

**A PRACTITIONER INQUIRY INTO PRE-SERVICE EFL REFLECTIVE  
PRACTICUM OF HARAMAYA UNIVERSITY: A CONDITION OF INABILITY  
TO REFLECT AND DETERMINANTS OF EFFECTIVE REFLECTION**

**BY**

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**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY,  
THE RESEARCH AND GRADUATE PROGRAMME OFFICE, DEPARTMENT  
OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

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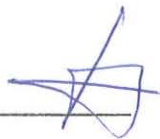


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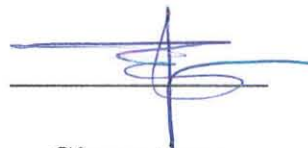
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## ABSTRACT

The thrust of this study was experiential observation of pre-service EFL student teachers' inability to reflect in/on their practices at Haramaya University practicum context. The overall aim of the study was to, firstly, critically analyze the problem in its context with the intention to understand the facts of the situation of the problem and, secondly, make an inquiry into ways for maximizing the student teachers' ability to reflect in their context.

A qualitative paradigm and practitioner inquiry design were adopted. Grounded Theory Method of data analysis was employed to systematically thematize, categorize and discover patterns and processes in the data. Ten student teachers, as respondents and practitioners, as well as four of their teacher educators, as informants, were selected by means of purposeful sampling, to take part in the study. Participant observation methods that involve unobtrusive observation, complete classroom observation, unstructured interview reflective journaling and discussions and practicum document gathering were used to collect qualitative data.

The findings of the Contextual Analysis showed that the core factor for the EFL student teachers' inability to reflect is mainly their lack of effective reflection tools for reflection-for/on/about-actions and lack of effective time for reflection-in-action. The data suggests that, consequently, the central strategy of reflective practice they adopted was overdependence on and replication of the existing school syllabi without critical reflection. Based on these Contextual Analysis findings an Inquiry was next conducted, whereby participant student teachers were engaged on reflective journaling for two semesters. The findings of the Inquiry showed significant levels of improvement in their ability to reflect for/in/on action. For instance, the data analysis showed that they steadily began to reduce non-reflective behaviors such as over-advocating own actions, protectionism of self and peers, and exchange of distorted information, each of which initially blocked reflectivity. Gradually, they began to take such reflective actions as reflective observation of pupils' behaviors, reflective planning of lessons and actions,

reflective classroom acts such as appreciative judgments of pupils' behavior, revision of some taken for granted assumptions, promotion of sharing of information in classrooms and effective time management. Yet, some non-reflectivity behaviors such as context dilemma continued to persist due to influence of macro factors. All the domains of EFL reflective skills—English, teaching and inquiry—improved.

From the findings, a conclusion has been reached that the student teachers' inability to effectively reflect related to their lack of effective reflection tools and control over lesson times and materials. By providing these conditions, student teachers' potential to effectively reflect and reconstruct new skills and knowledge from their experience can be prompted. Studies on conditions for cross-institutional and interdisciplinary practitioners' reflection are suggested as a major further area to be researched.



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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background

Initial teacher preparation, largely known as pre-service teacher education program, lays a strong foundation for student teachers' future development as reflective teachers. That is why many teacher educators (Brookfield 1986; 1995; 2001; Liston & Zeichner 1987; Zeichner 1991) emphasize practicum and other schemes that have the potential to give student teachers the opportunity and necessary skills to continuously evaluate and improve their practices reflectively. There is almost unanimous agreement that without some level of some form of reflective practicum experience, initial teacher education program is incomplete and ineffective.

Various ways through which student teachers can make systematic reflection on their professional practice in pre-service education can be identified. The prominent is practice teaching program in schools or practicum. Reflection in a reflective practicum requires student teachers to reflect back and forth on their assumptions about teaching and learning, on the ongoing school practices, the actual classroom actions/interactions and on the conditions that impact upon the quality of their practice. For instance, in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) practicum situation, a student teacher's reflection may involve a carefully planned and thoughtful action upon pupils' skills difficulties, apathy and anxiety, lesson pace, sitting arrangement, own testing practices, and so on, that intervene in teaching learning processes. Furthermore, aspects of EFL reflective practicum involve critical conversations on school and classroom actions/interactions; presenting facts and challenges about practices, learners and language learning; negotiating meanings and assumptions about teaching English as a Foreign Language; expressing ideas, arguments and understandings; and reflective deliberations on practicum-generated uncertainty, value-conflict, and conflict of expectation, dilemma, and ambiguity (Schön 1984, 1987, 1992).

In the year 2003, the Ethiopian Ministry of Education (MOE) introduced a new teacher education policy (MOE 2002, 2003, 2004), whose top priority is bridging the gaps between theory and practice in teacher education and practice. The policy reform was premised upon research findings that showed that, to mention a few, teaching skills and techniques of teachers were very basic; methods of teaching were treated theoretically; there had been mismatches between teacher education and secondary school practices; reflective practicum and action research were neglected; theoretical and practical courses in teacher preparation programs were fragmented (MOE 2003: 40-45). English teacher education researchers (Hailom 1993) had, also, pointed out the persistence of similar problems.

The policy-strategy guide from the Ministry of Education (MOE), *Teacher Education Policy and Strategy Guideline* (MOE 2003), orients all the pre-service teacher education programs in all teacher education institutions in Ethiopia. Accordingly, among the key competencies that teachers of all levels must exhibit before they qualify are (1) competent in the subjects and contents of teaching, (2) competent in the classroom actions/interactions, and (3) competent in the values, attributes and abilities essential to professionalism (ibid: 44-45). These imply serious considerations for the role of practical knowledge in the pre-service teacher education scheme.

The crux of the new teacher education policy is a reflective practicum. The policy and strategy guideline stresses that reflective practicum is pivotal since “development comes through the individual’s construction or invention of knowledge” (MOE 2003: 45). Therefore, due to this epistemological ground, it seems, the new practicum component shares almost a quarter of the whole undergraduate bachelor of education program. The aims are to give pre-service student teachers the opportunity to explore teaching methods and practices for themselves; to help student teachers to reflect on their experiences and school practice, and to allow student teachers to practice teaching, try out ideas, and develop confidence with the help of the tutors (MOE 2002). For that reason, the pre-service practicum program commends intensive and continuous reflective practice program that yields up to bachelor of education in English.

With the intention of achieving the reform goals, teacher education institutions across the country are implementing the new pre-service practicum program. For instance, Haramaya

University, which this study selected as its setting, has been making efforts to translate the newly reformed policy to practice. Recently designed Haramaya University's *Handbook of Practicum* (2007), for example, states that the pre-service practicum is carried out in three consecutive phases. Practicum I is where student teachers mainly involve in school observation. This comprises 2 credits which mean two hours per a week and a total of 32 hours activities. This course is offered when the student teachers are in their second year second semester (Haramaya University *Handbook of Practicum*, p.20). Practicum II is where student teachers take over actual teaching in secondary school classrooms, receiving feedback from the supervising teacher educator and schoolteacher. It comprises 7 credits, which means that 7 hours per a week or 112 hours practices. It is offered when the student teachers are in their third year first semester (*ibid*: 84). Lastly, Practicum III is a course in which the same student teachers carry out practice-based inquiry or action research formulated during the previous phases with the advice of the teacher educator. It comprises 4 credits, which means four hours per a week or a total of 32 hours of practice (*ibid*: 101). This is offered during the last semester of the whole three-year program.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

However, despite all the teacher education policy reformation and practicum program restructuring, still, unempirical day-to-day observations in the pre-service EFL practicum show that there is no indication that the problems that had generated the reform are abating. Especially, as the researchers' practical experience for the last couple of years as an EFL teacher educator at Haramaya University shows, pre-service EFL student teachers face acute difficulties in reconstructing new skills and knowledge from the practicum experience. On the one hand, the EFL student teachers lack English language skills. They are unable to adequately describe and express their practicum experiences—observations, challenges, desires, want lacks, feelings, and concerns in the target language. For instance, when they are asked to describe what they have learnt from a lesson they taught, they usually respond discrete and disingenuous responses such as “good” and “no problem”. However, closer observations by the researcher usually revealed

that these were means to cover up their inadequacies of skills of expressing, discussing and elaborating their experiences in the target language. Although unempirical, perhaps, due to this they usually resort to fending off questions and silence. As a consequence, teacher educators—including the present researcher—take no notice of otherwise real problems or resort to judgmental supervision rather than developmental practice. Research has indicated that this does not help student teachers learn effectively (Williams 1989).

On the other hand, classroom observations of the EFL student teachers' teaching practices, including near the end of the practicum program, indicate that they, in fact, lack the skills of planning appropriate lessons and presenting them meaningfully. Observations of their lesson plans show that their designs and presentations overly involve de-contextualization or issues far removed from pupils' lives and experiences. Moreover, day to day observations of their classroom actions reveal that they lack the skills of monitoring pupil-learning, i.e., being perceptive, sensitive and responsive to EFL learners' actions/interactions and desires. These, however, are essential reflection-in-action skills that student teachers should (be helped to) develop in practicum (Schon 1987; Brookfield 1995).

Still, the researchers' long experiential observations as EFL trainer in the practicum indicate that student teachers, especially after the end of the whole EFL practicum program, experience what some theorists (Brookfield 1995; Farrell 1998) call *impostorship* syndrome or student teachers' burnout on the pre-service practices. Very likely, since teaching skills and English skills reconstruction is significantly 'proven so un-becoming,' many observed to be inclined to thinking that they were 'incapable' of becoming effective teachers of English'. Unusually, they consider practicum course from instrumental point of view; that they consider practicum time as a vacation and the course as, in their frequent words, "a means for cheap grade" and "secondary to theoretical courses". English teacher educators at Haramaya University, also, commonly complain that student teachers view practicum course as such. Besides, congruent to the present researcher's practical observation, many EFL teacher educators, at least in Haramaya University, believe that student teachers complete their practicum programs with no significant change or reconstruction of their English, teaching and inquiry skills.

Nevertheless, it is obvious that for EFL student teachers, in particular, practicum is a key program for developing reflection skills. Firstly, they experiment with English language for themselves, which implies English being knowledge as well as language (medium) of reflection by itself. Secondly, in a practicum, EFL student teachers learn to become pedagogically competent prospective teachers. They bear the challenge of equipping themselves with the skills of planning lessons, implementing them and reflectively assessing the lessons in/on action. Thirdly, it is a key opportunity for them to equip themselves with the metacognitive skills of subjecting to inquiry the implicit assumptions that shape the way they behave in practicum. We cannot ignore this skill--though often ignored--since it is the key to independently improving their understanding of how effective teaching works as well as to reduce to minimum the misunderstanding engendered by their use of the language (code). Thus, the broad gap between high policy emphasis on practicum, on one hand, and the persistence of insignificant practical change of student teachers' reflection skills, on the other, has been a persistent puzzle for the present researcher before it was made object of inquiry as in this study.

What is more, despite all these problems, the training condition that leads these student teachers to these reflection problems is scarcely a topic of research. The only few available studies indicate that poor English skills is the reason for their inability to generate, organize and express their professional as well as personal thoughts adequately (Jeylan 2007; Adinew 2007). But, experience shows that the problem is far beyond this; student teachers resort to disengagement, silence or, at best, memorization of facts and procedure, rather experimenting with the language and exploring knowledge of teaching. This means that the problem is as much lack of pedagogic and inquiry skill as it is deficiency of language skills. Therefore, there is a need to inquire the student teachers' difficulty to reflect in a holistic manner, which this study attempts to address.

Yet, most of the existing international literature and studies have been focused on reflection in the English as a Second Language (ESL) context, neglecting, among others, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) (Canagarajah 1999; Pennycook 1994; 1999). Moreover, the existing literature focuses on formulation of models of reflection that are meant to be applied irrespective of contextual variances and differences in student teachers' situated ways of seeing their world. Therefore, there is a need, for context-bounded and holistic knowledge about the student

teachers' reflection difficulty. A new perspective which should address interactions among language, teaching and inquiry skills as organic reflection skills in a practicum is needed. If researchers and teacher educators know little about the elements, patterns/processes and determinants of effective reflection in its context, the connection between language, reflective learning and contextual factors is even less understood. Teacher educators and student teachers, thus, need to get a clear picture about this problem. They need to know how the existing context, assumption about reflective practicum, and adoption of reflective action/interaction strategies relate to effective practical learning. Thus, this requires as much empirical data as comprehensive and explanatory conceptual framework, each of which this study attempts to address.

In general, the central thesis of this study is that there is experience-informed inability to reflect in the pre-service EFL practicum of Haramaya University. It is believed that without empirical, in-depth and contextual inquiry into the properties, patterns and causations of the problem and exploration of ways to overcoming the problem, preparing effective EFL teachers, which the reform agenda envisions, will be unrealistic and impractical. These are what this study intends to address.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The two *central* and the key *specific* questions that this study intends to find answers to in the context of the pre-service EFL Practicum of Haramaya University are:

1. What conditions made the student teachers' reflection skills inadequate?
  - 1.1. What are the properties of the student teachers' reflection skills?
  - 1.2. What is the pattern of practicum action/interaction strategy that the student teachers adopt?
  - 1.3. How do the student teachers reflect on their teaching/learning actions/interactions?
  - 1.4. What assumptions about reflective practices underlie their practicum actions/interactions?

1.5. How do they reflect on their assumptions about their practices?

1.6. Why do the student teachers lack skills for effective reflection?

2. How can the conditions of the student teachers' difficulty to effectively reflect be improved?

2.1. How can the student teachers' potential to reflect be prompted?

2.2. What form of effective reflectivity can be achieved?

2.2. What determinants of effective reflection can be created?

#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

The central objectives of this study are to *investigate* the contextual conditions of the reflection skills inadequacies of the EFL student teachers and then *explore* ways to overcoming the problem of reflective skills and knowledge reconstruction on the pre-service EFL reflective practicum of Haramaya University. The specific objectives of the study are:

- 1) To identify the properties of the reflection skill of the student teachers in the EFL practicum of Haramaya University;
- 2) To investigate the patterns and processes of reflection in the EFL practicum of Haramaya University;
- 3) To understand causal factors that generate the student teachers' inabilities;
- 4) To explore ways for enhancing student teachers' ability to effectively reflect on their practices in the EFL pre-service practicum of context of Haramaya University;
- 5) To explore and create determinants of effective reflection in the context of the EFL pre-service practicum of Haramaya University and,

The general goal of this study is constructing a substantive model of effective reflection in the context of Haramaya University as well as similar contexts. It is believed that such a model will add context-informed knowledge to the existing teacher education strategy and practicum guidelines (MOE 2003). In addition to the substantive model to be constructed, critical analysis of the relevance of influential models, namely Donald Schön's (Schön 1983; 1987; 1992)

*reflection-in/on-action* and Stephen Brookfield's (Brookfield 1986; 1995; 2003) *becoming-critically-reflective teacher*, will also be explored in relation to the problem confronting the student teachers in the context of Haramaya University.

### 1.5 Conceptual Framework

In this study, a heuristic theoretical framework has been synthesized through parallel problem-observation and reflective-reading. Schön's (1992; 1987; 1983) and Brookfield's (1995; 1987; 1986) theories of critical reflection, theories widely hailed as harbingers of conceptual and methodological integration of reflection and action, and theory and practice, are germane to the researcher's view of reflective practicum. Besides, adding the socio-cognitive model of language and learning (Searle 1995; 2002; Hymes 1979; Halliday 1979, 1985, 1994; Fairclough 1999, 2003) which upholds language as a practice that is constructed and re-constructed in a social condition, allows the researcher to postulate a conceptual framework for inquiring into the EFL student teachers' difficulty to reflect. Thus, this study stipulates that:

1. A condition of inability to reflect in an EFL practicum relates to the extent to which the student teachers are helped to subject their practicum actions, interactions and assumptions to critical reflection;
2. Student teachers' underlying assumptions determine the action/interaction strategies they adopt and, hence, the processes and patterns of their reflection *for, in, and on* their practices in practicum;
3. There is holistic relation among language, teaching and inquiry skills reconstruction in a pre-service EFL reflective practicum.

It is believed that EFL reflective practicum encompasses linguistic (English), pedagogic (teaching) and inquiry (metacognitive) practices and skills reconstruction in tandem. It is also believed that if EFL student teachers are helped to critically reflect on *what* lessons they practiced to teach, *how*, and *why*, they will not only explicate their implicit assumptions but also reconstruct and advance their teaching skills and language skills. This, in turn, involves student



teachers in as much describing, discussing and conceiving of their practicum experience in the medium of English as it engages them in thinking, acting, and observing teaching English. In a collaborative, dialogic and critical reflective situation, the opportunity to subject own and colleagues' practices to observation, evaluation, analysis and refinement will become opportunities for effective reconstruction of new knowledge and skills teaching, inquiry and English language in tandem.

Thus, this conceptual framework can be operationalized through carrying out, primarily, a contextual analysis of the properties, patterns and causations of the student teachers' inability to effectively reflect. In so doing we could accurately describe and understand their concerns, lacks and genuine values. Once these are clear, it is assumed that it is possible to inquire into ways of enhancing the student teachers' capacity to reflect on and in their actions on the practicum in a collaborative manner, each of which this study will address. The methodological premise is that a problem of inadequate reflection skills can only be improved through collaborative critical reflection with the student teachers and concerned practitioners and taking actions against the problem.

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study have relevance and implications for the formulation of practicum programs that seek to have as their top priority, EFL student teachers' English skills, pedagogic skills and inquiry skills development in an integrated and holistic way in a reflective practicum. The substantive findings of this study will provide conceptual frameworks for addressing student teachers' background assumptions, concerns and desires. Moreover, the findings will provide conceptual tools for practically analyzing and enhancing the quality of pre-service EFL student teachers' actual practices.

Besides, the conceptual framework, the theoretical approach to reflective practicum and the research methodological approach to studying reflection constructed in this study will inform teacher education policy makers, teacher educators, practitioners and reflective practicum

programmers that need to integrate research and training, reflection and data collection-and-analysis, and theories and strategies of reflection and research. The study presents a modest effort to combine practitioner inquiry research strategy, participant observation methods and Grounded Theory methods of data analysis for both studying and re-conceptualizing the social constructions, processes and patterns of reflection in a context.

On the whole, this study aims at enhancing our empirical and conceptual knowledge about important and far-reaching issue, namely EFL reflective learning. This has, to date, been inadequately explored in the context of this study.

### **1.7 Scope of the Study**

This study is not a survey of student teachers' change vis-à-vis the new practicum program guide. Nor is it a study of departmental or faculty culture of reflective practice. Rather it is a critical and contextual analysis of *the condition* that generates the pre-service EFL student teachers' inability to reflect effectively on their practices. In addition to this, it inquires into the determinants for maximizing their capacity to effectively reconstruct reflective skills and knowledge. Specifically, it examines the following issues:

- 1) The condition of student teachers' reflective learning difficulty in the Haramaya University's pre-service EFL practicum setting;
- 2) How the pre-service EFL student teachers of Haramaya University reflect on their teaching practices;
- 3) Patterns and processes of the action/interaction strategies the student teachers in the Haramaya University's EFL practicum sites employ;
- 4) The properties of assumptions that the student teachers have pertaining to EFL reflective practicum and reflection;
- 5) Opportunities and challenges to reconstructing new knowledge and skills in the Haramaya University's pre-service EFL practicum;

- 6) The determinants of effective reflection and meaningful re-construction of holistic reflective skills and knowledge in Haramaya University EFL practicum settings.

### **1.8 De-limitation of the Study**

The study was de-limited to the Haramaya University and its practicum partner schools in the towns of Chiro (Asebe Teferi), Harar and Dire Dawa. These were selected through purposeful sampling. Haramaya University was selected purposefully due to the researcher's attachment to the discourse community of EFL teacher educators there and previous experience with the stated problem at the same setting. These experiences were exploited as resources for heightening the internal validity of the study (Miles & Huberman 1994). In addition, the rationale for sampling the specified practicum schools was availability of logistic materials that facilitated longer and frequent participant observation.

A sample size of ten EFL student teachers and four of their teacher educators, or supervisors, were purposefully selected to involve in this study. The student teachers were studying their B.Ed. in English as required in their three-year undergraduate program, from September 2005 to July 2008. Sample size of ten student teachers was preferable to study the problem deeply and with densely collected data. It is believed that, collection of data from different sites, activities, times and sources but of the same setting and same population enhances the quality and transferability of the finding to similar context.

### **1.9 Limitations of the Study**

The data collection methods and tools employed in this study are limited to qualitative and unstructured styles of observation and interview, on one hand, and reflective journaling and collection of documents, on the other. Various styles of participant observation methods such as direct and unobtrusive observations, informal and semi-structured interviews and reflective

accounts are employed in order to compare and contrast data. It is believed that less structured styles minimize respondent self-organization that could have been prompted by the more structured ones such as formal interviews and audio-video recordings.

Initially, covering the interplay between trainers', mentors' (schoolteachers') and student teachers' assumptions and action/interaction was assumed to be within the scope of the study. However, this was hampered due to various constraints such as time. This study, thus, proceeded by selecting as its core focus the study of the ten student teachers' reflection skills, modes of action/interaction and assumptions that shape the way they act/interact in the practicum. Besides, four of their teacher educators were selected as informants. It is believed that the information that the teacher educators provide enhance not only the accurate description of the phenomenon of the student teachers' inability to reflect, but also shape the whole process and product of this research. Mentors (schoolteachers) were excluded because they were not on school campus 'since student teachers overtook their duties'. Yet, it is believed that the gathering and analysis of practicum documents provided additional data regarding the nature and impacts of the practicum model that pervades the context. Besides, a reflective journaling method was also employed with the purposefully selected ten participant student teachers at *core site*—Chiro Secondary School. The findings of the analysis of their reflection journals are also included in this report. Although data was also collected from other practicum schools or *peripheral site*, this was done only during the first phase of the study—Contextual Analysis.

The study acknowledges that other macro factors on educational, social and global scales might influence the formation of certain assumptions and adoption of particular actions/interactions in the reflective practicum program and, hence, indirectly the efficaciousness of reflection on the EFL practicum. For instance, the distance traveled between partner schools and the university and the trends in the wider inter-institutional and socio-educational context impact effectiveness of the practicum program. Nonetheless, the study is focused specifically on practicum context determinants such as arrangements, contents, planning of strategies of reflective practicum program and operationalization of these in the Practicum settings.

### 1.10 Definition of Concepts

A number of terms and interrelated concepts are adopted and used in this study. They are defined below:

**Condition:** A condition refers to properties, patterns and causal circumstances under which the inability to reflect in the specified setting of Haramaya University EFL pre-service practicum appears and operates. The concept of 'condition' offers a conceptual framework for grouping answers to the circumstantial questions of the *what*, the *how*, and the *why* of the problem of the inability to reflect (Strauss & Corbin 1998; Fairclough 2003; Halliday 1994).

**Reflective practicum:** *Reflection* refers to two reciprocal processes: (1) a cognitive process of hunting, evaluating and refining the validity of own *assumptions* about teaching/learning practices, and, (2) a behavioral process of planning and teaching and analyzing, monitoring and improving own teaching/learning *actions/interactions* under the practicum conditions. A reflective practicum refers to an EFL training program in a school setting designed for the task of learning a practice of teaching English through reflection (Schön 1983; 1987; Brookfield 1995). The concept of *reflective practicum* and *reflective practice* are used interchangeably as an abstraction of both reflection and practicum.

**Assumption:** Refers to a set of *shared* and *implicit* meanings or pre-constructions that student teachers hold/use in/on/about their reflective practices. It pertains to *elements*, *processes*, *causations* and *goals* of effective reflective learning in the EFL practicum context (Brookfield 1995; Schön 1987).

**Action/interaction:** Refers to a set of teaching/learning strategies performed by student teachers vis-a-vis confronting problems and happenings that arise in the Practicum context (Zeichner & Liston 1990; van Manen 1977).

**Process and pattern:** Process denotes the action/interaction over time of individual and group of student teachers in response to those conditions in the Practicum context. Pattern refers to

alignment of *properties* (i.e. characteristics) and *dimensions* (i.e. location of the property along a continuum) of reflective ability of student teachers in the specified, Haramaya University, practicum condition (Strauss and Corbin 1998).

**Determinants** of effective reflection: Determinants are causal mechanisms that act/interact with one another so as to overcome the inability to effectively reflect and are responsible for the sustainability of the improvement of the problem under those practicum conditions. If they do not act/interact with one another in context (in this study, Haramaya University context), effective reflection and, hence, development of reflection skills, could not be practical and real.

**Reflection skills:** The potential skills (1) to adequately observe, describe, express and document experiences and understandings in the medium of *English*, (2) to appropriately *reflect for*, plan, act, and *reflect in own teaching* or *pedagogic* lessons, and (3) intently *reflect on* own teaching assumptions and explore new teaching actions/interactions (Schön 1983; 1987; Brookfield 1995). A reflection skill is natural tendency but it is triggered or suppressed by the environment.

### 1.11. Framework of This Study

This study is conducted in two phases (See Table 1 below). Phase One attempts at contextual understanding of the conditions—properties, patterns and causations—of the observed problem of the student teachers' inability to effectively reflect on their practices. This phase is also named as Contextual Analysis of the Practicum. The Practicum (capital **C**) refers to the EFL Practicum context of the English Department of Haramaya University, where the researcher confronted the original problem discussed above as a trainer. In Phase Two or the Inquiry Phase (capital **I**) refers to the exploration/experimentation phase during which the researcher, informed by the findings of the Contextual Analysis, engaged the selected participant student teachers on an innovative reflective practice with the intention of exploring ways for overcoming the problem and creating conditions for effective reflection. It is conceptualized that understanding the condition of a problem will lead to an effective inquiry into ways for overcoming it.

Table 1: Framework of this study

Central Problem	Central Research Questions	Central Objective	Conceptual Framework	Study Phase
EFL student teacher <i>inability</i> expressing, describing, documenting experience, reflecting for/in/on action	What conditions made the student teachers' reflection skills inadequate?	To <i>investigate</i> the conditions—properties, patterns, causes--of the problem of inability to reflect	Condition of EFL inability to reflect relates to the extent to which student teachers' <i>assumptions</i> about reflective practices and their actual practicum <i>actions/interactions</i> are subject to critical reflection;	PHASE ONE  Contextual analysis Phase
EFL student teacher <i>difficulty</i> re-constructing new skills, knowledge, understanding	How can the conditions of the student teachers' difficulty to effectively reflect be improved?	To explore conditions and ways of overcoming the problem of reflective skills/knowledge <i>reconstruction</i>	-Student teachers' underlying assumption about reflective practicum determines action/interaction strategies they adopt and, hence, the processes and patterns of their reflection <i>for, in, and on</i> their practices in the Practicum; -There is holistic relation among language, teaching and inquiry skills reconstruction in a pre-service EFL reflective practicum.	PHASE TWO  (Inquiry phase)

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter demonstrated the problem that the researcher experientially confronted while training student teachers in the Haramaya University EFL practicum. It emphasized the need to contextually analyze the problem—a problem of student teachers' difficulty and inability to reflect effectively. Besides, it emphasized the need to inquire into ways for enhancing the student teachers' capacity to reflect in their context. It was conceptualized that the problem might relate to the extent student teachers are helped to subject their practicum actions/interactions and assumptions under that underlie them to a critical reflection.

In this chapter, review of theoretical concepts related to the focal point and the conceptual framework of the study are discussed. Various issues such as *perspectives, approaches, traditions, conditions* and *procedures* of reflection and reflective practicum are explored. By exploring these issues, insights into how the concepts of *reflection, conditions of reflection, reflective practicum, reconstruction* of reflective skills all interlink. Especially, this literature review has added issues from the wider philosophical and social theories, sociological-linguistic theories, and practice theories since these are relevant, though they are usually underemphasized in foreign and second language teacher education reflective practice literature. In particular, Donald Schön's and Stephen Brookfield's models of reflection and reflective practicum are widely reviewed because their philosophical and socio-educational theories provide a clear and comprehensive approach to the focus of this study, namely the holistic re-construction of inquiry skills, language skills and teaching skills in a foreign language practicum context.

## 2.2 Philosophical Perspectives on Reflection

Reflection and reflective practice are, perhaps, the two most popular terms in the contemporary EFL teacher education literature. In the current literature, 'reflection' can be seen from four major perspectives: rationalist, hermeneutic, reflective and criticalist perspectives.

### 2.2.1 The Rationalist Perspective

The rationalist assumption is related to the 'critical thinking' tradition which views this as "a set of discrete, precise skills and rules seen as universally able to achieve sound logic, reasoning, and higher-order thinking" (Swartz 2004: 46). Underpinned in this assumption, reflection is assumed as reasoned, logical, deductive thinking located in natural pre-disposition. In this view, reflection amounts to 'thinking hard', recognizing faulty arguments through formal and informal logic (Burbules & Berk 1999; Bailin, *et al* 1999). Ability to reflect is assumed as an innate talent. To Dewey, it is synonymous to the ability of *logical* inquiry (Dewey 1933; Schön 1992).

The socio-cognitive theorists of language and learning criticize the rationalist view on the ground that a rationalistic view assumes language, its structures and words as discrete, static, and 'pure' names, which correspond to objective reality in a one-to-one fashion (Rutherford 1987; Morrow 1979; Hymes 1979). In this view, language mirrors objective reality out there. That is, by being either true or false, language or statement corresponds to reality. Also, practice theorists such as Reckwitz (2002: 255) critique this perspective because, inadequately, "language is primarily understood as a mental set of competences which is thus untied from the discursive practice of language use--'parole' appears as an actualization of 'langue'."

In the views of the above perspective, student teacher is seen as essentially a means-ends broker. To put this in another way is to say that EFL practice teaching is conceived as a technical exercise, an applied science, concerned with applying the internalized knowledge of English structures or skills and of 'how-to' transmit these to pupils. Student teachers are judged according to the criteria pre-set, based on 'scientific' studies, as to how efficiently these are to be applied. Practicum is seen as a "delivery system" within which the worth of student teachers is

defined entirely in terms of their possession of a pre-defined set of skills or competences. The view of language that underlies this perspective is that which “restricts the design of language to one face towards referential meaning, one towards sound, and that defines organization of language as solely consisting of rules for linking the two” (Hymes 1979: 15). As such, EFL professional beliefs require justification by technical-rational procedures of action and language.

### **2.2.2 The Hermeneutic Perspective**

In semiotic or hermeneutic perspective, critical thinking involves interpretation. It foregrounds being skeptical, interpretive, evaluative, inquisitive and reflective of what signs, symbols, experiences and practices mean. It is not just the surface but the deeper levels of meaning that is essential. Deweyan theory of reflection is, perhaps, the pioneer in advocating this perspective (Dewey 1933; Swartz 2004; Russell, et al 2001; Shulman May, 1998; Sparks-Langer, *et al.* 1990).

The biggest implication of this perspective for EFL teacher education is that reflection is “the process of thinking back on and considering experiences, in order better to understand the significance of such experiences” (Richards and Schmidt 2002: 450). According to this perspective, reflection is the process of giving meaning to as well as constructing meaning out of experiences by making connections between current experience and previous similar/related situation. Considering the accumulated and synthesized knowledge base, the practitioner relates the context of the experience and explores the understanding or rationale related to questions of why, what, and how and why of his/her practices.

The biggest pitfall of the hermeneutic view is that it is individualistic. Due to this, the social hermeneutic view advanced the idea that no individual action or thinking is trivial or individualistic. It is, rather, substantial and social. Schatzki (2003:173) points this out when he writes, the “mental states that organize a practice, qua components of the practice’s organization, are not the states of particular individuals.”

### 2.2.3 The Reflective Perspective

The reflective perspective goes beyond the assumptions held by both rationalist and the hermeneutic perspectives. Human “interpretation is neither mechanical mapping, nor coincidental construction, but constructive reflection” (Fuchs 2003: 223). Nor can linear and mechanical relations exist among teachers’ scientific knowledge, practical knowledge and their classroom practices.

The reflectivity view is a descendent of the Enlightenment tradition, whose realist logic for the need for reflection is intrinsic to the dynamic relationship between man and his world. This critical realist perspective might be summarized as in the tenets of critical realism philosophy explicated by Collier (1994: 7-8):

- 1) Objectivity, that the world is real whether known or not;
- 2) Fallibility, that all claims concerning knowledge are open to refutation and elaboration;
- 3) Transphenomenality, that knowledge exists beyond what can be seen or observed and some unseen properties outlive the perceived properties of the object; and,
- 4) Counter-phenomenality, that understanding of the deeper causal mechanisms of reality may contradict the perceived appearance of something.

According to this philosophy, life practice takes place in an *open* social reality and *uncompleted* assumptions (epistemological, methodological, ethical, so on), each of which should turn on an object of human reflection, action and change. Schön (1987; 1992) describes this view as *indeterminate* view of reflection and reflective knowledge.

To Schön (1983; 1987; 1992), reflection is mainly an *ontological* process of generating model and knowledge through reflective conversation with “the problematic of [...] the indeterminate zones of practice” (p. 11). Rejecting what he calls as technical rationality, Schön advanced a new concept of reflective rationality in his theory of reflection-in-action and knowing-in-action. To Schön, practitioner knowledge is knowledge in action. A practitioner faces with surprise, puzzlement, or confusion in a situation in which he finds himself/herself. Then, he/she sets the

problems. That is, he/she *names* them and *frames* the context in order to attend to them. Next, he/she experiments, explores, and hypothesis-tests, *listening* to how the situation responds. He/She “carries out an experiment which serves to generate both a new understanding of the phenomenon and a change in the situation” (Schön 1983: 68). Also, the practitioner keeps accounts of or builds up a repertoire of knowledge--“examples, images, understandings and actions” (1987: 38).

Reflective knowledge/skill contrasts to a mere translation of research-driven knowledge to practice, which entails technical practice of “fixed and clear” body of knowledge (p. 41). Schön argues, “When ends are fixed and clear, then decision to act can present itself as instrumental problem” (p. 41). Schön’s reflection-in action, accordingly, suggests reciprocal processes of turning (1) thought back on action and (2) on the knowing which is implicit in the action. Schön refers to the latter process as “knowing-in-action,” and the former as “reflection on the stuff at hand” (1983:50). Therefore, novelty of knowing and bottom-up knowledge construction is an essential epistemological position.

In this view, a reflective practicum is a training program and setting designed for the task of learning a practice. That is, where student teachers learn *by doing*, with the help of coaching. In other words, reflective practicum is where the *becoming*-practitioner is helped by more experienced practitioner. Many of the current theorists prefer the term ‘practitioner’, to refer to both ‘the becoming’ and ‘the experienced’, to ‘supervisor’, ‘the novice’, ‘coach’, ‘mentor’, ‘mentee’ and so forth. Part of the reason for the preference is that the latter terms imply not only a power relation imbalance between both parties, but also epistemological divide between education and training, teaching and learning, and theory and practice. Many theorists would also agree with Brookfield’s view that reflective practicum involves the process of “helping teachers understand, question, investigate, and take seriously their own learning and practice” (Brookfield 1995: 215).

In the view of reflective perspective, the role of language cannot be reduced, as in the rationalist perspective, to simple mirroring of objective reality. Rather, language and meaning are embedded in and are constitutive of (is shaped by and shapes) what is going on, i.e., both are

social-practice-in-context. Hymes (1979: 20) once wrote that language use “takes into account the interaction competence...the competence of others, and the cybernetic and emergent properties of events themselves [...] as an event, may have properties (pattern and dynamics) not reducible to terms of individual or standardized competence.” Similarly and succinctly, the renowned contemporary linguist Fairclough (1999: 74) describes “reflexivity” as “constantly reshaping our practices on the basis of knowledge about those practices.”

However, critiques of the reflective perspectives, especially of Schön, for instance Liston and Zeichner (1991) and Usher, et al (1997), argue that this approach to reflective practice, though new and innovatory, is individualistic, action-oriented role frame, and neglects the impacts of the institutional and social conditions of practice. Thus, they, suggest more critical perspective, which is discussed next.

#### **2.2.4 The Criticalist Perspective**

In the criticalist view, the purpose and scope of reflection and reflective practicum is more complex and deeper; the goal of reflective learning is not only reconstruction of self as social agent but also change in the wider educational and social practices (Brookfield 1996; 1995; Liston & Zeichner 1991; Gibbs 1999; Diniz-Pereira 2002; Usher, et. al. 1997; Richardson 1997).

But, the concept of ‘critical’ remains controversial. Based upon their recent work titled ‘Criticality Project’, Brumfit *et al.* (2004 [www](http://www)) explicated the term ‘critical’ as a cognitive ability that involves the following: (1) ability to develop creative and innovative solutions; (2) awareness of the provisional nature of knowledge; (3) ability to make informed judgments based on evidence; (4) ability to question current theories and practice, and (5) ability to recognize and analyze novel problems and plan strategies for their solution.

For the criticalist Brookfield (1995; 1987; 1986), one of the prominent scholars who extensively writes on theories and practices of reflection, the concept of ‘critical’ comprises epistemological, social and philosophical assumptions. Thus, Brookfield begins defining reflection as an

*epistemological* process of constantly ‘hunting’ and revising the implicit assumptions that define how we think and act on educational practices. He defines assumption as “the taken-for-granted beliefs about the world and our place within it that seem obvious to us not to need stating explicitly” (1995: 2). He stresses that “In many ways, we *are* our assumptions” (p., 2; Emphasis is original). This is because assumptions give meaning and purpose to who we are, why and how we act/interact in what we do. Based on this theorization, Brookfield unveils three categories of assumptions.

The first category is *paradigmatic assumptions*, which are “the basic structuring axioms we use to order the world into fundamental categories” (ibid: 2). We may not recognize them as assumptions, even after we have been notified about them; we simply take them for granted that they are accurate renderings of ‘what exists’ or they are facts we know to be true. According to Brookfield, these types of assumptions are resistant to change since it takes considerable amount of evidence as counterfactuals to experiences; but, once they are “challenged and changed, the consequences for our lives are explosive” (ibid: 3). Brookfield exemplifies this with his assumption that student teachers or adults ‘are self-directed learners’ and that ‘good educational practices are inherently dialogic’. To add, Schön’s paradigmatic assumption, for instance, is that “components of reflective practice....[are]...knowing-in-action, reflection-in-action, and reflective conversation with the situation” (1992: 123).

The second category is what he calls *prescriptive assumptions*, which refers to “what we think *ought to be* happening in a particular situation” (ibid: 3; Emphasis is added). Prescriptive assumptions are what we construct or interpret as desirable or undesirable practices. They surface in practice as we observe and reflect “how we think teachers should behave, what good educational processes should look like, and what obligations students and teachers owe to each other” (*ibid.*). If, for instance, one axiomatically takes for granted that what takes place in a reflective practicum is translating theory into practice, then he/she works out pre-established theories, facts and procedures. By contrast, Brookfield categorizes ‘student teachers as self-directed learners’, and, hence, his desirable way for reflective learning is to enable them to take control over conceptualizing, planning, implementing and evaluating their own lessons. To add, if one’s paradigmatic assumption is that our knowledge of reality or truth is fallible and so is

curriculum, he/she encourages student teachers to analyze, interrogate and improve syllabi and classroom practices so that the policy can be brought to fruition efficiently and effectively.

The final category is *causal assumptions*. Causal assumptions refer to our assumptions about “how different parts of the world work and the conditions under which processes can be changed” (*ibid*). They are stated in cause-effect terms. For instance, as the researcher’s causal assumption is that ‘EFL reflective ability development works by triggering the inquiry, pedagogic and inquiry components under a dialogic condition of a reflective practicum.’ This causal assumption draws attention to the key role of the individual agency, but also acknowledges the role of critical and dialogic reflection.

