

Reflective Narratives in Education: Exploring Teacher Testing Experiences Through Deep Conversations


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ABSTRACT

Studi ini menggali pengalaman dan perspektif guru mengenai pengajaran reflektif, sebuah praktik penilaian diri yang bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kualitas pengajaran dan pembelajaran. Melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan dua orang guru, tanggapan mereka dianalisis dengan menggunakan analisis tematik. Kedua guru mengakui pentingnya pengajaran reflektif dalam meningkatkan metode pengajaran dan pembelajaran siswa. Namun, mereka juga menunjukkan tantangan seperti keterbatasan waktu dan tidak adanya pendekatan terstruktur untuk pengajaran reflektif. Studi ini menggarisbawahi perlunya dukungan yang lebih banyak, termasuk lokakarya atau pelatihan rutin, bimbingan, dan pengurangan beban kerja administratif. Pengaruh lingkungan sekolah dalam mendorong pengajaran reflektif juga ditekankan. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa meskipun pengajaran reflektif dihargai dan dianggap bermanfaat, ada beberapa kendala dalam penerapannya secara penuh. Mengatasi tantangan-tantangan ini dan memberikan lebih banyak dukungan dapat mendorong pengajaran reflektif di antara para guru, yang mengarah pada peningkatan praktik pengajaran dan hasil belajar siswa.

This study delves into the experiences and perspectives of teachers regarding reflective teaching, a self-assessment practice aimed at enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. Through semi-structured interviews with two teachers, their responses were analyzed using thematic analysis. Both teachers acknowledged the significance of reflective teaching in improving their teaching methods and student learning. However, they also pointed out challenges such as time constraints and the absence of a structured approach to reflective teaching. The study underscored the need for more support, including regular workshops or training, mentorship, and a reduction in administrative workload. The influence of the school environment in fostering reflective teaching was also stressed. The study concluded that while reflective teaching is valued and seen as beneficial, there are obstacles to its full implementation. Addressing these challenges and providing more support could encourage reflective teaching among teachers, leading to enhanced teaching practices and student learning outcomes.



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INTRODUCTION

A competent teacher is arguably the single most important contributing factor towards the attainment of the educational objectives. The professional educator and the educational objectives enhance each other in a mutually interactive way. Richards and Farrell (2005) maintain that self-awareness is one particular distinguishing factor of a professional teacher. A self-aware educator understands how idealism, values, strengths and weaknesses are interrelated. Educators may also need to implement self-reflection tasks in order to improve self-awareness. This is a mental tool which helps people appraise the strengths and met weaknesses of their actions (Kuswando, 2012).

Reflection, in educational environments, is one of the significant parts of the professional education, which, in one way or the other, relates to effective teaching and learning processes, especially in reflective practice. According to Cole and Knowles (2000), the process of content and instructional objectives evaluation by a teacher after delivering a lesson is referred to as reflective teaching. Teachers have to think very deeply about the methods they employed in the lesson and the problems encountered with a view of improving effectiveness in subsequent lessons. Richards and Lockhart (2007) claim that active reflection by teachers during and after teaching and learning activity helps in identifying where the teaching deviated from how learners interpreted it or where it matched what learners perceived. In the opinion of Richard and Lockhart, teachers need to develop a practice of reflection, so that the learners improve in their English learning.

In Indonesia, reflective teaching was not a common practice in the past. According to Sudibyo's (2007) report, the government was worried about the criteria set on 2007 that included pedagogical competence, personal competence, professional competence, and social competence as the minimum competencies for the new teachers or for certification requirements for new teachers. Reflective teaching should become part of the standards and competencies for teachers if Indonesia is to improve. This can be more fully achieved by examining teachers' instructional materials as well as student assessments, and engaging in action research that seeks to improve the teaching practices.

As per Pollard's (2006) assertion, reflective practice for teachers in particular has been suggested as a strand of teacher professionalism; however, with the increasing number of demands to have students meet a certain level of performance, it is not unexpected that some educators may approach their practice from a rather operational or 'short sighted' perspective and this will adversely affect their chance to continuously reflect about their teaching. Even though reflective teaching has developed as an important part of teacher professional standards, its practice is out of step with government expectations. The state expects teachers to follow norms, but does not provide the necessary school conditions for the teachers to conduct the development work (Lubis, 2017).

