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An analysis of student responses to a questionnaire on teaching practice, together with other observations on the problems of practical teaching taken from overseas journals of education.

how effective is teaching practice: what student teachers think

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THE INCREASING EMPHASIS on the value of practical experience in the preparation of teachers has been questioned. While some educationists fear that academic standards will be debased by too great a concern with practical matters and therefore suggest that the status of the profession and colleges will be enhanced by a greater emphasis on academic work, that is educational studies and the main academic specialisations, others claim that practice teaching is an integral part of the programme of teacher education; indeed, they assert that it is the most essential and rewarding element in the programme — the heart of the professional preparation of teachers.

Teaching practice is, however, an area of many problems, and in view of the expenses involved, and the time and energy devoted to practical studies, colleges and universities must be assured that student teachers are gaining a worthwhile experience in the schools. The truth is that practice teaching is often a "hit or miss' affair and many students return to college disillusioned with their experiences. For many students practice teaching is merely a "haphazard exposure to bad teaching", (University of Exeter Institute of Education Conference Report of 30th March, 1969), a statement with which 46,5% of students of this college agreed. (Table VII, No. 13). Traditional school practice, according to Professor Elizabeth Perrot of Stirling University, is more likely to perpetuate current teaching methods, a view accepted by 51% of J.C.E. students. That this is not necessarily on account of the use of teaching methods which college tutors deplore, or simply bad teaching, is indicated by the lack of any positive relationships between items 5 and 11, and 5 and 13 of Table VII. Possibly, the enforcement of prescribed and compulsory syllabuses, together with the pressure of external examinations, partly accounts for this state of affairs.

There is therefore an urgent need to reappraise the aims and procedures of teaching practice in order to ensure that a student's practical experiences will be meaningful. The growing interest in the effectiveness of teaching practice is evident in the numbers of artcles in journals of education and the research activity in overseas collegues and departments of education.

The purpose of this survey is to gather information which will throw light on the problems, and to attempt an evaluation of the effectiveness of the procedures used in teaching practice. This inquiry was designed to ascertain student teachers' attitudes to experiences during practical teaching. Attention has been focussed on four aspects of the programme:—

1. The conditions in the schools which affect the value of students' practical experiences.
2. The effectiveness of practice lessons.
3. The contribution of college lecturers.
4. The problem of assessing students' performances in the schools.

In the evaluation of any educational programme, a consideration of objectives is essential. To what extent have the aims of practical teaching been achieved? These objectives may be briefly stated as follows:—

1. **To further the professional training of teachers in a practical setting**

S. Morris has suggested that the major objectives of teaching practice generall accepted by teachers, lecturers and students are:—

(a) **To enable the students to relate theory and practice.**

"The theoretical insights gained by study, particularly into the aims and objectives of education, the nature and development of children, the organisation and functioning of groups and of the school — these insights are now called upon in the teaching situation and make a contribution to the solution of practical problems." ("The Assessment and Evaluation of Teaching Practice" — p.64. "Towards Evaluation" edited by E. Stones, 1970).

(b) **To enable the student to acquire teaching skills.**

"A beginning is made in teaching practice in learning on the job and under the guidance of experts (teachers and tutors), the practical skills of teaching, particularly those concerned with mediating knowledge, skills and attitudes to children." (Morris op. cit. 64).

(c) **To assist the student teacher in acquiring a concept of his role as a teacher.**

"By working as a teacher with teachers and with the guidance of professional experts (tutors and teachers), the student simulates, practises and takes on the behaviour pattern of a member of the teaching profession — conduct, language, attitudes, aspirations, satisfactions, etc." (Morris op. cit. 64).

(d) **To provide the circumstances which will help in the**

"development of traits and personal attributes deemed valuable in a teacher — patience, tolerance, sympathy, self-awareness, etc. As the student meets new people, new problems and new situations and reacts to them with the help of tutors and teachers, he becomes aware of himself and his interaction with others, becomes critical of his own attitudes and behaviour and so learns to change himself." (Morris op. cit. 64).

During teaching practice, college supervisors are expected to advise students about their teaching, with a view to achieving these objectives.

2. **To assess students' competence in a practical situation.**

This competence may be assessed in three areas:—

(a) Competence in the use of teaching skills.

(b) Competence revealed in a student teacher's relationships with pupils, that is his interaction with them both within and outside the classroom.

(c) A student's knowledge of both his subject specialisation and educational theory. (Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook I, is of use here because of its specification in detail of objectives).

It is doubtful whether it is possible in practice to assess the objectives stated in 1(c) and (d) above, unless an attempt is made to express these aims in behavioural or operational terms.

Morris has drawn attention to the two-fold rationale of teaching practice.

"First, that these objectives will best be achieved in a training situation **so structured as to allow the student a gradual initiation into the tasks of the teacher.** Second, that some, if not all, of the learning achieved by the student in teaching practice will transfer to the 'real' teaching that the student will subsequently undertake." (op. cit. pp.64-65).

Design of the investigation

The opinions of student teachers at the Johannesburg College of Education, one of the three parties involved in the programme of the teacher, were sought by means of a questionnaire consisting of **three** sections.

