THE ARCHITECTURE OF PEDAGOGY IN THE PRACTICE TEACHING EXPERIENCE (PTE) OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE: A NEW PROPOSAL TO EVALUATE PRACTICUM STUDENTS

Milagro Piñeiro Ruiz*
Dunia Navarro Ramírez**

RESUMEN

El presente artículo pretende guiar a los supervisores en el desarrollo de la práctica docente realizada por los estudiantes de la carrera de la Enseñanza del inglés como idioma extranjero en la Universidad de Costa Rica, Sede de Occidente. Las autoras pretenden unificar criterios para obtener una mejor calidad al guiar a los estudiantes practicantes a través de actividades paralelas.

Palabras claves: supervisor, supervisión, técnicas, instrumento de evaluación, estudiantes practicantes, práctica en la experiencia profesional (PTE), inglés como idioma extranjero.

ABSTRACT

This article attempts to guide supervisors in the development of the Practice Teaching Experience carried out by students of Teaching English as a Foreign Language, at the Universidad de Costa Rica, Sede de Occidente. The authors attempt to unify supervising criteria, in order to achieve the highest standard for guiding practicum students throughout parallel procedures.

Key words: supervisor, supervision, techniques, evaluation instrument, practicum students, practice teaching experience (PTE), English as a foreign language.

*   Profesora en la Sede de Occidente de la Universidad de Costa Rica [milapineiro@gmail.com]
**   Profesora del Departamento de Educación de la Sede de Occidente de la Universidad de Costa Rica. [dmnavarror@yahoo.com]

After having accomplished the corresponding academic requirements, every year a group of students in the career field of teaching English as a Foreign Language, at the Universidad de Costa Rica, Sede de Occidente, must complete a practice teaching experience as an important component for their learning process. They do so by assuming the responsibility to teach a group of high school students for a semester. To guide their teaching experience, supervising instructors from the university assist them in cooperation with the school teacher, employee of the cooperating institution. The practicum students have to show the necessary skills and knowledge for developing English classes properly, according to students' interests, the requirements of the cooperating institution, and the cognitive targets included in the "English Syllabus" designed by the Ministerio de Educación Pública (M.E.P).

According to this process, the authors will explain what supervision means, techniques, and the guideline (evaluation instrument) supervisors use to describe the regular assessment practice by which practicum students will be evaluated throughout this experience (see annex 1). Furthermore, the components and categories included in these instruments are described, in order to show the educational ideology of the professional experience, with the purpose of stimulating the analytic reflection toward the explanation of the basic elements contemplated in this practice. Finally, some recommendations are provided to support the authors' effort and to highlight the student teacher supervision's job.

What does supervision mean? Supervision permits the improvement of the teaching and learning process carried out by practicum students during their PTE. Many years ago, supervision was conceived as an inspection which sought to control the execution of certain actions in regards to educational procedures which sought to control the execution of educational procedures and classroom management. Nowadays, it has been undergoing an evolutionary process of transformation due to variables such as the economical, political, social, and cultural conditions. According to these factors, supervising in educational institutions is directly related to the supervisors' work, their responsibility, and the way of performing the process itself. At present supervisors have started to guide the process in a pedagogic manner; attention is focused on working side by side with teachers, guiding their professional development, with the idea of improving the students' learning process.

In order to comprehend the epistemological basis of supervision, some traditional and modern concepts will be provided. However, it is relevant to emphasize that each point of view not only represents an important pedagogic support, but it also depends on the educational ideology as approached by different interests and in different time periods.

Cárdenas (1980) refers to supervision as the process of guiding teachers to gain confidence throughout a set of achieved lived experiences at the same time the supervisors themselves also gain the opportunity to increase their teaching strengths while observing the practicum students. Thomas & Kimbal (1983) define supervision as the aid to progress. They explain that supervision takes place when the supervisor helps the teacher to take a step ahead in their own learning

process; it means it cannot be imposed. It is only effective when it has been given as help and it is not limited to any person who has a supervising position at the M.E.P. In other words, supervision is a support within the development of the teaching and learning process.

However, ten years later Rubba (2000, 34) comes back to a traditional concept of supervision:

Supervision is to take continuous notes of perceived events. Short dialogues of interactions can be jotted as well, and sketches can be added. However, in order to be more systematic, educators suggest that supervisors should make use of observation instruments. One instrument is a checklist in which the person checks off teaching behaviors as they occur.

