

TEACHERS AS LIFELONG LEARNERS or THE CRAFT, THE ART AND THE MAGIC OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT. IMPLEMENTING A PEDAGOGICAL PORTFOLIO - A CASE STUDY

Svetlana DIMITROVA-GJUZELEVA
New Bulgarian University
OPTIMA, Bulgaria¹

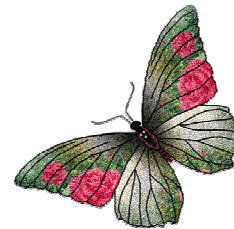
Abstract

*The present paper focuses on the lessons learned from using the **NBU Pedagogical Portfolio** (Dimitrova and Tashevska, 2004) for the purposes of quality assurance in the specific context of foreign language pre-service teacher education and in-service teacher development, not just at New Bulgarian University but in the wider professional community for over 15 years. In a way the paper is also a continuation of the exemplary case study which appeared in the **QualiTraining Guide** (Muresan et al, 2007) providing further details and more specific evidence of the quality assurance function of the **Portfolio**². Snippets of good practice and reflection leading to professional growth are shared and readers themselves are encouraged to reflect on their own experience and development as teachers and/or trainers.*

Key words: foreign language teacher education, NBU Pedagogical Portfolio, professional development, FL teaching competence, quality assurance

INTRODUCTION

What do you think is the link between the awkward-looking caterpillar below and the beautiful butterfly above? Have you read the story of the Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carl?



¹ This article is based on a joint presentation with Svetlana Tashevska at the BETA Pre-conference in Veliko Turnovo, Bulgaria on 23 April 2010.

² Dimitrova, S. and Tashevska, S. (2007) "Applying quality assurance in a Bulgarian teacher training context", In Muresan, L., Heyworth, F., Mateva, G. and Rose, M. (2007) *QualiTraining: A Training Guide for Quality Assurance in Language Education*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing, pp. 87-92



Of course, you have and you know how the uncouth caterpillar gradually accumulates building substances from solid nourishment to grow and finally transform into an embodiment of perfection.

This is a lovely metaphor for the magical transformation of professional growth, which our student teachers experience during their training. It is not a process which happens overnight and it takes a lot of hard work and high motivation on part of the trainee to internalise all the knowledge and competences needed to attain professional maturity, as well as the cooperative team efforts and the unyielding commitment of all the educators involved.

DISCUSSION

So, let us look into the black box (for it remains so for many stakeholders in education, who still often wonder whether teachers are born or made) and consider the craft, the art and the magic of professional development.

Reflecting on personal experience

At the beginning, take a moment to answer the following questions about your own professional development:

- ✓ What support did (do) you receive/ would you like to have received as a trainee?
- ✓ What support did (do) you receive/ would you like to have received as a (beginner) teacher?
- ✓ And then: *What has influenced your professional development the most?*

As an unpretentious recent survey has revealed, apart from the formal lecture input at the university, many practising teachers across the region received very little support of any kind in the years of their pre-service teacher training and almost none in later years on the job. During their teaching practice internship they were thrown in at the deep end and left to swim across on their own – some managed (mainly through learning from experience), most drowned (i.e. were frustrated in the process and were lost for the cause, never returning to the classroom again). The qualifying state exam at the end of their pre-service training only measured the success of their trial and the quality of the presumably attained professional competence, but nothing was offered in way of supporting growth or quality assurance. Admittedly, reality is changing but there is still a lot of support needed and/or wished for even by student teachers still in the process of training. Research data also indicate that what they

mostly need is coordinated constructive guidance and constant encouragement in the process of discovery of their own idiosyncratic style of teaching.

Developing professional competences

The complex construct of the foreign language teacher's professional competence is often presented as a mosaic of various components, conveniently expressed by "*Can do*" statements and organized in more or less structured sets (cp. *The European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages: A reflection tool for language teacher education*). However, many of these competences are very evasive in character and unless anchored to some tangible evidence, extremely hard to measure, let alone attempt to develop.

Defining the competent constituents

Let us take an example. As we often instruct our teacher trainees, the first step of a good lesson is its carefully prepared plan. So what does it mean *to be able to plan a lesson*? What are some of the specific skills involved in planning?

