The Impact of Aligning Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory with a Comprehensive Teacher Education Model on Pre-service Teachers' Attitudes and Teaching Practice

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Abstract

Since its inception, experiential learning has been a foundational tenant of teacher education. However, it is questionable as to the level of authentic experiential learning practices that are actually taking place. This paper presents one approach to addressing this situation, based on Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory Model. As such, this exploratory manuscript examines Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle (ELC) further, and considers the implications for Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) in teacher education. A description of teacher education program in the CRMEF (Centre Régional des Métiers de l'Education et de la Formation) is provided, then results from a quantitative and qualitative survey are triangulated with teacher trainees' reflection journals to evaluate the training program in terms of the teacher trainees' developing confidence and competence in teaching. Therefore, the present research will explore the implementation of this approach for teacher education in the CRMEF. Results indicate that the great majority of the participants have developed both their confidence to teach using this approach, thus, changing their perceptions and attitudes towards the teaching of English language. Specific learning experiences that help affect their sense of confidence and competence in teaching include in-person, experiential and hands-on approaches to learning relevant skills and knowledge, which confirms the importance of using Kolb's ELC as the basis

for teacher education program. The study recommends that teacher educators enhance their programs by providing instruction to pre-service teachers in authentic experiential learning pedagogy. Therefore, a comprehensive model for teacher education is suggested to demonstrate the role of experiential learning.

Introduction

Experiential learning has been a foundational tenant of teacher education since its inception. However, the theory of experiential education has received limited attention in the permanent teacher education literature base. Moreover, it is questionable as to the level of authentic experiential learning instructional practices that are actually taking place. This paper presents one approach to addressing this situation, based on Kolb's Experiential Learning Model. It further explores the tenets of experiential learning and considers the application of true Experiential learning pedagogy into teacher education programs.

The study examines the theories that view experience as the key to meaningful learning and link learning to personal development. It also demonstrates ways in which experiential learning Theory (ELT) provides a valuable framework for strengthening the critical synergy that can and must be developed among education, work, and personal development (Kolb and Lewis, 1986).

Giving special attention to teacher education in the CRMEF and workplace learning through practice teaching in the classroom (the practicum), we provide examples of current applications and conclude by examining the benefits of experiential learning for promoting teacher trainees' skills and competencies. Therefore, the present research will explore the implementation of this approach for teacher education in the CRMEF. Teacher trainees' self-reflections, observations, questionnaires and interviews will explore the extent to which the process and outcomes have influenced their beliefs and equally changed their classroom practices.

As such, this exploratory manuscript examines Kolb's experiential learning process further, and considers the implications for ELT in teacher education. A description of teacher education program in the CRMEF is provided, then results from a quantitative and qualitative teacher trainees survey are triangulated with their reflective journals to evaluate the training program in terms of teacher trainees' developing confidence and competence in teaching, based on their learned skills and knowledge.

The paper includes four sections. First, the background section provides a context of the study and the aims behind conducting it. The statement of the research questions and a description of the research tools are presented in the methodology section, while the findings are unveiled in the subsequent section. The last section is devoted to a discussion of the findings and the related recommendations.

Section One: Review of the literature
What is/Why experiential learning?

The present paper seeks to discuss the specific role experiential learning plays in teacher education through the lens of Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) (1984). As the name suggests, experiential learning relates to learning from experience or learning by doing. Experiential education first immerses learners in experience and then encourages reflection about that experience to develop new skills, new attitudes, or new ways of thinking and, hence, plan for innovative practices. As an approach that is considered fundamental to meaningful learning, and for many reasons, experiential learning has moved from the periphery of education to the centre.

First, there has been a move away from the behaviourist conception of learning that highlights the dominant role of the teacher as the main source of knowledge and the passive role of the learner as a recipient. The shift towards current cognitive, humanistic, social, and constructivist learning models stress the importance of meaning formation that is based on a cyclical interplay between the learner's previous experiences and their current and future learning. Second, in the last few decades, responsive teachers to the unprecedented influx of adult learners in higher education have been able to capitalise on their adult learners' prior experience in order to enhance their current and future learning. Third, in today's rapidly changing environment, educators are being held accountable for drawing upon their students' wealth of prior experience and background knowledge as a catalyst for new learning. Fourth, the challenge to assess the transfer of training to the job and thus, reconsider the critical linkages between learning and employability requires to design competency-based measures of learning and experiential techniques for assessing learner outcomes and evaluating their achievements. In fact, experiential approaches prove to be more effective in promoting communication skills, teamwork spirits and workplace literacy as the main job-related skills traced in the labour market (Kolb & Lewis, 1986).

Experiential Learning Theory: Historical background

In this section, we begin by tracing the origins of ELT which dates back to the experiential learning movement of the mid-nineteenth century. This movement represented an attempt in the United States to shift from formal, abstract and teacher-centred education to experience-based approaches to education that were more learner-centred. During this period, laboratory sciences, applied studies, and clinical experiences were introduced on college campuses. Early in the twentieth century, Jhon Dewey published *Experience and Education* (1983) highlighting the importance of learning by doing and demonstrating its applicability. Dewey's publication coincided with cooperative education which referred to various kinds of off-campus experiences and which was introduced as a complement to classroom instruction.

According to Dewey, experiential learning means a cycle of "trying" and "undergoing" that involves a series of steps, namely becoming aware of a problem, getting an idea, trying out a response, experiencing the consequences, and either confirming or modifying previous conceptions. This process has the potential to result in a person's cognitive reconstruction of experience and significant personal learning. Such ongoing meaning reconstruction over time culminates in learning to learn through practice. All this suggests that for Dewey, creating new knowledge and transforming oneself through learning to perform news roles is more fundamental than simply learning how to do something.

In the realm of transformational learning theory, Freire (1970) stresses the role of education in promoting the critical consciousness of learners. In fact, for Freire, educating people provides more experiential interaction opportunities for learners and exposes them to the realities of their culture. Accordingly, Freire conceives of transformational learning as social change.

Other writers interested in adult learning also stress the pivotal role of experience. Mezieow (1981, 1990) adopted Habermas' conception of knowledge and demonstrated its role in promoting critical reflection. The different horizons through which people perceive themselves and the way they structure their lives and the world around them are influenced by all the cultural and psychological assumptions. Critical reflection has been an effective means to raise people's awareness as to the relevance of these assumptions. Mezirow believes in transformational learning and perceives it as a means to personal development.