SECTION A consists of four questions of the open-response type:—

1. What were your most challenging experiences during teaching practice?
2. What were your least stimulating experiences during teaching practice?
3. What specific improvements do you suggest in teaching practice arrangements?
4. Were the yellow self-evaluation forms of assistance to you? Give reasons for your answer.

Students' responses to these questions were analysed and attempts were made to quantify the information, but it proved impossible to give an acurate, statistical analysis of this information for the following reasons:—

Many answers consisted of qualified statements and it was impossible to classify them in definite categories, e.g. two or more factors were often combined in a statement and it was difficult to separate them without distorting the meaning. The emphasis or intensity attached to an opinion was sometimes indicated by the length of a statement or the phrasing used. Students were unwilling to commit themselves to the expression of definite opinions. For these reasons the comments of students have been classified according to their approximate frequency.

SECTION B consists of 37 statements, some indicating a positive and others a negative attitude to experiences during teaching practice. Many of these statements were taken from articles in journals of education. The Likert attitude scale was applied to as-

certain the extent of agreement or disagreement with these statements —

Strongly Agree — Agree — Undecided — Disagree — Strongly Disagree.

Unfortunately, owing to pressure of time and the need to capture the responses of students soon after their return from a period of three weeks' teaching practice, it was not possible to test the items for their level of discrimination. This must be conceded as a weakness in the questionnaire. Several of the items should have been rejected.

SECTION C consists of 15 statements describing experiences of students during teaching practice. Students were asked to rate the value of these experiences on a four-point scale —

Experiences not encountered.
Experiences unlikely to assist or influence students.
Experiences likely to have moderate influence.
Experience of real value.

I am deeply indebted to the Computing Centre at the University of the Witwatersrand for its analysis of the students' response in Sections B and C of the questionnaire. The programme devised by the Computing Centre supplied:

1. A gross count of student responses to items.
2. A percentage count.
3. The relationship between responses to certain items.

The sample consisted of 810 students in their 2nd, 3rd or 4th year of study. As it was thought likely that students in different specialisations, e.g. age ranges and subjects to be taught, might react differently, the responses of each group according to year of study and specialisation were analysed separately by the computer programme. As it happened, very few significant differences were recorded, and these have not been reported.

One of the ways in which students are initiated into the work of a teacher is by the **observation** of teachers, tutors and fellow students in teaching situations. Although the lessons of experienced teachers may not always be inspiring (Table VII, No. 8), they have value for students (Table VII, C5). Observation of their peers has a definite value for students (Questionnaire Section C, No. 6), but it is obvious that students have little opportunity of witnessing lecturers demonstrating the right techniques; over 60 per cent of students have never seen their tutors in action. (Questionnaire, Section C, No. 15).

Students, however, deplore long periods of observation. Table VI, B). Apart from the tedium which results from inactivity, observation may be disliked because it draws attention to their status as students. It is also possible that having had no training in the skills of observation, students do not find the experience fruitful. Morrison and McIntyre (1969) have suggested that if lecturers themselves were training in observational skills, they would be better equipped to help students to benefit from observation. ("Teachers and Teaching", p. 61).

> "The complexity of the activity in a classroom at any one time, and the many aspects of teaching, are such that a student beginning to learn how to teach cannot give his attention to more than a small part of it; and, whether observing or teachnig, he is likely to be overwhelmed by this complexity, to retain only very vague, general impressions and consequently to learn little. It would be desirable, especially in the early stages of training, to reduce the situation to manageable proportions." (op. cit. p. 62).

The authors point out that one way of doing this is by simulating carefully planned classroom situations, with students playing various roles, and using this as a basis for analysis and discussion. Another more ambitious and expensive approach is the use of "micro-teaching".

Watching repetitive and stereotyped lessons based on rote-memory techniques, is for obvious reasons, considered dull and a waste of time (Table VII, B), but fortunately, as the questionnaire reveals, teaching practice affords students ample opportunities of taking classes themselves and working with children, and in this way applying theory to practice, including new methods. From Table VII A, it is clear that the experience which students value most is the opportunities to teach **independently** (Table VI a and Questionnaire Section C, No. 12), to give **unprepared** lessons and to engage in **continuous** teaching (Table VI).

Working with individual pupils and groups of immigrants, weak and difficult children, is also among the most challenging expe-

riences encountered (Table VI). The questionnaire reveals that over 62 per cent of students rate their teaching experiences with individual children as having real value in their initiation as teachers.

As one would expect, students are conscious of disciplinary problems, and it is interesting to note that many are also fully aware of the need to study critically the consequences of an authoritarian approach, as compared with free disciplines. (Table VI).

The structure of the teaching practice situation must also make allowance for assessment procedures, both by college tutors and teachers, as well as by the students themselves. There is, fortunately, an increasing awareness of the importance in the assessment process of providing a feedback to students. Apart from questions of promotion and certification, the questions to be asked are: to what extent will assessment assist students to increase their competence, and what will be the impact on the course of training, that is, will it lead to any changes in the course content and methods of teaching at college, e.g. the adoption of simulating techniques?

