر استخدام استراتيجيات التدريس التأملي على تطوير الأداء الصفّي للطالبات المعلمات تخصص اللغة الإنجليزية في جامعة الأقصر

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## The Effect of Using Reflective Teaching Strategies on Developing Classroom Performance of Prospective Teachers of English at Al-Aqsa University

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**Abstract:** This study aimed at investigating the effect of using the reflective teaching strategies on developing the classroom performance of prospective teachers of English at Al-Aqsa University. The Quasi-experimental design was adopted. The sample of the study consisted of 32 prospective female teachers of English enrolled at the Faculty of Education – Al-Aqsa University. They were randomly assigned to two groups (control and experimental). The control group received only the traditional supervisory practices while the experimental group was trained in using reflective teaching and introduced to three different activities of reflection which were journal writing, peer observation, and five-minute papers. Research instruments were interviews, checklist of classroom teaching practices, analytic scoring rubric of journal writing and peer classroom observation. Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviation, frequencies, ranks and percentages), independent and paired samples t-test (2-tailed) were used for data analysis. The effect size "d" was computed using Eta Squared ( $\eta^2$ ). Findings of the study showed the most important classroom teaching performance and practices in classroom in light of the checklist developed for that purpose. The results also demonstrated that a significant improvement in classroom performance of the experimental group in the post-observation. The study findings also indicate that statistically significant differences at 0.01 level were found in overall classroom performance and in six dimensions namely: giving effective instructions, using motivated question techniques, choosing suitable techniques for correcting mistakes, praising the correct answers, systematic handling of the blackboard, and making and using available audio-visual aids, in favor of the experimental group. Moreover, statistically significant differences at 0.01 level were also noted in overall classroom performance and in the six dimensions of classroom performance of the experimental group, in favor of those of the posttest. The study concluded that the reflective teaching strategies can be used effectively with student teachers during the practicum period. It was recommended that it should be incorporated in EFL teacher education programs, specifically in the EFL methodology course. However, student teachers should make every effort to learn

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more about a variety of reflective activities. The reflective teaching strategies could be used on developing and improving the classroom performance of in-service teachers as well. Prospective teachers should be trained on methods of developing reflective thinking levels.

**Key Words:** reflective teaching, classroom performance, prospective teachers, EFL.

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**الملخص:** هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى بحث أثر استخدام استراتيجيات التدريس التأملي على تطوير الأداء الصفي للطلبات المعلمات، تخصص اللغة الانجليزية. ولقد تبنت الدراسة المنهج شبه التجريبي. وتكونت عينة الدراسة من (٣٢) طالبة مقيمة بالمستوى الرابع في تخصص اللغة الانجليزية واساليب تدريسها بكلية التربية في جامعة الاقصى بغزة، وتم تقسيمهن عشوائيا إلى مجموعتين (ضابطة وتجريبية). اعتمدت المجموعة الضابطة على الطريقة المعتادة في أدائها، وهي تعليقات المشرفين فقط، بينما استخدمت المجموعة التجريبية استراتيجيات التدريس التأملي في فترة التربية العملية (٢) حيث تم تدريب المجموعة التجريبية على استخدام استراتيجيتين للتدريس التأملي وهي: المذكرات اليومية، وملاحظة زملاء أو الرفاق. ولقد تمت الاستعانة في هذا البحث بوسائل جمع البيانات وهي: قائمة ملاحظة بممارسات وأداء التدريس الصفي، ومقياس (متدرج) لتحليل وتقدير استراتيجيات التدريس التأملي. تم تحليل البيانات كمياً وكيفياً. واستخدمت الدراسة الإحصاء الوصفي (المتوسطات، والانحرافات المعيارية، والتكرارات، والرتب، والنسب المئوية واختبار "ت" في تحليل البيانات. ولمعرفة حجم التأثير الناتج عن استخدام استراتيجيات التدريس التأملي (المتغير المستقل) على الأداء الصفي للطلبات المعلمات (المتغير التابع) تم الاستعانة بمربع "إيتا". أظهرت نتائج الدراسة اهم ممارسات الأداء الصفي التي تحتاجها الطالبات المعلمات داخل الغرفة الصفية. كما اوضحت النتائج تحسنا ملحوظا في الأداء الصفي للمجموعة التجريبية. وعلاوة على ذلك، اظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية عند مستوى (0.01) بين متوسطي درجات المجموعتين

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(التجريبية والضابطة) في التطبيق البعدي لقائمة معايير الأداء الصفي ككل وفي كل محور من المحاور الستة (توجيه التعليمات، استخدام تقنيات طرح الأسئلة المحفزة، استخدام التقنيات المناسبة لتصحيح الأخطاء، تعزيز الإجابات الصحيحة، الاستخدام المنظم للسطح، واستخدام مصادر المعلومات والوسائل المتوفرة) لصالح المجموعة التجريبية. كذلك وتوصلت الدراسة إلى وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية عند المستوى بين متوسط درجات المجموعة التجريبية في التطبيق القبلي والبعدي لقائمة معايير الأداء الصفي ككل وفي (0.01) كل محور من المحاور الستة السابق ذكرها وذلك لصالح التطبيق البعدي. وخلصت الدراسة إلى فعالية استخدام استراتيجيات التدريس التأملي خلال التربية العملية في تحسين الأداء الصفي للطالبات المعلمات تخصص اللغة الانجليزية واساليب تدريسها. وفي ضوء النتائج التي تم التوصل إليها، جاءت بعض التوصيات ومنها: وجوب دمج استراتيجيات التدريس التأملي في برامج إعداد معلمة اللغة الانجليزية، وفي مقررات طرق تدريس اللغة الانجليزية خاصة. وأنه من الضروري أن تتعرف الطالبة المعلمة على أساليب وطرق مختلفة ومتعددة للتأمل • وقد أوصت الدراسة بإمكانية تطوير أداء المعلمات أثناء الخدمة باستخدام التدريس التأملي وأنشطته، بالإضافة إلى وجوب تدريب الطالبات المعلمات على استخدام الأدوات التي تدعم التفكير التأملي. الكلمات الدلالية: التدريس التأملي، الأداء الصفي ، الطالبات المعلمات، اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.

