

In-service EFL Teachers' Critical Reflective Practice: An Appraisal Analysis

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Abstract. This article aims at finding out how the EFL in-service teachers reflect their teaching practice and what can be learned by EFL in-service teachers about reflecting their reflective practice to their teacher professional development. Two in-service teachers at an Indonesian university participated in this study. The data in this study are collected from Narrative questionnaire on critical reflection of classroom practice, and in-depth interview. The qualitative data are the in-service teachers' critical reflection dealing with their teaching practice. The finding of the research show that the incident was analyzed using Appraisal theory by Martin & White (2005) becomes a reference for finding out what aspects of lecturer competence they want to target. Continuous reflection should be conducted to make better teaching learning process, so that he can get the impact of reflection activities maximally. Thus, it becomes endeavor for teacher professional development.

Key words: critical reflection; in-service teachers; professional development; reflective practice

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INTRODUCTION

By widening views and assisting student teachers in addressing difficult difficulties they encounter, reflective reflection in teacher education aids student teachers in helping them make sense of their practice. Reflection, according to Hammond-Stoughton, is crucial for fostering self-awareness and helping people better understand their own reactions and views as well as their own selves (McGarr & MacCormack, 2016). Reflective practice is frequently promoted as a way to support student teachers as they have early experience to settings where the norms might not align with their own values. It can help them adjust to "the balancing act to be performed in terms of creating their own style and independence and adhering to re-established, frequently tacitly agreed, internal rules of professional behavior within the school." According to Akbari and Cornford, there is also empirical evidence that reflective practice actually enhances instruction or student learning, particularly in a culture of teacher evaluation that prioritizes a teacher's performance in the classroom over other facets of their profession (McGarr and MacCormack, 2016).

Boody (2008) identifies four levels of teacher reflection: (1) retrospective analysis (ability to self-access), (2) problem-solving process (awareness of how one learns), (3) critical reflection of self (developing continuous self-improvement), and (4) reflection on beliefs about the self. Boody (2008) states that teachers' preparation, delivery, and evaluation of their

lessons are largely influenced by their beliefs about themselves. The second group includes the majority of the teachers' reflections. Instead of examining if their instruction, material, approach, implementation, etc. were appropriate, they were more interested in the responses, engagement, interest, and challenges of their students.

A crucial aspect of the student teachers' growth is reflective practice. They learn about reflective practice early on in their education. Student teachers participate in a variety of experiences while they are on campus, and they are asked to reflect on each one. For instance, student instructors engage in microteaching throughout their first year of training and then report on the experience of instructing small groups of students. In their second year, student instructors thoroughly investigate reflective practice and look at many modes of reflection. Student instructors get the chance to consider the social and cultural influences on schools during their third year of study. (McGarr & MacCormack, 2016). In this case, the relation between reflective practice and pre-service teachers' professional development is that by doing reflective practice, the student teacher can evaluate their teaching practice so that it can possibly improve and adjust the teaching method, learning material, classroom management, self-confidence and self-awareness in teaching, have new innovation, and others in order to achieve good students' achievement and outcomes.

The depth and wide range of teachers' reflection might vary. It depends on teachers'

background knowledge and experiences, level of education, environment, etc. Their self-awareness of their quality of teaching can give great contribution toward their professional development. Moreover, through researcher previous research on the in-service teachers' teaching artefacts (RPS) found that EFL teachers rarely made any change or revision that it is assumed they also rarely reflect their teaching practice. It is due to the fact that there is no or little attention from the Quality Assurance Committee on the teaching process, but rather to the product of teaching.

The good learning quality of students greatly depends on the good quality of teaching. The practice of reflecting can be one of the ways to self-evaluate their teaching as the basis to develop their teaching quality. The practice of reflection, then, can lead to their professional development. Due to the reason, it is badly needed to conduct the study to investigate the in-service teachers' reflection and how they reflect their reflection practice in relation to their teacher professional development.

METHODS

This study follows the rule of qualitative case study that allows researchers to get more depth and detail as well as to address the "how and why" questions (Yin, 2009). After the researchers have invested enough time and money, they address concerns regarding significant data gathering in the field and on the precise data analysis of text material. (Creswell, 2009).

