

Peer Assessment as a Mechanism for Evaluating the Instructional Performance of EFL Novice Teachers

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Abstract: This study examines the efficacy of peer assessment as a mechanism for evaluating the instructional performance of novice teachers in English language education. The primary objective is to determine the extent to which novice teachers can benefit from peer evaluations conducted by colleagues within the same discipline and to assess the prevalence and effectiveness of this assessment approach in English language teaching practices. Additionally, the study investigates the impact of peer assessment on the pedagogical competencies of novice educators.

The research was conducted with a sample of 20 English teachers employed in middle schools, utilizing semi-structured interviews as the principal method of data collection. The findings indicate that English teachers acknowledge and endorse the use of peer assessment, highlighting its significance in fostering instructional improvement. Specifically, participants emphasized that peer assessment contributes to professional development by engaging novice teachers in lesson planning, goal setting, self-reflection, collaborative pedagogical activities, and systematic performance evaluation; these findings match the results of Kurdritskaya's (2024) that peer assessment has a positive effect on teachers' learning and teaching.

Despite its advantages, several challenges associated with peer assessment were identified. These include heightened anxiety among novice teachers, the potential for embarrassment, and concerns regarding the exposure of specific instructional weaknesses. In light of these findings, the study advocates for the integration of structured peer assessment frameworks into teacher training programs to optimize their effectiveness in enhancing professional growth and pedagogical proficiency.

Keywords: peer assessment, novice teachers, performance tasks, intermediate schools

Introduction

Today, evaluation serves as a tool for development and improvement. "Assessment for learning" places learning at the center of evaluation, emphasizing its function as a catalyst for educational growth (Keppell & Carless, 2006). This approach employs a variety of assessment methods and techniques to provide a comprehensive understanding of how students teach (Perry, 2008).

Peer assessment is an evaluative method in which learners assess their peers' work and performances using predetermined criteria, followed by constructive feedback. Topping (2009) defines peer assessment as "an arrangement by learners regarding how they investigate and determine the quality, value, and level of other learners' performances or works." In this process, students assume dual roles—both as evaluators and as those being evaluated. Compared to other methods, this practice enhances students' ability to critically examine work and judge its quality (Lee, 2015). Moreover, comparing their work with that of their peers enables students to identify their own deficiencies while receiving and providing feedback. A study by Koc (2011) revealed that prospective classroom teachers recognized several benefits of the peer review process. It heightened their awareness of personal strengths and weaknesses, allowed for meaningful comparisons of various applications, underscored the importance of feedback, fostered evaluation skills, and cultivated empathy and critical thinking (Wulandari, et al, 2021).

Peer assessment holds particular significance in teacher training. This technique equips teacher candidates with essential knowledge and skills by integrating them into the educational process. When applied in teacher training, peer assessment consistently delivers high-quality learning outcomes. It enhances critical thinking, focuses attention on teaching practice, and equips future teachers with skills essential for their professional careers (Koc, 2011).

This study seeks to gather teacher candidates' perspectives on the use of peer assessment for evaluating a performance task. Specifically, it aims to answer the following research question:

How do novice teachers in intermediate schools perceive peer assessment in relation to performance tasks?

Literature Review

Peer Assessment

Peer assessment, is a structured process in which individuals evaluate the quality of their peers' work and provide constructive feedback (Reinholz, 2015). Research on peer assessment indicates that active participation in such evaluative practices enhances students' ability to produce well-structured written work and assessment responses while improving their interactive skills (Topping, 2009&Aslanoglu, 2022).

Furthermore, engaging in peer assessment fosters students' ability to communicate about their work, particularly when evaluating both their final products and the processes involved in their creation. This aligns with the concept of cooperative learning (Falchikov, 2007), although peer assessment is somewhat more constrained compared to collaborative learning environments, where students collectively produce outcomes, share knowledge, and engage in mutual learning. Instead, peer assessment focuses on the critical evaluation of each other's work based on predefined criteria, not only to acknowledge effort and quality but also to support individual development.

