AN ENGLISH TEACHER'S REFLECTIVE PRACTICE IN ENGLISH FOREIGN LANGUAGE (EFL) CLASSROOM

Rihali Indra Munggaran

English Education Department, University of Singaperbangsa Karawang, Indonesia
Corresponding Author: Rihali Indra Munggaran
Email: rihalimunggaran@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Keywords:
Teacher, Reflective Practice, EFL Classroom

The duty of the teacher is not merely transfering knowledge but he/she should be aware to any students's difficulties by carry on reflective practice during or after learning process. Therefore, This study examine how does the teacher reflect the teaching process in EFL classroom. In this respect, qualitative approach and descriptive qualitative method are used in this study. The study explored 6 participants such as one English teacher as primary source and five students as secondary source. The data were collected via observation, interview and documentation. The documentation is presented in the form of teacher's diary which is teacher can express about his/her feelings, experiences, difficulties and problems in a diary writing. The findings of the study revealed that the teacher using diary writing as a strategy to reflect the teaching process after learning activity has finished. The teacher always helps students, who are difficult to understand the material repeatedly. Reviewing the material is frequently use to check whether students still remember or forget and giving some questions related to the material to make students focus on learning process. The teacher arranged the technology to be used in learning activity to make students more interest on English subject.

INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English as a subject that must be mastered by students because students will be compete with the wider society to realize the purpose of life. However, there are found some difficulties in learning English specifically in classroom settings. English is a languange that is not easy to learn. Therefore, many problems are often found in every learning process. These problems include the decrease of learning motivation which make the students are indolent while doing the assignment and studying, unsatisfactory achievement results and also classroom environment is not conducive.

The figure who can answer the problem is a teacher. A teacher is a key in a successful learning. As (Shirao, Momanyi, & Anyona, 2020) argue that "The teacher is the most important ingredient in the effective teaching. Based on Awuor & Chemutai, it means that a teacher should be able to optimize his/her role because a successful learner depends on a teacher.

In optimizing role, a teacher should be able to guide the students to develop their knowledge and abilities, foster students' motivation and solve students' problem during learning process. It can enhance the teaching quality for the teacher itself. Actually, there are several ways to clear up the problem found in learning process, one of them is perform reflective practice. Reflective practice for the teacher is a self-evaluation regarding what has been taught to the students, observe what happened in the classroom and find solution to the problems found. In the evaluation process, a teacher should be able to identify the students, know that students have a problem while learning or not. If the problem is found, the teacher should be able to find solution so the teaching and learning has a better progress. If there is no problem, the teacher can continue the teaching and learning activity.

Reflective practice has become powerful movement for teacher in creating the best generation in the future. Describe that: "Reflective practice is a process where teachers think over their teaching practices, analyze how something was taught and how the practice might be improved or changed for better learning outcome". Indeed, reflective practice affect the teacher development and require teacher to improve self-awarness toward any issues in classroom environment (Lu, 2021).

Although there are not many previous research in this study, it is found under title Reflective Practice: A Means to Teacher Development. In the study, the researchers conducted a qualitative research to see the effectiveness of reflective practice in the development of student (Yu, 2018). The study examines how the educator created chances for student-teachers to develop their reflective practice teaching sessions. The result shows that reflective practice give a significant change on students teachers behaviour and it is also impacted on the teacher's development and improvement.

Another researchers has been analyzed reflective practice such with the title The Role of Reflection During the First Teaching Experience of Foreign LanguagePre-service Teachers: An Exploratory–Case study. The study conducted 2 aspects of reflection: Reflection-on-action & Reflection-in-action and three levels of reflection. The result of the study shows that reflective practice helped pre-service teachers to redirect certain actions in their classroom or to implement necessary changes at improving their teaching (McCoy & Lynam, 2021).

Nevertheless, the researcher is interested to analyze how does the teacher do reflection in EFL classroom to improve teaching quality based on three aspects of reflection: reflection-on-action, reflection-in-action and reflection-for-action (Moghaddam, Davoudi, Adel, & Amirian, 2020). This research is conducted in Junior High School level with many characteristics of students and various challenges in learning process. This research is expected to enhance teacher self-awarness toward students' difficulties in learning English, improve teacher's teaching quality and motivate teacher to be better by doing reflective practice (Lipka, Forkosh Baruch, & Meer, 2019).