From the foundation laid by each of the aforementioned theorists over the past fifty years for experiential learning, new experiential approaches continue to evolve, enabling us to respond and adapt to the dramatic changes that require more commitment and incorporation of

innovative experiential approaches to ensure relevance and to respond to the needs of diverse groups.

Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory: analysis and synthesis

Many theorists and practitioners made a significant contribution and acceptance of experiential learning. This section seeks to discuss the specific role experiential learning plays in teacher's education through the lens of Kolb's ELT (1984). In meeting that purpose, this section outlines the theoretical tenants of Kolb's ELT and examines publication within Kolb's comprehensive ELT bibliography (Kolb & Kolb, 2005a) in order to glean an in-depth theoretical framework of ELT that is relevant to teacher education. As such, an analysis of Kolb's ELT and a synthesis of those tenants in the context of teacher education follows.

In his ground-breaking book on ELT (Experiential Learning as the Source of Learning and Development 1984), Kolb perceives learning as the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. He defines experiential learning as a "*holistic integrative perspective on learning that combines experience, cognition and behavior*" (p. 21)

As a way to link theory to actual practice, Kolb's ELT model, also known as Experiential Learning Cycle (ELC), identifies four stages of grasping experience. These stages are:

Stage 1: Concrete Experience (CE): According to Akella (2010), the Concrete Experience stage represents the basis of the learning process. It is the stage where lessons are learned through "*adaptability and open-mindedness rather than a systematic approach to the situation or problem*" (p. 102) as the learner actively experiences an activity rather than passively observes or reads about it (Meiners, Schiller & Orchard, 2004).

Stage 2: Reflective Observation (RO): In this stage, learners reflect back on the experiences by observing and examining them from a variety of perspectives and articulating what learning processes they went through, how and what they have learned. Reflection represents a vital part of learning, problem solving and creativity that can be included in a teacher education course in the professions (Schon, 1995). Through reflection, the learner internally analyses the learning experiences and then encourages his/her own personal meaning and understanding about these experiences (Liddell, Hubbard & Werner, 2000).

Stage 3: Abstract Conceptualisation (AC): This stage involves the learner's use of logic and ideas as opposed to feelings to understand the situations and problems (Akella, 2010, p. 102). The reflective observations to which learners are exposed in the above stage of the ELC engage them in abstract conceptualization, thus, creating generalisations or principles that

integrate their observations into theories. In other words, the learner uses his/her practice, observations and reflections to create a theory or model in order to conceptualise his/her experience-based learning.

Stage 4: Active Experimentation (AE): Learners then use these generalisations as guides to engage in further action, called active experimentation, where they test the theory or the model they have developed in other more complex situations and put them into practice and/or plan for a forthcoming experience. Testing their learning allows them to "*make predictions about reality and then act on them*" (Akella, 2010, p. 102). Through the ELC, Kolb theorises that the learning cycle is transformed into a learning spiral of ever-increasing complexity since each learning experience leads to another set of concrete experiences and another round of learning at a more sophisticated and complex level. All this makes learning "*a continuous process grounded in experience*" (Akella, p. 41) increasing in complexity throughout the process.

Kolb identifies two dialectically related modes of grasping experience or taking information **(Concrete Experience versus Abstract Conceptualisation)** and two dialectically related modes of processing that information or transforming experience **(Reflective Observation versus Active Experimentation)**. Kolb suggests that one's learning style can be identified through a combination of preferred means of grasping and transforming experience information. He also believes that learning in this cycle can be entered at any point. However, he considers any one learning style to be an incomplete form of processing information. For meaningful learning that fully transforms one's understanding to take place, all four stages of the cycle must be negotiated by the learner. According to Kolb, an experience that is not reflected upon represents unrealised learning.

In his ELT, Kolb (1984) also developed a Learning Style Inventory to assess the learning styles of the different learners so that the theory created a better fit for each student. Each of the four learning styles (i.e. (a) Conceiving – Abstract Conceptualisation and Active Experimentation (b) Diverging – Concrete Experience and Reflective Observation (c) Assimilating – Abstract Conceptualisation and Reflective Observation (d) Accommodating – Concrete Experience and Active Experimentation) match the different stages of the ELT as learners learn better if the content presented to them meets their preferred learning style.

However, Kolb's Learning Styles and how they relate to ELT is not part of this paper. Rather the present paper examines how Kolb's four stages of his Experiential Learning Cycle (ELC) has been used to respond to the challenges of pre-service teachers entering their teacher education programs with little confidence and competence in English language teaching; yet needing to be prepared to teach once they are in the real classroom context.

Teacher education in the CRMEF: Background to context
        To assist in understanding the mechanisms necessary to support teacher trainees' training institutions, as well as the lack of coordination between them, the teacher training system in Morocco has faced remarkable changes, which has had negative repercussions on the quality of the educational system and the ability to adapt to the rapidly changing society. Indeed, teacher training was distributed according to the school education system and the ability to adapt to the rapidly changing society. Indeed, teacher training was distributed according to the school education cycles over 34 Teacher Training Centers (TTC), 13 Regional Educational Centers (REC), 7 Normal Superior Schools NSS, and two NSS technical education (Lahchimi, 2015; Ouasri, 2019).
        As advocated in the National Charter for Education Training (Superior Counsel of Education and Training, 2000) the need to strengthen the linkage between the teacher's commitments and school reconstruction was based on three main strategies, namely teacher training quality, training institution affiliation to the university, and the need for professional development through in-service training. Meanwhile, the establishment of teachers training as advocated in the National Charter for Education and Training (Superior Counsel of Education and training, 2000) has been delayed by about ten years. The different political and ideological trends have equally manipulated the Charter's agenda.
        In Europe, and elsewhere, the training of teachers placed in the higher education system, is organised by a faculty on an education department within a university. European countries, within the framework of the Bologna Declaration (1999), have undertaken to make comparable their university qualifications. Therefore, teacher training has undergone a movement towards the "universitarisation/professionalisation" of teacher training professions. What about Moroccan context?
        As for the Emergency Plan (2009-2012), it is adopted four measures: the definition of criteria and selection process, the establishment of University Education Courses (UEC), the creation of the CRMEFs by bringing together TTC and REC following the ministerial decree (2011), and the implementation of a continuing training strategy.
        The professional training systems in the CRMEF as well as the initial university training programs as two entities are developing each other's without being integrated in one identity. Within both training spaces, the provided activities, the methodological benchmarks, and the skills targeted for initial training and professional training have not contributed to complementarity between university and professionalsation of teacher training, which denies any tendency towards the beginning of a rapprochement between the two entities.

