Full Length Research

Exploring Supervisory Practices of ELT Educators: Socializing Teaching Practice through Negotiation

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A fundamental responsibility of English Language Teacher (ELT) educators is to assist and support student teachers' planning, performing and reflecting of lessons during the teaching practicum. This paper explored how do ELT educators' practice supervision at cooperating schools so as to help preservice English language teachers to enhance their classroom teaching competence. To answer this question, I explored the practice of 17 ELT supervisors and 25 EFL student teachers who practice teaching in cooperating schools using questionnaire and interview. The results showed a demanding effect of teacher educators to negotiate issues with the novice during supervision. Results also revealed that ELT supervisors had loose interaction that could damage the social bond among the supervisory triad. However, the supervisors' performance may be challenged by the way they develop experiences from their usual environment. From a humanitarian perspective, this study emphasizes the need to take into account the impact of negotiation during practicum to cultivate student teachers' teaching practice.

Key words: ELT education, ELT educators, EFL student teachers, ELT college supervisors, social bond, supervisory triad

BACK GROUND OF THE STUDY

The initial preparation of teacher is critically important for professionalizing teacher education. It should reflect both skills and abilities of those who enter teaching profession and the expectations which the society holds about their roles. In many ELT education programmes, the teaching practice experience is the central component (Richards and Nunan, 1990). Before joining cooperating schools where EFL student teachers expect to make reflection, different teacher training colleges equipped them with the general methodology courses and more specifically the necessary approaches and methods of language teaching. Teacher education, in all

country, is regarded as a strategic measure in national development, and without effective teacher education a country's development and modernization cannot become a reality.

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education has been of concern throughout the world and has prompted calls for reform to preservice EFL teachers' practices in order to raise the standard of teaching and learning (Cook, 1996; Larsen Freeman, 2000). This requires preservice teachers in countries where English is taught as foreign language to be prepared to meet the challenges and standards for EFL teaching (Wertheimer & Honigsfeld, 2000; Lu, 2002). In this regard, the change of ELT becomes flourishing. In many parts of the world,

"the increase demand for English in schools following the political and economical changes and the need to train ELT has necessitated the establishment of new programs to train teachers" (Randall and Thornton, 2001:11).

Following this, supervision has become probably one of the programmes that help the teacher education faculty to boost meaningful training providing different roles. One of the roles of supervising student teachers is to help student teachers to reflect how they really perform the act of teaching during practicum as regards teacher empowerment, this being a crucial step if teacher educators are to have a grasp of the real implications of their action and possibly challenge the conditions that limit their own autonomy as agents of educational transformation.

Becoming engaged in supervision practice by itself offers student teachers unique opportunities to be an integral part not only of the teaching activity but also of the implementation and evaluation of the teaching learning process. According to Randall and Thornton (2001) the time spent in the classroom not only plays important part in the development of the teachers basic teaching skills, but it is also a time for the student teachers to demonstrate their level of competence in such skills. This is the reason why applying supervision alternatives to preservice teaching practice has proved to be an efficient way to make student teachers more aware of their strengths and their weaknesses, as well as of their beliefs about teaching.

Traditional models of supervision often place supervisors in the position of judging and evaluating teacher performance by observing a lesson, noting "deficiencies," and prescribing corrective actions to improve the teacher's performance (Bailey, 2006). The teacher is seen as having a problem that must be fixed, and the supervisor's role is that of an instructional expert with solutions to fix the problem (Waite, 1995). Analyses of transcribed or recorded post observation conferences between supervisors and teachers have shown this traditional approach to be widespread in both general and language education (Wajnryb, 1994; Waite, 1995; Acheson & Gall, 1997).

However, in a collaborative model of supervision (Sullivan & Glanz, 2004), the supervisor doesn't need to develop in depth instructional expertise in every content and skill area in order to be effective and doesn't need to focus on deficiencies. An effective ELT supervisor can focus on developing clear program and student performance goals and nurturing best practices from student teachers through a process of reflective questioning. "The role of the supervisor in reflective supervision is not to evaluate but to help teachers think about their previous experiences, and articulate their motivations for decision making, and recognize the contextual variables that influence their work" (Chamberlin, 2000, p. 666). As far as the practice of

practicum is concerned, Ur (1992) argues that the focal point of the practicum programme has to shoulder on the ELT pedagogy course into which teaching practice and observation are integrated. It is during the practicum that trainees are encouraged to develop, practice and refine their competence as teachers (Freeman, 1990).

As the research in Malaysia shows that strengthening the supervisory triad as the framework for support systems in initial ELT education is invaluable. Preservice teachers need opportunities to reflect on classroom practice with supervisors, cooperating teachers and peers. Mentoring systems have tended to be characterized by a one sided partnership in the past with the training institutions dominating the relationship (Wilkin, 1992). Training is best seen as a partnership between training institutions and schools and a collaborative and cooperative approach to the supervisory triad. As supervision is practiced in such a way, it will be most effective in enhancing reflective teachers teaching competence. Wilkin (1992) suggests that effective mentoring is the most beneficial way for trainees to see how theory and practice can be integrated in the classroom. In addition, the research points ELT educators the need to look at the way in which teacher trainees can be both challenged and supported by college supervisors and mentors during school experience. When both challenge and support are high, professional growth is perhaps fostered.

The study in New Zealand shows that teaching practicum is a central element in most preservice ELT education programmes. However, the assessment of EFL student teachers' competence during practicum remains problematic. A number of issues remain contentious, e.g. the tension between the different purposes of assessment (Fish, 1995; Thompson, 1999), the impact of context on practice (Maloney, 1998); the tension between message and saving face (Wajnryb, 1996); who is to be the arbiter and definer of good practice (Fish, 1995); and competence versus competencies (Fish, 1995; Gibbs and Aitken, 1996). Additionally, debates about the assessment of the practice of student teachers often reflect ongoing philosophical debates about the nature of teacher education (Brown, 1996) and traditional barriers between teachers and academics (GroundwaterSmith,1997).