The data in this study are collected from Narrative questionnaire on critical reflection of classroom practice, and in-depth interview. The story on the experience of classroom practice becomes a critical reflection for the teachers. The participants of this study are in-service EFL teachers of English Education Department. The participation is based on the consent distributed by researcher and signed by the In-service teachers. Moreover, there are some consideration in recruiting the participants, they are; the purpose of the research, the convenience, the accessibility and the moral geography.

Data may be classified into quantitative and qualitative data. Qualitative data are in the form of sentence, word, or picture. Quantitative data are in the form of number or scoring of qualitative data (Sugiyono, 2014: 23). The data of this research are all qualitative. The qualitative data are the in-service teachers critical reflection in the form of narrative dealing with their teaching

practice. Additionally, the statistics include information on in-service teachers' views of the benefits of writing critical reflection and the justifications for why doing so is good for their professional development.

Martin & White's (2005) SFL-informed language appraisal looks at the interpersonal dimension of text and discourse. This discourse-semantic framework comprises three dimension: attitude, graduation and engagement. One of the central elements of the Appraisal framework is the attitude system (affect, Judgement and Appreciation). Among three components of the attitude system, affect (discourse semantic system) is a language resource for expressing emotions. The teachers' narrative of their critical reflection is analyzed through four parameters of affect as appraisal Framework; they are (dis)inclination, (dis)satisfaction, (in)security and (un)happiness.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Appraisal Analysis on Constructed Teachers' Reflection

Participan 1 (ST)

ST carries out learning reflection activities as part of her habits after teaching. This activity is carried out to determine the weaknesses and strengths of the teaching and to ensure that students achieve the predetermined competencies. The description of the activity above shows the time range of reflective activities carried out by him, which shows the realm of professionalism of ST as a lecturer. In addition, the reflection activity carried out is an answer to his dissatisfaction with the problems that arise in learning. He shows ST's confidence in overcoming the problems he faces so that learning objectives are achieved.

I often do reflective practice to analyze my teaching practice [inclination]. The reflections aspects that I usually do deal with uncommon incidents or problems [dis-satisfaction] in learning so I know how to handle [security] them to promote the achievement of learning objectives [inclination].

The criticality of this incident shows ST's concern because the practice of the learning activities he designed was not what he expected. This incident turned out to affect the smoothness of the learning process because each step of the learning process depends on how students react or

respond to the instructions given. This teacher shows a reflective teacher because he tries to identify deficiencies in his teaching, and this shows that he is a responsible person. He wanted to show his professionalism by improving his teaching performance by taking into account the results of the reflections he received from his previous teaching. He did this as an anticipatory step in preparing learning scenarios so that problems that arise in learning do not recur in subsequent lessons.

Problems such as lack of materials understanding and students' less active [insecurity] responses are commonly I encounter during teaching-learning process. I feel unsatisfied [dissatisfaction] seeing this situation so I need [inclination] to do self-reflection by trying to identify my teaching weaknesses. Such identification is important [security] to develop my performance and self competence in order to enhance students learning quality. It means, I want [inclination] to facilitate students to increase the intended attitude, response, behavior, and achievement. I am pleased [happines/feeling] if those four parameters can be attained by students [satisfaction].

ST uses three aspects of reflection to evaluate the teaching process. The first aspect is to describe the learning activities in detail from the beginning to the end of the process. The second aspect, ST criticizes the learning steps he has described, so that he finds the advantages and disadvantages of the teaching and learning activities he has done. The third aspect, ST determines the aspects that are still not good enough for him to make improvements in the next teaching planning. For example, when he found students who did not practice learning, he argued that there were students who gave responses that were not in accordance with the instructions given by the lecturer. Then, he or she determines actions to solve the problem by preparing worksheets that invite students to complete the exercises or assignments in each catch-up activity. He believes that the results of student work through these worksheets can be used as portfolios that can encourage students to be more active in producing study documents that describe learning achievement or learning outcomes more authentically.