As opposed to Europe, Morocco was involved in two parallel but diphase movements of teacher training: professionalisation (CRMEF) and universitarisation (UEC). The dysfunction of coordination between the establishments concerned by the training poses serious challenges that are mainly related to the degree of complementarity existing between university and professionalisation of teacher training.

Unfortunately, the lack of a fully-structured educational research in the CRMEF as well as the absence of the LMD system prevent CRMEF professor-researchers and teacher trainers from carrying out educational research. Therefore, the professional knowledge present in these programs is characterised by the absence of effective contributions of professor-researchers. Actually, only the CRMEFs have professor researchers-trainers qualified to put scientific and educational research at the service of professional training, in order to build professional knowledge and identify the knowledge base that is the problem of the teacher training.

The decree creating the CRMEFs (February 2011) set a training engineering that delineated the duration of training at one year in the two spaces of the CRMEFs and schools, at the rate of 26 hours per week (at the CRMEF). Based on the skills and alternate approach according to the "practice-theory-practice" paradigm as well as the alternance "work-study-training", as fundamental concepts in the centre of professional training, the training system was modular, (40%) alternating with practice (60%) made in school, which allowed the articulation between theoretical and practical knowledge as basic and essential concepts in teacher training.

In the Moroccan CRMEFs since 2017, qualifying training for teachers lasts two years, divided into two main phases. The first phase: lasts seven months, it takes place in two complementary spaces, the CRMEF and the school at a rate of 24 weeks per year at the CRMEF (1 week for the reception, 3 weeks for the first and second semesters' exams, including the resit exam) and 6 hour per week in the school along the 20 weeks of training. The second phase is devoted to the following missions: total responsibility for the class, benefiting from field monitoring, face-to-face training (at the CRMEF) and online training, preparation of an interventional educational project (action research) under the supervision of a teacher trainer from the CRMEF, and preparation and discussion of the personal portfolio.

The CRMEF training system (pedagogical guidelines framework document) has several skills to be developed during teacher training by adopting the typology of Tardif and Borges (2009), the training skills can be classified according to the following areas of knowledge that are presented as main and sub-modules within the CRMEFs:
-   Educational Sciences (a 30-hours module): Educational Sciences Field (ESF)- Didactics (a 30-hours module).- The Planning of the

Teaching and Learning Process (a 30-hours module).- TICE (a 30-hours module).- The Management of the Teaching and the Learning Process 1 and 2 (two modules of 60 hours).- The Evaluation of the Teaching and Learning Process (a 30-hours module).- Complementary training (four modules of 120 hours): Reference Discipline Fields (RDF), which includes the content of the knowledge to be taught.- Professional situations in a school environment represent 60% of the training duration, with the internship reports: Practical Training and Internships (PTI).

Beyond the areas defined by Tardif and Borges (2009), other skills are part of the training system adopted at the CRMEF:
-   Educational Research spread over the research methodology (a 30-hours module) and the completion of an end-of-study project- Legislation and Ethics of the Profession (a 30-hours module)- School Life (a 30-hours module) - Practice Analysis and Activities (a 30-hours module)- Didactic Production (a 30-hours module).

Therefore, teacher trainees have to develop skills related to consolidating their knowledge of concepts and notions, approaches and methods as well as the acquisition of didactic and pedagogical knowledge in terms of planning, managing -implementing and evaluating the teaching and learning process.

They are also required to develop skills related to undertaking research to identify and analyse teaching/learning deficiencies, correct and manage the conduct of class, taking into account the diversity of students, authority, didactical /pedagogical relationship and classroom management strategies.

Since training is based on a back and forth according to the reflective and dynamic paradigm of practice /theory / practice logic, the Practice Analysis and Activities and Didactic Production modules have been adopted in training since 2017-2018. The two modules take place within the framework of "workshop presentations'; these modules with internship reports (portfolio) aim to further consolidate the professionalising dimensions of teacher training in the CRMEF. They formalise practice, and this can also be requisitioned in view of lived experiences. In this respect, the practice /theory / practice logic is rooted within the main principles underlying Experiential Learning Theory.

Therefore, the training system in the CRMEF is inspired by the professional training model which offers a vision of professional practices as an original and relatively autonomous space for learning and training for practitioners (Tardif et al., 1988). It is oriented towards training teaching

professionals capable of building their identity and equally using their critical thinking and creativity to respond to different professional situations in an autonomous and responsible manner.

Section two: Methodology

The research is based on the mixed method, with questionnaires administered at the end of the raining year at the CEMEF-Fez. The results from the survey are triangulated with the qualitative data compiled from the comments that the teacher trainees written in their reports, reflective journals, synthesis response papers, learning statements and professional development projects. Other comments are extracted from the participants' assignments and reflective papers as main components of their portfolios, after the first year of input focusing on teacher education that target all effective skills and competencies required for a successful teaching and learning process.

Aim

The main aim of the present study is to identify the pre-service teachers' level of confidence and teaching competence as well as their attitudes towards the teaching of English language at the start and end of their training in the CRMEF. It also aims to investigate the range of the learning experiences offered to them in order to better understand the value and effectiveness of their training.

Research questions

This paper addresses the following research questions, focusing more particularly on English language teaching.

1. Were the teacher trainees exposed to any learning experience throughout their training in the CRMEF?
2. Did the teacher trainees develop their confidence and sense of competence in teaching English language throughout their training in the CRMEF?
3. What learning experience helped affect their attitudes and perceptions as well as their sense of competence in their teaching practices?
4. To what extent are the range of the learning experiences offered to them during their training in the CRMEF effective in terms of developing their teaching skills?

Research instruments

The questionnaires are developed significantly for the teacher training program to ascertain the pre-service teachers' perceived development in confidence and identify the learning experiences within the

training program that have affected their sense of competence in teaching. They are comprised of 20 questions. Some questions with a s point Likert scale for responses are close-ended (e.g. at the start of this training program, how confident did you feel about teaching English. Very confident, Confident; Not sure, Not confident; Scared stiff?). Other questions are open-ended (e.g. General comments about how you feel your sense of competence has developed in teaching English as a result of completing their teacher training program in the CRMEF).