And during the same decade, Benavides (1995, 47) refers to the supervisor's role as:

not to judge the student teachers, but to make them auto- critical and conscious of the way they could affect what occurs in the classroom, and due to this, be able to improve by themselves. It is to help the student teachers to grow professionally during work. This task is not easy, it is a complete process which needs time and includes different chores.

Finally, Sillivan & Glanz (2004, x) define supervision as "a dynamic process that facilitates dialogues to promote instructional improvement. Supervision is the center to the renewal of classroom teaching and learning in the new century".

If the preceding ideas are analyzed in order to contrast them, it could be seen that it is not difficult to distinguish between traditional and modern concepts; however, the predominant idea refers to the progress of supervision itself instead of the process.

Taking into account the given definitions and the main goal of this article,

the authors define supervision as the process of external support of specialized character, able to contribute to the improvement of the technical and pedagogical processes which are developed by a teacher in the classroom. This article outlines the primary task of the supervisor which means that the supervisor must have the pedagogical and technical knowledge required to guide teachers, working together for the achievement of the educational objectives and for the professional development of the members of the educational community.

Common techniques used by supervisors

There are many techniques supervisors have been developing and implementing when guiding the students' practice teaching experience. Two common ways are observing the pedagogical mediation teachers use in the classroom and checking documents such as the lesson plans and materials. Moreover there are many other techniques; as Garbanzo (2002, 42), expresses:

Diverse techniques can be used by supervisors to help the teachers' development; it is done by means of teachers' autonomous attitude, so they can reflect the impact in the teaching and learning process in students. Furthermore, the supervisor should have the capacity to know which techniques should be employed, as well as the manner and reason to implement them. As it is observed, the supervisor requires a wide knowledge of different techniques and the ability to adapt them to specific situations due to the complexity of the educational process.

- **Assessment supervision** is considered one of the fundamental tasks when supervising, since it promotes excellence in the educational process by focusing on the confirmation of

the success of the intended objective rather than final results. The variables employed by the teacher to assess have to agree with the cognitive target, so that the pupils can obtain positive results.

- **Clinical supervision** attempts to improve educators' performance. This technique requires: planning of didactic strategies to be analyzed, planning of observation strategies, and planning the way to analyze conclusions and the new proposals. Sullivan & Glanz (2004), specifically refer to Clinical supervision as the way in which supervisors try to bring about change which largely determines how teachers respond to the challenge. Supervisors can mandate change externally, or they can, together with teachers, build collaborative settings.

- **The evaluation instrument** is a chain of elaborated guides where objectives and ways to assess them are settled upon. Diverse contents can be included such as classroom management, discipline, teaching resources, pedagogy, and the development of subject matter. Assessing the teaching and learning process becomes easier when supervisors make use of that result.

Guideline for Supervisors

It is a requirement for students in their last year of study to participate in field experience that should be considered a bonus to the learning process any future teacher may have. They must accomplish the mandatory PTE in order to receive their diploma. The practicum students must teach English during a semester in educational institutions close to the Sede de Occidente. A gradual initiation to the classroom setting is completed before commencing use of the evaluation instrument for assessment.

First week

The practicum students are introduced to the principal, the cooperating teacher, and the English class; at this time, they start observing the teaching and learning process and work together with the cooperating teacher in some activities such as: calling the roll, reading instructions, checking written and oral practices, and grading exams. During this stage, the cooperating teacher plays an important role due to the fact he/ she is not only the mentor but also the tutor who better understands the manner in which teaching experience processes must be developed.

Second week

The practicum students will continue observing the English classes. They also apply different diagnostic instruments with the aim of gathering important facts related to the students´ interests, likes, strengths, weaknesses, and social and family background. They also become acquainted with the resources and rules of the institution. Students start planning the English classes based on the cognitive targets of the English syllabus from the Ministerio de Educación Públic, and by following all the suggestions given by the cooperating teacher and supervisor. When the plans and corresponding materials are ready, it is the supervisor's responsibility to check them and suggest, as needed, the appropriate changes to be implemented.

Third week

The practicum students start the instructional activities in the English class. During this week they should not be observed so that they become comfortable with the process and develop self confidence with the group.

Fourth week

The supervisor will continue to observe the development of the teaching and learning process the practicum students carry out. The supervisor will provide guidance and suggestions for working effectively, offering advice and encouragement. During this week the observation is considered formative.

