

DESIGNING A FRAMEWORK FOR CLASSROOM OBSERVATION FOR EFL TEACHERS IN ARAB CONTEXT

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Abstract

This study outlines a framework for Foreign Language (EFL) teachers in Arab context helping them to implement classroom observations in English as education. The research study reflects on designing a wide-ranging multistep framework that helps EFL learner teachers (LT) in execution of classroom observations self-sufficiently. At the same time, it focuses on reducing the likely issue of interpersonal conflicts with other involved stakeholders. The main idea of this paper is to offer LT and instructors in EFL teacher education a practical framework in order to implement an independent range of classroom observations, facilitating the process of classroom observations in order to add value contribution to overall professional growth of the teachers.

KEY WORDS: EFL- FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS, CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS; LANGUAGE TEACHING, TEACHER EDUCATION, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

Teacher training is a vast field that comprises many subject fields of teacher education. Classroom observations is considered as one of the most substantial constituent for the professional growth of student-teachers (ST) during teacher training. Classroom observations provide learner teachers the opportunity for observation, documentation and learning about the classroom learning arena. Having true learning experiences gained from observations during the course of teachers training facilitates the process of transition from teacher education to the real teaching scene. The capability to objectively and effectively make classroom observation is a learned skill but vital to turning into a teaching professional and a life-long learner. Though it is difficult, but it is very important for a novice teacher to observe EFL classroom activities very closely because such practices allow them to develop as successful teaching professionals. This is also a fact that EFL classrooms provide an incredibly complex scenario for teacher observation. As discussed by Richards and Farrell (2005) who defined language lessons as “self-motivated and up to certain level these are a combination of volatile series of events. These lessons get a complete involvement of varying contributors and usually multiple events happen concurrently. Another commonly noted factor is that the classroom events usually unfold so speedily that in reality the note taking practice of multiple events is almost impossible” (p. 88); therefore, most of the ST find it challenging to filter out something worth observing for their professional growth. Another challenge could be ST’s own perceptions towards the whole process of classroom observations. Borg (2003) designates teacher perception towards observation as the “unobservable cognitive dimension of teaching process – only what teachers learn, trust and contemplate” (p. 81). This unobservable cognitive dimension contains the teacher development cycle teachers experience as they disengage themselves from their role as a student-teacher and start developing into professionally qualified teachers. As a matter of fact, there is a big group of teachers who consider the classroom observations as a sudden source of negative feelings of evaluation. As reported by Richards and Farrell (2005), classroom observation is likely to be linked with evaluation, subsequently it is usually considered as intimidating or negative experience. On factual grounds, if considered in a constructive manner, only a limited number of observations are meant to be evaluative in teacher education, whereas the other cases usually provide a base for teacher development or a better understanding of classroom undercurrents. As a matter of fact, non-evaluative observations should occur more frequently in teacher education than evaluative observations as these are the types much appreciated by the teachers and nurture personal and professional growth for ST. Henceforth, in order to provide more non-evaluative observations and turning them more fruitful, a

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transparent process of observation should be adopted that should benefit both the observe and the observer from the initial target to the last achievement point.

An outline for classroom observations in the context of EFL teacher education

The current outline provides a roadmap for guiding the ST through six steps for applying and contributing in fruitful and least alarming classroom observations. This set up is different from many other observation systems e.g. COLT by Spada & Fröhlich, 1995 in a way that it does not outline the observation target in advance for ST by providing items for time or event sampling. On contrary it emphases mainly on the sociocultural process of adopting for the ST because they externally observe classroom activities and adopt this knowledge as per their own school of though and existing knowledge. This idea closely relates to the Vygotskyan belief that emotions can't be separated from thinking linking to a portion in language teacher education explored also by Johnson (2013) Nonetheless, by applying this structure, ST can start to withdraw from the tumult of communication in the classroom, and in addition the feelings these summon dependent on present or related involvements, and spotlight all the more obviously on the solid exercises that can be watched for expert development.