> "Learning theorists of a variety of theoretical persuasions are agreed on the value of feedback in learning. Student teachers are in very complex learning situations. **What arrangements are made to provide feedback when they are in the practical teaching situation?** Some recent techniques such as micro-teaching, using video taperecorders and the self-analysis of a taped lesson using some form of interaction analysis are attempting to cope with this problem." (Stones E. and Morris S. — "The Assessment of Practical Teaching". Unpublished, School of Education, Birmingham).

How effective is the contribution of college lecturers to the practical aspects of the teacher education programme?

It appears that students consider the **professional** training received prior to teaching practice inadequate, but that the general **academic** background provided by courses at university and college equips them at all levels for handling the content of their subjects (Table IV A, 26 and 27). There is unfortunately too little contact between college lecturers and students once teaching practice has commenced and, consequently, lecturers are not available for consultation when lessons have to be prepared (Table IV B, 20). The function of the college lecturer as a resource person is seldom realised. The seminars conducated by lecturers after the practice lessons, however, serve a useful purpose (Table IV Bm 18, 19, C7). Student opinion on the adequacy of lecturers' supervision in the schools appears to be divided (Table IV B, 28). A weakness in the structure of the teaching practice situation is the limited discussion devoted to the follow-up of students' classroom experiences on returning to College (Table IV C, 25). This may be attributed to timetable arrangements.

A large majority of students (almost 90 per cent) agree that the circumstances under which practice lessons are given are artificial. The reasons given for this statement appear from the positive relationship which exists between the responses to items No's. 16 and 17 (the need for a follow-up lesson with the same class), 16 and 22 (students should always have some acquaintance with the class being taught), and 16 and 23 (practice lessons are generally isolated "show" lessons specially designed to impress a visiting lecturer). (See Table C). For these reasons the assessment of a student's practical competence is made under artificial circumstances. For these and possibly for other reasons, students would like to see the formal "criticism" lessons abolished and replaced by more continuous teaching (Table VI). If this arrangement is to function successfully, however, greater reliance will have to be placed on teachers in schools, both for the guidance and assessment of students.

This draws attention to the important question of liaison between schools and the college. Unfortunately, school personnel often regard teacher training as peripheral to their many tasks — another duty imposed on them. Many teachers have no real sense of partnership with college staff and do not wish to become involved. Some are critical of the college curriculum and consider college personnel out of touch with reality. Hence the response of students to item B6 of Table VI.

Shipman's survey of conditions under which teaching practice is conducted revealed that —

> "schools with inadequate facilities tend to reduce the advice given by college tutors. Far from giving students valuable experience, they are exposed to depressing conditions in schools which are hostile to principles and methods advocated by the colleges.

Therefore, instead of reinforcing theory, teaching practice tends to make the theory irrevelant." (M. D. Shipman: "Theory and Practice In Education of Teachers". Educational Research, Vol. 9, No. 3 — June, 1967).

That innovative practices encouraged by college tutors are distrusted in **some** schools seems to be implied by the lack of any positive relationship between items 2 and 4 (Table VII).

A closer cooperation between schools and the college is needed in order to ensure the competence of supervising or co-operating teachers. As is the practice in most overseas countries, these associates (as they are called in the U.S.A.) should receive special training at in-service courses to equip them to handle students. They should also receive special recognition of these qualifications by means of an endorsement on their diplomas, and as they hold key positions in the teaching practice situation, they should also receive remuneration for their services.

The assessment of students' performances during teaching practice

What constitutes effective teaching? How does one recognise a good teacher? This raises the important question of criteria, but in spite of extensive research in this field, it has not been possible to establish objective criteria of what consitutes teacher competence. (Refer to the work of Edith Cope, E. Stones, S. Morris and A. Morrison and D. McIntyre). Teaching practice grades are usually based on **working notions** of what constitutes teacher effectiveness, and very few college lecturers have been systematically trained in techniques of observation and assessment. (Morrison & McIntyre, p. 53). When one considers how complex teaching situations are, the need of training in observational skills becomes evident.

Morris (1970) has discussed the problems of assessment in practical teaching.

1. **The teaching mark lacks validity,** that is, it does not assess what it purports to assess —

   "Instead of reflecting the whole range of a student's teaching ability, it reflects a strictly limited number of teaching skills observed during a limited number of teaching displays in artificial conditions." ("Towards Eavluation", 65).

Efficiency in teaching is relative, as Cope points out —

"a teacher may be effective with one group of children and ineffective with another, and efficiency may be modified by the physical, social and cultural environment in which the teacher operates."

("Teacher Training and School Practice", p. 90).

Assessment of students' performances must therefore take into consideration the varied contexts in which they operate. As Table V of the questionnaire reveals, 92 per cent of the college students consider practice lessons provide an artificial setting for evaluation (Item No. 16). Some of the reasons for these views are shown by the positive relationships between items 16 and 17 (the need for follow-up lessons), 16 and 22 (previous acquaintance with a class is desirable), and 16 and 23 (practice lessons are often isolated lessons given to impress a lecturer). Students' pleas for more continuous teaching, opportunities to do independent work and give unprepared lessons (Table VI), are in accord with the same views.

