

THE IMPACT OF REFLECTIVE PRACTICE TOWARDS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF IN-SERVICE ENGLISH TEACHERS

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ABSTRAK

Tujuan dari Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mencari tau dampak dari praktik reflektif yang dirasakan guru bahasa Inggris dalam jabatan terhadap pengembangan profesional mereka. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain penelitian studi kasus. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa semua guru mengaku tidak begitu sering melakukan refleksi dan menyatakan bahwa tidak semua refleksi memberikan hasil yang baik. Walaupun begitu, mereka tetap merasakan adanya perubahan dari cara mengajar. Ada yang merasa jadi lebih percaya diri, bisa membuat kelas menjadi lebih interaktif, bisa membuat media pembelajaran sendiri, dan bisa mendesain strategi pembelajaran yang lebih fleksibel. Kelima guru ini juga menyatakan mereka jadi lebih memahami kebutuhan siswa, baik dari sisi jurusan maupun kesanggupan siswa itu sendiri. Selain itu, mayoritas guru juga memiliki komitmen untuk terus berkembang secara profesional. Hanya satu guru yang tidak memiliki rencana ke depannya karena akan pensiun. Peneliti menyimpulkan bahwa guru cenderung situasional dalam melakukan refleksi. Namun, para guru menunjukkan sikap terbuka terhadap pengembangan profesional berkelanjutan, seperti melalui keikutsertaan dalam workshop, seminar dan pelatihan. Hal ini mengindikasikan bahwa kesadaran reflektif, meskipun masih terbatas, telah memberikan kontribusi nyata terhadap pengembangan diri guru.

Kata Kunci: refleksi, praktik reflektif, pengembangan profesional, guru bahasa inggris

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the impact of reflective practice perceived by in-service English teachers on their professional development. This study used a case study research design. The results showed that all teachers admitted that they did not reflect very often and stated that not all reflections gave good results. Even so, they still felt that there were changes in the way they taught. Some felt more confident, could make the class more interactive, could make their own learning media, and could design more flexible learning strategies. These five teachers also stated that they have a better understanding of students' needs, both in terms of their majors and their own abilities. In addition, the majority of teachers also have a commitment to continue developing professionally. Only one teacher had no future plans because she was about to retire. The researcher concluded that teachers tend to be situational in conducting reflection. However, teachers show an open attitude towards continuous professional development, such as through participation in workshops, seminars and training. This indicates that reflective awareness, although still limited, has contributed significantly to teachers' self-development.

Keywords: reflection, reflective practice, professional development, in-service English teachers

INTRODUCTION

Teaching is not an easy thing to do. It also requires skills in teaching. Teachers' role is not only need to help students acquire knowledge, but also develop their inquiry skills so that they can continue to learn independently for life (Lee & Mori, 2021). In today's world, teaching English has become one of the more difficult activities to do than ever before

(Fonkamo & Zeru, 2022). Indonesia is no exception. As reported by EF (Education First), the level of English proficiency of Indonesian citizens is in 81st position out of 116 countries (EF, 2024). Ofcourse this is an important task for English teachers to be able to help develop students' English skills considering that there will be many benefits that can be felt in the future. But ofcourse

English teachers not only face the lack of English skills of students, but there are also other things that they face. Teachers are investigators of their own classrooms and decide which aspects of the classroom they want to know more about (Kurosh et al., 2020). Such as differences in character, learners' interest in English, and the way of delivering teaching. Therefore, teachers need to reflect on their teaching activities to find out whether the teaching methods they choose are appropriate so that students feel enthusiastic and can help develop their English skills.

This reflection activity is known as reflective practice. Reflective practice is an activity where someone reflects on their experiences with the aim of good development for further activities. The process of reflective practice has emerged as a tool for learning from experience in a variety of fields, including social work, health care, and education (Schon, 1983 in Aurora et al., 2024). In the field of teacher education, reflective practice has become an important part of building teacher professionalism. (Bray & Fotheringham, 2022). However, reflective practice is not only used at the lecture level, so teachers who already have a lot of teaching experience, or usually called as in-service teachers, can also use it. In fact, it is highly recommended because through reflective practice, teachers question what goes on in the classroom, evaluate materials, identify strengths and weaknesses, and question their own teaching philosophies (Nuraeni & Heryatun, 2021).