Consequently, the aforementioned structure is intended to serve ST'S psychological measurement specifically as it intellectually and efficiently sets them up for leading, reflecting and disguising their classroom perceptions for expert development. In other worlds, it is implied to extend ST'S awareness and basic consideration amid this critical component of their instructor preparing and eventually progress their chances of procuring more noteworthy rewards from classroom perceptions.

It is actually helping to enhance the ST's awareness and critical thinking during observation part of their teacher training process and eventually enhance their chances of getting better results from classroom observations. Besides that, it includes ideas that help to decrease tensions between observers and observed ST, as dislike occasionally arises when the former gives critical feedback to the latter instead of giving constructive support (Fanselow, 1988). Having stress during the observation process is a common factor because of teachers' sensitivity while being observed in their classrooms. It has been indicated strongly by Richards and Farrell (2005) that having complete transparency during the observation process would be a vital factor both for the observer and the observed: "As the process of observation allows the observer to intrude the St's classroom directly, it is imperative that the observation procedures for carrying out observations should be carefully discussed and approved between the both parties" (p. 94). It has been confirmed from various experiences that interpersonal issues about classroom observations can be decreased if all the participants function with a set framework like the one proposed here. Though the observation instrument has to be tested frequently, initial feedback from STs studying in EFL teacher training programs in two different groups of teaching scenarios suggests that it enhances ST consciousness about the effectiveness of classroom observations, particularly when implemented shortly before their initial classroom observations during their teacher training.

Special P-Code framework for observations in EFL context

Significantly, the 6P framework comprises of recommendations for pre-, while- and post-observation stages, giving details of how ST should anticipate the (1) purpose, (2) predicate, (3) perceived parties, (4) participants, (5) profitters and (6) products of their classroom observations. The other important component of this P-code framework is that it is self-monitoring. It indicates that the process of classroom observations is a cyclic process as the final product of an observation relates onto its initial purpose. This cyclic process allows the observer to reflect whether the initial purpose of the observation is attained in its product or not. Consequently, ST undergoing observations can guarantee that what they target to achieve from the observation includes decisive results that can support their development as teachers.

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Figure 1: 6P- Code Framework

As described by Zacharias (2012) there are three didactic motives for conducting observations in EFL teacher education that are helpful for ST during pre-service phases of their training education. She has proposed three ideas: (1) observation for learning, (2) observation for description and (3) observation for evaluation. The current study would elaborate on these three purposes and give expanded description for the subsequent framework. There is a reformulation of these purposes from verb phrases into nouns just to distinct them from the actions that lead to the products. The following table 1 demonstrates how on initial stage for a specific purpose is the observation being conducted and that has further five interlacing and successive steps. All these steps are connected in a way that decision for taking step 1 has to be taken before step 2 and so forth. These steps are also divided into three key sequential categories represented on the left side of Table 1: pre-observation, while-observation and post-observation steps. Hence, the table should be read in descendent manner.

Table 1: 6P- Code Framework for classroom Observation

<i>Pre-Observation Phase</i>	1 Purpose	Development	Understanding	Improvement
	2 Predicate	Learn	Document	Evaluate
	3 Perceived parties	Experienced	Process	People /Activities
<i>Observation Phase</i>	4 Participants	Expert (Observed)	Peer (Observed-	Expert (Observed)-
		Novice (Observer)	Peer (Observer)	Expert (Observer)
			Self (Observed & Observer)	Novice (Observed)-
				Expert (Observer)
	5 Profifers	Observer	Observed & Observer	Observed
<i>Post-Observation Phase</i>	6 Product	Developing as professionals	Comprehension of classroom dynamics	Improvement

Observation for Development

In the initial stage of the process the ST has to decide that as part of their planning for pre-observation phase what should be the aim of the observation while selecting a particular classroom. The outline for the purposes has been defined in the 6P-code framework categorized into three types: (1) development, (2) understanding and (3) improvement. According to that, prior to the classroom observation, ST should mark a significant point, that is, the purpose of the current observation. At any stage where ST has to relate to these question points, they should be guided by teacher educators who should use markers in order to guide STs in their decision-making process. For