As long as there have been formal teacher education programs, teacher education institutions have had some relationship with schools so that their student teachers could have rooms to practice their teaching skills. For many years, student teachers would complete a teaching experience for a month in a block teaching in different institutions of Ethiopia with cooperating schools. Like, Kotebe teacher training college and Adiss Ababa University including Bahir Dar teachers' training college were/are the potential institutions to produce English language teachers to satisfy the needs of secondary

schools. This student teaching experience often comes at the end of the preservice program and usually be the first time that a student teacher will get a chance to practice his or her teaching skills with students(MOE, 1964).

Regarding to the above era, in our country the cooperative schools were perhaps believed that they were laboratories, where the student teachers practice teaching under supervision having the methods they have learned. They should see experts' teaching in action in the schools so that they themselves can develop high standards. Student teachers also made to receive guidance and advice from competent teachers that helped them to evaluate their performance. In case of the student teachers to become a good teacher, they must see the best teaching that they should be guided by those who set high standard and could be a model for the clients to follow (MOE, 1964).This assumption shows that demonstration lessons, a vital element of training, often given by the trainer or the cooperating teacher are meant to be imitated by the student teachers resulting "ritual teaching behavior." Student teachers are rarely given a chance to try out techniques that are unknown to the cooperative teacher or the supervisor.

Since 2003 onwards, Ethiopia has shown greater appetite for interaction with the outside world. As a consequence, the need to improve ELT has been very high on the agenda (MOE). Currently, field experiences schools have been used to play a much greater role in the teacher education curriculum. In Ethiopia, student teachers now complete a series of field experiences during their practicum, sometimes beginning at the onset of their program. Since about the mid-2003, ELT education program began to change its practices in other substantive ways with regard to supervising reflective teachers to provide them with more and longer experiences than the previous a month block teaching.

As far as the above researches are concerned, the findings reveal that there is discrepancy in the way supervision in ELT education is practiced. Some say teaching is best learned when student teachers works collaboratively, on the other hand there are bodies that say student teachers can best learn to teach when there is a model that they need to follow. There are also differences in the evaluation of student teachers by college supervisors.

Therefore, I believe that some of the practices regarding ELT supervision for training were perhaps handed down from our 'colonial master', for the past educators possibly passed through the very mandated and autocratic teacher educators. But we need to simulate the supervision practices with the current philosophy of ELT education. In this respect, I explored alternative approaches for supervising EFL student teachers to enhance their teaching competence in the way the trainees are highly absorbed with and learning

would be best resulted when it is socially constructed. As a result of this, I tried to see how negotiation helps student teachers to reflect their teaching activity which improve their EFL teaching competence at Debre Markos teacher training college.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Every teacher training college is working to produce qualified teachers. "Just as in a medical school clients might be entitled to expect the highest standards of care and hygiene, and in a business school the highest standards of administrative efficiency, so in a college or department of ELT education the clients are entitled to expect the highest standards of teaching" (Wallace, 1991:18).

Establishing an interactive and cooperative atmosphere between the supervisor and student teachers probably guarantees a highly positive professional relationship that promotes student teachers teaching competence and a friendly attitude towards the activity itself and towards the supervisory process as a whole. This is what ELT supervisors need to foster in ELT education.

Thus, supervision can be seen as a very important practice in training EFL student teachers through practicum. Zeichner (1992) argues that in many programmes, student – teacher's learning is limited by the uneven quality of practicum supervision. Despite a number of promising examples of interactive approaches to student teacher supervision that aim to help student teachers to reflect on their teaching, supervision and assessment in the practicum is inadequate (Richardson, 1988 as cited in Zeichner, 1992). Many second language teacher educators seem to limit their approaches to supervision and their choice of supervisory behaviors, which probably hinder student teacher's reflection in becoming competent and skillful teachers (Gebhard, 1990).

Wallace (1991), outlining the three models of professional preparation, craft model, the applied science model and the reflective model, is more inclined towards the reflective model of teaching because he sees it as a compromise solution. He argues that it gives "due weight both to experience and to the scientific basis of the profession". He states that received knowledge (e.g. scientific research, theories, concepts) and experiential knowledge (gained through practice of the profession, observation of practice and related to ongoing experience) leads to reflection followed by practice (the order may be changed) and this helps to achieve the desired goal. It is this dynamic and "continuing cycle of practice and reflection which leads to" (1991:59) professional competence.

The different models of teacher education probably influence the current practice of supervising reflective

teachers. If the supervisor views teacher education as craft, she/he will possibly encourage the student teacher to perform in line with the cooperating teacher that is believed as a model. In this stance, the teacher is expected to imitate what the cooperative teacher does in the best possible way (Wallace, 1991). An ELT supervisor could also be of the opinion that teaching is an applied science and therefore emphasizes the applied science model. In the applied science model, " the expertise is seen as basically residing outside the trainee: the trainee's job is to imbibe the expertise in the best way that he or she can" (Wallace and Woolger, 1991:321). In this model, the role of the student teachers is essentially passive while the supervisor is seen as the expert.

However, the roles and practices of an ELT supervisor who views teaching as a reflective practice significantly differ from the roles and practices of a supervisor who views teaching as craft and/or applied science. A supervisor emphasizing reflective practice, believes primarily the responsibility for the development of professional expertise resides with the trainee (Wallace and Woolger,1991). The supervisor's role will then become helping the student teachers to develop and refine their reflection on a particular lesson, and the student teachers' competence of reflection in general. Supervisors in favour of the reflective model are well removed from the motto 'learn the theory and then apply it' (Ur, 1992:57), and endeavor to foster reflective teaching skills in the student teachers through an inquiry oriented practicum.

In order to encourage positive results when engaging in a supervision practice, student teachers and supervisors have to bear in mind some features to promote efficient supervision. The most important of them is that student teachers need to feel confident and at ease during and after the visit. They need to trust the supervisor as a specialist, as a colleague, and as a person.

Randall and Thornton 2001 state:

> *Trust becomes a generic prerequisite for the provision off effective help.. It is central to the idea that the process is collaborative.. Without such trust,, collaboration between the advisor and the teacher cannot be under taken.. It is also of crucial importance in establishing the basis upon which the advisor can offer advice without being seen as critical of the teacher as a person p..74.*

During a visit, ELT supervisors need to pay attention to how they give support and advice. It is required to be sure that the supervisors are being objective and that they are not disregarding any of the relevant aspects in advising and supporting student teachers as a supervisor. ELT supervisors also need to consider the

following slogan as leading point: no distraction, no comments, and no interruption in the classroom. ELT supervisors need to apply clinical ways of supervision to address problems. It could be, thus, favorable to make student teachers feel free before suggesting means for improvement.