Gudeta's study (2022) evaluated teachers' reflective skills and attitudes in Addis Ababa secondary schools as a professional development tool but did not specifically address the impact. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by exploring the impact of reflective practice on the professional development of in-service English teachers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reflective Practice

Reflective practice is the integration of practical experiences and knowledge (Boud et al., 1993 as cited by Coutts et al., 2024). Reflection, as an activity of reflective practice, is an active mental process where one attempts to organize and reframe an experience, problem, or existing knowledge and insights (Korthagen, 2001 in Johannessen, 2024). This is because it involves thinking and is seen as engaging the cognitive

processes of identifying problems and finding solutions (Leitch & Day, 2000). Cornish & Jenkins (2012) added that reflection is therefore not merely thinking; it is a repetitive intellectual process that includes action (experience), reaction (reflection), further experimental action, and additional reflection. Reflective practice is carried out by professionals in the field. They also known as reflective practitioners.

Professionals vary from one another in terms of their subspecialties, the unique experiences and perspectives they contribute to their work, and their individual approaches to how they operate (Schön, 1987), including teachers. Farrell (2008) stated that to engage in this kind of reflection, teachers need to systematically gather data about their classroom practices and then assess whether there are any discrepancies between their beliefs and their actions (Farrell & Ives, 2015) because they have a responsibility to look at their professional practice, such as what they do, why they do it, and how they do it, both inside and outside the classroom, so that this practice can become meaningful to them personally (Farrell, 2015 in Farrell & Kennedy, 2019). From here, reflective practice has become a habit for teachers after completing their learning and teaching activities.

Why Teachers Need to Do Reflective Practice

The thing that makes reflective practice very necessary for teachers is because it is for professional development, so it makes reflective practice is crucial in reshaping and improving teachers' work (Akinbode, 2013; Burton, 2009; Farrell, 2007; Pollard, 2014 as cited by Nguyen, 2017). To enhance their professional practice and gain greater self-awareness, reflective teachers review past events, make informed decisions, and adjust their teaching strategies based on new insights, research, evidence, and experiences (Çetin et al., 2019; Sellars, 2012; Valli, 1997 in Chye et al., 2021).

Day (1999) stated that reflective practice equips in-service teachers with the ability to evaluate and enhance their professional practice within the classroom setting (Trauth-Nare & Buck, 2011). In addition, it also offers teachers various opportunities to reflect on different activities, sets guidelines for the reflection process in each case, allocates time for reflection, invites external feedback for deeper insights, and assists in

managing low emotional states (Curtis & Szesztay 2005; Farrell, 1998; Fiszer, 2004; Florez, 2001; Kabilan, 2007 as cited in Chien, 2013) by critically reflecting on all aspects of their work, so that they can make the right decisions to improve their performance (Cholifah et al., 2020), and help raise their level of awareness by developing skills in anticipatory reflective practice (Farrell, 2016). Indeed, times are constantly evolving and changing, so knowledge also continues to develop. Students' characters are also usually formed because of the times. Therefore, teachers need to continue to learn and develop their ways of educating and teaching according to the characters of the students.

The Impact of Reflective Practice

Reflection enhances learning and boosts professional practice, especially by fostering critical thinking and a stronger dedication to taking effective action (Fien & Rawling, 1996; Gardner, 2009; Grant, 1984; Merryfield, 1993; Reynolds, 2011; Zeichner & Teitelbaum, 1982 as cited by Ferreira et al., 2013). Harvey et al. (2016) argued that reflective practice encourages the development of strategies and the application of acquired knowledge to address unforeseen challenges in everyday life (Ho & Lau, 2025). Therefore, they can identify their strengths and weaknesses in teaching and work towards improving them (Motallebzadeh et al., 2018).

