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**THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS' PEDAGOGICAL  
REFLECTION OF THEIR ACTIVITIES AND SPEECH  
DURING A TEACHING PRACTICE AT SCHOOL**

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Статтю присвячено проблемі педагогічної рефлексії майбутніх учителів іноземної мови під час їх практики в школі. Під педагогічною рефлексією автор розуміє систематичний процес самоспостереження та самооцінки педагога, який передбачає спостереження за власною діяльністю та мовленням в класі, обдумування їх причин і результатів з метою подальшого внесення змін. У статті визначено роль рефлексії майбутніх учителів іноземної мови під час шкільної практики у процесі їх формування професійної компетентності. Виявлено основні етапи та способи педагогічної рефлексії студента-практиканта.

**Ключові слова:** педагогічна рефлексія, етапи, способи, практика, майбутній вчитель іноземної мови, професійна компетентність, діяльність, мовлення.

Статья посвящена проблеме педагогической рефлексии будущих учителей иностранного языка во время практики в школе. Под педагогической рефлексией автор понимает систематический процесс самонаблюдения и самооценки педагога, предусматривающий наблюдение за собственной деятельностью и речью в классе, обдумывание их причин и результатов с целью последующего внесения изменений. В статье определена роль рефлексии будущих учителей иностранного языка во время школьной практики в процессе формирования их профессиональной компетентности. Выявлены основные этапы и способы педагогической рефлексии студента-практиканта.

**Ключевые слова:** педагогическая рефлексия, этапы, способы, практика, будущий учитель иностранного языка, профессиональная компетентность, деятельность, речь.

The article deals with the problem of the future foreign language teachers' pedagogical reflection during a teaching practice at school. The pedagogical reflection is considered by the author as a teacher's systematic self-observation and self-evaluation process, providing surveillance of its own activities and speech in a classroom and thinking about its causes and results with the aim of subsequent changes. The role of the foreign language teachers' reflection in the process of their professional competence formation was identified. The main phases and means for the practice-teacher's pedagogical reflection were identified.

**Key words:** pedagogical reflection, phases, means, teaching practice, future foreign language teacher, professional competence, activities, speech.

### **The introduction**

The concept of modern Ukrainian education modernization involves the training of qualified, competitive and competent professionals according to international standards. Up to date, an

important demand for the individual of every foreign language teacher is not only a high-level theoretical knowledge and practical skills, but also the ability to non-standard creative thinking and pedagogical reflection. Such teacher forming process is made not only theoretically, but implemented in the pedagogical practice, so the question of reflection during a teaching practice at school as the factor of foreign language teachers's professional competence formation is considered to be important today.

### **The latest researches**

Many scholars (O. Blinova, 2002; I. Kotyk, 2007 etc.) have studied the teaching practice problems. The formation of foreign language teacher's professional competence has been studied by N. Barhramova, A. Bihych, N. Borysko etc. However, analysis of scientific literature has shown that the problem of the future foreign language teachers' reflection during their teaching practice at school, and especially its role in their professional competence forming, is characterized by insufficient theoretical and methodological elaboration.

**The purpose of the article** is to determine the role of the future foreign language teachers' reflection during a school practice in the formation of their professional competence.

### **The body of the article**

Nowadays a teaching practice is an important factor for every future teacher self-esteem and self-improvement. Students should realize the prime importance of a teaching practice, which is the first time that a future teacher learns that role behavior, which will be crucial to his future career. In order to make this first attempt successful, and the their further professional competence development more effective, the student should use all available means, including a pedagogical reflection, that is a reflection of a teacher.

The pedagogical reflection is considered by the author of the article as a teacher's systematic self-observation and self-evaluation process, providing surveillance of its own activities and speech in a classroom, thinking about their causes and results with the aim of subsequent changes.

According to the definition given above, the reflection process of a student as a future foreign language teacher is very

important especially in terms of teaching practice at school and is the effective factor of foreign language teachers's professional competence formation. We believe that teaching practice may be apt time for future teachers to begin the process of reflection, because of a good chance to focus on at least one class, to see the features of own teaching (for example, how you solve cases of bad behavior, encourage pupils to use a foreign language oftener and others), desiring to change them for better. An emphasis should be made on the fact that such pedagogical reflection of a student-philologist being as a practice-teacher at school can have many ways, stages, means, level and others, but the most important are considered by us to be phases and means.

We would like to name only those that should be not only at the very beginning of such reflection, but also during the whole this process.