The student's performance is linked with the discipline and organisation of the practice school and with the previous learning experiences of children. (Morris, 1970).

Perhaps the most important of the variables concern the requirements or criteria of lecturers (colleges and university departments of education). (Refer to recent research of E. Stones and S. Morris of Birmingham School of Education). The questionnaire (Table III B) analyses the factors which students consider affect the assessment of students in practice lessons. There is general agreement that grades in practical teaching depend on whether students are well matched with supervising tutors and on the need to tailor lessons according to special interests or fads of visiting lecturers. On the other hand, item 21 seems to indicate that originality of approach to lessons is not discouraged by rigid requirements imposed by tutors.

2. **Assessment of performance during practical teaching is not reliable.**

As Morris points out, this is what one would expect, since the criteria of assessment are largely subjective and there exist so many variables in teaching situations —

"Assessment by grading presupposes a general teaching ability. It is highly questionable whether such a general ability exists." (Morris, S. 1970, p. 67).

Shipman of Worcester has asserted that teaching practice assessment is often no more than "a lucky dip".

3. **The final teaching mark has little value as an instrument of predicting success in the teaching profession**

Morrison & McIntyre have discussed the problems of measuring teacher effectiveness, and conclude that —

> "teaching marks as currently given are of very little value as predictors of teaching ability, and are certainly inappropriate as criteria for attempts to predict the teaching ability of students." ("Teachers and Training", p. 54).

4. **Assessment by grading is inappropriate according to Morris (1970)**

> "The changes that a student undergoes during teaching practice are complex and subtle; the appreciation and appraisal of them require insight, sensitivity and mature judgement. To reduce all this to a crude grade, is to do injustice both to the development of the student and to the work of the tutor. An inappropriate element is introduced — quantifiability". ("Towards Evaluation, p. 67).

Stones, in his research, has shown that some institutions in England provide at the end of a course a profile of a student's competence. A typical profile lists attributes being rated along one side of a matrix and the rating along the other. Students are given ratings on each of the attributes and these ratings are plotted on the same scale and joined up to produce a profile which represents graphically a student's teaching performance along the different dimensions listed. The number of dimensions used varied from 32 to only 4.

5. **The emphasis on assessment impairs student-tutor communication and in this way hinders the realisation of certain objectives of practical teaching**

The questionnaire shows that students believe that there is too great an emphasis on the assessment of students' performances during teaching practice, that the assessment procedures are a source of stress and anxiety and that visiting lecturers are regarded more as examiners than guides. (Table III, Items 14 and 35). The positive relationship between these items is significant.

Morris points out that —

> "the tutor-student relationship is made ambiguous and is impaired by the fact that the tutor both helps and assesses. This area of grading is the one in the tutor-student relationship which the student is not invited to enter — the role of student and Tutor/assessor are hardened — an element of fear enters the student-tutor relationship." ("Towards Evaluation", p. 67.)

Stones (1970) poses the question: is the tutor mentor or assessor? He also refers to school practice as "the most sensitive area of staff-student contact", and "the most ticklish area of role-ambivalence".

The tensions caused by assessment are clearly revealed in the responses of students to the open-ended questions of Section A of the questionnaire. Refer to Table II p. 38 items 4, 5 and 6 (near foot of page).

Therefore it is necessary to conduct research in this field of assessment not only in order to improve the validity, reliability and predictive value of the evaluation, but also to ensure that assessment will have a beneficial effect on the professional training **process** itself.

Self evaluation

Feedback is an important element in all efficient learning. This subject has been mentioned on page 33 but the part which may be played by student self-evaluation in the structure of the training of teachers has still to be considered.

Students are required to learn often without the direct assistance from lecturing staff, and for this reason it is important that they should be able to evaluate their own teaching performances. As students learn by reacting to an encountered situation, their own evaluation of their responses to these situations, and the analysis of the consequences, may help to determine what they will learn from these experiences. It is also desirable to educate students away from a goal of simply striving to please their tutors (Findley and Scales in **Journal of Educational Research,** Vol. 46, No. 5. April 1953, p. 562). Self-evaluation is important because progress towards educational goals should continue long after students have left college.

> "Skill in self-evaluation is essential if one is to be effective in self-directed learning." (Sawin, E. I. "Evaluation and the work of the teacher".)

During the period of three weeks' teaching practice in February 1971, students were given their first experience of evaluating their own teaching performances. Special evaluation forms (referred to as the yellow forms)

were given to almost all students at the end of each practice lesson.

The reactions of students to the use of these forms were analysed in the questionnaire.

What were the values of using these forms? Almost 66 per cent of students agreed that self-evaluation encouraged the critical analysis of their own lessons; this made them aware of weaknesses and made possible improvements in subsequent lessons (Table II, item 31 and Section A, No. 4). Other reasons why students favour the process of self-evaluation are given in Table III and need not be repeated here.

Students experienced difficulties in evaluating their own efforts because of their lack of teaching experience and the fact that they had been given no training in the process of self-appraisal. This first experience of self-evaluation would have been of greater value if lecturers had made a practice of engaging in join-evaluation with students, so that they might have understood the criteria whereby teaching performances were being evaluated. As a teaching situation is generally complex, students should be encouraged to concentrate on a few specific aspects of a lesson rather than to attempt an evaluation of the whole performance. Several students expressed the view that in contrast with a student, who was involved in teaching a class, a lecturer who was "outside" was better able to observe and assess. (Table II, p. 38).