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example, while making a decision for the purpose of observation, it may be advantageous for teacher educators to initially advise for observations for development (i.e. watching others), prior to observing for understanding, and finally for personal improvement. In current study, development is entirely pointing towards the professional development, in order to have better comprehension of the fact about what it counts to be an excellent EFL teacher. It is clearly evident, that developing into a teaching professional is not a process that is strictly bounded by teacher training. It is noteworthy that ST first time start emerging as a professional mind after seeing themselves at the back of a classroom having to observe a lesson not as a student, but through the lens of an ambitious teacher. Therefore, in the course of developing as professionals, ST should learn to observe not what teachers are teaching, but their mode of teaching. At this stage, supervisors should incorporate structured observation schemes for ST to guide them for multiple related aspects of professional growth. Such process can help to take shape of well-known observation schemes, but it is also possible that they introduce customized observation schemes, developed and structured by the ST themselves. In case of professional growth, it is vital that ST are bearing in mind how to observe experienced teachers' classroom to learn their methods (Zacharias, 2012). Gebhard (2009) indicates that "in order to develop professional proficiency it is vital to understand how experienced teachers deal with their lessons and what type of the professional discourses are being used by them" (p. 252). Such observations include watching general attitude of the teacher like body language, pattern of spacing in the classroom, voice control as compared to the class size, physical appearance, classroom management, etc. In the EFL classroom context, more specific aspects such as teacher talk time, pattern of error correction, feedback techniques, use of first language (L1) and second language (L2), concept check questions, teaching subskills, etc. can also be observed from professional development viewpoint. Zacharias (2012) proposes that new trainee teachers should observe a senior teacher and enhance their learning by seeing the way lesson has been structured and feedback techniques are used (p. 135). Fanselow (1988) has very smartly focused on the benefits of observing others for learning purposes: When observation is based on watching others to achieve knowledge and gain self-insight and then practice to generate own ideas based on what has been observed from others leads to construct own knowledge (p. 116).

Predicate: The next P in the course of pre-observation planning is the predicate. While focusing on the predicate of the observation, actually ST decide and plan on which activity should guide their observation. The predicate actually relates to the initial introductory activity that is directed by the purpose of the observation. For instance, if the purpose of the observation is professional development, then they predicated on observing in order to learn on how to develop into a good EFL teacher. Further it refers to the principal mind-set the observer should have while conducting any observation. It is quite supportive to start the second step by considering the question: 'How to learn from the person being observed?' If seen from theoretical point of view, the ST would gather the declarative knowledge by observation and analyzing the other experienced teachers, though the main purpose of observing for development is to step forward toward acquiring the procedural knowledge about teaching. At this step, it is vital to bear in mind that while doing observation for development purpose the quality of the teaching should not be evaluated, but relatively be watching for the points that can enhance their own professional development as future EFL teachers. As a third step in the pre-observation planning stage is to ponder and choose who should be observed. In other words, to be stated as who would be the perceived party! Consequently, the observer's target should be to observe someone or something with the aim of obtaining information. This point sounds insignificant, but it refers to the actual observables in the context of EFL classroom. Observing skilled and experienced teachers helps ST for attaining significant information required for teaching and learning, this phenomenon is also called "action-system knowledge" (Zacharias, 2012, p. 134). The main points to be worth-noticing for development are the teacher's actions with the aim of acquiring a deep understanding about how to become a skilled teaching professional. Observing teacher's behaviours can be considered as one of the most challenging steps in classroom observations for ST (Weyland, 2013). The scheme of selection for teacher behaviours that are regarded as valued is sometimes difficult to plan as ST often plan to observe the difficult high-inference variables, meaning items that include a high level assumption about teacher behaviours or actions. There is a set of unobservable teacher behaviours, for example: mode of decision making, engagements of action, problems and teaching principles (Richards & Farrell, 2005). In order to accomplish the purposeful observation, ST should acquire the background knowledge about low-inference and observable ideas. This is important so that they could notice and identify characteristics of good teaching art. For example, EFL ST should be well aware of various types of error correction and feedback like repetitions, recasts, explicit correction, metalinguistic feedback, elicitations and clarification