For the following weeks and until the semester ends, supervisors start assessing practicum students by using the evaluation instrument. It is used to recall important information regarding practicum students' strengths and aspects that need further development.

Each rubric in the evaluation instrument is graded from 2 to 0 points (2 refers to the upper grade and 0 refers to the lower grade). Rubrics which are observed earn 2 points, aspects that need further development gain 1 point and the ones which are not observed receive 0 points. The total points a student-teacher can obtain is 96 points.

There are seven key rubric categories which are the basis of this **Evaluation Instrument.** Every category is divided into subcategories: personal aspects, opening activity, lesson structure and pedagogy, evaluation process, teacher's command of the language, and the closing activity. Each subcategory includes a section for the supervisor to write comments regarding strengths and other aspects that need

further development. Each one of the aspects is explained as follows:

1. **Heading** In this section the supervisor must write the date of the observation, the practicum student's name, the supervisor's name, the cooperating teacher's name, the name of the cooperating institution, the group number, the time, the method that is going to be used, the cognitive target, and the improved skills. Also there is a space in the upper right section of the heading in which the supervisor must write the grade and the observation number.

2. **Personal aspects of the student teacher**
   a. **Punctuality:** The supervisor will evaluate if student teacher is at least fifteen minutes before the class starts. If they do, it would give them the opportunity to prepare the classroom before students arrive; if not, the score for this aspect would be reduced.
   b. **Personal appearance:** Student teachers should wear appropriate clothing according to the teacher's role; this means that jeans, miniskirts, tank tops, blouses with a low neckline are not acceptable. Men's hair should not be too long. In regards to personal appearance Public Education Ministry regulations should be followed.
   c. **Confidence level:** Confidence is not a tangible noun, but it may be observed through the student teacher's attitude in front of the class. The student teachers show a good level of confidence when they react properly to students'

questions, when they show mastery of the contents, or when they react calmly, but in an assertive way toward unexpected situations.

d. **Class control:** The key to having good class control is to motivate the students. It could be said that the class is controlled if the lesson plan is successfully carry out as designed. However, if any of the following is noted, then it can be said that there was a lack of control in the class because the student teacher:

- Lacks interest or motivation.
- Does not foster student centered learning.
- Allows the students to do anything they want, such as talking among themselves or otherwise misbehaving.
- Remains sit and does not circulate among the students to oversee their work.
- Does not answer students' questions.
- Does not seem well prepared to teach.
- Does not relate well to students.
- Does not provide sufficient instructions or directions for an exercise or activity to be successfully completed.

3. The Opening activity

Routine activities are developed properly: Routines are known as pre warm-up activities teachers do in order to begin the class. Such as: greeting students, checking attendance, writing the date on the board or asking a student to do it. They should be developed properly to open and prepare the class for learning in a cooperative manner.

The motivation related to the objective is effective: A good class must be initiated with a good warm -up session to enhance students' learning in order to get the best from them. The activity used to motivate students should be linked to the cognitive target. If this does not awaken students' interest it could be said that the planned activities did not fulfill the class' expectation and that they were not suitable to enhance learning. On the other hand, if students enjoy the class from the beginning, and respond well toward the warm-up, it could then be considered as a good start for the class.

4. Lesson structure and pedagogy

Key vocabulary is presented properly: The student teacher must be aware of the importance of introducing new structures or vocabulary as an essential part in the learning of any foreign language. It means reinforcing and building the students' mental schemata by means of visual, auditory and oral stimulus.

The structure is used meaningfully: To internalize any word or structure, in order to transfer it to the long term memory, it has to be meaningful to the learner; consequently, the student teacher must introduce these structures in a very realistic way and link them to the pupils' interests, needs, concerns, and real life. Student teachers must teach the language, and not merely teach about it.

The method or technique is applied correctly: Teaching methods contain a set of procedures that educators are to follow in the classroom with the purpose of maximizing the class time in which the learners, rather than the teacher, do the work. Methods are based on a set of principles that consider the nature of language and the learning process. Consequently the

teacher has to follow the corresponding steps according to the chosen method, in order to achieve the goals of the planned lesson. If they work with a specific method or approach, the supervisor must be aware of its characteristics to evaluate if it is properly used. Methods should not be mixed, unless there is a previous established purpose to do so.