From a formative perspective, peer assessment contributes significantly to students' ability to engage in self-assessment, regulate their own learning, and cultivate higher-order thinking skills (Chetcuti & Cutajar, 2014). Additionally, it fosters metacognitive self-awareness, which is essential for independent learning and academic growth (Topping, 2009).

Peer assessment encompasses a range of practices, but fundamentally, it involves students providing feedback to their peers regarding the quality of their work. In some cases, this process may also include assigning grades, though this aspect is widely acknowledged as a challenging and often-problematic undertaking. Falchikov (2007) defines peer assessment as requiring students to deliver feedback, assign grades, or both, based on criteria of excellence for a particular product or performance. Notably, students may be involved in establishing these criteria.

Rationale for Peer Assessment

Falchikov (2007) asserts that peer learning builds upon a developmental process inherent from early childhood, a process often overshadowed by the formal education system's emphasis on teacher-centered learning. Peer assessment offers several benefits:

- **Encouragement of Collaborative Learning:** Peer feedback fosters a collaborative environment where students exchange insights on what constitutes quality work.
- **Alignment with Course Objectives:** To promote peer learning and collaboration effectively, assessment tasks must align with these goals.
- **Acknowledgment of Additional Effort:** Boud et al., (1999) emphasize the importance of recognizing the extra effort required for peer learning activities, suggesting a shift in assessment focus to reflect this effort.
- **Cognitive Apprenticeship Model:** Peer learning draws on this model, as described by Keppel and Carless (2006), enabling students to bridge gaps in their understanding and develop deeper learning insights.
- **Enhanced Dialogue on Assessment:** Research indicates that peer feedback can significantly enhance the development of students' writing skills through enriched conversations about the assessment process.
- **Improved Judgment and Intellectual Choices:** Students providing feedback cultivate their evaluative skills and capacity for intellectual decision-making.
- **Exposure to Diverse Perspectives:** Receiving peer feedback exposes students to a broader range of ideas, fostering development and improvement.
- **Reduction of Power Imbalance:** Peer assessment minimizes the hierarchical divide between students and teachers, elevating students' roles in the learning process.
- **Process-Oriented Feedback:** Peer feedback encourages students to clarify, review, and refine their ideas, fostering a focus on the process rather than merely the outcome.
- **Timely Feedback:** Immediate feedback allows for formative learning enhancements, equipping students with essential skills for professional contexts.

Peer assessment is consistent with Wenger's (1999) concept of a "community of practice." Falchikov (2007) highlights that learning involves active participation within such communities, where members collaboratively establish practices and construct identities (p.129). Through peer commentary, students are introduced to the norms of their community, enabling them to experiment, internalize, and ultimately align with these standards.

This process represents a critical integration of students into their academic and professional communities, advancing their understanding of shared values and benchmarks for excellence.

Implementation of Peer Assessment

Preparation and Practice Research indicates that students improve their skills in peer assessment through repeated practice (Falchikov, 2007). Confidence and competence in peer assessment can be developed over time through targeted preparation. Some strategies include:

- Fostering Familiarity: Incorporate activities such as exchanging and discussing lecture notes to prepare students for peer assessment.
- Establishing Clear Criteria: Ensure that the criteria for peer assessment are transparent, thoroughly discussed, and, where appropriate, negotiated with students to enhance their understanding and engagement.
- Building Trust: Dedicate time to creating a trusting classroom environment that facilitates open and constructive feedback.

Designing the Learning Environment

- Embed peer learning and collaboration into various aspects of the learning process.
- Avoid an overemphasis on marks, which may detract from the learning benefits of peer assessment. If marks are assigned, they should form part of a broader assessment framework and not overshadow the primary goal of learning enhancement.

Studies on Novice Language Teachers

Definition of Novice Teachers

The term "novice" generally refers to individuals in the early stages of their teaching careers, though definitions vary:

- Farrel (2012): Teaching for the first time.
- Kim & Roth (2011): Less than five years of teaching experience.
- Haynes (2011): Two years of teaching experience or less.