Cogan (1973) as cited in Randall and Thornton (2001) believes that teaching is mostly a problem solving process that requires a sharing of ideas between the teacher and the supervisor. They both work together in addressing a problem in the teacher's classroom teaching. The provision of effective advice depends to a large degree on the perceived status of the advisor by the advisee and the consequent interpersonal `distance' between them. I will argue that if the situations in which the supervisor and the supervisee invite to become trust each other and feel relaxed, it is likely to have a more realistic and effective way to give advice. Although there are some conditions which must be taken into account (in some cultures, extreme informality in a feedback situation may be inappropriate), the less formality that there is in the situation the more likely there is to be a degree of perceived `equality' between the supervisor and the supervisee. In this situation, it will be easier for ELT supervisors to provide supportive and nonthreatening advice than in a more formal setting.

EFL student teachers need to be observed consistently in order to gain confidence in their performance, to know what others think about their teaching. They must not be afraid of supervision at all. On the contrary, they should appreciate the possibility of recognized and of sharing ideas with their supervisors and perhaps other skillful teachers or peer student teachers. As Wajnryb states (1992:1), classroom observation is an invaluable learning tool that opens up a range of experiences and processes which can become part of the raw material of a teacher's professional growth and gives the teacher the opportunity to observe processes of teaching and learning.

Being supervised perhaps exerts a certain pressure on the student teachers and also on the supervisor. Therefore, it is the task of ELT supervisors to find ways in which their action could be seen as more interactive than directive, more democratic than authoritarian, more concrete than vague, more objective than subjective, more student teacher centered than supervisor centered, and more focused than unsystematic, more intrinsically motivating than extrinsically driven. I believe that one should develop the skills to observe student teachers because "Supervision could be a two aged weapon"(Wallace 1991, 91). This scholar argues that if we deal with supervision wrongly, it can be a most threatening and demoralizing experience. But when supervision takes place in a friendly and democratic atmosphere; when it is preceded by and followed by honest dialogues; when there is analysis afterwards, it can provide constructive feedback and promote the

student teachers' professional growth resulting in positive supervisor/supervisee experiences and outcomes for the future.

There is limited meeting between the supervisor and the student teacher prior to the observation. Sometimes there is a non-structured, post observation meeting and where this exists, data collected during the lesson may touch on everything the observer could see. From my own field experience, I recognized that the feedback is often unidirectional in which the supervisor is the expert who tells the student teacher what s/he did well and what s/he did poorly. It is also quiet common to see some teacher trainers who give observation data in devastating language negative, judgmental feedback that only discourages the student teachers. The other point that I could remember is that the talk that I made with some instructors. What they have told me is that they came to evaluate the student teachers after those young staffs are experiencing teaching with the help of the cooperating teachers. Here, I questioned myself, are they visiting student teachers for the sake of evaluation or providing help and support?

There is, even, a case of inaccessibility of ELT supervisors to observe lessons on a lesson to lesson basis as they are often away to perform extra work. The supervisor usually "pops in" and "pops out" of the classroom; she/he seldom (if ever) observes a full lesson. Often the supervisor stands outside looking in no more than one lesson at a time by shuttling from one classroom window to another. When the observer does enter a classroom, she/he either takes the student teacher's lesson plan and walks out or sits in briefly before walking out. As far as my field experience is concerned, supervisors interrupted ongoing lessons without any prior agreement with the student teacher concerned as to when and how they may intervene. These and such things have drawn my attention to research on ELT supervision in English Department at Debre Markos teacher training college.

It could be voiced, therefore, that reflective teaching practice, the relationship which is seen between the supervisor and the student teachers, is really paramount. Furthermore, the ways in which supervisors encourage their trainees and the way they offer help to enhance their teaching competence are invaluable in ELT supervision. But sometimes one could see the roles assumed by the ELT supervisors and EFL student teachers supervision; and the kind of support given by the supervisors is led by the way they prefer.

Main Research Question

The following leading research question defines the focus of my research project. And I used it to guide the study and to inform the specific subject matter I perhaps

addressed within the broad topic of ELT supervision.
How do EFL teacher educators practice supervision at cooperating schools so as to help preservice English language teachers to enhance their classroom teaching competence?

Specific Research Questions

Based on the above leading question, I have formulated the following specific research questions. These specific questions conclude what could be achieved by the study and are closely related to the statement of the problem. They are stated as follows:

➢   To what extent ELT supervisors negotiate with EFL student teachers to encourage reflection on their teaching practice during practicum?
➢   Do ELT supervisors offer the kind of help expected by EFL student teacher throughout the practicum?
➢   What beliefs and assumption underlie ELT supervision and how these are practiced by supervisors when EFL student teachers are experiencing teaching during practicum?

General objectives

This study explored the extent to which supervising student teachers and its main principles are welcomed by the EFL supervisors of Debre Markos Teachers' college and the amount they materialize the principles in real practice.

Specific Objectives

The study intended:

To see the possibility of ELT supervisors to negotiate with EFL student teachers to encourage reflection on their teaching practice
To identify the kind of support expected by EFL student teacher during the teaching practice
To realize the beliefs and assumptions of ELT supervisors to the importance of negotiation with EFL student teachers during experiencing teaching

Review of related literature

There are different studies of EFL teacher education trends in the general population. However, since the focus of this research is on supervisory practices, these

will not be reviewed in detail and will only be referred to as appropriate.

What is Supervision?

The term supervision is stated in a various way (Wallace, 1991). In general education, "a supervisor is usually a college overseer of the student teacher/ apprentice and thus the person who tries to maintain a theoretical and methodological dimension to teaching practice" (Woodward, 1991:209). In EFL teacher training, supervision has sometimes meant, simply, the times when a trainer is physically present in a student teacher's classroom to watch, listen and take notes (Woodward, 1991). In spite of the wide variety of terms used to describe supervision, Woodward (1991:203) defines it as a process "including planning discussions, teaching observation and feedback on all aspects of the teaching/learning event by both supervisor and trainee and any other helpfully involved party." Supervision can be broadly categorized into two: 'general supervision' and ' clinical supervision' (Wallace, 1991).

