

The Reflective Teaching Practices and Teaching Performance of Public Secondary English Teachers

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Abstract: Reflection is the persistent and deliberate consideration of any belief or supposed form of cognition. It is a powerful step that educators can use to enhance the quality of their teaching e.i. their teaching styles and techniques. The purpose of the thesis proposal is to determine whether reflective teaching practices are correlated with the teaching performance of the Public secondary English teachers. It will further seek to answer if the practice of reflective teaching will improve the quality of teaching. The researcher will employ complete enumeration of the 56 Public secondary English teachers in the Municipality of Midsayap, Cotabato, Philippines.

Keywords: Reflection, reflective-teaching, teachers' performance, ESL.

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is a complex phenomenon which cannot be easily understood. The effective use of education will lead to success of individuals. According to John Dewey (1910), education is the onward motion of all terminal points in the person which empower him to master his environment and fulfill his potential outcomes. To fully accommodate the educational needs of learners, varied teaching styles must be considered. It is a necessity to improve the teaching and learning of a language. In English as Second Language (ESL) contexts, it may be helpful to adopt the concept of the teacher as a learner and an expert in the area of oral communication instruction.

There are many definitions of teaching given by different psychologists and theorists. Edmund Amidon defines teaching as an interactive process, primarily involving classroom talk, which takes place between teacher and pupil and occurs during certain definable activities. Similarly, B.O. Smith considers teaching as a system of actions involving an agent, an end in view, and a situation including two sets of factors – those over which the agent has no control (class size, size of classroom, physical characteristics of pupil etc.) and those that he can modify by way of asking questions or ideas.

John Wells views teaching as a cluster of activities (that are noted about teachers) such as explaining, deducing, questioning, motivating, taking attendance, keeping record of works, students' progress and students' background information.

According to Fatemipour (2013) every instructor receives a professional obligation to be reflective and evaluative regarding their practice. As a consequence, instructors will have the capacity to distinguish how to better enhance professional activity in order to enhance the quality of students' learning. Similarly, an ESL teacher is continually exposed to different classroom situations. He tries to take varied approaches to create understanding in context. He draws on his experience to answer the problems and issues encountered. He undergoes a great deal of grooming to acquire competence to overcome classroom situations and psychological barriers in the case of second English teaching (Al-Ahdal & Al-Awaid, 2014). An English teacher bids his faculties and experience to assess his students' reactions and reflects on the outcome after addressing the learning behavior of his students.

There are many instances in the teaching career that teachers encounter challenges in their teaching strategies. Hence, they adapt and think of a better way to make the teaching-learning better. They pause and examine their practices to give way for the better understanding and learning of the students. When they do so, they are practicing reflective teaching.

Reflection according to Johari (2006) is described as the way in which people learn from their experience and seen as a deliberate thinking about action with a view to its improvement. As she noted;

Reflective teaching means looking at what you do in the classroom, thinking about why you do it, and thinking about if it works a process of self-observation and self-evaluation. By collecting information about what goes on in our classroom, and by analyzing and evaluating it, we identify and explore our own practices and underlying beliefs. Reflective teaching is significant and it has a high potential of bringing about desirable improvements and changes in the teachers instructions albeit learners performance. Reflective teaching is a means of professional growth which begins in our classroom. (p. 99)

Reflective practice in teaching is becoming a prevailing standard worldwide. Being an efficient teacher involves personal commitment to contemplative practice. The idea about reflection is highly a point of contention; it is an essential skill and a symbol of intellectual depth (Atkinson & Irving , 2013). Moreover, reflection is a strong drift to personal development and self-directed learning (Gallacher, 1997).

Farrell (2012) looked at reflective practice as a compass that will lead teachers in the classroom. There are some instances in the teaching process wherein an ESL teacher will ask questions about what he/she should have done better to have an effective classroom teaching environment.

Presently the term reflection and reflective practice are famous in education that they almost required in language teacher training and growth plans. Many language educators agree that some form of reflection is a good practice among teachers; however, there is no consensus whether what reflective practice and if reflective practices really promote teacher development (Farrel, 2007).

There are many foreign researches done about reflective practices in language teaching, but the researcher cannot find any study conducted in the Philippine setting especially in Midsayap, Cotabato. Thus, the researcher will take the first step to study the reflective teaching practices of teachers. The study will aim to find out whether the reflective practices of educators have significant effects on their teaching performance. It will further determine the relationship of reflective practices and teaching performances of teachers.