### Background of the Problem

Teachers need to develop and enhance the qualifications, which are necessary to carry out their different duties and functions. For this reason, the pre-service and in-service preparation programs must be updated so that teachers can acquire the necessary and suitable experiences.

One of these preparation programs is teaching programs currently used in the faculties of education. Through these programs, student teachers would acquire some facts about the characteristics of a good teacher and the teaching process. They would learn more about the useful methods of teaching, how to choose and use instructional aids, how to manage the class and how to evaluate their students. Neisler (2000) confirmed the importance of these programs which would give the prospective teachers varied abilities such as critical thinking and problem solving. Also, prospective teachers would be acquainted with the role of school management and system.

It is noticed that there has been a considerable growth of interest in the use of recent trends in teaching English as a foreign language which develop the teachers' performance such as attending conferences, consulting colleagues, discussing published scholarship reports and participating in teacher development courses. Richards and Lockhart (2005) mentioned that there is a movement away from "methods" and other "external" or "top down" views of teaching towards an "internal" or "bottom up" view of teaching that represents reflective teaching.

The idea of reflection started many years ago. Burge (2004:16) reported that "the concept of reflection for improving professional practice has gained notable regard in the United Kingdom, Canada, United States, Australia, and other countries throughout the past two decades".

Research on teaching and teacher education has proved a shift of emphasis to teachers' thinking processes. Aly (2004) said that "the important issues in teaching practice are not the ritualistic performance of set routines. (e.g., Has the teacher got a lesson plan? Can the teacher control the class? etc.)". Thus, the term "reflective teaching" has been widely used in the field of teaching and teacher education. Cruickshank and Applegate (1981) referred to reflective teaching as "helping teachers to think about what happened, why it happened, and what else they could have done to reach their goals".

Al-Hazmi (2008) showed that the important quality of reflection is thinking about how to improve teaching practice. The study also demonstrated that reflective teaching can lead to

professional and personal growth. Moreover, it developed the teaching profession and students' learning. The researcher points out that reflection, in general, and reflective teaching, in particular, has become to be widely recognized as a crucial element that may improve changes of teachers' attitudes in their professional and personal growth. Thus, practising reflective teaching helps us as professional teachers to examine our work.

Supporting this view, Al-Harithi (2015) assured that the need for reflective teachers becomes very important as it facilitates linking of theory and practice, and enables them to take a more active role in their own professional accountability. Furthermore, the purpose of reflective teaching is to expand teachers and student teachers' understanding of the teaching-learning process and their supply of strategic choices as language teachers.

There are many activities related to reflective teaching, which the teacher can use to investigate classroom teaching. The teachers can use different tools to access different sorts of information. Murphy (2001) divided these tools into some activities such as five minute papers, teacher assessment surveys, questionnaires, dialogue journal, written assessments, peer collaborations, classroom observation, teacher logs, audio recording, video recording, and action research.

El-Dib (2003) also mentioned some other tools of reflective teaching such as action research, reflection teams, role-playing, and debates. However, Miyata (2002) used web-based electronic teaching portfolio and video as devices for reflective inquiry and self-assessment by pre-service teachers. Al-Harithi (2015) added that reflective teaching is a movement in teacher education which is beneficial for both pre-service and in-service teachers. Because it offers more advantages than disadvantages for teacher education programs. These programs seek to help novice teachers become more aware of decision-making processes to help them determine the effect of decisions in teaching context.

For the aforementioned reasons behind reflective teaching and some others coming, the present study attempts to investigate the effect of some strategies based on the reflective teaching strategy on developing classroom performance of prospective English teachers. It also seeks to develop a reflective model of teaching to be integrated into pre-service EFL teacher education programs in Palestine.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Through practicum, prospective teachers acquire some facts about the characteristics of a qualified teacher and teaching. They learn more about the beneficial methods of teaching,

how to choose and use instructional materials, and how to evaluate their students. Teaching practice program aims at making qualified EFL teachers.

A semi-structured interview was conducted with some supervisors and a group of English teachers (n = 25) Based on the content analysis of responses, 100 % of the respondents reported that the majority of the student teachers' classroom performance is ineffective. As a result, the aim of teaching practice is not achieved. Therefore, conducting a study on the effect of reflective teaching strategies for EFL teacher education programs in Palestine might help improve prospective teachers' classroom performance.

### Questions of the Study

Based on the above mentioned problem, the present study tried to answer the following questions:

1. What are the areas of classroom teaching performance that EFL prospective teachers need to help?
2. How effective is the use of reflective teaching strategies on developing classroom performance of EFL prospective teachers at Al-aqsa University?
3. What is the effect of reflective teaching strategies on the six stated areas of classroom performance of EFL prospective teachers?

### Hypotheses of the Study

The present study attempted to verify the following hypotheses :

1. There are statistically significant differences at (0.01) level between the means scores of the control and the experimental groups in the posttest of classroom performance, in favor of the experimental group.
2. There are statistically significant differences at (0.01) level between the means scores of the control and experimental groups in the post test of classroom performance on each of the six performance skills.

### Purposes of the Study

The main purpose of the present study was to develop EFL prospective teacher's classroom performance by using reflective teaching. From this main purpose, the following sub-purposes emerge:

1. To identify the skills of classroom teaching performance that EFL prospective teachers need to develop.

2. To investigate the effect of the reflective teaching strategies on the classroom performance of EFL prospective teachers.

### **Significance of the Study**

1. Promoting reflective practice that is greatly recommended by many theorists in the field of teacher education.
2. Presenting a validated instrument (performance criteria) and scoring rubrics that may be helpful in observing and evaluating EFL prospective teachers' classroom performance.

### **Delimitations of the Study**

The study was delimited to:

1. Including fourth year EFL prospective teachers enrolled at Faculty of Education at Al-Aqsa university in Gaza-Palestine.
2. Providing a range of activities for EFL prospective teachers to reflect on their work during practicum period which started in the first semester of the academic year (2017- 2018)
3. Using only two different tools of reflective teaching namely, reflective journal writing and peer observation.