General supervision

General supervision is more concerned with 'out of classroom' and administrative matters; on the other hand, clinical supervision is more inclined to formative (training) aspects of classroom teaching (Wallace, 1991).

Clinical supervision

Clinical supervision, defined "as the process by which teaching performance is systematically observed, analyzed and evaluated" (Gaies and Bowers, 1990:167), has become an important form of supervision in both preservice and in service teacher development programmes. According to Richards and Nunan, (2000) clinical supervision refers to an ongoing process of teacher development that is based on direct observation of classroom teaching performance. In practicum settings, supervision is widely regarded as a vital component of student teaching, and is used as a powerful tool for instruction as well as evaluation (Zahorik , 1988; Ralph, 1994). In a supervisory process of a given practicum, the supervisory conferences, the roles assumed by supervisors and/or the kinds of supervisory support they render are central.

Models of supervision

Freeman (1982) and Gebhard (1984) outline a number of

approaches to language teacher supervision; some are reminiscent of the more traditional models referred to above while others break the traditional mold, moving away from an authoritarian orientation. Freeman introduces three approaches to teacher observation/supervision: 1) the supervisory approach (with the supervisor as the authority figure), 2) the alternatives approach (with the supervisor as a provider of alternative perspectives), and 3) the nondirective approach (with the supervisor as "understander"). Gebhard expands upon Freeman's ideas and introduces five models: 1) directive supervision (with a supervisor who directs and evaluates teaching), 2) alternative supervision (with a supervisor and supervisee who share the responsibility for generating alternatives), 3) collaborative supervision (with a supervisor who works with but does not direct supervisees), 4) nondirective supervision (with a nonjudgmental Supervisor who listens to and restates supervisees' ideas), 5) creative supervision (with a supervisor who makes use of a combination of approaches), 6) Selfhelp Explorative Supervision(with a supervisor who provide a different way to perceive the process that teachers go through in their development). Each model typifies a distinct approach to supervision, with different supervisor/supervisee expectations, relationships, and anticipated outcomes.

The Supervisory Triad

A cooperating teacher, a college or university supervisor and a trainee teacher form a supervisory triad (Kauffman, 1992). The key person in the school support system is the cooperating teacher, known in different educational contexts as school supervisor, pedagogic counselor, associate teacher, partner teacher, coach or mentor. The cooperating teacher is the link between the trainee and the school community, and the link between the training institution and the school. A relationship based on effective communication and collaboration between the triad members making explicit their aims and expectations can have a significant effect on the teaching experience of the trainee, intern, or student teacher. Research has shown that the rapport between the supervisory triad members and the time available for the support process are key influences on teacher trainee attitudes and self direction (Feiman Nemser, 1996).

However, roles in the supervisory triad may be unclearly defined and expectations and perceptions of the supervisory process may differ. The supervisor may be the source of theories, the cooperating teacher may be the provider of practice and the trainee teacher may be the uneasy bridge between these worlds. It has been suggested that the triad members should be matched closely rather than randomly so that role expectations are

complementary (Kauffman, 1992). However, it may be more practical to create the best possible conditions for mentoring relationships rather than optimal matches (Feiman Nemser, 1996).

Misunderstandings due to poor communication or a lack of unity between supervisors and cooperating teachers can result in the trainee being caught in the middle. It certainly seems that there is some truth in the view that 'there are vast differences in the degree and quality of support students receive from college supervisors and cooperating teachers during the teaching practicum' (Anderson, 1993: 62)

The support systems

Firstly, what are the support systems which should be available for our trainees during teaching experience? Ideally these 'life support systems' (Hull, 1990:27) should include a university supervisor, a mentor, professional resources, peer networks and a school based induction programme. Research has shown that trainee teachers go through a state of unrealistic optimism at the start of school experience, quickly followed by reality shock since reality rarely matches their expectations (Odell and Ferraro, 1992). A supportive context for teacher training is a prerequisite for reflective practice and reflection on teaching experience can foster trainees' professional autonomy. As Wallace (1991) points out, strong support systems encourage reflection, whereas isolation breeds isolation. According to Howley (1988), autonomy is responsible self direction. Therefore, we would expect autonomous teachers to be decision makers, confident and responsible to work independently. However, this does not imply that support is unnecessary. It can be hypothesized that when challenges and support are high, professional growth will occur (Daloz, 1986). In thinking about school experience and support systems we should begin with the trainee perspective as their learning needs are the foundation of practical training (Maynard and Furlong, 1993). A supportive context for teacher training is essential for reflective practice. Reflection on teaching experience fosters trainees' professional autonomy. Importantly, the trainee who knows there is a support system available will feel empowered and grow professionally as a self directed teacher.

Supervisors' role

The role of EFL supervisors is helping and supporting the novice teachers to reflect in their teaching. "The role of the supervisor in reflective supervision is not to evaluate but to help teachers think about their previous experiences, articulate their motivations for decision making, and recognize the contextual variables that

influence their work" (Chamberlin, 2000, p. 666).Wallace (1991) describes clinical supervision as an interaction between supervisor and trainee teacher to discuss and analyze the trainee's teaching with a view to professional development. There are a number of ways in which clinical supervision can be implemented and a simple classification is provided by Wallace (1991). In the traditional directive approach the supervisor is the authority, expert and judge. Wallace and Woolger (1991) argue, even though the supervisor usually has superior knowledge and expertise in general terms, the student teacher can also have greater knowledge concerning his/her particular class, and a different perspective on the particular lesson under discussion. The supervisor meets with the trainee for prelesson consultation, then observes a lesson and follows it with a postlesson analysis. The overtones are prescriptive, and the ways in which supervision is carried out can be variously helpful, ineffective, or positively damaging to trainees' (Kennedy, 1993: 162).