To wind up, according to the criticalist perspective of reflection, pre-service reflective practicum involves fundamentally a social construction of knowledge through knowledge. That means it involves student teachers in, through already constructed assumptions, re-construction of new assumptions about teaching, learning, learner and conditions for effective construction of knowledge and skills. Analysis of 'knowledge' or 'reality' or both is contingent upon social relations, and is made out of continuing human practices (Berger & Luckmann 1997). Knowledge, in this view, is, thus, reflected, argued, debated, justified and agreed truth. Similarly, reflective practicum draws student teachers in re-construction of assumptions about the profession and themselves as English language teachers. Moreover, reflective practicum aims at changing, improving and transforming the wider assumptions about schooling and teaching practices. However, some theorists doubt the possibility of the latter assumption since it connects with socio-historical conditions (Liston & Zeichner 1992).

Therefore, the implication involves, for the EFL student teachers their assumptions about teaching, learning, and learners, on one hand, and their actions/interactions, practices and how language works in these processes, on the other, ought to be conditions, medium and outcome of reflection. This jettisons pre-determination in advance of the contents and outcomes of reflective practicum. What is viable might be entering the zone of practice only with generic conceptual framework and operative tools. This speaks directly to programming, which shall be discussed in the following section.

## 2.3. Theoretical Approaches to Reflective Practicum

Two broad approaches can be identified in the current literature about how a reflective practicum is conceived, programmed and implemented. They are labeled as determinist or structured and dialogic or generative.

### 2.3.1 Determinist/Structured Approach

The logic that underlies this approach is to shape and direct student teachers to gain appropriate teaching experience by specifying its developmental and reflective learning markers. In other words, the assumption is that learning-teaching comprises pre-defined essences. So does language ability. Based on this assumption, practicum and practical learning are presumed as a much planned, conscious, intended and predictable journey. Similarly, learning language-teaching and language skills development are seen as clear and pre-defined.

Some theorists refer to this approach as ‘out-come oriented’ (Russell 2001; Hayes 1999) since practice-teaching skills/competencies, procedures, and assessment standards are pre-defined for student teachers. On her part, Ur (1992: 56) refers to such an approach to practicum as “rationalist learn-the-theory-and-then-apply-it.” As such, the style of practical learning is too linear (Williams 1989):

Pre-established teaching theories, contents and procedures → Induction to these in ‘theoretical courses’ → Student teaching → Lesson observation and assessment → Feedback based upon observed lesson events. [Key: → = Followed by]
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Admitting that a specification of the desired final behavior is necessary, Brumfit (1979: 185) warns the risk of this since it leaves “teachers incapable of making any judgements at all.” Schön (1997: 3) calls this an “epistemology of technical rationality.” Other scholars (Hayes 2004; Cochran-smith 2001; Williams 1989; Richardson 1990) debunk this approach based on the following premises:

- 1) Reflective learning does not follow a predictable and seamless course.
- 2) Teaching knowledge and skills are so inexhaustible to enumerate.
- 3) It does not consider individual interest and pace.
- 4) Terminology: 'competence' is subject to various interpretations.
- 5) Efficaciousness of top-down/outside-in knowledge construction is questionable.

If approach profoundly impacts action, Biggs (1995: 15) has persuasively listed the impacts of such a model of teacher education and practicum programming:

- 1) Teaching in a piecemeal fashion such as providing lists of behavior;
- 2) Assessing for independent facts; as is frequently done when using short answer, matching, and multiple-choice, and true/false tests;
- 3) Teaching, and especially assessing, in a way that encourages cynicism and teaching for covering the template;
- 4) Providing insufficient time to engage students in the tasks, or emphasizing coverage at the expense of depth;
- 5) Creating undue anxiety or low expectations of success: Any one who can't be competent in 'these lists' is not fit to be a reflective teacher.

On his part, Fuller (1991:100-120) lists the pressures mounted up on teacher educators and practicum planners when implementing such a traditional model of teacher training. To list only a few:

- 1) Intensifying 'modern forms of management', for instance specifying a curricular script for teacher educators to follow, which often yields results that have no effect on student teachers' change;
- 2) Reducing the teacher educators' professionalism as though it is discrete, predictable tasks;
- 3) Monitoring symbols of "proper teaching", instead of actions which boost the quality of pedagogy or the performance of trainees; and
- 4) Attempting to shape the student teacher's role and behavior in the classroom.

Above all, the biggest practical teacher-learning flaw of this approach, according to many critiques, is that research, reflection, theory and practice are not only separated, but also that student teachers have little or no control over selecting, sequencing and pacing of lessons and contents.

Especially, linguistic philosophers discredit such 'pre-given' approach since it is based on idealist and mechanistic view of language (Rutherford 1987; Lycan 2000; Adorno 1945). That is, none of the forms of expression (vocabulary, structures or statements) of the language can possibly be interpreted as real meanings of real 'things', phenomena and real forms-of-competence for real native speakers. To put it in a different way, English as Foreign Language learners, for instance, are forced to see the target language (English) irrelevant and belong to 'other world'. This assumption is possible because under such a 'pre-given' or 'pre-structured' practice, forms of expression are less likely to be seen as significant elements; words and statements cannot be found in the realm of real objects of practicing, teaching and learning.

### **2.3.2 Dialogic/Generative Approach**

Philosophically, theoretically and linguistically the dialogic/generative approach is quite different from the determinist/structured approach.

#### **2.3.2.1 Philosophical Assumptions**

Philosophically, dialogic approach is premised upon relational or dialectic form of human existence and generative form of knowing. It views reality as something we co-emerge with or are part of, which is opposed to dualistic and independently existing view of reality (McNiff & Whitehead 2002). The dialogic philosophy is underpinned with the belief that the self is formed and understood in the context of its relation with others and its environment.

This philosophy seems central to teacher learning and becoming a reflective practitioner.. What it means is that the knower/observer or reflector, the process of observing/reflecting and observations/the reflected co-emerge (Maturana & Varela 1992; Martinez 2001). In other words, it suggests the co-emergence of *the internal* (constructs, percepts and shared beliefs) and *the external* (relevance, or meaning-in-context, function, activity). In this view, re-construction of new knowledge (second order property) from previous knowledge (a first order structure/properties) occurs through practice (where new information in-comes from experience) in a context. Any separation of these is dualistic and epistemologically quite unrealistic (Bryant 2000).

According to this dialogic-generative approach “[k]nowing is a process of creating new forms out of previous ones, a process of becoming” (McNiff & Whitehead 2002: 29). To think dialogically is “to view reality as a process, always emerging through a self-contradictory development, always becoming; knowing this reality is neither subjective nor objective” (Reason & Rowan, 1981: 241 quoted in Reason 1994: 332). For a reflective practicum, the implication is illuminated by Roberts’ (1992: 5) “two basic steps” of awareness-raising: (1) awareness about a “negative part”, which shows the current limits in conceptualizing, and (2) a “positive part”, which shows that, in view of these limits, “knowledge can only be accounted for as *historical interaction of knowing subjects*” (Emphasis is original). What is at stake, here, is that reflective practice is seen as a social production of knowledge by means of knowledge at hand.

### **2.3.2.2 Epistemological Assumptions**

Epistemologically, it is assumed that dialogue is a necessary condition for effective reconstruction of both mental structure and teaching practices. It corresponds to what Schön (1987) argued that many theorists had lost sight of, namely an epistemology of practice grounded in “the problematic of [...] the indeterminate zones of practice” (p. 11). This entails the social construction of new knowledge by means of previously gained knowledge.

With the adoption of dialogic supervisory and feedback approach, trust, autonomy and curiosity for exploration of context-embedded knowledge and creativity are promoted. For instance, Brookfield (1995: 15) argues with open (indeterminate) and critical reflection, “Ideas about ‘good teaching’ that may seem obvious, even desirable, are revealed as harmful and constraining.” What this means is that both practice and theory evolve. In their argumentation of the need for logic of reflective practice, McNiff and Whitehead (2002: 4) state “Creating ideas begins with practice, and is located within the practice.” The implication of dialogic/generative or dialectic philosophy for discerning relation of theory and practice is explicated by Deleuze (1977: 206 quoted in Allan 2004: 423) as follows:

Practice is a set of relays from one theoretical point to another, and theory is a relay from one practice to another....No theory can develop without eventually encountering a wall, and practice is necessary for piercing this wall.

Further implications of the dialogic or generative logic can be drawn for EFL reflective practice. The first is it is an opportunity for English language ability re-construction. That is reflective practice serves as a relay or ‘conduit’, for both ‘competence’ and ‘performance’ supplement each other in order to construct new knowledge about the structure and skills of the language. This might entail the de Saussurean view that structure of a language is an event: “...it consists in the coming into language of what has been said in the tradition” (Koegler 1992: 48 based on works of Hans Gadamer). This contrasts with Chomskyan generativist view that splits competence and performance (Chomsky 1965). According to the latter view, difference is made between competence, the implicit system of rules that constitutes a language and performance, a person’s actual use of it. In an EFL practicum context, this split might have led to competence based approach where descriptions of the essential skills, knowledge and behaviors are pre-defined and believed to be required for the effective performance in the practicum setting. This cuts parallel with the above discussed determinist approach.

Similarly, second or foreign language teacher education theorists agree that, practicum promotes and enhances language skills of the teacher learners. The argument is, a reflective practicum as practical learning experience provides rich input, for it is where “words” unfold in context. In other words, the practical learning moment is where English is used by the EFL student teacher in all its aspects: formal, semantic and pragmatic. What this means is that if appropriately utilized, in an EFL practicum, English is used in a real communicative situation (Cullen 1994) because student teachers are promoted to engage in writing, speaking, reading and listening of real and meaningful issues and experiences. Further, in practice, the argument goes, student teachers grab the opportunity to re-construct their language awareness, i.e., how words and structures of the target language, English, function as “a fabric that links people” (Freeman 1996: 749). Accordingly, the deficiency of English language skills and its constraining impact on becoming a reflective teacher can be, indirectly, tackled in practicum experience, since language skills development might also be a part of “the kind of know-how that a practitioner develops through [his/her] own personal experience...that occurs ‘on the job’—or, more broadly, through doing” (Barnacle 2004: 61). If this argument goes down well, then effective reflection helps student teachers reconstruct new understanding not just about assumptions and actions that underlie their practices, but also their knowledge about skills and structures of the target language.

Secondly, the pedagogic skills development assumption is that, if teachers are more reflective, they will be better placed to make good judgment about their approaches, instructional strategies and assessment techniques (Brookfield 1995; 2001). The assumption is if student teacher becomes more reflective, he/she develops re-constructivity (inquiry) skills. That is, they internalize the norm, habits and skills of continuous professional learning; they begin to assume responsibility and confidence for classroom teacher’s role (MOE 2003). To add, it is assumed that when student teachers engage on critical reflection on their assumptions and actions, they not only develop the skills of questioning, inquiring, and researching, but also they continue to construct contextually grounded reflections-in-action, each of which will increase their knowledge-in-action (Liston & Zeichner 1990). According to Schön, both can go in tandem because:

Unusually reflection on knowing-in-action goes together with reflection on the stuff at hand. There is some puzzling, or troubling, or interesting phenomenon with which the individual is trying to deal. As he tries to make sense of it he also reflects on the understandings which have impacts on his action, understandings which he surfaces, criticizes, restructures, and embodies in further action (1983: 50).

To sum up, according to the dialogic/generative-social-epistemology of reflective practice, reflection promotes self-renewal and trust-building or *becoming* process (Esterela 1999; King & Hibbison 2000) since "...development comes through the individual's construction of or invention of knowledge" (MOE 2003: 11).

### 2.3.2.3 Linguistic Assumptions

The mind-world co-emergence philosophy dismisses the traditional dualist views such as competence-performance, learning-acquisition, signifier-signified, and langue-parole. Based on his constructivist-dialectic philosophy, Deleuze posits "language as a *system*, which becomes effective and expressive as long as the form of expression is *not separated* from but is supplemented by the form of content: both exist in assemblage" (Semetsky 2004: 316). The assumption is that language (its vocabularies, statements, structures) become evident only if (1) not alone, therefore (2) is continually used to describe, conceptualize, express feelings and 'things', abstract or physical, and (3) the whole of its meaning can be fulfilled by pre-constructs—experience, hunches, knowledge, hypotheses, and so on. What this suggests is that competence or "form of content" is, thus, assumed inseparable from the "form of expression" yet to be acquired. To quote Semetesky (*ibid*) at large:

A new nonrepresentational language of expression, exemplified in what Deleuze called a performative or modulating aspect, is being created by means of the language *structure* going through the *process* of its own becoming-other and undergoing a series of transformations giving birth to a new, as though foreign and unfamiliar, other language (*ibid*. Emphasis is original).

This means that both language structure (competence) and form of expression (performance) not only presuppose one another but also continually go through a process of **becoming**. Gadamer (translated in Koegler 1992: 48) described the structure of a language as “event”: “...it consists in the coming into being of what has been said in tradition.” Semetsky (*ibid*: 318) quotes Deleuze and Guattari, who disagree with reducing language to signifier and signified: “‘content is not a signified nor expression a signifier ... [Instead] both are variables in assemblage (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 91)’.”

Similarly, some cognitive and critical linguists argue that language is a domain for cognition to co-ordinate behavior in professional and lived experiences (Searle 1995; Maturana 1995). That is, like knowledge of teaching, knowledge of the structure or skills of second or foreign language is also re-/constructed in a practical experience through collaborative practice of reflecting on and analyzing educational texts and events (Fairclough and Wodak 1997).

In similar manner, Putnam (1992: 433) calls us to “give up the picture of Nature as having its very own language which it is waiting for us to discover and use...always waiting to be written down.” Putnam contends that holding such assumption suggests as well as means that there would be, for instance, a *thing* called “the proposition that the sky is blue”, or otherwise that there would be a unique sentence-shaped thing in the world. According to this theory, both human language and (EFL) internalized learner-language structure are to be assumed as in constant making and re-making of the learner for himself and with others in social practice. Therefore, in contrast to simple exposure to ‘the pre-givens’, for effective proficiency development, there should be as much acts *to do with* the words and forms of the language as there has to be acts in the forms and statements of the language. This might be as true for adult EFL learners as it is for children. Yet, few linguists (e.g. Lenneberg 1967) make a distinction between early-age and adolescent-level language development. They hold the belief that there is difference between learning and acquisition. The latter, acquisition, is associated with critical period-- the period during which a child can acquire language easily, rapidly, perfectly, and without instruction. They believe that for adults, language acquisition is difficult and hence leaning of the words and forms of a language, even under decontextualized situation, becomes an end by itself.

To conclude, according to the argumentation of the dialogic/generative approach requires a kind of reflective practicum whereby EFL student teachers engage, in the medium of English, on collaboratively analyze not only practically confronting problems, but also contextually evaluate pre-set procedures (e.g., procedures, tasks, syllabi, and curricula). In addition, encouraging them to design, try out and explore their own alternative pedagogic practices becomes vital.

## **2.4. Traditions, Patterns and Processes in Reflective Practice**

### **2.4.1 Traditions of Reflective Practice**

There are various thoughts and practices connected to the aims and values of reflection. Zeichner and Tabachnick (1991) outline four major theoretical traditions. The first one is what they call the *academic tradition*. This tradition emphasizes the student teacher's role as a subject matter specialist and, hence, reflection on subject matter and its transmission to students becomes essential. The second tradition they identify is the *social efficiency tradition*, which emphasizes the intelligent employment by student teachers of generic teaching skills and strategies that have been derived from the scientific study of teaching. In second and foreign language education this approach is also called structuralist approach. Some of Richards' (1990: 10) lists of such scientific, research-driven teaching acts are: instruction is guided by preplanned curriculum; Students are carefully oriented; when students don't understand, they are re-taught; standards for classroom are high; there are smooth, efficient classroom; instruction is clear and focused.

The third tradition of reflection is the *developmentalist tradition*. This tradition of reflection emphasizes the learner's natural development as the basis for what and how subject-matter should be taught. In foreign or second language education, this can be also described as learner-centred approach. Finally, the *social reconstructionist tradition* of practicum or reflection views schools and student teachers as agents of changing quality of teaching/learning. According to this tradition, reflection on contexts in which teaching practices are situated is as important as reflection on classroom pedagogic actions and reflective teaching. This tradition is committed to

reflection as a collaborative activity. This is somewhat similar to what second or foreign language education theorists call context-based approach.

#### **2.4.2 Models of Reflective Practice**

Predominant in the literature are Deweyan distinction between two models (in Zeichner & Liston 1990: 166): Routine and reflective actions.

##### **2.4.2.1 Routine action**

According to Dewey (1933) routine action is that which is guided primarily by habit, external knowledge, and circumstances. Similarly, van Manen (1977) defined technical 'practice/rationality' as that consists of responses that deal with the technical application of educational knowledge and basic curriculum principles, such as are the students doing what the teacher asked them to do. In such a model the context is not taken into consideration. This kind of technical rationality and routine practice resemble the traditional rationalist perspective discussed above.

Teachers who perform routine actions and, hence, are unreflective about their teaching often uncritically accept everyday reality in their schools and concentrate their efforts on finding the most effective and efficient means to solve problems that have largely been defined for them. These teachers often lose sight of the fact that their everyday reality is only one of many possible alternatives, a selection from a larger universe of possibilities. They often lose sight of the purposes and ends toward which they are working and become merely the agents of others. They forget that there is more than one way to frame every problem. Unreflective teachers automatically accept the view of the problem that is the commonly accepted one in a given situation.

#### 2.4.2.2 Reflective Action

In Dewey's much quoted-view, reflective action is active, persistent, and careful consideration of any assumption in the light of the grounds that support it and the consequences to which it leads (Dewey 1933). Since Dewey's stated that that reflection does not consist of a series of steps or procedures to be used by teachers, reflective practice became to widely be assumed as a holistic way of meeting and responding to problems. Based on Dewey's works, Schön advanced the view that reflective action is also a process that involves more than logical and rational problem-solving processes. In his various works, Schön (Argyris & Schön 1974; Schön 1983; 1987) argues reflective action involves intuition, emotion, and passion and conversation with problematic situations. To Schön, reflective action involves *problem-posing* and *world-making*. The latter are important to EFL student teachers because they need to pose problems for their action research projects, which develop into their images of professional development.

Van Mannen (1977) discusses two more concepts, which further elaborates on Dewey's reflective action. One is 'practical rationality/reflection', where the practitioner/teacher becomes more concerned with clarifying assumptions and predispositions while assessing the educational consequences towards which a teaching action leads. She or he analyzes student and teacher behaviors to see if and how the goals are met.

Finally, van Manen identifies 'critical rationality' model of reflection. According to this model, student teachers are concerned with the worth of knowledge and the social circumstances that are useful to students without personal bias. She/he asks her-/himself several questions such as: what were the strengths of the lesson, what should be changed, and was the content covered important to the students? The implication is that becoming and being a reflective teacher requires being able to *listen* to and accept multiple sources of understanding.

### **2.4.3. Processes of Becoming Critically Reflective Teachers**

Becoming a reflective teacher can be conceived as a process of reflection-for-action, reflection-in-action, reflection-on-action and reflection-about-the-reflection.

#### **2.4.3.1 Reflection-for-action**

Reflection-for-action involves what the teacher does before entering the classroom, and retrospectively, after leaving the classroom. Although Schön did not use this term, he expressed it in different terms. To Schön, reflection for action involves practitioners in “imposition of an order” on disorderliness, complexity and uncertainty associated with “a unique situation” (1987: 65). It is an early stage of “global experiment whose results will be only dimly apparent [and the practitioner] will need to discover its consequences and implications” (ibid.).

In this sense, in an EFL context, a distanced and early consideration of planning of a unique activity or method of teaching can be considered as aspects of reflection for action. Commonly, Schön refers to this kind of thoughtful action as *framing*. Framing is, thus, different from routine action of intuitively implementing of, for instance, what is pre-set in the school textual materials and syllabi.

#### **2.4.3.2 Reflection-in-action**

Reflection-in-action refers to the process of being responsive, perceptive and alert to a pattern of a problematic situation and interpreting it and providing solutions to problems during an action (while the situation is actually taking place). It involves our capacity to perceive similarities and differences as we perceive and enact through, explicitly or implicitly, “bringing past experience to bear on a unique situation” of practice Schön 1987: 66). Schön makes a contrast between a technical rationality or objectivist epistemology of practice and a constructivist epistemology of reflection-in-action. A technical rationalist view lost sight of reflection in action since practice is

seen as “instrumental problem solving, professional when based on systematic, preferably scientific knowledge” (ibid: 222). Hence, practice was seen as no more than “style grafted onto” the supplied “research-based knowledge” (ibid).

By contrast, the constructivist/constructionist view is that “practitioner’s feel for the materials [the unique situation’s puzzles, uncertainty, and confusion], on-the-spot judgments, and improvisations—the forms of his or her reflection-in-action—are essential to professional competence” (ibid: 222-223). According to this constructivist epistemology of reflection-in-action, a practicing EFL student teachers’ forms of reflection-in-action might involve conscious and on-the-spot judgments and comparison and contrasts of unfamiliar and familiar classroom happenings, and attentive listening, questioning, improvisation and re-framing of the happenings—behaviors, events, acts and actions/interactions.

#### **2.4.3.3 Reflection-on-action**

Reflection-on-action is temporally different from reflection-in-action in that it takes place after an action or series of actions. The former takes shape while taking action. Reflection-on-action might be seen from two points of view. On the one hand, it may be interpreted as *self-reflexivity*—exploring own learning, monitoring on own processes of inquiry and examining of own assumptions and new understandings (Fairclough 2005). In an EFL practicum setting this can take place by parallel theoretical reading and comparing and contrasting actual learning experience with the theoretical perspectives in the literature. For instance, Brookfield’s (Brookfield 1995: 75-77) Teacher Learning Audit can serve for self-reflexivity. It involves keeping reflective issues such as: Compared with this time last week/month/term, I now know that.... Compared with this time last week/month/term, I am now able to.... Compared with this time last week/month/term, I could now teach a colleague how to.... The most important thing I’ve learned about my students in the past week (s)/month/term is....

On the other hand, reflection-on-action can involve reflective and attentive observation and evaluation of the behavioral world. The latter can involve classroom actions/interactions. For

example, reflecting on how EFL learners behave and learn in classrooms. Student teachers would be encouraged to consider their practices as “a process of reflective experimentation in which they try to make sense of the sometimes puzzling things children say and do” (Schön 1987: 323). Reflection-on-action means that eventually reconstructing the situation, cognitively as well as in document form. Furthermore, it involves continuing to analyze and change actions and practices in similar fashion.

#### **2.4.3.4 Reflection about the Reflective Practicum**

A fourth element of reflection that should enter reflective practicum is meta-reflection or reflection *about reflection and practices*. Also called the “phenomenology of practice” (Schön 1987: 322), this involves reflection about the setting of practicum, reflection on the organizational constraints to reflection, and reflection about the professional conditions of the practitioner. Thus typical reflection about EFL practicum might involve reflection on/about the conditions, standards, procedures, tools, norms, role frames, constraints, assumptions, values, goals, and objectives that pertain to the EFL reflective practice.

Implied in all the above theory of reflective learning is that the road-map of becoming EFL reflective teacher can be defined as a spiral, in which we begin with **reflection-for-practice**, move into **reflection-in-practice**, and then to **reflection-on-practice** (inevitably leading us back to reflection-for-practice in an ongoing process). According to applied linguists such as Richards and Lockhart (1996) reflective EFL student teachers engage in problem-solving and decision-making, reflect on the thinking in progress, think about their strategies and revise them in order to make them more effective. The implication is that, if new ideas are a result of reflective thinking, then one may conclude that reflective thinking is the key to change and improve the skills and knowledge of teaching.

#### **2.4.4 Lenses of Becoming Reflective Teachers**

Brookfield believes teachers must engage in genuine dialogue about topics such as the dynamics and rhythms of classroom processes; the daily struggle to confront irresolvable dilemmas and contradictory demands; the significance and meaning of teaching for those that teach; the strengths enjoyed or humiliations suffered as part of the teaching process. For effective dialogic reflection on these, Brookfield (2001: 33-34) lists four types of *lenses*:

- 1) The *lens of autobiography* promotes, as a teacher and learner, using personal self-reflection and collecting the insights and meanings for teaching;
- 2) The *lens of students' eyes* seeking their input and seeing classrooms and learning from their perspectives;
- 3) The *lens of colleagues* peer review of teaching from a colleague's experiences, observations, and feedback;
- 4) The *lens of theoretical literature* may provide an alternative interpretive framework for a situation.

#### **2.5. Contextual Conditions for Reflective Practice**

External, internal and relational to-the-individual conditions facilitate and constrain reflective practice, as its pre-conditions, processes as well as outcomes.

##### **2.5.1 Contexts**

Contemporary literature illuminates that effective reflection can neither take place in a vacuum, nor can it emerge in *individualistic* and *de-contextualized* conditions. Contextualization in a reflective practicum literature refers to a condition where trainer and trainee, training and researching, theory and practice, classrooms and social contexts, learning and teaching are

connected and interacting (Liston & Zeichner 1990). Where there is no such situations 'reflection' becomes uncritical assimilation of pre-set assumptions, mechanical mapping of existing procedures of teaching, and reproduction of traditional practices. In the EFL language learning literature, contextualization refers to "the need to present content within thematic and situational contexts that reflects the natural use of language" (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain 2002: 195). What is needed is consideration of the EFL student teacher holistically—his/her linguistic, cognitive, professional, sociological, and historical *grounds* and *horizons*.

Contextualization of practical learning was pioneered by Dewey and advanced by Donald Schön. To Schön, background context and surrounding context enormously impact upon success or failure of a reflective practicum. Schön (1983: 270) points out four "constants" or "sets of background assumptions" in reflection that are relatively "stable" and provide practitioners with "solid references from which, in reflection-in-action" they can examine their theories and frames:

- 1) *Linguistic repertoire* (media) through which practitioners name and describe reality;
- 2) *Appreciative system* that practitioners bring to a reflective practicum, such as degree of desire for problem-posing, inquiring; openness for reflective conversation, problem-setting; uncertainty and curiosity (McNiff & Whitehead 2001);
- 3) *Concepts* and *conceptual frameworks (theories)* by which practitioners make sense of phenomena, for reality is accessed and constructed by means of concepts and conceptual framework;
- 4) *Role frames* within which practitioners set their tasks and through which they bound their institutional settings. This involves supraindividual codes, meanings and institutional frames that lie beneath practitioners' intentions, reasons and actions, implicitly or explicitly (Schön 1987).

Likewise,, researchers (Pennycook 1999; Morgan 1998; Canagarajah 1999) contend that the main goal of EFL/ESL teacher education should be to enable prospective teachers to see language, "not simply [as] a means of expression or communication but as a practice that

constructs, and is constructed by, the ways language learners understand themselves, their social surroundings, their histories, and their possibilities for the future” (Okazaki 2005: 175).

Schön’s critics, however, argue that reflection in practicum or studio alone cannot guarantee effective reflection since professionals work under institutional, social, and personal interests and constraints (Liston & Zeichner 1990). They argue that reflection is only potential being-in-relation of the internal constructs and external reality. For instance, according to Fuchs (2003: 219), reflection is not only “a complex causal relationship between an entity that causes changes, but “the exact moment and the exact form of the process of emergence and its resulting new qualities are to a large degree uncertain” for two reasons. One reason is that the change might take place within the internal mental structure, which renders it a degree of freedom from observation. The other reason is that there is no guarantee that there is one-to-one correspondence between cause and effect, i.e., reflection and re-construction, respectively. Possibly, another reason is the reflector might self-organize, or go back to the earlier state of mind or action, due to the influence of external conditions.

For related reasons many scholars agree that effective learning or continuous re-construction and action needs wider, mutual, and open interaction and communication focused on *collaborative learning* (Richardson 1999; Sosniak 1999; Usher, Bryant & Johanson 1997). In accordance with this view, only in a collaborative educational situation can practitioners be enabled to recognize, determine and realize themselves as reflectors.

Similar to these theorists of reflection, many socio-cognitive second/foreign language theorists agree that the vast majority of classroom learning and behaviors are determined by out-of-classroom factors (Holliday 1994). Therefore, the extent to which an EFL student teacher analyzes and revises his/her values, assumptions reveals that her/his alternative thoughts can severely be limited and robustly enhanced by the surrounding context.

### 2.5.2 Dialogic Action/Interaction

Commonplace in the current literature for effective reflective practices is reciprocal deliberations and *dialogical supervision*. To emphasize these, Brookfield (1995: 246) quotes Clift, Houston and Pugach (1990: 204): "...helping teachers at any level to reflect appears to be....characterized chiefly by dialogue and deliberation." Brookfield stress that dialogue is crucial because the use of colleagues and supervisors as support are crucial components of critical reflection. But, he emphasizes that student teachers need the chance and ability to articulate what they wish their classrooms to be like, for reflection is a dynamic concept that changes as one's knowledge base and classroom experiences expand. Likewise, Schön (1987) urges that both the *coach* (the teacher educator) and the *client* (student teacher) should engage in reflection-in-action in a dialogic fashion. This view contrasts with what others jettison as *linear* (theory-to-practice implementation) and *monological* (prescriptive and judgmental) practicum (Ur 1992; Williams 1998).

Brookfield (1995) warns against what he calls "three cultural barriers to reflection", namely "the culture of silence, the culture of individualism, and the culture of secrecy" (pp. 247-251). For reflection to take place, Brookfield discusses, there has to be "self-disclosure", "trustful atmosphere", "talking about teaching", and "collaboration". These argumentations directly speak to the need for open, dialogic, reciprocal and continually re-constructive institutional culture, from where a discourse community of future intellectuals flourishes. Freeman, an influential EFL/ESL teacher education theorist, discusses discourse community as a community that speaks, more or less, common 'language', creates new frameworks and sets scholastic standards (Freeman 1996). Likewise, Liston and Zeichner (1990: 175) denote that:

If teacher educators want their student teachers to foster cooperative and collaborative learning within their classrooms, classes in the college and university components of the teacher education program would be infused with cooperative learning structures.

To wind up, the presence or absence of intellectual, dialogic, reciprocal and inquiry traditions wield tacit and explicit influence. Especially, the mode of supervision influence student teachers'

curiosity, aspiration and enthusiasm for reflective practice and becoming critically reflective teachers. In addition to providing scripts, rules, guidelines and standards, practicum programs as careers should therefore offer student teachers interpretive schemes, resources and norms for fashioning a course through their professional journey.

### **2.5.3 Assessment of Reflection**

The vast majority of reflection literature confuses or does not make a distinction between reflection and reconstruction. Two approaches are recurrent in the literature: analytical and holistic.

#### **2.5.3.1 Analytical Approach**

In higher education context, this approach is also called *discrete-point* or *quantitative* approach (Biggs 1999: 150). It is a “quantitative way of looking at knowledge” (ibid.). Biggs (ibid.) lists four underlying assumptions of this approach:

- 1) Learning performance are unitized, i.e. quantified and rated;
- 2) These units are either correct or incorrect;
- 3) The correct units, or arbitrary transformations into marks may be treated additively, their sum becoming an index of learning that lies along a single scale;
- 4) Any one correct unit therefore is ‘worth’ the same as any other. It does no matter then what is correct as long as there are enough (usually 50).

The analytical view is framed on the basis of being systematic, formal, precise and internally logical.

In the evaluation of reflection, this approach to assessing reflection predominantly employs van Mannen’s (1979) distinction of three levels of reflectivity, namely *technical*, *practical*, and *critical*. List of checklist items are pre-designed on Likert-scale (usually four point scales) to assess student teachers’ level of reflectivity. The items usually refer to demonstrated quality of

teaching behaviors such as planning specific and measurable lessons, lesson introducing, lesson presenting, and lesson evaluating (Sparks-Langer, *et al.* 1990). Brookfield (1996: 266) calls this approach as “predetermined objectives approach” because the assumption that underpins it is that a reflective practicum program is “judged successful according to the extent to which these objectives had been attained.”

This approach seems to be disavowed by some theorists since it presupposes micro and positivist view of conceiving, assessing and researching social and educational reality. Woods (1996: 248), for instance, argues “categorizing teachers into predetermined groups hides the dynamic aspect of BAK [beliefs, assumptions and knowledge], and oversimplifies our understanding of the concept and process of teacher...change.” Brookfield (1986: 267), on his part, discredits “predetermined objectives approach” to evaluation on the grounds that it “is school [or institution] based, it does not allow for unintended outcomes, it is authoritarian, it encourages reification of program objectives, it discourages flexibility, and it takes no account of differences in students’ experience, interests and abilities.” Furthermore, evaluating student teachers on pre-defined criteria contradicts with the very tenets of reflection, such as, to mention a few, the indeterminate nature of the *swampy zone* (Schön 1983) of a practitioner. Change at one time cannot guarantee continuity of the consequential new way of behavior. According to Woods (1996: 252), “Teacher change involves two interrelated aspects. The first aspect involves change in ‘conception....The second aspect involves changes in behaviour: planning, action and the overlap between them.”

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### 2.5.3.2 Holistic Approach

Holistic, in contrast to analytic, approach is underpinned in qualitative view of knowledge. Again, Biggs (1999) is worth quoting. Biggs three key features of qualitative ways of looking at knowledge:

- 1) As learning occurs, new knowledge builds upon the previous knowledge and its structure becomes more complex and sophisticated. Assessment should therefore inform the present state of complexity and advancement, not how it compares across students.
- 2) A learning outcome should therefore be assessed holistically, not analytically. A structure can only be assessed as a whole, not in terms of the sum of its part;
- 3) Thus, each student's assessment is independent of any other student (Biggs 1999: 151)

Similarly and more recently, in reflective practicum context, teacher educators and researchers have begun to prefer qualitative, dialogic and participant observation of student teachers' *holistic* and *processual* behavior rather than relying solely on what they say or write under analytical and controlled situations. The general assumption of the holistic approach to teacher-learning assessment is that teacher education programs cannot prepare teachers for every situation they may encounter. The programs may help them to become thoughtful decision makers, but this is not always attained due to complex individual and contextual conditions.

The current reflection literature suggests looking at the reflective actions, works and narrations (journals, portfolio, conversations, and talks) of student teachers for reconstruction. Such constructs might include: questioning and examining of assumptions (Brookfield 1995); "ways of judgment of appropriateness and management of value dilemmas" (Buchmann 1987: 154); articulation of assumptions (Cranton 2001); ways of considering learner's experiences and level (Shulman 1987); ways of documenting and describing events that take place in classroom (Shulman 1992); signs of exposing discrepancies, conflicts of assumptions (Elbaz 1983); and, signs of illuminating better classroom practices from own perspectives (Zeichner & Liston 1991).

From all the theorists argumentations, Schön's (1987: 168-9) continua of "two poles of axis" along which a reflective practitioner is assessed seems more theoretically holistic and practically specific. They are:

- 1) Closed-system vocabulary vs. substantive understanding: That is, a practicing student might just repeat the words she/he learned, (maybe) connecting them to one another but

none to experience, events or action in a reflective practicum. Or, by contrast to this, he/she might be able to achieve a substantive understanding of the processes or patterns to which the words refer.

- 2) Unitary procedures vs. holistic grasp: That means, a student teacher may learn to carry out discrete, fragmented procedures without being able to connect or integrate them into a whole condition of (own) skill/knowledge practices (language, pedagogic and inquiry processes). Or, by contrast, she/he might learn to combine these into whole structures, coherent knowledge practices having processes, consequences and implications.
- 3) Narrow and superficial vs. broad and deep: A practicing student teacher may learn to solve the problem of specific situation (e.g. classroom management). By contrast, he/she may learn to see it, in various ways and varying degrees, as an exemplar for his/her future action research, or as an instance of a way of designing action research projects applicable to any teaching situation.
- 4) Overlearning vs. multiple representation: That means a student teacher may take the view of practicing advocated by tutor, trainer or the institutions (schools or the university/faculty/department) and be committed to it as a single right way or 'truth'. Or, contrarily, he/she might see it as merely one view, among competing other views, and critically analyzes it juxtaposing and combining it with other and alternative perspectives.

To wrap up this discussion on assessment, the *holistic* assumption against the *atomistic* one is that assessment must focus on development rather than judgment. As such, individual student teachers should be assessed on achievements relative to themselves rather than to others. Accordingly, assessors or trainers look for "best" as opposed to "typical" performances (Gipps 1994). The holistic method of assessment upholds an environment which is open, less controlled and flexible so that the practitioner learners are allowed to take part in the defining, selecting, designing and documenting of evidence for their own self-change and self-development process.

## 2.6. The Theoretical Framework of This Study

This Chapter demonstrated that various and divergent perspectives, models, traditions and practices of reflection have been around since the early decades of the last century. Various traditions, models and modes of reflective practices and assessing reflectivity are there around the world. These are more general and transcendental than specific and contextual. Schön provides vital conceptual frameworks but offers little practical tools. Brookfield is only one of the few who provides practical and contextual tools. Conditions for effective reflection are both extra-individual and inter-individual (conceptual repertoire). Following Schön (1983; 1987), two *strands* of views of ‘zone of practicum’, namely *determinate* and *indeterminate*, are visible. The latter view is compatible with the theoretical approach that the researcher adopted in this study, where reflective practicum is seen as social construction and re-construction of context-bounded knowledge and skills through reflection on and about own teaching/learning practices, assumptions and actions/interactions. This is because, the indeterminate view takes reflective and criticalist perspectives of the practicum rather than the rationalist one. That means it tends to generative approach where student teachers theorize bottom-up from practice rather than implement established theories and skills. From the indeterminate viewpoint, language and language learning are seen as event in context and where competence and performance are always in the process of interaction and advancement. Moreover, student teachers are considered as practitioner colleagues, change agents and autonomous rather than technical craftsperson.

Also, the researcher’s indeterminate perspective on practicum is congruent with that of the pre-service teacher education policy and strategy documents. The latter envision a constructivist model of reflective practicum where student teachers make sense of confronting problems and invent knowledge and practices of teaching (MOE 2003).

Similarly, in the language teacher education literature, too, two strands of theorists could be identified. On one hand, there are those whose focus is more on pedagogic skills development, and, as a result, language skills and inquiry skills are overshadowed. Moreover, reflection is understood as translation of literature-driven theories into practice or comparative discussions on these theories vis-à-vis school classroom events. Yet, on the other hand, there are the socio-



cognitive theorists who view language, knowledge and skills development as holistic and contextualized process. The latter view is compatible with the researcher's theoretical framework as well as, apparently, with the new national teacher education policy (See MOE 1994; 2002; 2003).

In a nutshell, the researcher's theoretical framework has profound implications for EFL practicum. The first is whether the ability or potential (skills and knowledge) for reflection of a student teacher depends on the contingent presence of certain conditions: predispositions (mental constructs or repertoire), tools for reflection, flexibility of institutional rules and role frames, and discourse community of teaching and learning. Secondly, whether these abilities and potentials are exercised is contingent and not pre-determined by any standards, competence pre-sets, or pre-fixed evaluation criteria. Thirdly, if and when they are ever exercised, their consequences will depend on some mediating variables such as degree of authenticity—for continuous professional self-development or for immediate instrumental purpose of, for instance, scoring pass grade in the course. Finally, such reflective potentials are subject to change, for instance, by affective factors that might curb, moderate or enhance confidence for reflective practice.

What about the methodological or meta-theoretical framework that guides the research process? This is what is explicated in the chapter that follows.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter explicates the methodological approach—the methodological concepts and how they were enacted. In her widely quoted article titled “The Dance of Qualitative Research Design”, Janesick (1994: 212) states, “there is no value-free...design...[therefore]...[t]he qualitative researcher early on identifies his or her biases and articulates the...conceptual frame for the study.” Therefore, the theoretical biases and values that underpin this research will be explicated in this chapter, focusing on their impacts and opportunities.

Firstly, the research design is discussed. Secondly, approaches to sampling of research setting and participants will be sketched. Thirdly, approach to data analysis and interpretation will be explicated. Fourthly, methods of data collection and storage will be outlined. Fifth, approaches to data reduction, organization and analysis procedures will be pointed out. Finally, strategies to enhance the quality of this study will be outlined.