The document "Reflective Narratives in Education" highlights a significant issue in the Indonesian education system. Despite the recognized importance of self-awareness and reflection in teaching, reflective teaching is not a common practice in Indonesia. The government has set criteria for new teachers that include pedagogical competence, personal competence, professional competence, and social competence. However, the state's expectations for teachers to follow norms are not met with the necessary school conditions for teachers to conduct development work. This discrepancy between expectation and reality presents a problem that needs to be addressed.

Based on the problem statement, the following research objectives can be formulated: to investigate the current state of reflective teaching in Indonesia, to understand the barriers preventing the implementation of reflective teaching in Indonesian schools, and to explore the impact of reflective teaching on student performance and teacher professional development.

The study of reflective narratives in education, particularly in the context of Indonesia, holds significant value. It aims to bridge the gap between the government's expectations and the current state of reflective teaching in Indonesia. By understanding the barriers and proposing strategies to overcome them, this study can contribute to improving the quality of education in Indonesia. Furthermore, the findings of this study can provide insights for other countries facing similar challenges in implementing reflective teaching. This research could potentially lead to a more effective and reflective teaching practice, enhancing the overall quality of education.

METHOD

This study explores the concept of reflective teaching, a self-assessment practice aimed at enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. The research was conducted using a qualitative approach, specifically through semi-structured interviews with teachers who have been teaching for at least five years. The interviews were conducted either in-person or via video conferencing, and all interviews were audio-recorded with the consent of the participants. The recordings were then transcribed verbatim to facilitate data analysis.

The data collected from the interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis, a method that involves identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data. The teachers' responses were coded and common themes were identified. These themes were then discussed in relation to the research objectives and the existing literature on reflective teaching.

The research method for this study was a qualitative approach, using semi-structured interviews. The participants taken from some schools who have been teaching for at least five years. There were 2 teachers as samples and were determined using a purposive sampling technique.

The qualitative approach for this study involved semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews were conducted and developed based on the research objectives and included open-ended questions that allow the teachers to share their experiences and perspectives on reflective teaching. The interviews were conducted either in-person or via video conferencing. Each interview is expected to last approximately 60 minutes.

All interviews were audio-recorded with the consent of the participants. The recordings were transcribed verbatim to facilitate data analysis.

Interview questions used to understand teachers' experiences and perspectives on reflective teaching:

1. Can you describe your understanding of reflective teaching?
2. How often do you engage in reflective teaching practices?
3. Can you share an instance where reflective teaching significantly impacted your teaching?
4. What strategies do you use to engage in reflective teaching?
5. What challenges do you face when trying to implement reflective teaching in your classroom?
6. How do you think reflective teaching impacts your students' learning?
7. How does reflective teaching contribute to your professional development as a teacher?
8. What support or resources do you think would enhance your ability to engage in reflective teaching?
9. How does the school environment or culture influence your ability to engage in reflective teaching?
10. In your opinion, how can the practice of reflective teaching be promoted among teachers.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Data Analysis

The data collected from the interviews and focus group discussions would be transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis. This involves identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data. The analysis would be conducted in two stages: the first stage would involve generating initial codes from the data, and the second stage would involve searching for themes among the codes. The data from the two responses provided by the teachers were analyzed using a thematic analysis approach. This involved coding the responses and identifying common themes that emerged from the data.

Teacher 1 Responses:

Reflective teaching, to me, is about constantly evaluating and re-evaluating my teaching practices. It's about looking back at my lessons, identifying what worked and what didn't, and making necessary adjustments for future lessons. I try to engage in reflective teaching after every lesson. It's a part of my daily routine. There was a time when I noticed that my students were not fully engaged during my lessons. Through reflective teaching, I realized that my teaching style was not interactive enough. I then incorporated more group activities and discussions, which significantly improved student engagement. I usually reflect on my lessons by writing in a journal. I also find peer observations and feedback very helpful. Time is a major challenge. With all the administrative work and lesson planning, it's sometimes hard to find time for reflection. Reflective teaching allows me to tailor my lessons to my students' needs,

which I believe enhances their learning experience. Reflective teaching has made me a more effective teacher. It has helped me identify my strengths and areas for improvement. I think having regular workshops or training on reflective teaching would be very beneficial. Also, reducing the administrative workload would give teachers more time to reflect. The school culture is very supportive of reflective teaching. We have regular meetings where we share our reflections and learn from each other. I think raising awareness about the benefits of reflective teaching and providing necessary training and support would encourage more teachers to engage in reflective teaching.