Most students claimed that they were modest in evaluating their own achievements and hence tended to underestimate their performances — they feared to appear over-confident. Findley and Scales, in their article already quoted, report that students tend to over-estimate their marks in direct proportion to their poorness as students — students of highest IQs tend to under-estimate, while those of low IQs tend to over-estimate.

Their research also shows that the level of aspiration of students operates in ego-involved situations which have intense personal significance for individuals, e.g. pressures for academic success and status needs. One might consider that some practice lessons are highly charged situations, involving students' ego. Self-evaluation under these situations is unlikely to be a success.

It is obvious from students' responses to the questionnaire that they would have preferred not to give themselves a symbol. Many thought that too much importance was being attached to the symbol and feared that it would be used or recorded. In order to secure a good mark, students tended to "play up" to lecturers and to use the specific methods desired by their tutors. Students felt too tense to evaluate themselves at the end of a lesson. Their chief concern was to match the tutors' assessments.

For these reasons, in any future attempts to encourage student self-evaluation, it is recommended that students should not be asked to award themselves a symbol; the real value of self-evaluation lies in the feedback to students and increased efficiency in learning.

The improvements suggested by students for improving the procedure of self-evaluation are listed on page 39 of Table II. The most significant of these are: the use of a less stereotyped form, a greater use of the completed forms during seminars in order to promote discussion and joint-evaluation, and allowance of more time for the completion of the forms. Self-evaluation cannot be forced and forms should not be shown to tutors, was another opinion expressed by many: students hesitate to express their self-criticisms in writing for others to read.

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Table I ANALYSIS OF ITEMS RELATING TO THE EVALUATION OF STUDENTS' PERFORMANCES. TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 810. QUESTIONNAIRE COMPLETED IN MARCH, 1971.

Item No.	STATEMENT	Percentage Strongly Agreeing	Percentage Agreeing	%
14	There is too great an emphasis on the assessment of a student's performance in practice lessons.	31,23	43,09	= 74,32
15	It is necessary, when preparing practice lessons, to bear in mind the whims and special interests of the visiting lecturer.	47,41	35,93	= 83,34
16	The circumstances under which practice lessons are given are artificial.	54,07	35,31	= 89,38
17	Practice lessons are of little value unless they are followed by another lesson with the same class.	23,21	48,77	= 71,98
21	It is difficult to be original in the approach to a lesson because of the rigid requirements imposed by College lecturing staff.	8,15	22,96	= 31,11
23	Practice lessons are of little value because they are rarely given as one of a series, but as an isolated lesson with which to impress the lecturer.	30,12	45,43	= 75,55
29	Symbols awarded for practice lessons are of little value because of personal differences between student and College lecturer.	21,48	32,22	= 53,7
30	Teachers in schools (class or subject) are competent to assess student's lessons.	10,00	40,00	= 50,00
32	Students and lecturers generally disagree on the evaluation of lessons.	5,06	30,12 (N.B. Percentage Disagreeing	= 35,18 = 41,85)
34	The assessment of performances in practice lessons has little value in predicting a student's competence when appointed to a school.	23,46	42,96	= 66,4
35	Assessment of lessons is a source of stress and anxiety; visiting lecturers are regarded more as examiners than guides.	31,48	48,27	= 79,75
36	Students' grades in practical teaching depend in a large measure on whether they are well matched with supervising teachers or lecturers.	16,17	46,91	= 63,08
37	Teaching practice, in my experience, has been a period of assessment rather than training.	16,05	31,85	= 47,90

CONCLUSIONS

For a variety of reasons, as the statements suggest, there are misgivings about some aspects of the assessment of student's performances on teaching practice.

Table II (A, B and C) indicates the extent of agreement amongst students in three areas viz:—

A Too great an emphasis on assessment during teaching practice.

B Personal factors which intrude into the process of assessment.

C The artificial conditions under which assessment is made in practice lessons.

Table II ANALYSIS OF ITEMS RELATING TO THE PROCESS OF SELF-EVALUATION. (Total No. 810 Students).

Item No.	STATEMENT	% Strongly agreeing	% Agreeing	Total %
31	Self-evaluation by students is useful because it makes one think critically about one's own efforts.	16,17	49,75	65,92
33	Self-evaluation by students has little significance because students are inexperienced.	5,80	25,43	31,23

Section C

		Rated by students as having moderate influence	Real value	
8	Completing the yellow self-evaluation forms after a lesson.	25,8	11,23	36,31