However, the literature (Wallace, 1991) shows that trainees generally prefer a counseling model of clinical supervision, that is, a collaborative approach rather than a prescriptive approach. In this approach the role of the supervisor is that of an understander who develops a rapport with the trainee, challenging the trainee's perceptions and exploring goals within a supportive and empathetic context (Cogan, 1995). The supervisor aims to encourage trainees to reflect critically on their teaching and to be responsible for self evaluation.

It is certainly impossible and undesirable to impose one prescribed approach to supervision within the institution. Nevertheless, it is highly desirable to propose that there are alternative supervisory models to a prescriptive approach (Gebhard, 1990). However, 'it has to be admitted that certain approaches to supervision may more readily be accepted and adopted within one cultural setting than another' (Cogan, 1995: 5). The literature has shown that trainees first and foremost mainly seek practical advice on strategies and activities and help with classroom management. Their needs are situation specific and they look for shortterm teaching solutions to help them survive reality shock.

They also seek encouragement and confidence boosting. All trainees received feedback on lessons observed and most received feedback on teacher qualities. Many were given both guidance in lesson planning and suggestions for teaching strategies. The majority received moral support from their supervisors. Since the literature shows that teacher trainees prefer the supervisor to be someone they know rather than an unknown quantity (Kennedy, 1993), further investigation is needed into whether trainees feel confident to contact their supervisor when a problem arises and whether they are encouraged to do so. Suggestions for classroom management, teaching strategies and activities, feedback

on lessons observed and moral support were the most helpful types of college support reported by trainees.(p. 98).

Whilst support from supervisors is obviously encouraging, supervisors do not always provide trainees with the type of support they need to meet their immediate survival needs. Trainees may also need more concrete advice relating to particular classrooms and specific groups of students and supervisors are not necessarily in a position to give this particular advice.

Student Teacher Socialization and the Practicum

Teaching practice has come to be recognized as one of the most important aspects of the teacher education program (Funk and Hoffman, 1982). As Clark (1988: 1) points out: 'If the literature and folklore of teacher education agree on one point, it is that the student teaching experience or practicum is important.' The process of teacher socialization really only begins during the period of the practicum. However, as Richards and Crookes (1988: 22) point out, little is known about '[what] exactly takes place during field experiences' in English language teaching (ELT).

Bliss and Reck define teacher socialization as 'the process by which an individual becomes a participating member of the society of teachers' (1991: 6). They go on to argue that teacher socialization is a 'learning process which requires developmental growth on the part of the novice teacher' (1991: 6). Schlechty (1990) links teacher socialization with teacher induction and suggests that preservice teacher education, especially teaching practice, is an important feature of the induction process. Schlechty continues, 'If pre service teacher education is to be conceptually and theoretically linked to the socialization of teachers, the only means of making this linkage is by conceiving of preservice education as part of the induction process' (1990: 29).

One of the biggest influences within the preservice teacher education course is the field based experiences beginning teachers encounter in real teaching situations. According to Huling, field based experiences offer teacher candidates a place to 'observe and work with real students, teachers, and curriculum in natural settings' (1997: 1).

The literature in the field calls upon the need of strong social bond to facilitate student teachers learn to teach. As reflective teachers experience their classroom teaching in a social context they would be beneficial and hold their teaching profession up towards what is expected from the field. Thus reinforcing reflection can be considered as good condition in order for the novice to understand themselves. Besides to this, reflection evokes the interest of student teachers in self evaluation, decision making and problem solving to their classroom teaching.

Negotiation in the Supervisory Triad

Kennedy (1993) advocates that at some point of the training, preservice teachers need to express their personal educational philosophies, theories and understandings. Teaching practice, notwithstanding the length or duration, is an excellent opportunity for preservice teachers to experiment and test their knowledge and skills in an authentic teaching and learning environment in tandem with own understanding of their personal educational philosophies and theories. In the words of Davis and Hall (2003), it is "a socializing experience into the teaching profession" (p. 2). Nevertheless, such rigorous negotiations during teaching practice essentially leads to higher confidence in improving preservice teachers' learning, satisfaction with their teaching career, and a higher sense of teacher efficacy (Oh et al., 2005). As such, preservice teachers must question their beliefs and assumptions in developing pedagogical knowledge during teaching practice to avoid practices that are not founded on effective and critical pedagogical knowledge and theories. The understanding for this can be drawn from Schön's (1987) argument that in the profession of teaching, the theoretical facets are embedded in and inseparable from practice.

Many recent studies on teaching practice quite extensively focus on the challenges faced by English language preservice teachers and how they affect numerous aspects of teacher education. Pomeranntz and Pierce (2004) lead an inquiry into the challenges experienced by Preservice teachers in the "real world", and to what degree the "courses prepared them for those challenges" (p. 55). These acts of rethinking and reexamining the challenges actually allow the 'knitting' of new knowledge and reconstructing of existing knowledge through various conciliation processes of solving problems and difficulties during teaching practice. Chung (2002) examines the challenges of developing effective teaching strategies of preservice teachers through quality feedback from supervisors. She concludes that the dialogues that they have facilitate knowledge building and encourage collaborative (between supervisor as an expert and preservice teacher as a novice) reflection on individual teaching practice to improve the understanding of teaching. By using such dialogues, Chung (2000) insists that supervisors are able to assist the novice teachers in identifying and evaluating "the context of the problem or deficiency and establish developmental goals or standards" and "the personal strengths and resources of the student teacher may be used to improve plans for teaching" (p.10). And the possibility of improving teaching is enormous in terms of the various innovative ways and situations in which new knowledge can be produced, constructed and reconstructed, and refined for positive, meaningful learning experiences.

Social Constructivism Theory

In recent years it is believed that the potential contribution of constructivism to EFL teaching and teacher training should be considered seriously (Skrinda, 2004). In line with constructivist methodology, the shift has been from the learner as a passive recipient of language forms to an active and creative language user who engages in meaningful activities in an effort to construct his own knowledge related to the target language and to communicate effectively in second language (Skrinda, 2004).

Considering Wilson (1996) assumptions about how the teachers for future generations should be, we can say that prospective EFL teachers should not just be required to acquire several learning and teaching theories and recall the facts related to them. Rather, they should develop higher order thinking skills, be able to realize the students with diverse learning needs and design the learning activities accordingly and facilitate communication and collaboration among the students.