The survey includes questions about how confident the participants felt about teaching English at the start and at the end of their training; which learning experiences helped them develop this confidence and change their attitudes toward English language teaching; how effective were the integration of learning experiences and why; how they developed both their professional and personal skills for teaching, and any general comments about how they developed their sense of competence in teaching English language throughout their training in the CRMEF.

Research participants

The participants English language teacher trainees enrolled in the teacher education program in the CRMFE-Fez include 112 during the training years 2020-2021 and 2021-2022. It is noted that 48% of the participants are females and 52% are males. Most of them live in the city of Fez including its suburbs. The other participants are originally from Meknes, Khenifra, Beni Mellal, Taza, Taounate and Boulmane. They took the time to complete the entire survey including the open-ended questions. Given the fact that the interviews were conducted after thje final assessment session of the training, only 25 participants living in the city pf Fez, accepted to participate. In-depth interviewing as a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents. They provide much more detailed information than what is available through other data collection methods, such as surveys. They also may provide a more relaxed atmosphere in which to collect information-people may feel more comfortable having a conversation with you about their program as opposed to filling out a survey. In this respect, the interviews were carried out to explore the participants' perspectives on the training program in the CRMEF. They include questions about their experiences and expectations related to the program, the thoughts they had concerning program operations, processes, and outcomes, and about any changes they perceived in their attitudes and teaching competence as a result of their involvement in the program. The interviews were conducted face to face to provide a better opportunity to read the body language of the respondents and match the responses. They represented purely a

conversational method and invited opportunities to get details from the informants.

The participants who took part in the research belong to different age group. The majority of the participants (89%) are in the 22-30 age groups, while 11% of them are more than 25 years. Among the respondent, only 8% have some experience in teaching (1 to 12 months), while the rest have no teaching experience prior to their training in the CRMEF).

Procedure

The questionnaires were administered in the final assessment sessions of the first years training in the CRMEF (2020-2021 and 2021-2022). The participants were asked to complete and return them by the end of the sessions. Of the 112 participants, 100 completed and returns the questionnaires. Only 12 participants provide incomplete responses, perhaps due to lack of time or interest. Therefore, the great majority of the participants have taken the time to complete the entire questionnaires, including the open-ended questions. The teacher trainees' portfolios that include their reflective journals, observation reports, synthesis response papers, learning statements and professional development projects, in addition to their assignments, were also used to collect data about their attitudes and developing confidence in the training program. The questionnaires had a tear-off sheet on which the participants put their names and agreed or disagreed that their portfolios could be used as part of the research. All reflective portfolios were de-identified prior to results being collected and analysed. The research data was collected from the questionnaires that included both close and open-ended questions in addition to the interviews as well as the participants' portfolios as reflective papers.

The quantitative data was analysed to ascertain percentages of the participants responding to each question. The qualitative data from both the interviews and the reflective portfolios was collected and classified into themes in relation to participants' perceptions of their developing confidence in teaching English as well as their explanations for this development.

Section three: Results

The quantitative data from the questionnaires analysed in terms of percentages of responses to the different questions is triangulated with the qualitative data collected from the teacher trainees' interviews and portfolios. The interviews and the reflective papers in the portfolio are analysed in relation to common themes arising from the participants' responses and comments. The themes include how the teacher trainees' confidence developed during the training; how the theoretical as well as the practical sessions assisted in their understanding and building their sense of

competence in teaching English; the value of the videos and classroom observations; pee-teaching and micro-teaching sessions; the problem solving situations and case studies; the training workshops, as well as the importance of experiential learning and their change in attitudes towards the teaching of English language in general and towards their teaching practices throughout the training in particular.

A considerable number of the participants reflected extensively on the different learning experiences that helped affect their attitudes and sense of competence in teaching English selected comments from the different themes are included in this paper along with the quantitative data.

Research question 1: Did the teacher trainees change their attitudes and develop their sense of confidence in teaching throughout their training in the CRMEF?

When asked how confident they felt at the start of the training year about teaching English, 6% of the respondents report that they felt very confident, 9% felt confident, 7% were unsure, 58% were not confident and 20% felt 'scared stiff'. Overall, 78% of the participants did not feel confident to teach English at the Start of their training in the CRMEF compared with 15% who felt confident.

When asked the same question in relation to the end of the training year, only 8 of the participants indicate that they did not feel confident (1% Scared Stiff and 7 % Not Confident) compared with 92% who report that they felt confident to teach English (60% Confident and 32% Very Confident).

All this indicates a considerable increase in confidence between the start and end of the training year. The teacher trainees' comments in the questionnaires, the interview and their reflective portfolios confirm this change of attitudes and increase in confidence, these include statements such as:

- "I entered the first week of training with a large amount of apprehension and dislike towards teaching English. As a student, I was led to believe that English was something difficult to be taught and I have been fearful of it ever since. That was, until the first time when I was given the opportunity to teach English and observe my colleagues as well as my host teacher in the practicum sessions I got a lot out of the lectures and the practical sessions which made me excited to teach English instead of being petrified of it I was initially very skeptical of the training program's effectiveness Nevertheless, after a few weeks of training, I became very enthusiastic about being a teacher who designs fun and engaging lessons scaffolded in a way that the students feel a sense of accomplishment in the lectures,

tutorials and video viewing sessions, I now feel more confident that I have the required skills to implement an effective learner centred approach in the classroom My knowledge of the didactic and teaching strategies has increased from bare minimum to a level of competency I didn't expect after only a few weeks of classes training."

Overall, the participants increased their confidence and competence in relation to English teaching after eight weeks of training activities and learning experiences. The next research question examiners which of these learning experiences helped their competence in English teaching.

Research question 2: What learning experiences helped affect the teacher trainees' sense of competence in English teaching?

The participants were provided with a list of learning experiences in which they were involves throughout their training; they were asked which ones specifically affected their sense of competence in teaching English. The following table (table 1indicates the percentage of the participants selecting the different learning experiences as those that helped their sense of competence in teaching English. Most of those which rank highest (peer-teaching and micro-teaching, delivering presentations, simulations and role-plays, dealing with problem solving situations, case studies, observation and video-viewing sessions are related to the first stage of Kolb's ELT, that of "Concrete Experience."