Support for Novice Teachers

Brannan and Bleisten (2012) identified several areas where novice teachers require support, including:

- Psychological insights into working with young people.
- Access to resources and logistical information provided by colleagues.

Mentorship and Peer Observation

Mann and Tang (2012): Effective mentoring does not always require significant differences in age or experience between mentors and mentees. When mentors and mentees are closer in age and experience, they may establish more productive professional relationships.

Observing mentors' lessons can be particularly beneficial for novice teachers. Real-life classroom experiences provide valuable insights into effective teaching strategies.

Richards (2005) emphasized that observing experienced teachers helps novices distinguish between effective and ineffective classroom practices.

Challenges and Recommendations

- Limited access to mentors may hinder the professional growth of novice teachers. This lack of interaction can result in suboptimal outcomes.
- Professional development requires dedication. Novices should be encouraged to engage actively in opportunities to observe, reflect, and implement strategies observed in experienced educators' practices.

Benefits of Peer Observation

- Peer observations foster idea exchange, benefiting both novice teachers and their mentors.
- These interactions provide a platform for novice teachers to learn innovative strategies and refine their teaching practices.

In summary, both peer assessment and mentorship for novice teachers emphasize collaboration, trust, and structured opportunities for growth, highlighting the importance of supportive and reflective learning environments.

Common Pitfalls of Peer Assessment

While peer assessment offers numerous benefits, several challenges and drawbacks must be considered to ensure its effective implementation.

- Perceived Inexperience and Lack of Confidence

Many students feel unqualified to assess their peers accurately and fairly, often perceiving both themselves and their classmates as inexperienced. This concern is particularly pronounced when peer feedback impacts grades, as highlighted in Kaufman and Schunn's (2011) study.

- Discomfort with Criticism

Students frequently express discomfort in critiquing their peers and receiving feedback from friends, as noted by Orsmond and Merry (1996) and Cheng and Warren (2005). They often lack confidence in their ability to provide objective and meaningful evaluations, which can compromise the effectiveness of peer assessment.

- Importance of Training and Preparation

Freeman (1995) emphasizes the necessity of training and practice to improve objectivity and efficacy in peer assessment. However, this requirement makes peer assessment a time-intensive process, demanding significant preparation and ongoing support (Falchikov, 2005; Topping, 1998; Alzaid, 2024).

- Subjectivity and Bias

Subjectivity remains one of the primary weaknesses of peer assessment, as identified by Brown (2004). Common issues include:

- Overly generous or uniformly high grading.
- Excessive harshness or lack of understanding in providing constructive criticism.
- Bias influenced by friendships, personal relationships, or group dynamics.

Reluctance and Anxiety

Students may feel anxious or reluctant to participate in peer assessment, especially in the initial stages (Falchikov, 2005; Topping, 1998). This reluctance can stem from a lack of familiarity with the process or fear of conflict.

Potential for Unreliable Results

- Friendship Bias: Assessments may be influenced by personal relationships, with students reluctant to assign low marks to friends or disproportionately harsh to others.
- Uniform Grading: A tendency to assign identical marks to all peers undermines the reliability of the evaluation.
- Group Dynamics: Discrimination or exclusion within groups can distort the fairness of the assessment process.

Strategies to Address Peer Assessment Pitfalls

To mitigate these challenges, several strategies can be employed:

1. Comprehensive Training: Provide explicit training and practice opportunities for students to develop confidence and competence in peer assessment.
2. Clear Assessment Criteria: Develop and communicate detailed, well-structured criteria for evaluations to guide students in making fair and consistent judgments.
3. Teacher Oversight: Involve teachers in moderating and reviewing peer assessments, particularly in high-stakes contexts such as grading.
4. Modeling Peer Assessment: Teachers can model the peer assessment process multiple times to familiarize students with the practice and set clear expectations.
5. Ongoing Feedback: Create opportunities for iterative feedback, allowing students to refine their skills and build trust in the process over time.
6. Gradual Introduction: Start with low-stakes tasks to ease students into the process, gradually increasing complexity and accountability as their skills improve.