*The first phase* in the practice-teacher's reflection is *to collect, record and analyze an information* of what is happening and has happened in the classroom, what is said or not. The means to be implemented at this stage can be a:

- 1) «Teacher's Diary»,
- 2) peer observation,
- 3) pupils' feedback (reactions and responds).

Such «Teacher's Diary» is a personal diary in which a student analyzes its own and pupils' activities at a lesson from the psychological and educational point of view, tries to find causes of progresses and problems, solutions to last, and so on. A student may also describe own reactions and feelings and those observed on the part of the students. Practice-teachers are likely to begin to pose questions about what they have observed. The specifics of the diary is seen by us to promote the professional competence of a future foreign language teacher. This kind of a diary shouldn't be confused with the other kind that is an essential and official part of documents on a practice to be given to a methodist after a practice term.

Diary writing does require a certain discipline in taking the time to do it on a regular basis. So, it is very important and nessesary for a student to make notes at «Teacher's Diary» regularly and constantly, to realise this importance and nessecity in order not to forget about it. So there are some demands to a student as a practice-teacher, they are: its responsibility, firm desire to be a teacher

in future, capability to a self-discipline and self-critics, tolerant and kind person, attentive to others, etc. On such features ground the person could associate itself with a real teacher, realising the purpose of teaching activity and having a good motivation to personal and pedagogical self-realization. There's a reason of the name «Teacher's Diary».

We also propose to divide each note of the diary into five main parts towards every lesson: 1) the purpose and objectives of it; 2) the activities and methods; 3) classroom management; 4) students; 5) teacher (self-analysis). According to such parts of a diary writing, students could:

- in the 1st part – highlight thoughts on a level of pupils' understanding a subject; themes and objectives' complexity, and so on;

- in the 2nd part – analyze the diversity and curiosity of teaching means and kinds of activities, the time usage, methods and principles of training, the ways of new tools implementation, and of improving the structure, content of the lesson, etc.;

- in the 3rd part – analyze their own classroom management: the chosen pace of a lesson, variety of selected species and the result of their use, clarity of the tasks, giving each pupil an opportunity to take an active part in a lesson, etc.

- in the 4th part – analyze the level of the pupils, their interest in the course of the lesson that they liked and vice versa, to compare the mood and behavior of a class at the beginning and end of a lesson, whether during the whole lesson or not the pupils used a foreign language, to try to identify possible problems etc.;

- in the 5th part – analyze their own activities in a classroom, including the level of self-control, self-esteem and speech etc.

We suggest the sample of every note for «Teacher's Diary» in the form of parts and questions:

1. Lesson objectives:

- *Did the pupils understand what we did in the lesson?*

- *Was what we did too easy or too difficult?*

- *What problems did the pupils have (if any)?*

- *Was there a clear outcome for the pupils?*

- *What did they learn or practise in the lesson? Was it useful for them?*

2. Activities and materials:
  - *Did activities last the right length of time?*
  - *What different materials and activities did we use? Did the materials and activities keep the pupils interested?*
  - *Did I use any new methods? Did it/they keep pupils interested?*
  - *Could I have done any parts of the lesson differently?*
3. Classroom management:
  - *Was the pace of the lesson right?*
  - *Did I use whole class work, groupwork, pairwork or individual work? What did I use it for? Did it work?*
  - *Did the pupils understand what to do in the lesson? Were my instructions clear?*
  - *Did I provide opportunities for all the pupils to participate?*
  - *Was I aware of how all of the pupils were progressing?*
4. Pupils:
  - *Were all the pupils on task (i.e. doing what they were supposed to be doing)? If not, when was that and why did it happen?*
  - *Was their behaviour good? If not, when was that and why did it happen?*
  - *Were they active all the time? If not, when was that and why did it happen?*
  - *Which parts of the lesson did the pupils seem to enjoy most? And least?*
  - *What was the mood of the class at the beginning and at the end? Did it change for the better?*
  - *How much English did the pupils use?*
5. Teacher/Me:
  - *Was my self-control good? If not, when was that and why did it happen? Did I manage to keep my positive until the end of the lesson? If not, when was that and why did it happen?*
  - *Did I do all I planned before? If not, when was that and why did it happen?*
  - *Which parts of the lesson did I enjoy most? And least?*
  - *How much English did I use?*
  - *What did I say wrong? How could I say it better? Which better or new words could I choose? What kind of lexics did I use? Was it difficult for my pupils? How did I understand that? Were my speech interesting? Did the pupils listen me? When did they stop listening me? Why?*

- *Were me speech grammatically correct? Where and why did I do a mistake/ mistakes? Which grammar theme should I repeat?*
- *What was my pronunciation? Which words did I pronounce incorrectly?*
- *If I taught the lesson again, what would I do and say/ask differently?*

In other words, a practice-teacher can write whatever he/she wants and considers it necessary and worthwhile; the more a student writes, the more he/she can analyse the situation in future; a well described situation can be easily remembered in a month, a year, and the more. When all the information has been gathered, a practice-teacher could make conclusions as a purely subjective opinion and try to find out about the situation from the outside.