Table 1: Learning Experiences affecting teacher trainees' sense of competence in teaching English as related to Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory

Teaching English as a Learning Experience		Percentage of teacher trainees selecting this learning experience
Kolb's ELT: Stage 1: Concrete Experience (CE)	**Peer-teaching**	12%
	Micro-teaching	14%
	Role-plays	10%
	Simulations	10.34%
	Teaching a sequence during the teaching practicums sessions	15.5%
	Teaching the whole lesson and taking the whole class responsibility during the practicum sessions	22.5%
	Participating in workshops	8.66%
	Video viewing and observing	7%
Kolb's ELT: Stage 2: Reflective Observation (RO)	**Reflective journals on practice teaching (peer/micro-teaching, practicums)**	53.5%
	Reflective journals on	25.22%

	lectures, video viewing and observing sessions	
	"My favourite Ten Items Collection" activity	21.28%
Kolb's ELT: Stage 3: Abstract Conceptualization (AC)	Synthesis response paper	62.76%
	Learning statement	37.24%
Kolb's ELT: Stage 4: Active Experimentation (AE)	Action plan and Personal Project	43%
	Professional development project	30.5%
	"Dear Future Me Letter" activity	26.5%

Kolb's ELT Stage 1: Concrete Experience
Practice teaching; micro-teaching, peer-teaching and practicum sessions

As noted in table 1 above, participating in practice teaching (38%) (teaching a sequence during the teaching practicums sessions; teaching the whole lesson and taking the whole class responsibility during the practicum sessions) and micro/peer teaching (28%) rate highest in relation to the set of concrete learning experiences that assisted in developing the participants' sense of competence in English language teaching. Sample comments of the participants about the value of these learning experiences include the following:

- "I believe that practice teaching through micro-teaching, peer-teaching, as well as the practicum sessions is very effective in modelling and inspiring ideas for teaching English language. Practice teaching makes me realise that it can actually be quite simple and that students can learn the concepts through engaging that put them in the centre of the teaching and learning process."
- "Initially teaching a sequence during the first practicums, then teaching the whole lesson and taking full class responsibility along the remaining practicum sessions allowed me to go through the different textbook units; I felt a little overwhelmed by the activities, pictures, texts, graphical representations, etc. Actually, I feel that I have learned a great amount about English language teaching and learning."

Participating in workshops: simulations, role-plays, problem, case studies

Among the sampled participants, 8,66% note that participating in workshops (Kolb's Stage 1) helped affect their sense of competence in teaching English. Teacher trainees' comments to confirm this include:

- "Within the workshops, the trainers reinstated the need to do as the students will. We interacted with our trainers by answering and

asking questions, repeating after our trainers (drills), sitting and standing up, rearranging our seats, passing to the board, creating some critical moments during the lesson (discipline issues, technical problems, interruptions of class, healthy/unhealthy noise, etc.). We were involved in the most exciting workshops we have ever attended. I cannot explain how refreshing it was to learn content in such engaging activities and varied techniques that shaped our positive attitudes towards learning and going through new experiences. The trainers were very informative and resourceful as they inspired us with important ideas and provided us with effective techniques and strategies that we could implement bin our classroom."

- "I thought teaching English language would be extremely difficult and challenging. The workshops helped us realise the importance of diversifying one's teaching methods and strategies. Simulations, role-plays, dealing with problem situations and case studies as main activities in the workshops represented a fantastic opportunity to clear some of my worries when it came to teaching English."

Video viewing, observation and lectures

In regards with Kolb's Stage 1, (7%) of the sampled teacher trainees indicate that viewing the videos prove to be important in assisting them to develop their competence in English language teaching. The videos were suggested and presented by the trainer and put online so that the teacher trainees could see English language lessons being taught in a real-life situation – something many of them may have never seen. Their comments reveal that they appreciate being able to view these authentic teaching situations. In this respect, one participant states that:

- "It was inspiring to watch so impressed that the students were engaged during these lessons as I had imagined that English language lessons involving fun and interactive activities (e.g. ice-breakers, warm-up activities, games, dialogues, role-plays, simulations, etc.) in any classroom would be noisy and chaotic. The videos were useful for demonstrating English lessons in action. They highlighted not only how to put English language lessons into practice, but also how to implement behavioural strategies in a way that would ensure a successful lesson. I found that the videos were a great aid in gaining a view of how to implement affective teaching and learning strategies into the classroom. By providing examples of different teaching styles, methods and techniques, it was easier to grasp how English was taught in the classroom and how students made use of different learning strategies".

Although the quantitative results indicate that practice teaching was ranked first (84,34%), many teacher trainees comment in the reflective journals on how the combination of the lectures, and the video viewing sessions helps them develop their confidence in teaching English as one participant confirms.

- "Overall the lectures and videos provided a great foundational basis for me in being able to teach English in the classroom in a fun and interactive way, allowing students to express themselves in an environment where their creativity is nurtured and encouraged. I was very apprehensive about teaching English as I had no English teaching background; I was quite linguistically gifted but for me, teaching English to students was a challenge; however, I am astounded on how much I did learn from attending the lectures and watching the suggested videos."

Another participant added:

- "Before the practicum, I felt a bit uneasy knowing that I would have to teach English language when having my own students because my only relationship with English language was learning and using it for communication purposes. The lectures, and videos, inspired me and allowed me to feel more confident."

Kolb's ELT: Stage 2: Reflective Observation

In the second stage of reflective observation, the learner reflects on the new experience in the light of their existing knowledge of particular importance to see if there exist any inconsistencies between experience and understanding.

Over half of the sampled teacher trainees, (53,5%) report that reflecting on their practices and learning proves to be very helpful (reflective journals on practice teaching (peer/micro-teaching, practicums). Their learning experience is related to Kolb's ELT stage 2 (Reflective Observation). The participants were given the opportunity to provide their opinion on reflection as an effective technique of learning that was practiced through their "reflective journals" on practice teaching (Peer/micro-teaching, practicums), and through "my ten favourite items" activity (21,28%), as these were the first reflection assignments the participants were required to complete from the beginning of the training year. Moreover, the great majority of the participants stress the importance of reflecting on their learning in the open-ended questions in the questionnaires (91%) and the interviews (93%).

- "90% of my learning was greatly influenced by teaching English and reflection on my teaching practices (learning by doing)."

- I "I feel I have a natural understanding of the main strategies of language learning, which has been only achieved but the act of 'doing'."
- "Having attended the lectures, the training workshops and video-viewing sessions, I feel that I have learned a great amount about language learning and teaching. The videos I viewed allowed me to reflect on my own teaching/learning strategies and identify the amount of information absorbed from the lectures, the training workshops, as well as the micro/peer-teaching and practice teaching sessions."
- "As I reflect on what I have experienced, read, viewed and listened to over the whole training year, I can say that we have been exposed to a variety of teaching and learning experiences and amalgam of reflective practices that have proven to be well structured, systematic, consistent, constructive, and at the same time, very simple, and engaging."