The explanations are given to the class clearly: Supervisors should pay close attention and monitor the way explanations are given by student teachers, due to the fact that they must be simple and accessible for the students. It means that they should consider the pupils' age and level of proficiency. When students show a lack of understanding toward a given explanation or demonstration, it is important to diagnose their learning difficulty, and based on the findings, break down the task or re-teach by using a different method, rather than merely repeating the same instruction or giving up in frustration.

A logical order in the teaching process is followed: Stern (in Brown 2000, 50) affirmed:

Watch a small child's speech development. First he listens, and then he speaks. Understanding always precedes speaking. Therefore, this must be the right order of presenting the skills in a foreign language. A small child listens and speaks and no (one) would dream of making him read and write. Reading and writing are advanced stages of language development. The natural order for first and second language learning is listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Thus, the supervising teacher will encourage student teachers to follow the order of these language skills in their lesson planning and in their teaching.

Audiovisual aids or other supplementary materials are used to enhance the lesson: Clark and Starr (1976, 327) affirmed that good teachers can be better teachers when they utilize a variety of materials. These materials range from audiovisual aids to any accessible realia material. However, all of them are excellent sources to enhance the learning if they are correctly used, because they alone can not do the teaching job. Any audiovisual aid or other sort of material needs to be introduced and followed up properly. "on their own, they may do nothing, carefully handled they can work wonders"(Clark at el.,328). The supervisor will evaluate if student teachers have used the materials appropriately according to the previous assumption.

The student teacher provides special encouragement and support for slow learners: It is important to encourage all the students in the learning process, especially those who, due to their lack of participation in class, or according to their low grades are called weak students or students with special needs. The student teacher must pay close attention to these students while presenting the subject matter. Student teachers have to be sure that these pupils truly comprehend the lesson. This process could be accomplished by reinforcing students' learning by means of different techniques designed for this purpose and assessing their understanding through direct questions or by alternative strategies to verify students' knowledge.

The student teacher's attitude is warm and challenging: Roger's Humanistic Approach (in Brown 2000, 90) asserts that teachers become facilitators of learning through the establishment of interpersonal relationships among pupils. They must first be real and genuine, discarding masks of superiority and omniscience.

Second, teachers need to have genuine trust, acceptance, and prizing students, as worthy, valuable individual, and communication must be opened and epithetical with their students and vice versa. According to the authors´ point of view, supervisors should help the student teacher to develop a good attitude toward their students, not only to understand themselves better, but to be more effective teachers. Student teacher must provide students with challenging activities to foster their learning process.

There is a mutually collaborative atmosphere among teacher-student, student-student, and student-teacher: Freire, mentioned by Brown, (2000, 93) considers that "students should be allowed to negotiate learning outcomes, to cooperate with teachers and other learners in a process of discovery, to engage in critical thinking and to relate everything they do at school to their reality outside the classroom".

Based on Rogers' position, teachers as facilitators must provide the nurturing context for learners to construct their meaning in interaction with others. Therefore, there must be a cooperative environment, in which the learning and teaching process interact together taking into account all the different components and participants of the process to build it as one. Moreover, the supervisors will encourage students' teachers to develop collaborative values among their pupils in regards to the many techniques applied in class and they will have to check if these are correctly used. Brown (2000, 90) says "what is needed, is for teachers to become facilitators of learning through the establishment of interpersonal relationships with learners[…]teachers need to communicate openly and empathetically with their students and vice versa."

The focus is on communication: Communication is the most important aim in which the teaching of a foreign language must be focused. Richards and Rogers (2000, 153) see "the need to focus in language teaching on communicative proficiency rather than on mere mastery of structures".

Nowadays, the term communicative language teaching is a byword for language teachers. Indeed the single greatest challenge in the profession is to move significantly beyond the teaching of ruling, patterns, definitions, and other knowledge about language to the point that student teachers have to communicate genuinely, spontaneously, and meaningfully in a foreign language. (Brown, 2000, 14).

According to the syllabus of the Ministerio de Educación Pública in Costa Rica, the most significant objective is to provide students with suitable activities in order to develop communicative skills. As it points, "to develop the ability to communicate for practical purposes" (Ministerio Educación Pública 2005, 14). Thus, the most significant course of action is to have activities that lead students into the process of using language with communicative purposes. "In summary, learning English as a foreign language in Costa Rica will allow students to develop communicative competence" (Ministerio de Educación Pública 2005, 16). With this in mind, the student teachers should bring activities to the class that will engage students in the communicative process.