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Consideration of the needs and interests of students is always used as the basis for ST in preparing learning plans. This is to ensure that the activities carried out can accommodate the various needs of students and anticipate all possible problems that arise. ST believes that giving students the opportunity to submit feedback after learning activities are completed directly is a strategy to provide students with freedom of opinion and thought. With the feedback given by students, ST becomes aware of the problems faced by students in the learning process. Apart from some of the strategies above, ST occasionally opens dialogues with colleagues to solve problems faced in class because some of the input and suggestions and experiences of colleagues can be an inspiration and reference. This is evidence that ST is an anticipatory reflective person who is open to input from his colleagues.

I always consider students' needs and interests, and what students want in developing lesson plans [security]. I know their needs and interests [security] from the feedback that I sometimes ask after teaching-learning process in which they do not have to write their identities to provide more spaces of freedom of thought and speech [inclination]. From their feedback, I also find problems related to students' learning process [satisfaction]. To solve the problems, I sometimes share with my colleagues since their suggestion, advice, and experience have been helpful [satisfaction]. Moreover, I put my personal and colleagues learning experiences as a basis in improving for my future teaching practice [inclination]. Conversely, I do not always [disinclination] consider and use a particular theory both in structuring learning steps and solving problems I encounter in the class.

Participant 2 (VD)

Problematic aspects such as learning materials, the learning process, and the classroom atmosphere were the focus of VD's reflection so that he always made reflection as a learning routine that he always did. VD considers this reflection activity as a very important part of identifying problems such as activities that are not in accordance with the plan because they do not carry out the instructions given, so that he can choose the solution strategy quickly. In addition to reflecting on student-focused learning, VD also reflects on its strengths and weaknesses.

After teaching, I always [inclination]do reflection on the teaching process to figure out some problematic aspects[inclination] such as learning materials, the learning process, and the classroom atmosphere. The example of learning materials problem is when students feel reluctant to read due to the texts difficulty although the level has been arranged from easy to complicated. As a result, the learning process that I have arranged does not go according to the lesson plan. I assume this is because my less teaching experience [insecurity], so it is difficult for me [insecurity] to make an unprepared adjustment to learning activities even though the teaching-learning objectives can be achieved through different teaching strategies [dis-satisfaction].

During the learning process, VD feels happy when students carry out the instructions it gives, as shown when they are actively involved in class or group discussions to complete assignments. However, there are events in class that attract VD's attention so that they are dissatisfied, such as situations when students do not understand the instructions in English that are delivered and the lack of attention of some students to instructions and material explanations. As a result, these students do not understand and do not complete the assigned tasks so that the learning process does not run smoothly. In dealing with this situation, VD takes several strategic steps such as identifying the causes of the problem and reflecting on oneself. VD found that too many students in one class were the cause of this problem. This is certainly a dilemma in itself because the large number of participants in one class has become a common condition in the institution where he teaches. During self-reflection, VD felt the need to improve his ability to adjust the volume of the voice while

teaching because this is one of the reasons for the lack of delivery of instructions and material to students. The problem of giving instructions by lecturers and receiving instructions by students is the main concern of VD during teaching. He often found students who did not carry out activities as previously instructed, such as students not reading certain material so that the class discussion process did not go as expected. After identifying the problem, he made a learning innovation by giving various quizzes to students. As for students who have problems understanding instructions, VD provides instructions with several steps such as writing instructions on the blackboard, providing modeling regarding how to do assignments, to confirming students about what assignments or activities they have to do.