Most of you will surely have come up with some of the following among their answers:

- ✓ to formulate realistic, achievable aims;
- ✓ to include and logically sequence various activities, balancing them well and ensuring good flow between them;
- ✓ to allot appropriate time to each activity in the plan in view of the lesson time constraints and learners' needs;
- ✓ to consider a range of interaction formats suitable for the activities in the plan;
- ✓ to prepare/adapt the needed learning materials and consider ways of incorporating modern ICT in the process of learning;
- ✓ to make provisions for individual differences between the learners in the group, etc.

The *NBU Pedagogical Portfolio* also offers a detailed multi-faceted descriptor of good practices in planning (see **Appendix 1 – part two**).

Identifying relevant evidence to prove competence mastery

Now imagine that you will need to demonstrate / to prove that you have that professional skill, i.e. that you can plan a lesson well, say to your methodologist or mentor [in a pre-service context], or to an expert during an inspection [in an in-service context]. What

support would you need in order to ensure that you perform to the expected standard? What would you do? Where would you go / look for assistance?

Presumably, you would try to read something on how to plan a lesson, ask for a template (structured lesson plan form), look for a model, discuss it with your mentor and/or peers, etc. (see again **Appendix 1 – part one**).

As to what evidence can be presented to show that you can plan a lesson, the answer seems to be more straightforward – the lesson plan itself, as well as some feedback on its implementation in the classroom during the very lesson.

Now take a moment to study the first lesson plan below (see Figure 1) and reflect whether it contains evidence indicating that one can plan a lesson.

<i>Stages/ Activities</i>	<i>Procedures + Timing</i>	<i>Interaction Patterns</i>	<i>Rationale</i>
1.Homework Check-in	Reading (7 min.)	Ss	The accuracy
Practice			
2. Ex.5	Writing (7 min)	T – Ss Ss	Recall rules Formation of adverbs
3. Ex.5	Reading (8 min)	T – Ss Ss	Use of adverbs in text
4. Ex. 6	Writing (7 min)	Ss T - Ss	Differentiate adverbs from adjectives
5.	Revise (7 min)	T - Ss Ss	Rule recall Past Simple / Past Cont.
5.1 Ex. 7	Writing (8 min)	T – Ss	Choose correct form

Figure 1: *LL's first draft of the lesson plan*

In some ways the trainee has met the above requirements – namely, s/he has employed the recommended lesson plan template, made an ordered list of various activities, specifying their timing, interaction format and rationale for doing them with the students. And yet, the plan [among other things] obviously lacks in precision.

Now look at Figure 2 – it shows the revised version of the same lesson plan. It contains some clear signs of professional competence development: not only has the plan got longer and more detailed, but there are also some significant improvements in its content, such as better defining of the stages of the lesson in relation to their revised rationale and explicit consideration of feedback collection formats. Of course, there is room for further improvement in it too, as illustrated in the critical comment of the trainee’s mentor on it:

“This is better but you still need to think about each task specifically and identify the appropriate aim for each one. You also need to think of including a variety of task types – to

balance recognition and production, more controlled and more guided tasks with freer practice tasks.” (feedback on the plan, provided by S.T., a mentor)

Stages/ Activities	Procedures + Timing	Interaction Patterns	Rationale
1. Homework Check	Different Ss read their answers 1 by 1, other Ss and T correct if needed (7 min.)	S-S T- Ss	Focus on accuracy
Practice 2. Ex.5 Forming adverbs from adjectives	Individually Ss form adverbs from adjectives Class-feedback - different Ss write adverbs on the board 1 by 1, other Ss and T correct if needed (7 min.)	T – Ss S T - Ss	Rule recall Provide practice of the form - adverbs (focus on accuracy)
3. Ex.5 Reading comprehension	Individually Ss fill in a text, writing the correct adverb Class-feedback - different Ss 1 by 1 read sentence by sentence, other Ss and T correct if needed (8 min.)	T – Ss S T - Ss	Provide practice of the form in context - recognition
4. Ex. 6 Recognizing adverbs and adjectives	Individually Ss make sentences, choosing the correct form - adverb or adjective Class-feedback - different students read sentence by sentence, other Ss correct if needed (7 min.)	T - Ss S T - Ss	Provide controlled practice on the use of adverbs and adjectives in context – recognition
5. Revising rules – Past S. and Past Cont.	Different Ss give examples on the use of Past S. and Past Cont. Individually Ss fill in the rules on use Class-feedback – different Ss read rules (7 min.)	T - Ss S T - Ss	Rule recall Past Simple / Past Cont.
5.1 Ex. 7 Identifying correct form	Individually Ss write sentences, choosing the correct form – Past S. or Past Cont. Class-feedback – Different Ss read their answers 1 by 1, other Ss and T correct if needed (8 min.)	T - Ss S T - Ss	Provide practice on the use of Past Simple and Past Cont.