The supervisor will analyze if the student teachers provide these activities in accordance with this aim and guide them in the teaching practice.

The student teacher appropriately utilizes techniques and drills that maximize

students' speaking and minimize teacher's talk time: The supervisor observes if the student teachers act as facilitators. Brown reinforces the importance of being facilitators of the pedagogical tricks. He affirms, "Teachers as facilitators must therefore provide the nurturing context for learners to construct their meanings in interaction with others" (Brown 2000, 91). Teachers should just be the guides in this learning process rather than the core of the process. Teachers as facilitators will bring to the class those activities to have their pupils interact with the language.

Based on this constructivist approach, student teachers should give pupils specific procedures for them to construct their own learning. If the students are the ones who are to do the most speaking in class, they will be motivated to use the language, on the other hand if the students act as receivers of the input, and not as an active part in the process, the objective of developing communication skills among the students is lost.

The student teacher must try to find the appropriate equilibrium, and this could be obtained by visualizing what they will get and expect from their pupils from every single activity planned.

The student teacher provides enough language exposure and practice: The student teachers' task is then, to create a suitable environment for learning, where activities will be used to develop and reinforce the language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing).

The student teacher respects learning styles and multiple intelligences: Theories of language acquisition are broad and they all deal with principles of human language. Gagné (1965 in Brown 2000, 91) "ably demonstrated the importance of identifying a number of types of learning

that all human beings use. Type of learning varies according to context and subject matter to be learned". He classifies the learning strategies people use to learn in eight different styles which go from simple signal learning to problem solving. Among these, stimuli-response learning, chaining, verbal association, multiple discrimination, concept learning, principle learning, and problem solving. In 1983 Gardner also classifies intelligence as ability, giving a better picture of it, and dividing it into eight different intelligences to approach learning. Thus, not a high IQ indicated "intelligence" but also abilities such as linguistic, spatial, naturalistic, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, intrapersonal and interpersonal. This new concept proposed by Gardner came to break the stereotyped idea of INTELLIGENCE = IQ. So if students do not learn by following intelligence, teachers must use other patterns in order to enhance students' learning.

It is important to consider the relevance of these theories in regard to teaching, because teachers must be updated with the different pedagogical trends that emerge through the years.

The teacher encourages active learning: It is important to provide active mediation activities to enhance learning. The supervising teacher will be observant of the fact that these types of activities are included in the process.

5. Students' evaluation process

Comprehension is checked during the whole class: English teachers make use of different strategies to check on the progress of the students and to visualize how far they have mastered what they should have learned. This is done in order to skip, reinforce or adapt the upcoming

procedures that will be expanded during the class meeting. Students' comprehension could also be assessed by monitoring pupils' progress, using eye contact, asking questions, and checking assigned tasks.

Errors and mistakes are treated well: The teacher's role is to point out errors and mistakes and to encourage students' self assessment in order to comprehend and to correct and avoided them. Thus, students might monitor their progress, and improve their own slip-ups.

There is opportunity for students' participation: The authors consider that the best way to learn a new language is by making use of it; subsequently teachers may provide students the opportunity to participate voluntarily and actively in the learning process. Pupils may have the possibility to improve the listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills by performing given tasks.

All the students are involved: One of the principles for language teaching methodology proposed by Nunan (1999) emphasizes the significance of focusing the English class on the learner. Therefore, learners should be actively involved. This means that the class should be student- centered instead of teacher-centered. However, there are two dimensions to this learner involvement. The first of these is the involvement of learners in making decisions about what to learn, how to learn, and how to be evaluated. The second is maximizing the class time in which the learners, rather than the teacher, do the work. The teacher **and** the students make all of the decisions in regards to the learning process. Hence, a teacher who is committed to this principle will look for opportunities to involve learners in becoming more reflective and in making more decisions about their own learning.

The student teacher provides opportunities for self correction and peer correction: The concept of learner's autonomy requires responsible learners who are able to consciously monitor their own learning process (Scharle et al. 2000, 3). All human beings are involved either consciously or subconsciously in an ongoing process of self-assessment that guides the person to a self correction process. The English class is not an exception. Teachers should provide students with the possibility to assess themselves as part of their individual educational process, and this could be achieved by asking students to reorganize something they have said or written in an incorrect way.