Nowadays, the English language is considered as an international language because there has never been a language so widely spread or spoken by so many people as English. It has a special role to play in the countries where it has been accepted as the official language and is being used as a medium of communication (Thorburn, 2019).

Nowadays, we are living in a world which the job market is becoming more and more dynamic so it is vital that people make adaptations to have better job (Novakova, 2020). Learning to learn is considered a requisite for entry into most professions. It is not a simple task for defining the quality of a teacher as the criteria because it can vary from person to person, from one community to another and from one era to the next.

Adults are more interested in learning language and it becomes more important for good teacher to be able to teach English in an effective and interesting way (Alzeebaree

& Zebari, 2021). In fact, teachers' effectiveness can not be assessed in any criteria. In language teaching, teachers have different styles of teaching and they also can be classified as native teachers and non-native teachers, unlike teachers of other subjects. The field of language teaching is subject to rapid changes and language teachers need to maintain the interest, creativity and enthusiasm in their profession (Whitehead & Greenier, 2019).

School system effectiveness refers to the extent to which every unit within school carry out their routine functions that can promote or hinder the attainment of set objectives (Owan, 2019). School system effectiveness implies a state where activities within every school are tailored towards students' development, school growth, and goal attainment. Insight has been provided as to what constitutes an effective school (Vongkulluksn, Matewos, Sinatra, & Marsh, 2018). It follows, therefore, that the judgment of any school depends on five major aspects-the teachers, students, principals or school leaders, the physical facilities, and the school environment. It is one thing to understand what constitutes an effective school, as it is yet another thing to measure the effectiveness of a school (Ilomäki & Lakkala, 2018).

An effective teacher has a high rate punctuality, good time management, good academic performance of students, good relationship with other staff, respect for rules and authority, adherence to school norms, effective communication, proper record keeping, and good professional behavior. The performance shown by the teacher is an indicator of the effectiveness of the achievement and the success of learning objectives (Donohoo, 2018). Teacher's performance is an indication of the success of the teacher in carrying out institutional tasks and other specific tasks demanded by the nature of the teacher's position. Efforts to improve teacher performance can be done by increasing work productivity, work quality, work efficiency, job satisfaction, work discipline, work excellent, and work development.

The reputation of the school and its impact on the quality of the educational institutions depends on the quality of the teachers working in it (Hassan, Mirza, & Hussain, 2020). Therefore, for school development it requires teachers with high discipline. Teacher's performance is, basically, the teacher's achievement in his work. Teacher's performance can be also assessed through the extent to which the learning carried out, which can give significant effect to students. Specifically, the work target requires the teacher to formulate learning objectives in the form of behavior that is transferred to students. This means that learning quality is the main determinant factor of the success of the learning process (Jackson, Fleming, & Rowe, 2019).

Due to the importance of the role of the teacher's performance in the quality of the education and the quality of human resources, it is natural that the reality of the low human development index and the low quality of the education in Indonesia is a result of the low teacher's performance (Jin, Qian, Chin, & Zhang, 2020). Work discipline is an influential factor of teacher's performance. Work discipline is a behavior to comply with all organizational rules in doing work to achieve expected goals (Bakti & Hartono, 2022). Teacher's discipline is very important in carrying out the duties and obligations as instructors, educators and advisers. High discipline will be able to build professional performance, because with a good understanding of discipline, the teacher will able to observe the rules and strategic steps in implementing learning.

Teacher work discipline which includes attendance at school, adherence to teacher's work standards, commitment to duties, responsibility for duties, and courtesy and neatness have gone well. Good discipline reflects the amount of responsibility a person has towards the tasks assigned to him. Communication and work discipline are predictors of employee performance. Good discipline reflects the amount of one's

responsibility towards the tasks assigned to him. This encourages work passion, work morale and high work performance.