Kolb's ELT: Stage 3: Abstract Conceptualisation
"Synthesis Response" paper

Reflection gives rise to a new idea, or a modification of an existing abstract concept the person has learned from his/her experience Abstract Conceptualisation/Generalisation). In this stage, the teacher trainees' learning involves using theories, logic and ideas, rather then feelings to understand problems or situations. Typically, they rely on systematic planning and develop theories and ideas to solve problems.

The "synthesis response" paper represents the main assignment in this stage. The teacher trainees were required to reflect on the themes or patterns raised in lectures, articles, presentations, group discussions, whole class debates, video-viewing and observation sessions, workshops, macro/micro peer-teaching, practicum sessions, problem-solving situations, case studies, etc. (62.76%).

Among the participants, 35.40 % claim that through the synthesis response paper, they learned how to make links between precious experience of teaching and/learning and any theories or knowledge they can apply. Other respondents (27.36) report that this assignment stands as an effective strategy to reflect on what helps/hinders learning and teacher development. About this point, one participant comments,

- "We did not need to be comprehensive, but rather, we were required to use this space to add insights, build connections, or raise additional questions about "English Language Teaching and Learning", which has, undoubtedly, shaped our understanding of learning and boosted our teaching skills and competence."

However, only 6.36% of the participants reveal that the difference between the previous stage of reflection (Reflective Observation) and the Abstract Conceptualisation stage using the synthesis response paper is not clear. They reported that they need more practice and examples to further understand the difference between the two concepts and get a deeper understanding of the two stages of reflection.

"Learning Statement" paper

Through the learning statement, the teacher trainees were required to write an essay by exploring the following set of leading questions in order to write a synthesis of learning on the training course:

- What were your key learnings on the course (consider yourself, your teaching, learners, learning, etc.)? Why are these learnings important to you? How will you apply these learnings in your own classroom?
- What are two areas you hope to improve or explore more in the future? What is your action plan to do this (remember SMART actions (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound))?

When asked about the effectiveness of this assignment as a means to conceptualise their learning throughout this stage within the ELC, 37.24% of the participants assert that it allows them to come up with generalisations and theories about their learning as well as students' learning that are linked to specific events or experiences in a lesson. The following comments are extracted from the participants' learning statement essays:

- "The course has endowed me with the ability to develop a flexible mindset and use all reflective skills for providing and receiving feedback from my colleagues and trainers throughout the ELC stages (describe, analyse, interpret, generalize, and plan action). It has allowed me to exchange my reflections with my colleagues on our teaching practices and base my action plans or further steps that could be explored through new experiences, hypotheses and experimentation. The refection on my teaching practices proves to have a strong impact on my own perceptions and beliefs about teaching and learning in general".
- "These reflections have enabled me to develop my reflection skills and made me keen on rethinking both the most successful and puzzling moments in my future lessons. All this will equip me with the necessary tools to critically analyse my teaching practices and improve my reflective as new avenues for any personal growth and professional development".

- "The reflective practices that I experienced throughout the LC required me to be alert to every moment and every stage of the lesson. This suggests that in my future teaching, I will take into account the main objectives of my lesson (instructional objectives; SMART), the classroom environment, the types of students I will be teaching as well as the teaching approach, methods, strategies and techniques I will be adopting. Most importantly, students' output should be crystal clear in the Fluency stage ECRIF framework) as well as during the production stages language skills (PPP/PDP) has a proof of effective teaching/learning."
- "The training experience in the CRMEF has provided us with a time for planning and practice, an outlet for creativity, a space for reflection and debriefing and a home base to build community and support each other."

Unfortunately, among the participants, 21% argue that writing the learning statement remains challenging as the line between the second stage (Reflective Observation) and the third stage (Abstract Conceptualisation) of the ELC remains blurred. They contend that they cannot readily identify the difference between the two stages.

Kolb's ELT: Stage 4: Active experimentation
The newly created or modified concepts give rise to experimentation. The learners apply their ideas to the world around them to see what happens. In this respect, the participants engaged in the fourth stage of the ELC using different strategies as demonstrated below.

"Professional Development Project"
This assignment is a plan for how the teacher trainees intend to use their experiences and learning in the training course to impact education in Morocco when the training course is finished They were required to turn in the written portions of this assignment with their course portfolio and share some elements of the assignment with their peers late in the last week of their training in the CRMEF.

Through the professional development project, the teacher trainees were to come up with realistic and specific ideas about things they thought they would be doing after the training course in the CRMEF. The different and specific actions they planned to take were guided through the following questions:
- How can you share your learning in ways that will directly impact your student?

- What are you considering with your peers and colleagues about your learning?
- How can you share your learning with the authorities above?
- What barriers and obstacles do you think you may encounter?
- What elements of your training in the CRLEF do you think do you think will be most useful to the people you come into contact with?
- Which elements do you think will be most challenging?
- What elements of the course might you choose not to share, or not to share right away?

As regards professional development, 30.5% of the participants assert that it remains an effective technique to bridge the gap between their past/present experiences (the first, second and third stages of the ELC) and their future learning experiences (the fourth stage of the ELC). It allows them to plan specific actions for their future teaching practices based on their teaching and learning experiences Related to this view, are the following comments that represent the participants' attitudes and perceptions.

- "Given the importance of the program, I would assert that pour mission as teachers is to share, transmit and cascade such a huge learning experience with our colleagues and implement this accumulated knowledge in our EFL classrooms."
- "Implementing our learning should not be limited to the classroom as a private space of the individual teacher, who will probably preserve it to his/her classroom, but it should transcend it to reach all people concerned with the field of teaching and learning."
- "As a novice teacher, I have a strong endeavor to share my learning at different levels, in different contexts, throughout different mediums and with different people Therefore, I will deploy a variety of techniques and strategies to demonstrate, contextualise and make their learning meaningful Blending theory with practice and learning by doing will be an effective way to help my colleagues learn about the ECRIF and PDP models in different occasion s (workshops, demo-lessons, etc.) In this resoect, I plan to introduce them to Kolb's outstanding reflection cycle (ELC) as soon as I leave the CRMEF training course. This will certainly enable them to reflect on their own teaching practices in a more structured and systematic way."
- "I believe that university students, especially the ones enrolled in the MASTER and PhD programs on education, teaching/learning, training pedagogy and communication are to be also targeted and introduced to all folds of our accumulated knowledge throughout the training course in the CRMEF."