In conclusion, while peer assessment presents several challenges, proper planning, training, and teacher involvement can significantly enhance its effectiveness, making it a valuable tool for collaborative learning and skill development.

Alternative Assessment Tools

- Alternative assessment encompasses various approaches and strategies designed to evaluate learners' abilities through practical, real-world tasks. According Clément et al., (2022), assessment can be classified into three main approaches: authentic assessment, performance-based assessment, and constructivist assessment. Similarly, Smith and Ingersoll (2004) identifies three primary strategies for integrating alternative assessment into educational settings: cognitive assessment, performance assessment, and portfolio assessment. Notably, the terms *performance-based assessment*, *alternative assessment*, and *authentic assessment* are often used interchangeably. As Wangsatorntanakhun (1997) asserts, *performance-based assessment* encompasses both alternative and authentic assessment, making the two terms closely related.

Performance assessment is characterized by two core concepts, as outlined by Elliott (1995):

1. **Performance:** The student actively generates a response that can be observed directly or indirectly through a tangible product.
2. **Authenticity:** The assessment task and context are relevant and reflect "real-world" challenges or issues.

Authentic assessment is specifically designed to connect instructional activities to the real-life experiences of learners, enhancing the relevance and applicability of learning outcomes. Bailey (1998) underscores that the effectiveness of performance assessments lies not only in their authenticity but also in their direct and highly

To enhance the effectiveness of performance assessment, educators should adhere to the following evidence-based principles (Elliott, 1995):

1. **Task Alignment:** Assessment tasks should be explicitly aligned with instructional objectives and the content delivered during the course to ensure validity and relevance.
2. **Transparent Criteria:** The assessment criteria should be clearly communicated to students prior to task initiation, ensuring they understand the expectations and evaluation parameters.
3. **Clear Standards and Exemplars:** Educators should provide explicit performance standards and exemplars of acceptable work to guide students in meeting the required competencies.
4. **Promotion of Self-Assessment:** Students should be encouraged to engage in self-assessment practices, fostering metacognitive skills and reflective learning.
5. **Developmentally Appropriate Evaluation:** Performance should be assessed against developmentally appropriate standards while also considering peer performance as a contextual benchmark.

This structured approach to performance assessment ensures that evaluations are fair, transparent, and conducive to student learning and growth.

Novice Teachers

Novice teachers, while equipped with foundational knowledge and academic training, often face significant challenges when transitioning from theory to practice in the classroom. Danielson (1999) and Flores & Day (2006) and Wijaya (2023) highlight that although novice teachers possess the requisite knowledge; their inexperience poses challenges that can impede their professional development. These teachers may hesitate to seek help for fear of appearing insufficient, but a supportive school environment can provide the guidance and encouragement necessary for the development of effective teaching practices. Such an environment allows novice teachers to engage in meaningful discussions about their ideas and experiences related to teaching and learning (Langdon, 2001).

While novice teachers typically have a clear image of successful teaching practices and a solid understanding of educational theory, including psychology, curriculum, and evaluation (Hammerness et al, 2005), they often struggle to apply this knowledge in real-world classroom settings. New teachers may feel unprepared for the demands of the profession, including managing time constraints, navigating a heavy curriculum load, conducting assessments, and addressing classroom management challenges. The gaps between theory and practice are significant, and despite being equipped with knowledge, novice teachers lack the experience to execute teaching practices as effectively as their more seasoned counterparts do.

The first years of teaching are particularly critical, and teachers require robust support to navigate this demanding transition. Orientation programs designed for new teachers should cover a wide range of topics to ensure their success. These topics might include not only the basics, such as time management, curriculum pacing, and assessment, but also more nuanced elements like the institutional culture—both written and unwritten—and the challenges of managing classroom behavior. While novice teachers are often assigned similar responsibilities to those of more experienced teachers, the inexperience they bring to the classroom can

make these responsibilities more overwhelming, sometimes resulting in higher turnover rates in the teaching profession (Wonacott, 2002).