The prospective teachers trained in a constructivist learning environment probably establish a meaningful link between theory and practice and have many opportunities to teach, to observe and to reflect on their own and the other prospective teachers' teaching (Cochran, DeRuiter and King, 1993). For significant learning to occur, students should be provided with a supportive, nonthreatening, safe, free and responsive environment that encourages disclosure of student constructions (Airasian and Walsh, 1997; Hendry, 1996). The term constructivist learning environment has been used to describe teaching and learning situations which are explicitly based on constructivist epistemology and are designed to support learners' knowledge construction process (Tynjälä, 1999). Wilson (1996) defines a constructivist learning environment as "a place where learners may work together and support each other as they use a variety of tools and information resources in their guided pursuit of learning goals and Problem solving activities" (p.5). It is called to be a learning environment, not an instructional environment, because in constructivist settings, learning, rather than teaching, is emphasized (Wilson,1996).

Designers of constructivist learning environments emphasize the following seven pedagogical goals (Cunnigham et al., 1993, as cited in Wilson, 1996): 1. Provide experience with the knowledge of construction process 2. Provide experience in and appreciation for multiple perspectives 3. Embed learning in realistic and relevant contexts 4. Encourage ownership and voice in the learning process 5. Embed learning in social experience 6. Encourage the use of multiple modes of representation 7. Encourage self awareness of the knowledge construction process.

Honebein (1996, as cited in Wilson, 1996) also developed some pedagogical goals that should be achieved in constructivist learning environments. These goals can be summarized as facilitation of knowledge construction process, an interactive environment between the students and the teacher as well as among students, engagement of students in activities, collaborative activities such as teamwork, leadership, negotiation and cooperation, encouragement of learners' individual thinking, provision of authentic ways to learn content and students' optimal use of what they know.

Taylor (1995) stated that colleges or universities usually have been exemplars of the transmissionist paradigm typified by the dominance of lecturing. In such classes knowledge is regarded as a commodity which can be transmitted to the students' minds. He believes that the college teaching should be reformed and the learning environments should be resigned based on social constructivist epistemology. According to him, in a constructivist learning environment: 1. knowledge is a transformative growth process shaped by the learner's sense of purpose rather than a product to be received externally (Reflexivity, Relevance and Management) 2. the teacher is a crafter and facilitator of knowledge growth, rather than a disseminator, and modifies and adapts learning activities, rather than adheres to a prescribed curriculum (Accountability) 3. students interactively construct their knowledge in social and cultural contexts (Negotiation) 4. the curriculum goals are concerned how and why we know what we claim to know (Reflexivity).

The literature, therefore, shows that learning to teach is likely facilitated when student teachers engaged in collaborative learning atmosphere and construct their own learning from the interaction they make. Constructivist learning theory preponderates over the others. Learning to teach is unthinkable in a vacuum. Thus, EFL student teachers need to practice their teaching in cooperating schools before they join the profession. Teaching practicum is the get way to the profession. And it is here student teachers possibly armed with the necessary experiences of teaching during their stay in schools.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The focus of this study was exploring how ELT supervisory roles regarding to the current approaches of helping and supporting the student teachers to empower their teaching competence in the department of English at Debre Markos teachers' college. The researcher, thus, applied the sequential exploratory strategy. As professionally constructive, both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used in the data collection

process. The former was employed in the interest of representativity of the views expressed, and the latter for the purposes of more in depth probing and the verification of the quantitative data. The researcher opts for the use of multi methods in this study to secure optimal understanding of the phenomenon in question — involving the research dimensions of both breadth and depth (Cresswell, 2003).

The quantitative approach involved a questionnaire survey. The questionnaire consisted of closed ended and open ended questions. For the closed questions, four point Likert scale was used. The qualitative approach involved individuals with semi structured interview.

Sample

The sample for the questionnaire survey consisted of 25 subjects out of the 158 third year English language student teachers and all 17 ELT supervisors in Debre Markos teachers' college who were engaged in the practicum supervision in the 2018/19 academic year. Random sampling technique was used to select the sample in order to collect data through questionnaire in the case of student teachers. Comprehensive sampling, however, was practicable to the college supervisors as their number is manageable.

Random sampling was also used to gather data through the semi structured interviews. The participants, then, were two ELT supervisors and two EFL majoring student teachers at Debre Markos teachers' college.

Research Instruments

The researcher applied different research instruments to triangulate and see the how of supervision in preservice ELT education in enhancing student teachers teaching competence. From the various nature of ELT education, the researcher favored and used questionnaire, semi structured interview questions, Journals/diary and observation.

Questionnaire

Questionnaire is a relatively popular data gathering tool (Nunan, 1992). In the study, questionnaire was found to be an appropriate means of data collection for two main reasons. One, the nature of information required to answer the basic questions of the study as it was a kind of data that can easily be gathered through questionnaire. Second, as the number of respondents was relatively big, questionnaire was selected to be one

of the appropriate tools for the study. The questionnaires were distributed to both college educators and student teachers.

The first section of the data gathering tool, which carried four items, focused on the degree of cooperation between supervisors and student teachers as well as cooperating teachers. When we see the open ended questionnaire, it has a power to give freedom for both respondents. Respondents could air their views by adding some insights to the research area and can comment for further development of the field learning. Of course, the questions probably directed the respondents not to be out of the focal point of the research problem.

Semi Structured Interview

The semi structured interview questions were designed for both supervisors and student teachers. This instrument was helped with field notes to collect data. For the purpose of obtaining dependable data that could be verified, some of the questions that were included in the questionnaire were presented in the interview. By doing so, it strengthened the data. As this instrument was selected to gather data from different subjects, one individual at a time, it gave the researcher in-depth ideas to see the supervisory roles in advising and assisting student teachers. The researcher, thus, collected different feasible thoughts from the experience gained from the course of supervision. The researcher also believes that it helped to draw information from student teachers as these subjects experienced with different college ELT supervisors during the teaching practice.