- "This learning will be better shared when it is documented and when it conforms to the standards of the academic and scientific fields. This suggests that I will publish articles in different magazines, national and international journals that will enable me to share this experience and knowledge and reflect on it."
- "I would admit that, as novice teachers, we would be the right persons in the right position to cascade our accumulated knowledge throughout the CRMEF training course to the future generations of teachers and hand them the torch that will enlighten their ways towards the implementation of this learning."

Other respondents (8.5%) contend that though they have been exposed to different learning experiences throughout their training course, they will need more teaching practice that will qualify them to cope with a comprehensive professional development project in order to plan specific actions for their future teaching practices.

"Action Plan and Personal Project", "Dear Future Me Letter"

In this stage, after reflecting on the practical and learning experiences in which they had been involves, the participants were asked to write an integrated plan fir teaching English. They were required to complete different assignments, namely, "Action Plan', "Personal Project", "Dear Future Me Letter" and "Action Olan" to test out the pedagogical theories to which they had been exposed in the previous stages of the ELC and subsequently experiment with new ones.

Through the "Action Plan and Personal Project" assignment, the teacher trainees were asked to plan their SMART actions by thinking about everything they had experienced throughout the previous stages within, the ELC. They were required to write an action plan for what they would do in future lessons or workshops (if required to facilitate one) using what had been learned from threat training experience. For example, SMART actions (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) they would need to undertake in the classroom, school and environment in order to implement the Learner Centred Teaching approach (LCT) and promote autonomous learning in their students.

It is worth mentioning that action research topics are proposed during the last weeks of training in the CRMEF; however, the teacher trainees are required to undertake their action research along the second year of their training, which provides more opportunity for them to identify some teaching/learning issues and intervene by using the necessary strategies to deal with them.

Of the sampled teacher trainees, 43% claim that writing an action plan and personal project helps affect their sense of competence in teaching English language. Throughput the second year of training, they will be implementing all what they have been exposed to within the training program, which will allow them to complete the fourth stage of ELC. In this stage, they will put what they have planned into practice and; thus, experiment with new experiences by undertaking action research and implementing their action plans and personal projects.

"Dear Future Me Letter"

Change takes time. Even if the teacher trainees have identified some areas to work on, they will not see a difference overnight. For this practical task, they were required to write letters to their 'future self'.

Writing a letter to their 'future self' represents a way of checking in and seeing how it is all going. It is also an exercise in consistent personal growth, a way to hold themselves accountable to their perceptions, beliefs and values ad regards "English Language Teaching and Learning', and a means of preserving and protecting what is important today well into the future.

The following suggestions were provided for the teacher trainees to consider:

- Summarise your current self. Start with a reminder of where you currently are in your research journey within the field of 'English Language Teaching and Learning'.
- Identify your key values and beliefs. Ask yourself what guides the current you.
- Note your skills in your Learning (as a teacher trainee)/teaching practices (in case you teach or have a teaching experience) relating to 'English Language Teaching and Learning". Pick out a few skills or practices you can clearly identify.
- Define your goals and hopes. Write about things that are important to you now and what you would like to accomplish in the future for yourself in terms of your goal within the fields of "English Language Teaching and Learning".
- Add things you want to stop, continue, and start doing.
- Give yourself advice. Think about what advice you want to give your future self. Your advice can be simple or complex.
- Ask yourself questions. These questions should make the future you reflect on. So, reflect on what you have done to reach the point you will be at and how you feel about it.

- You are writing this letter to yourself, so be casual. Write as though you are talking to your best friend When talking about your current self, use 'I' language When talking about your future self, use 'You' language The letter id for you only and nobody else Please write your letter in the language that works best for All we will do with the letter is to schedule it to be sent back to you. You will automatically receive your letter in six months' time

As noticed above and reported by 26.5% of the participants, the casual aspect of the letter allows the teacher trainees to express themselves freely, define their hopes and goals and draw their action plan. About this point, one respondent claims:

- "I believe it is the most effective strategy I have ever use for identifying my goals, displaying my hopes, drawing my action plan and providing advice to my 'future self'. It helps me understand the difference as well as the relation existing between the two stages of "Abstract Conceptualisation" and "Active "Experimentation"".

General comments and changing attitudes towards Experiential Learning throughout the pre-service training

The different reflection tools and reflective teaching techniques to which the participants were introduced and which are in line with Kolb's ELC model are summarized in the following chart that represents the main components of the Teacher Training Portfolio.

Experiential learning: changing attitudes and general comments

In addition to the quantitative results presented above, the participants commented in their portfolios about other aspects of their pre-service training that helped develop their confidence and competence in teaching. Below are some selected comments about the importance of the use of experiential learning and practical learning experiences.

Experiential learning

- "I believe that 90% of my learning has been greatly influenced by teaching English language and reflecting on my teaching practices. I feel I have a natural understanding of the teaching and learning strategies, which has been only achieved by the act of 'doing'. The way that the training workshops, the micro/peer-teaching and practice sessions are run in terms of actually being in hands on experience allows me to gain a deeper knowledge of all the strategies involved in the teaching and training proves and how to implement them in the classroom through different managerial techniques."

- "I find this concrete way of learning very stimulating as it engages the whole class to realise and experience how innate language learning predispositions and teaching competence are within every person. Due to the practical input in the lectures, training workshops, peer/micro/practice teaching and video viewing sessions, I am now enthusiastic to teach English on a daily basis in my classroom. I will also ensure that the lessons always have practical, engaging and fun activities imbedded within them to encourage involvement and ensure that my student enjoy themselves."

Changing attitudes and perceptions

- "I have overcome the apprehension that I once had towards this area of teaching 'English language teaching and I have adopted a positive attitude, which I hope that I can transmit to my class of more than students in the near future Throughout the lectures and training workshops, we have been introduced to a variety of teaching methods and strategies. We have been also equipped with different reflective techniques that go beyond our imagination and transcend our expectations."
- "I was engaged throughout the entire training workshops and practice training sessions I learned that, as a future teacher, it is important to be daring to explore with English language teaching and learning Going out of the box and taking the risk is the key element in this respect, I want to be a positive and enthusiastic teacher who uses effective communication strategies and various teaching techniques to engage students so that they can appreciate the importance of English language learning for communicative purposes and for personal development Any pessimistic attitudes I had before disappeared for I have realized how exciting teaching English language can be."