#### 3.2 Qualitative and Practitioner Inquiry Design

##### 3.2.1 Introduction

Fundamentally, reflection involves the relation of man and his world in the life practice. Thus, there is a necessity to see or study reflective practice and reflector, and all problems associated with these, in context in a holistic way. This, in turn, requires adopting the qualitative paradigm. Thus, this study is premised upon the *modernist* (Lofland & Loftland 1980) qualitative paradigm rather than the quantitative paradigm. The modernist qualitative paradigm adopted in this study is concerned with understanding human behavior from the actor's own frame of reference. As such, it requires naturalistic and uncontrolled observation (Reichardt & Cook 1979). This promotes in this study to attune to the “insider” perspective and construction of grounded

understanding about the object of this study, i.e. the problem of the student teachers' inability and difficulty reflecting on their practicum experiences.

### **3.2.2 Practitioner Inquiry Design**

Practitioner inquiry design has emerged as an alternative approach to bridge the gap between researching and training, theory and practice or teaching and learning, a gap which many of the existing research designs could not narrow.

#### **3.2.2.1 Background**

Practitioner inquiry research design was developed based, for the most part, on Donald Schön's theory of knowing-in-action (Schön 1983, 1987; Dahlström 2004; Griffiths 1998; Elliot 1991; McNiff & Whitehead 2002; Elliot 1991; Cohen, et. al 2000; Whitehead 1993). Practitioner inquiry is an "approach...[that] broadens the base for what is recognized as common knowledge about education and develops a more dynamic relationship between educational theory and practice...[that] goes beyond conventional research methodologies in an attempt to develop tacit educational knowledge into professional educational repertoire" (Dahlström 2006: 62). Accordingly, a practitioner inquirer contextually analyzes an experientially observed problem, and then tries out a new innovation against the problem and formulates decisions about the problem (Dahlström 2004; Elliot 1991; Cohen, et. al 2000; Anderson,, et. al. 1994; Whitehead 1993). In a Practitioner Inquiry approach to educational research, exploration of solutions to a problem is assumed as important as description and explanation of the condition of the problem (McNiff & Whitehead 2002). A practitioner inquirer engages in a spiral of spirals of observing, describing, planning, acting, reflecting, evaluating, and improving a problem of significant professional concern.

Likewise, this study is premised upon the assumption that, studying a problem of reflective practicum requires, in the first place, a researcher to be a reflective practitioner him-/herself, who

does study with participants on a common problem (Anderson, et. al. 1994; Heron & Reason 2001). Therefore, the most relevant design for this study ought to be a practitioner inquiry design. The paradigmatic assumption that underlies practitioner inquiry approach is the belief that knowledge is value-laden, context-bounded, socially and experientially based, local and specific in nature (Denzin and Lincoln 1994; Schwadt 1994). As concept-bearer and concept-inventor, the researcher was **interested** in framing, analyzing and transforming the situation of a personally confronting problem (Schön 1983; 1987), as follows.

### **3.2.2.2 Practitioner Inquiry Frame**

Practitioner inquiry approach comprises four traits or processes each of which guides this research: studying *practical* problem, *participative*, *contextual* analysis and *inquiry* (Dahlstrom 2006).

#### **3.2.2.2.1 Practical problem**

Developed on the basis of Schön's epistemology of reflection-in-action, practitioner inquiry approach assumes that a practitioner's "own practice becomes the area of inquiry and change" (Dahlstrom 2006: 66). Schön argues in several of his works that the practice situation is full of problematic situations for inquiry and change, i.e., challenges, problems, conflicts, and puzzles.

Likewise, the object of this study is the researcher's own practice. The problem of pre-service EFL student teachers' inability and deficiency of the skills of reflection on their practices is grounded in the researcher's day-to-day practice of training the students for over four years at Haramaya University. "How can I improve my student teachers' reflective ability to re-construct new understandings from their practicum experience?" was the motive behind this study.

actions/interactions would spotlight the causations and consequences of their inability to reflect on their experiences. It was assumed that identifying these, in turn, would help in designing appropriate and accurate action strategy that would be implemented to explore ways for maximizing the student teachers' opportunity to re-construct reflective knowledge and skills from their practicum experience.

#### **3.2.2.2.4 Inquiry Component**

Beyond analyzing the contextual situation of a problem, action and change are crucial components of practitioner inquiry. Schön (1987: 72) states: "The practitioner has interest in transforming the situation from what it *is* to something he *likes* better. He also has interest in understanding the situation, but it is in the service of his interest in *change*" (Emphasis is added). In the Inquiry process, unlike the experimental paradigm, the inquirer remains open to any possibility of results and the situation determines the methodology and findings.

Pursuing the practitioner inquiry design principles, this study opted to engage in a process of inquiring into ways for maximizing the student teachers' reflective ability (Section 3.2 ahead).

### **3.3. Sample Design**

#### **3.3.1 Selection of Setting**

This study assumes that reflection and reflection-related problem are better understood *in reflection* with the practitioners themselves in candid, communicative and interactive ways in the social context of the problem. This resonates with purposeful sampling, i.e. theoretically and contextually informed sampling. While objectivist methodology logic lies in randomization and, hence, avoidance of bias and contamination, "the logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth" (Patton 1990: 169). Such information-rich environments are where the object of study or the "phenomena can be placed meaningfully"

(Holliday 2002: 37) and where “conceptually dense” data are obtainable (Strauss & Corbin 1994: 278).

Thus, Haramaya University and its partner practicum schools were believed to be, the setting where the researcher, and participants could learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of this research. This is because the researcher has preunderstanding of the area as a trainer. This allowed the researcher to critically reflect and undo errors in the field. This, in turn, heightens “the internal validity of the study” (Miles & Huberman 1994: 431). Besides, Haramaya University pre-service EFL practicum setting was purposefully sampled because as a staff, the researcher (a) has consistent and easy access to trainees and resources, (b) has access to documents and artifacts, and (c) has contact with practitioner colleagues who would and could serve as informants. All this coincides with the socio-cognitive linguistic perspective that personal and temporal scent with the structure and culture of research setting can help a researcher to not only “frame” the study process more validly, but also “name” the process and properties more accurately (Fairclough 1989; 1992). Further, it resonated with the indeterminate nature of the zone of reflective practicum (Schön 1992).

Two categories of sites were selected (1) core site and (2) peripheral site. The researcher selected as Chiro Secondary School as **core site** for the study. It is core because the pilot test, the Contextual Analysis of the condition of reflection skills difficulty (Phase One) and the Inquiry into determinants of effective reflection (Phase Two) were all carried out at this site.

From **peripheral site** of Dirre Dawa Secondary School, Sabbian Secondary School and Harar Medeanalem Secondary School, observation data were collected as supplementary to the data collected from the core site. It is peripheral because at this site (1) data was collected during Phase One only, (2) due to time and space (distance) constraints, no Phase Two study was carried out, and (3) only unstructured observation—unobtrusive and lesson observation—was conducted as a method for data collection. The observations were conducted with non-participants since all the selected participants were assigned together to the core site. Extraction of observation data from this site does not significantly affect the study since the style of observation is unstructured and naturalistic (See Section 3.5.2 below). Also, cross-analysis of the

data obtained indicated that no significantly different themes emerged as compared to those from the core site. Moreover, the objective for adding peripheral site was to understand what **generic** conditions were at work in the entire setting of Haramaya University.

Cross-case-analysis of the data obtained from the two sites extended “external validity” (Miles & Huberman 1994:435) i.e. showed that there was no significance difference in the themes and categories that emerged from both sites.

### **3.3.2 Selection of Participants**

This study requires dialogic discussions (Holliday 2002). Therefore, primarily, the researcher discussed about the purpose of the research with head of the English Department of Haramaya University. Then, similar discussion was carried out with the English teacher educators in the department. A list of English major first-year students of the year 2005/6 (or 1998 Ethiopian year) was obtained. Then, in a session all the students were briefed on the purpose and advantages they gained if they participated in the researched; especially, they were told that they would gain skills and knowledge of critical reflection on their practicum experiences. Later, out of forty-two, twenty students reported to the department Head that they wanted to participate. Discussing the matter with the Head and the EFL teacher educators, ten out of the twenty student teachers were selected. These were, roughly, believed, according to the insider observations of their teacher educators, to be ‘the type of’ potential reflectors i.e., they have more curiosity to involve in learning. This decision was correspondent with the researcher’s belief that the aim of the study is collaborative, rather than competitive, understanding and transformation of the problem. Thus, no difference in their performances is contrasted or compared against each other. Rather, each participant is monitored and assessed holistically (See Section 2.5.3.2 for Holistic approach that underpins this study). Bogdan and Biklen (1998: 65) also argue that in a purposeful sampling, “particular subjects [are] include[d] because they are believed to facilitate the expansion of the developing theory”. Also, by this time of the research process, these student teachers were already in the process of being introduced to key methodological and theoretical issues in language and teaching courses offered by the department.

A small sample size was preferred for three reasons. Firstly, the study required a close follow-up, and depth inquiry than width. Secondly, massive qualitative data would be generated from such a size of research sample for in-depth analysis. Thirdly, especially in the second phase of the study, more time would be needed to inquire into ways for overcoming the problem of student teachers' difficulty reflecting and reconstructing new knowledge and skills from their practicum experience (Section 1.2).

With the agreements of the student teachers and Head of the department, all the selected students were assigned to Chiro Secondary School, where the researcher selected as core site (Section 3.3.1 above). The sampling was done during their second semester program, just before they were to go for Practicum I. This initial phase of the Practicum was when the researcher conducted pilot-test of the methods (Section 3.8).

Similarly, out of the fifteen teacher educators in the department, four teacher educators were selected. These were those who had publications on teacher education and carrying out research on the practicum, too. Initially, the role of the teacher educators was assumed to be only debriefing, i.e. for the purpose of validity checking trail. But, during the pilot testing, it emerged that the information they offered played a vital role in revealing the condition of the student teachers' inability to reflect. Therefore, the data obtained, though spontaneously and unobtrusively, were added as part and parcel of the Informal Interview data.

To keep confidentiality, dialogically, the researcher reached a protocol of understanding with both parties to hide their names by codifying (Appendix 10).

### **3.4. Grounded Theory Approach to Data Analysis and Interpretation**

This study is premised on the belief that student teachers reflect, act and interact based on certain assumptions they hold and problems that confront them in context (Schön 1992; Brookfield 1986). Therefore, this requires *understanding* and *measuring* behavior in its context--Haramaya

University, in particular. It is believed that only with grounding of student teachers' behaving in their context, the problems confronting them would adequately be delineated and measured.

Thus, the Constructivist Grounded Theory Method of data analysis (Strauss & Corbin 1998; 1990) is believed to be the compatible data analysis and interpretive framework. Grounded Theory is both approach to and method of qualitative data analysis (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Glaser 1978; Strauss & Corbin 1990; 1994). The influential theoretical framework for origin of Grounded Theory is *symbolic interactionism*. The three premises of symbolic interactionism are summarized by Blumer (Blumer 1969: 2 quoted as by Flick 2002: 17):

The first is that human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them...The second is that meaning of such things is derived from, or arise out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows. The third premise is that these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters.

The central tenet for analysis, according to this view, is *perspective*—a conceptual framework used to make sense of the world. This view today has transformed a little bit to the social constructivist epistemology that, reality is a social construct.

The current dominant version of Grounded Theory, which is congruent with the adopted approach in this study is the constructivist Grounded Theory advanced by Strauss and Corbin (Strauss & Corbin 1994; 1998; Charmaz 1990; 1995). This version facilitates generation of substantive theory, grounded in the accounts, experiences, perceptions and attitudes of the actors or participants in the study. In this study, these principles of Grounded Theory approach/method of data extraction and analysis has been adopted to contextually generate, conceptualize, and illuminate themes and categories that gave clues to not only the condition of inability to reflect but also to determinants for improving the conditions.

### 3.5. Participant Observation Strategy

This study aimed at generating qualitative data from its context in a naturalistic way. Hence devices for capturing data should give access to the background assumptions that student teachers bring to a reflective practicum setting. This requires entering the research setting with minimally pre-designed instrumentation. Thus, the researcher opted for participant observation method (Denzin & Lincoln 1994). The type of participant observation adopted in this study corresponds to Denzin's take; it is a "field strategy that simultaneously combines document analysis, interviewing of respondents and informants, direct participation and observation, and introspection" (Denzin 1989 in Flick 2002: 139).

Therefore, unstructured interviewing, observation of events and happenings, collection of artifacts/documents, and reflective/introspective journaling are all adopted.

#### 3.5.1 Unstructured Interview

Unstructured interview was conducted only at the **core site** of Chiro Secondary School, where the interviewees (participants) were assigned. It was only possible to interview the participants. The purpose was to generate data pertaining to the student teachers' assumptions about reflective practicum and how they reflected on their practicum experience. This required probing and extracting rationales for the way they carried out their practicum action/interaction such as teaching, reflection, and lesson planning. The premise was that, unstructured interview gives insights into respondents' assumptions and rationales for their actions, without provoking self-organization of respondents and informants (Adler & Adler 1994). Moreover, less structured interview allowed student teachers to open up and let them express themselves in their own terms and in their own pace. Also, the researcher preferred this style of interview to attune to the student teachers' English abilities and skills-use.

Therefore, two modes of unstructured interview were preferred: (1) informal interview, one that excludes predetermination of topic area, and (2) semi-structured interview, one that includes only

general predetermined but flexible focal points were chosen (Bernard 1995). Specific questions were, thus, only generated in and after interaction with the setting. For instance, student teachers were asked to take part in reason-giving discussions on their lesson plans and test items. And, teacher educators were asked to take part in communicative validation discussions on emergent data and themes. This coincides with what Schön (1987; 1987) calls the *indeterminate* nature of the *zone* of reflective practicum.

The semi-structured interview times were arranged with an individual or a group of student teachers. The focus of the semi-structured interview was on what observation, reflection, and action research mean to them and how they were doing these (See Appendix 5). But, the informal one was conducted spontaneously as data unfolded in context, usually after lesson observation by the researcher. Interview questions were generated in and from classroom contexts and then put to respondents. The domains for informal interview involved challenges that the student teachers faced while they practiced teaching and alternative actions they planned to employ or thought. Approximately, a total of 5:30 hours of informal and semi-structured interviews were carried out with the student teachers.

In the same way, the application and items of the informal interview with the informant teacher educators was constructed during validity checking-trials. Therefore, the informal interview questions were not pre-designed for the informant teacher educators. So, with minimally pre-designed instrumentations, information that they gave was recorded spontaneously (Appendix 5 C). Approximately, a total of 2 hours of informal interview was conducted with the informant teacher educators.

### **3.5.2 Unstructured Observation**

This study assumes that concrete behavior at micro level constitutes higher macro level qualities through action and interaction (Adler & Adler 1994). For that reason studying problems and processes pertinent to reflection, which is the task of this study, requires direct and naturalistic

observation of behavior and actions/interactions. Hence, two styles of unstructured observation were found to be pertinent (Bernard 1995).

The first one is unobtrusive or naturalistic observation, i.e. without impacting processes of occurrences of the actions/interactions. The researcher took Descriptive Notes pertaining to student teachers' actions/interactions seen, heard, 'tasted' in the research setting in unstructured and unobtrusive manner (Holliday 2002). These involve extraction of data pertaining to **roles**: student teachers' roles, role relationships, lesson planning; **procedures**: trainee assessment, supervision, feedback style, pre-/post-lesson reflections, management of student teachers' problems and interests; student teachers' **values**: concerns, lacks, wants and desires; **assumptions** about action research, understanding of practicum experience, effective teaching/learning of English in the practicum. Manual note taking of the observation data was done spontaneously as data emerged in context (e.g., in the staff lounge arguments, discussions on the bus, etc.). Sometimes, descriptive jottings (Bernard 1995) were taken. The purpose was to understand the impacts of the teacher educators' assumptions upon that of the student teachers'.

On average, the researcher carried out a total of 12 hours of unobtrusive observations both at the **core site** of Chiro Secondary School practicum and the **peripheral site** of (1) Dire Dawa Secondary School, (2) Sabbean Secondary School, (3) Harar Medanealem Secodary School, and (4) the Junior School of Harar. During the first two weeks of their Practicum II course, unobtrusive observation and descriptions of what the student teachers were seen doing and heard discussing, particularly, as regard their lessons, roles, concerns, lacks, wants and desires were taken. For instance, the researcher took the descriptions while they discussed in the staff lounge on how they prepared for teaching. These unobtrusive descriptions were the core data for better understanding of their assumptions and perceptions about their practices. Meanwhile, descriptions of what the teacher educators did and discussed with their student teachers were taken unobtrusively in order to gain better understanding of the nature of feedback style, pre-/post-lesson reflections, and assessment that pervade the context of the practicum.

The second type of observation that was selected was *complete observation* of classroom actions/interactions (Adler & Adler 1994), where the researcher took *Lesson Observation Notes* or running *commentaries* of classroom teaching-learning happenings. With this style, the researcher took membership role (e.g., while-lesson recording of field notes, note-taking during pre-/post-lesson discussions and reflection), though participants were not aware of specific constructs. The researcher considered the following constructs of classroom actions/interactions: **Language**: speech acts; **Activity**: a set of related acts student teachers do; **Object**: the physical things that are present; **Act**: single action that student teachers do; **Event**: a set of related activities that student teachers carry out; **Time**: the sequencing that takes place over time; **Goal**: the things student teachers are trying to accomplish; **Feeling**: the emotions felt and expressed (Spradley 1979 in Flick 2002).

Together with the informant teacher educators, the researcher arranged and conducted lesson observations. The researcher conducted observed 20 lessons out of which 10 were of those non-participants in the peripheral site. A lesson observation took forty minutes. As was referred to above, lessons observed at peripheral site were that of non-participants; this helped to compare and contrast experiences at both core and peripheral sites. Descriptions of the nature of speech acts that were carried out; activities that student teachers did; objects that were present to facilitate teaching; acts that student teachers enacted; time management and use, and feelings that were felt and expressed. The informant teacher educators cooperated in taking similar descriptions whenever they carried out supervision of their trainees. They observed, “according to the norm, twice a trainees teaching”. Their descriptions served for comparative and contrastive analysis so that validation data was enhanced.

### **3.5.3 Documents/Artifacts Collection**

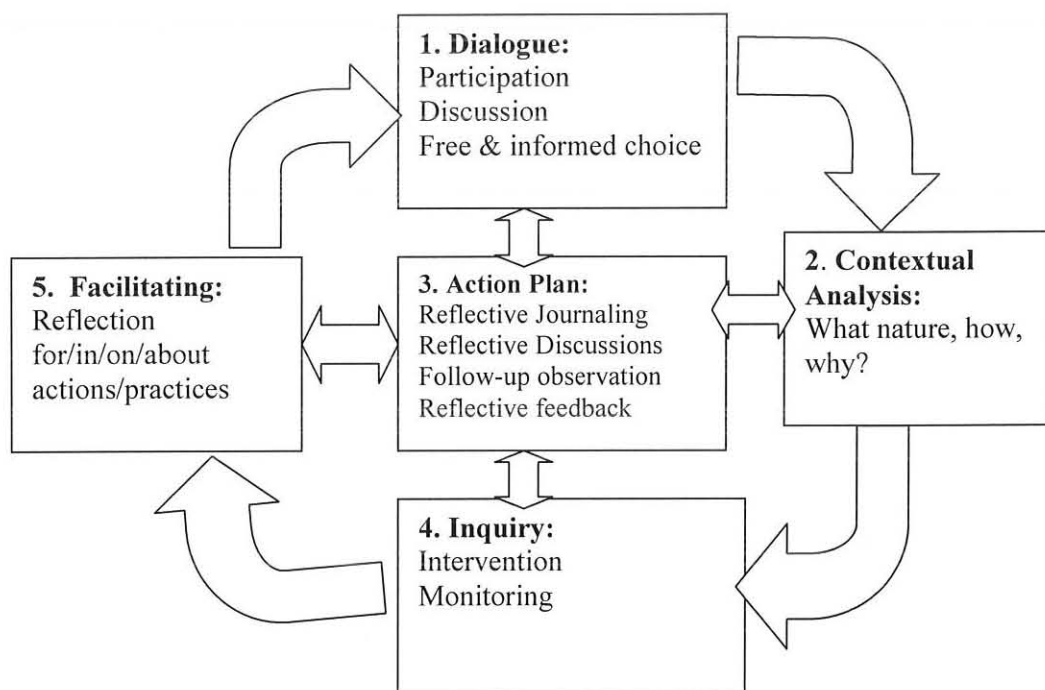
Documents, or artefacts, are essential data for educational and social research (Fairclough 2003). They store institutional assumptions and practices (Hodder 1994; Holliday 2002; Apple 1991). According to Hedgcock (2003: 303), they are the community’s “formalized means of expression.” Similarly, the researcher believed that collection and analysis of practicum program

documents would reveal the institutional conditions that constrain the student teachers' ability to reflect and reconstruct new knowledge and understanding from the EFL practicum of Haramaya University.

Thus, from Haramaya University's Practicum Co-ordination Office, the researcher collected the following: (a) Practicum Assessment Format for Teacher Educators, (b) Reflection Checklist for Trainees and (c) Lesson Plan Format for trainees. From the partner secondary schools, the following were obtained: (a) national Secondary EFL Teacher's Guide, and (b) Official Secondary School Lesson Plan Format (Appendix 2). These served as data in revealing models and modes of reflective practice are carried out in the context of the practicum. It is believed that the documents would impinge upon student teachers' adoption of reflection strategy and hence reveal why the student teachers face difficulty and inability to effectively reflect on their practices.

#### **3.5.4 The Practitioner Inquiry Strategy**

In addition to participant observation strategy, the researcher formulated a mutual and coherent strategy for the Inquiry phase study that followed the Contextual Analysis phase. It is referred to as **Practitioner Inquiry Strategy** (See Fig. 1 below). It was developed based on critical reading of works of the above mentioned practitioner research methodologists in order to guide the Inquiry process (Section 3.2.2).



*Fig. 1: The Researcher's Practitioner Inquiry Strategy: A conceptual model*

The Practitioner Inquiry Strategy designed composes five interrelated and iterative steps as displayed in the conceptual diagram.

#### **3.5.4.1. Dialogic Discussion**

Open and dialogic discussion (See Box No.1 in the Figure) with the research setting and the selected participants is an essential early stage in this study (Holliday 2002). Also, Schön (1987) states that the starting conditions of a reflective practicum require the coach (trainer) and the client (student teacher) to join “in a particular communicative enterprise, a dialogue of words and actions” (p. 163). Building a relationship conducive for a reflective practicum requires willingness trust and commitment. Therefore, in this inquiry the researcher created what Hailom (1997: 9) calls “a relationship of trust and confidence” between himself and the student teachers by providing deliberation on the purpose and expectations of the project. A general overview of

the problem under investigation was provided, for instance, the need for *us* to be reflective teachers. They were also interested in the project since they were informed that they would gain reflective experience and awareness in participating in the project. The participant teacher educators were also interested in the project since they were also making their own studies on the reflective practice. With these dialogic discussions, explicit awareness about the generic issues related to the practitioner inquiry was reached.

This dialogic relationship could not lead to unnatural behaviors on the part of the student teachers since the researcher played multiple roles, namely observer, analyst, trainer, informant, facilitator of reflection and transformer of the problem under investigation.

#### **3.5.4.2 Contextual Analysis**

Once trust, interest, willingness and confidence were built, Contextual Analysis (See Box No. 2) or analysis of the nature of the problem was carried out with the intention to understand the facts of the situation. This led to designing a development plan or Action Strategy tested out against the problem, as discussed above under Section 3.5.4.3.

#### **3.5.4.3 Planning Action Strategy**

As shall be presented in Section 4.4.2 ahead, the necessary Action Strategy emerged to be a combination of reflective journaling, reflective discussions on the journal entries and emergent themes, follow-up observation, and reflective feedback (See Box No. 3 in Figure above). This Action Strategy/Plan was conceptualized and hypothesized as an instrument for enhancing the reflective ability of the student teachers. This was opted because the Contextual Analysis result illuminated that the core factor that sustained the problem of deficient reflection skills of the student teachers was *lack of tools for effective reflection* (Section 4.4). To Brookfield (1995; 2000), effective reflection tools are *open, projective* and *bottom-up generative* means for mediating between mind (assumptions) and reality (confronting dilemmas, confusions, knacks, messes, etc.). That means, in contrast to directing student teachers towards completing structured

or pre-set tasks, effective reflection tools are generative means for building up new understanding, images, and designs (or *world-making*) out of experiences in practicum.

Thus, reflection tools were developed based on the review of current literature, especially Brookfield's (1995) prominent works (Appendix 1). Three types of reflection tools were adapted and employed: (1) Critical Incident Journal adapted from Brookfield, (2) Dilemma Analysis Tool adopted from Talanquer, et al. (2007) and (3) Plan-Implement-Observe-Reflect tool designed by the researcher based on the reading of the theoretical literature. Critical Incident Journal promotes student teachers to keep reflective accounts about high and low moments in their practice of teaching, or details of the significant incidents that stand out in the professional lives of teachers. Brookfield (1995:148-9) provides a simple guideline (Appendix 1A). Keeping record of critical incidents help student teachers "decide what themes they want to explore in depth" (ibid: 148). Buttressed by group critical discussions, critical incidents provide clear focus for student teachers, help them generate themes and realize that their personal stories are in fact generic, context-embedded and far more complex. Furthermore, critical and reflective deliberations on the incidents enable student teachers "discover that their personal struggles are not so different from those experienced by their colleagues" (ibid.). Ultimately, this generates confidence, emotion management and emotive and genuine inquiry into own context dilemmas.

Dilemma Analysis is a reflective tool that promotes student teachers to identify and carefully analyze a particular dilemma that caught their attention and forced them to make a decision during their practice (Talanquer, et al. 2007). It promotes them to think and document why it was important or relevant to them, how the dilemma did emerge, how it developed, how they tried to solve the problem, how the dilemma or problem influenced their beliefs about teaching or learning, and what they would do about it next. This tool would encourage the skills of alertness, sensitivity, perceptiveness and responsiveness.

The Plan-Implement-Observe-Reflect Journal, designed by the researcher, is a reflective tool that involves student teachers in designing a unique lesson or activity, implement it and keep account of their reflections on the design and implementation. It encouraged them to reflect for action and reflect on the action. They are required to attach samples of their design as artefacts to their

journal entries. This would serve them compile image of their professional development; this, in turn, would boost their confidence.

#### **3.5.4.4. Inquiry: Exploring, move-testing and hypothesis testing**

Inquiry is the essential part of the researchers' job (See Box No. 4 in the Figure above). Once the Action Strategy was formulated, the researcher planned to involve in Schön's (1987: 70-74) "three levels" of practitioner inquiry: exploring, move testing and hypothesis testing. The Inquiry is exploration in the sense that it involves *probing*, without pre-conjecturing, with the intention to discover a grounded understanding that would explain the conditions shaping the processes and patterns of reflective practices of particular student teachers in their particular context (as was discussed in Section 3.4.above).

Besides, it comprises a certain amount of what Schön calls "move-testing experiment" (p. 70-71) in the sense that it is a "deliberate action" undertaken in order to produce "an intended change." It is deliberate for it was informed by both experiential confrontation with the problem and contextual analysis which unpacks the causations, processes and patterns, and consequences of the problem (as will be discussed in Chapter Four).

Finally, it is also *hypothesis testing* in the sense that the researcher "seeks to make the situation conform to his hypothesis [Action Strategy above and Conceptual Framework in Chapter One Section1.5.]" but "violating the canons of controlled experiment" by remaining "open to the possibility that it will not" (p. 73). Likewise, both opportunities and challenges emerged from analysis of the monitoring data (Section 5.5). Two types of monitoring methods were employed: (1) **reflective journals** and (2) **lesson observation**, as discussed next.

##### **3.5.4.4.1 Reflective Journaling**

All of the ten participant student teachers were engaged in reflective journaling as a part of the Inquiry phase during the consecutive semesters of practicum II and practicum III in the years of

2007 and 2008. Reflective journaling was employed as a strategy of both training and generating data. On the one hand, reflective journaling was used as a method for re-framing the situation of the problem of reflection skills development; to make it an object of collaborative improvement *with* the student teachers. On the other hand, reflective journaling strategy was used as additional means for generating data for exploring determinants of overcoming the reflective inabilities of student teachers.

As referred to above, three types of reflective tools that are believed to be generative and bottom-up were adopted (1) Critical Incident Journal, (2) Dilemma Analysis, and (3) Plan-Implement-Observe-Reflect Journal. From November 20, 2007 to June 5, 2008 (on average for 20 weeks see also Appendix 1), every weekend, their reflective entries on either of the reflective tools were collected after they deliberated to their peers in reflective discussion sessions organized by the researcher. However, they were informed that they could also keep their journal entries confidential when they did not want to share to colleagues but they had to submit, for the researcher guaranteed confidentiality. Weekly entries in the student teachers' journals are the major sources of data for the Inquiry.

#### **3.5.4.4.2 Lesson Observation**

To supplement the reflective journaling monitoring method, lesson observation was found out important because it helped to monitor changes in action/interaction. On average, the researcher conducted two lesson observations a week—lessons taught by any two of the ten participants, based on purposive or deliberated decisions—for a total of almost 20 weeks. And, one lesson observation a week—of any student participant's—by one of the four informant teacher educators was carried out. The use of an informant teacher educator (codified as XXXJ, see Appendix 10) as a participant observer was found to be essential to enhance reliability and validity of the reflective journaling data.

The focus of the lesson observations was similar to the one employed during the Contextual Analysis phase (Section 3.5.). In addition, the researcher-practitioner conducted pre-lesson and

post-lesson feedback sessions, individual or group. Part of the feedback discussions were the naturalistic ways of interviews—informal and semi-structured—for data collection.

Nonetheless, initially it was thought that the inquiry phase lessons and lesson observations could be carried out during normal school schedule. However, it was found to be impossible for student teachers to employ those lesson-tasks that they themselves designed because the *plasma* occupies almost all the 40 minutes allowed for any English period. [NB: By *plasma*, respondents are referring to the national secondary school practice of aired-lesson through satellite link broadcast from a studio in Addis Ababa. See FDRE/The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. (www). Report on the Development of Education in Ethiopia to the UNESCO Forty-seventh session of the international conference on education 8-11 September 2004 Geneva, Switzerland]. Therefore, rather than “disrupting the school’s regulations”, the student teachers arranged weekend classes with “enthusiastic” consent of their pupils. This arrangement was found to be coincident with the purpose of the Inquiry phase since what was inquired involved what *alternative insights and actions were to be invented by the student teachers* as a result of the new action strategy that the researcher introduced.

#### **3.5.4.5 Facilitating Reflection**

It is believed that change comes only because and inasmuch as humans act; the power for change or agency is possessed by knowledgeable human actors (Giddens in Tucker 1998). With this belief, at this step (See Box No. 5 in Fig. 1 above) the researcher plays the role of scientific explanatory or *coaching*, i.e., “he must describe designing, in the modes available to him—advice, criticism, questioning, or explanation” (Schön 1987: 163). For instance, the researcher-trainer provided specific advice on, for instance, reflection-for-action, e.g., preparation of lesson tasks resonant with pupils’ life experiences; post-lesson observation questioning to serve as reflection-on-action, e.g., what, do you think, could you have done better? (See Appendix 5 Interview Guides for more questioning techniques, which served as method of data generation in tandem). The role of coaching is required in accordance with the institutional norms, too; the researcher must play the role of trainer and evaluator. Playing these roles did not create a

problem since they are congruent with the tasks that any practitioner inquirer must be professionally committed to, namely observing, analyzing, and transforming a real problem (Heron & Reason 2001; Altrichter et al 2008).

In addition to reflective journal keeping, weekend reflective discussions on their journal entries before submission was part of facilitation of reflection. The intention was to engage the participant student teachers on reflective sharing and conversations on their experiences as in their journal entries. Each student teacher read, told, or deliberated to peers about what he/she reflected and wrote. Sometimes, they gave their value judgments on themes in the journal entries, for instance, whether it was right or wrong to employ “physical punishment”, whether they joined the profession “willingly or unwillingly”, and whether “teacher-led or plasma-led teaching is communicative”. Research (Carter 1994; Connely & Clandinin 1988), indicate that by “telling professional, interpretive stories about experiences, teachers can impose order and coherence on that experience and develop their own practical knowledge” (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain 2000: 222). The researcher played the role of coaching and providing information on emergent issues during the discussion. It was hoped that with and through such reflective writing, conversation and discussions, reconstructed and shared language, pedagogic and inquiry knowledge and skills might be furthered.

To wrap up, the practitioner inquiry is more of problem posing (encapsulated by the arrows in the diagram above) since the situation of practice is always complex, dynamic and indeterminate (Schön 1983; 1984; 1987; 1992). The overall requirement of the participant student teachers was to build image of reflective practice—reflective journal and new understanding—while that of the researcher was collected data and new understanding about the inquiry (the centre of the conceptual model).

### **3.6. Data Management Strategies**

In order to record, store and display, the qualitative data in organized and systematic ways codebooks and matrices were designed and used.

### 3.6.1 Codebooks

The researcher prepared codebooks (Appendix 6 for codebook layout) before entering research sites. Ryan and Bernard (2000:781) define, “code books are simply organized lists of codes (often in hierarchies)”, and codes are “mnemonic devices used to identify or mark the specific themes in a text”.

Accordingly, two categories of codebooks were designed (Appendix 7). The first category is codebooks for recording field data—observations and interviews. Following Bernard (1995), each codebook began with code Number (Code No.) 001 (three digits) and proceeds indefinitely till data capturing ceases. Character codes such as the specified time, place, the interviewee or the observed were taken at the top margin. A wider space was left for capturing field notes—interviews, descriptions, and methodological and theoretical notes (the latter two are discussed below).

The second category of codebooks was designed to take reflective **notes**. Reflective notes involve systematic thinking and insight into patterns and processes of the phenomenon under investigation (Elliot 1991; Bernard 1995; Strauss & Corbin 1990; 1998). One kind of reflective note was **methodological note**. This comprises field notes pertaining to methods used, reasons for using them and justifications for possible changes of the methods (Appendix 9). Another type of reflective note that the researcher took was **coded note**. Coded note is data or individual with specific labels attached. Data or indicators are codified using code numbers (Appendix 8). Besides, each of the ten student teachers and four informant teacher educators were codified (Appendix 10). Reasons for codifying are to easily remember and to reduce data. In the case of participants, the purpose was also anonymization, for they wanted confidentiality. Finally, a codebook for taking theoretical note was also designed and employed. A theoretical note involves the researcher’s understandings and insights into the properties and patterns of the problem in its context. It can comprise both induction and deduction (Appendix 11).

### 3.6.2 Matrices

The first category of matrix is conditional matrix. A Conditional Matrix is a visual “analytic device” that illustrates the “relationships between macro and micro conditions and consequences of both to each other and to the process” (Strauss & Corbin 1998: 181). Conditional matrices were constructed to trace and illustrate these relationships in the data (See Table 5; Fig. 3).

Second type of matrix constructed was data catalogue. This comprised documentations pertaining to data-case codes, incidents described or participants interviewed, the specific place, date and time of the participant observation (Appendix 4). For instance, the catalogue communicates that DN0012/3 is catalogued as Descriptive Notes (taken in an unobtrusive observation strategy) whose description is about what participant teacher educators’ (code-named as XG, XXA, XXXJ, XXXXK) account/behavior and was captured at Practicum School Chiro on 03/01/2008 at 8:15-9:00 GMT. The catalogue documents all the data collection methods except Artefacts/Documents because the latter were collected at once from inside the university documentation centers. Cataloging of the data in this manner facilitated the processes of identifying, refining and sifting data.

The third and final type of matrix that was used to organize the qualitative data was corpus data matrix. A corpus data matrix was developed to store the sorted out, refined bits of data from the messy, unrefined raw field data (Appendix 8). The refined data bits are also called *indicators*. The Matrix demonstrates Domains (Column I) Codes (Column II) and, due to space constraints, only major indicators (Column III), each of which was identified during coding of field notes. The Codes refer to abbreviated form of the participant observation method for data collecting followed by the page and/or the line or indicator number on the same page. Double quotation marks are used to show that the indicator is directly taken from the raw data while single quotation marks are used to indicate paraphrase or summarization of bigger data. In Data Analysis and Discussion chapter (Chapter Four and Chapter Five), excerpts from the Corpus Data Matrix are cited as evidence for each theme constructed out of indicators (s).

An example of data citation technique is demonstrated below. It displays that, as an example, the indicator IIN001/1 is verbatim data (in double quotation mark) taken from the first (001) Informal Interview (IIN) method or data case conducted with two informant teacher educators (codified as XXA, XXXJ). It is the first indicator of the category of Speech Act (Column I of Corpus Data Matrix) identified as first (1) indicator on the IIN code-book as indicated after the slash (/). It was captured at Practicum School Chiro (PS (C) on 12/12/2007 at 8: 15-8:30.

Table 2: Catalogue of Field Data

CODE	D/ I	SPECIFIC PLACE	DATE	TIME (in GMT)
DN0012/3	XG,XXA,XXX J, XXXXK	PS (C)	03-01-08	8:15-9:00
IIN001/1	XXA, XXXJ	PS (C)	12-12-07	8:15-8:30

Consequently, it is possible that “the most frequent complaint of supervisors is student teachers’ poor English proficiency” (DN0012/3), and hence the former are “forced to give feedbacks to their trainees either in the medium of Oromiffa or Amharic” (IIN001/1).

Table 3: Corpus Data Matrix

Category	CODE	INDICATORS
Speech Act	DN0012/3	“...the most frequent complaint of supervisors is student teachers’ poor English proficiency”
	IIN001/1	“Because they often can’t understand it, supervisors are forced to give feedbacks to their trainees either in the medium of Oromiffa or Amharic.”

### **3.6.3. Data Reduction, Organization and Analysis Methods**

For simultaneous data reduction, analysis and organization processes, the researcher adopted the three procedures of Grounded Theory method. These non-linear procedures are: (1) *open coding*, (2) *axial coding* and (3) *selective coding*. The logic is that the analysis process should fundamentally move from observation of events in the data, to generation and interpretation of themes and categories (representative of aspects of the phenomenon being studied) , to provision of explanation of the phenomenon. Below is detail about each of these theory ‘discovery’ steps were employed during the data analysis process.

#### **3.6.3.1 Open Coding**

The researcher began data analysis and reduction with open coding the qualitative data. Qualitative data is defined as “a string of words capturing information about *incident*” (Fernandez 2004: 87 Emphasis is mine). A Grounded Theory analyst begins analyzing the qualitative data in open coding by ‘opening up’ the data and identifying indicators, breaking down the data into discrete *incidents* (Strauss & Corbin 1998: 101). *Indicators* are possibly relevant word, phrase, sentence or summary of a bigger text or data in the area of investigation. Indicators indicate or constitute themes or concepts. Themes or concepts are condensed, abstract, often fuzzy, constructs discovered by the analyst (Ryan & Bernard www). In other words, themes stand for unrefined incidents in the domains of behavior, viz. cognitive, psychomotor or attitude.

Various techniques for identifying indicators and conceptualizing themes were employed in this study (Ryan and Bernard www; Glaser 2002; Patton 1990; Strauss & Corbin 1990). They are discussed below.

##### **3.6.3.1.1 Repetition**

Words that occur a lot are often seen as being salient in the minds of respondents (Ryan and Bernard 2003). Therefore, repetitive words were identified and underlined.

#### **3.6.3.1.2 Reflecting**

A pertinent technique used for unearthing deeper patterns in the data, was reflective questioning. For this the researcher employed the following reflective data-analysis questions: 'What is the main issue or problem with which these student teachers seem to be grappling?' 'What keeps striking me over and over? Although it might not be said directly, what comes through as salient concern?' (Glaser 1978, 2002; Strauss & Corbin 1998).

#### **3.6.3.1.3 Constant Comparison**

Constant comparison is addressed by looking for similarities, differences, and consistency of meaning in the data carefully and line-by-line. Glaser and Strauss (1967:101-116) suggest asking "What is this data about?" and "How does it differ from the preceding or following statements/indicator?" This kind of detailed work keeps the researcher focused on the data themselves rather than on theoretical flights of fancy (Charmaz 1990).