Section A

4 Were the yellow self-evaluation forms of assistance to you? Give reasons for your answer.

	Frenquency of Comments — approximate only		
	Most frequent comment	Mentioned by a few	Rarely mentioned
Students favouring the practice of self-evaluation after completing practice lessons gave the following reasons:			
1. Completing the yellow self-evaluation forms made them aware of weaknesses in their lessons and this made possible improvements in subsequent lessons.	X		
2. The student's self-evaluation was valuable when it formed the basis of discussion and comparison with the evaluation of the College lecturer.		X	
3. There is value in self-discovery; students learn more by a process of self-evaluation than reliance on the criticisms of lecturers.		X	
4. Answering specific questions in the form results in a critical analysis of different aspects of a lesson and helps to clarify general impressions.			X
5. Self-evaluation affords an opportunity to appraise a lesson objectively.		X	
6. The habit of self-evaluation will be beneficial in later years when a student has left College.			X
7. The yellow forms would be useful if used in the preparation of lessons.			X
8. Self-evaluation affords students an opportunity of justifying themselves should their views be in conflict with those of the lecturer.		X	
9. A lecturer, after perusing the self-evaluation forms, is able to make a more positive contribution to discussions of lessons.			X
10. Lecturers should assign a mark for a lesson only after studying the student's self-evaluation.			X
11. Students are in a better position to assess the impact of a lesson than a lecturer since they know the pupils; lecturers tend to be onlookers and many are not specialists in the subject or age-range being taught.			X
Students experienced difficulty in evaluating their own efforts because:			
1. They lacked teaching experience.		X	
2. They had had no training in the process of self-appraisal.			X
3. It was often impossible to assess a lesson unless there was a follow-up to the practice lesson.		X	
4. The student teacher was "inside" the lesson while the lecturer was "outside". The latter was therefore better able to observe and assess.		X	
5. It is difficult to express exactly what one feels about a lesson.			X
6. The average person is never completely frank with himself.		X	

	Frequency of Comments — approximately only		
	Most frequent comment	Mentioned by a few	Rarely mentioned
Students experienced problems in awarding themselves symbols for their performances for the following reasons:			
1. Students are modest in evaluating their achievements, and hence tend to underestimate their performances; there is a fear of being considered over-confident on the one hand, but, on the other hand they do not wish to appear to be lacking in confidence.	X		
2. Too much importance was attached to the symbol; the symbol should not be used or recorded. (Students would prefer not to give themselves a symbol).		X	
3. In order to secure a good mark, students tend to "play-up" to lecturers and to use specific methods required by College lecturers. Self-evaluation in these circumstances was wasted as the lessons did not represent sincere efforts.		X	
4. Students are too nervous — too tense — to evaluate themselves at the end of a lesson; they are more concerned about lecturers' opinions. It is impossible to give an objective assessment because of a student's emotional state after a lesson.			X
5. Students' evaluation is often in conflict with the assessment of lecturers.		X	
6. The chief concern of students is to match the lecturer's assessment.		X	
The procedures followed in connection with self-evaluation were adversely criticized by students for the following reasons:			
1. Students were given insufficient time to complete the yellow forms; staff members were generally in a hurry to reach the next school.	X		
2. Self-evaluation should take place **before** the lecturer's seminar.		X	
3. Self-evaluation should always be followed by discussion with a lecturer.			X
4. Students were too tired after a lesson to do justice to the self-evaluation.			X
5. Questions on the yellow form were not applicable to all lessons; students ought to be able to judge a lesson's success without a detailed analysis.		X	
6. Self-evaluation tended to follow a "monotonous pattern" as the same forms were used every time; replies in the senior primary group tended to become stereotyped.	X		
7. The self-evaluation forms should not be shown to lecturers; they should be private. Students hesitate to express their self-criticisms in writing.	X		
8. Students should be allowed to retain the self-evaluation forms.			X
9. The process of self-evaluation by completing a form is artificial; the forms are unnecessary as students are naturally critical of their own efforts.		X	
Many students misunderstood the purpose of the self-evaluation forms as is evident from the following types of comments:			
1. If students prepare lessons well, they will be confident of success; there is no need for a student to criticize his own lesson if it has been prepared thoroughly.	X		
2. The yellow forms were unnecessary as lessons were always discussed with lecturers afterwards.			X
3. The criticisms expressed in the forms were a matter of opinion.			X
4. It is more important for students to know how their peers evaluate them.			X
5. Only the symbol is significant, and this is a matter of guessing what symbol the lecturer has assigned.			X
6. Self-evaluation is unimportant; only the lecturer's criticism counts in the end.			X
7. There is no point in a lecturer observing a lesson if students evaluate themselves. ...			X
8. A teacher should be able intuitively to realize the success or failure of a lesson without filling in a form.			X
9. Differences between the criticisms of students and lecturers rendered the forms superfluous.			X

Table III ANALYSIS OF MEASUREMENT OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN ITEMS.

A. Items which suggest too great an emphasis on assessment during teaching practice

Item No.	STATEMENT	Percentage of Students agreeing with each of: %	
14	There is too great an emphasis on the assessment of a student's performance in practice lessons.	No. 14 = 74,32	
35	Assessment of lessons is a source of stress and anxiety; visiting lecturers are regarded more as examiners than guides.	No. 35 = 79,75	Percentage of students agreeing with **both** Nos. 14 and 35 = 61,37.
37	Teaching practice, in my experience, has been a period of assessment rather than training.	No. 37 = 47,90	Percentage of students agreeing with **both** Nos. 14 and 37 = 38,7.