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requests (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). Some other observables in EFL teaching might refer to other types like teacher behaviour and teacher talk time. There are more categories such as: timing framework, planning for activities and questioning techniques (Richards & Farrell, 2005). It is imperative for observer to pre-plan the points to be learnt from the other experienced teacher. Collectively, there are certain amazing characteristics of good teaching, and ST should plan and prioritize the ones they consider valuable for them to learn from the experienced teachers before even entering their classroom for observation purpose.

Here it leads to the fourth P in the model: participants. This is the first step of “while-observation phase” that ST should plan. Worth mentioning is the point at this stage that during the course of observing for professional development, the ST should be taking the role of the novice, and the observed as the expert. The ST should perform observation without considering the social, educational or power relationships may exist between them (e.g. native speaker–nonnative speaker, male–female, third year university student–teacher with ten years of experience). The most important reason for drawing these lines and assigning these roles is to reduce any expected tensions between the observed and the observer. For example, Malderez (2009) states that conflicts may cultivate while training the EFL teacher when beliefs and principles about conventional and communicative language teaching methods differ from each other. Having uncertainty about roles during observation process may cause stress for the ST who would feel themselves in the less appropriate role of observing expert, looking for improvement, then focusing on areas of the teacher’s behaviour or mode of teaching method that differ from their own. This might cause unsought for negative criticism about the observed lesson. If the ST has clear understanding of the predicate and perceived parties, then there shouldn’t be critical evaluative comments at all. Besides that, the point not to be ignored is that some experienced teachers may learn from the ideas about language learning and teaching that ST could present. Hence, there should be a point of mutual agreement between the observed experienced teacher and the observer novice ST about the aim of the observation before even they commence observations. After knowing the purpose of the observation is development the expert teacher with full confidence becomes more resourceful and supportive for the novice to learn from, instead of having the feeling of being evaluated and criticized. This clearly indicates that the experienced teacher should also be given an opportunity to get ready for their new role as a support and guided with practical ideas for offering constructive feedback like those suggested by Fanselow (1988, pp. 116-117). In the scenario of having classroom observations for professional development, the roles should be clearly defined like the novice is there to learn (the predicate) from a more capable other (the perceived party) in order to develop professionally from the process of observation.

This leads us to the fifth P of the framework, that is, the profiler. In this suggested framework the profiler is the person who is at reception end getting the valuable advantage from the observation in terms of professional growth. Considering the fact that this participant will be the one who has the potential to harvest valuable knowledge about learning language teaching skills. However, being conscious about personal teaching skills during the observation directs to more mindfulness and thus provides a greater chance for adding more valuable knowledge to the already existing one. If the previously mentioned four steps are taken, then it would be easier for the profiler to obtain more benefits and almost automatically generated because previously existing reasoning knowledge, leading action, observable item and participant roles help to construct the infrastructure that helps to find the way for profitable knowledge gain. Another supportive factor is when the profilers understand how observing the experts helps them in considering their own teaching differently (Fanselow, 1988). At the final stage of the observation there is a concluding step taken either a scrutiny of the developed observation scheme, self-reflection on conducted observation or in a discussion with the observed teacher, mentor or peer pattern observation. As Richards and Farrell (2005) state, “observation is a component feature of teacher development that includes discussions and reflection and finally acquiring an effective understanding of the meaning of the events observed” (p. 87). In the context of professional development, the observer/profiler of the observation should relate to the activity that predicates the observation and question themselves: ‘What has been learnt from the experienced teacher?’ and ‘How will my learning help me with my own professional development?’ While discussing with others, the observer may like to define the key points of the observation, and then addressing the questions about how these could help for their own professional development. In the scenario of having a discussion with the experienced teacher, the observer may ask some ‘why’ questions but it should be done without being critical and negative. Significantly, it is vital to always focus on the aim of the observation agreed upon right in the start and they should stick to the mind-frame of