### **Definition of Terms**

#### **1. Reflective teaching.**

Tice (2006) viewed reflective teaching as "looking at what you do in the classroom, thinking about why you do it, and thinking about if it works as a process of self- observation and self-evaluation" (p. 236). Based on the above definition, reflective teaching is operationally defined as an approach in which the student teachers reflect (thinking back on what they have done in class) critically on their teaching experiences and performance, as a way of improving classroom performance through using journals writing and peer-observation.

#### **2. Journal writing**

Reflective journal writing is one technique of reflective teaching which has been advocated by educators in many fields as a means of stimulating reflective learning. This is done when a teacher writes about what he did in the class after finishing the class (The researcher).

### 3. Peer observation

It is a professional development strategy or method for educators to consult with one another, to discuss and share teaching practices, to observe one another's classroom, to promote and increase support. (The researcher)

### Review of Literature and Related Studies

Reflective teaching and its strategies become very important in the field of teacher education. Thus, many studies have been conducted searching it. The researcher illustrates several points that are needed to be clear for educators like:

### Importance of Reflective Teaching

Good teachers should learn throughout their careers. This is called "life-long learning" or "ongoing professional development". One tool that can help teachers to develop themselves professionally is known as reflective teaching practice. In light of reflective teaching, language teachers need to think about what they do and how and why they do it.

Al-Harithi (2015) demonstrated that reflective teaching can be a beneficial form for professional development at both the pre-service and in-service levels of teaching and is also regarded as a vital skill for teachers and a dialogue of thinking and doing through which I become more skilled. El-Sayed (2005) reported that reflective teaching involves a desire and a willingness to engage in continuous self-appraisal and development that largely contribute in improving the teachers' performance.

That is why, Pollard et al. (2002) identified seven key characteristics of reflective teaching which are :

- 1- It implies an active concern with aims and consequences, as well as means and technical efficiency.
- 2- It requires competence in methods of evidence-based classroom enquiry, to support the progressive development of higher standards of teaching.
- 3- It requires attitudes of open-mindedness, responsibility and wholeheartedness.
- 4- It as well as professional learning and personal fulfillment are enhanced through collaboration and dialogue with colleagues.

Al-Hazmi (2008) demonstrated that reflective teaching is important for some of the following reasons:

- 1- It enables teachers to provide a rationale behind their practice.
- 2- It enlivens the classroom by making it challenging, interesting and stimulating for students.

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- 3- It increases democratic trust as a result of the examples and modeling conveyed by the teacher, thereby allowing students to learn democratic behavior and moral tone.

Thus the researcher thinks that the role of reflective teaching is significant in the professional growth of any teacher including the EFL ones and also in creating an ideal professional environment for the practitioners and for their self-development.

In a similar way, Opp-Beckman and Klinghammer (2006) assured that the reflective teaching process begins with the examination of an individual's own actions and contrasting the actions to the ideal of the practice. The process also results in behavioral changes that improve professional performance.

Al-Harithi (2015) demonstrated that reflective teaching helps teachers take informed actions, namely actions that are based on assumptions that have been carefully investigated before, during and after class work. Likewise, they develop a critical rationale for their practices. In other words, reflective teachers tend to be open-minded, devoted, responsible, and possessed of enhanced skills of observation.

### **Procedures of Reflection**

Richards (1991) mentioned that many different approaches can be employed if one wishes to become a critically reflective teacher, including observation of oneself and others, team teaching and exploring one's view of teaching through writing. This process involves:

- "1- The event itself:** The starting point is an actual teaching episode such as a lesson or other instructional event. While the focus of critical reflection is usually the teacher's own teaching, self-reflection can also be stimulated by observation of another person's teaching.
- 2- Recollection of the event:** The next stage in reflective examination of an experience is an account of what happened without explanation or evaluation. Several different procedures are available during the recollection phase including written descriptions of an event, a video or audio recording of an event, or the use of checklists or coding systems to capture details of the event.
- 3- Review and response to the event:** Following a focus on objective description of the event, the participant returns to the event and reviews it. The event is now processed at a deeper level and questions are asked about the experience".

### Dimensions of Reflection

A useful conceptual framework for understanding the nature of reflection in pre-service teacher education is provided by LaBoskey (1993). It can be applied to guide research and practice in the use of reflective tools such as journal writing. This framework incorporated four dimensions of reflection:

- 1- Purpose: It refers to a need to regain control of a situation or a desire to better comprehend an issue.
- 2- Context: It indicates to the structural aids such as reflective tasks, partners or observers, timing, and location.
- 3- Procedure: It refers to a process that one goes through in order to make a decision or arrive at a judgment.
- 4- Content: It shows particular classroom events, phenomena or experiences.

Another study was done by Jay and Johnson (2002) who suggested three dimensions of reflection which are: descriptive, comparative, and critical.

#### 1- Descriptive reflection

It involves the intellectual process of "setting the problem" , the process by which educators define the decision to be made, the ends to be achieved, the means which may be chosen.

#### 2- Comparative reflection

It refers to what calls a "frame experiment". It concerns seeking to understand others' points of view. "It involves thinking about the matter for reflection from a number of different frames or perspectives". The comparative dimension provides a way for instructors to compare their current practices against alternatives approaches and theories, or simply new ideas for teaching a familiar course.

#### 3- Critical reflection

It describes the result of carefully considering a problem that has been set in light of multiple perspectives. However, the highest level of thinking occurs in the critical dimension of reflection. Critical reflection involves making a judgment and considers the matter from different perspectives with an eye towards moving ahead.

According to Boyd & Boyd (2005), there are two ways for reflective teaching to be critical. First, when considering broader implications and deeper meaning of classroom instruction. Second, "in the sense of self-critique and continuous learning and improvement".

### **Tools for Reflective Teaching**

There are many different activities that reflective teachers can use to investigate classroom teaching and access different sorts of information. Brookfield (1995) suggested some other tools for reflective teaching which were conference logs, teaching logs, teacher learning audits, role model profiles, survival advice memos, videotaping, peer observation, student learning journals, participant learning portfolios, the critical incident questionnaire, and the good practice audit. Murphy (2001:44) discussed five ways for gathering information. These tools are: five-minute papers, formative teacher assessment surveys, student focus groups, retrospective field notes, and formative feedback from peers. "By combining two or more tools over the span of an entire course, a teacher gains access to alternative vantage points".