B. Factors affecting the assessment of students' performances in practice lessons

Item No.	STATEMENT	Percentage of Students agreeing with each of: %	
15	It is necessary, when preparing practice lessons to bear in mind the whims and special interests of the visiting lecturer.	No. 15 = 83,34	
21	It is difficult to be original in the approach to a lesson because of the rigid requirements imposed by College lecturing staff. ...	No. 21 = 31,11	
29	Symbols awarded for practice lessons are of little value because of personal differences between student and College lecturer.	No. 29 = 53,7	
32	Students and lecturers generally disagree on the evaluation of lessons.	No. 32 = 35,18	Percentage of students agreeing with **both** Nos. 15 and 21 = 31,18. Nos. 15 and 29 = 49,13. Nos. 15 and 32 = 32,85.
36	Students' grades in practical teaching depend in a large measure on whether they are well matched with supervising teachers or lecturers	No. 36 = 63,08	Nos. 15 and 36 = 59,86.

C. Assessment of students' competence is made under artificial circumstances

Item No.	STATEMENT	Percentage of Students agreeing with each of: %	
16	The circumstances under which practice lessons are given are artificial.	No. 16 = 89,38	
17	Practice lessons are of little value because they are followed by another lesson with the same class.	No. 17 = 71,98	
22	Practice lessons are of little value because they are frequently given to a class not met with previously.	No. 22 = 43,58	Percentage of students agreeing with **both** Nos. 16 and 17 = 69,21. Nos. 16 and 22 = 49,07.
23	Practice lessons are of little value because they are rarely given as one of a series, but as an isolated lesson with which to impress the lecturer.	No. 23 = 75,55	Nos. 16 and 23 = 65,45.

Table IV

A, B, C. ANALYSIS OF ITEMS RELATING TO THE GUIDANCE GIVEN TO STUDENTS BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE PERIOD OF PRACTICAL TEACHING.

A. Preparation for practical teaching

Item No.	ITEMS FROM SECTION B OF QUESTIONNAIRE	% Strongly Agreeing	% Agreeing	% Total Disagreeing
26	Professional training during college lectures provides an adequate preparation for the situations which confront the student in the classroom during teaching practice.	2,96	28,27	51,85
27	The purely academic education (not the training in method) which I am receiving at university or college provides valuable background and bases for my practical teaching.	9,51	49,01	29,26

B. Value of seminars etc. during practical teaching

Item No.				
18	Seminars conducted by lecturers after practice lessons are of great benefit to students.	24,44	57,04	7,65
19	Seminars with lecturers and students are difficult to arrange during school hours.	4,57	26,67	58,03
20	College lecturers give adequate assistance to students in the preparation of lessons.	3,58	29,14	44,20
28	Lecturers' supervision of students in schools was inadequate.	12,10	29,01	39,01

Item No.	ITEMS FROM SECTION C	Rated by Students as having moderate influence	Rated as having real value
7	The seminars held to discuss students' practice lessons	46,05	31,36
15	Attending a demonstration lesson given by a college lecturer	16,67	22,72
2	Teaching a class with a lecturer present	53,58	17,16

C. Follow-up to teaching practice

		% Strongly Agreeing	% Agreeing	% Total Disagreeing
25	On returning to college at the conclusion of teaching practice, lecturers spend time discussing problems with students as a follow-up to their classroom experiences.	3,46	37,65	47,66

Table V

ANALYSIS OF ITEMS RELATING TO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PRACTICE LESSONS I.E. LESSONS ARRANGED IN ADVANCE AND ATTENDED BY A LECTURER FOR THE PURPOSES OF ASSESSMENT.

Item No.	STATEMENT	% Strongly Agreeing	% Agreeing	% Disagreeing
16	The circumstances under which practice lessons are given are artificial. ...	57,07	35,01	6,67
17	Practice lessons are of little value unless they are followed by another lesson with the same class.	23,21	48,77	15,81
22	Practice lessons are of little value because they are frequently given to a class not met with previously.	10,62	32,96	47,29
23	Practice lessons are of little value because they are rarely given as one of a series, but as an isolated lesson with which to impress the lecturer.	30,12	45,43	19,76

Table VI(a)

(ANALYSIS BY MISS M. NUSSEY) — 810 STUDENTS

1. What were your most challenging experiences during teaching practice?	Frequency of comments — approximate only								
	Most frequently mentioned			Mentioned by a few			Rarely mentioned		
	SP	JP	Sec	SP	JP	Sec	SP	JP	Sec
The children taught									
Immigrants				X	X				X
Weak pupils (learning difficulties, misunderstanding)	X	X				X			
Difficult children (rejected, home background, poverty, lack of interest)		X		X					X
Handicapped children (deafness, special defects)							X	X	X
Bright children						X	X	X	
Teaching experiences									
Independent work (teacher ill — classes handed over for considerable periods of time)	X	X	X						
"Criticism" lessons				X				X	X
Taking unprepared lessons at short notice	X	X				X			
Taking groups not trained for e.g. grades							X	X	X
Experimenting to find most suitable methods				X	X	X			
Answering questions and stimulating children	X			X		X		X	
Group techniques — free discussion							X	X	X
Encouraging creativity and independence							X	X	X
Teaching subject found difficult by student				X				X	X
Overcoming prejudice against a subject						X	X	X	
Putting subject matter across				X	X	X			
Teaching subject not trained for							X	X	X
Promoting enjoyment of a subject							X	X	X
Discipline									
Striking a balance between asserting control and encouraging pupils to develop a liking for the student				X				X	X
Maintaining interest				X		X		X	
Taking over uncontrolled class				X				X	X
N.B. Finding suitable disciplinary techniques	X	X	X						
Getting pupils to accept the student as a teacher				X					X