On the other hand, peer correction benefits learners too. Firstly because the evaluation and grading is not only the prerogative of the teacher; it could be shared with the classroom community (Sengupta 1998). Secondly, the learner's internalization of the evaluation criteria is deepened: 'By becoming proficient evaluators of others` work, the students are better able to critically, thoroughly, and objectively evaluate their own and classmates' performance (Moore 1986, 23). This suggests that the quality of the learners' performance is enhanced too. Finally, peer correction greatly contributes to learner autonomy and responsibility. Learners construct the evaluation of the learning progress as a classroom community. Consequently, it is important to provide these assessment strategies to pupils for them to evaluate their learning.

6. Teacher's command of the language

The following rubrics evaluate the student teachers' command of the English according to the following scores as shown in table 1.

Table 1

Excellent	4 points
Very good	3 points
Good	2 points
Fair	1 points
Poor	0 points

In table 2 each rubric will be explained in order to comprehend each aspect better and guide supervisors to assign the appropriate score.

7. Closing activity

There is a culminating activity at the end of the class: It is always very useful to guide the class with the consolidation of the acquired knowledge, since the students only have contact with the foreign language inside the classroom. The consolidation activities allow students to memorize and reinforce words and structures in an exhaustive way before beginning new content.

There is a leave taking sentence: A leave taking statement is a structure that indicates to pupils that the class is over. It is the closing phrase used, such as, see you next class, see you later, class is over, that's all for today, and so on.

8. Other aspects to be considered

There is a proper lesson plan: There is not an exclusive class planning type or valid outline that can be applied to all circumstances. The planning of the class varies considerably in number, order and extension of its elements, but in general it should include the following elements:

- **Objective delimitation:** The objectives should have a communicative purpose, to be observed and to be determined in functional terms and structure in a thematic area that supposes a specific lexical content.

- **Pedagogic structure:** It includes the planning of the activities set up to reach the objectives in the four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, or in those linguistic skills that cover the necessities of the students. These activities should follow a logical sequence, from the presentation, or input, to the production, or output. The sequence of the activities should correspond with the logical sequence of the student's learning process. When planning the class, it is logical to keep in mind these phases, and to plan tasks that favor the activity that characterized each one by means of an appropriate sequence. The activities proposed for each stage should agree with the specific objective of each one of them. At the same time, they must contribute to the achievement of the general objective.

- **Evaluation of specific objectives:** It represents an important part when planning a lesson. It is the purpose of how the attainment of the proposed objectives will be evaluated. It would be convenient for teachers to plan the activities of the evaluation at the same time that the specific objectives with the purpose of having concordance among them.

- **The lesson plan is followed:** The objectives must be set up by the function of what the students should know or be able to produce at the conclusion of the class. The true beneficiaries of all the activities are the students. After all, they are the ones pursuing the most important objective: to learn a

Table 2

	Excellent 4 points	Very Good 3 points	Good 2 points	Fair 1 point	Poor 0 points
Voice volume	Volume is appropriate at all times.	Volume is okay most of the times.	Volume is not loud enough sometimes.	Volume is often not loud enough.	Volume is too low.
Speech	Speech is clear, fluent and effortless	Speech is most of the time fluent and effortless with minimal lapses or silent periods.	Speech is usually fluent with some pauses.	Speech is often disrupted. There are many silent period.	Speech is extremely halting, very slow or disrupted by relative long silent periods.
Intonation and stress patterns	Intonation and stress patterns are correct.	Intonation and stress are most of the time accurate.	Intonation and stress are sometimes incorrect, but do not interfere with communication.	Frequent use of wrong intonation and stress causes some confusion in meaning.	Incorrect intonation and stress causes severe communication problems.
Spelling	There are no mistakes in word spelling.	There are few spelling mistakes.	There are several spelling mistakes but they do not interfere in communication.	There are a lot of spelling mistakes which inlay confusion.	There are severe spelling mistakes that totally interfere with communication..
Pronunciation	Pronunciation of vowels, consonants clusters, beginning, middle and final sounds are clear and comprehensible.	Occasional pronunciation mistakes or omissions exist but are not relevant for meaning.	Pronunciation mistakes, errors or omissions do not interfere in communication.	Pronunciation mistakes, errors or omissions cause confusion. There are problems in vowels and consonant clusters.	Pronunciation patterns are incomprehensible or omitted.
Language of instructions	Instructions are accurate and precise. Students clearly understand what to do.	Instructions are well stated, seldom limited and usually understood.	Instructions are usually clear but sometimes need to be rephrased for student's comprehension.	Instructions frequently need to be clarified because of poor wording or phrasing.	Instructions are so limited as to be incomprehensible.
Grammar usage	There are no grammatical errors.	There are minimal number of errors in structure and form.	There are several minor mistakes but overall a good control of grammar is noted.	There are frequent errors which demonstrate limited grammar control.	There is little or no control of grammatical forms and structures.
Teacher´s command of the language	There is an excellent performance and competence in regards to all language skills.	There is a very good performance and competence in regards to all language skills.	There is good performance and competence in regards to all language skills	There is a fair performance and competence in regards to all language skills	There is poor performance and competence in regards to all language skills.