Figure 2: LL’s revised version of the same lesson plan as in Figure 1

Here is one more pair to analyse and reflect on – this time it concerns the ability to formulate lesson plan aims:

- practise students' language
- encourage students to express themselves
- co-operative skills
- enlarging students' vocabulary
- practise pronunciation skills
- improving reading skills[the aims of TY's 1st lesson]

- to develop Ss' speaking skills through discussing a picture in pairs
 - to develop Ss' reading comprehension skills (reading for gist)
 - to enlarge Ss' vocabulary by eliciting the meaning of the new words from context and practising them in a meaningful way
 - to practise Ss' pronunciation by reading aloud
 - to develop Ss' co-operative skills by encouraging students to work in pairs
- [the aims of TY's last lesson]

Figure 3: *TY's lesson aims* – taken from her first and her last plans

Take a moment to consider how the second set of aims – which strongly resemble the first in content – differs from the first and what has the student teacher improved?

Clearly, in the second case the lesson's main focus was on developing reading skills and rest of the aims are related to integrating it with work on the other communicative skills and areas of knowledge, using the full potential of the same text and topic. The aims are much better formulated and more detailed, making explicit all of the teacher's intentions.

Both sets of examples above give us the starting point and the end result of a long process of learning and growth. They are simply snapshots of two distinctive stages in the professional development of the two trainees, but including them both in their portfolios is essential for illustrating how each of these trainees has developed professionally over the period of their training.

Managing the process of transformation or quality assurance in action

At this point a further question arises: what has happened in between? How did the improvement take place and what was the role of the *Pedagogical Portfolio* in it? What follows is an attempt to slightly lift the curtain and allow the reader a glimpse into the casting of the magic behind the scene.

Here is a list of some of the signposts on the way to successful transformation in relation to developing the professional competence of lesson planning (the skill under discussion here) – it also provides a page reference to the resources, found in the *NBU Pedagogical Portfolio for Foreign Language Teacher Trainees*, which support both the trainer and the trainee in their efforts:

- ✓ explicit guidance in the *Pedagogical Portfolio* – procedural description of lesson planning and some samples (pp. 18-22), apart from the input during the methodology course and the breakdown of the competence in the descriptors of good practice (p. 24/ pp. 30-31) – see also *Appendix 1*;
- ✓ structured observation [possibly with the educator in order to critically reflect on it together] of the



- implementation of a lesson plan (p. 47) – see also *Appendix 2*;
- ✓ structured forms – Lesson Plan (pp. 50-51) – see also *Appendix 3*;
- ✓ in-advance discussion of plan and/or planning together with the mentor and/or with peers;
- ✓ guided post-lesson discussion with the mentor / methodologist (Teaching Practice Feedback Form - p. 53-54) – see also *Appendix 4*;
- ✓ assisted self-evaluation in the aspects for development (Trainee Self-evaluation Checklist - p. 52) – see also *Appendix 4*;
- ✓ mentor’s / methodologist’s written comments, questions, suggestions;
- ✓ assisted action planning.

The bridge from theory to practice

On examining the resources in the *NBU Pedagogical Portfolio* (see the four appendices here) one is easily convinced that it is a valuable tool which throws a bridge between pedagogical theory and school-based practice and helps trainees and novice practising teachers to document and make sense of their learning and teaching experience, offering them guidance in the structuring of their professional biography and completing their dossier with multiple sources of evidence of their professional competence and performance. However, the one of the most valuable lessons that we have learnt over the years of using the *Pedagogical Portfolio* is that its compilation should not be a solitary endeavour, if it is to fulfil its purpose effectively.