Work discipline is a form of compliance toward school organizations. The aim is to motivate teachers and school staff to meet performance target according to the objectives of the school organization. Efforts to improve teacher work discipline are usually directed as teacher's behavior. The purpose of discipline is to improve teacher's performance. A person who has high discipline will continue to work well even he is not supervised by a supervisor. He will not use work time to do other things that have nothing to do with the work, and he will obey the rules that exist in a work environment with high awareness.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research method uses descriptive qualitative method. The researcher describe how does the teacher reflect the teaching process in EFL classroom. The aim of this study is to describe systematically the facts and characteristics of a given population or area of interest, factually and accurately.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this section is to analyse and discuss the gathered data. For the sake of clarity, the analysis and discussion are presented in three sections. These sections are related to the research questions listed above. The focus of these sections is as follows: (1) teacher engagement in classroom research, (2) complexity of classroom research and its causes and (3) reasons for conducting/not conducting classroom research.

1. Teacher engagement in classroom research

Two questions on the questionnaire were related to the participants' engagement in classroom research and their wish to be involved in this kind of professional activity. In the former question, three participants (n = 3, 3.75%) were always involved in classroom research, eighteen (n = 18, 22.5%) were very often involved in research and thirty three (n = 33, 41.25%) were sometimes involved. The other two options were: rarely (n = 22, 27.5%) and never (n = 4, 5%). According to the latter question, ten participants (n = 10, 12.5%) would like to always be involved in research projects, twenty four (n = 24, 30%) very often, twenty three (n = 23, 28.75%) sometimes, fourteen (n = 14, 17.5%) rarely and nine (n = 9, 11.25%) never.

There were seventy six participants (n = 76, 95%) who stated that they do research in the classroom at different levels of frequency. These participants said they took part in quantitative (n = 29, 38.15%), qualitative (n = 12, 15.78%) and mixed-methods (n = 35, 46.05%) projects. They also added that they used a number of instruments. In descending order, the instruments used were: questionnaires (n = 45, 59.21%), tests (n = 42, 55.26%), observation sheets (n = 27, 35.52%), interview guides/question lists (n = 23, 30.26%), checklists (n = 14, 18.42%), portfolios (n = 9, 11.84%) and diaries/journals (n = 8, 10.52%).

The questionnaire revealed that the majority of the participants believed that classroom research is important. The participants' opinions were as follows: very important (n = 47, 58.75%), important (n = 25, 31.25%), moderately important (n = 7, 8.75%) and of little importance (n = 1, 1.25%). The interview data also support those Armenian teachers do value classroom research. When asked whether they believed conducting classroom research is important, two participants stated,

Well of course it is important. Before MA TEFL I didn't think so, but after doing the research, especially the action research, ... I think it is really important; it changes lots of things. [...] For example, things that you don't see or you don't realise - you do it unconsciously, and then after doing the research you pay attention to things. So I think it is really important. (Tatev)

Well, I think research in the classroom is important because it enables you to understand what are the needs for your students and to what extent to enhance the activities to be given to them to develop their language skills later. (Tanya)

Likewise, the participants felt that EFL teachers should be required to do classroom research. In this question, however, the frequency distribution was reversed for the first two items: 47 and 25 vs. 10 and 51. The distribution of opinions in the second question was as follows: ten of the participants (n = 10, 12.5%) strongly agreed, fifty one (n = 51, 63.75%) agreed, thirteen (n = 13, 16.25%) were undecided and six (n = 6, 7.5%) strongly disagreed.