Peer observation. A student can invite other teachers, a methodist, and university groupmates that are at practice too, to come into a class to collect information about a lesson. This may be with a simple observation task or through note taking. This will relate back to the area a student has identified to reflect upon. For example, a future teacher might ask colleagues and friends to focus on which pupils contribute most in the lesson, on different patterns of interaction occur or how he/she deal with errors, on the speech of a practice-teacher.

Pupils' feedback. Using the methods of interviews and questionnaires, the student can also ask pupils what they think about what is happening in the classroom, their activities and cooperation. Their views and perceptions can expand and make the collected information more interesting one.

Then a future teacher should do a summary of own and other people opinions, suggestions and comments, rethink its own activities, do work on the mistakes and move on to the next step – check an activity by recording lessons on audio and video.

*The second phase – recording lessons.* For a future foreign language teacher video or audio recordings of lessons can provide very useful information for reflection. The students may do things in class they are not aware of or there may be things happening in the class that as the teacher they do not normally see.

The proper analysis and doing this step of reflection again can confirm or not the progress in the teacher's professional self-improvement and competence development. We believe that audio

recordings can be useful for considering aspects of future teacher talk, especially for future foreign language teacher, answering such questions: *How much do you talk? What about? How much do you talk foreign language? Is your English grammatically correct, rich etc.? What do you need to improve your speech? Are instructions and explanations clear? How much time do you allocate to pupil talk? How do you respond to pupil talk?* etc. Video recordings can be useful in showing the aspects of the future foreign language teacher behavior, answering such questions as, for example: *Where do you stand? Whom do you speak to? How do you come across to the students?* etc.

*The third phase* in teaching reflection at a practice is the *search for solutions to unsolved questions and problems*. As a future teacher-philologist can conclude that some issues or problems remained unresolved, he should look for relevant information about their resolution or elimination. In this case, the useful are: 1) reading scientific works on teaching foreign languages made by ukrainian and foreign teachers and scientists; 2) communicating with representatives of the city, country or foreign progressive pedagogical experience, many of which have their own websites or pages in social nets etc.; 3) analysing the foreign language lessons of foreign and ukrainian colleagues, different language schools etc., which are of great number in Internet; 4) sites not only for foreign language teachers, but also psychologists, where you can find useful educational, psychological and pedagogical ideas etc.

For a future foreign language teacher the great importance is laid onto realizing such phases not in native language, but a foreign one. This additional use of foreign languages will improve oral and written foreign language speech, thus facilitate a communicative competence in general. We believe that the pedagogical reflection of future foreign language teachers is a cyclic process, because as soon as a person begins to make some changes in its own teaching career, changing its results, a new cycle of self-assessment and reflection will start.

The finale element of the future foreign language teacher's reflection during a school practice could be proposed as a combination of some checking questions: *What are you doing? Why are you doing it? How effective is it? How are the students responding? How can you do it better?*

It is considered as appropriate after teaching practice to discuss not only results, creative reports of students at the final conference,



but also students to present their results and achievements in their own reflection. So, in any form students should display the most interesting, important or experience supplied event of practice, caused the changes in their teaching for better and noted the conclusions to which they came and needed actions they taken.

### **Conclusions**

Therefore, in our opinion, the formation of the future foreign language teachers' professional competence is very effective in terms of teaching practice in schools. The main relevance and value are seen in pedagogical reflection of practice that can take place in many phases, of which the most important are the following: 1) to collect, record and analyze an information, using «Teacher's Diary», peer observation and pupils' feedback; 2) recording lessons; 3) search for solutions to unsolved questions and problems. It is considered as appropriate after teaching practice to discuss not only results, creative reports of students at the final conference, but also students to present their results and achievements in their own reflection. It is sure, in our opinion, that the systematic pedagogical reflection will contribute not only the future foreign language teachers' self-esteem, but also their professional competence development and speech skills improvement.

**The prospect research** is to build a professiogram of a future foreign language teacher basing on a reflexive approach.

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