

A SELF-REFLECTION IN DEVELOPING TEACHING PERFORMANCE AT THE CLASSROOM FOR ENGLISH FOREIGN LANGUAGE (EFL) TEACHERS

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Abstract

This paper deals with a topic self-reflection in developing teaching performance. Self-reflection is a vital skill to reflect and evaluate teachers' teaching performance in the classroom. However, there are many teachers running monotonous classes because they do not make a self-reflection. This consideration explores teachers' strengths and weaknesses in learning process. This research will help the teachers to maintain or eliminate critical incident on learning and teaching process. This research had been conducted at English Education Department, University of Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta. The respondents consist of some English Foreign Language (EFL) teachers. This research used qualitative research design. Then the researcher used interview as a research instrument to elaborate the information. The data becomes the parameter whether the respondents give agreements or disagreements to the case in using self-reflection. Considering the reasons above, the researcher makes an implication that self-reflection can be a good method for EFL teachers. The finding reveals that teachers who use self-reflection get better ways on how to explore well performance in the classroom. Writing journal is a kind of reflective language teaching that has been employed to enhance teachers' skill in teaching. Therefore, self-reflection is also to engage systematic reflection on teaching.

Keywords: *Self-Reflection, Professional Development, Teaching Performance, Teaching Reflective*

Introduction

Reflection has currently been the top of the styles in education, especially in discussion about teacher experience and teacher performance. The interest in reflection has massively grown as a key concept in education about teacher education and the teaching profession. Self-reflection here means introspection. It directs to the process of observing one's self to evaluate the work of life. It is supported by Ferraro (2000) saying that "the concept of reflective practice as a critical process in refining one's artistry or craft in a specific discipline."

Self-reflection also helps a language teacher to monitor the development from basic beginner to experienced professional. That would increase professional development and teaching performance of someone's work. "Reflective practice can be a beneficial process in teacher professional development both for pre-service and in service teachers" (Ningamma, 2011). It is similar to Marsh (2008) saying that all teachers, especially pre-service teachers, need to reflect critically on their actions. Teachers were students, who learn a mistake and error from their academic in the field of education. Professional develop-

ment of a person is a process to gain the goals of the plan. People might face the failure to go into a success.

Furthermore, on this research the author will concentrate on devoting self-reflection for English Foreign Language, which is measured to be one of the strategies in enhancing teaching performance and professionalism. Teaching performance will influence language teachers to set them to be good language teachers. Teachers will be able to develop their classroom skill with improvement of experience and competence.

Problem Statement

Currently, when people hear "reflection", they usually tend to think that someone has to evaluate themselves on whatever they do. However, they rarely know what exactly have to do to fix on what they have done, so do language teachers. The language teachers who should do reflection in their way to give well performance while teaching with appropriate term. Therefore, it is going to explore what actually the limits which can be resulted in doing reflection for language teachers, and what kind of reflection that can be used.

The objectives of this research are 1) to discuss what exactly “self-reflection” in enhancing well performance on teaching itself, 2) to identify the language teachers who do the “self-reflection” on their own performance in teaching, and 3) to explore what is the limits of the “self-reflection” for language teachers, especially for English Foreign Language teachers.

Methodology

There will be one method which will be used in this research that is interview method. The interview method will be used for exploring respondents’ opinion and experience into self-reflection in teaching. The respondents are lecturers of English Education Department of Language Education Faculty at University Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta who have/graduated master degree of English education. Another side, the author will take the material from books and internet to support the information of data for this research.

Literature Review

This study is going to explore what effects are resulted by self-reflection itself. To make good understanding, it will be structured out the explanations of the topic. It will be highlighted the definition of self-reflection and teaching performance.

Definitions of Self-Reflection

According to (Richards, 1991) that reflection refers to an activity or process in which an experience is recalled, considered, and evaluated, usually in relation to a broader purpose. Self-reflection is used to enhance teachers’ ability in pulling students’ motivation and the learning process. Similarly, as quoted by Anita (2011) Hernandez also states that reflection as specialized form of thinking has been recognized as an influential factor that helps to improve the quality of teaching.

In addition, Farrell (2007) states that “It is important saying too for experienced language teacher because self-reflection is defined as the condition of consciousness characterized by awareness, objectivity, clarity, acceptance and being in the present as well as by absence of opinion, preference, prejudice, and attachment.”

A teacher needs to be aware of a vari-

ety of ways to reflect the class to ensure that it is relevant to students and the community. Quoting Brookfield, Marsh (2008) views that to undertake reflection, teachers have to collect autobiographical data about their actions such as diaries/accounts, and find out from students how they perceive a teacher’s actions. Therefore, a self-reflection is a hopeful action and it would be done in spirit full of hope in the future.