Depending on the above mentioned views, the researcher find it suitable to choose two reflective strategies: student teacher's strategy (journal writing), and peers' strategy (peer observation) in order to fulfill the purpose of the study. .

#### **1. Journal writing**

According to Boyd & Boyd (2005), reflective journal writing is one technique which has been advocated by educators in many fields as a means of stimulating reflective learning. In addition, reflective writing journal is also a tool for self-reflection by students in teacher education programs. These programs have relied on teaching journals for more than twenty years, but the recommended users have been primarily elementary and secondary teachers in training. However, reflective journals are often key elements of the reflective teacher's practice. Moreover, journal writing is a valuable tool for developing critical reflection and its goals are :

- 1- It provides a record of the significant learning experiences that have taken place.
- 2- It helps the participants come into touch and keep in touch with the self-development process that is taking place for them.
- 3- It provides the participants with an opportunity to express, in a personal and dynamic way, their self-development.
- 4- To foster a creative interaction between the participant and the self-development process that is taking place.

Boyd and Boyd (2005) identified three structured types of reflective journals which are: guided journals, double-entry journals, and dialogue journals. These types can be explained as follows:

**a. Guided journals**

They have the potential to produce greater critical reflection by turning reflection away from the natural tendency toward emotional release. These guided journals are more structured, but also more focused in their resultant insights into instructional methods".

**b. Double-entry**

These journals consist of a two-step writing process. A teacher describes what happened in class on the first page. On the second page, the teacher reflects critically on the description.

**c. Dialogue journals**

This kind will be shared with others. These dialogue journals can be with a supervisor or peers. Similarly, Al-Harithi (2015) clearly stated that journal writing can be used in order to support learning in a number of contexts:

- 1- Professional: field placements, professional practicum, in-service professional experience, and professional projects.
- 2- Academic: course content.
- 3- Interpersonal: interactive learning experiences.
- 4- Personal: personal life or learning experiences.
- 5- Promotes reflection, correction, metacognition, and integration.
- 6- Personalizes learning.
- 7- Keeps a record of development overtime
- 8- Keeps a record for learners of key ideas and concerns.

**2. Peer observation.**

Al-Hazmi (2008) stated that one way teachers can gain awareness of their teaching is to observe other teachers. Teachers can see their own teaching in the teaching of others and when teachers observe others to gain self-knowledge, they have the chance to construct and reconstruct their own knowledge. Observing other people's teaching has given new ideas for teaching and being observed by others has given ideas about how the class looks in order to increase the effectiveness of teaching. More importantly, peer observation encourages reflection on teaching practices with a professional equal willing to collaborate to further develop instructional skills. The researcher sees that there are many characteristics of peer observation such as: 1. it provides opportunities for teachers to view each other's teaching in order to expose them different teaching styles. 2. It also provides opportunities for critical reflection that help teachers improve their instruction and help them to work together professionally thereby eliminating feelings of isolation. 3. Peer observation can also help build new strategies and skills by encouraging reflection and analysis of teaching practice and

providing opportunities for professional growth for their colleagues whatever their experience. 4. It is effective in helping them meet their goals. 5. It enhances teachers supported by their peers as well as their principals, they are likely to take greater risks to improve their instruction, remain in the teaching and show more interest in building activities and goals. 6. It allows the relationship to be built on confidentiality and trust , and secure environment in which they learn and grow together.

In a similar context, Al- Harithi (2015) demonstrated that peer observation is a professional development strategy or method for educators to consult with one another, to discuss and share teaching practices, to observe one another's classroom, to promote and increase support, and to help ensure quality teaching for all students.

It can be concluded that discussion with another person is a powerful strategy for fostering reflective action. It is also a positive solution to some problems of pre-service and in-service teacher. Thus, peer observation not only aids personal reflection on teaching, but also reinforces the idea of how can people benefit from each other.

### **Reflective Teaching and Teacher classroom performance.**

Hanna (1991) dealt with the effectiveness of some awareness techniques in sensitizing student teachers to their own performance in teaching practice. The participants were third year students at Fayoum Faculty of Education. Every time a student teacher taught he was asked to grade his own performance on some items on an observation sheet. At the same time, the researcher rated them on the same items. This was done for both the experimental and control groups. Results showed that student teachers who were exposed to the awareness techniques came closer to the researcher's own evaluation than did the control group did.

Seifeddin (1994) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between EFL teachers' lesson planning skills and their classroom performance skills in the preparatory stage. Two research instruments were designed : a sheet for analyzing daily lesson plans and an observation scheme for observing teachers' classroom performance. The sample comprised 80 EFL teachers selected randomly from preparatory stage teachers in Menoufiya Governorate. A sample of lesson plans was analyzed and their teaching performance was observed, recorded and analyzed. It was conducted that:

- 1- There were some difficulties encountered by beginning teachers while planning their lessons. Years of experience helped improve lesson planning skills.

2- Some teachers' level in classroom performance skills was poor. This reflects the divorce between theory and practice. Again, years of experience helped improve the teachers' classroom performance skills.

Bowes (1997) carried out a study to develop and validate a systematic observation instrument to measure the teacher behavior commonly identified as classroom management skills. The developed instrument, the Classroom Management Observation Instrument (C-MOI) was utilized in a field test with four primary grade teachers and three observers, each with varying educational experiences, in central Pennsylvania. Evidence was found within this study to support the use of the (C-MOI) as a valid and reliable instrument to measure classroom management skills.

Recently, Al-Mutawa (2004) attempted to assess the competencies of primary school teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL) in Kuwait. The sample for the study consisted of 53 teachers working in various government primary schools throughout the country. An evaluation format was developed. It consists of 28 competencies divided into three components as follows : Language level – Lesson planning – and Implementation. The format is accompanied by a number of variables as guidelines for evaluation. It was carried out by four EFL evaluators including the researcher in the first place and subsequently the teachers themselves. At the end of the visit, the teacher was given the same format for self-evaluation. Results showed significant differences between the teachers' performance in (1994) and the teachers' performance in (2002) with the latter's averages being higher in each of the three components. However, the means of implementation in both groups remain lower than other components.