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observing to learn and not observing to evaluate. During this reflection stage, it is important that the observer compares the achieved target of the observation with the initially set purpose, by this means completing the cyclic pattern and watching over the attained goals hitting the targeted objectives. If the observer is not satisfied with the attained goals and objectives and there is least learning at their end, then it is important to reflect on why that has happened. It is significant at this stage for observers to be reflective about their own planning and actions taken and ponder over the fact that the observation scheme they opted needs amendments. The observable item they chose to observe could be unobservable or they need to improve their style. Besides that, ST might encounter some experienced teachers as difficult source of learning for whatever reasons. Considering the fact, these are expected cases for an unproductive observation. The most important thing is that these reasons are timely figured out and necessary steps are taken to improve the upcoming observation events.

Observation for understanding

The second column in the 6P-code framework includes observation for understanding. This is the first P of this observation type. In order to understand classroom activities as a passive observer's perspective is an effective and strong way to develop as a professional as it provides an opportunity to ST to experience classroom dynamics without getting directly involved. At this point the aim of the observation is to "help reduce the gap between some one's perceived idea of teaching and ground reality" (Richards & Farrell, 2005, p. 94). Establishing the current aim is the activity of documenting classroom dynamics. Therefore, the second P in the framework is documentation. It is vital in all three types of observations to describe what has been observed. At this stage documenting reflects a better side of the objective action that the observer should be taking into account during the process of observation. The ideas proposed in the current study are based on teacher-education. Though, this mode of observation seems nearly parallel to the observations conducted in second language acquisition research, especially related to action-based research. According to Burns (2010), in the scenario of action-based research the main goal of the classroom observation is observing ideas that are happening in front of us in a manner that we haven't deliberately noticed before and about acting like 'strangers' in our own classrooms" (p. 57). This is an idea of keeping yourself away from your own acts and observing matters from other's perspective. In order to attain this, ST's main activity should necessitate accurately done documentation about all that is taking place in the classroom. This could be done either by watching video recordings of lessons or by doing peer observation through peer-learning activities. Burns (2010) proposes searching for "critical incidents" (p. 60). Therefore, this may be too ambiguous for ST who have less experience of teaching. As suggested by McKay (2006), there are four key points to be observed in the classroom: settings, systems, people and behaviour. Apparently, these four categories are very wide-ranging and multifaceted classes, that means the observers should consider in their pre-observation planning which sub criteria, or sub criterion of these categories they want to particularly observe. For instance, under setting area, an observer can emphasis on what McKay (2006) indicates to as activities, signifying guideline questions such as: "Are there some activities planned to happen in one place in contrast to each other? Is there a specific zone or mode for less organized activities?" (p. 80). Her target is also to emphasize on some specific roles within settings, stating questions like: "Does a specific zone relates to a particular role? Having students in a specific seating plan, does it relates to particular roles?" (McKay, 2006, p. 80). By observing the classroom dynamics from a stranger's perspective, the observers would definitely be able to complete documentation of such items accurately. From MacKay's point of view, the more formal systems relate to having the more structured the classroom in reality. Besides, if observing any individual in classroom is the task of an observer then he/she should be able to complete documentation of the roles and pattern of communications of the individuals in the classroom. When you observe from an outsider's perspective, by observing the roles of the students and their pattern of interaction, it is convenient for the observer to classify points like peer groups, class leaders or group outsiders (McKay, 2006). Documentation of such information can help to focus on understanding the fact and finding the logic why certain people work together very well, while others can't. Eventually, observing the classroom dynamics also contains observing individuals' behaviour. This category might be the most complex one, and when documenting teachers' behaviours, it overlays with observing for professional development. The valid way of observation for understanding should be to focus on the students and their learning styles and methods. By adapting such method, the teacher will remain involved but without being the main focus. There are certain significant features in such situation that are vital to be observed, for instance, question answer session between the teacher and students, proportion of use of L1 and L2,

