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## FOSTERING REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONERS: INTEGRATING INNOVATIVE REFLECTIVE MODELS INTO UZBEK ENGLISH TEACHER EDUCATION

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### ABOUT ARTICLE

**Key words:** reflective practice, teacher education, English language teaching, high power distance, educational reform, innovative technologies, linguodidactics.

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**Abstract:** The following article investigates the critical role of reflective practice in contemporary English Language Teacher Education, examining global trends and specific challenges within the context of Uzbekistan's ongoing educational reforms. As a global shift from a technical-rationality model to a reflective-practitioner paradigm is evident, the implementation of comprehensively, critical reflection often remains hindered by universal issues of superficiality, time constraints, and assessment dilemmas. In Uzbekistan, these are compounded by specific socio-cultural factors, notably high power distance, and infrastructural limitations. However, a policy window created by national strategies like "Uzbekistan 2030" presents a unique opportunity. This paper requests a hybrid, scaffolded model for integrating reflective practice into Uzbek ELTE, moving from descriptive to dialogic and finally critical reflection. The model is supported by practical recommendations for capacity building, cultural adaptation of tools, and assessment reform, aiming to contribute to the development of autonomous, adaptive, and critically-minded future English teachers in Uzbekistan.

## REFLEKTIV MUTAXASSISLARNI SHAKLLANTIRISH: O'ZBEK INGLIZ TILI O'QITUVCHILARI TA'LIMIGA INNOVATSION REFLEKTIV MODELLARNI INTEGRATSIYA QILISH

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**МАQOLA HAQIDA**

**Kalit so'zlar:** refleksli amaliyot, o'qituvchi tayyorlash, inglez tili o'qitish, yuqori hokimiyat masofasi (Hofstede), ta'lim islohoti, innovatsion texnologiyalar, lingvodidaktika.

**Annotatsiya:** Ushbu maqola zamonaviy Ingliz tili o'qituvchilarini tayyorlash (ELTE) jarayonida refleksli amaliyotning muhim rolini o'rganadi, jahon tendentsiyalarini hamda O'zbekistondagi davom etayotgan ta'lim islohotlari doirasidagi muayyan muammolarni tahlil qiladi. G'oyalar darajasida texnik-ratsionalistik modeldan refleksli amaliyotchi paradigmasiiga jahon miqyosida o'tish aniq bo'lsa-da, chuqur va tanqidiy refleksiyani amalga oshirish ko'pincha sirtqi yondashuv, vaqt cheklovleri va baholash qiyinchiliklari kabi universal muammolar tomonidan qiyinlashtiriladi. O'zbekiston kontekstida bu muammolar o'ziga xos ijtimoiy-madaniy omillar, xususan, yuqori hokimiyat masofasi (power distance, Hofstede) va infratuzilma cheklovleri bilan murakkablashadi. Shu bilan birga, "O'zbekiston-2030" kabi milliy strategiyalar tomonidan ta'lim sohalari uchun noyob imkoniyatni taqdim etadi. Ushbu maqolada O'zbekiston ELTE tizimiga refleksli amaliyotni integratsiya qilish uchun gibridda va bosqichli (scaffolded) model taklif etiladi, unda deskriptiv refleksiyadan dialogik va nihoyat tanqidiy refleksiya sathiga mantiqiy o'tish nazarda tutilgan. Model, shuningdek, kadrlar salohiyatini oshirish, refleksiv vositalarni madaniy kontekstga moslashtirish va baholash islohoti bo'yicha amaliy tavsiyalar bilan mustahkamlanib, O'zbekiston kelajakdagi inglez tili o'qituvchilarini mustaqil, moslasha oluvchi va tanqidiy fikrlaydigan mutaxassislar sifatida tayyorlashga hissa qo'shishni maqsad qiladi.

**ФОРМИРОВАНИЕ РЕФЛЕКСИВНЫХ СПЕЦИАЛИСТОВ: ИНТЕГРАЦИЯ  
ИННОВАЦИОННЫХ РЕФЛЕКСИВНЫХ МОДЕЛЕЙ В СИСТЕМУ ПОДГОТОВКИ  
УЧИТЕЛЕЙ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА В УЗБЕКИСТАНЕ**

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**О СТАТЬЕ**

**Ключевые слова:** рефлексивная практика, педагогическое образование, преподавание английского языка, высокая дистанция власти, образовательная реформа, инновационные технологии, лингводидактика.