Data Analysis techniques

Questionnaires

This section of the questionnaire contained four possible alternatives. Thus, respondents reacted by choosing one of those alternatives they believed was the reality in supervision. Having tallied the responses of the respondents for each item of the close ended questions, percentage was used, and descriptive analysis was given.

Interview

The interview was made to help the data which was collected through the questionnaire so as to illustrate the information qualitatively. So that discussion was given by incorporating the sample responses which were obtained from two student teachers and two college supervisors. After reading through the field notes, categorization, developing themes and memos were done.

Data Presentation and Discussion

The main purpose of this section is to see how far ELT supervisors, EFL student teachers and cooperating teachers make negotiation to understand and communicate issues with each other effectively in order to promote professional development in ELT education. Four discussion points have been identified and discussed.

ELT supervisors					EFL student teachers			
Items	approve		disapprove		approve		disapprove	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
tolerance and patience to renegotiate dead lines	3	17.65	14	82.35	0	0	25	100
discussion on the availability and communication issues	4	23.53	13	76.47	2	8	23	92
determining the nature of guidance, direction and collaboration	5	29.41	12	70.59	3	12	22	88
negotiating to analyze data collaboratively	3	17.65	14	82.35	0	0	25	100

According to the above data, 17.65% of the EFL supervisors pointed out that there were chances to negotiate with the novice teachers. Whereas, 82.35% of the supervisors reported that they did not develop the sense to negotiate with student teachers on different issues. During interview, supervisors suggested there should be negotiation among student teachers, mentors and supervisors. Here is the extract: "I am afraid. You see, discussing some issues together has power to promote collaboration. Negotiation is essential to develop a good rapport, but I feel that it is time consuming …". ELT supervisors did not negotiate with the rest supervisory triad. However, they admit with great tendency that they need to develop the culture of negotiation as it paves the way to professionalism. When we see the reply of student teachers, all of them responded that there was limited probability to express their ideas and negotiate with their supervisors. Let us see the case from the interview. *".....Even I didn't know who was going to be my supervisor"*. How could it be possible to discuss with ELT supervisors unless they come to the cooperating schools before the evaluation period and introduce themselves to student teachers? This suggests the practice of negotiation is very young and it was not practiced by the ELT supervisors.

However, negotiation has been seen as a corner stone in helping and supporting the student teachers to develop the sharing of ideas with others. As supervisors negotiate in most circumstances with the rest bodies of the supervisory triad, they could foster the growth of EFL student teachers professional development. There are areas which need the active involvement of the student teachers and the cooperating teachers. Kennedy (1993) advocates that preservice teachers must be able to express their personal educational philosophies, theories and understandings at some point of their training. So negotiation is the central element in developing professionalism in the field.

There is also a need to ELT supervisors to determine the how of the guidance, direction and collaboration with student teachers. As supervisors do this, they become more aware of the student teachers: what kind of support they need, how supervisors perform the supervision and in what way they need to collaborate with other colleagues in the cooperative schools. In this respect, 23.53% of the supervisors only approved that they sat with student teachers during pre observation conference in order to decide the how of the supervision. But the majority of respondents suggested that they did not make such atmosphere to discuss what sort of help and support was being needed by student teachers. And these 76.47% of the respondents further pointed out that they were not in a position to chair preobservation conference. During interview, supervisors confessed that they should make a preobservation conference and have to decide means that lead the programme to its end with student teachers and cooperating teachers. But ELT supervisors further replied that what they are practicing is far from what the theory of language learning and teaching underlies.

In the same vein, 92% of the student teachers also claimed that their supervisors did not create chance to negotiate on the way they could get guidance, help and to what extent and how they perform the teaching

learning process collaboratively with colleagues and other staffs in the cooperating schools. Only small number of student teachers responded, which is 8%, as they got opportunity to discuss on the matter. As the majority of both respondents suggested, the culture of working together is still in doubt. But the literature in ELT points out; strong support systems encourage reflection, whereas isolation breeds isolation (Wallace, 1991).

Supervisors, therefore, are responsible for coordinating and overseeing the practice of teaching experience. Topical researches clearly discuss that collaboration is "a socializing experience into the teaching profession" (Davis and Hall, 2003, p. 2). It is vivid that supervisor serves as the link between the college's education program, the student teacher, and the cooperating teacher and the school. Therefore, to become successful in the arena of EFL teacher education supervisors possibly need to promote negotiation among the social bond.

The other issues like access, regularity and frequency to get support from supervisors should be communicated among the three parties: student teachers, cooperating teachers and ELT supervisors. 70.59% of the ELT supervisors approved that they did not discuss with the rest members of supervisory triad. The remaining 29.41% of the supervisors plainly discussed that they did make such opportunity. Whereas, a large number of student teachers responded that they (88%) did not get information on how often they would be visited and the regularity of the visit. The remaining few respondents (12%) stated they negotiate with their supervisors on the access, regularity and frequency of the visit. The data clearly revealed that negotiation on such issues was not practiced as one would expect to see this alive in the practice of teaching. As it is mentioned above, most supervisors did not make any pre observation conference that helps to agree on such issues. Setting a preobservation conference probably provide good atmosphere to make an agreement on the issues listed. During interview student teachers forwarded like "we don't have the schedule and we do not know when did they come." This implies that the supervisors perhaps like to evaluate the trainees unpredictably. So one could understand the supervisors are probably interested in evaluating student teachers rather than providing support that could promote professionalism.

Regarding to the collected data, 17.65% of the supervisors reinforced the student teachers and the mentors to analyze the data together with them. The rest 82.35% of the respondents rather believed that it is the supervisors' part to analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the student teachers teaching experience in the classroom. All student teachers responded supervisors were autocratic figures who analyze the data themselves. They further developed this in the interview. These student teachers produced like "With regards to

their comments, with these two days unlike their evaluation that they were together, they gave me comment independently. I do not understand why they did this". Student teachers informed that supervisors and mentors gave comments independently. ELT supervisors perhaps lack interest to analyze data collaboratively. If they were open to do this all together, they would possibly manage the data progressively. But they did not do this. From this one could conclude that the supervisor is the only person that judges the performance of the student teachers. This implies that ELT supervisors are in favor of the top down approach that has perhaps little help for student teachers to bridge theory with practice. They do not build any ground for negotiation with the possible parties under the scheme.