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methods of error correction, body language, etc. There is a long list of such points, but the most important thing is that before observation the observer should be aware of the targeted student behaviours in order to have the best understanding of classroom dynamics. This is strongly suggested that there should be a pre-observation meeting between the observer and observe and they discuss in advance about the targeted student behaviours to be observed and documented. Here comes the next P in the code framework that is the first while-observation step of participants. It is strongly recommended that the participants in this set of observation are either the self, through the use of audio-visual equipment, or peers. In relation to the former, Burns (2010) states self-observation as the “observation of one’s own behaviours, views, actions, ways of communicating as a teacher” (p. 58). However, from experience it is reflected that type could be an unproductive way of observation for ST, as simultaneous monitoring of their own behaviour as well as the students’ behaviour and actions could be difficult task. Besides that, during this course of self-observation, ST would start evaluating themselves, assessing their own actions, or judging their own body language. Though having self-criticism on our own behaviours is a key factor for professional growth, it is not the target of this type of observation. Consequently, if this is a self-observation, it is recommended that the ST should observe the events in the classroom as an outsider neutral party and especially observing students’ reaction, interaction and behaviour in teacher’s presence. If seen in detail, the other roles of participant are the ones that are suitable for peer-observations. Richards and Farrell (2005) state peer observation as “a teacher or other observer closely observing and monitoring a language lesson or part of a lesson so that they could understand some aspects of teaching, learning in process, or classroom interaction” (p. 85;). The main concept presented by highlights the main aim for this type of observation, proposing that the main activity of such observations should be to complete documentation in order to comprehend the classroom dynamics. As stated by Zacharias (2012, p. 134), peer observation is more effective for some reasons: (1) it provides the observer an opportunity to check on how to deal with problems teachers face on regular basis, (2) observers get an opportunity to learn more operational (or new) approaches they themselves have not adapted, (3) peer observations also help the observer to mirror on their own teaching techniques. Though Zacharias has proposed these from a research-oriented perspective, it is strongly supported that these are actually connected to professional growth in language teacher education system. Besides that, all objectively done documentation of classroom dynamics could be a very helpful piece of information for the observed peer and also for doing peer observations “helpful for both the observer and the observed teacher” (Zacharias, 2012, p. 134). Here is swift lead to the fifth P in this observation P-code framework: profitters. Peer observations are supportive and fruitful for both the observed and the observer provided the information has been shared between the participants. As stated by Richards and Farrell (2005), while observing another teacher one can easily get triggered to have reflections about their own teaching pattern. The observed teacher can demand the observer to provide an ‘objective’ scenario of the lesson and observer at the same time can collect information about the lesson that is difficult for the observed teacher to gather and ponder about. (p. 86)

If both the participant parties want to profit equally, it is recommended that they should have a pre-observation meeting and continuous discussion before the lesson is observed. During the pre-observation meeting, the observed teacher can propose the target areas to be observed and focused by the observer. At the same level, the observer can propose target points they would like to concentrate on for their own professional growth. Zacharias (2012) proposes an overview that means the observer documents everything that’s happening while teaching” (p. 134). Though, it should be stressed that the peer-peer type mean that the observation is not evaluative. This also confirmed that the quality of the teaching shouldn’t be documented by the observer, rather there should be an objective documentation done in the classroom. It is significant to outline the well-defined roles of the participants in peer observations in order to reduce any stress on parties about the goals of observation. The observed teacher should not be put under pressure and at no time feel nervous as it is a common feeling that the presence of an observer makes the observed feel evaluated. Due to these exact reasons peer-peer observations p-code framework has been suggested, as the presence of expert-observers and novice-observed collections almost inevitably result in a certain level of evaluation. At the same time, having cooperative peers can be really comforting as they tend to mutually share knowledge and exchange ideas on equality level having a vision of common experiences.