The researcher employed all of the above techniques to identify and underline an indicator, relate it to other indicator(s) and construct *themes*. Themes are related to generate *categories*. A group of similar categories were classified together. They form a classification or a *central category* (Appendix 12). Once identified, indicators were stored in Corpus Data Matrix (Appendix 8).

#### **3.6.3.2 Axial Coding**

Another Grounded Theory data analysis and organization procedure used is axial coding. Axial coding involves further generation of categories and systematically linking them. Categories are higher-level, more abstract, than themes. A category represents real phenomena or aspect of a phenomenon.

In order to facilitate the systematic linking of themes and categories, Conditional Matrices were formulated based on the works of Grounded Theory methodologists (Strauss and Corbin 1998). Strauss and Corbin's element of a conditional matrix is basic frame of generic relationships which involves the *conditions* of the phenomenon and the interrelationships of the data, themes and categories in terms of *causals*, *context*, *contingencies*, *co-variances*, and *consequences*.

*Causals* refer to the factors that lead to the occurrence of the *phenomenon*. A phenomenon is "the problems, issues, concerns, and matters that are relevant to those being studied" (Strauss & Corbin 1998: 114). In this study, the phenomenon is (aspect of) reflection skills difficulty/development of EFL student teachers in Haramaya University's pre-service practicum. *Contingencies* refer to broader or narrower *mediating* conditions that "mitigate or otherwise alter the impact of causal conditions on phenomena" (Strauss & Corbin 1998: 131). *Contextual conditions* refer to the moderating "specific set of conditions (patterns of conditions) that intersect dimensionally at this time and place to create a set of circumstances or problems to which persons respond through actions/interactions" (Strauss & Corbin:132). *Co-variance* refers to verbal and/or non-verbal action/interaction strategies that agents (participants) perform in response to the phenomenon and intervening conditions under given situations. Finally, *consequences* refer to the outcome, effects or results (intended or unintended) of the action/interaction, or lack of action/interaction.

Similarly, conditional matrices were constructed in this study in order to organize the emergent themes and categories systematically and discuss vis-à-vis the problem under investigation (e.g. Table 5). These make the key instruments for Data Analysis and Discussion chapters.

### **3.6.3.3 Selective Coding**

The final step employed in the data analysis and organization procedure was selective coding. Selective coding is "the process of selecting the core category, systematically relating it to other categories, validating those relationships, and filling in categories that need further refinement

and development” (Straus & Corbin 1990: 116). To aid selective coding, *theoretical sensitivity* is an essential technique adopted in this study. Theoretical sensitivity refers to alertness and sensitivity to what is going on in the research data (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Glaser 1992).

In this study, to facilitate theoretical sensitivity, Paradigm Model, which shares similarities with Conditional Matrix discussed above, that was formulated by Strauss and Corbin (1990; 1998) was adopted, as it consists a systematic cause-effect scheme for relating categories (Fig.2 below). Similarly, models that represented processes and patterns observed in the data during data analysis were constructed (See Table 5)..

Fig.2 *Strauss and Corbin’s Paradigm Model* (adapted from Strauss & Corbin 1990: 99)

(A) Causal Conditions → (B) Phenomenon → (C) Context → (D) Intervening conditions/Contingencies → (E) Action/interaction strategies/Covariance → (F) Consequences [key: → = engender(s)/generate(s)]
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In Strauss and Corbin’s views of causality, causal conditions are linked to action not through the individual’s cognition but more indirectly through the phenomenon, context and intervening conditions, each of which may include elements of the wider, context-bounded and shared assumptions in Stephen Brookfield’s sense as was discussed in Chapter Two Section 2.2.4. This model contrasts with the linear, regularity or correlation view of cause and event.

### 3.6.3.4 Constructing a Theory

In Grounded Theory approach to data analysis ‘theory’ is defined as “an explanatory scheme that systematically integrates various concepts...constructed from data...through statements of relationship” (Strauss & Corbin 1994: 279). A core category that appears from data analysis defines the theory. A core category should be able to “pull the other categories together to form an explanatory whole” (Strauss & Corbin 1990: 116). Once discovered, it is the Core Category that answers the basic question of the study as well as terminates the data analysis and collection. Besides, once constructed, the core category also indicates that data collection and analysis

sooner reaches *saturation point*. This refers to where no new or relevant data seems to be emerging pertaining to the core category.

In this study, the researcher constructed core categories and central categories pursuing similar procedures. Though it was time consuming, manual coding was preferable to using software programs (Strauss & Corbin 1998; Glaser 2000; 2001). This allowed iterative and reflective analysis, each of which no software program could do.

### **3.7. Strategies to Enhance the Quality of This Study**

Contemporary qualitative design theorists (Holliday 2002; Janesick 1994, Morse 1994) argue that one of the strategies of managing the quality (trustworthiness and dependability) of a qualitative research study is to explicate one's position with respect to current methodological discussions and issues and state its impact on the research. The above discussion of the adopted methodological approach, methods and procedures, thus, has explicated the assumptions that underlie the project, the possible impacts these have on the research and how these are treated.

What is more, in order to further enhance the quality of this study, triangulation, processual dependability, transferability and communicative validity-checking-trail were adopted and addressed.

#### **3.7.1 Triangulation**

The broader concept of triangulation (Denzin 1998) is one of the key strategies adopted in this study. Triangulation of practitioner inquiry, participant observation and constructivist Grounded Theory approaches have enabled the researcher to manage bias by addressing various epistemological and ethical issues such as pre-construction/emergent, emic/etic, insider/outsider, micro/macro and bottom-up/top-down issues. In addition to this, various styles and devices of

data collection such as observation, interview, artefacts/documents and reflective journaling are triangulated.

### **3.7.2. Transferability**

Like other quantitative approaches, however, Grounded Theory research is informed by the view of *transferability* of finding from a case and its context to similar contexts (Flick 2002). According to Glaser (1978) the finding, or the theory, should be **modifiable** such that when new data appear, variation occurs only in some concepts/relationships, without discarding of the theory in its entirety.

In this study transferability and modifiability of the constructed theories have been validated through pilot-testing and actual project data collection and analysis.

### **3.7.3 Communicative Validity-Checking Trail**

Becker and Geer's (1960 in Bernard 1995) validity-checking framework was employed (Table 4 below). Bernard (1995: 361) advises, "As field research progresses, try consciously to switch back and forth between these two perspectives, the *emic* and the *etic*, and to check yourself from either buying into the folk explanations or rejecting them without considering their possible validity" (Emphasis is original). Similarly, the assumption of this study was that data gives meaning (only) when it is connected to the context--the social, the contextual, and the situational.

Table 4: *Validity-checking Trail Matrix* (adopted from Bernard 1995)

		<i>Volunteered</i>	<i>Directed by observer</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Statements</i>	<i>To observer alone</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>V</i>	
	<i>To others in everyday conversation</i>	<i>II</i>	<i>VI</i>	
<i>Activities</i>	<i>Individual</i>	<i>III</i>	<i>VII</i>	
	<i>Group</i>	<i>IV</i>	<i>VIII</i>	

In this study, throughout data collection and analysis processes: (1) for each statement made by a participant student teacher, the researcher asked the informant teacher educators whether it was made by others, too, or if it was directed by the presence of the researcher; and, (2) for each activity observed, informant teacher educators were involved in validating whether it occurred when the researcher was alone with the participant student teacher, or whether it was spontaneous. Similarly, each theme, category and core category was validity-checked throughout this study with the informant teacher educators. Besides, the participant student teachers were also involved in validation of data in reflective group discussions as well as individual discussions, for instance, in informal interview sessions. Sometimes, the validity checking interaction was necessarily made unobtrusive to not block information. The necessity was proven necessary during pilot testing. Only after validity checking were the emergent themes or categories conferred the status of *real phenomena or experience for real people*.

Finally, the researcher pursued the concepts of necessary and sufficient conditions. A *necessary condition* is one that must be present before a certain outcome can occur. A *sufficient condition* is one that can produce a certain outcome by itself, with no other conditions required. Sometimes *complex/multiple causality conditions* can each produce the same outcome independently (Dey 1999).

### 3.8. Pilot-testing

A pilot-test of the research methods had been conducted from March-June 2006 during Practicum I (Appendix 3) at the **core site** for this study, namely the partner school of Chiro (Asebe Teferi) Secondary School. Among the four EFL teacher educators assigned by the English Department to Chiro Secondary School, one informant was selected based on his willingness. The teacher educator allowed the researcher to conduct joint observations of his trainees' lessons.

Originally, structured observation and interview styles, where observation and interview guides designed ahead, were planned. But, these were found not generating valid and adequate data. One reason was the student teachers were unable to adequately express themselves in English. The other reason was that they were too anxious under the structured condition. Still, some self-organized, .i.e. validity checking of the information they gave did not correspond to reality. For instance, they claimed that they were employing "communicative English teaching techniques such as role play, group work and pair work". Similarly, the structured observation styles where checklists of observation were intended was found not suitable since, for instance, lesson was transmitted through satellite video link.

Likewise, the informant teacher educators were found uncomfortable with more structured ways of interviewing and filling out questionnaire. An informant teacher described the context when he said that "people are uncomfortable, unforthcoming and sometimes apprehensive of filling out questionnaire and sitting for structured interviews. I tried all these styles and no one was willing." He also indicated that "teacher educators are fed up of doing such pointless things since they have never seen any journal publications of their contributions to research. People extract data and go. They never gained anything." Thus, an informal interview style of discussion was preferred both for data validation discussions and additional generation of data. See Appendix 5 C for the informal interview guide.

Thus, the researcher abandoned the structured styles and resorted to naturalistic participant observation modes. Interview items were rather constructed from context rather than pre-designed. Complete participant observation and description of classroom events, speech acts, feelings, and activities were made in such a way that details of these generic domains would emerge from data. For instance, speech acts, activities, and feelings were made domains of focus but under each domain the properties and patterns emerged from data. Similarly, in order to gain understanding of the nature of reflection, interaction, supervision and feedback styles, unobtrusive observation style was chosen to describe what was going on in the practicum setting.

Roughly, for the pilot test, a total of 4 hour lesson observations, 6 hour unobtrusive observations and 4 hour interviews were collected and analyzed. Furthermore, student teacher evaluation standards, teaching guides, observation and reflection tools were obtained and analyzed (See Appendix 2).

The ultimate purpose of the pilot test was to measure the reliability and validity of the research methods. The shift from structured to less structured style bore fruits. Significant size of data were collected and analyzed. The validity checking of the emergent themes indicated that the methods were relevant (Section 3.7.4). The validated themes were incorporated into the Contextual Analysis phase results. In addition to the methodological changes, the interview and observation questions that were generated were incorporated into the main research project.

### **3.9. Data Collection and Analysis Stages**

Data collection and analysis was conducted in three analytical and successive stages. Stage one of the analysis procedure was conducted during Contextual Analysis phase of the study, where the aim was to investigate the facts of the situation of student teachers' inability to reflect on their practices and experiences. This was carried out in September 2007 (Appendix 3). During stage two, which corresponds to the Inquiry, data was collected and analyzed only at the **core site**, namely Chiro Secondary School. The final stage of data analysis was comparative analysis of both the data and the findings of the two inquiry phases.

### **3.10 Reflections on the Operationalization of the Research Methodology**

One of the interesting observations in the application of the research methodology is that the reality of the situation defined the application of the research approach and the nature of data obtained. For example, after entering the field for the Contextual Analysis of the study, the researcher felt it was important if some school teachers were involved as participants. The researcher thought they, as 'mentors', might offer some insights regarding student teachers' language, teaching and inquiry skills difficulties. However, no EFL school teacher was available in the school campus. The researcher contacted the school director on this matter. The director, who himself was an EFL teacher by training and had been the researcher's "summer in-service trainee" told the researcher that the school teachers "usually do not stay in-campus during the practicum time since the student teachers take the class over". This was found out to be uniform across the partner schools. Then, the researcher gave up the plan.

In the same way, initially the researcher proposed an action strategy of involving the participant student teachers in a small-scale practitioner inquiry, where each of them could have conceptualized, designed, implemented an action of particular interest and monitored its impact. But, the student teachers and the informant teacher educators both decided that it was "impossible for them to conduct such inquiry given the televised lesson style and the strict rule of the school to abide by the syllabus". Some of them (the student teachers) said that they must cover the apportioned lessons to them in the weeks of the Practicum. Yet, they agreed that they could involve in the reflective journaling and discussions on their practices. At that moment, the researcher decided to critically inquire, as a part of the Contextual Analysis, 'what exactly was action research mean in that Practicum context'.

Further, the initial plan of the Inquiry phase was to involve all the four informant teachers as 'lesson observers' but due to "personal reasons" three of them could not proffer assistance; only one of them agreed. Still, there emerged opportunities which the researcher did not anticipate. Initially, the semi-structured and informal interviews with the student teachers were intended for

data collection only. But, later in the site, they emerged as useful instruments and part and parcel of feedback and reflective discussions for training reflective practice. As instruments of reflection, the interview styles were employed both for individual, face-to-face, and group discussions. Likewise, informal interviews made with the teacher educators were not only techniques for communicative or peer validity-checking, as was discussed above, but also that their accounts were pivotal in shaping the process and outcomes of the study. The information obtained from them, hence, is included in this report.

Finally, although the initial plan of the Inquiry phase was to add more reflection tools to those employed, it was found out to be impossible due to constraints such as time and stationery materials for keeping journaling notes. For instance, there was shortfall of stationery materials, such as, files, folders, markers, and flip charts, each of which was intended for enriching the reflection/training action strategy. Yet, this constraint was compensated by emergent and unintended resources for reflection as well as for data collection, namely weekly reflective discussions on the journal entries and emergent themes before they (the student teachers) submitted their journals. In addition to being a researcher, the researcher played, here, multiple roles—trainer, explainer, facilitator, participant observer and a coach providing constructive feedbacks.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION: THE CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS PHASE

#### 4.1 Introduction

In this dissertation, the organization of the Data Analysis and Discussion is structured according to the adopted Practitioner Inquiry design as was discussed in the approach to the research (Chapter Three Section 3.2.2) and the guiding Conceptual Framework (Chapter One Section 1.5). This is because, following the principles of Grounded Theory Method of data interpretive framework (Chapter Three Section 3.4.), the researcher entered the field only with the generic Conceptual Framework with the intention of allowing categories, classifications (group of related categories) and themes to emerge from data analysis.

The Contextual Analysis data was collected from the five partner schools to Haramaya University from September to November 2007. The partner schools are Chiro Secondary School (the Core site for the project), the Dire Dawa and Sabbean Secondary Schools (in Dire Dawa town) and the Medanealem and Junior School of Harar towns. The general participant observation of the Contextual Analysis of the Practicum took over 12 hours of Unobtrusive Observations, 7 hours of informal and semi-structured interviews and 20 lessons observations.. In addition, the validated data of the pilot test, conducted from March to June 2006, were also incorporated into the Contextual Analysis data.

The Data analysis and Discussion are organized into two chapters—Chapter Four and Chapter Five. In this Chapter, analysis and discussions of the first phase of the practitioner inquiry, the **Contextual Analysis of the Practicum** of Haramaya University, is explored. Yet, this chapter is organized into sections according to the key specific questions under the first central research question—what conditions made the student teachers' reflection skills inadequate? Under this question the key specific questions ask the nature of the student teachers' *action/interaction strategies* and *assumptions* that underlie these. It is believed that the interplay among the actual

action/interaction strategies that student teachers adopted and how they reflected on these in the Practicum, on one hand, and the nature of assumptions that underpin their actions/interactions and, hence, how they reflected on their tacit assumptions, on the other, would illuminate the condition of the problem of reflection skills inability of the student teachers. (The second central question is 'How can the conditions of the student teachers' difficulty to effectively reflect be improved?', which will structure the next chapter). It is believed that the interplay among the actual action/interaction strategies that student teachers adopted and how they reflected on these in the practicum, on the one hand, and the nature of assumptions that underpin their actions/interactions and, hence, how they reflected on their tacit assumptions, on the other, would illuminate the condition of the problem of reflection skills inability of the student teachers. Nevertheless, each section is broken down into sub-sections and/or far smaller sections in accordance with the emergent classifications and categories, each of which will determine the label for the headings of the sub-sections and 'sub-sub-sections'.

For labeling the emergent categories and classifications during the data analysis process, terminologies in the reflection literature shall be used. However, for naming the hierarchically smaller themes, some level of flexibility shall be allowed in the naming for *in vivo coding*, (Strauss & Corbin 1998). Yet, efforts shall be made to retain the wider meanings of the terms. When necessary, operational definitions shall be given, in addition to evidencing with citation of raw data, also called here *indicators*. The techniques for citation and referencing of raw data were discussed in detail in Chapter Three Section 3.6.2, and utilized in the Data Analysis and Discussion chapters.

The nature of the student teachers' action/interaction strategies and how they reflected on their actions/interactions in the Practicum is what shall firstly be presented next.

## **4.2 The EFL Student Teachers' Practicum Action/interaction Strategies and How They Reflected on Their Actions/Interactions**

### **4.2.1 Introduction**

Some of the key objectives of this study are to investigate and understand the properties of the EFL student teachers' reflection skills and patterns of their actions/interactions in the context of Haramaya University practicum setting. It has been understood from this study that examining how student teachers choose to act/interact in a certain way and how and why they choose the way they do in a reflective practicum setting partly unearths not only how and why (in-)effectively they are reflecting, but also what should be done to promote more reflective practices.

The analysis and discussion will be presented in two sections, each of which corresponds with emergent classifications of categories. Firstly the nature of *process of Reflection on the Practicum* is examined. Secondly, *Procedures of Reflection in the Practicum* shall be examined before *Summary and Conclusion*. [See Chapter Three, Section 3.6.2.1.3 **Data Catalogue** for the citation technique of the raw data of the interview /description/observation, page 70-71. See also Appendix 4 for the specific context of each data-bit or indicator—i.e., who/what was interviewed /described/ where and when]. The data stored in the Catalogue and, hence, quoted in Analysis and Discussion chapters are only those conferred the status of 'indicators' i.e., those that were confirmed, through constant comparative methods (See Section 3.6.3.1), *are* reflective of real experience. The messy, raw data are not necessary part of this report.

### **4.2.3 Process of Reflection on the Practicum**

The properties, the patterns, the consequences and the mechanisms that determine student teachers' strategies of reflecting on a reflective practicum experience are invaluable to teacher educators and practicum programmers as these illuminate how student teachers behave (think, say and do) and why they behave in the ways they do.

In the Contextual Analysis phase, the properties of reflection processes employed in the Practicum emerged in 9 categories from the analysis of the collected documents, observations and interviews data: *Planning of Lessons, Observation of Practices, Tools for Reflection, Time, Classroom Actions, Classroom Events, Activities, Speech act and Feelings*. Themes under each of these were validated by involving the participant teacher educators to give their rational and professional-experiential judgments. They agreed that the themes were salient properties, as shall be discussed as in the following sections, of the student teachers' reflective practices.

#### **4.2.3.1 Planning of Lessons**

The properties of planning of lessons that student teachers engaged in emerged especially from the interview data. As was discussed in Chapter Three Section 3.5.2, how planning of lessons was conducted by the student teachers was one of the generic domains with which the researcher entered the field. This was because lesson planning or reflective designing of lesson tasks is part of the necessary skills and practices of reflection-for-action for student teachers.

The semi-structured (SSI) and informal interviews (IIN) and collection of artifacts carried out indicated how the student teachers plan lessons on the Practicum. The informal interviews (IIN) made with the student teachers indicated that all hold the assumption that they "don't have to design lessons" since they "just use the Student Text Book for pupils and the Teacher's Guide for themselves" (IIN007/8). This view connects with their decisions that they "...must simply follow the plasma syllabus" (IIN0 04/2) since "replacing plasma lesson by own designed lesson is disallowed" (IIN 006/1). [NB: By *plasma*, respondents are referring to the nationally televised-to-classroom lessons from Addis Ababa city through satellite link]. Similarly, the official Teacher's Guide (TG), for instance, states "teaching materials required for student teachers are textbooks and for pupils is exercise books and pens" (TG 904/1). Yet, the first item in the 'lesson plan evaluation format to be used by supervisors', which the Practicum Office designed, asks "Does the plan derive from, and is it obviously related to, the unit of the study in the school syllabus?". [Practicum Office is an office under the Faculty of Education and is connected to the

Ministry of Education on matters pertaining to practicum, organizing, coordinating, setting standards and placing student teachers to practicum partner schools]

Perhaps, due to all these, effective planning, for the student teachers, is “accomplished”, when their lesson plan formats provided to them by schools or the faculty is filled out to match the school syllabi. For instance, the semi-structured interviews revealed that for them “a good lesson plan is that which corresponds s ponds to the contents and objectives set in official Teacher Guide” (SSI008/10). For them designing lively tasks sidelining the official Guide was impossible. The frequent comments of the student teachers was that, “even if they believe in it, preparing lesson tasks has no value as the *plasma* does it” (SSI 008/11). Consequently, they practice *teaching inauthentic lessons*. For instance, in a lesson the issue was “we cleaned our village yesterday”. One pupil raised hand and said in his mother tongue, Oromifa, “Teacher, that is false. Our village is still full of trash” [translated]. These are jus instances of lack of both conditions and skills of reconstructing the pedagogic skills of conceiving, planning, implementing meaningful lessons—a problem that prompted this study.

On the whole, the above accounts suggest that these student teachers practice teaching English under the circumstance of *over-dependence on lessons pre-defined in the official Teacher Guide and transmitted on TV*. Validity checking trail with the informant teacher educators also revealed that they unanimously agreed on the persistence of this circumstance as an aspect of the practicum situation. This might well make planning of lessons personally meaningless and unnecessary. This circumstance, thus, might be partly implicated in the student teachers’ lack of opportunity for developing adequate pedagogic skills in/out of their practicum experiences.

#### **4.2.3.2 Observation of Teaching/Learning Practices**

Observing is an initial and key process in reflective learning. How the student teachers considered practicum observation and the way they observed was obtained through the informal interviews employed.

Interviews made with the student teachers generate data pertaining to what observation means to the student teachers. In semi-structured interviews, asked what 'observation' means to them, the majority of the student teachers responded "watching how school teachers teach and how the plasma teaches" (IIN012/20). Still, for some of them observation is "identifying class size and how pupils participate in the Practicum I or School Observation practicum course" (IIN012/21). All suggested that the 'school observation' or Practicum One course helped them to "have got exposure to how school teachers teach". A student teacher described his observation of how the school teachers taught English: "their main activities were, before the plasma, introducing what the plasma teacher would teach, then controlling whether pupils watch attentively and finally recapitulating what the screen teacher had transmitted" (IIN010/4). As a result of this view of observation, the student teachers absorbed the school teachers' ways of teaching. According to an informant teacher educator, "this is a big problem that is confronting the practicum program. The vast majority of student teachers take it for granted that what and how the school teacher or the plasma teacher teaches is the only right and unquestionable appropriate practice" (DN012/11). All these are possible traits of difficulty to reflect and reconstruct teaching skills out of a practicum experience.

This result reverberate with Usher et al (1997) argumentation that where student teachers are only exposed to school practices without critical reflection on the practices they cannot develop the skills of problem-posing. Similarly, Schon (1997: 169) argue that exposure to the existing school practices without critical reflection on the nature of the practices often lead to *overlearning* the existing practices, i.e., assimilating them without reflection.

Therefore, what is implied is that these misconceptions associated to observation can be considered both as an aspect of and a generative mechanism for the student teachers' lack of pedagogic skills—the skills of conceiving, planning, and effectively implementing appropriate lessons. This, in turn, suggests the need for a reflective practicum curriculum that would engage student teachers on active, critical and continuous observation. This might involve incorporating to the Practicum curriculum content where student teachers make a distinction (i) between appropriate and inappropriate practices, (ii) between what they theoretically know and what actually goes on in schools, and (iii) a critical observation of the gap between what is taught by

the school teachers or the plasma teacher and what ought to be taught in accordance to empirical theories.

#### 4.2.3.3 Tools for Reflection

Practicum documents were collected and are one of the main data for analysis. From the exploration of the documents, it was understood that one of the key impacts of the practicum documents is that they provide conceptual or symbolic tools for reflection. Analysis of the tools, in turn, spotlighted why the student teachers chose certain practicum action/interaction strategies. The latter, in turn, contributed in revealing why the student teachers face difficulties in reconstructing new skills and knowledge from their practicum experience.

Three types of tools appeared: *tool for school observation*, *tool for planning* and *tool for self-assessment*. Each define on what, how and why the student teacher reflects-on/for/in-action. For instance, the School Observation Checklist (Appendix 2) provided to the student teachers at the initial stage of the Practicum called “School Observation” impeded effective observation. For example, under Teacher activity, the observation items included observing how “the teacher communicate objectives to the students”, whether “questions are asked throughout the lesson”, whether “high level of subject knowledge was evident”, and whether the teacher used “methods that enabled assessment of the children’s understanding”. These items might direct student teachers but responding by writing or ticking ‘yes’ or ‘no’ alone, as observation indicated is the case, does not involve them in thinking, analyzing, exploring, discussing and documenting the *why* and the what-ought-to-be done. Besides, many of the items confused and were unclear to them. For instance, in informal interview discussions held with the student teachers, they said “high level of subject knowledge” and “methods that enabled assessment” were among those many notions that the student found “confusing and unclear”. Thus, this tool can be considered as an element of factors that generate the student teachers’ inability to effectively reflect and act.

Similarly, the obtained tools for lesson planning (Appendix 2) defined and shaped whether and how reflection-for-action was to be carried out. For instance, the *Format for Lesson Plan* involved a slot in which the student teachers filled in inputs provided in the EFL Teacher’s

Guide and Student Textbooks. Also, the national *Plasma Guide* indicates what the student teacher should do before, while and after the plasma lesson transmission. For instance, it requires the teacher to “familiarize” self with the topics of the lesson, following the Student Textbook, and, for pupils, to prepare their “pens and pencils”. These tools can be considered as one instance of the student teachers’ lack of opportunity for developing effective reflection skills because the formats are a slot for *filling in* copying from the official Teacher’s Guide and Student Textbooks. Practically no conceptualization and designing of lessons are observed. Schön (1992:131) calls such formats as “*initially given search space*” (emphasis is added).

Another tool obtained is a *self-evaluation* format *on the quality of the lesson plan*, which consisted 18 items to which student teachers ticked yes/no boxes, and were also distributed to student teachers. For instance, “Did I consider students’ interests and experience in my planning?” [Item No.3]; “Do the lessons I have planned provide meaningful student interaction?”[Item No. 10]; “Have I planned for a variety of teaching strategies that promote learning” [Item No. 15].

Although these might be good items for self-evaluation, whatever a plan a student teacher has, there were possibilities for unforeseen circumstances to emerge and influence the development of the lesson. A prototypical example of what commonly happened was captured as follows:

The plasma already has started lesson presentation. Still, however, pupils knock at the door one after the other, coming in after break time. TV teacher reminds the past lesson. Then displays: ‘Page 151. Read the Nine Example Sentences’. Then, begins 10-second countdown. ‘Please teacher, divide the class into three groups’ said TV-teacher. Again, 10-second countdown begins. But no division was possible to do so since the chairs and tables are fixed. Plasma gone due to unknown reason, perhaps power cut (LO007/1).

Besides, since the items required retrospectively asking on the already planned lessons; on the spot decision-making skills such as being alert and sensitive to actual happenings, which involve reflection-in-action, were neglected. Furthermore, since the tool is retrospective, it contributes little to training the student teachers the skills of framing of real problematic situations. For

instance, amid a plethora of day-to-day challenges, it is commonplace to hear student teachers say “no problem was observed”.

In other words, there is no opportunity for student teachers to reflect and consider re-planning a lesson in a different way. Still, it is not clear as to how these items could be achieved practically under the condition where lesson contents and procedures are already pre-set in the national Televised-lesson, Student’s Textbook and Teacher’s Guide. In short, they are rather *research-based items* than operative, bottom-up or reflective items. Consequently, student teachers filled out the yes/no boxes by just ticking without reflecting on the meaning of what they did and how they did.

In general, all the above tools can be instances of why the student teachers lack adequate inquiry skills—an aspect of the problem that was a thrust of this study. It is commonplace to hear student teachers complain “could not identify yet problem for action research” though they are expected to do this according to the practicum program Handbook (Haramaya University 2007). With the above type of tools, it is hardly possible for EFL student teachers to reconstruct inquiry skills--to access, focus, reflect on and frame problematic situations that circumscribe them. This fact, in turn, points to the need for *reflective/generative tools* (See Brookfield 1995), that can help them to observe, reflect, act, and re-construct coherent meaning out of their particular experience rather than top-down or research-driven items.

#### **4.2.3.4 Time for Reflection**

Effective use of time is a key pedagogic skill, especially, connected with the skill of reflection-in-action. The informal interviews and the lesson observations generated properties pertaining to the extent to which the student teachers use their lesson time. For instance, a salient classroom event is that: “Student teacher tries to turn on the plasma TV. He fails. A pupil helps. Four minutes are wasted. Still the student teacher continues to battle with dodgy line of the channel” (LO 006/51). Similar issue was at work when a student teacher said “myself could never find enough time to read the text displayed on the plasma screen, let alone my pupils. The plasma is



too fast” (IIN 009/2). Observations of the student teachers’ lessons (LO) also indicated that the plasma gives for instance, “four minutes for pupils to read a three page text” (LO 001/00) and “ten seconds for student teacher to seat pupils in groups” (LO001/11). Frequently, student teachers were also heard to complain “it is difficult to group students under the plasma presentation due to shortage of time” (DN 00/95). Similarly, the student teachers frequently complained that “much of their lesson time is consumed by “frequent power cut”, “switching on and off the plasma”, and “taking attendance and regulating students’ misbehavior” (DN 006/23). During power cut, what the student teachers resort usually was *strategy of dictation*, for instance, “on how quotation mark is used” (LO009/12). These kinds of events and actions curb reflection-in-action.

All these incidents and accounts are not only aspects of the student teachers’ inability to reconstruct pedagogic skills of using time for effective teaching, but also mean that these student teachers practice under a condition of not only *speedy lesson time*, but also *no-control over the time*. Under such condition, they could not pause, reflect-in-action, revise and self-monitor as they practice teaching. Since they have no control over time, the student teachers were frequently put under stress. Researchers such as Biggs (1999: 67) found out that where “no time is available to students for reflection”, they develop “*time stress*” (emphasis is added). This in turn, leads to “surface approaches” to learning teaching such as “an intention only to achieve a minimal pass”, “underengaging”, “high anxiety”, and “genuine inability to understand particular content at a deep level” (ibid:14-15).

Therefore, it can be inferred that student teachers’ lack of control over and use of their lesson time might be one of the causes for their inability to reconstruct reflective skills and practical understanding on their practicum experiences. The implication for the reflective practicum is that there is a serious need for student teachers to take hold of the flow of classroom practice teaching times.

#### 4.2.3.5 Classroom Actions

The unstructured and complete observations of the participant student teachers' classroom actions gave clues to aspects of the student teachers' teaching actions and the situation of their classrooms. The lesson observation data indicated that the student teachers were engaged in carrying out *disconnected* and *fragmented teaching acts*. For instance, frequently observed actions were *reading out from Student's Book to the students*, for example, on "how English sentences change their forms in reported speech" (LO004/9), and *telling* students to "open appropriate pages on the textbook following orders from the TV-Teacher" (LO005/10).

Sometimes, observation showed the student teachers' actions conflicted with that of the TV-Teacher. For instance in an observation "student teacher tries to justify how changes to verbs in reported speech take place. But, TV-teacher introduces a different topic lesson--*Must be*" (LO0011/7). Still, some interesting discussions are stopped. For instance, in an incident observed "...student teacher goes on eliciting uses of trees..... hands up. A pupil responds 'For timber'. Another student responds 'For medicine'...Nice and hot participation. Meanwhile plasma lesson appears on muted screen. Student teacher adds volume. The discussion stopped. Both student teacher and his pupils begin watching TV. The TV-Teacher, Candy Leigh-Jones, takes over and begins lesson-casting" (LO001/40).

From these observations, it could be concluded that the Practicum actions that the student teachers classroom teaching skills are characteristic of a set of *disconnected* and *fragmented classroom acts*. This might be partly implicated in the student teachers' inability to develop teaching/pedagogic skills on the practicum because under such circumstances, *attentive thinking* and, hence, reflection-in-action can be impeded. This is possible because, according to Schön (1984: 7), under such conditions, experience becomes "mere information divorced from action" since "operational attention", or, in his words, "a readiness to translate what we [observe] into action", is obstructed.

#### 4.2.3.6 Classroom Events

A set of classroom events that occurred in the student teachers' practice context were observed, described and analyzed. The data indicated that the classroom events were full of *discrete* and *incomplete events* over which student teachers have less control. For instance, one of the recurrent events is that "TV –teacher asks pupils to find out information in the passage... But there is no discussion, all are silent. Student teacher feels embarrassed at the silence. He commands them again and again 'Discuss!'"(LO019/32). To add, the student teachers frequently experience such events: "TV-teacher's lip-movement and sound mismatch. The former appears a couple of seconds after the latter" (LO006/5). Still, common in their classrooms is this event: "Student teacher and pupils await TV to begin broadcasting the lesson, silently. Several minutes pass. TV-teacher appears....After a couple of minutes, power cut occurs....Student teacher shift to dictation. It seems he plays the role of the TV-teacher" (LO 006/51).

What all the above events suggest is that, in the Practicum, *discrete* and *incomplete* teaching is both features and contextual conditions of poor teaching/pedagogic skills. These student teachers practice teaching under a circumstance they have little or no control over. Effective reconstructive learning on the contrary, requires a condition conducive for student teachers to control, analyze, connect and change, if necessary, the situation of the events. Practicum can be regarded effective when every effort is made to control, analyze, interpret and construct holistic meaning out of a pedagogic event. Thus, from the nature of the classroom events, it can logically be deduced that the existing situation might make student teachers unable to construct connected and coherent meaning out of what goes on in their classrooms.

#### 4.2.3.7 Activities

Accounts and descriptions pertaining to a set of related acts, or activities, that student teachers were involved in, were obtained through the participant observation strategies of data collection. For instance, in an informal interview moment, one of the student teachers described her classroom activities, which others also agreed resonated with theirs, too. The reason-giving account

goes “My lesson was on simple past...first I introduced this, and then told them that it is used to express past action...that –ed...then plasma began.... Finally, started summarization of the plasma lesson... for evaluation I asked to tell what simple past mean” (IIN 010/4). The student teachers’ lesson plans also consistently indicated that their activities, as written under Teacher Activity column, are divided consistently into three strategies: ‘*pre-plasma*, where they introduce the lesson, *while plasma*, where they tell and check students to follow the plasma, and *post-plasma*, where they summarize the TV-lesson’. Similarly, an informant teacher educator discusses the nature of activities that his student teachers, in general, are involved in, as follows:

Our practicing trainees’ routines involve reading schedule on the notice board, waiting for bell to ring, entering classroom, switching on satellite TV lesson, telling the day’s lesson point from Teacher’s Guide [can proceed the latter sometimes], monitoring if students are listening and watching the screen teacher, switching off TV-set when lesson ends, and summarizing what TV-teacher presented before leaving for another 40-minute similar activities...” (IIN 013/3).

All this evidence might compel us to conclude that the nature of activities that these particular student teachers took part is, on the most part, *formulaic activities* i.e. fixed and repeated activities. Executing these kinds of activities, where they are always certain of what they do during the pre-/while-post-plasma, communicate the nature of the inadequate skills of inquiry—a problem that the researcher practically confronted with and intended to study.

#### 4.2.3.8 Speech Acts

The nature of speech acts in which student teachers are engaged in using or teaching is vital for EFL contexts. It is where learning and teaching coalesce. Thus, the nature of speech acts that student teachers and their students perform were observed and described. The obtained data seem to indicate that the situation is a hallmark of *listening and responding* to the TV-Teacher. For instance, the essence of how reading comprehension exercise is normally practiced was captured when the TV-Teacher said “the next question is how an American behaves. We *read and respond*” (LO 020/24). Similarly, student teachers’ dominant speech act is *telling* “the correct answers as given in the Teacher’s Guide” (LO055/61). And, the most frequently heard utterance

of pupils is 'Yes' as a response to the TV-teacher's or the student teacher's frequent question whether the lesson or an aspect of the lesson was clear. However, it has been observed that it is more of ritual than genuine response.

All this evidence the student teachers' lack of opportunity to be immersed in, exercise and experiment with various speech acts. These student teachers practice teaching English under a practicum situation of high quantity of information transmission through a hi-tech, but practically and personally they do so with very *limited and unidirectional communication*. In other words, the plasma initiative is more of constraint rather than an opportunity for EFL reflective teaching/learning practices because student-to-student, students-to-students, within and between groups and whole class communicational discussions are, almost, impaired. Consequently, it is possible that "the most frequent complaint of supervisors is student teachers' poor English proficiency" (DN0012/3), and hence supervisors complain that they are "forced to give feedbacks to their trainees either in the medium of Oromiffa or Amharic" (IIN001/1). This is not code switching; according to Richards and Schimdt (2002: 81) code switching is a "sign of cultural solidarity or distance or serve as an act of identity". It is rather a sign of inability expressing one's experience in English. In contrast, an EFL practicum in the context of these participant student teachers can be regarded as effective only when they acquire not just the pedagogic/teaching knowledge, for instance how to effectively teach reading, but also when they acquire and use the code (English) used to convey the content (knowledge-in-the-reading).

Bourdieu and Passeron (1995: 5) argue that:

Pedagogy loses all meaning unless it reflects the intention to communicate rationally, and thus to completely rationalize the means of communication...The student's ability to relay the message back to the teacher (for correction or information)...measures the success of the action of forming ideas and of transforming knowledge more effectively.

Most likely, this condition undermined the student teachers' ability to construct English language as whole event and practice (See Chapter Two, Sections 2.2.1 and 2.3.1). For instance, in semi-structured interview sessions based on their previous lessons, asked what reading exactly meant

given their context, almost all the student teachers conceived it as “finding information in a passage.” Although it might bear some truth, this might reverberate with the limited and unidirectional communication mode they were exposed to. That means that in the eyes, as well as context, of the student teachers, reading and, hence, meaning lies in verbal image/text (See challenges to this in Chapter Two Section 2.3.2.3).

Therefore, for these EFL student teachers there is a dire need to exercise, experiment with and practice to teach, as well as learn for themselves, varieties of speech acts, notions and functions. This requires, in turn, as much contextualization of secondary school EFL learning/teaching syllabi materials. Student teachers must practice contextualizing school syllabi through, for instance, analyzing, adapting, updating lessons and, sometimes, substituting them by their own designs in as much as these make their practice meaningful and authentic. Otherwise, English language and practice teaching remain de-contextualized and devoid of real, authentic communication and action.

#### **4.2.3.9 Feelings**

An element of any student teacher’s or practitioner’s practices is his/her emotion as influenced by the conditions under which he/she practices. The participant student teachers’ feelings were identified with the data collection tools. In an informal interview, for instance, a participant student teacher described his feelings saying “I was happy that the plasma was gone due to power cut. It only makes me and my students disorganized and too tense” (DN 007/10). This comment was supported by observations. For instance, an event was such that “TV-Teacher says ‘He lives in Gonder’. Students laugh loudly because they recognized the ‘He’ who appeared on the screen was non Ethiopian, perhaps South African, and, hence, inauthentic. Student teacher gets *disappointed* at pupils’ loud laugh. My presence as supervisor made him far more anxious” (LO006/6). Such *inauthentic situations* are commonplace in their practice situations. To add more incidents, “student teacher turns on the TV.... ‘Discuss the meaning of the new words’ is displayed. List of words appear.....pupils shout ‘We did this last week’, and student teacher feels upset” (LO 018/12).