The process has to be closely monitored on a regular basis by the trainee’s educators (the methodologist and/or the mentor), who – by careful attention to the trainee’s needs and constructive feedback – should provide the necessary conditions for professional growth and the development of the teaching competences. This support should commence at the very beginning of the teaching practice experience, assisting student teachers in developing a taste for it and an appreciation of its benefits – i.e. trainees need to be convinced that the portfolio is an effective tool for professional development and an important stepping stone to further discussion with the mentor, methodologist and/or peers and professional growth mediated by the educators. Here is how one student expressed this need for attention: “Why should you arrange a showcase and then have no one to display it to?” Even those who are successful in the pursuit of their professional career goals welcome and look for support and encouragement, constantly checking their performance against recognised professional standards and commonly approved expectations.

Therefore, hereafter emphasis is laid on those aspects of the caterpillar-butterfly transformation (i.e. the process of sustained professional growth and maturity) which illustrate how the *Portfolio* supports the fruitful partnership and the cooperation between the trainee and the trainer.

The first steps: Focus group discussion of classroom observation and collaboration with the mentor and/or the peers

To begin with, after the structured observation of the implementation of a lesson plan (at NBU we usually precede that with the observation a video recorded lesson together with the whole group of trainees, immediately followed by a focus group discussion of major aspects of the lesson and critical reflection on the ways in which the teacher flexibly adapts the plan to answer the learners' needs on the spot), the *Portfolio* encourages the trainees to plan their first lessons with the mentor and then to discuss their implementation together too (p. 17):

Teaching Practice experience plan

STAGE 1
(...)

- √ First visit(s) to the school: observation of class(es) to be taught during TP, followed by discussion with mentor.

STAGE 2 (optional)

- √ Collaborative planning of a lesson with the mentor.
- √ Collaborative teaching of the lesson with the mentor is also possible.
- √ Feedback discussion of the lesson with mentor.

Over the years many mentors have reported their satisfaction with the results of that cooperation with the trainees: both for facilitating the process of adaptation of their own classes to the new part-time teachers (the trainees) and not disrupting their school programme, as well as for the positive impact it has on developing the trainees' own potential for lesson planning. Here is what one mentor shared in the Teaching practice feedback form she completed for one of her mentees:

“A lesson plan was prepared and planning of the stages was discussed in advance with the mentee – this was extremely useful. Additional materials and short tasks were given to the student to prepare [for the next lesson] at home.” (JB, a mentor)

Not surprisingly, we have also found that cooperating with one's peers during the teaching practice may also have favorable influence on trainees on the way to attaining mastery of professional competences. They could act as critical friends, bouncing off each other's ideas, sharing experience, pooling resources and generally sparking each other off. They could plan their lessons together, jointly teach a few activities or a whole lesson, observe each other teaching and then help their partners reflect more objectively on their classroom performance. In the Teaching Practice experience plan (*NBU Pedagogical Portfolio*, p. 17) they are also invited to try out this approach:

STAGE 3 (optional)

- √ Team planning and team teaching of a lesson by two trainees. Two trainees plan and teach one lesson between them. Mentor observes.
- √ Feedback discussion of lesson with mentor.

The academy of excellence: mentor, methodologist and/or peer feedback and self-evaluation

Along with joint planning, reflection-on-action during post-lesson discussions with the mentor and the assisted self-evaluation and action planning in the aspects for development (in this case the competence of lesson planning) are also highly appreciated by the trainees, as can be seen from the following trainee self-evaluations:

“I had two difficulties in planning the lesson. One is that I was wondering how to begin the exercise about prepositions in stage V of the lesson plan. Before the lesson, I asked the mentor about this ex. and he advised me to firstly elicit what Ss knew about the material I was going to teach and consequently teach what is necessary, from which I drew the conclusion that I should regularly elicit information before starting new material, because I may begin teaching something they already know which will be useless.” (an excerpt from a self-evaluation by STs, a trainee)

“The planning of the first two lessons and their realisation were not the same in all aspects I expected. One of my biggest problems is timing. I planned to make a lot of exercises but I barely managed to do half of them. I should have elicited all the information students already knew instead of presenting everything as new [...]. During the post lesson discussion my mentor helped me learn a very good strategy for making my lesson easier: I should connect the exercises we do with the students' previous knowledge... .” (an excerpt from a self-evaluation by TC, a trainee)

Solicited self-evaluation and objective reflection on teaching performance and the attempt to apply a certain professional competence in practice also contains a valuable lesson to be learned, as the following example also illustrates:

“While preparing the lesson I was not sure whether it would be possible to perform these tasks, whether I would be able to fit them in the time limit. But the plan was very useful for that purpose because throughout the whole lesson I already knew how much time to give for a task and how much I have left. The plan systematises everything that should be covered in the lesson. I was able to follow it during the lesson and I already had partly developed ideas how to present the thing.” (self-evaluation by MG, a trainee)

Last but not least, timely written comments and suggestions provoked by specific occasions and tailored to individual needs / contexts – either by the mentor or the methodologist – not only provide useful feedback to the trainee on which s/he could immediately capitalise in their next classroom performance and long-term development, but also have a very motivating effect, as one student teacher shared:

“The lesson plan was very useful for me. During the lesson I was able to look at it several times so that I was aware what to do next. Preparing the lesson plan wasn’t very difficult this time but it always takes time to consider and to write it. (...) I was really grateful to my methodologist when I sent her the lesson plan the night before the exam and she inspected it, commented on it and gave me some useful advice the same evening. I acted on it and it all worked out really well.” (DY, a trainee)

Here are two examples of the type of feedback that the mentors and/or methodologists may offer to their trainees to assist their teaching competence development (Figures 4 and 5) – the samples are the same as above to illustrate how the educators can “manipulate” (in a good way) the caterpillar-butterfly transformation of their trainees, and yet leave them space and challenge them to do their bit of the homework:

- practise students' language – **who is to practice?** - encourage students to express themselves
- **about? How?** - ... co-operative skills -?
- enlarging students' vocabulary – **specify target vocabulary!**
- practise pronunciation skills
- improving reading skills – **Be specific! (+ Is reading aloud about developing reading skills?)**

Figure 4: An excerpt from TY's 1st lesson with methodologist's comments on aims

Stages/ Activities	Procedures + Timing	Interaction Patterns	Rationale
1. Homework Check-in	Reading – <i>who is reading what? You need to specify the procedure.</i> (7 min.)	Ss	The accuracy – <i>in what? (was HW connected with doing gram./voc. practice or developing Ss' with writing skills)</i>
Practice 2. Ex.5 – <i>what is this ex. about? What is its aim? e.g. Language structure practice</i>	Writing – <i>as above: spell out who is doing what (i.e. what exactly are the Ss writing & are they working individually? If so, is a model provided – when, by whom?) How is feedback collected?</i> (7 min)	T – Ss Ss	Recall rules Formation of adverbs
3. Ex.5 – <i>as above (here it could be “Reading comprehension”)</i>	Reading – <i>is that about developing reading skills, or is the focus on providing Ss with practice on recognising the language structure in context (i.e. “intensive reading” – reading used as a means to a different end). How do Ss read – aloud or silently? What is the task and how is feedback collected?</i> (8 min)	T – Ss Ss Ss	Use of adverbs in text – <i>think about the aim of this task – what do Ss learn as a result of it?</i>
4. Ex. 6 – <i>as above</i>	Writing – <i>as above (provide a more detailed description of the procedure, incl. feedback collection)</i> (7 min)	T - Ss	Differ adverbs from adjectives – <i>is this about passive recognition of the lg form or [controlled/guided] its active production by the Ss?</i>
5. <i>Heading?</i>	Revise (7 min) – <i>as above</i>		Rule recall Past Simple / Past Cont.
5.1 Ex. 7 – as above	Writing (8 min) – <i>as above</i>	T - Ss Ss T – Ss	Choose correct form – <i>be more specific!</i>

Figure 5: LL's Lesson plan – 1st version with methodologist's comments

Final reflections

In conclusion, it was a combination of educator-mediated factors that raised the trainees' professional awareness, helped them grow and gave them confidence in their teaching competences before they could spread their wings and fly:

- ✓ input at the University (both theoretical and practical, springing from school-based practice) and further guided, focused reading;
- ✓ implementation of the **Pedagogical Portfolio** – fulfilling its purpose by effectively using its potential as a learning tool and a showcase of competence development and professional growth, where each and every achievement is objectively measured and

anchored by some piece of tangible evidence tagged with a log of trainee's own reflection-on-action;

- ✓ group work with peers (sharing experience and pooling ideas and resources, sparking each other off) – both educator-led and spontaneously initiated by the trainees;
- ✓ individual work (on one-to-one basis) and cooperation with the mentor;
- ✓ individual work and cooperation with the methodologist;
- ✓ critical reflection on learning and teaching experience, self-assessment and informed action planning on part of the trainees themselves.