In another research, Baniabdelrahman (2004) studied the effectiveness of three different practicum teaching and supervision methods based on the type of visits a student teacher receives and the number of cooperating teachers they work with, in improving the student teachers performance in teaching English. The study tried to answer the question: Are there significant differences in the performances of the student-teachers of the three groups in teaching English due to the method of supervision they receive or to their gender?. The sample of the study consisted of all EFL students at Yarmouk University who were expected to attend two practicum teaching courses in the second semester of the academic year (2003/2004). They were 43 student-teachers practicing their practicum teaching in Irbid City schools. The results of the study proved that the Multi-Supervision and Multi-Cooperating Teachers method (MSMCT) was significantly better than the Individual Supervision and Individual Cooperating

Teacher (MSICT) and Multi- Supervision and Individual Cooperating Teacher (ISICT) methods in improving the EFL student teachers teaching skills of English. The results also pointed out that the MSICT method was also significantly better than the ISICT method in improving the EFL student teachers teaching skills of English. No significant effect was found for gender. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended to offer student-teachers the opportunity to work with more than one practicum supervisor and with more than one cooperating teacher.

### **Commentary**

In light of the previous literature review, it is clear that the focus is on using reflective teaching for preparing both teachers and (practicum's students ) EFL prospective teachers. They also focused on the positive effects of reflective teaching and its activities on teaching. Glowacki-Dudka and Barnett (2007) applied self-reflection within the online environment in order to assess group development. They pointed out that when students are allowed to provide those reflections, they provide evidence of group development and a feeling of ownership in the class. The pre-service teachers' views on the value of guided reflection indicated that they perceived it as meaningful for their professional growth and development as prospective physical education teachers.

Reflective practice, as dealt with earlier, is discussed by various researchers as to play a basic role in the improvement of teachers' classroom performance and how it must be a dominant theme in teacher education. Much of the research work, like the present study, attempted to develop and the evaluate actual classroom performance and competencies of teachers and student teachers by using reflective practice (Bowes, 1997& Al-Mutawa, 2004). Others aimed at developing student teachers' teaching skills (e. g., El-Sayed, 2005 ), and Baniabdelrahman (2004) also tried to develop and then evaluate the classroom performance of student teachers.

Al-Harithi (2015 : 87) described his own reflective practice as "a dialogue of thinking and doing through which I become more skilled". To be an effective teacher, it is not enough to be able to recognize what happens in the classroom.

As it has been noticed, a number of studies adopted different reflective teaching activities like journal writing, portfolios, peer observation, action research and writing conferences ( El-Dib, 2003 & El-Sayed, 2005). Those activities were used to investigate classroom teaching and access different sorts of information and to gain awareness of teaching. More importantly, findings of some studies were of benefit to the present study in designing

and developing the research instruments (Murphy 2001, Seifeddin, 1994; Bowes, 1997 & El-Sayed, 2005).

### **Design of the study**

This study adopted the quasi-experimental approach. The pretest – posttest equivalent groups design was followed. Accordingly, experimental and control groups were randomly drawn. The experimental group was trained in using the reflective teaching during their practicum while the control group had the traditional supervisory practices. The impact of treatment was judged by the difference between the post observation scores of the experimental and control groups.

### **Participants of study**

A group of fourth year (n = 32) students of English department enrolled at Faculty of Education in Al-Aqsa University were randomly drawn from a total population of students (N = 127). They were involved in the practicum at the secondary school level. They were randomly divided into two groups (control and experimental). They have the same previous teaching practice experience.

### **Variables of the Study**

The variables of the study are:

1. Reflective teaching strategies as an independent variable.
2. Classroom performance of EFL student teachers as a dependent variable.

### **Instruments of the Study**

To carry out the experiment, the following instruments were constructed :

#### **1. Checklist of classroom teaching performance ( practices ) (CCTP).**

##### **a. Description of the CCTP**

The purpose of this checklist is to determine the areas of classroom teaching performance (day to day practices of teachers inside the classroom) for which EFL student teachers need the greatest help. It includes 20 items that represent different classroom teaching practices.

##### **b. Piloting the CCTP**

##### **c. Validity of the CCTP**

Based on the previous literature and the results of the interview questions with some EFL teachers and supervisors, a preliminary checklist (25 items) of classroom teaching practices was prepared. To ensure that the checklist items were clear and appropriate, it was

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submitted to a jury of experts for content and face validity. Their feedback led to replace some items with others.

## 2. Reliability of the CCTP

To establish the reliability of the CCTP, the test-retest method was used. The checklist was administered to a group of student teachers ( $n = 20$ ). After two weeks it was administered to the same group. The correlation coefficient between the test and retest scores was computed using Pearson Correlation Formula.

(Table 1)

The Correlation Coefficient between the Test & Re-test Scores of the (CCTP)

| Administration | M     | SD    | ' r ' |
|----------------|-------|-------|-------|
| First          | 26.45 | 3.966 | 0.826 |
| Second         | 26.00 | 3.933 |       |

Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed).

## 2. Analytic scoring rubric (ASR).

- **Description of the ASR**

It is a scoring scheme for grading classroom performance of the student teachers. It includes the criteria areas that are thought to be important by the student teachers according to the results of the CCTP. It is comprised of three components: criteria, indicators, and levels of performance. Each indicator is accompanied by four alternative levels of performance: Outstanding, Efficient, Developing, and Unsatisfactory. The six criteria are: giving effective instructions, using motivated questioning techniques, choosing suitable techniques for correcting mistakes, praising the correct answers, systematic handling of the blackboard, and making and using available audio-visual aids. A number of statements of expected performances (indicators) is derived from each criterion. The rubric is based on a four-point scale ranging as: outstanding (4), efficient (3), developing (2), and unsatisfactory (1).

- **Piloting ASR**

- **Validity of the ASR**

This scoring rubric was submitted to a panel of jury for content and face validity. They were requested to give their opinions concerning the adequacy and appropriateness of

performance levels They reported that the levels of performance are adequate, appropriate, and varied. In addition, their feedback led to replace some statements with others.

- **Internal consistency of the ASR**

To determine the internal consistency of the six criteria of the ASR, the correlation coefficient for each criterion of the analytic scoring rubric with the whole rubric was computed using Pearson Correlation Formula. Results are reported in table 2.