All these suggest that the student teachers practiced teaching under enormously unpredictable and decontextualized context that could generate diminishment of reflection skills. For instance, in a post-lesson observation reflective discussion, a student teacher said he felt “If I don’t have gotten my expectations, what am I doing here?” He meant “on the one hand, he wanted to practice some new ways of teaching, on the other it [the way he was practicing to teach] was simply the way he was taught when he was a secondary student few years back” (SSI 02/07). Another student teacher expressed what all his colleagues agreed: “for me, to be a full [effective] teacher is to teach like the plasma teacher” (SS01/06).

All these are as much properties of inadequate inquiry skills as inadequate conditions for developing these skills—the skills to question traditional assumptions and practices and reconstruct new understandings. The teacher education reform policy and strategy documents contend that effective practical learning involves, intrinsically, doing and understanding anew (Chapter One Section 1.1). However, the data obtained implies that the practicum serves more as socialization rather than creativity and re-construction of new understanding and skills. This can be one of the factors that generated the problem of the student teachers’ difficulty to develop inquiry skills in/on their practicum experience--the object of this study.

#### **4.2.3.10. The Practicum Reflection Process: Summary and Conclusion**

As a part of the Contextual Analysis intended to seek the facts of the situation of the reflective skills problem of the student teachers, the above broader section and its sub-sections were devoted to examining the nature of reflection processes that the student teachers were engaged in the Practicum. With the intention to trace the patterns of the emergent themes, the researcher conducted the constant comparative process of axial coding. The central process that the student teachers were engaged in was **replicating** the existing secondary school practices of English teaching.

Before class, what the student teachers are engaged in are *over-learning* the plasma-teacher and the school teachers' ways of teaching, without calling these into question or reflection. For instance, it has been observed that they memorized the before-plasma, while-plasma, after-plasma actions dictated to them in the Teacher's Guide. Moreover, the first phase of the practicum course (Practicum I) is devoted to students' learning from school teachers' classroom teaching styles (Section 4.2.3.2 above). All these seem to have generated in the student teachers *over-dependence* on the school syllabus and *formulaic activities* of cut-and-paste style of planning and teaching.

Inside classroom, the student teachers are mainly involved in translating the over-learned scripts. One of the key properties of their classroom actions/interactions was that they lacked control over lesson time due to the fact that the lesson is transmitted from a studio in the capital city. Un-reflected on and exacerbated by the apparent *time stress*, the syllabi were implemented under circumstances of *fragmentary acts* and *disconnected events*, as was observed above. Added to these, the *uni-directional communication* style appears to have generated further *context dilemma* in the student teachers' affects.

To wrap up, the evidence suggests that the process that the student teachers are involved in is mainly characteristic of **replicating** what are given in the official syllabi and the school's tradition of practices rather than practicing teaching anew. Like any other themes, this central category—replicating process—was also validity-checked with the informant teacher educators and confirmed that it grabs the real experience of the student teachers.

#### **4.2.4 Procedures of Reflection in the Practicum**

The nature of the accepted mode of doing reflection and practicing teaching, or here referred to as *procedures of reflection*, emerged from the analysis of the collected data in four categories: Role of student teacher, Feedback Style, Assessment of reflection, and the Relationship of the trainer, the tutor/school teacher and the trainee .

#### 4.2.4.1 Role of Student Teacher

The salient duty performed in the Practicum by student teacher was described by themselves as “playing the TV-lesson” (IIN011/5). Derogatory and sarcastic, “DJ” is the label they commonly use to refer to their own position. What this means is that the degree of their involvement is fundamentally reduced to mediating between the TV-teacher and pupils. An informant teacher educator’s worries correspond to the student teachers’ concerns about their role: “After all, what do I assess my trainees on? Everything is done by the TV-teacher?” (DN 002/6). In his reflective journal a student teacher described reflected “according to the policy of today’s school, the most essential tasks...is to follow the national guidance for the subject--English syllabus, text books and teacher guide, the plasma.”

What the observation suggests is the role that the student teachers play is characteristic of *non-reflective implementers of the TV-lessons* rather than inquirers or parishioners. Brook, too, observed student teachers’ roles in the current Ethiopian teacher education practicum program and concluded that “this role can be carried out by any gatekeeper” (Brook 2006). During lesson broadcast the screen teacher commands the student teacher to “divide the class into three groups” giving him 10 seconds count-down. During the five minute given to them just before the TV-lesson, they carry out the task of “introducing lesson.” For them, this means, in their words, “reminding the past broadcast lesson”. In the five-minute after the TV-lesson, they summarize the lesson, meaning “recapitulating the points transmitted”.

Thus, this role to which they are limited to can be implicated as one of the main factors for the student teachers’ inability to reconstruct the pedagogic skills of presenting and concluding meaningfully a lesson. These student teachers need the skill of understanding their students’ pre-constructions and lived experiences and connecting these to issues, activities and notions in the new lesson. They need the ability to mediate between pupils and their (pupils’) pre-constructions (language skills, knowledge, and experience), on one hand, and their (pupils’) world, on the other. On the contrary, under the present condition they mediate a lesson to another lesson, each of which is presented by on screen teacher.

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#### 4.2.4.2 Feedback Style

Style of providing feedback, such as prescriptive versus reflective, cyclical versus post-event, dialogic/open or closed/monological, are determining conditions for reflective learning (Chapter Two Section 2.5.2). Nevertheless, observing feedback moments is so difficult due to ethical problems, and it needs willingness of both parties, namely the student teachers and the teacher educators. The limited unobtrusive observation showed a prescriptive feedback exchange whereby a teacher educator “advised” a student teacher to “Clean the blackboard. Give correct answer to pupils’ questions. Don’t mispronounce words. I hope these will never happen again” (DN005/9). In addition, an informant teacher educator described the nature of feedback style that occurred the Practicum context as: “telling do’s and don’ts after observing their lessons” (DN 003/1). Still the frequency and intensity of feedback moments can be seen from the limited time that student teachers and their “supervisors” stay together in the Practicum site. That is “teacher educators supervise student teachers only for a week or so since they [the former] cannot stay there throughout the Practicum time” (DN001/2).

The implication drawn from constant comparison of these limited data with other themes below might compel us to believe that student teachers may take without reflecting on the views of teaching advocated by the faculty advisor or the school teacher. This might lead them to assume the feedback as a single right ‘truth’. This in turn might impede inquiry skills--questioning, reflecting and exploring alternatives to their established, taken for granted assumptions. The implication for action is the need for incorporating ‘feedback’ as part and parcel of the reflection process rather than as *feedback as end in itself*. The latter appears to be the case in the context of the Practicum. Feedback can be an opportunity for teacher educators to surface student teachers’ errors and achievements as objects of critical reflection and as a stepping stone for further learning (Williams 1989).

#### 4.2.4.3. Assessment of Reflection

The documents collected and analyzed served in revealing mode of assessment of student teachers' reflectivity.. Standards *for assessment* of lessons and action research reports consisted checklists with which the student teachers were evaluated. These are distributed to the student teachers so that they are made aware of the points. This encourages trust and readiness. The 26 five-level Likert-scale items are classified into two. Five items are categorized under *quality of the lesson plan format*. For instance, "How well are all the elements of the lesson plan written in the lesson plan format?"; "Are the lessons specific and measurable and related to the lesson contents?" And, the rest of the items are categorized under *application of pedagogical subject knowledge in teaching process*. This consisted, for instance, "Is the student teacher well postured (Looking to his students or carelessly standing anywhere in the room)?" (Item No. 6); "Language proficiency" (Item13); "Ability to make the lesson participatory" (Item No. 15). Each item is rated on 5-level Likert-scale. The best achievement is rated excellent (5) while the lowest is rated unsatisfactory (1). The teacher educator and school teacher, also called mentor, transforms his/her views of the student teacher's learning and change into marks by ticking, adding and letter-grading.

This mode of assessment means that student teachers are expected to carry out problems posed by others. Moreover, they are expected to exhibit the pre-defined competencies in their classroom actions. Second language teacher education research has indicated that the use of research driven categories and sub-categories as tools for observation and reflection is too "distracting" and technical (Gebhard, et. al. 1990: 20). Moreover, it does not encourage student teachers to enhance their capacity to practice problem-posing. Rather it made the student teachers rote-learn the standards. For instance, student teachers are observed memorizing the competencies like "introducing the lesson", "presenting the lesson", "stabilizing the lesson", "evaluating the lesson". It is common to observe student teachers telling the pupils "let me introduce to you the today's lesson", or "summarization is our 'next topic'". These behaviors imply that these student teachers are committed to learning by heart possibly pushed by the kind of conceptual tools they are provided with.

Therefore, the existing mode of assessment can be considered as one of the factors that hindered the student teachers' development of reflection skills. Underlying the assessment tools is that student teachers were provided is the view of **application-oriented** approach to reflection (See Chapter Two Sections 2.6.3.1 for critiques of this approach) and *pre-determined objectives approach* (Brookfield 1986) to evaluation which many theorists of teacher education consider unfounded. They critic these approaches on the ground that it is "rooted in a rationalist/empiricist epistemology [which assumes that] [e]xperience is constructed as transparent, giving unmediated access to the world" (Usher, et al 1997: 101). To Fuller (1999:100) this role is "monitoring symbols of proper teaching" rather than reflective "coaching" (Schön 1987).

#### **4.2.4.4. Teacher Educator, Tutor and Student Teacher Relationship**

The nature of relationship, or interaction and communication among teacher educators (trainers), tutors (schoolteachers) and student teachers (trainees) emerged only from the unobtrusive observation data. This shows how data pertaining to interpersonal relationship was difficult to obtain in the context of this study. Formal ways of generating such data was found not helpful.

In one of the unobtrusive observations, an informant teacher educator was heard described the nature of relationship that existed in the Practicum site:

...that there are three categories: trainers, trainees and tutors. There is high insulation when it comes to communication. Supervisors or teacher educators have no communication whatsoever with school teachers. The latter consider practicum time as a vacation since student teachers take over their tasks. No time have I observed when the three parties sat together. There is annual school teacher and the University staff consultative workshop, but it is more about managerial issues rather than about how critical reflective practice is to be promoted (DN 009/15).

Quite similarly, one of the unintended themes that the researcher's unobtrusive observation generated was that the student teachers were labeled, by the school teachers, as *kollejoch*, the

Amharic equivalent of ‘those from their college’. These show the prevalence of more alienation than collaborative climate. Furthermore, the teacher educators were heard saying they “supervise [observe] three different trainees’ lessons within forty minutes due to overload” (DN 001/21). A teacher educator, according to these informants, is accountable to, on average, twenty-five student teachers. The supervisions, due partly to this fact, are made in an “intrusive fashion” (DN 001/22). This style of supervision resonates with Smyth’s (1986: 60 quoted in Wallace 1991: 111) findings of prescriptive approach to supervision, that it “is not the [student] teacher’s agendas, issues and concerns that are being addressed...What really is at issue is the question of who exercises power” of knowing.

The above evidence might compel us to believe that the student teachers practice teaching under the condition of relationship which can be interpreted as monological, non-trustful and non-collaborative (Brookfield 1995: 247-251). Under such a supervisory relationship, re-constructive learning is impeded. This kind of relationship directly speaks to the researchers’ experientially observed problem of student teachers’ inability to reflect and reconstruct new understandings and skills. Peter and Reason (2002) argue that effective learning from practice requires practitioners’ collaborative research, inquiry and exploration. Reflective practicum, thus, should be considered as where knowledge is created, subjected to criticism, counter criticism and refinement.

#### **4.2.4.5 The Practicum Reflection Procedure: Summary and Conclusion**

In this section and its subsections as a part of contextual analysis of the Practicum, an examination of the mode of doing reflection and practicing teaching, or *procedures* of reflection, has been carried out. From all the evidence and argumentations it can be concluded that the condition of practicum procedure that the student teachers are engaged in is characteristic of *routine practice/actions*, where student teachers, without meaningful reflection, execute or fail to execute contents and procedures pre-set in the Practicum program and the school syllabi. This corresponds to Dewey’s argumentations of routine action—that which is habitual, intuitive and commonsensical.

The data analysis revealed that the apparent mode of reflection, Routine Actions, is characteristic of *non-collaborative* relation as was observed above. This kind of relationship is believed to have been engendered by the *top-down* and *judgmental assessment* styles discovered above. This is possible because under such circumstances there can be no or little room for open and trustful discussion. Researchers have indicated that where there are no open discussions on what, how and to what end to reflect, a reflective practicum becomes judgmental, and where there *are* these, however, constructive relations and hence effective reflection flourishes (Hailom 1993; 1997). Nonetheless, as indicated by data, the presence of less collaborative relationship and top-down and judgmental assessment, in succession, might have resulted in *prescriptive* and *post-event feedback*. The cumulative effect of all these was, logically, student teachers' attraction towards *non-reflective implementation of syllabi*. The cycle of the routine practice appears that non-collaboration and non-reflection seem to have served as both causation and consequence to each other, giving rise to judgmental and prescriptive practice as well. This is possible according to circular causality theory (Dumont & Evens 1999).

Zeichner and Liston's (1987: 38) four procedures of reflective practicum through which student teachers might be helped to progress are essential. The first level is *factual*, where the student teacher focuses on facts associated with procedural steps. The student teachers are concerned with what has occurred in a teaching situation or what may occur in the future. The second is *prudential*, where the student teacher focuses on the evaluation of teaching experiences and outcomes. The student teachers examine what they might need to do or evaluate what has been accomplished. *Justificatory*, the third level, occurs when the student teacher provides rationales for actions. The student teachers ask the questions of why they did what they did, why they did it in that manner, and why they chose that action with those particular students. The final level, *critical*, occurs when the student teacher focuses on the underlying assumptions of actions that may or may not have an impact on change. At this level, the student teacher examines the goals, curriculum and materials, procedures, students, and context.

### **4.3. Assumptions That Underlay the Student Teachers' Actions/Interactions and How They Reflected on Their Assumptions**

#### **4.3.1 Introduction**

In order to accurately understand how come the student teachers' inability to effectively reflect and why it continues to exist, a contextual analysis of tacit assumptions that the participants hold in their practice situations becomes pivotal. Accurate delineation of these helps the researcher not only understand student teachers' behaviors, but also take informed decisions in the inquiry into ways for overcoming the problem in the second phase of the study. To that end, the participant observation methods employed and the Grounded Theory Method of data analysis procedure used yielded pertinent categories, classifications and themes. Two classifications of categories emerged, each of which guides us in the exploration of the emergent categories and themes. The classifications are: (i) Perspectives on the Practicum and (ii) Social Constructions of Practical Learning.

#### **4.3.2 The Student Teachers' Perspectives on the Practicum**

The particular way student teachers consider the Practicum in the context that circumscribes them emerged in four categories namely, assumptions (1) about reflection, (2) about action research, (3) about understanding of experience and (4) about role frames. Each of the selected informant teacher educators was involved in validating that the assumptions that the researcher discovered in the data, as shall be presented below, represented real experience in the practicum (Methods of validity-checking was discussed in Section 3.7.4 ).

##### **4.3.2.1. The Student Teachers' Assumptions about Reflection**

The form of shared meaning pertaining to the concept of reflection emerged mainly from the informal interview data. Asked what he understands by the concept of reflection, a student teachers said "reflection is *composing* school observation pursuing the reflection checklists

distributed to them” (IIN02/2) by the Practicum Coordination Office. Another student teacher said reflection “is *feedback* or comments that supervisors give after lesson observation” (IIN02/3). Validity-checking trail was conducted to check whether the rest of the eight student teachers conceive reflection as such; they agreed that these views corresponded to their views. Their views share some commonalities with the prescriptive feedback style found above (Section 4.2.4.2). Still, for other student teachers “reflection is discussion” based upon responses to the checklist items in “peer-teaching sessions organized inside the university just after returning from the practicum schools” (IIN02/4). An informant teacher educator described this session as where student teachers “discuss to their peers or compare and contrast the results of their self-ratings by ticking off the questionnaire items” (IIN 013/33). One of the key tasks in this session is, the supervisor shows his/her ratings of each “supervisee’s” quantified marks and grade, which itself is based on ticking of the official checklist. Another informant teacher educator revealed that “the faculty assumes that student teachers only observe and tick reflection questions, a list of yes-no questions distributed to each student teacher. Reflection here means just *ticking off* those questions and submitting them to the department. They are assessed on their views to these questions” (IIN 002/5). Validity checking of this informant teacher’s comment with that of the rest of the three informant teachers indicated that the comments are reflective of facts of the situation.

Hence, it can be inferred that for the student teachers reflection amounts to application of pre-determined theoretical categories. Nevertheless, reflective practicum theorists connect these ‘faulty perspective’ with the *academic tradition of reflection* (Listen and Zeichner 1991), *technical rationality* view of practicum (van Mannen 1977; Schön 1983), the *positivist behavioral science* (Usher, Bryant and Johnston 1997) and *factual procedure* (Zeichner and Liston 1987), as was seen in the literature review chapter. These misconceptions might be implicated in the reflection skills difficulty of the student teachers.

#### 4.3.2.2 The Student Teachers' Assumptions about Action Research

Action research is one of the widely acknowledged key components and means for effective reflective practicum, in specific, and teacher education, at large. Assumption that lies beneath the 'action research' in the context of this study was found out as one of the conditions shaping the Practicum. For instance, in the semi-structured interview employed to understand how the student teachers were going about their action research, they responded they were "researching on how grammar, vocabulary or language skills are taught by school teachers, including surveying factors that affect how school teachers teach" (SSIN 001/1). Likewise, observation of the student teachers' 'action research reports' also indicates that no actions are designed, implemented, monitored and analyzed. For instance, the action research focal areas obtained comprise: 'Comparative Study of Classroom Management in Grades Nine and Ten'; 'Analysis of Students' Perception of their Teachers' Use of Group Work'; 'Study of Factors That Affect Use of Language Games'. Besides, the student teachers argue that they "are analyzing data using descriptive statistics" (SSIN 001/3). For instance, questionnaire items for pupils commonly involve, "Do you communicate with your teacher freely?"; 'In which type of classroom do you participate more actively and comfortably, large or small size?" (See Appendix 13 C for more). Underlying all these accounts, is conceiving of action research as **survey** or **descriptive study**, where taking and researching on own action is not viable (Elliot 1991).

Although survey with items like the above might bear relevance in some contexts, what is more needed, in the context of the Practicum is rather *action*. But, for the student teachers, the traditional survey and similar paradigm of research amount to action research. According to the informant teacher educators, these views of student teachers emanate from the kind of "action research course that they are offered, which is in fact similar to statistics or quantitative research" (SIIN 013/15). Still a constant comparison of the students teachers' misconception cuts parallel with the *routine Practicum model* adopted (Section 4.2.4.5) and the style of *pre-determined objectives assessment* approach (Section 4.2.4.3.) that infuse their context. Underlying all is the misconception that action research involves, application of scientific and research-based theories in a controlled way and in quantitative analysis of a phenomenon. In contrast to this view, the much-quoted Kurt Lewin's (Lewin 1947 in Whitehead & McNiff 2002) definition of action

research is that, it is three-step spiral process of (1) planning which involves reconnaissance; (2) taking actions; and (3) fact-finding about the results of the action.

Thus, the prevailing misconception and, hence, malpractice of action research can be implicated in the student teachers' inability to reflect and deficiency of skills for reflecting on their practices. Under such misconceptions, the cyclical process of observe-plan-reflect-act-reflect cannot be part of their practical learning experience (Griffith 1998; Elliot 1991).

#### **4.3.2.3. The Student Teachers' Assumptions about Understanding of Experience**

How the student teachers use their learning in order to negotiate with their experience and/or to see it differently, or, here means, their *understanding*, emerged mainly from the lesson observation data analysis. For instance, lesson observations recurrently indicated that "The plasma teacher said..." is what student teachers are usually heard to say. This means that for them *quoting the TV-teacher's words* is commonly seen as "summarization" or "recapitulation" of the transmitted lesson. Similarly, as a practice of introducing lessons, the student teachers customarily say "yesterday, the plasma as well as we", for instance, "changed *is* to *was* in the reported speech" (LO005/12). This means that for them *re-minding the previous plasma-lesson events* is tantamount to introducing a lesson. Likewise, student teachers occasionally repeat some terminologies that they appropriated from their "theoretical courses". For instance, a student teacher (ST-01) tells pupils "language skills are listening and reading, which are receptive skills, and speaking and writing, which are productive skills..." (LO 014/2). Similarly, it is commonplace to observe student teachers tell pupils "Every student should get the chance to speak. So speak!" (LO 001/13). These might show more of *reproduction of terminologies* in the theoretical courses than deeper and accurate understanding through reflection.

Thus, the most possible conclusion drawn about assumption of *understanding* that underlies these particular student teachers in their particular practicum context is reproduction of contents, words, and sentences without developing individual conception of the meaning. This, in turn, points to why the student teachers face difficulty in reflective learning. Perhaps, they understood

understanding as, solely, memorization of discrete terminologies, concepts and words. We might be compelled to believe that these student teachers need to develop the ability to see their practicum experiences differently rather than reproduce traditions.

#### **4.3.2.4 Role Frames that Circumscribe the Student Teachers**

In this study one of the key conditions emerged from data analysis is assumption about role frame. Role frames are important institutional tacit rules, codes and meanings that shape practitioners' intentions and actions. No data extracted from the student teachers directly revealed the nature of their role frame. However, analysis of the collected artifacts unraveled the prevailing role frame in the Practicum context. Underneath the artefacts' is the code that the Practicum Office pre-sets reflection competencies, assessment standards or 'checklists', reflectivity levels and tools for reflection (Appendix 2). According to the documents, the role of teacher educators is to "supervise", "monitor", "assess" and "give feedback to" student teachers based on the standards. A student teacher's lesson "must be observed thrice" (IIN 003/3). This means focus on supervision, which in the practicum setting means, in vivo, *monitoring-and-assessment* in accordance to the norm. For instance, teacher educators "tell student teachers to write their reflection notes based just on the faculty's observation checklists," (DN013/13). [See Appendix 2 for the Checklist]. Usually, as the informant teacher educators heard complaining they just evaluate the "so-called action research solely on the ground of grammar and syntax criteria" since, in their beliefs, 'no action, critical reflection, or evidence-based analysis is observed.'

This assumption about role frame might, logically, impede as well contradict the role of teacher educator as colleague and reflective practitioner, which many scholars argue for (Reiman 1999; Zeichner & Tabachnic 1991; Williams 1989). Under such condition of role frames, student teacher plays the role of imitator of the expert teacher (Wallace 1991), rather than of reflective practitioners or change agents (Liston & Zeichner 1991). Due partly to this view of role frame, the sole roles of supervisors and partner school managements is "to strictly take attendance of each student teacher's behavior, punctuality" (IIN003/7). This might suggest that teacher

educators and mentors [school teachers] might over-depend upon what Biggs (1999:23) calls training “management”, which is “concerned with *management*, not with facilitating learning” (Emphasis original).

Under such role frame condition, student teachers, too might be attracted to meeting the requirement of the management rather than effective reflective learning. For instance, an assumption that almost all of the student teachers hold is, as teacher educators complain, “no copy of teacher’s Guide, no job”(DN 008/2) and “No lesson in the timetable, no need to appear in the Practicum school” (DN 009/2). Lesson observations of their classroom also show that ‘no supervision, so no need of lesson planning’ is the assumption that underpinned their behavior. In post-Contextual-Analysis or Inquiry-phase reflective journal, a student teacher (ST-04) reflects back “I used to submit weekly lesson plans to have the school director signed it”, i.e., for managerial adequacy. The researcher asked the rest of the student teachers whether this *managerial adequacy* was really the main factor for weekly submission of their lesson plans. This was confirmed experience of each of them. In fact, the lesson planning was nothing but, in their words, “cutting a lesson from the official Teacher’s Guide and pasting it to the lesson plan format distributed to them from the Director’s office.”

Indeed, management requirements, in essence, do not necessarily conflict with reflection but the requirements should encourage genuine problem posing, task designing, creativity and learning anew. Nonetheless, apparently, the nature of the existing role frame does not encourage these. Therefore, this might be one of the responsible factors for the student teachers’ inability of reflection and re-construction of practical skills and knowledge in the Practicum. Researchers and teacher educators have shown that student teachers, if supported well, can take as well as discharge responsibility over their own practices (Hailom 1993).

#### 4.3.2.5 Assumptions That Underlay the Student Teachers' Practices: Summary and Conclusion

So far, in this section and its subsections, the themes and categories related to the central category, or classification, of *perspectives on practicum* have been generated and analyzed. From the results, it can be inferred that the prevailing perspectives on practicum in the Haramaya University setting is a hallmark of *misconceptions*, namely misconceptions of reflection as structured report or feedback, action research as survey, understanding as memorization and focus on management training rather than reconstruction of experience. These are bigger than each of the student teachers, individual and group. What the data suggests is that the misconceptions pervade the context of the university's Practicum setting rather than at the policy production level (See MOE 2003). For instance, the student teachers' beliefs that '*reflection is reporting writing*', is congruent to ticking or responding to the questionnaire designed by the Practicum Office (Appendix 2). Thus, there is a need for the Practicum Office to not impose reflectivity standards, evaluation criteria, lists of competencies and outcomes upon teacher educators and student teachers. Thus, the findings point to the need for critical and reconstructive reflection where teacher educators and their student teachers are motivated to substantively or bottom-up theorize on their practices. This, in turn, requires a condition that encourages teacher educators and student teachers to take part in designing, reflecting and interpreting on the standards, contents, processes, tools and strategies that they employ in their reflective practices.

#### 4.3.3 The Social Constructions of Practical Learning in the Practicum Sites

In the context of this study, *social constructions of practical learning* mean a way of representing knowing or the knower, which is not only *believed* and *accepted* as **normal** but also is *enacted* and *shapes* the process of reflection in the context of the Practicum. A social construction is not necessarily valid but debatable, context-bounded, value-laden and might be changed given a 'better' alternative condition. A social construct is contingent upon social relations, and is made out of continuing human practices, by processes such as reification, assumption formation, and habitualization. For more on social constructions, Berger and

Luckmann (1967) and Schwandt (1994) are typical resources. Findings pertaining to the *social constructions* of practical learning that occurs in the context of the Practicum emerged through data analysis processes in six categories, namely Social Constructions of: (i) Reflection Skills, (ii) Language, (iii) EFL Teaching, (iv) EFL Learners, and (v) Cause-Effect of EFL Practicum. The four informant teacher educators also validated that each of the themes that emerged under each category, as shall be explored below, reflected their observations.

#### **4.3.3.1. The Social Construction of Practice-Teaching Competence**

The assumptions about EFL practice-teaching competence that underlie the student teachers actions/interactions were accessed when they took part in unstructured interviews (semi-structure and informal). Student teachers were asked what they planned and why they did it in the way they did. For instance, a typical account is as follow:

I followed the official lesson plan format. The day's topic and subtopics were copied from Teacher's Guide and Student's Book into the Lesson Plan Format. For every sub-topic, I apportioned the 40-minute allowed. Then, as to Teacher Activities, I wrote introducing the lesson, presenting the lesson, summarizing the lesson and asking key questions of the lesson for evaluation (IIN10/15).

A student teacher tells what he planned: "During 'pre-plasma, I advise students to take notes, depending on the plasma lesson. During while-plasma, I planned that I control whether the students are following the TV-lesson attentively or not. During 'post-plasma, summarizing accurately what the plasma teacher said is what I will do" (SSIN004/13). The skills of 'advising', 'controlling', 'accurately summarizing' are implied as the skills that he perform. Comparison of the student teachers' lesson plans indicated similar actions are frequently planned.

Likewise, asked whether they could adapt or design lessons in a collaborative way, the student teachers responded "No! We don't have to design lessons. We just use the Student's Textbook for pupils and Teacher's Guide for ourselves." The practice of keeping reflective diaries or journals was also described by all the student teachers as "non-existent".

What these accounts suggest is that practice-teaching competence is misconstrued as **over-dependence upon** and **implementation of discrete and pre-established skills** in the official textual materials distributed to them, namely Teacher's Guide, Student Textbook, TV-Lesson Guide. This misconstruction of practice-teaching competence might partly be implicated in the student teachers' inability to develop pedagogic skills of designing, adopting or evaluating appropriate EFL lessons in their practicum experience.

Therefore, in the context of the student teachers what seems to be lacking is considering practice-teaching competence as whole process. Research has indicated that, once second/foreign language student teachers are immersed in reflecting, analyzing, writing and speaking about these, they might well develop the skills of critical thinking, writing, reading and speaking in English, directly or indirectly (Brumfit et al 2004; 2005).

#### **4.3.3.2. The Social Construction of EFL (Language)**

Assumption about language is a vital component as well as a key object to ponder about in reflective practice. To that end, the participant observation strategies and methods generated pertinent data.

What 'language' or 'English' means for the student teachers in their context was extracted indirectly since putting the same question directly to them could not yield sufficient and valid data. An informant teacher educator described the assumption about language that permeates the student teachers practices: For them, English language "equals grammar. All that the student teachers plan, albeit the national Student Textbooks and Teacher Guides contain skills, to teach is grammar" (IIN008/4). Also, as the semi-structured interviews indicate, designing grammar tests where, for instance, "choose the best answer, which constitute of five grammar-questions, pertaining to *so that* and *such that*" was the dominant design (SSIN 004/10). Like his colleagues, another student teacher tested "give-short-answer" questions like "write the four stages of composition writing" and "define the phrasal verbs such as fed up" (SSIN 004/11). (See Appendix 13 A for more). There is, however, awareness as to the need to consider other skills on

the part of the student teachers. For instance, lesson observations of their lessons showed that they usually explicitly tell or write the fact that ‘there are four language skills’. For reasons yet to be empirically determined, they, however, are for the most part involved in teaching and testing grammar and vocabulary. Yet, frequent justifications that the student teachers give is that ‘pupils’ expectations’, which, in turn, relate to the nature of the national secondary school leaving examination, and that ‘the syllabus itself is more of structure’.

Similarly, classroom observations of lessons also indicated, as was seen in various sections above, the *audiolingualistic* social construction of EFL teaching, where English (language) is transmitted to the EFL learners through televised lessons, is the prevalent tradition in schools (See also Section 4.3.3.3). This view is also implied in the student teachers’ lesson plans where they consistently wrote that student activity is “Listening to the Plasma”. This is both the defining feature of the student teachers’ practice and indicative of absence of adequate opportunity for the student teachers to interact and communicate in the target language—English—in *plasma lesson*. It can be inferred from these that **mechanical view of language** (this was reviewed in the literature Chapter Two Sections 2.2.1 and 2.3.1) pervades the actions and context of the student teachers in the Practicum.

In a nutshell, the prevalent misconception of EFL, or language in general, might be partly accounted for the student teachers’ English language skills inability; under such a mechanical view of language (Rutherford 1987), second or foreign language learners over-depend upon studying the target language grammar as a subject (Ellis 1986). Since this kind of ‘learning’ is far removed from context and meaning, it cannot adequately improve students’ language skills.

#### **4.3.3.3 The Social Construction of EFL Teaching**

The form of social constructions of EFL teaching that infused the context of practicing student teachers has been observed as tremendously impinging upon the way and nature of reconstructions that they make of their experiences. Therefore, an attempt was made to find in the data pertaining to this. For instance, the artifacts provided to the student teachers indicate

watching as model of ‘good’ teaching (See Appendix 2 Plasma Guide). Besides, observations of classroom happenings and **classroom objects**--the physical things that are present—illuminated similar construction of English language teaching. For instance:

Some pupils, as audience, watch the live TV-lesson on plasma screen. The plasma screen presents How Deaf People Communicate, with hi-tech hypertext. A great number of students bowed down on tables ‘sleeping, pillowing their arms and their exercise books. Still some gossip their personal issues, while others simply write scratches of personal nature. It seems they are bored of their dull and inept role--watching....I see three pupils sharing a single chair, sitting in a very precarious situation. The student teacher points at the screen with a stick in his hand, noting them repeatedly “Watch!”, ‘Listen carefully” (LO004/8).

To add, the following event illustrates similar student teacher mode, *overseeing*, and pupil mode, *watching* and same class-organization, being *audience* to the TV-teacher, across almost every student teacher classroom:

TV teacher reminds the last lesson—how an American behaves. Then displays page 116...Read the nine example sentences...10 second given...Student Teacher, too, watches...Candy Leigh-Jones—the TV-teacher--tells Student Teacher to supervise pupils... warns pupil, ‘Remember. Your answers [to comprehension questions] should have the same....Student Teacher stands watching the TV-teacher broadcast the lesson. Pupils watch TV-lesson (LO020/24).

These modes of practice teaching can be considered as instances of inadequate skills of teaching because the student teachers practice English teaching as transmission.

#### **4.3.3.4. The Social Construction of EFL Learners**

The social construction of language (EFL) learners (i.e., how the learners are constructed) that embedded the Practicum context of the student teachers was identified. Classroom observations indicated that out of the forty minutes allocated for English lesson a day, for around thirty

minutes, pupils are audience to the TV-teacher, except the first five and the last five minutes, where the student teachers introduce and summarize the day's lesson. Although the TV lessons have spaces for learners to do tasks in groups, pairs and individually, there is inadequate opportunity for the EFL pupils and student teachers to play the role of communicators, interlocutors, arguers and speakers in classrooms in the target language (English) due mainly to "shortage of effective use of time"(DN009/5). A salient and recurrent event was described as follows during lesson observations:

TV-teacher says 'Write the answers in your exercise books.' Then a 2-minute countdown began. TV-screen displays 'Page 154 Exercise 3 Direct Speech → Reported Speech. Students could not do the tasks because some couldn't understand and some have no copies of Student Book. The countdown completes. TV teacher starts telling the right answers to the verb changes. Students got confused. Student teacher tries to justify why changes occur but TV-teacher goes on talking. Student teacher finds it difficult whether he should go on justifying or whether he should listen. He stops and began watching (LO006/8).

Brook (2006) also observed similar phenomenon. What this means, in the student teachers' views, is that the flow of lessons is not controlled by the student teacher. This role of EFL pupils is similar to what Williams and Burden (1995: 58) call learners-as-spectacles view. By this view they mean where EFL learners are "filled with knowledge [through] instruction and information-giving" (ibid). Similarly, Freire (1984) calls such misconstruction as *banking model*, where learners are like blank accounts into which money (knowledge) is deposited and drawn (tested) upon.

It is possible that the situated social construction of EFL learners can be implicated, indirectly or directly, in the student teachers' difficulties of re-constructing the skills of English language, teaching and inquiring into their practices because in order for them to play the role of practitioner (inquirer into own practices and abilities besides being a practicing teacher), there has to be relative or corresponding changes to the role of the EFL learners. This condition make student teachers construct their EFL learners as **absorbers** of the inputs transmitted. But, there is indication that there is some awareness on the student teachers' part that the condition of the pupils is inadequate and inappropriate for learning English. For instance, on their reason-giving informal interviews, the student teachers argued that they labeled the pupils, metaphorically,

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*spectator* to mean that the pupils are reduced viewers—in contrast to learners--of satellite TV transmission of lessons. This situation further brings to mind the fact that practicum curricula re-structuration (Chapter One Section 1.1) without accompanying and similar re-structuration in partner secondary schools is incomplete—a complex relationship between educational practices.

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#### 4.3.3.5. Construction of Cause-Effect of EFL Practicum

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The underlying assumption about causation of effective practice, or *what causes effective reflective practicum and to what end*, that persists in the context of the student teachers emerged both from the document analysis and unobtrusive observation that was employed to extract data. For instance, the deeply held and recurrent belief among student teachers is “we studied theoretical courses at university classrooms and apply those in schools” (DN 013/4). To them, the commonly taken assumption is that they are “expected to demonstrate the methodological courses or theories mastered in the theoretical courses” (DN010/11). Their views coincide with the assumptions that a teacher educator heard saying during an unobtrusive observation: “what the faculty expect from instructors is to observe the student teachers’ skills of teaching and tick off the evaluation checklists, grade their skills of applying those standards” (DN 009/11). Both the student teachers’ and the teacher educators’ assumption resonate with the Practicum format for student teacher evaluation that “Application of pedagogical subject knowledge in teaching process” is the core evaluation category comprising 21 evaluation items (the Evaluation Checklists at Appendix 2).

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Beneath all these views is the social (mis-)construction of effective practicum and practical knowledge as accurate application of particular pre-defined theoretical categories in a particular way. For instance, ‘deriving lesson tasks from the Unit in the national textbook’ and ‘whether the lesson has a clear beginning, middle and culmination’ (See Appendix 2 *Lesson plan evaluation format to be used by evaluators*). Ur (1991:56) describes this as “learn the theory-and-then-apply-it”. It means **linear model**. Thus, this model can be partly accounted for the student teachers’ inability to reconstruct the skills of inquiry—a problem that the researcher experientially confronted with. It is possible that under such a condition student teachers can

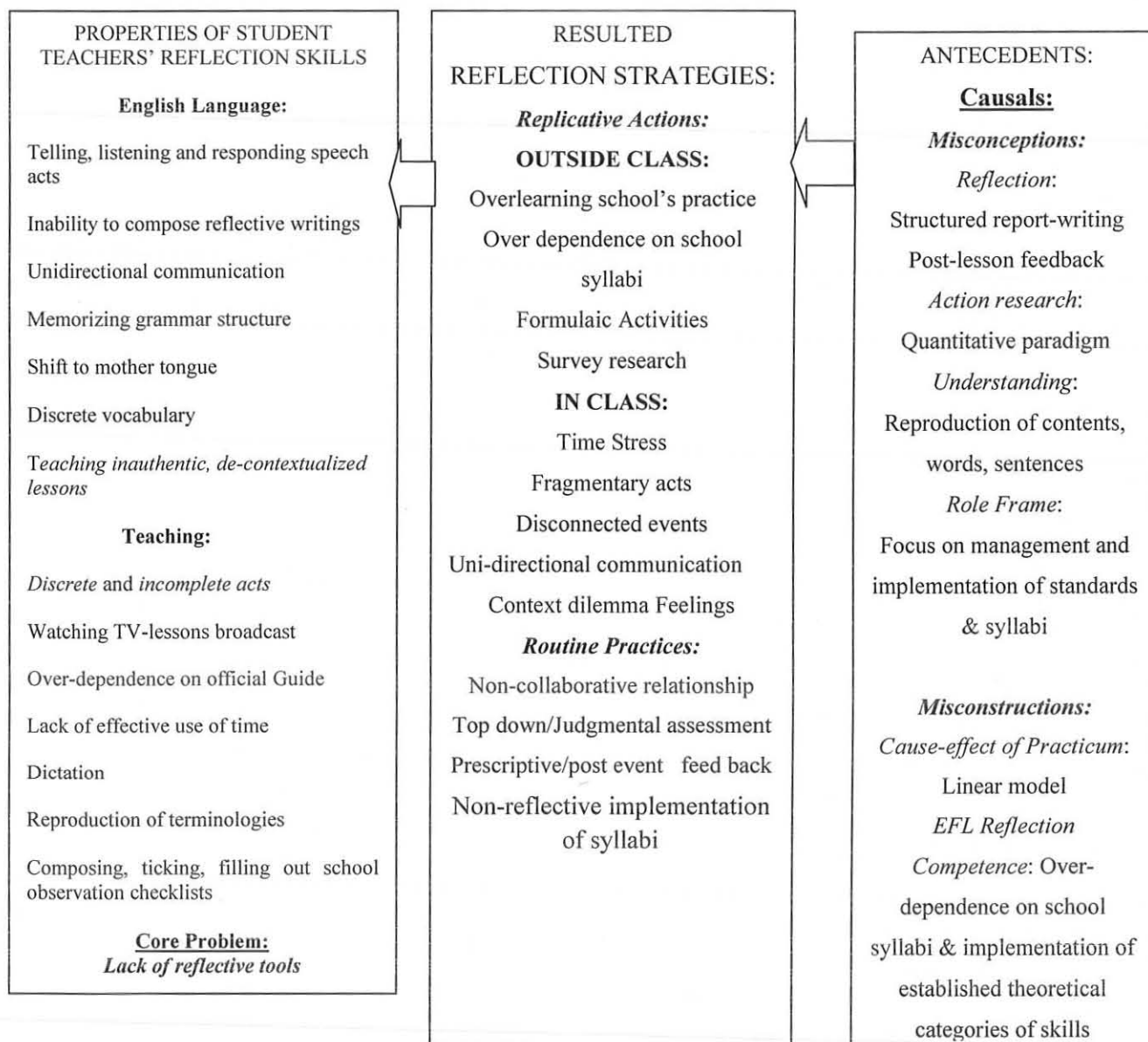


Table 5: A Constructed Conditional Matrix of the Condition of Pre-service EFL Student Teachers' Reflection Skills Difficulty: Causals, strategies and consequences

As depicted in the first column, fragmented and incomplete reflection was characteristic of the student teachers' practicum skills. This kind of reflection was seen characterized by English language skills properties of unidirectional communication, shift to mother tongue, discrete vocabulary; telling, listening and responding speech acts; reproduction of closed-system terminologies; teaching skills of watching, dictation, and overlearning school's tradition; the inquiry skills of non-reflective implementation of syllabi; practicum as instrument for grade;

composing school observation pursuing Practicum Office checklists. . The point, here, is not to repeat them, but to stress that what underlies all is that they are features of inadequate reflection skills.