- Several studies have examined the challenges faced by novice teachers and the effectiveness of induction programs. Whitman (2024) identified two key issues that influence how novices evaluate their induction programs: practice shock and cultural mismatch. Practice shock refers to the overwhelming differences between theoretical training and the reality of classroom teaching, while cultural mismatch arises from the challenges of adapting to the institutional culture. These difficulties often lead to feelings of inadequacy, which can negatively affect a teacher's attitude toward the profession. In light of this, McCann & Johannessen (2005) emphasize the importance of support systems during the first years of teaching to help novice teachers feel confident, comfortable, and connected to the resources they need to succeed in their careers.
- Yalçinkaya (2002) further highlights common issues faced by novice teachers, such as the disconnection between academic studies and real-world application, the struggle to meet deadlines, fear of being observed, and challenges related to adapting to school culture. Other specific difficulties include classroom management, adhering to curriculum pacing, accommodating diverse student abilities, and understanding institutional rules and regulations. Achinstein & Barret's (2004) research also points to three major problems faced by novices: classroom management (93%), human relations (100%), and the political dynamics of the school environment (87%). These issues are often exacerbated by a lack of formal training in areas such as student behavior, discipline, and collaboration within the school community.

In line with these findings, McCann, Johannessen, and Ricca (2005) classified the primary challenges of novice teachers into several categories: communicative problems, excessive workload, time management, curriculum-related issues, assessment and grading, and classroom management. Wang et al, (2004) focused on the interaction between mentors and mentees and found that novice teachers often encounter challenges related to the teaching process itself, the topics being taught, and the students they are teaching. Similarly, Taneri (2004) identified common difficulties among novice teachers, including managing diverse student ability levels, understanding school regulations, preparing teaching materials, and engaging students in active participation.

Conclusion

The transition from student teacher to novice educator is often marked by a range of challenges; including managing classroom dynamics, meeting professional expectations, and navigating the complexities of school culture. Induction programs that provide comprehensive support—ranging from mentorship to ongoing professional development—are essential for helping new teachers succeed in these formative years. By addressing the specific needs of novice teachers, schools can foster a more supportive and sustainable teaching environment, ultimately improving teacher retention and student outcomes.

Intermediate schools typically have several key features:

Intermediate school

Intermediate schools, often referred to as middle schools, typically serve students in grades 5 through 8 (ages 10 to 14). They bridge the gap between elementary and high school, focusing on academic and social development. The curriculum usually includes a mix of core subjects like math, science, language arts, and social studies, along with elective courses and extracurricular activities to foster a well-rounded education.

1. **Grade Structure:** Usually serve grades 5 to 8, accommodating early adolescents.
2. **Curriculum:** A mix of core subjects (math, science, language arts, social studies) and electives (art, music, technology).
3. **Team-Based Learning:** Often organized into teams or pods, promoting collaboration among teachers and a supportive learning environment.
4. **Developmentally Appropriate Practices:** Focus on the social and emotional needs of early adolescents, incorporating strategies to foster independence and self-advocacy.
5. **Extracurricular Activities:** Offer clubs, sports, and other programs to encourage student engagement and social interaction.
6. **Transition Support:** Provide resources and guidance to help students transition from elementary to high school.
7. **Flexible Scheduling:** Often have block scheduling to allow for longer class periods and more in-depth exploration of subjects.
8. **Parental Involvement:** Encourage active participation from parents in school events and decision-making processes.

These features aim to support students' academic growth while addressing their developmental needs.