They may also choose to approach things differently or continue with their current teaching methods (Cadiz, 2022). One of the objectives of reflective practice is to help students take responsibility for their own learning, which ultimately boosts their confidence (Torres-Goens & Farley, 2017). So, whether pedagogical or sociocultural, it enhances both teachers' classroom practices and students' academic performance (Day et al., 2022). It enables teachers to become confident and empowered decision-makers (Tlali, 2019) because they are allowed to recognize how their beliefs impact the instructional choices they make during teaching (Farrell & Ives, 2015).

Professional Development

Afe (1995) argued that the professional development of teachers is an essential part of any educational system, focusing on preparing and educating teachers to develop the necessary skills and competencies in teaching, ultimately aiming to

enhance the quality of instruction in their classrooms (Vadivel et al., 2021). Given that teachers spend most of their careers teaching in the classroom, it can be argued that a large part of their professional growth takes place in that setting (Lund, 2020).

Teachers learn best through professional development that addresses their needs (Meissel et al., 2016 in Badri et al., 2016). Kennedy (2005) and Timperley (2011) argued that teachers' professional development in formal settings includes programs for professional growth, teaching research groups, structured mentoring programs, courses and workshops and introductions to new methods and techniques (Hauge & Wan, 2019). Teachers also may gain valuable learning experiences through scheduled reflection sessions with fellow educators, as well as through spontaneous discussions with colleagues before or after class, or during informal interactions such as parent-teacher meetings (Postholm, 2012).

In informal settings, reflection is considered the key to fostering the highest level of professional expertise in teaching (Tlali, 2019). Minott (2010) and Jaelani & Umam (2021) stressed that professional development relies on teachers taking the initiative to reflect on their own teaching practices and make improvements (Janssen et al., 2012). Reflective practice involves teachers bringing their personal insights, beliefs, values, and varying skills into the classroom, then assessing and evaluating their teaching methods based on these perspectives in order to enhance the teaching and learning experience (Sellars, 2012 in Cirocki et al., 2024) so of course reflective practice can be an effective method for teacher professional growth (Ferraro, 2000 as cited by Pang, 2022).

In-Service English Teachers

The term "in-service teacher" refers to a teacher who is already certified and actively teaching in a classroom (Koellner & Greenblatt, 2018). The role of English teachers is the same as teachers in other disciplines. It's just that English teachers need to teach an external language which "language is the external culture and the carrier of culture" (Fu & Shao, 2024 p. 107). It because the goal of teaching English should be to foster learners' 'intercultural communicative competence' in English, allowing them to address challenges associated with the global use of English in both local and international settings within the 'global village' (Bayyurt, 2006).

Of course, with this cultural difference, not all students can accept it. This is also supported by a statement from Martin-Anatias (2018) that while learning English is strongly encouraged, many people also perceive it as a threat to their Indonesian identity (Foster and Welsh, 2017; Gunarwan, 1993; Martin-Anatias, 2018; Muslich, 2010).

In addition, English teachers also need to teach language that can suit the career needs of students or referred to as English for Special or Specific Purposes (ESP) (Broughton et al., 1978). Usually, this is taught in vocational schools because the students are intended to work directly after graduating from school where they can work with clients from abroad. So, teachers are challenged to implement engaging strategies in their English classrooms (Kusumaningrum, 2016) and responsible for fostering students' interest in learning English, as they play a key role in the teaching and learning process (Frahesti & Natasha, 2020).

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. In general terms, qualitative research is an approach that enables us to explore people's experiences in depth (Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2020). The case study, as a research method, is applied in various situations to enhance our understanding of individual, group, organizational, social, political, and other related phenomena (Yin, 2009).

This study was conducted in one of the vocational schools in Bogor Regency with 5 participants who were in-service English teachers. The researcher chose vocational school because its education is very focused on developing practical skills that are directly applied in the industrial world.

The researcher used one instrument to collect data, namely semi-structured interview. This instrument used Bahasa Indonesia to make the participants feel comfortable and more open in sharing their experiences and perspectives. Semi-structured interview is although the interviewer should have a structured set of questions to steer the interview, the use of this structure should not be inflexible (Pin, 2023) to gather information on people's perspectives, understandings, and the meanings they attach to the events and experiences

in their lives (De Trigueros, 2017). The tools used were notes and voice recorders.