It should be noted that the *Pedagogical Portfolio* played an instrumental role in the process of quality assurance through all of the above – pulling the strings of the various activities together and spelling them out for both the trainee and the trainer, ensuring coherence of approach (linking one step to the next and making sure all available resources and opportunities are capitalised on – e.g. that actual teaching practice is preceded by focused reading and class observation and analysis; that self-reflection is assisted and supplemented by constructive mentor/methodologist feedback, etc.) and monitoring processes in their progress, steering the way to successful accomplishment.

CONCLUSION

Maybe some teachers are indeed born, but if you are aware of the craft, the art and the magic involved in

professional growth you stand a better chance of facilitating your trainees' caterpillar-butterfly transformation and of providing an equal start for all those who did not have that luck at birth but are

nonetheless committed to the career and willing to go the extra mile to achieve professional competence. And as we all know, motivation pays off generously.



References:

1. Dimitrova, S. and Tashevska, S. (2004) *Pedagogical Portfolio for Foreign Language Teacher Trainees*. Sofia: NBU University Press;
2. Dimitrova, S. and Tashevska, S. (2007) “Applying quality assurance in a Bulgarian teacher training context”, in Muresan, L., Heyworth, F., Mateva, G. and Rose, M. (2007), pp. 87-92;
3. Muresan, L., Heyworth, F., Mateva, G. and Rose, M. (2007) *QualiTraining: A Training Guide for Quality Assurance in Language Education*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing [publication also available online at <http://qualitraining2.ecml.at>]
4. Newby, D. et al. (2007) *European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages: A reflection tool for language teacher education*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing [publication also available online at <http://www.ecml.at/epostl>]

Appendix 1

A snapshot of the Pedagogical Portfolio contents page, listing all the resources on lesson planning:

Advice on planning and evaluating lessons.....	18
Assistance with planning	
Planning a series of lessons	
Planning a lesson	
Lesson plan checklist	
Possible lesson plan formats	
Aims of lessons	
Self-evaluation	
Keeping a reflective diary	
Photos. Audio- and Video-recordings	

The descriptors of good practice in the Pedagogical Portfolio relating to the competence of lesson planning:

PLANNING	
Aims and objectives	Lessons plans must have clearly stated aims and objectives, in order to ensure that lessons focus on learning rather than teaching the coursebook. Trainees should be able to plan realistic aims and objectives which are relevant and appropriate. They should be able to show how achievement of aims/ objectives will be checked.
Anticipation of difficulties	Trainees should be able to anticipate learner problems and plan appropriate solutions.
Structure: shape, balance, timing and sequencing of activities	In relation to the aims and objectives trainees should prepare sufficient and varied activities for the time available, plan appropriate procedures and interaction formats and allocate an appropriate time to each activity. They should avoid simply going from one coursebook exercise to another, focusing on teaching the content, without linking activities together. The activities should follow each other naturally and in connected way with clear transitions. Trainees should try to include in a lesson at least one activity that is lighter and amusing.
Preparation of materials	The coursebook should be seen as a support for teaching, rather than a substitute for it and the teacher should use her/ his imagination at all times in preparing interesting ways of exploiting the coursebook unit in accordance with the specific teaching context. Trainees should strive to use supplementary materials and other teaching aids.
Familiarity with subject content	Trainees should be familiar with the subject content, so that they are comfortable in handling the material for their lessons.
Suitability of content	Lessons will generally be more successful when the teacher adapts or supplements the coursebook materials in response to the specific learners' profile.