Finally, there is the last P of this P-code framework that is the product. The final product of this type of observation system is an improved understanding of classroom dynamics. In addition to that, the product of the observation can only be successfully achieved after the participant complete their analysis of the results from observation plan, self-

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reflected themselves and finally got engaged in post-observation and a productive discussion about the lesson. There is a set of possible questions that could be raised and addressed by the participants at this stage, those include: 'What was the new learning about the classroom dynamics that was out of our awareness and practice before this lesson?' or 'What is new that has been learnt about the classroom dynamics that we were not familiar to beforehand?'. Another set of more specific questions about the programmed criteria can also be helpful at this stage of the observation plan. Participants could associate the product with the purpose that was predominantly set before the observation. While reflecting on their performance, if the participants realize that no latest and fruitful information has emerged from the observation, then automatically they need to do adjustments to their approach. Mostly these modifications are mild, such as only specifying more accurately on target points. For example, student behaviour such as 'attentiveness' can be related with 'eye-contact with teacher' or 'raises hand in class'. In other cases, these modifications could be critically strong and also end up finding a new peer to work with or another learner group to observe.

Observation for improvement

In the pursuit of teacher development through observation, the last but not the least aspect is the purpose: improvement. As Zacharias, 2012 states, this is the type of observation that usually all categories of educationist professionals (ST, experienced teachers, and teacher trainers) consider from teacher education point of view. Also, it is also considered as the most intimidating and alarming of the observation types (Richards & Farrell, 2005). In case of ST, this type of behavior could be the result of their previous experiences in related situations. It is predictable that ST will feel evaluated when others observe them teaching during training phases of their education. As a matter of fact, it has been, I have underscored that the participants must be meticulous about not being judgmental while observing for development and understanding observations. On contrary, in case of observing for improvement, the scenario will be evidently contrasting. The principal activity of such an observation is to evaluate. Zacharias (2012) proposes also identical activities like "to monitor" or "to manage". The key aim over here is that in order to progress ST's teaching style it is utmost important that a constructive feedback about the quality of their teaching is given to them at certain point of their training process. This is usually including the suggestions about the improvement and betterment of their their teaching style, their teacher talk time, methodology, etc. This is relays to the related parties involved in this type of observation: individuals and planned activities. The key factor behind this constructive feedback is not only the evaluation of teaching by just criticizing, but also giving encouraging remarks about the weak areas and appreciation for strong areas of the observed lesson. Selection of target points to be observed and evaluated should be a point of discussion between the observed and observer during pre-observation meeting. This type of set up discourages the fear point as mentioned by Richards and Farrell (2005) that evaluative observations are observer-centered and the observed teacher has no say in such type of evaluation. The observer and observed should have an agreement on target points to be observed and evaluated for improvement. For instance, for ST in EFL context usually find time management and giving clear instructions about the tasks as the most challenging areas of teaching. Hence, having an arrangement where the observer to records time scale for all tasks and takes complete notes of the set of instructions given by the observed, would be great idea in order to make a stance for constructive feedback. Maintaining complete transparency during this process will be very important in this process. The same concept as (Zacharias, 2012) proposes that there should be perfectly designed set of a clearly thought out set of pre-decided criteria that both the observed and the observer have agreed upon prior to the observation takes place. Additionally, for more concrete and fruitful evaluation for improvement that is acceptable for both parties, it is vital to have a positive and good relationship between the participants of the observations. The proposed set up is usually a combination of novice-expert or an expert-expert arrangement. This arrangement has also been reinforced by Zacharias (2012) who proposes that observations for evaluative improvement should often be conducted by more experienced on the new ones in the field" (p. 135). Especially this pattern validates in teacher education and is different from research-based observations for improvement where novice teachers should be allowed to evaluate experienced teachers for data collection purposes. Conversely, in case of teacher education it is an absolutely wrong idea to allow a new ST evaluating experienced teachers during their workshop classes as any propositions for improvement by novices would likely offence the experienced teacher. Consequently, in contrast to the observation for development, the participant relationship in improvement observations suggests that the novice ST should have the observed role, while the expert teacher should be the observer. In certain special scenarios these roles could be