Source: Evaluation Sheet Instrument proposed by the authors (2008).

foreign language. Therefore in each class the students should reach concrete and clear objectives that can be perceived in a transparent way during the established time.

- **Aims are achieved:** This deal with the acquisition of the stated objectives for the lesson.
- **There is enough time for each activity:** The distribution of the activities implies the temporary division according to a pedagogic and methodological achievement. The activities should be carefully planned with regard to time. Each activity requires a variable time and it is the teacher who can best indicate its length. However, time should be given, for individual work, or in group, without forgetting that the time is not the same for all students. It is recommended to set up the time frames and inform the students before beginning the activity, but to be flexible in expanding the time limit when students appear to be motivated or need extra reinforcement.

Comments of improvement

These are some general comments supervisors should reinforce or point out to be taken into consideration in future classes.

General recommendations to supervisors

- Coordinate administrative permission with the corresponding authorities where practicum students will carry out their practice teaching experience. Introduce the practicum students to the head of the institution and administrative personal.

- Have an introductory meeting with the practicum students and the cooperating teachers to analyze roles, tasks, and responsibilities.
- Check and analyze with the practicum students, those aspects in regard to schedules, anecdotic registers, diagnostic instruments, materials, mapping, planning, individual attention plans and final reports.
- Guide the practicum students to identify objectives, procedures, and timeliness schedules.
- Keep a permanent "person to person" communication with the practicum students in order to give a hand, when needed, and to closely monitor their progress. Make the supervision process more a feedback than a success or failure process.
- Discuss with the practicum students all the details observed during the supervision of the lesson, immediately after each observation, offering constructive criticism, suggestions for improvement, and new alternatives.
- Be an advisor to practicum students by answering their questions, recommending appropriate materials, and setting up activities in initial efforts.
- Notify the corresponding people cooperating teacher, professor of the course, practicum students, head of the institution of any problem or misunderstanding, as soon as it is recognized.
- Stimulate and guide practicum students in a democratic way to help them develop their own capabilities.
- Prepare remedial tasks for practicum students to meet the expected objectives in every class setting.

Conclusion

The proposed evaluation process offers sufficient criteria to guide practicum students´ supervisors in pursuit of better results by organizing practical and easy to follow strategies and rubrics which will help to facilitate their task.

Another advantage observed in this proposal is that it could be used by practicum students' supervisors of any foreign language, since the proposed strategies and rubrics could be adapted to accommodate any language program.

Moreover, these higher standards could also be used, due to the proposed methodology, as universal assessment at all Costa Rican universities to judge practicum students' performance and competence in their teaching.

References

Benavides, R. (1995). Una propuesta para evaluar práctica docente. *Revista Reflexiones,* Facultad de Ciencias Sociales. Universidad de Costa Rica, 47.

Brown, D. (2000). *Principles of Language learning and Teaching.* San Francisco State University: Longman, 14, 50, 90-91, 93.

Cárdenas, M. (1980). *Antología Supervisión Educativa.* Universidad Estatal a Distancia. San José: Editorial UNED.

Clark, L & Starr, L. (1976) *Secondary School Teaching Methods.* McMillan Publishing Company, Inc. New York. United States, 327-328.

Garbanzo, G. (2002). *La supervisión educativa: Eje para el desarrollo de maestros y maestras, profesores y profesoras eficaces del sistema educativo costarricense: Un enfoque en busca de la calidad educativa.* San José: Editorial Universidad de Costa Rica, 42.

Ministerio de Educación Pública. (2005). Boletín Oficial del Estado, 14, 16.

Moore, L. (1986). Teaching students how to evaluate writing. *TESOL Newsletter (*10), 23.