All the above comments reveal how the participants value the experiential and practical approach adopted in the pre-service training program and equally indicate the extent to which this experiential learning has changed their attitudes in relation to English language teaching.

Section Four: Discussion

The overall results from the questionnaires, the interview as well as the reflective journals indicate that the majority of the teacher trainees started the training with very little confidence in English teaching. After the training received throughout the different modules along the two semesters of their first year of training in the CRMEF, the majority of the participants have

developed their knowledge, skills and understanding English language teaching and learning, changed their attitudes and equally, increased their confidence in relation to teaching English. This was not only evident in the quantitative data, but was also confirmed through their comments about each specific aspect of their experiential learning during their training in the CRMEF.

The results indicate that 78% of the participants were not confident to teach English at the start of the first semester, compared with 92% of the participants admitting they were confident to teach it at the end of their first training in the CRMEF. Confirming this are their responses and attitudes when asked if they are ready to teach English after their training, with 89.5% of the teacher trainees revealing that they are well equipped with the necessary techniques and strategies that will help them to teach English. This correlated with what has been advanced in the literature asserting that if learners are confident in the subject, then they are more likely to teach it (Bruce, 2001; Lazar, 2007; Russell-Bowie, Roche & Marsh, 1995; Welch, 1995).

As well as developing their confidence in teaching English, both the quantitative and qualitative results indicate that the participants' attitudes to English teaching have changed significantly over the whole training year. As suggested in the literature, both experience and the opportunity for reflection are significant factors in changing learners' attitudes 'Bondy, Schmitz & Jhonson, 1993; Garman, 2010; Grouix, 2001; Haberman & Post, 1992; Deering & Starnutz, 1995). In fact, the participants were involved in a variety of learning experiences and reflective practices. These seem to be significant factors in changing their attitudes and shaping their perceptions.

The two aspects of experience and reflection are also important stages in Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (1984). The first stage (Concrete Experience) proves to be the most important element of the teacher trainees' experience leading to developing their confidence and competence in teaching English language. As seen in Table, the participants rank the face-to-face and experiential learning highest in developing their sense of competence in teaching English. These include participating in lectures and training workshops, role-plays, simulations, peer-teaching, micro-teaching, teaching a sequence during the teaching practicum sessions, as well as teaching the whole lesson and taking the whole class responsibility during the practicum sessions.

The second stage (Reflective Observation) is more important to more than half of the participants (63.5%) in developing their sense of competence to teach English. At the end of their first year of training in the CRMEF, they were required to think about what they had experienced, what and how they had learned during that year. The participants' comments reflect their

excitement about what they have learned, how their skills and knowledge have developed and how their attitudes have changed. As confirmed in the literature, reflection proves to be an effective tool to facilitate the learning process and increase learners' knowledge and skills (Conrad and Hedin, 1990; Hatcher and Bingle, 1997; Liddell, Hubbard and Werner, 2000). In the present study, it proves to be an important factor in building teacher trainees' confidence and changing attitudes towards English language teaching.

The third stage of Kolbs' ELC theory is that of "Abstract Conceptualisation". During the training year, the participants were required to think about how the English language pedagogy and skills learned in the CRMEF and in the school practicum, in addition to the online resources, could shape their perceptions of teaching and learning and their understanding of professional development. They were also asked to write a synthesis paper about all strategies, techniques and challenges involved within the teaching and learning process. Ultimately, throughout this stage, the participants were required to draw general conclusions about teaching and learning in their personal statement.

Given the abstract nature of this stage which is difficult to be approaches through quantitative research, the questions in the questionnaires did not specifically cover this stage. The main questions related to abstract conceptualization stage were left to the interviews conducted with the participants.

Abstract Conceptualisation of the methods and strategies required for English techniques and learning leads into Kolb's fourth stage, that of "Active Experimentation". In this stage, after reflection on their practical experience and, thus, drawing their general conclusions about teaching and learning, the participants were asked to write an integrated plan for teaching English through different assignments, namely, "Action Plan and Personal Project", "Dear Future Me Letter" and "Action Research" to test out the pedagogical theories and practices to which they had been exposed in the previous stages and subsequently experiment with new ones.

Among the sampled teacher trainees, 43% report that writing an action plan and personal project has improved their sense of competence in teaching English language. Throughout the second year of training, and as part of the fourth stage of ELC, they will be implementing their action plans. In fact, undertaking action research and implementing action plans and personal projects will allow the teacher trainees to put what they have planned into action and, thus, experiment with new teaching methods and strategies. All this suggests that since each learning experience leads to another set of concrete experiences and another round of learning at a more sophisticated and complex level, the learning cycle is transformed into a learning spiral of ever-increasing complexity throughout the process.

Conclusion and implications of the study

Both the quantitative and qualitative results from this survey triangulated to confirm that experiential learning as well as he reflective nature of the training program in the CRMEF have been effective in developing the participants' competence in relation to English language teaching and, thus, changing their perceptions and attitudes towards the teaching of English language. These results can be used by education experts and practitioners and all actors involved within the field of curriculum to design pre-service teacher training programs taking into account the teacher trainees' attitudes, needs, as well as their degree of confidence and background experience in English language teaching.

In this respect, diagnostic evaluation can serve as an effective tool to identify teacher trainees' needs, attitudes and perceptions, and gauge their predisposition to promote their teaching skills and competence and, thus, boost their self-confidence. The training program should include a variety of experiential learning activities (Kolb's Stage 1: Concrete Experience) along with the opportunity for the teacher trainees to reflect on their learning (Stage 2: Reflective Observation). Moreover, teacher trainees should be challenged to relate their observation, experiences and reflections to generalize new concepts and relevant ideas about classroom and English language pedagogies (Stage 3: Abstract Conceptualisation). Ultimately, they should have the opportunity to test their generalisations in relation to an authentic classroom situation by designing action plans and professional projects, and undertaking action research. The main objective in this respect is to experiment with their newly general perceptions about teaching (Stage 4: Active Experimentation).

In the current climate of basic skills testing where the soft skills are de-prioritised, providing teacher trainees with adequate training that highlights the importance of both experience and reflection alike has become significantly important. Moreover, inspiring them to use their analytical and critical thinking, equipping them with the necessary skills to teach creatively, changing their attitudes and developing their competence through experiential learning is vital for the future of teaching languages to the third millennium student.

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