The researcher asked each teacher about how often they implemented reflective practice and the impact they felt it had on their professional development as teachers. The stages were: 1) transcribing the questions and answers, 2) comparing the participants' answers with each other, 3) writing down the participants' core answers and drawing conclusions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

Researcher divided the findings into 8 themes, namely: 1) reflective practice experience, 2) impact of reflective practice on teaching, 3) impact on relationships with students, 4) impact on skills and competencies, 5) professional career development, 6) impact on confidence and job satisfaction, 7) challenges and constraints, and 8) foresight.

Reflective Practice Experience

Regarding the frequency of reflection, all participants admitted that they did not reflect very often. This is clarified in the following quote:

"Sometimes, when students' work proves that something needs to be improved." (Teacher A)

"Rarely. Because TO students are difficult to learn English. I only look at the students' work scores." (Teacher B)

"Certainly not that often, because it would be a lot of homework for me. At least twice a month I do reflection." (Teacher C)

"Since attending the teacher training, I have continued to reflect on every lesson. But only on certain occasions." (Teacher D)

"So far, every learning session, but not that often. Because not all reflections go smoothly." (Teacher E)

The majority of participants conducted unscheduled reflections because they only relied on certain events or students' work. Meanwhile, Teacher C targets to routinely reflect twice a month.

Impact of Reflective Practice on Teaching

Most participants stated that they became more understanding of the diversity of students' learning styles due to reflection. This is quoted as follows:

“Initially, I used games as learning media. But I found that the students grasped the games more than the material. Because of this, I changed the learning to interactive learning so that students would be much more active in class.” (Teacher A)
“There are definitely changes. Especially with this Merdeka curriculum that has diagnostic assessments. I can adjust my teaching according to what they need and what they want.” (Teacher C)
“I realized that differentiated learning must be facilitated for students with their diversity. Both from different potentials and interests.” (Teacher D)
“I can identify weaknesses in myself when I teach, for example, I used to teach with lecture techniques and changed it to project-based-learning.” (Teacher E)

Meanwhile, Teacher B attributed the impact of reflection to the improvement of students' pronunciation skills because she actively encouraged speaking practice in the lesson.

“Those who used to misspell have become more focused. Because every meeting, I keep encouraging them to talk.” (Teacher B)

Although she admitted that she rarely reflects, she still sees the success or failure of teaching in the classroom based on the development of students' abilities.

Impact on Relationships with Students

All participants felt that through reflection, they became more sensitive to students' learning needs. This is made clear in the following quote:

“There are times when I allow the students to discuss with their friends when given tasks that should be done individually. Because I understand, basically they want to give their best for me as a teacher. This motivates me to really provide material that is suitable for them.” (Teacher A)

“I even have books that relate to their major. So, I combine.” (Teacher B)

“Whenever I want to assign a task, I first see whether they are ready or not. If they are not ready, I lighten it. I give them the same task but with a different weight.” (Teacher C)

“I am able to adapt the English material to their TPFL world.” (Teacher D)

“In the past, I used to focus more on how to deliver the material completely in one semester. Now I don't, because I'm more concerned with how students understand the material that I convey.” (Teacher E)

Teacher B and Teacher D stated that their teaching approach focuses on customizing to the needs of each department. While the others focused on customizing to the students' ability levels.

Impact on Skills and Competencies

Through the interviews, the new competencies and skills developed by each participant were different. Here are the answers from each participant:

“Direct communication. Because in this vocational school, students are required to be able to speak English.” (Teacher A)

“No. Only speaking that I encourage.” (Teacher B)

“Speaking. Because in this vocational school, the goal is speaking.” (Teacher C)

“I made my own learning media. At that time, I used e-book creator for procedure text material.” (Teacher D)

“I design learning strategies that are more flexible and responsive to the situation in the classroom.” (Teacher E)

Most of the participants stated that speaking is a skill that they continue to develop. Teacher B still encourages speaking skill for a long time. For Teacher D, the competency she develops making her own learning media, while for Teacher E is designing better lessons from time to time.

