

## Peer observation of Teaching and Professional Development: Teachers' Perspectives at the English Language Institute, King Abdulaziz University

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### Abstract

Peer Observation of Teaching (POT) is one means to help teachers develop professionally. It shows any institute's sincere efforts to help its teachers for the sake of improving the quality of learning and teaching. It also helps to spread a spirit of collegiality in the workplace by sharing best teaching practices among colleagues. This paper reports on participants' reflections and viewpoints regarding a piloting Peer Observation Program (POTP) implemented in the English Language Institute (ELI) main campus at King Abdulaziz University (KAU), Jeddah, Saudi Arabia in the academic year (2013-2014). It also investigates whether taking part in POT helped teachers to develop professionally and to what extent. This paper utilizes data from an evaluation questionnaire completed by 13 teachers (observers and observees). Based on data analysis, this paper identifies: 1) the benefit of peer observation to achieve professional development by building self-confidence, self-reflection, sharing ideas and learning new teaching techniques, 2) teachers' needs for administrative remuneration and training on peer observation skills especially feedback techniques, and 3) the hurdles that might inhibit teachers from participating in POT, which included time constraints, busy workloads and paper work.

**Keywords:** Peer Observation, professional development, self- reflection, self-confidence, sharing ideas.

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