Nunan, D. (1999). *Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sullivan, S & Glanz, J. (2004). *Supervision That Improves Teaching: Strategies and Techniques. Second edition. Sage Publications, x.*

Richards, J. & Rodgers, T. (2001). *Approaches and Methods in language Teaching.* Second Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 153.

Rubba, J. (2000. 10 octubre). Syllable structure in English. recuperado 27, october 2007, de http://cla.calpoly.edu/, 34.

Scharle, A & Szabó, A (2000). *Learner Autonomy. A guide to developing learner responsibility.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 3.

Sengupta, S. (1998). 'Peer evaluation: "I am not the teacher"*, ELT Journal. (*52),19-28.

Thomas, J. & Kimbal, W. (1983). *Supervision for better schools. New York:* Prentice Hall.

Annex: 1

UNIVERSIDAD DE COSTA RICA
SEDE DE OCCIDENTE
CIUDAD UNIVERSITARIA CARLOS MONGE ALFARO
DEPARTAMENTO CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACION
Teléfonos: 437 9932 445 5533 Fax: 437 9880

PUNTAJE: 96
CALIFICACIÓN:
OBSERVACIÓN #:

Evaluation Instrument

Date: _____

Student- teacher's name _____

Supervisor's name _____

Cooperator- teacher's name _____

Institution _____

Group _____ Time _____ Method _____

Cognitive _____

Target: _____

_____

Improved skills: _____

_____

	2PTS	1PT	0PTS
PERSONAL ASPECTS OF THE STUDENT TEACHER	0	NFFD	NO
1. Punctuality			
2. Personal appearance			
3. Level of confidence			
4. Class control			

Strengths: _____

_____

_____

Future growth and development: _____

_____

_____

	2PTS	1PT	0PTS
OPENING ACTIVITY	O	NFFD	NO
5. Routine activities are developed properly			
6. The motivation related to the objective is effective			

Strengths: _____
_____
_____

Future growth and development: _____
_____
_____

	2PTS	1PT	0PTS
LESSON STRUCTURE AND PEDAGOGY			
7. Key vocabulary is presented properly			
8. The structure is used meaningfully			
9. The method or technique is applied correctly			
10. The explanations are given to the class clearly			
11. It is followed a logical order in the teaching process (Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing)			
12. Audiovisual aids or other supplementary materials are used to enhance the lesson			
13. St- teacher provides special encouragement and support for weaker students			
14. The st-teacher's attitude is warm and challenging			
15. There is mutually collaborative atmosphere among teacher-student, student-student, and student-teacher			
16. The focus is on communication			
17. The st-teacher appropriately utilizes techniques and drills that maximize students' talk and minimize teacher's talk time			
18. The st-teacher provides enough language exposure and practice			
19. The st-teacher respects learning styles and multiple intelligences			
20. The st-teacher encourages active learning			

Strengths: _____
_____
_____

Future growth and development: _____
_____
_____

	2PTS	1PT	0PTS
EVALUATION PROCESS			
21. Comprehension is checked during the whole class			
22. Errors and mistakes are treated well			
23. There is opportunity for the students' participation			
24. All the students are involved			
25. The st-teacher provides opportunities for self-correction and peer-correction			

Strengths: _____
_____
_____

Future growth and development: _____
_____
_____

	4 PTS	3PTS	2PTS	1PT	0PTS
TEACHER'S COMMAND OF THE LANGUAGE	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor
26. Voice volume					
27. Speech fluency					
28. Intonation and stress patterns					
29. Spelling					
30. Pronunciation					
31. Language of instructions					
32. Grammar usage					
33. Command of English					

Strengths: _____
_____
_____

Future growth and development: _____
_____
_____

	2PTS	IPT	0PTS
CLOSING ACTIVITY	0	NFFD	NO
34. There is a culminating activity at the end of the class			
35. There is a take leaving sentence			

Strengths: _____
_____
_____

Future growth and development: _____
_____
_____

	2PTS	1PT	0PTS
OTHER ASPECTS	0	NFFD	NO
36. There is a proper lesson plan			
37. The lesson plan is followed			
38. Aims are achieved			
39. There is enough time for each activity			

Strengths: _____
_____
_____

Future growth and development: _____
_____
_____

COMMENTS ON IMPROVEMENT: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE ST- TEACHER'S SIGNATURE

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

NOTE
O: Observed
NFD: Need Further Development
NO: Not Observed