Professional Career Development

For Teacher A and Teacher C, reflection contributed to their professional development in their careers. This is quoted as follows:

“I can design for the needs of students even if I am placed in any school or department.” (Teacher A)

“Every teacher is entitled to conduct PTK (Penelitian Tindakan Kelas/Classroom Action Research). So, this PTK is taken in our learning in the classroom. With this PTK, we are like producing a small thesis or report and this is nationally recognized.” (Teacher C)

As for Teacher D and Teacher E, reflection contributes to the improvement of teaching skills. As quoted below:

"I teach students to be reflective too. I feel that I have to teach them to be aware that they are thinking. Not just the cognition, but the meta-cognition has to be trained." (Teacher D)

"I became more aware of my strengths and weaknesses in teaching, and it helped me to continuously improve myself. In the long run, I feel more prepared to face challenges in the classroom because I am used to analyzing and finding solutions from previous experiences." (Teacher E)

In contrast to the other participants, Teacher B did not perceive any contribution of practical reflection to professional development, either past or present.

"I'm about to retire now. Even back then, because I rarely reflected, I didn't feel this way." (Teacher B)

Interestingly, when the researcher asked another question about the opportunity to improve the qualifications of the reflection activities that had been implemented, Teacher B said:

"I used to participate in some kind of MGMP (Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran/Subject Teacher Conference) and seminars. After that, for the last 10 years, I haven't participated in such activities anymore." (Teacher B)

Teacher B's statement does not seem to be in line with each other. Even though the two questions asked were still related to career professional development. In contrast to other participants who were consistent in giving statements:

"This reflection that I have done can definitely help in developing my career. Because earlier, when I was rotated anywhere and in any department, I got to know the needs of the students." (Teacher A)

"Because earlier, teachers who have done PTK, their career path is even higher. This PTK is not only approved by the principal, but must also be recognized by the education office. Then published in the national library." (Teacher C)

"I was able to participate in selections held at the national level, for example, the Guru Penggerak program when it was still the Merdeka curriculum." (Teacher D)

"Because I am used to reflecting, I am more aware of the need to continue learning and deepening my knowledge, both pedagogically and professionally." (Teacher E)

However, the majority of participants gave different statements, suggesting that there are many avenues for teachers to continue to develop professionally, both in terms of teaching skills and overall career.

Impact on Confidence and Job Satisfaction

Four participants stated that they became more confident when teaching after implementing reflective practice, as in the following quotes:

"Because I get to know the students' needs. When I know where their 'pain' is, I know the 'cure'." (Teacher A)

"I used to think that the important thing was that I had mastered the material. But since reflecting, I realized that in addition to mastering the material, I also have to master various teaching methods." (Teacher C)

"I feel more connected to the students." (Teacher D)

"I used to have doubts about whether the methods I used were appropriate or not. But since I've been reflecting, I understand my students' learning patterns better and can evaluate my teaching strategies objectively." (Teacher E)

Only one participant, Teacher B, was unsure about this:

"So-so. Because when I give serious material, they won't listen. So if I give different methods to different student characters, it doesn't work." (Teacher B)

So, when researcher asked about the influence on her motivation and commitment to the teaching profession, she stated that:

"Has no effect on me whatsoever." (Teacher B)

In contrast to other participants, they actually gave positive statements about this:

"I used to feel that this profession didn't suit me. But by recognizing that I, as a teacher, am not the only source of learning, I became less stressed." (Teacher A)

"Because I have a willingness to learn in determining which method is suitable for my class to teach." (Teacher C)

"Whatever I catch from students, including their gestures, attitudes, and activities in class, it also becomes a motivation for me." (Teacher D)

"Very influential. The reflection made me understand the meaning of my role as a teacher, not only as a presenter of material, but also as a facilitator and companion of student learning." (Teacher E)

In general, reflection helped to increase participants' motivation and commitment to their own profession. They could even manage their emotions and there was a desire to continue learning.