(Table 2)

The Correlation Coefficient of the Six Criteria of the (ASR) with the Whole Rubric.

| Criterion                                    | M     | SD   | 'r'    |
|--|-------|------|--------|
| Giving effective instructions                | 12.70 | 3.21 | 0.940* |
| Using motivated question techniques          | 14.80 | 2.42 | 0.942* |
| Choosing suitable techniques for correcting  | 13.60 | 2.60 | 0.952* |
| Praising the correct answers                 | 7.70  | 2.56 | 0.816* |
| Systematic handling of the chalkboard        | 12.55 | 1.73 | 0.765* |
| Making and using available audio-visual aids | 1.23  | 1.23 | 0.835* |

Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As shown in (table 2), the correlation coefficient for each criterion i. e., giving effective instructions, using motivated question techniques, choosing suitable techniques for correcting mistakes, praising the correct answers, systematic handling of the chalkboard, and making and using available audio-visual aids, with the whole rubric were .940, .942, .952, .816, .765, .835 respectively. These results are statistically significant at the 0.01 level and indicate that ASR has high internal consistency.

- **Reliability of the ASR**

Scorer reliability was used to establish the ASR reliability. A sample of prospective teachers ( n = 20 ) were visited and evaluated by two raters ( the researcher and an external evaluator) independently. A grade was given to the student teacher on each visit using the scoring rubric. The correlation coefficient between the two scores was computed using Pearson Correlation Formula.

### **Procedures of the Study**

Prior to the experiment, the researcher implemented the following procedures:

1. An interview was carried out with a group of supervisors and English teachers as a pilot study.
2. Depending on the interview results and the previous literature, a preliminary checklist of classroom teaching performance and practices was designed. Later, its validity and reliability was determined.
3. The developed checklist (CCTP) was administered to the participants to identify the criteria areas of classroom teaching practices for which they felt the greatest need to help.
4. The experiment lasted for 8 weeks. Both control and experimental groups were pre-observed to measure their classroom teaching performance.
5. The pre-observation took place at the beginning of the practicum period. The experimental group were trained to reflect. They were introduced to different activities of reflection in a workshop which was conducted in the first week of the practicum period at Al-Quds Secondary School for girls in Rafah.
6. The period during practicum was devoted wholly to reflection practices. Each participant made a journal writing format after each class.
7. Then, each student teacher visited her partner class and completed the classroom peer observation format using the procedures that both parties had agreed on.
8. Before the end of practicum, the two groups (the control and the experimental) were also post- observed. The performance of both groups was rated (pre and post observation) according to six criteria. Each participant was evaluated on two visits by the researcher and an external evaluator independently.
9. A grade was given to the participant on each visit using the analytic scoring rubric (ASR).

### **Statistical Treatment and Analysis of Data**

Data collected were statistically analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively using a set of statistical procedures through the SPSS. Descriptive statistics such as means, standard deviations, frequencies, ranks and percentages were computed. Independent samples t-test (2- tailed) was used to determine if there were any significant differences in the mean scores between the experimental and control one on the pre and posttest. Also, paired samples t-test (2-tailed) was used to determine if there were any significant differences between the mean

scores of the same group (experimental) on the pre and posttest. For statistical analysis, the alpha level of significance of 0.01 of confidence was adopted. To measure the effect size " d " of using the reflective teaching strategies (independent variable) on the classroom performance (dependent variable) of the experimental group, Eta Squared "  $\eta^2$  " was computed using " t " value for the differences between the means.

### Results of the Study

This part presents a discussion of the study results related to the questions and the hypotheses of the study.

#### 1. Results of the checklist of classroom teaching practices (CCTP).

The results related to the first question of the study "What are the areas of classroom teaching practices in which the student teachers need the greatest help?" will be answered in light of table 3.

(Table 3)

Frequencies, Percentages and Ranks of Classroom Teaching Practices Needed by the Study Participants

| Item  | f  | %     | Rank |
|---|----|-------|------|
| 1. Giving effective instructions.                             | 26 | 81.25 | 1    |
| 2. Using motivated question techniques.                       | 24 | 75.00 | 2    |
| 3. Choosing suitable techniques for correcting mistakes.      | 22 | 68.75 | 3    |
| 4. Praising the correct answers.                              | 21 | 65.62 | 4    |
| 5. Systematic handling of the blackboard.                     | 20 | 62.50 | 5    |
| 6. Making and using available audio-visual aids.              | 19 | 59.37 | 6    |
| 7. Using suitable timing of class.                            | 18 | 56.25 | 7    |
| 8. Explaining / discussing the grammatical rules.             | 18 | 56.25 | 8    |
| 9. Using EFL patterns and structures in different situations. | 18 | 56.25 | 9    |
| 10. Posturing and moving around the class.                    | 17 | 53.12 | 10   |
| 11. Demonstrating the different English language skills.      | 16 | 50.00 | 11   |

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| Item   | f  | %     | Rank |
|--|----|-------|------|
| 12. Dealing with students' individual differences.                     | 14 | 43.75 | 12   |
| 13. Using vibration of voice level.                                    | 12 | 37.50 | 13   |
| 14. Endeavoring to involve the students in different class activities. | 11 | 34.37 | 14   |
| 15. Calling / addressing students in their names.                      | 9  | 28.12 | 15   |
| 16. Grouping students in pairs / groups and controlling them.          | 8  | 25.00 | 16   |
| 17. Exerting efforts to deal with the students' problems.              | 7  | 21.87 | 17   |
| 18. Developing a good rapport with the students.                       | 7  | 21.82 | 18   |
| 19. Bringing various resources to class.                               | 6  | 18.75 | 19   |
| 20. Using students' first language through lesson procedures.          | 5  | 15.62 | 20   |

Table (3) shows the frequency and percentage of each item of the checklist. The rank of each item is also presented to indicate the most important classroom teaching performance and practices needed by EFL prospective teachers.