Performance Task

Performance tasks as defined by DepEd permits students to show what they know and what they can do in a variety of ways. To build a more authentic framework for performance tasks, according to Wiggins and McTighe (2005), the GRASPS model should be utilized. The GRASPS model establishes a real-world goal; a significant role for the learners; an authentic or visualized audience; a contextualized situation involving real-world application; products generated by students; and standards and criteria for success by which performance would be evaluated and assessed. It is a design tool that enables the creation and innovation of performance tasks with focus on context (Iter, 2017). Moreover, with the utilization of GRASPS as an assessment model, teachers can develop authentic assessment and students can develop metacognition (Yang, 2019). Unfortunately, findings in the study of Lasaten (2016) revealed that 70% of teachers are having difficulty on performance task preparation. On testing in general, quality of assessment ranked first on assessment problems encountered by teachers. Similarly, the study of Lumadi (2013) revealed that still the major challenge teachers face in classroom assessment is the preparation and quality of assessment.

Methodology

The main purpose of this study is to examine the influence of peer assessment on new English language teachers' performance tasks. The goal is to improve teachers' performance and identify the negatives and positives of peer assessment.

The approach used in this study is qualitative research method. This type of method focuses on obtaining data through open communication and conversation. It also involves collecting data from personal experiences, introspection, life stories, interviews, observations, interactions, and visual texts that concern people's lives. (Radu, 2019)

The current study attempts to reveal teachers' attitudes towards peer assessment. It also examines the difficulties and recommendations that will lead to improving performance tasks.

Research Participants

The research participants are 20 English teachers from intermediate school. The following table gives background information about them.

Table 1: Research participants' background

Participant	Gender	Age	education	experience
1	Female	36	BA	12
2	Female	35	BA	13
3	Male	29	MA	3
4	Female	38	BA	15
5	Female	40	BA	18
6	Female	27	BA	3
7	Male	26	BA	4
8	Female	30	MA	3
9	Female	27	MA	2
10	Female	29	MA	4
11	Female	27	BA	4
12	Fmale	30	MA	3
13	Male	30	BA	2
14	Female	33	BA	8
15	Female	30	BA	2
16	Female	38	BA	14
17	Female	31	BA	4
18	Male	29	BA	4
19	Female	35	MA	10
20	Male	56	BA	30

Research Tools

For collecting qualitative data in the present study, a questionnaire consisting of 10 items was distributed to all participants. This questionnaire served to introduce the population and study sample, highlighting key

characteristics such as educational background and demographic information. The data collected through this tool were systematically organized and structured as part of the theoretical framework of the study.

The advantages of using a questionnaire as a research tool are multifaceted. First, it ensures uniformity in data collection across respondents, allowing for consistency in the information gathered. Additionally, questionnaires are time-efficient, facilitating the swift collection of data without significant delays. The analysis of the collected data is relatively straightforward and objective, ensuring that the interpretation of results remains unbiased. Furthermore, the use of a questionnaire provides an effective means to compare responses from different participants, enabling a thorough examination of the data across diverse perspectives. These characteristics make the questionnaire an appropriate and effective tool for this study. Interviewing the teacher candidates, recording the interview using audio recording, and then analyzing it through the coding process.

Findings

The present study aimed to investigate the attitudes of novice English teachers towards the peer assessment method and its perceived effectiveness in enhancing teachers' performance in English language classes. The study also sought to explore various factors, including the skills or qualifications required for effective peer assessment, the challenges faced by teachers in the process of teaching English, students' reactions to the method, strategies to enhance students' engagement, and teachers' attitudes towards learning.

The data collection for this study took place during June and July 2024, and the qualitative findings were derived by categorizing and analyzing the respondents' answers. A total of twenty teachers participated in the study, all of whom were English language teachers at middle schools. The sample included 15 female teachers (75%) and 5 male teachers (25%), with a majority holding bachelor's degrees (70%) compared to 30% pursuing master's degrees. The age range of the participants varied from 26 to 56 years, with teaching experience spanning from 2 to 30 years.

