# Teachers' Beliefs and Practices Related to Reflective Teaching in English Classroom

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## Abstract

Reflective teaching is essential for classroom teachers, allowing them to introspect on their classroom experiences and gain valuable insights. This research used a qualitative research design. Especially qualitative descriptive. It involved 2 experienced teachers to explore beliefs regarding reflective teaching. Research data was taken from semi-structured interviews, observations, and documentation. The data was analyzed using thematic analysis proposed by Braun & Clarke (2013). The aim of this data analysis is to find meaning in the data which is achieved by organizing and presenting the data methodically. The findings revealed teachers regularly participate in Subject Teachers' Conference to address teaching weaknesses and use student feedback to refine their practices. It helps teachers develop new, creative strategies and create a dynamic classroom environment that meets students' diverse needs as the ability to evaluate teaching methods and find new ways to be more effective. However, it cannot be denied that several factors hinder the implementation of this belief in the classroom, including time management and lack of communication between subject teachers.

*Keywords:* Teacher Beliefs; Teacher Practices; Reflective Teaching

## Introduction

Reflective teaching is a way to reflect on oneself by recognizing, observing, and evaluating some information about behavior and reflecting on what is happening. Therefore, it can create reflective teachers in the learning process. Serra (in Olive &; Mutiarani, 2018) suggests that reflective teaching is a tool used by teachers to observe and evaluate activities in the classroom by collecting information about the learning process. Meanwhile, Schon (Navaneedhan, 2011) suggests that reflective teaching is an ongoing process by considering one's own experience in applying knowledge that helps develop their personality.

Given that the application of reflective teaching in the classroom has a positive impact on student learning outcomes, it is necessary to understand the way teachers think about their teaching practices. Teachers' actual teaching practices will be influenced by how they view teaching and the considerations they keep in mind when doing teaching practice and they may decide to reflect on the practice or keep doing it as it is.

By examining how these beliefs are reflected in teaching practices, teachers' awareness about the influence of their reflective teaching beliefs can lead to more effective teaching strategies, ultimately improving educational quality and student engagement in the region. This research is timely and essential for fostering a deeper understanding of how reflective teaching can be better integrated into everyday classroom practice.

Under ideal conditions, teachers' beliefs and reflective practices will be fully integrated into the school culture. Teachers regularly participate in reflective activities such as group discussions, reflective journals, and class observations with constructive feedback. They can access appropriate resources and support to assess and improve their teaching practices. Additionally, the school environment fosters teacher collaboration and builds a learning community where experiences and insights can be shared openly. School administrators actively support these reflective efforts through ongoing training and evaluation of effective reflective practices.

## 1. Reflective Teaching

Teachers often use reflective teaching to evaluate their teaching methods. This process includes three stages: pre-teaching reflection, reflection on the moment, and post-teaching reflection. Richards and Farrell (2005) define reflective teaching as teachers learning from experience through focused reflection on the nature and meaning of teaching experience. This definition emphasizes the importance of deliberate and thoughtful consideration of one's teaching experiences to gain insights and improve educational practices.

Reflective teaching is vital for educators seeking to enhance their teaching practices and foster professional growth. According to Richard, as cited in Finogina (2014), "reflective teaching involves teachers observing themselves, collecting data about their own classroom and their role in it, and using that data as a basis for self-evaluation, change, and consequently, professional growth.". The process of reflection is integral to effective teaching and learning, providing a framework for educators to analyze and improve their practices.

## 2. Teacher's Belief

Several experts define the meaning of teacher beliefs. "Beliefs are not only hard to define but hard to measure" (Mede, 2017, p. 462). Measuring teacher beliefs often rely upon teachers' self-reporting, which may cause issues such as the teachers feeling under pressure to conform to the ideologies they have been taught rather than being free to report their genuine beliefs. While, Borg (2001) defines a teacher's beliefs as propositions that may be consciously or unconsciously held, and something accepted as true by the individual, and therefore beliefs inspire and guide people's thinking and behavior. Calderhead (1995, cited in Ispri, 2015: 17) asserts that teacher beliefs refer to teacher pedagogical beliefs or beliefs of relevance to individual teaching.