As displayed at the bottom of the first column, **lack of effective reflective tools** was core category or problem that sustained the fact of not being able to reflect effectively and in reconstructive manner in the context of the Practicum. As Brookfield (1995; 2000) always emphatically argues, effective reflective tools are neither task completion activities nor research-driven and performance-oriented questionnaire items. Rather, effective reflection tools involve student teachers in extensive, intensive, bottom-up thinking and conversations with the problematic situations that confront them. It is in-ward thinking means rather than externally imposed structured tasks. As was explored in the Literature Review Chapter, Schön also holds similar view. In converse, the Contextual Analysis has revealed that the nature of reflection tools that the student teachers were provided with was highly structured, performance-oriented and underpinned by pre-defined objectives approach (See Chapter Four Section 4.2.4.3.). Thus, it was believed that Lack of Effective Reflection Tools was not only the core problem confronting the student teachers in their day-to-day activities, but also that it pulls together all the categories and themes pertaining in particular to the reflection skills inability of the student teachers [See Chapter Three Section 3.6.3.3 for further information on strategies used for selecting the core category]. This core category was validity checked with all the informant teacher educators and they agreed that it reflects the actual problem and experience of their student teachers, too.

The data analysis yielded two central strategies that the student teachers engaged in: (i) Replicative actions (Section 4.2.3.10 above) and (ii) Routine practices (Section 4.2.4.5 above). The central strategy was replicating what the student teachers are found doing are categorized into two, on the basis of emergent categories from the data analysis. Before class, as was seen above, they engaged in over-learning school's practice, especially observing how the plasma-teacher and school teachers taught (Section 4.2.3.10). For planning, they over-relied on copying the school syllabi and textual materials. These gave rise to formulaic activities, which means, doing pre-fixed tasks such as filling out the lesson plan format/slots, memorizing of the before-while-after-plasma activities they would discharge. All these behaviors are called replicative

because there is no apparent reflection, evaluation, analysis or change but of reproduction of the existing practices of teaching. Similar replicative actions, or where there is no significant reflection-in-action and re-construction of actions, were observed inside classrooms, too. Aspects of such in-class replicative actions involved *fragmentary acts*, disconnected events, and uni-directional communication. All these happened in the 'fragmented' affective mood of time stress and context dilemma.

Routine practice is another pattern or category that described the student teachers' strategies. It was identified that teaching actions/interactions and practices that the student teachers engaged in are driven by habitual, non-reflective and taken-for-granted decisions. Aspects of *routine practice* encompassed non-reflective implementation of school syllabi and getting assimilated to the already existing school teaching practices (Section 4.2.4.5).

Two major antecedents or causals for the facts of the student teachers' lack of opportunity and, hence, inability to reflect emerged from the data analysis. One is a set of **misconceptions** (See the third column.). It has been indicated that in the context of the Practicum, *reflection* is apparently misconceived as either structured report-writing or prescriptive feedback session and/or structured discussion on the basis of established categories of observation (See Section 4.3.2.1 above). Moreover, data analysis showed (Section 4.3.2.2 above) that *action research* was found misconceived as survey and, hence, the student teachers aware, overly, engaged on survey research rather than plan-action-reflection processes of experimentation. Besides, data analysis (See Section 4.3.2.3 above) has indicated that *understanding* of experience seem to have been considered wrongly as reproduction of contents, words, and sentences. Furthermore, the role frame of the context of the Practicum is more of a focus on management and implementation of standards and syllabi than re-construction of experiences and practices (See Section 4.3.2.4 above).

Another causal dynamics for the facts of the situation of the student teachers' inability to reflect is the prevalent social construction of practical learning which, as the data suggested, abounded of various misconstructions. This situation is evidenced in various categories that emerged from the data and data analysis. One apparent misconception is that of constructing of effecting

practicum as a linear process (See Section 4.3.3.5 above). Moreover, the data suggested that EFL reflection skills or learning are construed as over-dependence on school syllabi and implementation of established theoretical categories of skills (See Section 4.3.3.1 above). The social construction of effective *EFL Teaching* that infused the Practicum context was found audiolingualism (Section 4.3.3.3above). Due partly to this, the data suggested, English *language* was for the most part considered as solely of its Grammar/structure/patterns (Section 4.3.3.2 above). Finally, the social construction of the EFL Learner suggested in the data is that of their being passive participants (Section 4.3.3.4. above). As the Table depicts, the results of the antecedents or the causals are believed to be the actual processes/patterns or strategies adopted for reflection (See the middle column in the above Table).

Hence, all these array of empirically identified factors compel us to believe that the student teachers' inability to reflect effectively merged due to these conditions.

So far, the first phase of this research—the Contextual Analysis—has established the facts of the student teachers' difficulty and inability to reflect on their practices in the Practicum. The second phase—Inquiry Phase—was conducted based on the above empirical findings of the first phase. Analysis and discussion of the Inquiry data will follow.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION: THE INQUIRY PHASE

#### 5.1. Introduction

In the last chapter, attempts have been made to analyze and discuss the Contextual Analysis data, with the intention to understand the condition—properties, patterns, and causation—of the inadequacies of student teachers' reflection skills. In the course of the analysis, attempts have been made to understand the nature of the experientially confronted problem—a problem of inability and difficulty reflecting for/in/on/about (own) practicum actions/interactions. The Grounded Theory Method of data analysis generated a core category, among many others, that was believed to have *explanatory power* and describe the factors that sustained the problem, namely the student teachers' *lack of effective tools for reflection*.

Based on the findings of the Contextual Analysis, the Inquiry phase was conducted with the central research question of 'How can the conditions of the student teachers' difficulty to effectively reflect be improved?'. The central objective was to inquire into ways for maximizing the student teachers' ability and skills of reflection was made. Thus, this chapter will exclusively examine the impacts of the Inquiry phase, which attempted to provide reflective tools and other conditions for reflection. It will look into opportunities and obstacles met in the Inquiry processes. The Inquiry began in November 2007 and ended in June 2008 (Appendix 3). There was roughly a two-week semester break. Except this time, the researcher and the participants were in continuous contact, discussions and reflections on the reflective practices.

The analysis is based on data obtained from the monitoring methods/tools—student teachers' reflective journals, the accompanying weekly reflective discussions on the journal entries, and reflective feedback (informal and semi structured interviewing) discussions, on one hand, and, on the other, the researcher's and an informant teacher educator's unstructured lesson observations (as was discussed in Chapter Four Section 4.4.2 The Inquiry Methods). Sometimes,

reflective discussion sessions and data analyses processes were also conducted inside the university, which was held frequently after coming back from the Practicum partner schools. Each student teacher's reflective journal entries were collected after discussion sessions. Each student teacher's reflective journal (abbreviated as TRJ) was codified after his/her code name as was discussed in data management Chapter Three Section 3.6.2.1.3. For instance, TRJ01 refers to reflective journal of student teacher code-named ST-01. Each student teacher's journal was paginated based on the sequence of the week from the first week of submission, consecutively. Thus, when relevant data-bits, or indicators, were identified, they were given code number of the week, sequentially. Therefore, indicators codified, for instance, as TRJ01/1 and TRJ-01/20 show same student teacher's account but the former was identified in the 1<sup>st</sup> weeks' (see the latter after the forward slash) and the latter was later (20<sup>th</sup> week). Codifying indicators this way—sequentially—helps to monitor change over time. Each student teacher's journal was analyzed in constant comparison to others', immediately after collection every weekend, with the intention of insuring that each emergent theme was salient and reflective of everyone's experience without exception. The analysis process followed the Grounded Theory Method's principle of looking for concepts, or themes and categories, that offer "condensed, abstract view...of the data that includes otherwise seemingly disparate phenomena" (Glaser 1978: 55).

Unlike the previous chapter, where the specific questions guided data analysis and discussion, this chapter is organized according to the classifications, categories and themes that emerged during data analysis. Indicators that share common underlying meaning were grouped together and labeled; the labels are the emergent *themes*. Themes that shared common meaning were related to generate *categories*. A group of similar categories were classified together; they formed a classification or a *central category* (See Section 3.6.3 and Appendix 12).

The analysis of the data generated three classifications or forms of reflectivity namely (i) non-reflectivity, (ii) potential reflective actions and (iii) reflective actions, each of which comprises categories and themes, as presented below.

## 5.2. Non-reflectivity

In this subsection emergent non-reflectivity behavior, their properties and causations are presented. Non-reflectivity level of reflection refers, here, to *traits blocking reflection and/or mere provision of information about facts, expectations, or procedures without adequate justification of causation, consequence, implications and/or taking appropriate actions*. For teacher educators and reflective practitioners, awareness about elements, patterns, consequences and, especially, causations, of such non-reflectivity behaviors is as much important as awareness about behaviors of reflectivity ones. This is because knowledge about the one implies the other. The data analysis of the monitoring tools of the Inquiry, namely Reflection Journals and Lesson Observations (Section 3.5.4.4), generated non-reflectivity themes, especially at the early stage of the Inquiry processes.

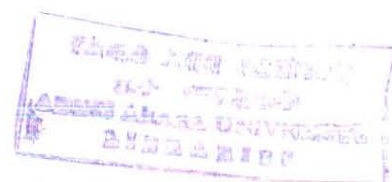
Non-reflectivity appeared in two dimensions: (i) improved non-reflectivity and (ii) non-improved, i.e., that continued to emerge throughout the Inquiry process.

### 5.2. 1. Improved Non-reflectivity

The emergent improved non-reflectivity behaviors involved: (1) *over-advocating own actions* and (2) *protectionism of self and peers*. , each of which is discussed below.

#### 5.2.1.1 Over-advocating Own Actions

Initial stage of analysis of the student teachers' reflective journals yielded what Schön (1987: 268) also observed and described as "sense of fending off the sense of impotence" or over-advocating self. For instance, a participant student teacher wrote what in fact did not coincide with observation made of his classroom actions/interactions: "I used student-centered approach so that the students understand the subject of the lesson by themselves. I used it also to teach listening, speaking and, even, for writing" (TRJ01/4). This appears a misconception of student-centered approach but it is more about deflecting the real incapability of applying this in action.



Similarly, a student claimed to have done what actually observations of his lesson did not indicate: “This week, I planned my lesson where I played my students language games. The language games were very important. They motivated students to make active participation” (TRJ10/1). Another student teacher wrote “what is my greatest achievement this week is I applied role play in my classroom” (TRJ06/2). Similar accounts of fending off sense of inability were rampant in the early stages of the student teachers’ reflective journals. .

Another student teacher’s reflection journal account goes: “School teachers evaluated me and said you are very good at explanation and using of time effectively, before and after the plasma. Generally, the feedback or reflection that the school teacher and my students gave shows that I am good at teaching using communicative approach” (TRJ01/2). This kind of unreflective self-advocating, which blocks turning own assumptions and actions to objects of reflection, was common (Appendix 8 B for more). Whether school teachers or pupils truly said these or not remained to be determined. But, what is more important is that the account, which is presumably a representation of assumption, shows fear of being or appearing ‘incapable’, on one hand, and, on the other, taking for granted what people say or hold as ‘truth’ about him/her. For instance, there was no indication that these were put to joint reflection.

Over-advocating is a sign of poor reflection. It blocked self-reflexivity—evaluative self-monitoring of teaching actions. This, in turn, developed in them ‘comforting’ of fog and gap in knowledge and blocked analysis and exploration of acting in a better and different ways. For instance, as was seen above in Sections 4.3.2, when asked in an informal interview, many contended, but vacuously, ‘they knew well’ what ‘reflection’, ‘practicum,’ ‘action research’, ‘teaching practice’, and ‘observation’ meant. At this initial phase, over-advocating blocked opening ones assumptions to different perspectives. Also it blocked reflective discussion by eliminating the need for genuine speaking, sharing, conversing, and arguing real issues in the target language

Student teachers might hold this ‘smart’ way of acting/interacting due to conditions that surround their practicum setting such as , according to, informant teacher educators, to appear ‘communicative-language-teaching users’ and, hence, confirm ‘good grade’. Moreover, this

behavior might also connect to the Practicum context's judgment-oriented 'supervisions' and standardized procedures discovered in the previous chapter (Section 4.2.4.3).

### **5.2.1.2 Protectionism of Self and Peers**

The student teachers initially tacitly accepted protectionist climate, "a group climate of risk aversion and passivity" similar to what Argyris and Schön (Argyris & Schön 1978 in Schön 1987: 274) observed. For instance, a student teacher accepted that "the reflective practices of university students in this school are excellent" (TRJ05/1). An unobtrusive validity-checking style, where the researcher put this account to the student teachers' peers (as discussed in Chapter Three Section 3.7.4), revealed all this protectionist assumption. Also, constant comparison of this account with others accounts did not show correspondence to many of the critiques against the Practicum program that they forwarded as shall be seen ahead. This was, likely, suggested to avoid hurting self and peers.

Likewise, some protected the profession by claiming "teaching profession is a good job." However, constant comparison of this account with other data set showed incongruity. For instance, unobtrusive observations shows incongruity; that student teachers are commonly heard complaining of "being a teacher". Moreover, validity checking trail conducted showed that in general all the participant student teachers concurred with the complaint. Another aspect of protecting self is by promising principles but with no indication of specific strategy. For instance, a student teacher vows "I should improve my use of the language." And, similarly another student teacher gives his words: "I should consider the interest of my students." These look reflections but still look buzzes.

Although it steadily diminished, protectionism posed challenges to reflection during the Inquiry. This might be due to the fact that confidence building takes time. As passivity and closure, protectionism of self and peers was an impediment to experimentation with and reconstruction of reflection skills—language, inquiry and teaching. Open-mindedness and wholeheartedness that require teachers to open up and examine their own and others' assumptions and practices are

essential to reflective action (Dewey 1933). Exchange of distorted information or commonsense cannot bring about reflective learning. Effective reflection is fundamentally perspective transformation.

### **5.2.2 Non-improved Non-reflectivity**

Some non-reflectivity behaviors yet continued to appear throughout the Inquiry. For unearthing these deeper patterns in the data, the researcher employed Grounded Theory's reflective data-analysis questions: 'What is the main issue or problem with which these student teachers seem to be grappling?' 'What keeps striking me over and over? Although it might not be said directly, what comes through as salient concern?' (Glaser 1978, 2002; Strauss & Corbin 1998). Recurrence or repetition was also another employed (See Sections 3.6.3.1.1 & 3.6.3.1.2). The recurrent and patterned ones involved: (1) *teaching/learning towards assessment*, (2) *blaming pupils without reflecting on causals for their misbehaviors*, and (3) *context dilemma*.

#### **5.2.2.1. Teaching/Learning towards Assessment**

Assessment-centeredness and unrealistic expectation of high achievement are some of the non-improving unreflective thoughts that continued to emerge till the end of the Inquiry. This might be related to many issues but one among them is their expectation or consideration of practicum. For instance, the researcher unobtrusively observed non-participant student teachers say "practicum course is called *glucose*". Then, the researcher/trainer put this *in vivo* to discussions with participant student teachers. They said they meant "it awards cheap grade". This view of 'assessment-centeredness' affected also the way they practiced teaching English to pupils. For instance, a student teacher writes "I feel happy when my learners get equal mark with not much difference" (TRJ-07/5).

This non-improved non-reflectivity skill might connect to the deep-rooted belief in practicum as ancillary to 'theoretical course'. The Contextual Analysis indicated that practicum is conceived subsidiary and in the service of application of the 'theoretical courses' (See Section 4.3.2.1

above). It might also well connect to the Practicum role frame that focuses on monitoring, *management* and judging rather than re-constructive and collaborative reflection (See Section 4.3.2.3). In general, the findings indicate that behavior—teaching/learning towards assessment--this is one of the crucial issues to be critically reflected on in the pre-service practicum.

#### **5.2.2.2. Blaming Pupils**

One of the interesting recurrent themes in the student teachers' reflection journals is their blaming of pupils for their 'misbehaviors'. This is important to educators in general and EFL teacher educators in particular since it poses questions as to why these behaviors happen. Student teachers need to know the sociological-psychology of children. Their lack of such awareness is reflected in their accounts. For instance they commonly complain that "pupils leave the class while the plasma transmits the lesson" (TRJ03/15), "pupils do not attentively follow the plasma" (TRJ01/11), "they usually be absent from class" (TRJ02/03), "they disturb, are undisciplined and do not have respect for teacher" (TRJ04/02). The commonest *blames* involve that 'pupils do not like being tested on language skills except on grammar and vocabulary'; that 'they dislike English period'; that 'they never understand the plasma or speak any English; that 'they prefer watching the music or films that the plasma presents as bridge between lessons rather than the lesson'. Though these complaints seem the student teachers' special interest in evaluation and regulation of classroom 'misbehaviors', they are also indications of their lack of the ability of critical reflection. It has been observed that student teachers assume such behaviors as natural 'gift' and lack of intelligence. To add one more recurrent and common blame: "the students here, in this part of the country are lazy. They don't care about their education. They are disrespectful to their teachers" (TRJ09/21).

These blames can be connected with what many educational sociologists such as Apple (190; 1996), Giroux (1997), and Halsey et al (1997) call the relations of learners' 'anomie', 'resistance' and the 'hidden curriculum'. The available data suggests these particular student teachers need awareness-raising reflective discussions on these issues. With the help of teacher

educators, student teachers can, be motivated to conduct their action research on these and take actions to improve the situations.

### 5.2.2.3 Context Dilemma

Remarkably, the student teachers' Dilemma Analysis Journal, especially around the end of the Inquiry, revealed an interesting theme. After comparing the normal plasma-led and non-plasma lesson that they framed on weekends, they began to raise in their reflective journals and discussions that some of what they "**are** doing", for instance, "not preparing own real-issue tasks", "not employing group work", and, in general, "not employing communicative language teaching"—all of which they claimed to have awareness about and indeed were observed by the researcher—were all, in their words, "inappropriate". For instance, a student teacher reflects what was also "true" for others: "In principle, I do not accept my teaching towards lessons, contents or objectives already pre-set in the syllabus. I believe it is good if I were to design and teach new lessons based on my students' interests. But, I can't afford not doing so under the existing plasma situation" (TRJ01/4). Similarly all admitted their peer's admission that "However I tried to do the best, effective learning still is not going on" (TRJ02/1) against his wishes (Appendix 8 b for more student teachers' reflective accounts). Alike, another student teacher reflected "I ought to have designed and implemented own tasks, but can't be put to use due to the *plasma*" (IIN007/21).

This kind of **context dilemma** gave them **lack of confidence in durability** of what they newly re-constructed. That means they were concerned whether they would retain and if so to what extent employ the habits of reflecting on/in/for/about their own and their would-be schools' practices when they would enter the real-world of teaching. This bears resemblance with what Schön (1984; 1992) observed when his 'clients' experienced 'loss of control,' 'avoiding risk taking' and 'verbal descriptions to be translated into action'. But, the difference is that in the case of these student teachers these labels are victim-blaming since they only wanted enabling secondary-school conditions but have the potential and interest for action. Moreover, if it were translated to action it would have *real effect*, i.e., would have potentially 'good' behavioral consequences on both student teachers and their EFL learners. This indicates the need for more

dialogic and cooperative practitioner practices that would go beyond the here and now of the practicum context. Researchers suggest, for instance, re-structuration of school and faculty practices, so that student teachers make informed choices and changes when they feel these are necessary (Chapter Two Section 2.4.3. and 2.6.1).

### **5.3 Potential Reflective Action**

The category of *potential reflective action* refers to improvised verbal designs of action, which, however, could not be translated to practical action due to constraining factors, which shall be explored below. Their capacity “to call up for scrutiny” and genuine and emotive understanding of cause and solution of a problem by itself is sufficient level of reflection in the eyes of Luke (2004: 26).

This category involved two themes: (1) *cross-skills test design*, and (2) *attempt to design real issues tasks*.

#### **5.3.1 Cross-skills Test Design**

The concept of test or testing was one of the emergent Inquiry phase themes. It was observed that this was one of the key themes at work in the reflective journaling. The student teachers attached the kinds of artefacts or materials they designed to their Plan-Implement-Reflect Journal. Initially all their test items contained solely grammar and vocabulary. See an example artefact they attached in Appendix 13. The artefacts demonstrate an attempt to address reading and writing in addition to testing of grammar and vocabulary skills. There is also apparent attempt to contextualize the question items.

The researcher, also here a coach in Schön’s sense, brought themes in their documents to reflective discussion sessions, with offering issues in the current theories of testing such as ‘communicative language testing’, ‘validity’, ‘communicative competence’, especially relying

on works of Hughes (1987), Bachman and Palmer (1996) and Morrow (1979). The researcher observed that these were, to some extent, new concepts to them. However, in the weeks that followed they designed much improved cross-skills test (See a sample at Appendix 13 B). Yet, many of them were in doubt about applying their improvised testing technique due to the “large class size”, “school culture, which emphasizes testing English structures and vocabulary” and “lack of stationary, e.g., printing papers”.

The student teachers are becoming aware of the need for *cross-skills testing of EFL learners*. Although they were, possibly, held back ‘physically’ from translating these into action due to, mainly, the *analytic-assessment* school culture (Biggs 1999 in Chapter Three),

### **5.3.2 Attempt to Design Real Issues Tasks**

In this study, the researcher has understood that encouraging student teachers to design lessons especially on issues related to pupils’ real, practical and true life is not only a fundamental skills that they need to develop, but is also a fundamental opportunity for teacher educators to raise awareness of EFL student teachers that language is meaningful event, activity or social practice.

These kinds of skills and opportunities were remarkably observed when the student teachers attached their plans to their Plan-Act-Reflect journals. One of the student teachers planned lesson tasks on a flood disaster that havocted earlier Dire Dawa town, killing many people. His instructions for the pupils ask student teachers to think back what they felt and write these the first paragraph. Then, requires the pupils to add one more paragraph as regards what precautions should be taken for such a disaster not to occur again. The vast majority, however, designed their lessons on *khat*, a widely and customarily consumed plant by the surrounding people, which, however, many allege as drug. The instructions ask pupils to write and/or speak (against) this tradition, raising its consequences on health, economy (e.g., family financial crises), and education (as many believe it is a stimulant for ‘studying’/reading ‘for a lengthy time’ with ‘extraordinary ability of understanding). Still other recurrent issues of their lesson tasks involve issues of drought and poverty, each of which reverberates with the pupils’ environment and lives.

Overall, all their lesson tasks show interesting level of potential reflectivity, which, however was less translated to action in classroom teaching actions/interactions. The constraints, according to their reason-giving accounts as well as observations, too, involved 'the aired live lesson', which does not allow flexibility, and the "syllabi coverage", i.e., the student teachers were told by the school teachers that a certain number of chapters had to be covered before they (the student teachers) handed back the class.

To conclude, some non-reflectivity behaviors steadily decreased, especially those associated with pedagogic skills and language skills. Perhaps, this improvement is due to the fact that, triggered by the intervention, each of these behaviors were made objects of dialogic (open) and critical discussions, i.e., the sessions held weekly on the student teachers' journal entries and themes. This finding corresponds with Argyris and Schön's (in Schön 1987: 276) observations that their similar "intervention had the effect of opening" their trainees' defensive behaviors. Similar studies, for instance, Hailom (1993) observed that as "peer teaching", "reflections" and, hence, "learning from others' experiences" continued (p. 204), student teachers' initial "trauma", which is characterized by "anxiety, fear and lack of confidence" (p. 201), improved.

But, still some non-reflectivity behaviors continued to persist. Especially, these are associated to the metacognitive skills such as turning students' misbehaviors to inquiry and lack of confidence in the durability of habit of reflection.

#### **5.4. Reflective Actions**

As was discussed in Chapter Two, reflective, critical and dialogic reflection theorists argue that the purpose of reflective practicum is to enable student teachers to learn to take reflective actions. Although controversial, every reflection theorist agrees that these involve contextual, thoughtful, evaluative, scrutinized and informed action. Reflective actions gradually emerged from the Inquiry methods analysis in many categories.[NB; The data citation technique is that the number after each of the forward slash almost corresponds to the sequence of the week from

the first where the student's reflective journal was collected till the last week--25<sup>th</sup>. This help trace change or otherwise). Each of them shall be presented below.

#### 5.4.1. Reflective Observation

Reflective observation is not only a key element of reflective skills, knowledge, or habit, but is also one of the essential purposes of involving pre-service student teachers in a reflective practice. While we have to be wary of universally defined criteria, here reflective observation means the skill of *perceiving and identifying similarities and differences between the familiar and the unfamiliar or the taken-for-granted situations*.

Aspects of reflective observation have been identified at adequate level in the reflection journals of the student teachers. For instance, a trainee (ST-03) observed: "While I was observing the students during my lessons, I had seen many situations, especially, the way students speak, act and feel. I saw that student vary on how they behave based on their background. Some, for instance, do not respect their teachers. Some are respectful. I think this is based on their familial background" (TRJ003/16). This shows that this particular student teacher is thoughtfully making distinctions between behaviors those are unfamiliar, or may be previously tacitly seen, and that are familiar ones. This is as much pedagogic skill as inquiry one. See also Appendix 8B for more similar reflective *observation of student behaviors*.

Another category of observations identified is *observation of own observations*. For instance, a student teacher (ST-07) self-reflected that: "There were certain things that came to my mind, which needs mental preparation before coming to classroom. That was, I felt that my students felt I might not have been teaching them well" (TRJ007/24). This might be a sign of observation of own observation or *reflexivity*. Similar reflexivity was indicated in an account of another student teacher who reflected "as I observed, especially, while I was teaching, that how far I prepared myself determined whether or not I could overcome emerging problem" (TRJ10/25). Another interesting reflexivity goes, "in order for me to be able to communicative effectively on

my ability, I should always reflect on my ability. I should improve my English proficiency. I should talk without fear in a group discussion like this” (TRJ-03/24).

All the above accounts suggest that reflective observation, which is personally meaningful and relevant, was partly at issue in the process of the reflective journaling entries. The findings confirm the fact that if they are provided with reflective tools, like that are employed in this study, student teachers can critically observe phenomena that usually are ‘normally’ taken for granted. The potential to reflectivity is a natural there, but it must be triggered through reflective move between cognitive potential and the environment in training.

#### **5.4.2. Reflective Planning**

*Thoughtful and deliberate act of designing lessons, tasks and activities for instruction*, which is labeled here as *reflective planning*, emerged in two categories from analyzing the student teachers’ journals. The first category is *reflective planning for lessons* to be implemented. For example, a student teacher (T001) seriously thought that he “should be careful in preparing “lesson plans which should address” his “students’ interest” (TRJ 001/22). Another student teacher even went to the extent of challenging school teachers: “mentors informed us preparing lesson plan has no value. But, I have seen it is vital especially when the plasma is not working” (TRJ 009/25). He meant he found it useful he led his classes differently from the ‘normal’ televised lessons. What all this reveals is that these particular student teachers were developing a kind of reflection skills similar to what Heron and Reason (Heron& Reason 2001: 183-184) refers to as *meta-intentionality* i.e. the ability to remain purposive and committed to own practices even under challenging conditions.

The other category of planning that emerged was a *reflective planning for action*. For instance, a student teacher (T004) was convinced that it was “important” to him that he “must identify why students do not involve themselves in the process of his teaching”, so his “aim must be to identify the reason”. Though there is no data whether he did it or not, this, however, is reflections that suffice to believe that he is making *reflection for action*. The same is true when another

student teacher vowed “I can solve this problem through process in the future. I expect I will try a different systematic teaching, for example I will make my students feel free to talk to me. I have to be friendly and nice to them” (TRJ 003/ 25). (See Appendix 8: Corpus Data (i) Student Teachers’ Reflections). What this means might be that this participant student teachers were beginning to form the *skills of resonance and attunement* to their students. These skills, thus, might have been triggered by reflective tools and reflected discussions that they exploited during the Inquiry Phase.

### 5.4.3 Reflective Acts

Classroom observations by the researcher and an informant teacher educator were frequently made and the participant student teachers’ acts were monitored in order to see the relationships between their accounts and acts. Reflective acts, or *thoughtful and intended intervention against emergent and unanticipated problems*, have been described. For instance, the informant teacher educator observed that a participant student teacher “realized some pupils were inactive. Then, he asked all the class to stand up and do some physical exercises” (LO 009/22). The informant teacher educator reflected “I really was touched by his quick and on-the-spot act, which I never observed in any other classrooms” (LO009/23). Frequent observation of the student teachers’ lessons also indicated similar informed acts like *boosting pupils’ confidence* through providing *appreciative judgments* when they observed active participation of their pupils: “I’m proud of you pupils in this class!” Similarly, in their reflective journal entries, too, some satisfactory reflective acts were also reported in some of the student teachers’ reflections journals. For instance, a student teacher narrates “surprisingly one of my pupils wanted to punch me waiting outside classroom, but I became cool and tried to cool him down too. I continued to follow him to discuss with him to identify why he does this” (TRJ010/25). This can be interpreted as *emotion management*. This implies that reflecting on what led the student to such an undesirable behavior is as important as reflecting on the desirable ones.

The above observations might be indicative of the fact that these particular participant student teachers are beginning to reflectively act due to the action strategy, namely reflective journaling and discussions.

#### **5.4.4. Reflection on Assumptions**

Clues to reflective re-construction of taken for granted assumptions, or *revision of assumptions* has been identified in the reflective journals of the participant student teachers. This appeared in the challenging and revising of assumptions about oneself, learners and knowledge. For instance, on a reflective discussion, a student teacher (ST-02) reflected “I thought the plasma teaching was superior. But now, I see that it was only the graphics, the beautiful color and the technology that fascinated me. These, however, contribute nothing to communicative language teaching”. What is more, his revised assumption further generated similar revisions in other student teachers’ assumptions, too. For instance, other student teachers (ST-06) began to challenge assumptions that underlie their attitude to the plasma when they argued “Students see the plasma picture, its different designs...They do not consider it as about English learning”. This contrasts with their earlier assumptions that the plasma was a “good model of teaching”. Still, others reflected on the built confidence triggered by, in words, ‘*such free and good discussions*’, on even what they described as “sensitive” issues such as critiquing, scrutinizing and making evaluative *judgments* on the Practicum structure and the wider school educational practices.

Furthermore, *increased awareness of the role of reflection* on their practices was also what was at issue in their journals. For instance, a student teacher asserts, “this kind of reflection is indispensable for me because it enables me to know [understand] what I experience. This will help me a lot when I become a full teacher” (TRJ10/23). Likewise, another student teacher substantiated that “due to this reflection process, I realized that even I can learn a lot from my students’ comments and remarks about my teaching practices” (TRJ02/24). These are quite similar to Schön’s (1987) concept of *substantive understanding*, where practitioners construct new understanding from confronting problematic experiences.

On the whole, the above results can force us to believe that, the reflective journal keeping accompanied by reflective discussion on the journal entries might be triggering careful and thoughtful evaluation and revision of tacit and previously taken-for-granted assumptions.

#### **5.4.5. Reflection about School Practices**

Ability to reflect on the wider school practices and explanation of how the wider issues connect to the classroom behaviors, actions and interactions have been demonstrated in the reflective journal of student teachers. For example, student teacher (ST-05) reflects “the rationale of the plasma-based English teaching style must be pedagogic, i.e. that motivates different activities, and varieties of tasks. The plasma is the most influential factors for my students to become less participant” (TRJ05/24). He reflected on *discrepancy* between what he knows in theory and practically witnessed. Another student teacher (ST-01) proffered alternative insights, too. He reflected: “The current Ethiopian secondary school practice is supportive of the cause of the plasma, but I think the plasma should rather be controlled by the teacher. And, the time given for a lesson must be changed from 40 minute to 1 hour” (TRJ01/22).

Another aspect of reflection about school practices that emerged from the student teachers’ reflections was *depictions of challenges* facing them vis-à-vis the school’s tradition of English language teaching. They depicted such challenge, as “lack of textual materials” (TRJ03/24) such as journals magazines, and news paper for designing tasks. Some of them even felt “there is nothing for them to do since lesson presentation is controlled by the plasma” (TRJ 008/19). Still, some *exposed the fact* that “the plasma teaches same lessons over and over, and, even, weeks after weeks redundantly” (TRJ010/10). In addition, all impersonally and negatively critiqued that they “unusually they were forced by the context to negotiate with students on assessment”, which means that there is give and take between both pupils, on one hand, and student teachers on the other. For instance, pupils “assisted” them “creating” hot participation when a supervisor was there in classroom. This might relate to the focus on management procedure role-frame emerged and discussed of in Section 4.3.2.4 above).

Similar views were shared by other student teachers who put forth their views that “the plasma style teaching suits more for natural science teaching than for EFL teaching” (TRJ03/23). These might be indicative of the fact that the student teachers were beginning to *explore better and alternative classroom actions*. This skill is advocated by many theorists as signs of becoming reflective teachers (Chapter Two Section 2.4.3.). In general, what can be inferred is that triggered by the reflective journaling and discussions, these particular student teachers were beginning to *explicate and subject to negative criticism* practices that are not critical and constructive to educational practices. All this could mean that the necessity of providing pre-service EFL student teachers with reflective tools and fundamentally open discussion.

#### **5.4.6. Time Management**

The analysis of the complimentary lesson-observations during the Inquiry reveals that the participant student teachers exhibited effective use of time. For instance, the informant teacher educator’s running commentaries of classroom events goes:

Student teacher talks facing and making eye-contacts with pupils. One time, he jots on the board, another time, he faces towards his students, at different intervals. His enables pupils think, jot down, raise hands, and ask questions, at different intervals. This variation and flexibility with mix of writing, pausing, eliciting, suggesting, etc, made me think that surely this lesson is beyond my expectations in every aspect (L0009/11; See Appendix 8 B (ii) for more).

This might be interpreted as a sign of emerging skills of *pacing out lessons*, i.e., the skill of optimizing the quality, quantity and speed of a lesson vis-à-vis available time.

Although this effective management and use of time for learning might largely be attributed to the absence of the aired plasma-lesson and, hence, control of time by the student teachers, it might also be argued that the situation, in the first place, was *designed intently and reflectively* by the student teachers themselves. As they reported in the deliberative discussions on their journal entries, the biggest constraint to all of the ten participants was “shortage of time provided for action” under the normal plasma lesson, which made them, in their words, “*passive*

*teachers*". Hence, they wanted to change their situation by seeking weekend extra classes with the consent of their pupils. Their actions can be considered as a sign of what Schön (1987) calls *move-testing experiment*, where practitioners introduce an alternative action and see whether they can achieve what they are interested in.

#### **5.4.7. Classroom Participation**

One of the emergent themes from the Inquiry lesson observation data analysis was pupils' *active participation* and the adequate *sharing* of information with one another. This was witnessed both by the researcher and the informant teacher educator. For instance, the teacher educator's description of what he observed goes: "Pupils engage on both solicited and unsolicited responding, at their own favorable moments. 'Ask if you've any question', the student teacher gives confidence to pupils. 'Okay, we will!' pupils respond in chorus....Pupils say 'yes!' and 'No!' to express their understanding or failure to understand. I never heard this in any other classes." See Appendix 8 B (ii) for more descriptions.

Informant teacher educators agree that, although it might be that the above events are less than collaborative learning classroom, in its stringent term, it is better than a circumstance wherein "pupils are made *passive receptacles*." They meant "the centrally controlled TV-lesson".

#### **5.4.8. Awareness about Pupil Evaluation**

The skill and knowledge of evaluating and testing EFL learners is one of the essential components on practical or reflective learning. This element of student teachers' practical knowledge was observed in their reflective journals as the Plan-Implement-Reflect tool (Appendix A) required them to design and attach their designs to their weekly entries. All the student teachers were critical of the existing schools' and their own testing practices. In their observations, both the school teachers, on one hand, and themselves, on the other, 'tested just grammar and vocabulary'. For instance, a student teacher (ST-02) self-reflects "So far, I've been developing classroom tests without taking the principles of designing tests. But now, I can say

that I've the necessary concepts...I have to try to test at least writing and reading, though it may be difficult to test speaking in this large class" (TRJ2/22). However, in the weekly reflective discussions all deliberated about the fact that "no continuous assessment practice" was attempted due to, in their words, "large class size", "dearth of stationery materials to keep portfolio and profiles of each student", and *more challenging* to them was "the school culture that does not allow student teachers qualitative ways of continuous assessment" (TRJ2/16). Yet, the student teachers did try to set what they believed is 'better test designs'. See Appendix 13 A, which is a school teacher designed test which they critiqued as "grammar-only" test and B, which is their own attempt of "better and cross-skills" test design. Indeed, in their test designs there is improvisation such as exchanges, task completion tasks and provision of *mini-contexts*. Yet all agreed that the situation of their practice could not allow them to translate this design into action. The student teachers mentioned such obstacles as 'lack of stationary materials', 'time shortage' given the courses they 'must cover according to the school's rules', and 'students' lack of desire to be tested other than grammar and vocabulary'.

### **5.5 Reflections on the Inquiry Findings: Opportunities and obstacles**

As was explored in Chapter Two, the meaning of reflective learning and knowledge and, especially, the levels, reaches and scope of reflection is always controversial. Schön (1987: 218) explicates this as follows: "With the shift from an objectivist to a constructionist view of practice, such critically important terms as *truth* and *effectiveness* become problematic. We may still talk of true statements and effective actions, but only *within* a frame..." (Emphasis is original). And, that frame for the researcher's discussions was explicated in the Conceptual Framework (Chapter One Section 1.5.) and discussed in detail in the various sections of the theoretical approaches chapter (Chapter Two). Also, the researcher's theoretical framework was summarized at the end of the chapter. Thus, given the guiding conceptual and the theoretical frameworks, the above discussed themes and data can make us to reach a logical conclusion that the action strategies of reflective journaling and reflective discussion on the journal entries have effected moderate changes in the student teachers' reflection skills. Effective reflection is seen as

change or re-construction which is succinctly defined by McNiff and Whitehead, i.e., “interacting and doing things differently from before” (McNiff & Whitehead 2002: 143).

Nevertheless, the findings of the Inquiry show that the impacts of the action strategy were not linear. Rather, the findings confirm that it is complex. As was observed above, the consequence is mixed picture: (i) non-improved non-reflectivity behaviors, (ii) Improved non-reflectivity behaviors, (iii) potential reflectivity and, (iv) moderate level of reflective actions.

Finally, in this study one of the remarkable observations was that ‘higher’ level of English language proficiency is not necessarily determining factor for effective reflective action. These student teachers have already stored lexical and syntactic repertoires, though these are chunks, disconnected and rusty. As far as reading of their journals, in a *holistic* approach (Chapter Two Section 2.5.3.2) is concerned there is adequate level of intelligibility and steady improvements in their composition and expression skills. The findings are indicative of the fact that their poor English skills are contingent upon the condition under which they practice teaching. The cognitive potential is already there. They have also been introduced to essential concepts in language and teaching in other courses. Thus, they must be provided just with a condition whereby they are empowered to see and use English language as connected, whole and social activity. Without contextually analyzing the properties, patterns and causation of the student teachers’ problems, as was attempted in the first phase of this research, it is impossible to accurately understand and take appropriate action to prompt their potential to effectively reflect. See, for instance, Adinew (2007) and Jeylan (2007), whose conclusion is, that student teachers’ poor English skills is the major obstacle to their own poor reflection skills.