**Аннотация:** В данной статье рассматривается ключевая роль рефлексивной практики в современном педагогическом образовании преподавателей английского языка (ПОПАЯ). Анализируются глобальные тенденции и специфические вызовы в контексте *ongoing* образовательных реформ в Узбекистане. Хотя в глобальном масштабе наметился переход от модели технической рациональности к парадигме рефлексивного практика, внедрение глубокой, критической рефлексии часто остается ограниченным из-за таких универсальных проблем, как поверхность, нехватка времени и сложности оценки. В Узбекистане к этим проблемам добавляются специфические социокультурные факторы, в частности, высокий уровень дистанции власти, а также инфраструктурные ограничения. Тем не менее, открывшееся «окно возможностей» в результате реализации национальных стратегий, таких как «Узбекистан-2030», создает уникальный шанс для изменений. В статье предлагается гибридная, структурно поддерживаемая модель интеграции рефлексивной практики в узбекскую систему ПОПАЯ, предусматривающая переход от описательной к диалогической и, в конечном итоге, к критической рефлексии. Модель сопровождается практическими рекомендациями по наращиванию потенциала, культурной адаптации инструментов рефлексии и реформе системы оценивания. Цель предлагаемого подхода — содействие подготовке автономных, адаптивных и критически мыслящих будущих учителей английского языка в Узбекистане.

**Introduction.** The phenomena of global teacher education has arised from a technical rationality model, which counted teachers as technicians applying prescribed methods, to a reflective-practitioner model, which mirrors them as autonomous, critical professionals who reset and develop knowledge in context (Schön, 1983). The base of this transformation is reflective practice, termed as the ability to critically evaluate one's own teaching experiences, practice and beliefs to be capable of providing continuous professional and personal growth and developed student outcomes. For novice and future English teachers, this skill is practical, hence they are not only analyzing linguistic

knowledge but also mediating cultures and applying communicative skills, tasks that requires a high level of flexibility and critical thinking. In this article current conditions for improving reflective skills of future English teachers are explored by encountering global challenges and situating them through the specific context-sensitive blueprint for the successful integration of reflective practice into Uzbek English Teacher Education programs.

### Theoretical Foundations and Global Models of Reflection

The historical backgrounds of reflective practice are underpinned in the work of John Dewey (1933), who defined reflection as “active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge”. Donald Schön (1983) then widened this by implementing the crucial components of “reflection in-action” (thinking during teaching) and reflection-on-action” (thinking after teaching) to explain reflection is multi-strand, Stephen Brookfield (1995) advocated for analytically reflective teaching through four lenses: the teacher’s autobiography, the students’ eyes, colleagues’ experiences, and theoretical literature. In today’s global world gives chance to operationalize these theories through variety of models and tools with the help of teacher education programs. As a first tool structured Frameworks are mentioned. These Frameworks are specialised to scaffold in helping students growth from description to critical analysis and future action planning. In this field Gibb’s perspective is slightly affected by exploring linguists such as John Dewey, David Kolb, and Donald Schön, and he translates their concepts into practical frameworks for education, especially in teacher education. The main purpose of a structured reflective framework is to exchange rough, mostly unstructured experience into meaningful, usable knowledge. It avoids from being descriptive asking the question “what happened” and instead directs the practitioner toward deeper analysis, conceptualization, and future planning. According to Gibb these frameworks are critical tools for converting reflection into a disciplined, evidence-based, and developing practice. They serve to propel the reflective practitioner model, guaranteeing that learning from experience is intentional, in-depth, and directly combined to professional improvement and enhanced steps. For Gibb, organized frameworks transforms reflection to a useful notion to a teachable, learnable and assessable essential professional ability.

Secondly, digital portfolios (e-portfolios) are also effective tool of the development of reflection. These platforms allow student teachers to compile lesson plans, teaching videos and written reflections, creating longlasting record of growth. E-portfolios specify to the critical analysis of reflection utilizing prompts and frameworks like Gibb’s Cycle motivating students to move beyond simple and ordinary description “what I did” to critical analysis “why it mattered, what I learned, how it connects to theory”. Digital portfolios externalize the internal process of reflection by transmitting abstract ideas into tangible artifacts such as: text, audio, video. It tracks the progression of understanding between the student and the mentor. The major purpose of the e-portfolios is to assist

students develop the ability to reflect on their own thinking and learning. Students need digital portfolios to evaluate their decision-making processes, strengths, shortcomings and long-term growth.

Lesson study and Action research approaches foster collaborative reflection among peers, this is also known as Collaborative inquiry. This is a structured, collective process in which a group of practitioners (teachers, student-teachers and professionals) systematically investigate their own practice by posing questions, gathering evidence and reflecting together in order to gain a better understanding and effect meaningful change. This inquiry elevates reflection from a private, individual activity to a collaborative, communal, and data-driven learning experience. It is founded on the concept that knowledge about practice is socially produced, and that cooperation breaks down isolation, challenges assumptions, and produces more robust insights than solo reflection.