The participants were also asked whether or not they agreed that classroom research should be made compulsory for all EFL teachers. According to the gathered data, twenty three participants (n = 23, 28.75%) were undecided about this statement, In general, the participants admitted that classroom research is difficult. Forty five participants (n = 45, 56.25%) agreed with this statement, whereas thirteen (n = 13, 16.25%) were undecided, twenty one (n = 21, 26.25%) disagreed and one (n = 1, 1.25%) strongly disagreed. The participants also clarified what makes classroom research difficult for them. The most common issues were: designing research tools (n = 33, 41.25%), handling ethical issues (n = 29, 36.25%), formulating proper research questions (*n* = 27, 33.75%), analysing data (*n* = 25, 31.25%) and collecting data (*n* = 13, 16.25%). The results are presented in Figure 1 below.
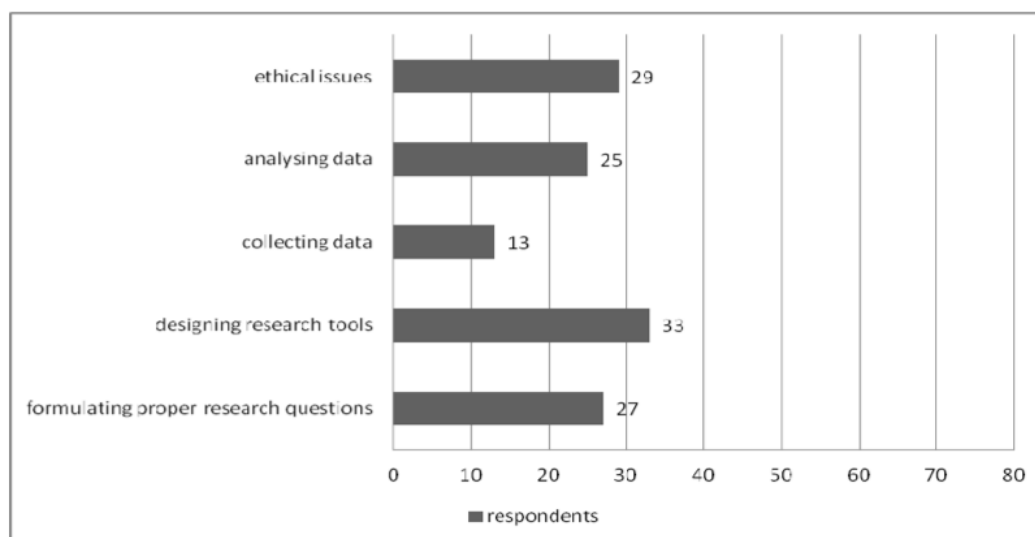

Figure 1. Areas that make classroom research a complex task

Well, I find it interesting actually, neither difficult nor easy.... Every teacher's motivation is to know their target audience and what are their expectations. So, it's difficult if you have very different ideas and you are going to research individual students during the course; it makes things hard. And it also makes your work easy because you

know exactly what to do during the course and how to work with every single student to satisfy them.

I wouldn't say it is difficult or easy. It depends on your knowledge of how to conduct research. If you are aware of what are the things you need, how you need to, for example, write the research questions, use instruments, and then collect data and analyse it, it is not going to be so difficult. But the real difficulty that I had was analysing the data. I think, and I have also heard it from my peers, that it is the worst part because you deal with numbers, especially if you are doing quantitative research. Then to analyse them, and sometimes also generalise them.

2. **One participant noted an advantage of classroom research from her experience:**

No, no [classroom research] is easier actually, because sometimes when you go and do research on others, for example with other teachers it's hard. Maybe teachers are busy or some of them are not very open. In Armenia, especially, I think the research idea is not really working well, because teachers are very Interestingly, several participants noted that doing research was neither difficult nor easy. They offered some unique perspectives about the act of doing research and highlighted a few challenges.

3. **Action research was great. I would do action research in the future**

Overall, Armenian teachers consider classroom research to be a difficult part of their practice. In particular, the teachers reported that they have problems with basic elements of pedagogical research, including formulating proper research questions, designing research tools or analysing data. Another interesting finding was that Armenian teachers had difficulty in collecting data in the classroom. In reality, an active search for data is not necessary as classrooms abound in data. However, teachers rarely regard their students' tests or written assignments as research data that can be examined both qualitatively and quantitatively. On the other hand, some teachers considered the simple act of collecting test scores, student feedback and student assignments to be research, without any organised approach to analysis of the data. Hence, it is advisable that teachers be informed that systematic data collection in the classroom, with appropriate analysis, performs a pivotal role in boosting learning and keeping track of student progress as well as in "identify[ing] patterns through which a holistic image of teaching can be created".

CONCLUSION

Based on the research problem, the overall result of this research can be summarized that English teacher using diary writing as a strategy to reflect the teaching process after learning activity has finished. The teacher expresses her experiences, feelings, difficulties and problems in the diary and try to find solution of the problems. The teacher always helps students who are difficult to understamd the material by explain the material repeatedly. Reviewing the material is frequently use to check whether students still remember or forget and giving some questoins related the material to make students focus on learning process. Role play method is effective to build students' confidence and spirit. The teacher sometimes invites students to singing together when they look bored. The teacher has arranged the technology to be used in learning activity to make students more interest on English subject. Students feel enjoy and easy to understand the material. They pay attention on learning process and complete the assignments. Only a few students have difficulties to understanding the material. However teacher always explain the material repeatedly and motivate them to be braver.