Another interesting experience was the role of **affective dimension of reflection**. The **time stress** and **context dilemma** themes explored above emerged both as opportunities and constraints. The student teachers’ reflective journal entries on Low Point of Performance and Dilemma Analysis indicated that these themes were the major issues they reflected about. That means these stressful and dilemmatic experiences triggered the student teachers to pause, reflect in detail and write critically in their dilemma analysis and critical incident journal entries as the situations constrained the way the student teachers practiced teaching and reflection.

On the whole, the Inquiry Phase and the Contextual Analysis findings spotlight defining features and conditions of (in-) effective EFL reflection skills, reflective practices, and practicum programming. Lessons learnt and recommendations for future actions shall be presented in the final chapter that follows

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **LESSONS LEARNT, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

In this conclusion chapter, firstly a summary of the research process will be presented. Next, the lessons that the researcher gained will be discussed. Then, recommendations to policymakers, EFL teacher educators and other academics are presented based on the findings. Finally, highlights of areas for further research will be provided followed by concluding remarks.

#### **6.2. Summary of the Research Processes**

As a practitioner inquiry study, this study has been re-framed asking reflective questions based on emergent issues throughout the study processes. The researcher entered the field with only practically confronted problem of student teachers' inability to effectively reflect on their EFL practice. The original intention was to extensively and broadly describe the problem and interpret it in the traditional qualitative research design. However, eventually, the study emerged to be a practitioner inquiry paradigm whose core components are to, firstly, understand properties and causation of the problem and then inquire into ways for maximizing conditions for effective reflection. Moreover, instead of the traditional descriptive approach, the Constructivist Grounded Theory data interpretive framework was adopted to focus on rigorously uncovering the underlying patterns in the data. . With the fundamental methodological shift, the researcher focused on inquiring and contributing an innovative window of opportunity for improving the problem. That is the most remarkable experience, an experience of constructing and re-constructing methodological tools and insights out of a research project grounded in experience.

As is the case in qualitative research, the findings of this study are unique to the particular researcher, participants, informants, practitioners and context of this study. The transferability of these re-constructed understandings for reflective practices is established as the reader considers

(ii) From the methodological design and the findings of the study, the researcher has learned that student teachers' behaviors are shaped by complex social factors. This study is distinct from some other studies (e.g., Adinew 2007; Jeylan 2007) in its systematic examination of the context and efforts to inquire ways to overcome the problem of inability to reflect on practicum experience. The research has also demonstrated that researchers and practitioners have to go beyond the categories of 'assumption' and 'action/interaction'. Important lessons have been learned that student teachers and the informant teacher educators, on one hand, quickly become or are already explicit about some of their assumptions that shape their actions, including about the "inappropriate" ones. Paradoxically, on the other hand, these still are observed both guiding (the inappropriate ones) and not guiding (the appropriate ones) their actions.. The categories of conceptions, beliefs, and attitude, each of which are usually used in the literature cannot capture such assumptions in this study as when a student teacher said "that I know the plasma-aided lesson is not conducive for communicative language teaching practice, but, still, I have to practice audiolingualism, which I don't believe in, because there is no alternative". Paradoxical, this is conscious, unacknowledged and actual practice--a stumbling block to EFL reflective practicum in the context of this study. These mean that conditions of effective reflection also connect to the wider, macro social context of practitioners, going beyond cognitive and situated context of practicum.

### **6.3. 2 Methodological Lessons Learnt**

This study focused both on analysis and transformation of the research problem. Especially, in the Inquiry phase it focused more on strengths than 'defects' and more on macro reflection-skills (language, teaching and inquiry) than the micro ones (e.g. syntactic and morphological skills, questioning, treatment of students' errors). No any preconceived reflection skills were imposed on the data, except the generic skills of inquiry, teaching and language skills. However, it would be appropriate if practitioner *re-inquiry* is made with these categories in mind.

In this study, the Inquiry methods benefited from some constructed situations. For example, the development plan/action strategy of reflective journaling and reflective discussions worked as

size of student teachers in collaboration with a sizeable group of teacher educators as co- equal practitioner-researchers.

Besides, there were some situations which improved the study but such situations were not repetitive enough to reanalyze. For instance, such constraints to reflection-in-action as power-cut, redundancies of the plasma lessons, and variations in class size, all emerged as both obstacles and opportunities for reflective re-construction of the situations for the Inquiry processes. They served as stimulus and objects for reflective journal keeping, narrating and group deliberations (Section 5.5).

Practitioner and student teacher activities are too complex and their determinants are far more complex than the researcher initially thought it relates to the practicum context. Diniz-Pereira (2002: 382) for, instance, has observed that “international organizations such as the World Bank” determine practitioner activities in teacher education institutions around the world (also Samoff 1998; Fuller 1991). In sharp contrast to this, Brookfield (1986: 288) has observed that “certain individuals and groups [who want] to make themselves heard and their demands felt” determine practitioner activities to a great extent. Yet, Schön (1987) observed that overambitious and unrealistic teacher education programs unusually doom reflective practicum to failure.

Thus, studying and flourishing a culture of reflection for/on/in action and, especially, reflection about practice, or reflection on reflection, is more effective at achieving re-construction when it is collaborative. That is to say effective EFL practicum requires coordinating multi-programs, cross-disciplinary and multi-institutional study cultures rather than limited to, for instance, EFL teacher educators alone. For instance, sociologists, social psychologists and anthropologists can work together with EFL-educators, applied linguists both on methodological and substantive issues.

## 6.4. Recommendations

Based on the empirical findings, re-constructed understandings and experiences in this particular setting of this study, some key recommendations pertaining to practicum program and curriculum designing and practical processing of reflection are outlined.

### 6.4.1. Programming of Reflective Practicum Curriculum

(i) The Contextual Analysis of the Practicum showed that a myriad of misconceptions and misconstructions pervade the context of the Practicum (Section 4.3). As the data analysis showed, consequently, compartmentalized view of practicum into school-based categories (e.g., implementation, application school official materials syllabi, Teacher Guide and Student Book) versus university-based categories (e.g., list of competencies, standards, and evaluation criteria to be rote learned) cropped up. Consequentially, as the data analysis suggested, de-contextualization and disconnection among the skills of linguistic (English language), teaching, and inquiry resulted. As was seen in Chapter Four (Sections 4.2.3. & 4.2.4) the consequences of all these were far-reaching on the student teachers' choices of strategies of reflection and action/interaction. They resorted to *replicating* and *routine practice*. Moreover, practicum became an end in itself, for instance, feed-back became one-off, prescriptive and top-down and student teachers were committed to learning by heart discrete skills like introducing, stabilizing and summarizing skills. This kind of practice is similar to what Schon (1983) and van Mannen (1977) describe as determinist and 'technical rationality' practices and to 'mechanical/positivist view of language use/learning' (Hymes 1979; Rutherford 1987 ;), each of which we explored in Chapter Two.

Practicum setting and reflective learning is an indeterminate, open, complex or dynamic. Therefore, as was explored in the Inquiry Phase, bottom-up, reflective, generative, or re-constructive practices as propounded by Schön and Brookfield and language-as-an-event-in-context views (Halliday 1979, 1985; Searle 1995, 2002) are mandatory. *Effective EFL teacher training/education cannot go in a factory-like production fashion*, or what some educational theorists call as *Fordism*—which is

“characterized by a moving assembly line, where the product passes the workers along a conveyor, rather than the workers having to move to the product as in nodal production” (Brown, et. al 1997: 174). Student teachers must be promoted, helped and encouraged to directly and actively confront problems, analyze them, interpret what they mean to them, re-construct new understanding and change their situation. This is a process of preferential interpretation of own practice; it cannot be done by proxy. They should be encouraged to exercise their power to transform objective reality/situation into a condition rather favorable to pupils’ learning; thinking or practicing the converse, where conditions/situations/objective reality dictates the student teacher, as was suggested by the Contextual Analysis of the condition of the Practicum, is tantamount to dehumanizing student teachers. To *know* something, a situation or reality is “to *be able* to objectify it, to say definitively what it is” (Foucault as cited in Carter 1997: 128, Emphasis added).

(ii) Initially, this study conceptualized (Chapter One Section 1.5. Conceptual Framework No. 3) that *there is holistic relation among language, teaching and inquiry skills reconstruction in a pre-service EFL reflective practicum*. Similarly, in the Inquiry Phase of this study, it has been observed that the status or property of a student teacher’s English language skills ability does not exclusively determine the other two skills—teaching and inquiry skills. With whatever level of English proficiency, the participant student teachers could begin to conceptualize and ‘name’ their teaching experiences. For example, they conceptualized and described dilemmas confronting them, for instance between their roles and the role of the TV-teacher; their concerns, for instance, lack of control over lesson time; their high and low points of practices. They also attempted to conceptualize alternative lessons beyond what were given in the national textbooks; self-reflected, critiqued and expressed their future intentions as we saw in their reflection on their own assumptions and actions. Through immersion in the process of reflective journal keeping and discussions processes, the English skills of the student teachers improved alongside other reflection skills—teaching and inquiry skills. For EFL student teachers, reflective practice encompasses linguistic (English), pedagogic (teaching) and inquiry (metacognitive) practices, in tandem.

Thus, based on the re-constructed understandings, the present researcher defines an effective EFL reflection as (i) generative/bottom-up re-construction of English Language, Teaching, and Inquiry skills, and (ii) re-construction of understandings about own classroom actions/inter-actions and the underlying assumptions about these. Thus, objects for effective EFL reflection has to be clear. The researcher has learned from the empirical findings and experiences in the research that objects or issues for EFL students teachers to reflect *for/in/on/about* should be: (1) their classroom actions/inter-actions, (2) assumptions that underlay these, (3) university and school practices, and (4) conditions of their practice. The latter is important since the reflective practicum is under constraining conditions as the present research indicated.

(iii). The Contextual Analysis of the condition of the Practicum in the context (Haramaya University) has disclosed that the practicum program is focused on management and overseeing of implementation of the Practicum Office's standards and the school's syllabi (Section 4.3.2.4). To this end, too many checklists are employed (See Appendix 2). This weakened re-constructive practice, where student teachers and their teacher educators (supervisors) are supposed to collaboratively do, test out, invent and explore new and better practices of teaching EFL. Therefore, the Practicum Office has to give autonomy to them to decide what, how and to what end both reflect and act. We have to take Wallace (1991: 147), who recommends that a reflective practicum course "should lead trainees to greater autonomy by allowing them increasing independence action." The Practicum Office has to create, rather, a common forum of practitioner inquirers, for instance, establishing *Journal of (EFL) Practitioner Inquirers*. Such a forum will create a discourse community, a community of informed academics that create, invent and distribute reflective concepts, conceptual frameworks and tools to EFL student teachers and emerging practitioners.

#### 6.4.2. Promoting the Ability to Reflect

By promoting reflection, here, it means causing and promoting the natural tendency of becoming reflective teachers by providing determinant conditions to EFL student teachers. Becoming a reflective practitioner or reflective teacher is sometimes steady, demanding, and frustrating process and still it is sometimes a leap, yielding and possible journey.

(i) An EFL reflective practicum process must be systematic and unified. The Contextual Analysis unpacked that the Practicum is characteristic of *fragmented* and *incomplete* constructions of the necessary processes of reflection for/in/on/about actions and practices (Section 4.4). In contrast to this, the Inquiry Phase has yielded significant level of reflectivity (Section 5.4). Thus, based on the findings, processes of effective reflection, has been identified as constituting six interacting processes: (1) dialogic/participative discussion, (2) reflection-for-action (3) reflection-in-action, (4) reflection-on-action, (5) reflection about school practices and (6) reflection on the reflective practicum and school practices. Thus, practitioner inquiry as employed in this research is important in coordinating all these processes

(ii) The Contextual Analysis of the Practicum has uncovered that an array of misconceptions surround reflection and action research (Section 4.3.2). The findings show that this is true not only for student teachers but also of teacher educators and practicum programmers. But, what was interesting was that all the informant EFL teacher educators had had adequate awareness not only of what reflection and action research exactly are but also that they were critically evaluating, scrutinizing and calling into question the prevalent misconceptions. One of the biggest constraints, according to the EFL educators, is that neither the action research course, nor the practicum syllabus is in their control; they are offered by the Pedagogy Department and overseen by the Practicum Office. This contradicts with the decentralization that the new teacher education policy envisioned (MOE 2002; 2003). Therefore, it is highly recommended that these courses be run by the EFL teacher educators so that the processes, contents and outcomes are collaboratively designed, including involvement of student teachers in all these levels.

(iii). One of the Inquiry Phase non-improved aspects of reflectivity was that of student teachers' blaming of pupils rather than making *analysis* of the generative causes for their misbehaviors. Indeed, studies indicate that this is also true of even very experienced teachers (Clark & Peterson 1986). Although it is unrealistic expectation to require such reflective analysis from novice teachers, still we can help student teachers turn these problems to object of reflection and their action research. In spite of the fact that they are circumscribed by a myriad of practical problem,, student teachers are engaged, rather, in survey research, where researching on and improving practical, real, personally meaningful problem is impossible. According to informant teacher educators, still "the vast majority of the so-called report is copied or plagiarized. [This, however, needs to be empirically confirmed]. Therefore, student teachers ought to be helped to practice reflecting on/in/about their own actions rather.

(iv). This study has identified that the biggest challenge to reflection-for/in-action, action research, and practitioner inquiry is the live televised-lesson, or customarily called *plasma*. All the student teachers and the informant teacher educators concurred that, it made reflection for/in action irrelevant, for it gave student teachers pre-determined contents and time, each of which they have no control over at all. It left student teachers diagnosticians or, as an educational sociologist said, "gatekeepers" (Brook 2006). It gave the student teachers time stress and context dilemma and inflexibility. Furthermore, it made action research, for student teachers, and the joint practitioner inquiry, for the researcher, impossible, each of which normally requires testing out an innovative action. Without the plasma, however, the student teachers improved their reflectivity. This problem can be alleviated if the EFL-lessons package is recorded on, for instance compact discs (CD) and distributed to teachers rather than it being transmitted from a single studio from the capital city. Another possibility might be making the lessons available online; however, observations indicate that although internet cables are observed the internet connection is either malfunctioning or is only available at, in an informant teacher educator's words, "snail's pace". The general recommendation given here corresponds to what Connely and Clandininn (1988), prominent second language teacher education theorists, point to as necessary for us to prepare effective teachers: (student) teachers must actively participate in innovating, researching and designing second or foreign language teaching/learning curricula, syllabi and teaching/learning practices.

(v).The Inquiry Phase developmental plan or Action Strategy (as theoretically explicated in Chapter Three Section 3.5.4 and practically applied in the Inquiry Phase study) has yielded significant **form of opportunities for effective reflection** (Chapter Six). On the basis of the empirical and comparative analysis of the condition of the Practicum (Chapter Four) and the situation of the Inquiry (Chapter Five), on one hand, and the conceptual framework of this study (Chapter One Section 1.5), on the other, enabling factors or **determinants** for the improved level of reflective skills and ability were identified and formulated in the following conceptual model (Fig. 3 below). The figure encapsulates the confirmation in this study that the ultimate real power for change lies in the student teacher (see the sphere in the centre of the diagram). The researcher recommends to himself for his own future practices; the fundamentals of the model can be transferable to the specific circumstances of same context of the study. The model and the determinants discovered can also possibly be transferable to other EFL/ESL contexts with some modifiability but still keeping some of the core elements is helpful. The model demonstrates that accepting the transformative power of human agent (the student teacher) is pivotal in the improvement of the situation of the problem (the sphere in the middle of the model). In the practitioner inquiry, student teachers were considered as participants and colleagues with no significant infringement on the researchers' various roles, namely analyst, reflector, facilitator, transformer, observant scientific explainer of emergent issues and themes using current theoretical literature such as those reviewed in the Literature Chapter.

The application of this model in a practitioner inquiry strategy has been found easy and practical. As displayed in the left box, this consideration of student teachers as change agent should be premised upon dialogic and generative approach to practicum, which this research has confirmed it is possible (Chapter Two Section 2.3). It is believed that this approach enabled (see the leftward block arrow in the figure) student teachers to make free and informed decisions, for instance, to make changes to the time, place, and contents of their practices (Sections 3.5.4.3.2). This contributed to their having a control over their time and lesson materials at their disposal, including the school syllabi. This gave them trust and confidence (Section 5.54.4). Based on what theorists developed, the researcher provided the student teachers with generative, in contrast to performance-oriented, tools such as *dilemma analysis tool* (Appendix 1). It has been confirmed that these kinds of tool gave access to reality/experience through introspection,

reflective observation, discussion and thoughtful considerations of experiences--practical problems, assumptions and actions (Section 5.4) and, hence, effective reflection for/in/on/about action and practices.

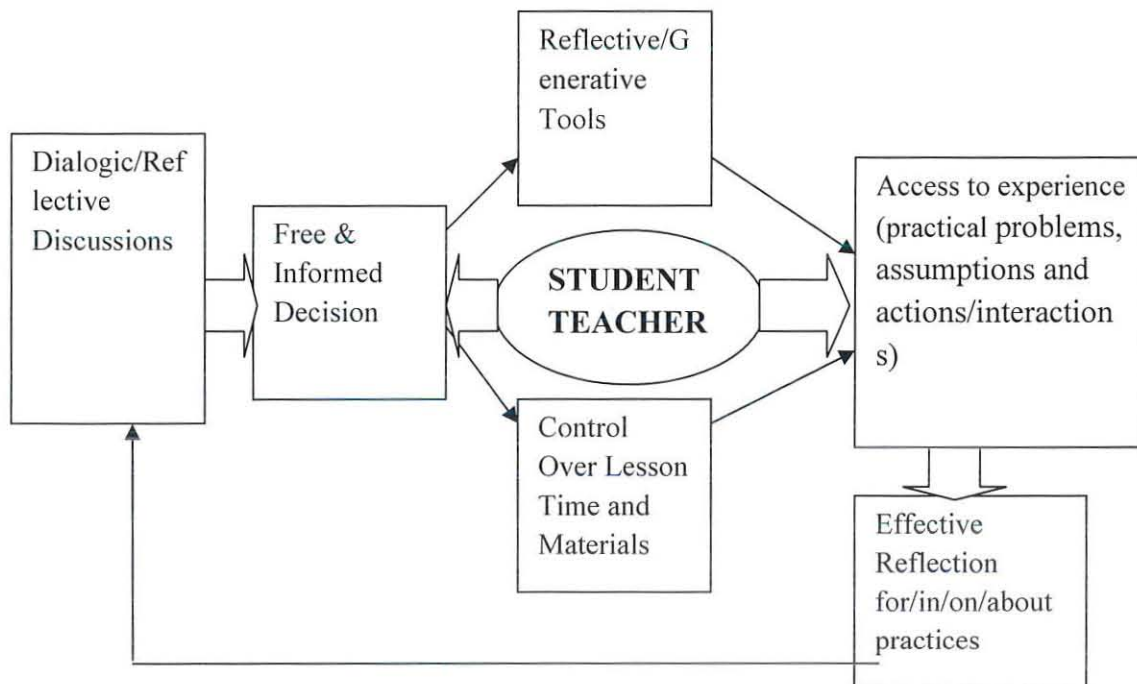
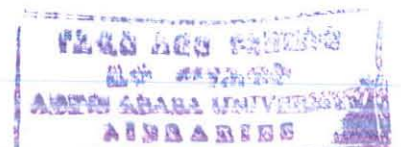


Fig. 3: *Constructed Model of the Determinants of Effective EFL Reflection*

Thus, the researcher recommends Practitioner Inquiry Strategy (Fig. 1) and this constructed model as useful strategies both to create conditions for effective reflection and realizing of EFL student teachers' potential for reflective reconstruction of their reflection skills—English, teaching and inquiry-- in mutual and interactive manner.

Besides, both of the constructed *Practitioner Inquiry Model* and *Model of the Determinants of Effective EFL Reflection* address insights from current reflective practicum researchers. For instance, what the findings and the models show is similar to what Sosniak (1999: 195-196) observe as the appropriate professional and subject matter knowledge for teacher education. Sosniak argues that it is not just “*what* knowledge”, it is also, if not more important, “*whose*



knowledge” counts and “*how the knowledge is generated*” (Emphasis is added). It has been seen that it is the personal, the meaningful and the re-constructed knowledge that counts. As indicated in the centre of the model, this kind of knowledge is possible if the student teachers are encouraged to make informed and free choice and is helped to access experience— problems, issues, dilemmas, and confusions that occur in their contexts. The keys to their ability to decide, choose, access and re-construct their experience are open, effective and reflective discussions and tools. Freire and Macedo (1995:379-381) are key educators to explicate to us that that dialogic approach is a fundamental ‘epistemological relationship’ among the “educator”, the “student” and the “object of knowledge” and “dialogue is a way of knowing” and should “never be viewed as a mere tactic to involve students in a particular task” and neither is it a “conversation that mechanically focus” students on tasks.

(vi). For the above model to be adapted /adopted, teacher educators themselves need to be able to make their own informed and free choices. For instance, they need to design appropriate role frames, evaluation standards, feedback styles, reflection tools and make any preferential interpretations over their practices. Indeed, the policy guide encourages ‘student teachers’ participation’, ‘teacher educator autonomy’ and ‘democratization of teacher education institutions’ (MOE 2002; 2003). Therefore, these remain to be translated to action by faculty and university managements and, especially, by the Practicum Program Office.

(vii). One of the ongoing challenges to reflection in this study was student teachers’ lack of trust in the durability of knowledge and skills they re-constructed and, hence, to critical reflection (Section 5.2.2.3). This is only indicative of the complex nature of reflective practicum and reflection. Sometimes, they, even, went to the extent of feeling that they were *practicing falsity*, that is, they already knew once they left the campus they would never be able to continue to critically reflect on/about their practices. Addressing this problem requires continuous professional development, among many other socio-educational macro conditions. This, in turn, requires fundamental acknowledgement of the fact that educational reality and EFL educational practices are texts or inputs for second/foreign language teachers and students to reflect, interpret, write, speak, ‘read’ and ‘listen’ about/on.

when they feel it is necessary, the existing patterns and processes of school and classroom actions/interactions. These ought to be the key objects-of-reflection on practicum. In addition to this each party—student teachers, school teachers/mentors, and teacher educators— ought to engage in collaborative practitioner inquiry. The Practitioner Inquiry Strategy model constructed and employed in this study (See Fig. 1) has been proven helpful for this.

(xi). In the course of the study, it has been discovered that the vital practicum program emphasis, which aimed at constructivist approach (MOE 2003), has, unfortunately, turned up practically routine practice. The findings seem to indicate that this is due, mainly, to assumption that underlies the Practicum, namely the application of theory through pre-determined and theory-driven categories, formats, questionnaires, guidelines and questions. Thus, the implication drawn from this misconception is the need for teacher educators and practicum programmers to invoke what can be called as *reflection on reflection* or critical reflection about the Practicum. That is to say that deeper and extensive reflections, discussions and awareness-raising seminars on the philosophical, theoretical and practical grounds of reflection and reflective practice is necessary condition for effective practicum to be realistic. In so doing, teacher educators might also engage student teachers on modest reflection-on-reflection which, in turn, might trigger meta-cognitive and inquiry awareness and skills in the prospective teachers.

(xii) Quite related to No. xi, the study has revealed the misconception that action research involves just application of scientific and research-based theories in a controlled way and in quantitative analysis of a phenomenon. The implications drawn from the prevailing misconception might be that the action research courses should be offered to the EFL student teachers by EFL teacher educators themselves rather than by distant departments like pedagogy or psychology. Besides, it should be offered as process and part and parcel of the Practicum rather than as independent, product or goal in itself. Furthermore teacher educators should be aware about principles and practices of action research. On the whole, teacher educators should practice doing action research collaboratively with student teachers and among one another. Finally, there is apparent need for creating a community of action researchers or reflective practitioners through a *journal of reflective practicum* where practitioners make and invent discourses.

## 6.5. Implications for Further Research

A number of future focal points for action for both the researcher and other practitioners have emerged from the present study. By considering the context of Haramaya University and similar pre-service EFL practicum context, the following major areas of further research are recommended as a point of departure:

(i) This research is indicative of the fact that under any level of constraining conditions, there is always space for maneuver if we inquire into the conditions. Nevertheless, sometimes paradoxes were observed. One of the interesting unobtrusive observations was that, the EFL teacher educators experience theory-practice inconsistency. That means, they for instance, in principle knew that prescriptive feedback, judgmental assessment and unobtrusive supervision are all “unproductive”, in their words, but still they practically did practice all these. What is more fascinating is that they knew also that there is always a window of opportunity, however little, to transform their practice conditions, for instance, through longer participant observation of lessons and organizing post-lesson group discussions. What is the cause for such a practice-theory inconsistency? How can it be improved? Studies should reveal the deeper properties, patterns, causations of this phenomenon and ways for overcoming it.

(ii) Another emergent problematic category was the disintegrated or non-cooperative interpersonal (e.g., student teachers, school teachers and teacher educators) and inter-institutional (e.g., school-university) relationships. This might be indicative of what Schön (1983; 1987) calls *culture of hierarchies of knowledge*, which was (and may be is) rampant in Western universities, too. Nevertheless, further studies and actions are necessary to change this rather to a collaborative community of reflective practitioners.

(ii) The Inquiry phase of this study has spotlighted that (a) describing of a phenomenon or what is going on here and now, (b) surveying of perceptions or attitudes towards the phenomenon, and/or (c) interpretation of these in a monological and non-participative ways miss or are incomplete description of the reality. For instance, had it not been participative, this study might not have discovered that the core factor that sustained the inability to reflect and difficulty

for reflection was, mainly, the student teachers' lack of effective, reflective and generative tools. Moreover, initially the participant student teachers were unconditionally appreciative of the condition under which they were practicing, but later after participant observations and dialogic discussions they began to expose their true self. [See, for instance, that Adinew's 2007 and Jeylan's 2007 findings that the problem lies just in student teachers' poor English proficiency]. Furthermore, it has been learned that description and interpretation lack *action and explanation*. It is one thing to describe and interpret and report, it is another thing to take action and explain in order to contribute to changing the situation of the problem. Exploring alternatives, by intervening and taking actions, is what EFL teacher training in Haramaya University, in particular, and across Ethiopian teacher education institutions, in general, what is seriously needed. Explanation, in this sense, involves causal analysis—disentangling the generative factors for appearance of the phenomenon. Experience in this study has indicated that student teachers, usually and without help, are unaware of the causal dynamics for how they behave (what they say, act, or feel) and why they selected to do so (the way they say, act, or feel).

The experience re-constructed confirms Anthony Giddens' (in Tucker 1998: 58) conception of social scientific studies that:

'Mutual understanding is not a methodological postulate, but the very ontological condition of human life in society as such'. The researcher must grasp the culture of a society and be able to participate in it in principle, if s/he is to understand that society. Understanding or *Verstehen* involves 'publicly accessible' meanings articulated in language and embedded in tacit rules.

This means that respondents or interviewees are reflective, concept-bearing and concept-inventing humans. In other words, as experienced by the researcher, they can close themselves, for instance, if we don not approach them dialogic and participative ways. Thus, the researcher calls upon other practitioners and researchers to unleash further research, reflections and discourses on the relations of the research, the researched, the participants and the context, especially, in the Ethiopian context. The researcher's experience shows that almost the vast majority, if not all, of graduate theses that the researcher came across are descriptive and/or interpretive studies. By promoting reflections on research and paradigms of research, the

prevalent compartmentalization and gaps between theory and practice, action and reflection, teachers and educators and teaching and training will narrow.

(iv). By way of naturalistic observations in the practicum partner schools, the researcher unintentionally observed that almost the vast majority of pupils failed because, according to the school teacher, they “lacked a language for discussing even the very basic local issues, materials, and furniture.” This might well connect to the nature of reflection skills difficulty that this study identified. Although it is possible to predict this problem from the findings of this study, for instance arguing that their situation might be characteristic of disconnection among reflection/discussion, EFL language and the context, this only describes the situation rather than critically explaining. Therefore, what exactly this problem means for EFL teacher educators and their practices and how it can be critically and empirically explained remains to be examined. An insight to this might help us gain further insights into ways for connecting university-school practices.

(v.) The Inquiry phase data has indicated that the reflective practicum alone is far less than promising for professional growth of teachers. This is indicated by the challenge posed from **loss of confidence in durability** of the knowledge, habits and skills that they constructed. This connects with the constraining conditions of the secondary schools they would be going to face. That is that, they have practically witnessed the challenges that they would face outside the Inquiry Phase—a momentary situation that they constructed, together with the researcher and their pupils, as ‘artificial’ or laboratory situation, where they have had relatively better freedom and power to make decisions, unlike the normal official-times of the secondary schools . This story points to the fact that there is competition between the (student) teachers, on one hand, and the school (state), on the other, on the control of classroom times, lesson contents and interpretation of practices of good/bad teaching/learning. Under such conditions, how can student teachers be helped not to lose those knowledge, skills and inspirations of reflective teaching they acquired, once they become, in their words, “normal teachers”? Research on these issues plays a vital role in improving the practices and systems of EFL teacher education in the country.

## 6.6. Concluding Remark

A final remark for the researcher is that, he came to this research wanting to better understand a problem that he experientially confronted with, namely EFL student teachers' inability to reflect on their practices. What was equally important for the researcher was, given the identified conditions of the problem—its causations, processes and patterns—what could be done to improve the situation. The researcher has emerged from this research with a strong body of evidence that supports the notion that their inability to reflect is just a condition of lack of mechanisms that trigger re-construction of their own actions and assumptions through systematic reflection for/in/on/about their practices. The research has enabled the researcher to become a more informed practitioner in the process in his professional ambition of training reflective EFL teachers.

Furthermore, the research has allowed the researcher to learn about Holistic Model of EFL Reflective Practicum Design, a Model of the Determinants of Effective Reflection, and Holistic Model of EFL Reflection Processes, none of each the researcher was aware about previously. Above all, this research as practitioner inquiry carried out by the practitioner on his own practice has permitted the researcher to formulate a most important guiding professional conceptual frame for his future professional journey: **Given an incapacitating [contextually analyzed] problematic condition, how can I help [through participative inquiry] my student teachers enhance their capacity?**

The current challenge is making teacher educators and practitioners aware that they need to raise their awareness about practitioner inquiry-- where taking action is pivotal--and dialogic and re-constructive reflection. Speaking to these issues and conducting practitioner inquiry such as this signals the importance of these issues and gets reflection-on-reflection rolling, both in the field of EFL and other disciplines.

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(viii). In the course of this study, it has been understood that, there are *dynamic* and *mutual* relationships between assumption about reflection and the actual processes and patterns of action/interaction strategies in a practicum. On the whole, the observed change in reflectivity (Chapter Five Section 5.3 and Section 5.4) suggest that, when *assumption is taken-for-granted and, hence, not made object of critical reflection, the existing patterns/processes of action/interaction are reproduced*. But, when the former is the converse (i.e., assumption is made object of effective reflection with reflective tools), both are *re-constructed*. This evidence strongly supports the following recommendations to overcome the persistent reflection skills difficulties in pre-service EFL student teachers: For student teachers (i) refining *their* assumptions about teaching practices, (ii) reflective conversation with the problematic of classroom actions/interactions and (iii) seeking alternative pedagogic practices ought to be the building elements of reflection on practicum.

(ix) For this (recommendation No. viii) to be possible the key is the teacher educator. This study has demonstrated that there is always a room for transformation of a problematic situation, even under extremely constraining situations. The latter were discerned in this study as triggering generative factors for steady but remarkable change in the student teachers' ability. Thus, teacher educators should provide student teachers with *generative* reflection tools, rather than tasks for performing out and completion of pre-established competences and procedures, and encourage open, participative, group or reflective discussions based on issues, themes, challenges and opportunities that the reflective tools generate. Exclusively for EFL teacher educators, the researcher strongly suggests Stephen Brookfield's practical and critical *tools* and *eyes* for reflection and Donald Schön's grandiose epistemology of reflection-in-action (Chapter Two Section 2.4.4). Both ix and viii suggestions can be addressed through Practitioner Inquiry Strategy and Determinants of Effective Reflection models above (Fig. 1 & Fig. 3).

(x) This study has confirmed that there are non-collaborative, prescriptive and judgmental role frame between teacher educators and student teachers. This made the student teachers unconditionally accept the top-down 'truth' without reflecting on them. This curbed student teachers' motives to call the 'truth' into question. Therefore, teacher educators and the faculty of education should encourage EFL student teachers to observe, plan, reflect and act to change,

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Reflective Journaling Instruments

A: Dilemma Analysis Instrument (adopted from Talanquer, et al., 2007)

#### Instructions

Identify a particular challenge or dilemma related to your practicum experience. It might be a sticky situation that caught your attention, made you confused and forced you to make a decision. Carefully, build your analysis of the situation addressing the following questions:

1. What was the problem or dilemma?
2. Why was it important or relevant to you?
3. How did the dilemma emerge? How did it develop?
4. How did you try to solve the problem? What was the rationale for your decision?
5. How did the dilemma or problem influence your beliefs about teaching or learning?
6. What would you do the next time?

B: Plan-Implement-Reflect Journal Entries

#### Instructions

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date (s): \_\_\_\_\_

1. **Plan:** Briefly summarize what you did to get ready for the Practicum class (You may want to discuss your preparations for lessons and how important this preparation was, and/ or what other preparation you might have done.)
2. **Implementation:** Briefly summarize pertinent information related to: what the students were learning/ producing this week; what types of instructional strategies were being employed; what interactions you had with students.
3. **Focus:** Narrow your discussion to a particular issue/idea/incident that captured your interest. Briefly relate the issue/idea/ incident. And why you think it is important.
4. **Reflections:** On the plan and the implementation, reflect upon your feelings/ opinions as well as what you've experienced and/or read about your focus issue/ idea/incident. Consider the following questions (just as examples) why is it an issue? Was the incident avoidable? How would you have responded to the incident (or how do you wish you had responded) and why? How des the issue/idea/incident relate to what you've experienced previously or to what you've read/ heard about in this class or another? What did you learn this week that will help you as a teacher?
5. **Artifacts:** Attach or include evidence of your preparation, involvement, professional growth, e.g., full or mini lesson plan, copies of student work, comments from students/teachers, etc.

C: Critical Incidents Journal

**I. High points of practice**

Think back over the past week. Choose an incident that made you say to yourself, “This is what teaching is really all about” or “This is a great day in my life as a beginning teacher.” Write some notes about this incident. Make sure that you write down where and when the event happened, who was involved, and what it was that made the event so significant.

**II. Low (negative) points of practice**

Think back over the past week. Choose the event that caused you the greatest distress in your practice as a beginning / practicing teacher, i.e. the kind of event that made you regret or question your joining of the teaching profession, or the event that you spent the most time worrying about. Write some notes about this incident of where, why, and when this event happened, who was involved and what it was about the event that was so distressing to you.

**Appendix 2: Some Practicum Documents**

English Teachers' Guide grade 9

- There is no specific preparation necessary for this lesson but you might like to familiarize yourself, again, with the grammatical constructions and rules governing the expression of result, using so... that and reason using because, since and as
- The lesson is too short for all the exercises to be completed. There is one exercise left undone. If possible, please arrange a time for the students to do this exercise or give it to them for homework.

Teacher preparation

- Listen to a recap of the lesson.
- Listen as some students read their questions and answer to the class rules.
- Do guided exercises to practice the grammatical construction and its rules to be covered in the lesson.
- Listen to an explanation of the reason for grammatical construction and its rules.
- Mark their work and correct any errors.
- Do exercises to practice the construction and its rules.
- Listen to an explanation of the first grammatical construction and its rules to be covered in this lesson.
- Listen to an introduction to the lesson.

The students will:

Exercises during the lesson

- The reading of their work to the class, by some selected students.
- Completion of exercises from the textbook based on the second of these rules.
- Checking of the answers to the exercises and correction if and when necessary.
- Completion of exercises from the textbook based on the first of these rules.
- Introduction of the two grammatical constructions to be covered.
- Introduction to the lesson.

Outline of the television lesson

### Outline of the television lesson

- Introduction to the lesson
- Introduction of the two grammar points to be covered
- Completion of exercises from the textbook based on the first of these rules
- Checking of the answers to the exercise, and correction if and when necessary
- Completion of exercises from the textbook based on the second of these rules
- The reading of their work to the class, by some selected students.

### Exercises during the lesson

The students will

- Listen to an introduction to the lesson
- Listen to an explanation of the first grammatical construction and its rules to be covered in this lesson
- Do exercises to practise this construction and its rules
- Mark their work and correct any errors
- Listen to an explanation of the second grammatical construction and its rules to be covered in this lesson
- Do guided exercises to practise this grammatical construction and its rules
- Listen as some students read their questions and answers to the class
- Listen to a recap of the lesson.

### Teacher preparation

- There is no specific preparation necessary for this lesson but you might like to familiarize yourself, again, with the grammatical constructions and rules governing the expression of result, using so ... that, and reason using because, since and as
- The lesson is too short for all the exercises to be completed. There is one exercise left undone. If possible, please arrange a time for the students to do this exercise or give it to them for homework

PRACTICUM IV

Pre - Observation Checklist Student teacher Assessment

Complete this checklist prior to being observed by your supervisor. Be prepared to explain your responses and cite examples when appropriate

No.	Description	Yes	No.
1	Have I prepared complete lesson plans that include clearly stated objectives, teaching procedures, a list of material and media needed, and assessment procedures and materials?		
2	Have I used information about students to plan and organize my instruction? Did I consider the different needs of students in my planning?		
3	Did I consider the students' interests and experiences in my planning?		
4	Do my lessons integrate knowledge from several subject areas?		
5	Am I aware of my communication with the students? Is my language grammatically correct and appropriate for the school environment?		
6	Have I considered how I will communicate high expectations to all students in my class or classes?		
7	Have I considered the various cultural, ethnic, socio-economic gender, and special population students represented in my classroom and intentionally planned to be sensitive to diversity?		
8	Do I take time to listen to what they are saying by responding appropriately?		
9	Have I planned for a classroom climate that is accepting of all and encourages creativity, inquisitiveness, and risk-taking?		
10	Do the lesson I have planned provide opportunities for meaningful student interaction?		
11	Do I have enough background knowledge to effectively teach the subject? If not, am I taking necessary steps to improve my background knowledge before teaching the subject /lesson?		
12	Am I enthusiastic about what I am teaching? Can I convey that enthusiasm to the students?		
13	Have I planned how I will communicate the objectives and the importance of the topic of being studied?		
14	Have I considered how I can make this lesson relevant and meaningful to the students in my class? Can I relate the lesson to the students' everyday lives?		
15	Have I planned for a variety of teaching strategies that promote learning?		
16	In my teaching, will I address different learning styles, performance modes multiple intelligences, and special education /gifted education needs?		
17	Have I considered the level of my students and how easily language is understood?		
18	Have I planned clear directions for carrying out instructional activities? What examples will I use for clarification?		

continued...

- to prepare lesson plans, evaluation formats, guidelines, synopses etc.
- monitoring the ongoing program.
- provide support & periodical supervision to partner schools.
- documentation of "good practice".
- insights, comments, challenges, education practitioners, working documents, schedules.
- to enhance a sense of community among departments, administration, student-teachers & staff.

**The practicum is administered by the Practicum Coordination Office:**

- to develop & administer procedures & planning affecting practicum programs.
- the placement of student teachers.
- establish & maintain central files of practicum sites.
- organize & conduct workshops or seminars for all parties that involve in practicum.
- plan, design & prepare package materials those are relevant to practicum.