The following sections present the key findings based on the responses of the teachers. The findings are divided into five categories

1. Teachers' Attitudes towards Peer Assessment as a Performance Task

The majority of teachers (14 out of 20) expressed a positive attitude towards using peer assessment as a method for evaluating teaching performance. Teachers highlighted several benefits, such as the mutual learning experience, improved teaching quality, and enhanced communication and collaboration among peers. Below are some representative quotes:

Positive Attitudes:

- "Weak teachers can learn from better ones" (Respondent 1)
- "It strengthens the relationship between the trainee teacher and the teaching staff." (Respondent 2)
- "It improves teaching." (Respondent 3)
- "It is a means of exchanging ideas." (Respondent 5)
- "Develops constructive criticism skills, enhances critical thinking and encourages them to take responsibility" (Respondent 9)
- "Helps develop communication and teamwork skills" (Respondent 11)
- "Provides quick and detailed feedback" (Respondent 13)
- "It actively engages teachers by defending their opinions, rephrasing ideas, and listening to other points of view." (Respondent 14)
- "It stimulates active participation in the educational process." (Respondent 15)

Despite the general positivity, a few teachers raised concerns regarding the peer assessment process:

Negative Attitudes:

- "Some teachers may not be qualified to evaluate their colleagues' performance objectively" (Respondent 6)
- "Misunderstanding or misinterpretation of standards and expectations may lead to problems in relationships between teachers" (Respondent 7)
- "Some teachers may face challenges in planning well" (Respondent 8)
- "Emotion or personal relationships may affect the integrity of the evaluation" (Respondent 10)
- "Every teacher has their own style. It doesn't always work perfectly." (Respondent 16)

2. Teachers' Position on Peer Assessment as a Performance Assessment Tool

Teachers generally reported a positive attitude towards the use of peer assessment in English lessons. However, six teachers noted some barriers that caused negative reactions, as summarized below.

Positive Reactions:

- "Positively, it makes a difference in the regular lesson." (Respondent 2)
- "They are happy." (Respondent 9)
- "They participate more." (Respondent 14)
- "The teacher benefits from assessment positively to develop social, educational, and professional pedagogical skills." (Respondent 18)
- "Teachers benefit from the skills of other teachers." (Respondent 19)

Negative Reactions:

- "High tension." (Respondent 6)
- "They do not interact properly." (Respondent 7)
- "They are afraid of making some mistakes in vocabulary, spelling, or pronunciation and their peers make fun of them." (Respondent 8)
- "They may face some problems due to lack of skills." (Respondent 11)
- "Some teachers face difficulties in preparing well." (Respondent 17)

3. The Contribution of Peer Assessment in Motivating Novice Teachers to Develop Their Professional Performance

Peer assessment was seen as a tool that fosters mutual respect, teamwork, and acceptance of constructive criticism, which are essential for professional growth. It encourages teachers to express their ideas while also being open to feedback for improvement.

4. Obstacles/Challenges in Implementing Peer Assessment

The teachers in implementing peer assessment effectively identified several obstacles. These included a lack of time, difficulty in finding suitable time slots for peer evaluation, resistance to accepting others' opinions, and feelings of nervousness when being observed by a colleague.

5. Suggestions for Improving Peer Assessment as a Performance Task Tool

Teachers provided various suggestions for enhancing the peer assessment process, including:

- Identifying new teaching methods.
- Providing continuous supervision and constructive feedback for teacher development.
- Using creative activities such as presentations, storytelling, mini research projects, and group activities to engage teachers and promote continuous learning.

Conclusion

The findings suggest that the majority of novice teachers, who recognize its potential to improve teaching practices and foster professional development, views peer assessment positively. The method enhances teachers' communication skills, teamwork, and self-confidence, while also promoting constructive criticism and mutual support. However, challenges such as lack of time, teacher readiness, and emotional factors need to be addressed to ensure its effective implementation. Teachers also suggested incorporating more creative and interactive methods to further enrich the peer assessment experience.

Discussion

This study aimed to examine the effect of peer assessment on the performance tasks of novice teachers, focusing on the required skills and qualifications to effectively implement this method, the challenges teachers face during the teaching and evaluation process in English language lessons, and teachers' responses to peer evaluation. The study also explored how peer evaluation can be used to enhance teacher performance and development.