Recent studies relating to teacher beliefs have explored various aspects of beliefs, such as beliefs about teaching, beliefs about learning, beliefs about subject matter, etc. Reynolds, quoted in Ispri (2015: 18), categorizes that there are three aspects of teacher beliefs, namely (1) learning and learning, (2) the instructional role of the teacher, and (3) student activity. Basturkmen (2004: 215-217) adds that there are five aspects of teacher beliefs: (1) practical, (2) personal practical, (3) subject matter content, (4) pedagogical content, and (5) curricular, Richard and Rodgers add some aspects of trust; i.e., beliefs about (1) English, (2) learning, (3) teaching, (4) programs and curriculum, (5) language teaching as a profession.

## 3. Teacher's Practices

Teacher practice is an implementation carried out by a teacher in accordance with the goals to be achieved (Uce, 2016). Related to this, the implementation of teacher reflective teaching greatly affects the success or failure of the implementation of learning in the classroom and the learning outcomes to be achieved by students. Teachers as educators are tasked with helping students in dealing with teaching and learning activities according to students' abilities, interests and talents. In the current era of learning, teachers are required to develop practical teacher competencies to face challenges.

In classroom learning, teachers have the highest position as facilitators for students as stated in Law of the Republic of Indonesia number 14 of 2005 which states that teachers are professional educators. Lubis (2018) said that professional teachers must have basic pedagogic competencies which are the practice of teacher performance behavior in the learning process. A teacher must master 4 competencies, namely pedagogic competence, personality competence, social competence, and professional competence. Professional competence includes teachers faced with the implementation of reflective teaching; this professional teacher refers to teacher practice in applying reflective teaching in the classroom.

## 4. Teacher Practices Related to Reflective Teaching

Reflecting on practice generally means teachers think about their fundamental values and beliefs about teaching and learning and compare them to classroom practice. Reflection is a systematic inquiry and develops over time. Teacher educators need to establish this. Habit by adopting assessment tasks, learning activities, providing useful ideas and viewpoints.

To engage in this type of reflection, teachers must systematically collect information (data) about their classroom practices, and then check for any inconsistencies between their beliefs and practices (Farrell, 2008). Engaging in such evidence-based reflective practice allows teachers to articulate to themselves (and others) what they do, how they do it, why they do it, and, ultimately, what impact one's teaching has on student learning. The results of engaging in such data-driven reflective practice may mean affirmation of current practice or the need to make changes to current practice as they may not reflect teachers' specific beliefs. Ultimately, any change in practice that teachers make will be the result of concrete evidence rather than based on impulses or routines.

Additionally, according to Mathew et al. (2017), there are seven strategies for implementing reflective teaching. These include

- Maintaining a reflective journal or diary, which allows teachers to document their daily experiences and reflections on their teaching practices.

- Collaborative learning is another essential strategy, where teachers engage in discussions with their peers to share insights and challenges.

- Recording lessons provides a visual and auditory record for teachers to assess their teaching methods and student engagement.

- Feedback from teacher educators offers an external perspective on teaching practices, helping teachers identify areas for improvement.

- Peer observation involves teachers observing each other's classes to gain new ideas and constructive feedback.

- Students' feedback is also crucial, providing direct insights into how teaching methods impact their learning experiences.

- Finally, action research involves teachers systematically investigating their practices to implement and assess changes aimed at improving student outcomes.

Therefore, this study addresses this gap by examining the beliefs about reflective teaching among experienced teachers at a private high school in Yogyakarta. It will also explore how these beliefs are reflected in their teaching practices, with the goal of enhancing teachers' awareness of the role these beliefs play in effective classroom implementation.

## 5. Obstacles to Reflective Teaching

Reflective teaching is a crucial practice for educators aiming to enhance their instructional methods and student outcomes. Teaching reflection can be challenging for educators due to various obstacles. Tabassi et al. (2020) identified obstacles that teachers may encounter in reflective teaching. These obstacles include:

- Low Payment: Insufficient financial compensation can diminish teachers' motivation and resources for engaging in reflective practices.

- Lack of Motivation: Without intrinsic or extrinsic motivation, teachers may struggle to invest time and effort into reflective teaching.

- Neglect of Supervisors: Inadequate support or guidance from supervisors can hinder teachers' ability to effectively engage in and benefit from reflective teaching.

- Workload: High teaching and administrative workloads can leave teachers with limited time and energy for reflective practices, impacting their effectiveness and growth.