Challenges and Constraints

Teacher A, Teacher B, and Teacher D revealed that of all the reflections they did, reflection always had a positive impact. This is quoted as follows:

"It is actually impossible for RP not to have a positive impact. The problem is whether we are willing to accept our shortcomings in teaching." (Teacher A)

"A lot of it is positive, but it depends on the student. If the student is obedient, there is a positive impact. That is also only for a few percent of students." (Teacher B)

"If from the results of the reflection I find that something still needs to be improved, then I must try to improve it. The result will also be positive." (Teacher D)

However, some of the participants did not feel that way. There were difficulties they encountered despite their reflections.

"I once tried a new learning method because I felt that the previous method was not effective. But it

turned out that the new method actually made students confused because they were not ready for the approach. At that point, I felt frustrated, as if my reflections were 'misguided'." (Teacher E)

"Not all classes can successfully apply the same method. So, it really depends on the background and character of the student itself." (Teacher C)

The difficulties faced by both participants are the same, namely in learning methods. This shows that it is not easy for teachers to use the right learning methods in every class they hold.

Foresight

Four out of five participants expressed a desire to continue to develop professionally. This is clarified as follows:

"Because reflection is not just about receiving input from others, I also try to level up myself by attending seminars, etc." (Teacher A)

"Definitely will continue to innovate and look for more." (Teacher C)

"I am very motivated to develop the results of my teaching reflections into writing. Moreover, I can be invited to iTell in 2022 and the Ministry of Education and Culture's scientific article guidance, which is something very special for me." (Teacher D)

"Of course. One of them is that I want to continue to collaborate in workshop activities with other colleagues." (Teacher E)

Teacher B has no plans as she is nearing retirement age.

"I used to have it because I was a civil servant. But now it's not." (Teacher B)

Almost all participants showed a strong desire to learn from themselves. So, the researcher asked an additional question about hopes for teachers out there to implement reflective practice. This was quoted as follows:

"Actually, reflection is very good if we are willing to accept it. It goes back to ourselves. We're not great yet and don't be discouraged by doing this reflection." (Teacher A)

"Actually, the teachers are already smart. But it's about experience. They will develop naturally because of their experiences." (Teacher B)

“Teachers should implement reflection in every lesson. But it depends on the individual.” (Teacher C)

“What keeps us excited about teaching and educating students is being reflective. Without reflecting, we will get bored of teaching. Without reflection, our teaching profession becomes meaningless because it is not based on self-awareness and does not touch the heart. Reflective teaching will touch the heart. If you teach with your heart, your students will also accept it with their heart.” (Teacher D)

“For me, there should be more collaboration, cooperation, and mutual support with other colleagues. Because teachers are professionals when teaching.” (Teacher E)

From this, the researcher underlines that even though they do not often reflect, they recognize that practical reflection plays a very important role in their professional development. In addition to the skill side, reflection also helps the psychological side of each participant because of the motivation from outside and inside.

Research Discussion

The discussion in this section interprets the findings based on reflective practice theory and previous research.

Reflection is Situational

All participants stated that they rarely reflect consciously. This is only if there is a specific event and because of the school's demands where students are required to be able to speak English. This type of teacher does exist and according to Van Manen (1977), this type of reflection falls into the level of practical rationality, which involves context-specific reflection on teaching and learning, grounded in real classroom experiences, particular events, and the observed behaviors of individual students (Nuraeni & Mahabbah, 2025; Nurfaidah et al., 2017).

The Impact of Reflection on Teaching and Social Relationships

Most participants stated that reflection made them better understand students' learning styles, in line with the statement Juma (2024) that regular reflection on their interactions allows teachers to become more sensitive and responsive to students' needs, viewpoints, and learning experiences. This

indicates that although reflection was limited, they still gained insights that helped them respond to students' needs. In addition, three participants stated that reflection encouraged them to adapt their approach to students' abilities, while two others adapted it to the needs of the department. This shows that reflection is contextual and responsive to the vocational school environment.

Teaching Competency Development

Participants linked reflection to the ability to develop students' skills, especially in speaking. This suggests that reflection is used to strengthen practical learning outcomes that are relevant to vocational needs. Some participants also reported improvements in media design and lesson design, suggesting that reflection encourages creativity and adaptation. This data is consistent with the findings of Rauteda (2024) that engaging in reflection or reflective practice enhances teachers' critical thinking, creativity, self-awareness, and professionalism throughout their careers.