Based on the data in the table (3), the items which got the highest frequency and percentage were giving effective instructions, using motivated questioning techniques, choosing suitable techniques for correcting mistakes, praising the correct answers, systematic handling of the blackboard, and making and using available audio-visual aids, respectively. Conversely, the items which got the lowest frequency and percentage were calling / addressing students in their names, grouping students in pairs / groups and controlling them, exerting efforts to deal with the students' problems, developing a good rapport with the students, bringing various resources to class, and using students' first language through lesson procedures, respectively. In addition, using suitable timing of class, explaining / discussing the grammatical rules, and using EFL patterns and structures in different situations had similar frequency and percentage. In other words, giving instructions had the highest percentage (81.25 %) whereas Using students' first language through lesson procedures. (15.62%).

- Results related to the second question **"How effective is the use of reflective teaching approach in developing classroom performance of English major student teachers?"** will be answered in light of table 4.

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(Table 4)

The Effect Size of the Reflective Teaching Strategies on Overall Classroom Performance of the Experimental Group

| Independent variable           | Independent variable          | T      | DF | $\eta^2$ | D    | Effect size |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------|----|----------|------|-------------|
| Reflective Teaching strategies | Overall classroom performance | -9.291 | 15 | 0.85     | 4.76 | large       |

Statistical findings in (table 4), indicated that the independent variable (reflective teaching strategies) had a large effect size (4.76) on the dependent variable (classroom performance).

- The results related to the third question "What is the effect of reflective teaching approach on the six stated areas of classroom performance of the student teachers?" will be answered in light of table 5.

(Table 5)

The Effect Size of the Reflective Teaching Strategies on the Six Dimensions of Classroom Performance of the Experimental Group

| Independent variable           | Dependent variable                                   | T      | DF | $\eta^2$ | D    | Effect size |
|--------------------------------|--|--------|----|----------|------|-------------|
| Reflective Teaching Strategies | Giving effective instructions                        | -7.246 | 15 | 0.78     | 3.77 | Large       |
|                                | Using motivated question techniques                  | -7.027 | 15 | 0.76     | 3.56 | Large       |
|                                | Choosing suitable techniques for correcting mistakes | -7.766 | 15 | 0.80     | 4.00 | Large       |
|                                | Praising the correct answers                         | -5.805 | 15 | 0.69     | 2.98 | Large       |
|                                | Systematic handling of the Blackboard                | -6.822 | 15 | 0.75     | 3.56 | Large       |
|                                | Making and using available audiovisual aids          | -6.352 | 15 | 0.73     | 3.29 | Large       |

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As Table 5 shows, the reflective teaching strategies (independent variable) had a large effect size on developing the six dimensions of classroom performance (dependent variables) i. e., giving effective instructions, using motivated question techniques, choosing suitable techniques for correcting mistakes, praising the correct answers, systematic handling of the blackboard, and making and using available audio-visual aids. "d" values were 3.77, 3.56, 4.00, 2.98, 3.56, and 3.29, respectively. The highest score of the effect size was noted for correcting mistakes while the lowest score was for praising the correct answers ( reinforcement).

### Results of the hypotheses of study.

**1. Results related to the first hypothesis " There are statistically significant differences at 0.01 level between the means scores of the control and the experimental in the post test of classroom performance on the analytic scoring rubric, in favor of the experimental group".**

Independent sample t-test was conducted to compare the gain scores of the experimental group and control group.

Table 6 presents the mean scores, standard deviations, t-value, and t significance of overall classroom performance of the two groups on the post test.

**(Table 6)**

t-Value for Overall Classroom Performance of Both Groups (Post Test)

| Variable                      | Group        | M     | SD   | T     | Sig   |
|-------------------------------|--------------|-------|------|-------|-------|
| Overall classroom performance | Experimental | 80.40 | 6.90 | 7.102 | 0.000 |
|                               | Control      | 62.59 | 7.27 |       |       |

Table 6 shows that the mean score of the experimental was (80.40) with a standard deviation of (6.90). However, the mean score of the control group was (62.59) with a standard deviation of (7.27). Result of the t-test revealed that there were statistically significant differences at ( $p < 0.01$ ) between the mean scores of the control and experimental groups in the post test of classroom performance. This means that the experimental group achieved significantly higher degree of improvement than the control group.

**2. Results related to the second hypothesis " There are statistically significant differences at (0.01) level between the mean scores of the control and experimental groups in the post-test of classroom performance on each of the six areas of analytic scoring rubric criteria i. e., giving effective instructions, using motivated question techniques, choosing suitable**

techniques for correcting mistakes, praising the correct answers, systematic handling of the blackboard, and making and using available audio-visual aids., in favor of the experimental group”.

(Table 7)

t-Values for the Six Dimensions of Classroom Performance of Both Groups (Post Test)

| Classroom Teaching practice                          | group        | M     | SD   | T     | Sig    |
|--|--------------|-------|------|-------|--------|
| Giving effective instructions                        | Experimental | 15.09 | 1.86 | 7.102 | 0.000  |
|  | Control      | 10.62 | 2.39 |       |        |
| Using motivated question Techniques                  | Experimental | 16.75 | 1.43 | 6.685 | 0.0000 |
|  | Control      | 13.46 | 1.27 |       |        |
| Choosing suitable techniques for correcting mistakes | Experimental | 15.75 | 1.85 | 5.698 | 0.000  |
|  | Control      | 12.03 | 1.83 |       |        |
| Praising the correct answers                         | Experimental | 19.18 | 1.09 | 5.417 | 0.000  |
|  | Control      | 6.37  | 1.76 |       |        |
| Systematic handling of the Blackboard                | Experimental | 13.62 | 0.92 | 5.283 | 0.000  |
|  | Control      | 11.78 | 1.04 |       |        |
| Making and using available audiovisual aids          | Experimental | 10.00 | 0.81 | 5.519 | 0.000  |
|  | Control      | 8.31  | 0.91 |       |        |

Table 7 demonstrates that the t-values revealed that there were statistically significant differences at ( $p < 0.01$ ) between the mean scores of the control group and the experimental one in the post-test of classroom performance on each of the six areas of scoring rubric criteria i. e., giving effective instructions, using motivated question techniques, choosing suitable techniques for correcting mistakes, praising the correct answers, systematic handling of the blackboard, and making and using available audio-visual aids.