The findings of the study align with previous research, such as the work by Nasri and Peria (2017), which highlighted positive teacher attitudes towards collaborative learning methods. In their study, they emphasized the impact of such methods on improving speaking skills, a notion that was also observed in the present study, which found that peer evaluation positively influenced English language teachers' performance. Teachers in this study expressed a strong belief in the value of peer evaluation, noting its contribution to the

development of their teaching skills, including communication, cooperation, and critical thinking. The peer evaluation process also helped foster a supportive and collaborative teaching environment, where teachers felt more confident and motivated, ultimately benefiting their professional development.

The findings of this study align with those of Tahmasebi et al. (2019), who investigated the advantages of cooperative learning. Their research highlighted that the social interaction embedded within cooperative learning methodologies, in contrast to traditional instructional approaches, fosters enhanced skill development. Similarly, the teachers participating in this study reported that peer evaluation facilitated the cultivation of essential interpersonal competencies, including mutual respect, tolerance, and teamwork.

These results indicate that integrating peer assessment into teacher development programs can play a pivotal role in supporting the professional growth of novice educators. This could be done by fostering a socially interactive learning environment that promotes skill acquisition and collaboration. Furthermore, the study's findings are in line with Lee's (2015) research on students, where the use of cooperative learning activities, such as group discussions and role-playing, was shown to improve speaking skills. Although Lee's study focused on students, the parallels between his research and the current study are noteworthy. The present study found that teachers also benefited from peer evaluation through collaborative activities, where they were encouraged to reflect on their teaching, exchange ideas, and learn from one another. This collaborative process is essential for novice teachers, who are in the early stages of their professional development and may benefit significantly from peer support and feedback.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study provides evidence that peer assessment is an effective method for enhancing the performance and professional development of novice English teachers. The peer assessment process fosters a collaborative environment that promotes self-confidence, mutual respect, and the acquisition of new skills. It also enables teachers to engage in reflective practices, receive constructive feedback, and improve their teaching methods. The findings of this study align with previous research on the benefits of cooperative learning and peer feedback, demonstrating that this approach can be valuable not only for students but also for teachers. To maximize the benefits of peer evaluation, it is crucial to provide novice teachers with the necessary support, training, and resources, ensuring that they are equipped to effectively participate in and benefit from this process. Future research could explore further the specific strategies and tools that enhance the implementation of peer evaluation in teacher development programs.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. **Teaching Evaluation Concepts in Teacher Preparation Programs:** It is essential for evaluation concepts, including peer assessment methods, to be integrated into teacher preparation programs at the college level. By equipping future teachers with an understanding of various assessment tools and strategies, including peer evaluation, they will be better prepared to implement these methods effectively in their classrooms.
2. **Restructuring EFL Teacher Preparation Programs:** EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teacher preparation programs should be restructured to include a broader range of student teaching opportunities and field experiences. This will ensure that the teaching methodology taught in the classroom aligns with the curriculum objectives and allows teachers to gain practical experience in real-world educational settings. These changes will help novice teachers develop a deeper understanding of how to apply teaching methods, including peer assessment, in their own classrooms.
3. **Encouraging Student Motivation and Patience:** EFL teachers should focus on motivating their students and demonstrating patience in their teaching practices. By fostering a supportive and encouraging classroom environment, teachers can enhance students' language production and usage, which is critical for their language development. Patience is key to helping students gain confidence in their abilities and feel more comfortable engaging in peer assessments and other interactive activities.
4. **Allocating Time for Collaborative Activities:** Curriculum designers should ensure that sufficient time is allocated for collaborative activities, such as group and pair work, within the curriculum. These activities not only promote peer interaction but also provide opportunities for teachers to integrate peer evaluation methods into their lessons. By prioritizing collaboration, students and teachers alike can benefit from shared learning experiences, fostering a community of practice that supports both academic and social development.

By implementing these recommendations, teacher preparation programs can better support novice teachers, enhance their professional growth, and improve the quality of teaching and learning in English language classroom.

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