These challenges highlight the need for systemic changes and support to facilitate effective reflective teaching

## *Method*

To achieve the research objectives, this study used a descriptive qualitative design. A descriptive qualitative design was chosen because it attempts to present a complete picture of a phenomenon in its context (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006) This study was carried out in a Yogyakarta private high school. At a Yogyakarta private school, the research was conducted The participants in this research were two English teachers who had experience teaching English at the same private school. They are experienced teachers. Experienced teachers in this study were defined as having less than 10 years of teaching experience, and/or more than 5 years of experience. This is in line with the classification used by Achmad Sugandi (2004): work experience is a good teacher recognized in educational institutions; the criteria for a teacher are work experience, having taught for approximately 10 years, and having taught for at least 5 years. Data was taken from semi-structured interviews, observations, and documentation. Furthermore, This research used thematic analysis proposed by Braun and Clark (2013) to analyze the data. According to Burns (2000), finding meaning in the data is the goal of data analysis, which is accomplished by organizing and methodically presenting the data.

## *Results and Discussion*

## 1. Reflective Teaching in English Classroom

This section discusses the researcher's theoretical arguments, which are based on research findings accompanied by justification from the perspective of theoretical insight. The findings discussed relate primarily to relevant theories regarding reflective teaching. Regarding teachers' beliefs about reflective teaching, the first is that teachers understand their views regarding learning objectives. Reflective teaching is an important pedagogical concept in modern learning, especially for experienced teachers in private schools such as T1 and T2.

Additionally, Reflective teaching is a process in which educators actively recognize, examine, and reflect on the way they teach. This process includes recognizing that each educator brings certain backgrounds, experiences, beliefs, assumptions, knowledge, attitudes, and values to their teaching practices. According to Graham et al. (2010), reflective teaching aims to understand and improve learning practices by considering students' diverse abilities, needs and interests.

T1 and T2 are examples of teachers who understand the importance of reflection in teaching. Their observation notes show that T1 and T2 are trying to improve their teaching methods through reflections carried out at the Subject Teachers' Conference. By reflecting periodically, T1 and T2 can identify weaknesses in their teaching and find solutions to increase learning effectiveness. Things similar is also recognized by research. According to Rahman (2014), there are a number of indicators that indicate how well teachers are doing at implementing reflective teaching, including how frequently they participate in workshops, seminars, or training activities, as well as whether or not they actually study every textbook in order to become more competent teachers and students. Their expertise in the scientific subject they instruct.

The next finding is that teachers' beliefs regarding reflective teaching are measured by student feedback; this is explained by T1 This is in line with Wa Ode's findings Nurmaulid (2016) said that reflective teaching is teaching based on experience, then evaluating our own teaching in order to improve teaching practices, methods, techniques and strategies to improve the results of the teaching and learning process.

Reflective teaching also includes efforts to understand and accommodate students' diverse needs. According to Graham et al. (2010), educators must prepare quality learning by considering the diverse abilities, needs and interests of students. This means that teachers must be able to adapt teaching methods to accommodate various learning styles and student needs. In its implementation, reflective teaching aims to provide opportunities for all students to learn and develop optimally according to their potential. Educators can change components of routine activities and provide various task options that are in accordance with the concepts being taught. For example, in teaching science, teachers can provide various experiments and practical activities to help students understand concepts in more depth.

## 2. The Difficulties in Implementing Reflective Teaching

Time limitations and the large number of other tasks often become obstacles in implementing reflective teaching consistently. This is in line with the findings of Wa Ode Nurmaulida (2016) that there are several obstacles when they practice reflective teaching, one of which is lack of time constraints. Teachers are often enthusiastic about learning and forget the time, especially if students don't understand what they have done, so time is wasted and teachers don't have time to take reflective action.

However, the data above is different from Lilis Anifa's (2017) theory, she said that reflection is still included as one of the activities in learning. Even though it is a closing activity and the time allocation is only short, this activity is very important to do. This activity helps teachers to find out

students' understanding of the material that has been taught. By carrying out reflective activities, teachers will know their shortcomings so they can find appropriate solutions to correct these deficiencies so that they can improve the quality of learning.

Meanwhile, other obstacles related to not implementing reflective teaching are:  differences of opinion between subject teachers which sometimes make it difficult to coordinate and carry out peer observations.  This is in line with when a teacher wants to become a professional teacher by implementing reflective teaching, then he can be helped and Facilitating the growth of teacher professional development through reflection or self-assessment can be done through several strategies, including increasing the role of peer groups through peer coaching activities (Ross & Bruce, 2007). Despite these obstacles, T2 continues to search for new and interesting teaching methods by participating in Zoom with native speakers. This helps T2 to improve teaching techniques in the classroom.