Thus, results indicated that the reflective group performed better than the unreflective group on the six dimensions of classroom performance. For the experimental group, the

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participants scored (15.09), (16.75), (15.75), (9.18), (13.62), (10.00) for giving effective instructions, using motivated question techniques, choosing suitable techniques for correcting mistakes, praising the correct answers, systematic handling of the blackboard, and making and using available audiovisual aids, respectively. Concerning the control group, the subjects scored (10.62), (13.46), (12.03), (6.37), (11.78), (8.31) for giving effective instructions, using motivated question techniques, choosing suitable techniques for correcting mistakes, praising the correct answers, systematic handling of the blackboard, and making and using available audio-visual aids, respectively.

### **Discussion and Interpretation of the Results**

The following discussion can be stated in light of the present study results, review of literature, and the previous related studies.

It is clear from the results that the most important classroom teaching performance and practices for which both groups need the greatest help were "giving instructions, questioning techniques, correcting mistakes, reinforcement, handling the blackboard, and making and using of audio-visuals aids". Conversely, the items which got the lowest frequency and percentage were "use of students' names", "student grouping", "dealing with students problem", "rapport with students", "use of resources", and "use of Arabic", respectively. In addition, "timing of class", "explanations/ discussion of rules", and "practicing new language patterns and structures" had similar frequency and percentage.

Results indicated that the experimental group outperformed the control group in classroom teaching practices. The high scores obtained by the experimental group on the post test was due to the large effect of reflective teaching strategies on classroom performance. The experimental group showed a satisfactory improvement with reference to classroom teaching practices i. e., giving instructions, questioning techniques, correcting mistakes, reinforcement, handling the blackboard, and making and using audio-visuals aids.

Results also indicated that the experimental group achieved more improvement regarding questioning techniques while they achieved less in reinforcement. Supporting the above mentioned findings, Pacheco (2005) assured that "reflective teaching is undoubtedly a valid means towards effective teaching practices".

Also, El-Sayed (2005) assured that reflective teaching had a positive effect on developing EFL student teachers' teaching skills. Pollard et al. (2002) reported that reflective practice supports initial training students in satisfying performance standards and competences. Reflective teaching is beneficial for both pre-service and in-service teachers and teacher

education programs are becoming more devoted to develop reflective practices in their student teachers (Al-Harithi, 2015).

Results of the present study indicated that the experimental group had favorable attitudes towards using the reflective teaching approach. This result is in agreement with some other researchers. El-Dib (1993) mentioned that student teachers who adopt the model of reflective teaching are encouraged to adopt a positive attitude toward their practices.

Results of the present study are consistent with some views reported by Al-Hazmi (2008) who assured that professional development of prospective teachers could happen through reflective teaching and who proved that there is an intimate relationship between reflective teaching and teacher development.

Results of Hanna's (1991) study showed that student teachers who were exposed to the awareness techniques (using observation sheet) came closer to the researcher's own evaluation than did the control group. Most of the sample agreed that Journals provide a private and non-threatening environment to reflect and write about one's teaching experience. This result is consistent with some studies that concentrated on the potential benefits of using teaching and learning journals as tool for self-reflection by student teacher in education programs in this study.

Also, these results are in harmony with Al-Hazmi (2008) who believed that reflective journals are often key elements of the reflective teacher's practice.

Results of the present study are also consistent with those reported in other studies. El-Sayed (2005) reported that peers discussions provided student teachers with various opportunities to relate their experience to those of others. Wallace (2004) pointed out that peer observation enabled teachers to get feedback from their colleagues, which was motivating and rewarding, enhancing reflection, improving self-esteem, and relieving tension. Most of the sample indicated that peer comments during the meetings helps improving teaching practices and a very effective way for critical reflection on their own teaching.

### Summary of the Results

The results of the present study can be summarized as follows:

1. The most important classroom teaching practices in which both groups need the greatest help "were giving effective instructions, using motivated question techniques, choosing suitable techniques for correcting mistakes, praising the correct answers, systematic handling of the blackboard, and making and using available audio-visual aids".

2. Statistically significant differences were found in overall classroom performance in favor of the experimental group as compared with the control group, due to reflective teaching strategies (t-value is 7.10).
3. Statistically significant differences were noted for classroom performance and teaching practices, in favor of the experimental group, in the post-test. The experimental group gained higher scores than the control one on each of six cores of classroom performance i. e., giving effective instructions, using motivated question techniques, choosing suitable techniques for correcting mistakes, praising the correct answers, systematic handling of the blackboard, and making and using available audiovisual aids (t-values are 5.89, 6.68, 5.69, 5.41, 5.28, and 5.51, respectively).

### **Conclusions**

Based on the findings of the current study, the following conclusions could be drawn:

1. The reflective teaching strategies can be used effectively with EFL student teachers during the practicum period.
2. The constructive role of reflection on the development of EFL pre-service teacher was clear.
3. Effective teaching is linked to reflection, enquiry and continuous professional development and growth.
4. Knowing how to make a reflective journal is a worthwhile skill.

### **Recommendations**

In view of the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are presented:

1. The reflective teaching strategies should be incorporated in EFL teacher education programs.
2. EFL prospective teachers should be introduced to reflective teaching and its principles in EFL methodology course.
3. EFL prospective teachers should make every effort to learn more about reflective teaching and its activities.
4. EFL preservice teachers should improve their effectiveness in the classroom by gaining a better understanding of their own individual teaching styles through reflective practice.
5. Prospective teachers should be trained on methods of developing reflective thinking levels.

6. It is recommended to offer student teachers the opportunity to work with peers.
7. It is necessary find out the effect of using reflection on several aspects of student teachers such as personal features and performance as a whole (inside and outside the classroom).

#### **Suggestions for Further Research**

1. This study can be replicated on other classroom teaching practices (e. g., timing of class, posture and movement, use of Arabic, use of voice, student grouping, classroom management, and practicing new language patterns and structures).
2. There is a need to further research other reflective tools i. e., portfolio, computer conferencing, action research, and videotaping that can be employed by EFL teachers.
3. There is a need for further exploration of differences in attitudes to reflection and reflective practice.
4. A study comparing the effects of different reflective teaching practices (journal writing, peer observation, five-minute papers) on teacher development.

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