However, the preservice teachers' relationship with authority figures (the supervisors,) has an important bearing on creating the optimum practicing teaching environment. Thus, it is perhaps mandatory for supervisors to work altogether with cooperating teachers and student teachers to make good analysis of the teaching practice. The bottom up approach invites student teachers to practice and then to postulate their own theory. Wallace (1991) suggests towards supervisors to apply clinical supervision as it creates an interaction among supervisor, cooperating teachers and trainee teacher to discuss and analyze the trainee's teaching with a view to professional development. This literature underlines that high levels of communication and collaboration between supervisors, cooperating teacher and Preservice teachers are necessary to enable an optimum learning environment. Establishing a good field experience relationship among the three parties is essential. An environment in which preservice teachers and mentors are aware that they can approach supervisors openly to discuss any issues without fear of consequence enables optimum learning. Such rigorous negotiations during teaching practice essentially leads to higher confidence in improving preservice teachers' learning, satisfaction with their teaching career, and a higher sense of teacher efficacy (Oh et al., 2005).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The findings of this study can be understood as ELT supervisors were not in a position to build a strong social bond (meaningful interaction among or between the ELT supervisors, the cooperating teachers and the EFL student teachers). The relationship was insufficient to create a good supervisory triad which has potential to fill the gaps. But EFL student teachers perhaps benefit more from the interaction they have with colleagues, supervisors and cooperating teachers and this interaction builds a kind of bond and kinship among.

As a result of this, there was, of course, little negotiation

among the supervisory triad. The door was not opened to the student teachers to communicate the overall situation of the teaching practice. Negotiation, as a vital element to promote learning, was hardly practiced during preobservation conference and post observation conference too. The communication which was held on during post observation conference was simply unidirectional.

The present findings also confirm there was almost little chance for student teachers to reflect what they experienced in their teaching. Rather ELT supervisors made student teachers listen to what they were articulating about their evaluation. However, negotiation fosters the interpersonal interaction and creates a strong social bond that helps to practice good teaching. As supervisors facilitate team work, the practice of teaching would become more fruitful. Good teaching experience is, therefore, perhaps best constructed if student teachers work with their colleagues, cooperating teachers, ELT supervisors and other staff members. Despite the fact that, this research highlights that there is a loose interaction among ELT supervisors, EFL student teachers and cooperating teachers. Future research should be devoted to the development of plausible strategies which can be seen as root for good supervision practices.

RECOMMENDATION

➢   ELT supervisors should develop the culture of negotiation as it helps to create a strong social bond among the supervisory triad during practicum.
➢   ELT supervisors should respect and reinforce the student teachers novel ideas and give them maximum chance to grow which start germinating in the trainees' mind.
➢   ELT supervisors should be active listeners for what student teachers articulate during preobservation conference and post observation conference.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire for ELT Supervisors

Dear EFL supervisors, the purpose of this questionnaire is to see the practices of supervisory teams in ELT education. To get the prominent ideas about this reflective teaching practice, the researcher gives priority for the supervisors as you are practicing supervision with the cooperating schools. The researcher also believes that you can throw some light on the standard of the current practice. Then, you are kindly requested to fill the questionnaire using your rich experiences. Use a tick // to site degree of approval for use and associate activity as a supervisor in the right position. And articulate your understanding in your own words in the space provided to the open ended questions.

Your genuine response is already invaluable to address the problem and work with its solution.

Best regards

Items	Strongly approve	approve	disapprove	Strongly disapprove
I am tolerant and patient to renegotiate deadlines.				
I discuss with student teachers on the availability and communication issues.				
I determine the nature of guidance, direction and collaboration with student teachers.				
I confer to analyze data collaboratively with student teachers.				

1.   Comment on the kind of interaction you had with your trainees during supervision. Was it useful?
_____
_____
_____
2.   Just throw some light on the weaknesses of the supervision practice if there are?
_____
_____
_____
3.   Can you think of any changes that would benefit the ELT supervision?
_____
_____
_____
4.   What can you say regarding your interaction with student teachers during the practicum? Are you open to them?
_____
_____
_____

Appendix B

Questionnaire for EFL Student Teachers

Dear EFL student teachers, the purpose of this questionnaire is to see the effectiveness of supervision in ELT education in enhancing your teaching competence. More specifically, the researcher wants to see how your supervisor advices and supports you to empower yourself to be a competitive teacher. To see the current practice, the researcher highly seeks to collect the necessary data from you. Use a tick // to site degree of approval for use and assistant activity given by your supervisor in the right position. And voice your understanding in your own words in the space provided to the open ended questions.

Your genuine response is already invaluable to address the problem and work with its solution.

Best regards

Items	Strongly approve	approve	disapprove	Strongly disapprove
My ELT supervisor:				
took time to talk with me in both pre observation and post observation conferences.				
discussed on the availability and communication issues like access, frequency and regularity				
determined the nature of guidance, direction and collaboration with me.				
confered to analyze the data collaboratively at all stages in order to develop my confidence and ability to reflect on my classroom teaching				

1. Comment on the kind of interaction you had with your advisor.
_____
_____
_____

2. Was there a chance to share ideas with other student teachers and reflect on your teaching?
_____
_____
_____

3. Did you face any problems during the supervision session? How did your supervisor help   you   to   tackle   them?
_____
_____
_____

4. Do you think the support of your ELT supervisor has increased your competence of teaching   and   learning?   If   yes,   comment   on   the   kind   of   support   you   had.
_____
_____
_____

Appendix C

Interview questions to the ELT educators

1. To what extent did you deal with student teachers on when and how you give support during practicum?
2. How do you chair the post observation conference?
3. Who was dominating the conference? Is that you or the student teachers?
4. Do you give chances to your student teachers to discuss issues related to their teaching practice with you?

Appendix D

Interview questions to the EFL Student teachers

1. Have you made any discussion with your supervisor before you start observing and teaching in the classroom?
2. Could you remember the time when you dealt with issues in common with your supervisor?
3. When the practicum is going on, what was your supervisor's role? Was it helping or judging?
4. Did your supervisor invite you to cooperate with your colleagues and other teachers in the school?