Teaching Performance

Commonly, a self-reflection aims to push teacher on teaching performance proficiency for teacher of English Foreign Language. It needs a process to reach the goal of the work, and Pultorak cited by Anita (2011) says that teacher-reflection is a developmental process and may be characteristics of beginning teachers. The more successful teachers in achieving the standards of the criteria, the greater opportunity in increasing good performance in the class.

There some views on the meaning professional development. The first is according to Marsh (2008) that professional development is the process whereby members go about improving their competences. While quoting Marginson, Marsh (2008) views that professional development is the process of growth in competence and maturity through which teachers add range, depth, and quality to their performance of their professional tasks.

It should be noted that professional development activity for teachers is analyzing performance of teachers through self-reflection in order to improve the teachers’ quality of teaching.

Findings and Discussion

In this point, the findings will be presented based on the research questions. There will be five research questions which will be discussed in findings.

What is your opinion about self-reflection in teaching?

Based on those respondents’ views, they totally think that “self-reflection” is one of the strategies besides looking at our performance in delivering materials. However it would be reflected the language teacher on how they can be able to comprehend the class in various situations instead of students’ characteristic when teaching and learning process.

The First Respondent	The first respondent views that self-reflection is one of ways to find the strengths and weakness in our teaching. He believes that every single language teacher has already known what self-reflection is, but it depends on them to sense it.
The Second Respondent	The second respondent thinks that self-reflection is a strategy to reflect ourselves on way in teaching. What we have done and what students respond on it, we will know through self-reflection.
The Third Respondent	The third respondent has a bit longer view about self-reflection. She argues that self-reflection is the way how to look at our performance in teaching and learning process. She gave more explanation. <i>"Self-reflection reflects teachers on what happen in the class. Does our method work or not in giving materials to the students? How about students' response and how to face the student with different capabilities? We need to be selective for those cases in order to avoid us lost track in action when teaching."</i>
The Forth Respondent	The forth respondent also has similar opinion about self-reflection. He believes that self-reflection is how we do reflection in ourselves to make a great performance in teaching. Instead, every language teacher might know what self-reflection is, because they recognize students have different ability.

2. Do you make a self-reflection in your teaching?

According to four respondents above, they mostly make a self-reflection in variety terms. They always create some notes such

kind of diary as a self-reflection on what they have done in action to make class run well. The expectation is to get students' attention or motivation even to make their concentration increase in learning English.

The First Respondent	The first respondent surely answers that he does a self-reflection since he teaches English class. He explains that he makes self-reflection in two ways. There are abstract and concrete. The abstract way means that as a teacher just does the reflection in their mind on teaching. Whereas, another one is that a language teacher makes self-reflection about students' perception that can be formed in writing. Personally, the first respondent prefers concrete way to supply one of the links in website for students to write any comment or suggestion in his class. He believes that not all students can speak freely in front of the class. There must be noted that not all of students' writing will be accepted by the teacher. For instance, there were some students who criticized that he spoke too fast when teaching. Then, he changed his way when speaking in the class. In another case, a student wrote that he gave too many assignments for students. He considered that the number of assignments has been standardized in education rules, so that he would never change it. He also does self-reflection in his mind for some situations.
Second Respondent	The second respondent's statement is quite different from the first respondent. He confesses that he does not make a self-reflection in a certain term, because he thinks that there is no policy of institution to create self-reflection in teaching. Here are some sentences quoted from his interview representing his view. <i>"There is no rule to make a self-reflection in teaching, because that's only a choice."</i> Sometimes, he just has a small discussion with students to talk some problems in his class.
The Third Respondent	The third respondent has similar opinion to first respondent. There are two concepts in making self-reflection which she callsas formal and informal concept. She emphasizes that she has not made formal concept yet, but she always makes some notes about her teaching process as a self-reflection. She has been creating such "Book of Ideas" to write every problem of her class and also the solution to overcome it. Those notes would be united in a research then.