Table VI(b)

2. Which were your least stimulating experiences during teaching practice?									
Inactivity									
Long periods of observation	X	X	X						
Doing nothing — children reading library books, copying notes	X							X	X
Teaching methods									
Watching mechanical, repetitive, stereotyped, rotememory techniques.									
Authoritarian teaching	X	X	X						
Compulsion to use the class or subject teacher's methods.	X				X	X			
Rigidy and continual punishment				X				X	X
Methods unrelated to pupils' needs				X				X	X
Tasks									
Marking work set by teacher	X				X				X
Menial routine jobs e.g. covering books	X	X							X

Lessons	Most frequently mentioned			Mentioned by a few			Rarely mentioned		
	SP	JP	Sec	SP	JP	Sec	SP	JP	Sec
"Criticism" lessons				X				X	X
Unresponsive class	X		X					X	
Unprepared lessons				X		X		X	
Tactless interference by teacher						X	X	X	
Routine lessons — drill							X	X	X

Table VI(c)

3. What specific improvements do you suggest in teaching practice arrangements?

(a) **Initial organisation**									
Early notification of students, staff and schools on lessons to be taken.	X	X	X						
Tighter organisation to ensure that all give a certain number of "crits" and that these are staggered.				X	X				X
(b) **Choice of school**									
Convenient bus service and not too distant.				X	X				X
Placement in classes with cooperative teachers.				X				X	X
Period of teaching practice									
One long period of continuous practice per year.				X	X				X
Practice teaching at commencement of the year to be abolished.							X	X	X
(c) **Experience in school**									
Opportunity to take classes continuously.	X	X	X						
LESS OBSERVATION: the number of lessons to be taught a day to be specified and teachers to conform.				X				X	X
Teacher to leave the room when a student gives a lesson.				X	X	X			
(d) **Contribution of college lecturers**									
Discussion and contact with students BEFORE and AFTER lessons.				X				X	X
More time to be spent on discussions.							X	X	X
Lecturers should be be more sympathetic and less dogmatic. More constructive.				X	X	X			
(e) **Assessment**									
Criticism lessons are artificial and should be abolished. Teachers in schools should assess.	X	X	X						
Assessment should be based only on a series of lessons.				X		X		X	
Less weighting should be given to criticism lessons in arriving at final mark.				X		X		X	

Percentage students agreeing with **both**

Nos. 16 and 17 = 69,21
Nos. 16 and 22 = 49,07
Nos. 16 and 23 = 65,45

Table VII ANALYSIS OF ITEMS DESCRIBING CONDITIONS IN SCHOOLS WHICH AFFECT THE VALUE OF TEACHING PRACTICE. (Total No. 810 Students).

Section B

Item No.	STATEMENT	% Strongly Agreeing	% Agreeing	% Disagreeing
1	There were ample opportunities to give lessons to classes.	25,80	47,78	23,70
2	The class teacher (or subject teacher) encouraged the use of new teaching methods.	18,64	40,12	32,72
3	Teachers are inclined to exploit students giving them menial tasks to perform.	12,10	33,46	43,70
4	Teaching practice affords many opportunities of experimenting with new methods not current in schools.	9,14	37,90	38,27
5	Teaching practice frequently perpetuates current teaching methods.	3,83	47,65	13,21
6	It is frequently necessary to reconcile conflicting attitudes of school staff and college staff towards content and teaching methods.	9,26	46,30	25,68
7	Teachers give every possible assistance when students are preparing for lessons.	19,26	47,53	25,43
8	Observed lessons given by teachers are usually inspiring.	5,93	30,74	47,77
9	Teachers are always willing to hand over classes to students.	8,77	37,28	44,08
10	Observation of lessons is of little value because so many teachers are inexperienced.	3,21	16,67	63,45
11	Observation of lessons is of little value because teachers use methods which college lecturers deplore.	5,93	28,15	48,76
12	Observation is of little value because no discussion or explanation is usually possible afterwards.	6,30	34,94	48,27
13	The haphazard exposure of students to bad teaching is a common experience of students during teaching practice.	7,04	39,38	31,58

Items from Section C

Item No.	STATEMENT	Rated by Students as having moderate influence	Rated as having real value
1	The discussion of teaching problems and methods with school staff	35,80	39,26
5	Observing experienced teachers in action	31,48	55,80

Percentage Students agreeing with **both:—**

Nos. 2 and 4 = 32,6
Nos. 2 and 6 = 30,15
Nos. 5 and 2 = 33,1
Nos. 5 and 11 = 19,83
Nos. 5 and 13 = 28,06