During teaching process, I am happy [happyness] to see students engaged in discussions [inclination] to complete assignments. However, there are also incidents in the class that I do not like and catch my attention [dis-satisfaction], one of which was there are some students who need repeated instructions several times. As a result, some students do not complete the assignment while some others are indifferent to my instruction and explanation so the learning process does not run smoothly [dis-satisfaction]. I found that this problematic situation is caused by a big number of students in the class. Additionally, it is hard for me [insecurity] to maintain the volume of my voice throughout the lesson. Another example of problematic situations is that some students who do not read the intended chapter [dis-satisfaction] as previously instructed, but they do not carry it out, thus hampering the discussion process. One of the strategies that I have used to solve this problem is to give oral quizzes spontaneously so that they will prepare themselves with materials before the meeting [security]. To cope with [security] students who do not understand instructions, I do several strategies [security] such as 1) writing instructions on the blackboard or on the slide. 2) modelling on how to do the tasks 3) confirming students' understanding of instruction

When designing lessons, VD does not have information on the initial abilities of students to

be taught. This condition makes VD not analyze student needs. However, VD tries to identify the needs of students during their first meeting with them. VD conducted this needs analysis because he felt that this activity was important so he immediately adjusted the learning scenario when he had access to dialogue and communicate with students directly.

I do not conduct[inclination] need analysis in planning or designing the instruction (lesson plan) because I do not have access to students [dis-satisfaction]. However, I identified students' need and abilities while discussing the learning contract[inclination] at the first meeting so that I could adjust the learning scenario. [satisfaction].

Asking for student feedback after the learning process is an activity that is sometimes carried out by VD. With a psychological and dialogical approach in an informal manner, VD can obtain more detailed information. This activity was carried out by VD to get information about the difficulties faced by students regarding the material, learning steps, or the explanations it conveyed. In addition to solving the problems independently, VD also took the time to share with more experienced colleagues and put their suggestions into practice as long as the suggestions and input in line with his teaching philosophy. The similarity of values and learning objectives is the basis for VD in determining solutions so that he can more confidently face any possible problems.

I sometimes ask for students' feedback[security] after teaching process. I informally ask for the feedback [security] such as are the materials difficult? Are there any difficulties in learning? Is my explanation difficult to understand? scenario. Moreover, dealing with problems in the class, I share with colleagues and use any suggestion scenario [security] given to help me solve the problems as long as it is doable [security] and meet my teaching belief.

VD learning experience is experienced through a long and difficult process that results in very valuable knowledge. Therefore, VD has always been his learning experience as a basis for designing learning. An example is the drilling technique that he applies in teaching materials that require accuracy and habituation. Drilling that VD practices is a manifestation of the

learning theory that he believes in teaching such as constructivism theory so that class discussions become a place to link theory with practice. VD does not only believe in certain theories, but also operationalizes them in learning activities that are designed and practiced.

My personal experience in learning always becomes the basis for designing my lesson. The example is when I have difficulty in making yes/no questions using certain tenses, I drill myself to the verb forms changing. From this experience, I apply such drilling when students find similar difficulty that I have. Besides, I also consider and use certain theories such as constructivism as teaching philosophy [inclination]. I try to relate every theory to the real life experiences in the class discussion [inclination].

As the first participant, ST realizes that to bring out the maximum impact of reflection he must reflect consistently and continuously. With the influence and benefits obtained from reflection, ST is satisfied with the practice of reflection that he has done and realizes that to become a reflective teacher he must practice continuous reflection with various ways of reflection to make it better, so that he can get the impact of reflection activities maximally.

VD, the second participant, believes that reflection practice helps her in identifying classroom learning practices as well as self-identification in teaching. The ability to identify problems in the learning process through reflection practice is one indicator of teacher professional competence. Identification of problems found in class is an anticipatory step so that similar problems do not appear in subsequent learning activities or as a reference for solving problems at hand. Reflective activities that VD do reflectively with themselves or dialogically with students and collaboratively with other colleagues help VD build professional competence as a teacher educator.

CONCLUSION

The research investigates participants and find various findings as concluded in this section. First, the lecturer reflects by identifying critical events that occur in the learning process in the classroom. The incident was analyzed using appraisal theory by Martin & White (2005) about how the lecturer reacted in response to the incident.

Secondly, all of the participant agree that the reflective practice conducted provide benefits for their teaching and learning process. All participants realize that to bring out the maximum impact of reflection they must reflect consistently and continuously. Continuous reflection should be conducted to make better teaching learning process, so that he can get the impact of reflection activities maximally. Thus, it becomes endeavor for teacher professional development

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