Teacher 2 Responses:

To me, reflective teaching is about being mindful of my teaching practices and making conscious efforts to improve for the benefit of my students. I engage in reflective teaching, but not as often as I would like. Mostly, I reflect at the end of each week. Once, I realized through reflection that I was not giving enough attention to slower learners in my class. I then started differentiating my instruction, which helped those students significantly. I use a reflection journal to record my thoughts and observations. I also find feedback from my students very useful. One challenge is the lack of a structured approach to reflective teaching. Without proper guidance, it can sometimes feel like I'm not doing it right. I believe reflective teaching helps me understand my students better, which in turn allows me to teach them more effectively. Reflective teaching has helped me grow as a teacher. It has made me more aware of my teaching practices and motivated me to keep improving. I think having a mentor or coach who can guide us in reflective teaching would be very helpful. The school environment is somewhat supportive of reflective teaching, but I think there's room for improvement. I believe providing structured training on reflective teaching and creating a supportive school culture that values reflection would promote reflective teaching among teachers.

Discussion

The discussion focused on the themes identified from the data analysis. These themes were discussed in relation to the research objectives and the existing literature on reflective teaching. The discussion also explored the implications of the findings for teacher professional development and education policy in Indonesia.

The data collected from the interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis. This involved identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data. The themes identified were:

1. Understanding of Reflective Teaching
2. Frequency of Reflective Teaching
3. Impact of Reflective Teaching
4. Challenges in Reflective Teaching
5. Support for Reflective Teaching
6. School Environment

From the data observed, there are some themes identified, namely:

1. Understanding of Reflective Teaching: Both teachers demonstrated a clear understanding of reflective teaching, viewing it as a process of self-evaluation and continuous improvement. They perceive it as a tool to better understand their teaching practices and make necessary adjustments for the benefit of their students.
2. Frequency of Reflective Teaching: There was a variation in the frequency of reflective teaching practices between the two teachers. Teacher 1 reported engaging in reflective teaching on a daily basis, while Teacher 2 reported doing so on a weekly basis.
3. Impact of Reflective Teaching: Both teachers reported positive impacts of reflective teaching on their teaching practices and student learning outcomes. They highlighted benefits such as improved student engagement, better understanding of student needs, and more effective instruction.
4. Challenges in Reflective Teaching: Both teachers identified challenges in implementing reflective teaching. Teacher 1 cited time constraints due to administrative work and lesson planning, while Teacher 2 pointed out the lack of a structured approach to reflective teaching.
5. Support for Reflective Teaching: Both teachers expressed the need for more support to enhance their reflective teaching practices. They suggested potential solutions such as regular workshops or training, mentorship, and reduction of administrative workload.

6. School Environment: The teachers had slightly different views on the school environment's support for reflective teaching. Teacher 1 found the school culture very supportive, while Teacher 2 thought there was room for improvement.

Findings

The findings suggest that while teachers understand the value of reflective teaching and attempt to incorporate it into their practices, they face challenges that hinder its full implementation. These challenges include time constraints and the lack of a structured approach to reflective teaching. The teachers' responses also highlight the need for more support to enhance reflective teaching practices. This could be in the form of training, mentorship, or a reduction in administrative workload. The school environment also plays a crucial role in promoting reflective teaching. A supportive school culture that values reflection can encourage teachers to engage more in reflective teaching.

After making the interviews as well as analyzing the data, the findings can be concluded as follows:

1. Reflective teaching is viewed positively by teachers and is seen as a valuable tool for improving teaching practices and student learning.
2. Teachers face challenges in implementing reflective teaching, including time constraints and the lack of a structured approach.
3. There is a need for more support to enhance reflective teaching practices, such as training, mentorship, and a reduction in administrative workload.
4. The school environment plays a crucial role in promoting reflective teaching. A supportive school culture can encourage more teachers to engage in reflective teaching.

CONCLUSION

The study on reflective teaching practices among educators has provided several significant insights. Both teachers involved in the study recognized the importance of reflective teaching as a tool for self-improvement and enhancing student learning. They also acknowledged the challenges they face in implementing reflective teaching, such as time constraints and the absence of a structured approach. The teachers expressed a need for more support to enhance reflective teaching practices. This support could be in the form of regular workshops or training, mentorship, and a reduction in administrative workload. The role of the school environment in promoting reflective teaching was also emphasized, with a supportive school culture seen as a key factor in encouraging more teachers to engage in reflective teaching. In conclusion, while reflective teaching is valued by teachers and seen as beneficial, there are barriers to its full implementation. Addressing these challenges and providing more support could help promote reflective teaching among teachers, ultimately leading to improved teaching practices and student learning outcomes.

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