SOSAINS
Jurnal Sosial dan Sains

Furthermore, students want the teacher to be more assertive and able to rise the voice volume.

REFERENCES

Alzeebaree, Yaseen, & Zebari, Idrees. (2021). What makes an effective EFL teacher: High School Students' Perceptions. *The Asian ESP Journal*.

Bakti, Rizal, & Hartono, Sri. (2022). The Influence of Transformational Leadership and work Discipline on the Work Performance of Education Service Employees. *Multicultural Education*, *8*(01), 109–125.

Donohoo, Jenni. (2018). Collective teacher efficacy research: Productive patterns of behaviour and other positive consequences. *Journal of Educational Change*, *19*(3), 323–345.

Hassan, Malik Mubasher, Mirza, Tabasum, & Hussain, Mirza Waseem. (2020). A critical review by teachers on the online teaching-learning during the COVID-19. *International Journal of Education and Management Engineering*, *10*(8), 17–27.

Ilomäki, Liisa, & Lakkala, Minna. (2018). Digital technology and practices for school improvement: innovative digital school model. *Research and Practice in Technology Enhanced Learning*, *13*(1), 1–32.

Jackson, Denise, Fleming, Jenny, & Rowe, Anna. (2019). Enabling the transfer of skills and knowledge across classroom and work contexts. *Vocations and Learning*, *12*(3), 459–478.

Jin, Hui, Qian, Xinyi, Chin, Tachia, & Zhang, Hejie. (2020). A global assessment of sustainable development based on modification of the human development index via the entropy method. *Sustainability*, *12*(8), 3251.

Lipka, Orly, Forkosh Baruch, Alona, & Meer, Yael. (2019). Academic support model for post-secondary school students with learning disabilities: student and instructor perceptions. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *23*(2), 142–157.

Lu, Jane I. (2021). Educational models of spiritual formation in theological education: Introspection-based spiritual formation. *Teaching Theology & Religion*, *24*(1), 28–41.

McCoy, Selina, & Lynam, Aoife M. (2021). Video-based self-reflection among pre-service teachers in Ireland: A qualitative study. *Education and Information Technologies*, *26*(1), 921–944.

Moghaddam, Rokhsareh Ghorbani, Davoudi, Mohammad, Adel, Seyyed Mohammad Reza, & Amirian, Seyyed Mohammad Reza. (2020). Reflective teaching through journal writing: A study on EFL teachers' reflection-for-action, reflection-in-action, and reflection-on-act

Novakova, Lucia. (2020). The impact of technology development on the future of the labour market in the Slovak Republic. *Technology in Society*, *62*, 101256.

Owan, Valentine Joseph. (2019). School-community relationship and school system effectiveness in secondary schools in Cross River State. Owan, VJ (2019). School-Community Relationship and School System Effectiveness in Secondary Schools in Cross River Sta.

Shirao, Beatrice, Momanyi, Marcella, & Anyona, Jared. (2020). *Implementation of Life Skills Education towards Curbing Teenage Pregnancy in Public Secondary Schools in Makadara Sub County, Nairobi, Kenya*.

Thorburn, Thomas. (2019). 13. Cost-Benefit Analysis In Language Planning. *Can Language Be Planned?*, 239.

Vongkulluksn, Vanessa W., Matewos, Ananya M., Sinatra, Gale M., & Marsh, Julie A.

(2018). Motivational factors in makerspaces: a mixed methods study of elementary school students' situational interest, self-efficacy, and achievement emotions. Internationa

Whitehead, George E. K., & Greenier, Vincent T. (2019). Beyond good teaching practices: Language teacher leadership from the learners' perspective. *TESOL Quarterly*, *53*(4), 960–985.

Yu, Wai Ming. (2018). Critical incidents as a reflective tool for professional development: An experience with in-service teachers. *Reflective Practice*, *19*(6), 763–776.