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reversed between the parties, but after negotiations and complete consent agreement. The other proposed and reasonable participant relationship for this type of observation is the expert-expert arrangement. In such settings one experienced teacher invites the other experienced teacher to do evaluation for improvement. Yet, it could also be the same case where that two equally experienced ST peers would allow each other to conduct a form of observation for improvement during their workshop lessons. Apparently, in this scenario the expression of “expert” has been used in a flexible manner. Zacharias (2012) proposes a perfectly fit solution for such situations that peers should evaluate each other with some pre-discussed and mutually discussed and approved target points that allow evaluation for improvement only for “specific areas of teaching that need improvement” (p. 135). Yet, the profiler of such an observation will remain the same regardless of how the participant arrangement has been done. The observed should be the main profiler of the observation for improvement and in most cases this is the novice ST. This is quite evident that this type of observation is the only form in which the observed teacher is also the main profiler of the observation. This also keeps the observed teachers in a weak state as they are conscious that their teaching pattern and the students’ interactions are the focus of the established statement of the observer. Usually, it is hard for the observed to digest and accept feedback to see the benefits of such observations for their professional growth during observed lesson. Though having a set criteria of target points to be observed and evaluated is important to maintain transparency before conduction the real observation. This will help to enhance the value of the observation for improvement. Besides that, if the ST bears in mind that main target of the evaluation is improvement, then it can be considered positively, and conceived as a productive step toward professional growth as an EFL teacher. The real positive results of the observation for improvement are actually found in the product. The product of the observation for improvement can only be reflected at the time of post-observation discussion with the other participants involved in the observation. At this stage, it is vital that the observed does a complete and detailed self-reflection about the taught lesson, receives constructive feedback from the expert/observer, as well as having a collaborative anticipated view about the quality of the lesson and how this could be reflected positive with improvement for subsequent lessons. There are certain anticipated questions for reflections and discussions at this stage: ‘What were the high notes of the observed and how can this be built upon?’ or ‘What were the reasons behind the weak students’ interaction? What caused them to do so?’, or ‘Why was a specific activity complete failure, and how can it be improved for the next time?’. It is actually the responsibility of the expert to identify and gauge the performance level of the observed and discuss during the post-observation meeting. Also, helping and guiding the novice ST on how to build on and improve the performance level with the guided examples and suggestions. For instance, while conducting the post-observation discussions and reflecting on the observation, the observed might face difficulty in recalling the relevant moments and finding it impossible to explain the reasons for that, at this point it is the responsibility of the observer to explain those points and help the observed ST to find explanations for it. As Johnson (2009) advocates, stating that teacher education is not a process of decoding theory into exercise but “a dialogic process of reconstruct knowledge with mutual discussion and that emerges out of participation in special sociocultural practices and contexts” (p. 21). This re-constructed knowledge should then eventually guide towards improvements in teaching process in succeeding lessons. The purpose of such observation can be reflected on if this knowledge is transcribed effectively in the subsequent lessons, giving space to the observed to associate the product of their observed lesson with its original purpose.

Conclusion

The main aim of this research paper was to sketch a practical decode framework for EFL ST for implementing classroom observations in a positive scenario. This is usually challenging for ST to concentrate and propagate professionally from their classroom observations due to the complications of classroom activity, bitter past experiences, and also expected stress between the observer and observed. The proposed 6P-code framework presents a roadmap for formulation, steering the classroom functions in a constructive manner. It also helps to reflect positively on classroom observations by avoiding personal tension between the participating parties. Richards and Farrell (2005) underscore, “if observation has to be a positive event with good experience it should be carefully planned and executed” (p. 88). Hence, the target of the proposed framework is to provide constructive support to the ST and plan different types of observations with great care and with three strong purposes: development, understanding and improvement. Remaining in the outline of the proposed framework, it is suggested that each observation should be well and pre-planned with concrete action plan and agreed and pre-discussed observables. In

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addition to that, during these observations under this proposed framework, the particular roles of the participants should be clearly defined with transparent agreement on who should profit the most from particular observations. Lastly, it is concluded that the classroom observations are a recurring cyclic process because the final product of the observation is exposed post-observation and it should mirror the initial purpose of the observation.

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