Appendix 2

A structured observation sheet from the NBU Pedagogical Portfolio for observing the implementation of a lesson plan

Pedagogical Portfolio for FLT Trainees

OBSERVATION SHEET (SAMPLE 6)

NAME OF STUDENT: DATE: TIME:
 SCHOOL: GRADE/ CLASS: COURSEBOOK AND UNIT:
 CLASS TEACHER: LEVEL OF PROFICIENCY:
 ELT METHODOLOGIST:

Topic: **Lesson Planning Implemented: Opening / Closures, Lesson Phases and Transitions. Timing and Patterns of Classroom Interaction**

/Reading: Doff, A. (1992). Teaching English. CUP, pp. 57-61; Wajnryb, R. (1992). Classroom Observation Tasks. CUP, pp. 38-39 & pp. 74-84 & Gower, R. and Waters, S. (1983). Teaching Practice Handbook. Heinemann, pp. 41-48/

TASK: List all the activities of the lesson, noting down their timing, pattern(s) of interaction employed by the teacher (at the different stages of the activity) and their rationale within the framework of the whole lesson and its aims (You will need to discuss the latter with the class teacher prior to observation). What does T do to organise the activity, how does s/he monitor students' performance and collect feedback, does s/he extend it in any way to integrate it with the other activities in the lesson? Is the order of activities in the coursebook followed rigidly, or does T adapt it to the needs of the specific group, modifying tasks, changing order and using additional materials? Are mixed abilities provided for? How? Comment on the effectiveness of the lesson. (Use another sheet if necessary.)

PHASE OF LESSON	ACTIVITY AND MATERIALS USED	LEARNERS' BEHAVIOUR	TEACHER'S BEHAVIOUR	PATTERN OF INTERACTION	TIMING	RATIONALE

FINALLY: Use a separate sheet to answer the question: "What did I learn from the experience?"

Appendix 3

The structured lesson plan template in the NBU Pedagogical Portfolio

Pedagogical Portfolio for FLT Trainees

LESSON PLAN No

Trainee:
 School: Date/ Day:
 Grade/ level/ age: Time: from to
 Mentor/ class teacher:

Aims / Objectives:

Assumptions:

Anticipated problems:

Possible solutions:

Materials / Equipment /Aids:
 (Attach copies of coursebook and additional materials, if relevant.)

Pedagogical Portfolio for FLT Trainees

Stages/ Activities	Procedures + Timing	Interaction Patterns	Rationale	Notes

(Continue on a separate sheet)

photocopiable

Self-evaluation
 (Attach a separate sheet, if necessary.)

Appendix 4

The first page of the structured template in the NBU Pedagogical Portfolio for mentors to provide feedback on the trainee's teaching practice (A) and the Trainee Self-evaluation Checklist, assisting critical reflection on experience during the teaching practice (B)

A

Pedagogical Portfolio for FLT Trainees

TEACHING PRACTICE FEEDBACK FORM

Trainee: School: Grade/ level/ age: Lesson materials/ aids:	Mentor: Methodologist: Date & time:
LESSON AIMS:	
PERSONAL QUALITIES/ CLASSROOM MANNER:	
COMMAND OF LANGUAGE:	
LESSON PLANNING AND PREPARATION:	
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LESSON (stages, activities, procedures, patterns of interaction, teacher talk, error correction strategies, etc.):	

B

Pedagogical Portfolio for FLT Trainees

TRAINEE SELF-EVALUATION CHECKLIST

Answer these, or some of these questions, after you have taught each lesson. It will help you to reflect on the lesson before you discuss it with your mentor. Afterwards you can write your own brief notes about the lesson, too, which could help you when writing your self-evaluation.

<p>Planning and Preparation</p> <p>How useful was your lesson plan? Were you able to follow it? Did you need to depart from it during the lesson? Why? What were the consequences/ effects of the changes you made?</p> <p>What difficulties did you face in planning the lesson?</p> <p>Now that you have taught your lesson, what changes would you make in the plan for the next time?</p>
<p>Teaching the lesson</p> <p>How successful was the lesson? Which part of the lesson was the most successful? Why? Which part was the least successful? Why?</p> <p>How did you ensure that all the students understood or could do what you wanted them to do?</p> <p>How and how much did you use the board? Was it effective? What other aids did you use? Were they effective?</p> <p>Which of the four skills did you develop most? Which language areas did you work on?</p> <p>How much Bulgarian did you use? Should you have used more or less?</p> <p>What did you do in order to provide a real learning environment in the class?</p> <p>What aspect of the lesson gave you most difficulty?</p> <p>Were you able to tackle all the unexpected situations in the classroom?</p> <p>How was this lesson different from ones you have taught before?</p> <p>What did you learn from teaching this lesson? (About the students?/ about yourself as a teacher?/ about the teaching of English?/ etc.)</p>