Reflection and Professional Development

Almost all participants stated that reflection contributed to career development and improved qualifications, such as being ready to be assigned to any school and major, the desire to conduct action research, the desire to participate in national teacher development programs, and the desire to continuously improve their teaching knowledge. However, Teacher B showed inconsistencies between statements about the impact of reflection and recognition of opportunities to improve qualifications. This could be due to a lack of awareness of the relationship between reflective action and career outcomes, or due to non-pedagogical factors such as motivation towards retirement. Mann and Welsh (2015) have stated that teacher development relies on the willingness and ability to critically examine one's professional practice and apply informed judgment to reflect and take meaningful action (Rauteda, 2024). Thus, teachers who experience more significant professional development are only those who are able to use professional judgment reflectively to review and improve their teaching practices.

Self-Confidence and Job Satisfaction

Four out of five participants stated that reflection increased their confidence in teaching and influenced their motivation to teach so that it could

reduce stress and increase ambition to continue to develop. This relates to the statement of Lutz et al. (2013) that reflective practice helps lower stress levels and supports continuous professional growth (Maharjan et al., 2025). This shows that even though it is not done formally, reflection still strengthens teachers' belief in their capacity. Teacher B was the only one who did not experience this impact, suggesting a possible influence of age or late career phase on reflective perceptions.

Barriers to Reflection

Mixed responses emerged regarding the challenges of reflecting. Some participants did not find it difficult, while others mentioned that reflection does not always go smoothly. This suggests that reflection is not yet an established culture or skill in vocational school teaching. Even so, reflection results that do not meet expectations are normal. This has been stated by Mohamed et al. (2022) that:

“Reflection is widely agreed to be a thought process concerned with finding solutions to real problems (Calderhead, 1989; Adler, 1991; Hatton and Smith, 1995; Loughran, 2002; Choy and Oo, 2012). However, it is unclear whether solving problems is an inherent characteristic of reflection. For example, Schön's (1983) reflection-in-action involves thought processing simultaneously with a group event taking place, and reflection-on-action refers to a debriefing process after an event. Both aims to develop insights into what took place—the aims, the difficulties during the event or experience and better ways to act. While focusing on reacting to practical events, these practices do not often intend to find solutions to specific practical problems. Instead, reflective practitioners are invited to think about a new set of actions from if not wider, at least different perspectives.” (p.3)

Based on this statement, the researcher captured that reflection activities are not to solve problems, but rather to reflect in order to make improvements. Previously, the participants also mentioned that not all of their methods are suitable for other classes even though they are in the same department and level. So, in the future, teachers will still find other teaching challenges.

Foresight and Professional Commitment

Although they do not routinely reflect, the participants generally have a commitment to continue to reflect in an initiative manner. This

relates to the statement Juma (2024) that reflective initiatives encompass activities such as professional development workshops, training programs, and collaborative learning communities that are specifically designed to promote and enhance reflective teaching practices. It was because of this experience that they expressed the hope that other teachers could implement reflective practice. Even Teacher B, who is nearing retirement, expressed her hope. This shows that there is a collective awareness of the importance of reflection, although its application is still unsystematic.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to explore the impact of reflective practice on their professional development. Although their more frequent reflection is situational, they admit to feeling changes, such as more varied teaching methods, more understanding of the needs and abilities of students, more interactive, and positive development of the students themselves. Thus, they feel less stressed, more confident, motivated in teaching, and committed as English teachers in vocational schools with the intention of participating in teacher professional development programs in the future. However, not all of the reflections they carried out had a positive impact on their learning, which is a very natural thing to happen as long as they are not separated from reflection activities. The participants above did show an awareness of continuing to develop professionally as teachers. Therefore, the researcher suggested teachers to more routinely implement reflective practice. Moreover, most vocational graduates go directly into the workforce, so practical reflection is a crucial thing that must be done well by English teachers so that the knowledge students get can be useful and applied in the field. For future research, it is recommended to finding out the factors that influence the frequency of teachers in conducting reflections. This kind of research is expected to provide deeper insight into the obstacles or drivers of teachers in implementing reflective practices consistently.

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