Implementation is not always easy and is often influenced by various external factors. Teachers need to face practical realities in the field which are often different from ideal expectations. However, with constant awareness and reflection, teachers can look for ways to bridge the gap between belief and practice. Through collaboration with peers, participation in training, and use of student feedback, teachers can identify strategies that are more effective and realistic to implement in their context. This is in line with the findings of Rahman (2014) when Observing directly in the field, it is rare for teachers, both individually and among their peer groups, to carry out a self-reflection process to make a number of improvements to their professional performance.

Therefore, teachers in the field sometimes face obstacles in their professional practice. However, this is different from the findings of Wa Ode Nurmaulid (2016) in that reflective teaching is reflected in peer teacher observations or sharing with fellow teachers about their teaching or other things related to teaching.Further, obstacles The biggest problem is time because, according to T1, there is not enough time, and he has to complete several chapters in one semester. Meanwhile, in reality, reflective teaching is a learning system where the teacher provides opportunities for pupils or pupils to carry out analysis of individual experiences and facilitate learning from these experiences.

According to Rohana and Ningsih (2016), the concept of reflective thinking through reflective learning is the core of the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm (PPI), which consists of three main elements, namely experience, reflection, and action. Then, so that these three elements can be applied well, several learning stages are needed, namely: Context recognition stage. The stage of presenting experiences and reflections.  Action stage and evaluation stage. Even though they are constrained by time and other problems, T1 and T2 remain committed. The interview above illustrates that the teacher has used all kinds of strategies, approaches, and media relevant to the learning outcomes and learning objectives that they want to introduce or visualize to students.

## *Conclusion*

This study investigated two English teachers' beliefs and practices related to reflective teaching in the classroom. Reflective teaching in the English classroom involves teachers actively recognizing, examining, and reflecting on their teaching methods to understand and improve learning practices. This process is crucial for educators, especially those in private schools like T1 and T2, who face pressures to deliver high-quality education. Through reflective teaching, teachers can better understand their views on learning objectives and adapt their methods to meet students' diverse needs and interests.

First, T1 and T2 exemplify the importance of reflection in teaching, as shown by their regular participation in Subject Teachers' Conference to identify and address weaknesses in their teaching. This aligns with Rahman (2014), who emphasized the value of training, workshops, and peer discussions in fostering reflective teaching.

Second, T1 and T2 used student feedback, which is a critical component of this process, providing valuable insights into the effectiveness of teaching methods, as noted by Iqbal et al. (2016). Using simple questionnaires, T1 and T2 gather feedback to assess and refine their teaching practices, enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes.

Third, despite the recognized importance of reflective teaching, its implementation can be challenging due to time constraints and other practical realities. Teachers often face difficulties consistently practicing reflection, as Wa Ode Nurmaulida (2016) noted, but even brief reflective activities can significantly impact teaching quality. Collaborative efforts, such as peer coaching and participation in professional development, can help teachers overcome these obstacles and effectively integrate reflection into their practice.

In conclusion, reflective teaching is essential for enhancing the quality of education in private schools. By regularly reflecting on their teaching methods and incorporating student feedback, teachers like T1 and T2 can continuously improve their practices, leading to better student outcomes and a more dynamic learning environment. Despite the challenges, the commitment to reflective teaching is crucial in fostering professional growth and ensuring high-quality education.

## *Suggestion*

It is hoped that the results of this research will be helpful for the following stakeholders: For further research, reflective teaching is highly relevant to English language teaching, and it is recommended that similar studies be conducted to enhance the implementation in the teaching and learning process. Future research should focus on reflective awareness to emphasize its role and importance in English language teaching.

For English teachers, the findings can serve as a reference to understand the importance of reflection in teaching. Teachers need to describe, evaluate, and develop their reflective knowledge and awareness, which will improve English language learning in Indonesia.

For English language education institutes can aid in this by selecting and developing the best teaching methodologies and methods, guiding teachers and students in implementing better reflection in the classroom.

For Educational policymakers should choose appropriate curricula, methods, and teaching strategies, especially those related to culture, to enhance students' reflective awareness and ultimately improve the quality of English language teaching and learning in Indonesia.

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