*Handwritten note*

**The program necessitates:**

- Coordination, monitoring & supervision.
- to plan & develop partnerships with schools so that students get support & advice from school teachers.
- to allocate time, budget and resources.

**The underlying principle behind practicum**

- to produce quality teachers.
- to deliver theory & practice in an integrated, balanced, inseparable & continuous way.
- to broaden the knowledge & skills of student-teachers.

*Handwritten note*

**Practicum Definition**

- the time spent by students in developing their understanding of the complexity of teaching & learning process in schools & the role of the teacher.

WELCOME TO THE 5TH PRACTICUM CONSULTATIVE WORK SHOP  
 HARAMAYA UNIVERSITY  
 NOVEMBER 25, 2006

*Handwritten note: HUPCO = Haramaya University Practicum Coordination Office*

HARAMAYA UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION

CHERCHER SECONDARY SCHOOL

FORMAT OF EVALUATION FOR STUDENT TEACHERS' ACTIVITIES  
OUTSIDE THE CLASS ROOM

(To be completed by partner school practicum coordinators and submitted back to practicum coordinating office or head of the respective departments). The school practicum coordinators may consult principals, friends and anyone else who work with the student teachers.

Name of the student teacher Tuway Haikw Department English  
ID. NO 3178197 School Chercher

Marks: 5= Very good, 4= Good, 3= Fair, 2= Poor, 1= Unsatisfactory

No	Evaluation Criteria	5	4	3	2	1
1	Conduct additional classes, tutorials, and overhaul willingness to help his students	✓				
2	Social relation with the school community, community around the school and others.		✓			
3	Participation in co-curricular activities.	✓				
4	Free from any bad habits	✓				
5	Relation with students outside the class room		✓			
6	Punctuality	✓				
7	Readiness to carry out responsibilities	✓				
8	How long he/she stays in the school compound in working hours	✓				

Total marks 38/40

General comments \_\_\_\_\_

Strengths \_\_\_\_\_

Weakness \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation for improvement \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2 ...

Underline or circle the elements that were present in the lesson observed and then and additional comments below if required.

**TEACHER ACTIVITY** includes: the teacher communicated the objectives to the children, the teacher used some active learning methods, questions were asked throughout the lesson, the lesson was well focused on objectives, a high level of subject knowledge was evident, knowledge was delivered at an appropriate level for children, positive interaction with children, lesson well paced, a range of relevant examples were used to help understanding, main points were summarized at the end, the teacher used methods that enabled assessment of the children's understanding, boys and girls were given equal opportunities.

**Additional Comments**

**STUDENT ACTIVITY** includes: the children were activity involved in the lesson, all children could see a text book if required, children able to answer questions asked, over 50% of children in class answered questions, children appeared to understand the subject content, children had the opportunity to show their understanding, children were encouraged to ask questions, boys and girls responded equally, children's activities were varied, a positive challenge was given.

**Additional Comments**

Two successful things about the lesson

# Appendix 2 ...

Practicum 1, 2009

## Daily Lesson Plan format 2

School Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's name \_\_\_\_\_

Cr. & Sec. \_\_\_\_\_

Subject \_\_\_\_\_

Dur. of a period \_\_\_\_\_

Objective (s) – At the end of the lesson the students will be able to:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Lesson	Time	Main content	Teacher's activity	Student's activity	Teaching aids/material	Remark
One	2		Before the broadcast			
	30		Before the broadcast <i>While</i>			
	12		Before the broadcast <i>After</i>			
Two	2		Before the broadcast			
	30		Before the broadcast <i>While</i>			
	12		Before the broadcast <i>After</i>			

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HARAMAYA UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF EDUCATION

LESSON EVALUATION FORMAT FOR PRACTIVUM IV

(To be completed at least two times by instructor and schoolteacher) Use the backside for your second time evaluation.

NAME OF STUDENT TEACHER Sissy Astutke  
 DEPARTMENT English ID.No 3165/97  
 UNIT/TOPIC: Unit - 11 Listening  
 SCHOOL: Chercher Sec & prep. school  
 MARKS: 5= Very good, 4= Good, 3=Fair, 2= Poor, 1=Unsatisfactory.

No.	Evaluation Criteria	5	4	3	2	1
1.	<b>LESSON PLAN F ORMAT</b>					
1.1.	How well all the elements of the lesson plan written in the lesson plan format?		✓			
1.2.	Are the objectives smart and related to lesson contents?		✓			
1.3.	The logical sequence of contents.	✓				
1.4.	Manageability of the lesson content within the given time		✓			
1.5.	Do assessment questions relate to the lesson objectives?			✓		
2.	<b>APPLICATION OF PEDAGOGICAL &amp; SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE IN TEACHING PROCESS:</b>					
2.1.	Is a student teacher well postured? (Looking to his students or carelessly standing any where in the room)	✓				
2.2.	How does the teacher settle the class so that they are ready for the lesson?		✓			
2.3.	Is the topic is introduced in a manner to sound interesting?	✓				
2.4.	How the eye contact is maintained to draw the attention of all students?		✓			
2.5.	Does the voice reach all corners of classroom & is there voice modulation?	✓				
2.6.	Handwriting and how efficient is the blackboard usage.			✓		
2.7.	Use of body language?		✓			
2.8.	Language proficiency?	✓				
2.9.	Are students asked to do any activity?		✓			
2.10.	Ability to make a lesson participatory.		✓			
2.11.	How does the teacher get evidence that the learning objectives have been met?		✓			
2.12.	Are subject- matter concepts conveyed & delivered clearly?	✓				
2.13.	Are teaching aids used when required?			✓		
2.14.	Are relevant and varied examples given?		✓			
2.15.	Are the students properly directed & motivated?		✓			
2.16.	Is homework or class work set?		✓			
2.17.	Are the students' response appreciated and encouraged?		✓			

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# Appendix 2 ...

Practicum I, 2009

## Evaluation Checklist on Students Lesson Observation and Evaluation

Evaluation student Lesson Observation and Evaluation by putting a tick in the box as follows:

1. Very Poor      2. Poor      3. Good      4. Very good      5. Excellent

No	Items	1	2	3	4	5
1	Adequacy of observation of teacher activity					
2	Adequacy of observation of student activity					
3	Efforts made to identify successful things of lessons					
4	Adequacy of the reasons for the successful things					
5	The value of the recommendation(s) for improvement					
6	The degree of critical analysis of reflection on the lesson observed					
7	The quality of general comment					

Comment:

## Unit Plan evaluation Checklist

No	Item	Yes	No
1	Does the breadth content Match with and time allocated		
2	Is the introduction Adequate in over viewing the unit		
3	Are the objectives relevant to the curriculum for which students will be held accountable?		
4	Do the objectives promote a range of learning outcomes across several domains of learning (cog; off, Psych.)?		
5	Are the objectives written terms of what learners are expected to known or do?		
6	Do the objectives correspond to the readiness and ability		

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**Lesson Plan evaluation format to be used by evaluators**

No	Items	Yes	No
1	Does the lesson plan derive from, and is it obviously related to, the unit of study?		
2	Are the objectives clear & measurable?		
3	Are the objectives appropriate to the learners?		
4	Are the lesson activities related to the objectives, interesting & effective?		
5	Does the lesson take into account what is known about learners & learning?		
6	Are the materials & resources adequate?		
7	Does the plan provide a clear lesson beginning (preparing the student for what is to be learned), middle learning activities, and culmination (Summary, conclusion, and transfer)?		
8	Does the plan account for where the activities will take place and for transitions (change & movements)?		
9	Does the plan provide for assessing learners on the extents to which they have accomplished the lesson objectives?		
10	Is the lesson likely "doable" within the time available?		

**Comment:****Evaluation of Teaching Materials used in team teaching**

Evaluate student' the quality of the teaching materials used during team teaching by putting a tick in the box as follows:

N <sup>o</sup>	Items .	1	2	3	4	5
1	Relevance to the lesson presented					
2	Quality - In relation to physical perception problems					
3	Effort - Made in producing the materials; time,					

## Action Research Proposal Evaluation Guideline (30%)

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ ID. \_\_\_\_\_

Title of the Project \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor's name \_\_\_\_\_

No.	Points to be considered	Mark
1	<b>The research problem and its objectives (10%)</b>	
1.1	Clarity of the problem under investigation	
1.2	Specificity of the problem	
1.3	Its relevance to the existing classroom situation	
1.4	Researchable	
1.5	Manageability in a given time interval	
1.6	Originality of the problem	
2	<b>Content and organization (10%)</b>	
2.1	Relevance of the background to the topic and context of the study	
2.2	Statement of the problem and its clarity	
2.3	Relevance and achievability of the objectives	
2.4	The relevance of the expected outcome to objectives set	
3	<b>Method and Procedure(5%)</b>	
3.1	Appropriateness of the procedure	
3.2	Appropriateness/Quality of the tools to collect the required data	
3.3	Relationship between the subjects and the research problem	
3.4	Validity and reliability of the data to be gathered	
4	<b>Language (5%)</b>	
4.1	Clarity, directness and readability of the language	
4.2	Quality of the language(spelling, grammar, punctuation)	
4.3	Paragraphing and Coherence	

Evaluation Checklist for Action Research problem

No.	The problem	
	Yes	No.
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

Comment:

### Appendix 3: Durations of the Study

Total Duration of the Study

<b>THE STUDY PHASES</b>	<b>DURING PRACTICUM</b>	<b>CARRIED OUT DURING</b>	<b>AT</b>
Contextual Analysis	II*	Sept.- Nov. 2007	Core Site & Peripheral Site
Inquiry	II & III	Nov. 2007-June 2008	Core site
PILOT	I	March-June 2006	Core Site

Key: (II)\* = Only the first two weeks for Contextual analysis

#### Appendix 4: Catalogue of Field Data

**CODES:** DN=Description note; D/I=Described/Interviewee; LO=Lesson observation; IIN=Informal Interview; SSIN=Semi-structured Interview; ST=Student Teacher; ST-001=ST; ST=All of ST; TE=Teacher Educator; XG/XXA/XXXJ/XXXXK=Codified TE; PS=Practicum school; PP (C)=Practicum School Chiro; PP (HM)= Practicum School Harar Medianalem; Practicum School Harar Junior.

CODE	D/ I	SPECIFIC PLACE	DATE	TIME (in GMT)
DN 001	XXXXK	PS (C)	19-09-07	11:30-12:30
DN 002	All ST's	PS (C)	20-09-07	8:30-9:30
DN 003	XXA, XXXJ	PS (C)	20-09-07	12:00-13:00
DN 004	ST-007	PS(C)	21-09-07	11:00-12:00
DN 005	XG	PS(C)	21-09-07	11:20-12:30
DN 006	ST-005	PS(C)	21-09-07	11:05-11:30
DN 007	XXA, XXX	PS (HM)	22-09-07	5:00-8:50
DN 008	XXXXK	PS (DD)	22-09-07	7:10-8:00
DN 009	XXXJ, XXXXK	PS (DD)	23-09-07	14:00-15:00
DN 010	ST-003	PS (HJ)	01-01-08	12:15-13:00
DN 011	XG, XXXJ, XXXXK	PS (C)	02-01-08	7:15-8:00
DN 012	XG,XXA,XXXJ, XXXXK	PS (C)	03-01-08	8:15-9:00
LO001	ST-02	PS (C)	20-09-07	8:00-8:40
LO002	ST-01	PS (C)	21-09-07	5:00-5:40
LO003	ST-04	PS (C)	22-09-07	5:00-5:40
LO004	ST-09	PS (C))	22-09-07	5:40-6:20
LO005	ST-03	PSC(C)	27-09-07	12:00-12:40
LO006	ST-06	PS (C))	27-09-07	10:20-11:00
LO007	ST-05	PS (C)	01-01-08	7:00-7:40
LO008	ST-07	PS (HJ)	01-01-08	7:40-8:20
LO009	ST-08	PS (C)	02-01-08	8:15-9:00
LO010	ST-10	PS (C)	02-01-08	5:40-6:20
LO011	ST-04	PS (C)	02-01-08	10:10-10:50
LO012	ST-03	PS (HJ)	03-01-08	5:00-5:50
LO013	ST-02	PS (DD)	03-01-08	10:10-10:55
LO014	ST-01	PS (M)	03-01-08	10:50-11:30
LO015	ST-04	PS (DD))	04-01-08	8:15-9:00
LO016	ST-09	PS (K)	04-01-08	9:00-9:40
LO017	ST-03	PS (HM)	04-01-08	10:10-10:50
LO018	ST-07	PS (C)	04-01-08	10:55-11:35
LO019	ST-08	PS (HM)	05-01-08	5:50-6:30
LO020	ST-10	PS (DD)	05-01-08	6:30-7:00
IIN001	XXA, XXXJ	PS (C)	12-12-07	8:15-8:0

IIN002	ST-05 & ST-09	PS (C)	16-09-07	14:15-14:30
IIN003	XG,XXA, XXXJ, XXXXK	PS (C)	19-09-07	10:15-10:30
IIN004	ST-03	PS (C)	20-09-07	6:30-7:00
IIN005	ST-007; ST-10	PS (C)	20-09-07	10:55-11:00
IIN006	ST-01; ST-06	PS (C)	21-09-07	11:30-12:00
IIN007	All TE's	PS (C)	22-09-07	11:00-12:00
IIN009	ST-07	PS (C)	01-01-08	6:15-6:25
IIN010	ST-04	PS (C))	03-01-08	10:00-10:25
IIN011	ST-02	PS	03-01-08	12:00-12:15
IIN012	ST-03, ST-01, ST-05	PS (C)	02-01-08	8:00-9:00
IIN013	XXA, XXXXK	PS (C)	07-01-08	11:05-11:30
IIN008	ST-010	PS (C)	20-09-07	15:00-15:15
IIN009	ST-007	PS (C)	01-01-08	15:00-15:15
IIN015	ST-003	PS (C)	03-01-08	15:00-15:20
SSIN001	ST-001	PS (C)	03-02-08	15:00-15:15
SSIN002	ST-002	PS (C)	03-02-08	5:00-5:15
SSIN004	ST-010	PS (C)	04-02-08	5:20-5:37
SSIN003	ST-004	PS (C)	03-02-08	7:00-7:25
SSIN003	ST-006	PS (C))	03-02-08	13:00-13:22

## Appendix 5: Unstructured Interview Guide

### A: Semi-Structured Interview for Student Teachers

1. What do you understand by the term *observation*?
2. What do you understand by the term *reflection*?
3. How do you reflect, when and why?
4. When was the first time you heard the term *reflection*?
5. Has this practicum course helped you to reflect? How, give me an example?
6. What is *action research* to you? Are you doing your practicum action research? On what area? How, give me an example of how you gather data? What action are you taking?
7. Who else worked with you in this practicum? How do they help you?
8. How well are you doing your jobs as practicing teachers?

### B: Informal Interview for Student Teachers

1. How would you have differently planned:
  - a) If there were no national text book and teacher guide?
  - b) If there was no University-set lesson plan format for all and any lesson?
  - c) If there was no plasma lesson?
2. In the lesson you just completed:
  - a) Why did you [turn down a pupil's question about// ...//many of the pupils lied down napping at the desks...//...]. Why?
  - b) You said/wrote... [grammatical structures, e.g. 'die' as "phrasal verb"]. What don't you know about [...phrasal verbs] and how could you learn?
  - c) How did you feel?
  - d) What could you have done if.....were NOT....constraining you?

C: Informal Interview Guide for Teacher Educators

- 1) To what extent do you think the theme/category \_\_\_\_\_ correspond to what student teachers do/assume/believe in this practicum? [++ DISCUSSIONS]
- 2) Does the assumption/theme/category \_\_\_\_\_ hold, given your experience in this practicum? [++ DISCUSSIONS]
- 3) How salient/common/recurrent, do you think, is the action/statement \_\_\_\_\_? [++ DISCUSSIONS]

**Appendix 6: Codebook Layout**

Code No. _____ Name of the observed/interviewed _____ Date: _____ Time (in GMT): _____ Region: _____ Specific Place: _____	
<b>Field note</b>	<b>M e m o i n g</b>

**Appendix 7 : Types of Field Note-taking Codebooks**

Codebook Code No.	Code book Type	Code Name
01	Cognitive Mapping	CM
02	Theoretical Notes	ThN
03	Methodological Notes	MN
04	Coded Notes	CN
05	Lesson Observation Notes	LO
06	Descriptive Notes	DN
07	Semi-structured Interview Notes	SSIN
08	Informal Interview Notes	IIN
09	Trainee Reflective Journal	TRJ

**Appendix 8: Corpus Data Matrix (Some)**

A. The Contextual Analysis Matrix

DOMAIN	CODE NO.	INDICATORS
Observation of practices	IIN022/1 IIN0011/5	“...ticking faculty designed yes-no reflection questions” ‘teacher educators were not needed in the school observation or Practicum I’
Planning of Lessons	IIN007/1 IIN007/1 SSIN004/1 SSIN004/8 SSIN004/12 DN 001/8	“...No! We don’t have to design lessons. We just use the Student’s Textbook for pupils and Teacher’s Guide for ourselves.” “...could have designed and implemented own tasks, but can’t be put to use due to the <i>plasma</i> ...” ‘Student teachers teaching aids (materials): national textbook, plasma guide, plasma items [hyper texts, graphics, pictures, images...], national Teacher’s Guide’ ‘Teacher Activity: Pre-plasma: advising students take notes depending on the plasma lesson. While-plasma: checking the students whether they are following the lesson effectively or not. Post-plasma: summarizing the lesson in short.’ ‘Department Head’ and vice-Director’s comment: ‘Seen!’ Signatures and Date’  “Teacher Activity – ‘pre-plasma; Advising students take notes depending on the plasma lesson; Reading that notes for the students; while-plasma: checking the students whether they are following the lesson effectively or not; post – plasma : summarizing the lesson in short,
Time for Reflection-in-action	DN006/23 DN009/5	“...Much of my lesson time is consumed by taking attendance ..., switching on and off and tuning to the TV screen, regulating misbehavior of students...” “... difficult to group students with plasma presentation due to... shortage of time”
Classroom Actions	IIN004/2 IIN011/6	““...Student Teacher writes on the board... the four language skills are listening and reading, which are receptive skills, and speaking and writing, which are productive skills...”  “Candy Leigh-Jones, the TV- teacher warns pupil Remember. Your answers [to comprehension questions] should have the...”  “Student Teacher stands in front of pupils. Pupils watch TV- lesson. Student Teacher is silent, pupils are also silent. Leigh –Jones, TV-teacher, tells ST  to supervise pupils...”
Classroom Events	LO014/2	“... students, as audience, watch satellite TV-lesson, sitting straight up as if filled up with apprehension. The student teacher....points with a stick in his hands says repeatedly’ listen carefully.... ‘The plasma teacher said...’ he echoes the virtual teacher’s statements repeatedly....”  “Some few minutes are left over, from the only 40 minutes allocated nationwide as a ‘period’ for the student teacher. Taking over the left-over from the TV-teacher, who just completed and fare welled is lesson, the student teacher in a hurry and bedlam began to ‘re tell’ the

	LO015/16	right answers to grammar questions of so ... that and such... that true, redundant and boring the textbook adds nothing but more apathy to the children. Some how down on the table 'sleeping' pillowing their arms, while some gossip their person issue, while others scribble, etc.
Speech acts	DN004/8 DN012/3 DN009/36	"...us student teachers face difficulty in understanding plasma teacher let alone pupils..." "...the most frequent complaint of supervisors is problem of 'deficient English language proficiency of student teachers...'" "South African dialect gives us difficulty in understanding..."
Feelings		"...pupils shout we've done this task several times...Student Teacher says 'my plan was upset due to the power black out,. The plasma TV doesn't function today, I'm sorry..."
Conceptions	IIN013/1 IIN013/27 IIN013/31 IIN013/15 IIN012/2	"...most action research done is on schoolteacher's actions or on pupils' perception of these..." "...almost all the practicum action research reports are the traditional survey mode" "...research done on schoolteacher's actions/interactions and on students' perception of these" "...the kind of action research course they are offered by the Department of Pedagogy is in fact statistics or quantitative research" "Reflection is reporting results of school observation schedules"
Feedback style	DN001/21 DN003/6	"supervisors make three different lesson observations within forty minutes", "Teacher educators leave for the practicum school a week after student teachers have left"
Role frame	DN009/11 DN010/1 IIN 006/7	"Instructors offer theoretical course inside university and supervise inside practicum school classroom" "...application of theoretical knowledge mastered..." "...We tell student teachers to write their reflective notes based on the faculty's observation check list or sheet. We also monitor who is in or out the practicum school compound... tell partner school management to strictly take attendance of each student teacher's behavior, punctuality, presence or absence..."

#### B: The Inquiry Matrix

DOMAIN	CODE NO.	INDICATORS
Non-reflectivity	TRJ-01	"Since I am beginning teacher, problems may occur. I feel fear and loss of confidence, especially at this early class. Even though I know the answers to the questions that students ask, it disappears out of mind in classrooms The reason is because am beginning teacher"  "School teachers evaluate me and said you are very good at explanation and using of time effectively, before and after the plasma Generally, the feedback or reflection school teacher and my students gave shows that I am good teacher." "The relationship between me and my students is good. I coordinate them in a nice way, in addition to the plasma."
	TRJ-10	"This week, I planned my lesson on teaching vocabulary. This

		preparation was very important because I recalled different vocabularies that I forgot before.’
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DOMAIN	CODE NO.	INDICATORS
Reflectivity	TRJ-01	“The current Ethiopian secondary school practice is supportive of the cause of the plasma, but I think the plasma should rather be controlled by the teacher. And, the time given for a lesson must be changed from 40 minute to 1 hour”
	TRJ-03	“Generally, when my students achieved and understood what I taught them, I became satisfied. This was my great day in my life as a beginning teacher.”
	TRJ-06	“So far, I work in my job in my own interest. Of course, it should be based of the students in tersest. They are the reason why I come to school everyday. So I should teach based on my students’ interest.” “I know my focus now is my own interest. But I know I will make it through; I just want to be a kind of teacher who teaches for satisfaction, not only for grade and salary”
	TRJ-04	“There are jobs which I refuse sometimes since I get fed up. For instance always taking attendance and punishing absentees. The students, I think are, fed up too, since what they do is mundane watching witching! The plasma. They’ve good reason.”

(i) Student Teachers’ Reflections (Some)

Code No.	INDICATOR
TRJ -01	<p>“Since I am beginning teacher, problems may occur. I feel fear and loss of confidence, especially at this early class. Even though I know the answers to the questions that students ask, it disappears out of mind in classrooms The reason is because am beginning teacher”</p> <p>“School teachers evaluate me and said you are very good at explanation and using of time effectively, before and after the plasma Generally, the feedback or reflection school teacher and my students gave shows that I am good teacher.”</p> <p>“I used student centered approach so that the students understand the subject of the lesson by themselves. I used student centered approach listening in speaking and, even, for writing.”</p> <p>“In principle, I do not accept teaching towards lessons, continents or objectives already pre-set in the syllabus. I feel, sometimes, it is good if were to conceptualize, and teach</p>

	<p>new lessons based on students' but, I can't afford not doing so under the editing situation."</p> <p>"The current Ethiopian secondary school practice is supportive of the cause of the plasma, but I think the plasma should rather be controlled by the teacher. And, the time given for a lesson must be changed from 40 minute to 1 hour"</p>
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Code No.	INDICATOR
TRJ-02	<p>"However I try to do the best, learning may still not be going no"</p> <p>"I should improve my use of the language."</p> <p>"I should consider the nature of my students"</p> <p>"Since I am a teacher, I must respect the school's rules and regulations in order to be effective teacher. Because teacher is the model of the society and the learners."</p> <p>"I hope that I will be a good career in future I will see teaching is a good job."</p>

Code No.	INDICATOR
TRJ-03	<p>"In my class, I know female students speak or discuss more then male students. Also, students who come from towns speak more and more than those from rural. The later are us usually silent."</p> <p>"Generally, when my students achieved and understood what I taught them, I became satisfied. This was my great day in my life as a beginning teacher."</p> <p>"Everyday it is required to prepare lesson plan. But sometimes the lesson plan that appeared on the plasma TV does not match. These make me distressed."</p> <p>"The worst student that I will never forget in my life is the one who left the class during my evaluator was in class."</p> <p>"I feel happy that as teacher I'm free from corruption, unlike others. But, the salary is not satisfactory."</p> <p>"In order for me to be able to communicative effectively on my ability, I should always reflect on my ability. I should improve my English proficiency."</p>

Code No.	INDICATOR
TRJ-04	<p>"According to the policy of today's school, the most essential tasks in order to do well and be a confident teacher is to follow the national guidance for the subject, e.g. English syllabus, text books and teacher guide."</p> <p>"There are jobs which I refuse sometimes since I get fed up. For instance always taking attendance and punishing absentees. The students, I think are, fed up too, since what they do is mundane watching witching! The plasma. They've good reason."</p> <p>"In the coming years I hope I will be a normal and good teacher."</p> <p>"I am observing my students grasp what I teach them. I am happy when my students do tasks in groups, as in this weekend, rather than they be audience of the TV- teacher. That is my happiest time."</p>

Code No.	INDICATOR
TRJ-05	<p>"The reflective practice of university students in this school is excellent."</p> <p>"In this week what I learnt is that how to pick out the gist from a given passage."</p> <p>"The relationship between me and my students is good I coordinate them in a nice way, in addition to the plasma."</p> <p>"This week, I planned my lesson on teaching vocabulary. This preparation was very</p>

	important because I recalled different vocabularies that I forgot before.’ “I have already seen that I have changed on my confidence, experience, giving summary to my students, standing in front of them as a teacher, etc.”
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<b>Code No.</b>	<b>INDICATOR</b>
TRJ-06	<p>“So far, I work in my job in my own interest. Of course, it should be based of the students in tersest. They are the reason why I come to school everyday. So I should teach based on my students’ interest.”</p> <p>“I know my focus now is my own interest. But I know I will make it through; I just want to be a kind of teacher who teaches for satisfaction, not only for grade and salary”</p> <p>“The positive side of being a teacher is creating human. Teaching is like breastfeeding. It is putting knowledge into those empty minds of children....”</p> <p>“How to communicate with my students in English is the essential tasks I have to think about. If I in can’t communicate in English with them, like I used to be, my teaching will go not as I expect.’</p>

<b>Code No.</b>	<b>INDICATOR</b>
TRJ-07	<p>“I feel happy when my learners get equal make with not much difference.”</p> <p>“My next lesson will be Grammar, about expressing results by using result clause. Therefore, I expected from students to construct sentences of result clause. I ‘m going to engage them in this task. I’ll use different kinds of the task.”</p> <p>“How and with what measures I will take to solve the problem is also another thing which I am going to deal with in the coming days.”</p> <p>“...I heard my students say they could not work in groups on the task I gave them. Why? What should I do? What I did was I tried to tell them about trees in simple English and sometimes in mother tongues –Amharic and Oromiffa. I told them to choose a group leader who presents to the class about uses of trees. The result was great. Every body participated in discussions. That day was the greatest day for me.”</p>

<b>Code No.</b>	<b>INDICATOR</b>
TRJ-10	<p>“The relationship between me and my students is good. I coordinate them in a nice way, in addition to the plasma.”</p> <p>“This week, I planned my lesson on teaching vocabulary. This preparation was very important because I recalled different vocabularies that I forgot before.’</p> <p>“I have already seen that I have changed on my confidence, experience, giving summary to my students, standing in front of them as a teacher, etc.”</p>

(ii) The Inquiry Lesson Observations

<b>CODE NO.</b>	<b>INDICATOR</b>
LO008/1	“...This made me realize that pupils are enjoying, attentively engaged more than any other English lessons I have observed, ...pupils talk, ask freely at their own

LO009/11	pace...”
LO010/32	<p>“Student teacher slowly and clearly talks, one time, then jots on the board, another time, at different intervals. I see this enables pupils think, jot down, raise hands, ask question whenever they feel... This variation and flexibility with mix of writing, eliciting, suggesting, etc made me think that surely this lesson is beyond my expectation...</p> <p>“...I observe pupils engaged on both giving solicited and unsolicited answers to questions, at their own moments. “Ask if you’ve any question”, the student teacher gives confidence to pupils. “Okay, we will!” pupils respond in chorus...”</p>

### Appendix 9: Methodological Notes (Sample)

A: Methodological Note\_MN 001/7

<p><b>Code No. :</b> <u>MN 001/7</u></p> <p><b>Name of the observed/interviewed:</b> <u>ST-010</u></p> <p><b>Gender:</b> <u>Male</u></p> <p><b>Date:</b> <u>21-02-2006</u> <b>Time (in GMT):</b> <u>7:15</u></p> <p><b>Region:</b> <u>Oromia</u> <b>Specific Place:</b> <u>Chiro Sec. School</u></p>	
<p><i>In my attempt today (21/02/2006) to make a structured interview, I have come across these problems: (1) this formality gave the participants an enormous anxiety and nervousness; (2) due to this, I guess, they concentrated on defensive, reason-faking, which I think was sign of self-organization (3) I observed poor reason-giving skills, for instance, when asked about their practice, they repeatedly said “very excellent” but with no elaboration as to why they say so . So, I’ve found structured interview to be revealing no significant data at all....”</i></p>	

B: Methodological Note MN004/12

<p><b>Code No.</b> <u>MN004/12</u></p> <p><b>Name of the observed/interviewed:</b> <u>XXXXK</u></p> <p><b>Gender:</b> <u>Male</u></p> <p><b>Date:</b> <u>07-02-2006</u> <b>Time (in GMT):</b> <u>5: 30</u></p> <p><b>Region:</b> <u>Oromia</u> <b>Specific Place:</b> <u>Haramaya University</u></p>	
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<p><i>"If you're to ask people here to fill out questionnaire or sit down with you for interview never will they do it this. That's what I've experienced for the past many years ...people are fed-up of these or they are simply too anxious or hesitant to cooperate."</i></p>	<p>Better use, therefore, unstructured or informal ones</p>
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**Appendix 10: Participants' Code Names**

Teacher Educator Code	Student Teacher Code
XG	ST-1
XXA	ST-2
XXXJ	ST-3
XXXXK	ST-4
	ST-5
	ST-6
	ST-7
	ST-8
	ST-9
	ST-10

**Appendix 11: Theoretical Notes (Sample)**

A: Theoretical Note ThN009/11

<p><b>Code No. <u>ThN009/11</u></b>  <b>Date: <u>01/01/2008</u></b>                      <b>Time (in GMT): <u>11:00</u></b>  <b>Region: <u>Oromia</u></b>                              <b>Specific Place: <u>Chiro Sec. School</u></b></p>	
<p><i>After a lesson observation (LO007) and post-lesson reflection on what went on in the classroom, I understood that the student teacher [ST010], never made an effort to get ready for his lesson. Yes, he had had no good reason to do so because all is done by the TV-teacher. Then a concept came to my mind—replication—which, here means, copy-and-paste lesson planning</i></p>	

B:Theoretical NoteThN001

**Code No.** ThN001

**Date:** 07-02-2006 **Time (in GMT):** 5: 20

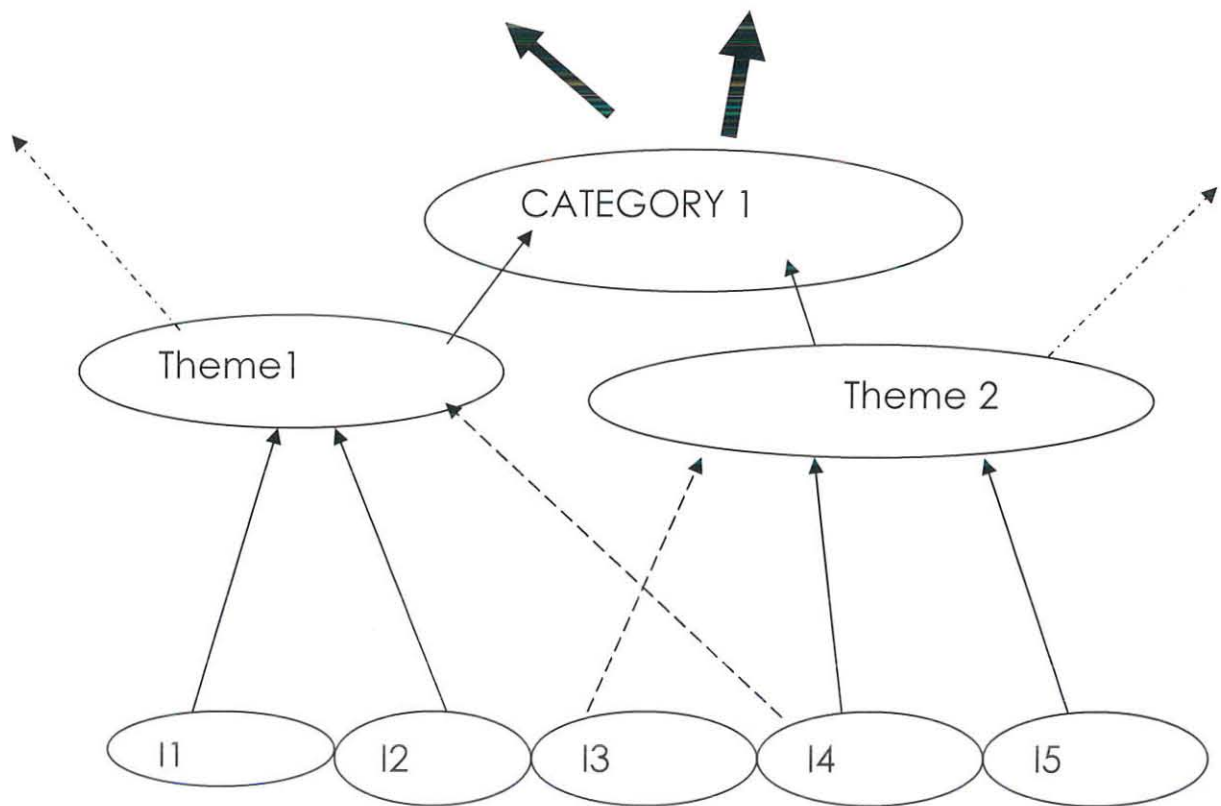
**Region:** Oromia **Specific Place:** CHIRO

*"I have to change my initial conception of my role, from participant-as-observer role [where the researcher does not try to influence the direction of the participants (Adler & Adler 1994)] to researcher-as- complete observer or active-member because I have to act as reflective practitioner and facilitator of reflective learning with participants. Besides, the faculty rule obliges me to train those participant student teachers, where I must evaluate and submit their results formally...."*

**Appendix 12: Constant Comparative Methods of Relating Indicator, Theme, Category and Classifications**

**CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY 1 + CATEGORY 2 ++



**Appendix 13: Sample Student Teachers' Reflective Journal Artefacts**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade 10 Roll No 0

I Choose the correct answer

1. Aster is \_\_\_\_\_ a nurse \_\_\_\_\_ a doctor. she is a teacher.

- A. Either/or B. Neither/or C. Neither/ nor D. either/ nor

2. \_\_\_\_\_, he sat on the chair

- A. Having kissing his wife B. kissed his wife C. Having kiss his wife D. Kissing his wife

3. My sister's dog, \_\_\_\_\_ is called 'Mechal'

- A. Who barks every night B. Which barks every night C. That barks every night D. Whom barks every night

4. Lea comes form China. He is \_\_\_\_\_

- A. China B. Chinian C. Chinese D. Chinesian

5. I couldn't drink the coffee as there was \_\_\_\_\_ sugar in it.

- A. a few B. very little C. a little D. very few

6. I prefer coffee \_\_\_\_\_ tea.

- A. than B. better than C. More than D. to

7. Hana speaks English \_\_\_\_\_ fluently as any Englishman

- A. Less B. More C. Most D. As

8. They insisted \_\_\_\_\_ the work themselves:-

- A. on doing B. in doing C. to do D. for doing

9. When exams approach studenils usually \_\_\_\_\_ anxious

- A. Became B. Become C. Becomes D. Have become

10. You should abide \_\_\_\_\_ school regulation's

- A. by B. in C. with D. On

II Decide what tense the underlined word/ words are in the following sentences.

Appendix 13A Grade 10 (Ten) English Assessment

Name X Grade 10 Roll No 0

I Choose the correct answer

1. Aster is ----- a nurse ----- a doctor. she is a teacher.  
 A. Either/or B. Neither/or C. Neither/ nor D. either/ nor
2. -----, he sat on the chair  
 A. Having kissing his wife B. kissed his wife  
 C. Having kiss his wife D. Kissing his wife
3. My sister's dog, ----- is called 'Mechal'  
 A. Who barks every night B. Which barks every night  
 C. That barks every night D. Whom barks every night
4. Lea comes form China. He is -----  
 A. China B. Chinian C. Chinese D. Chinesian
5. I couldn't drink the coffee as there was ----- sugar in it.  
 A. a few B. very little C. a little D. very few
6. I prefer coffee ----- tea.  
 A. than B. better than C. More than D. to
7. Hana speaks English ----- fluently as any Englishman  
 A. Less B. More C. Most D. As
8. They insisted ----- the work themselves:-  
 A. on doing B. in doing C. to do D. for doing
9. When exams approach studenils usually ----- anxious  
 A. Became B. Become C. Becomes D. Have become
10. You should abide ----- school regulation's  
 A. by B. in C. with D. On

II Decide what tense the underlined word/ words are in the following sentences.

# Appendix B

## Alternative test

The following test is prepared as an alternative to the test which we analysed. This alternative is supposed to be more communicative, valid and written holistically.

I choose the correct answer that can complete the following dialogues.

1 Counselor: Are you a nurse or a doctor?  
Client: I'm \_\_\_\_\_ a nurse \_\_\_\_\_ a doctor. I'm \_\_\_\_\_

A. Either/or B. neither/no C. either/no D. neither/or

2 Hanna: What do you like to drink, tea or coffee?  
Beja: I prefer coffee \_\_\_\_\_ tea.

A. than B. to C. more than D. better than

3 Stranger: Excuse me, can you tell me the way to the bus station?  
pedestrian: \_\_\_\_\_

A. I'm afraid I can  
B. I'm sorry, I'm new here myself  
C. Bus station is important.  
D. There is no bus today.

II Complete the following statements with suitable word or words.

- 4 They come here \_\_\_\_\_ (use infinitive)
- 5 If I don't wake up early, I know I \_\_\_\_\_ late for school.
- 6 a. What would you do if you had known her before.
- b. Had I known her before?

## Appendix 13 C

Block them. The remaining 38.1% responded that they fear to some extent and prefer situations and contexts for participating in the class room interaction

Therefore, the majorities response in sufficient evidence of the fear students develop to have considerable effect on their courage to participate in class room interaction

In general any person who want to know to what extent the fear anxiety of making mistakes affects students participation in particular can guess the potential sources to be several in kind and complex in nature as was discussed in the review part.

Table 5. Students' response of the class type they feel more comfort

Item	Alternatives	No of respondents	%
In which type of class room do you participate more actively and with comfort?	Large class	4	19.1
	Small class	9	42.8
	In all class equally	5	23.8
	I don't participate at all	3	14.3
<b>Total</b>		<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>

Source field survey 2006

## Appendix 13C

The item of table 3 helps to know whether or not the teachers initiate their students to participated actively. About 33.4% of the students responded that teacher do not motivate

Them and as a result they fail to participate, where as the remaining 66.6% responded positively. This implies that the teachers usually invite the students to ask or answer but for some other reasons they keep quite or participate when they feel comfort as they learning. Fem. this any educational expert can conclude not teachers' initiative problems that make students with draw from a class room interaction. Because, as the indication of this finding teachers are found working positively to create participatory class room climate. Therefore, it must be due to factors beyond the teachers' initiation used to involve learners..

**Table 4. Students' response of their encourage to participate in class room interaction winning fear of making mistakes.**

Item	Alternatives	No respondents	of %
When you participate in your class do you fear not to make mistakes and as a result reduce your mode of participation?	Yes	11	
	No	2	
	To some extent	8	
	total	21	

DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name Dereje Tadesse Ribirso

Signature 

Date 02/06/2009