The Forth Respondent	The forth respondent suggests that self-reflection can be realized in term of paper, such as portfolio or journal article. Nevertheless, he makes self-reflection through contemplation method, which sees students' skill to find the proper strategy in order that students can be able to master the lesson. In another hand, he always writes outstanding cases in high or low level into "Journal Link".
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3. *When self-reflection can be created appropriately?*

The First Respondent	The first respondent says that there will be a note to know on creating self-reflection because it should be suitable where the class has possibility on it. The first respondent says that a self-reflection can be conducted with considering the circumstance of the class. The self-reflection might possibly be imposed when the students in a class are from the same major. He suggests that English class will be appropriate to make self-reflection since they need to conquer the subject. He mostly focuses on building self-reflection after the learning and teaching process, especially in English Education class. He also does such a reflection on the spot if the class is an urgent condition.
The Second Respondent	Even though the second respondent does not make a self-reflection in a certain term, he agrees that self-reflection should be created in the end of the class. There will be always experiences or problems found after the class is over. Thus, those things can be a language teacher's homework to overcome.
The Third Respondent	The third respondent has a bit different analysis than others. Personally, she does self-reflection continually. In the beginning, she prepares such syllabus as a self-reflection then she writes some activities after the class as a note for the next class.
The Forth Respondent	Forth respondent completely believes that self-reflection must be designed after the class is over. Here are some sentences quoted from his interview representing his view. <i>"In the beginning of the class is not reflection, but it is called as a syllabus."</i>

From those respondents' views above, they totally agree that possibility to create self-reflection is in the end of the class. It gives more chances to get to know what exactly students' responses on what we have given to them. Therefore, a language teacher can do

well preparation in teaching to help students' capability increase. Besides that, one of the respondents thinks that self-reflection also can be useful conditionally.

4. *How does the teacher make a self-reflection?*

The First Respondent	The first respondent confesses that he rarely makes a self-reflection with other language teachers, because everyone has own business. Thus, he prefers doing reflection by himself through building interaction to the students directly.
The Second Respondent	Sometimes, the second respondent makes such small sharing with students to ask what happen in his class, and he considers it is as his reflection.
The Third Respondent	The third respondent explores that she always does reflection with her partner or even with students. She likes to discuss in every after the class, to find the proper solutions on problems that occur in the class. In addition, she loves to share the great method that can be implemented in the class.
The Forth Respondent	For the last respondent, he has similar opinion to the previous respondent. He prefers to do reflection by himself and his partner who has the same position in every after teaching the class.

We have already known that they always do reflection after the class is over with different ways. Some of them stated that they need other people to discuss the reflection, but neither do they. No matter what kind of way

they like to do, the aim is to find out what is supposed to be reflected.

5. *What effect is resulted by the self-reflection toward the language teacher?*

The First Respondent	The first respondent truly believes that self-reflection is the most effective way to know what our capability or restrictiveness in teaching. There are many ways that teachers can take, and it depends on what they want. Some people might like to make paper or journal, or might just provide a link on website like what he does to do reflection.
The Second Respondent	The second respondent suggests that every single teacher, especially a language teacher, needs to reflect themselves even it is just having a short talk with students. That would be more beneficial if the teachers can know students' need.
The Third Respondent	The third respondent emphasizes that every teacher should have a self-reflection even though it is not in a formal term since a reflection is created based on teachers' awareness. Here are some sentences quoted from her interview representing her opinion. <i>"There are two reasons why a teacher does reflection. Firstly, he/she is a recent teacher who still has not many experiences in education yet, and secondly there is a policy to make self-reflection of the institution."</i> She adds, if a self-reflection is written clearly, that will make us easier to see and read what activities or experiences we have faced. Teachers can also write some notes or such diary in an informal term because self-reflection is used as "professional development".
The Forth Respondent	The forth respondent has the same view as the previous respondents. He argues that a language teacher might find some problems in teaching. He is pretty sure that a language teacher needs to build reflection in order that they can organize the class to run well. The self-reflection will help the teachers have good preparation, so they will be able to deliver the materials and make it appropriate with students' condition.

All of the respondents have the same ideas that they strongly agree that it is a need to make a self-reflection for every teacher. It is to get to know not only what the result they have been reached, but also how they can master the class and encourage students' motivation since teachers have known students' responses on the method that is given by them.

Conclusion

To conclude, a reflection is the one of the keys to evaluate teachers' performance in teaching. Through this way, teachers will know the method that they are supposed to implement. In this paper, it can clearly be said that self-reflection is very useful for the language teachers if they make it neatly and continually. It also has some effects for language teachers.

According to the respondents, they mostly get comprehension through the reflection in every class they teach. They have a short talk with

the students, or share experiences, activities, or problems that occur in the class with another teacher. Some of them prefer to reflect their teaching by themselves. Furthermore, having an interaction with students is a good strategy to become closer. To make it happen, they sometimes produce a journal link, notes, or diary to keep their writing.

Thus, it would be beneficial if every teacher has a self-reflection to remind that all students must have different capability. We need to know that not all students can tell comfortably what they feel. Therefore, it is expected that a self-reflection would be helpful for teachers to lead a better performance in their teaching.

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