A Critical Friends Group is a structured approach to making reflection a collaborative, evidence-based, and professionally transformative practice. It introduces the concept of the “reflective practitioner” within a supportive yet challenging peer network. It is specialized and effective kind of Collaborative Inquiry that uses protocols to ensure the safety and depth of the reflective discussion. These employ organized protocols for peer observation, which shifts input from evaluative judgement to descriptive, inquiry-based discourse.

**Video Analysis:** Recordings of teaching practice, frequently with annotated commentary, provide for extensive “reflection-on-action.” It is an evidence-based reflection that extends beyond recall and personal experience. The fundamental purpose is to create a “mirror” for practice, allowing for a detailed, reproducible and frequently collaborative evaluation of teaching and learning events as they happened, rather than one’s initial perceptions of feelings. Video analysis transforms reflection from a retrospective narrative into a clinical, evidence-based evaluation of practice. It makes the invisible visible and the implicit explicit, making it one of the most effective ways to improve a teacher’s capacity for deep, critical thinking.

#### Prevalent Global Challenges in Developing Reflection

Despite these advanced models, implementation confronts considerable challenges worldwide. The most common problem is superficiality, which limits reflection to a descriptive, ritualistic exercise rather than a deep, critical process of meaning-making. This is frequently worsened by the evaluation dilemma—the difficulty of objectively grading an internal, cognitive activity using external products, which can result in performative.

Uzbekistan's education system is in a dynamic state of transition. The "Uzbekistan 2030" strategy and related governmental decrees emphasize competence-based education and critical thinking, creating a decisive policy window for integrating reflective practice.

However, the current condition in teacher training universities reveals significant gaps: Curriculum and Practice: The curriculum remains heavily theoretical, with limited dedicated time for

guided reflection. The pivotal pedagogical internship often prioritizes the technical delivery of a lesson plan over critical analysis of decision-making or student learning. Tools: Traditional tools like the "Practice Diary" are commonly used but frequently result in descriptive accounts without critical analysis. The use of e-portfolios, video analysis, and peer feedback is nascent and reliant on individual initiative.

The specific barriers within the Uzbek context are particularly telling:

**High Power Distance (HPD):** This cultural dimension acts as a potent, invisible barrier to critical reflection. In an HPD culture, hierarchical relationships naturally limit the open critique and collaborative inquiry essential for deep reflection. Student teachers' reluctance to question mentors or university methodologies stifles the development of a critical professional voice.

**Lack of Trainer Training:** Many current teacher educators and mentors were trained in the traditional system and may not be skilled reflective practitioners themselves, limiting their capacity to model and facilitate it.

**Resource Limitations:** Unreliable access to technology hinders the adoption of modern reflective tools like e-portfolios.

**Linguistic and Conceptual Gap:** Key Western concepts of reflection may lack direct, culturally resonant translations, creating a conceptual barrier.

#### A Proposed Hybrid Model for Uzbek English Teacher Education

Given these conditions, a direct importation of Western models is likely to fail. Instead, a culturally and contextually attuned, scaffolded model is proposed to systematically build reflective skills:

**1. Level 1: Descriptive Reflection (Foundation):** Use structured reflective journals with clear prompts (e.g., "Describe a successful moment. What did you and the students do?"). The focus is on building the habit of observation and self-reporting.

**2. Level 2: Dialogic Reflection (Collaboration):** Introduce "Critical Triads" (a less intimidating term than "Critical Friends"). Small groups of student teachers observe each other using simple, descriptive observation protocols. The focus is on learning to give and receive non-judgmental, evidence-based feedback.

**3. Level 3: Critical Reflection (Transformation):** Implement Guided Action Research Projects. Student teachers identify a specific classroom challenge (e.g., "Why are students reluctant to speak?"), investigate it, and propose an intervention. This connects personal practice to broader educational principles and cultural contexts.

#### Essential Supporting Actions

For this model to succeed, supporting systemic actions are crucial:

**Capacity Building:** Develop intensive training for university methodologists and school mentors on facilitating reflection.

**Culturally-Relevant Materials:** Adapt global reflective tools and rubrics using local examples and scenarios.

**Pragmatic Technology Integration:** Begin with low-tech options (audio recordings, written

blogs) before scaling to high-tech e-portfolios. Assessment Reform: Develop a dual-assessment system for teaching practice, evaluating both teaching performance and reflective growth via a portfolio.

**Conclusion.** The development of reflective skills in future English teachers is at a critical juncture globally and in Uzbekistan. While the global community grapples with moving from theory to profound practice, Uzbekistan faces the dual challenge of adopting this paradigm within a unique cultural and infrastructural context. The barriers, particularly high power distance, are significant but not insurmountable. By leveraging the current policy momentum and implementing a carefully scaffolded, hybrid model that respects the local context while aiming for transformative critical inquiry, Uzbek teacher education can cultivate a new generation of English teachers who are not only knowledgeable but also reflective, adaptive, and empowered to shape the future of their profession.

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