Statement of the Problem:

This research will be conducted to look into the reflective teaching practices and teaching performance of Public Secondary English teachers in Midsayap, Cotabato for the S.Y. 2014-2015. This research aims to answer the following questions:

1. Determine the socio-demographic profile of the public secondary school teachers in terms of
 - a. gender,
 - b. length of service,
 - c. educational attainment
2. What are the reflective teaching practices of teachers in terms of
 - a. ability to self-assess,
 - b. awareness on how one learns, and
 - c. developing lifelong learning skills?
3. What is the teaching performance of public secondary English teachers based on the Performance Appraisal System for Teachers (PAST)?
4. Is there a relationship between the socio-demographic profile of the respondents and their reflective teaching practices?
5. Is there a relationship between reflective teaching practices and teaching performance of public secondary English teachers?

Hypothesis of the Study:

- Ho1: There is no significant relationship between gender and ability to self-assess.
- Ho2: There is no significant relationship between gender and awareness on how one learns.
- Ho3: There is no significant relationship between gender and developing lifelong learning skills.
- Ho4: There is no significant relationship between length of service and ability to self-assess.
- Ho5: There is no significant relationship between length of service and awareness on how one learns.
- Ho6: There is no significant relationship between length of service developing lifelong learning skills.
- Ho7: There is no significant relationship between educational attainment and ability to self-assess.
- Ho8: There is no significant relationship between educational attainment awareness on how one learns.
- Ho9: There is no significant relationship between educational attainment developing lifelong learning skills.
- Ho10: There is no significant relationship between ability to self-assess and teaching practices.
- Ho11: There is no significant relationship between awareness on how one learns and teaching practices.
- Ho12: There is no significant relationship between developing lifelong learning skills and teaching performance.

Scope and Limitation:

This study will be limited to public secondary English teachers of Midsayap, Cotabato to find out the relationship between socio-demographic profile and reflective teaching practices and the relationship of reflective teaching practices and teaching performance.

Significance of the Study:

The findings of the study may be useful to the following:

Students. The students will benefit from this study since they are at the receiving end of the approaches used by the teachers. The awareness of the teachers of the effect of reflective teaching in their performance will change their paradigm in teaching and thus, students Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) will be developed.

Teachers. The result of the study will enable the teachers to reflect on their teaching styles if it is effective for the learners. It will make them more evaluative to recognize factors which will help them in their teaching. This study will make them aware of their reflective teaching practices and its effect on their performance.

Administrators. The administrators/principals can use the result of the study as a basis for motivating teachers to introspect on their teaching styles particularly on the use of reflective teaching practices. If found favorable towards teacher performance, reflective teaching practices will not only encouraged in language teaching but in other subject areas as well.

Future Researchers. The result of the study may serve as the basis for future studies regarding reflective teaching practices and teaching performance.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

This chapter surveys literature pertinent to this study. It includes definitions of reflection, reflection in/on action and reflective language teaching.

Recent literature in education has clearly shown that teachers differ substantially according to their goals and priorities and to the instructional and classroom management strategies that they utilized. Barlett (1990, cited in Sadeghi, 2013) defines teaching as interactive process among a group of people learning in a social setting describe as classroom. Moon (2005) also believes that it is a mental processing that we use to materialize a goal. He pointed that its purpose is to thread unstructured ideas and reprocessing concepts that we already have.

Meanwhile, Brookfield (1995) suggests that the essence of teaching is determined through reflective teaching. Educators must continue to reflect on their way of teaching to do better in their teaching profession.

It is generally acknowledged that reflective teaching and reflective practices assume an essential part in teaching profession. Reflection is additionally a critical part in teachers' professional behavior and relevant in their professional development (Kalk et.al, 2014). Varied authors support the handiness and necessity of reflection.

A reflective teacher identifies problems, York-Barr, Sommers, Ghore, & Montie, (2001) highlight that teachers should consider the following when reflecting: first, teachers are encouraged to reflect on what happened in the classroom. He asks himself questions' pertaining to what he has done and what others did. Second, he reflects why things happen the way they do and asks himself why he chose to act the way he does. Third, he asks himself what he has learned and how will this change his future thinking, behavior and interactions. Lastly, he asks himself what to remember if exposed to a similar situation. With these reflective questions asked, it will involve a wide range of thinking skills to integrate these thinking skills with judgments (Shermis, 1999).

Reflection has become a part in teaching, and such terms as 'reflective teaching', 'reflective practice', 'reflective thinking', 'the teacher as decision-maker' 'the teacher as researcher' and 'the teacher as reflective practitioner' are now incredibly utilized as a part of a scope of instructive settings and are educated by hypothetical systems (Bengtsson, 1995).

Definitions of Reflection:

What defines us as human beings is our ability to think. Great importance is given to thinking into today's educational system because the society depends on individuals with higher level of thinking skills. Teachers have a big role to play in educating thinking individuals; hence, they should be informed and well trained. (Tican & Taspinar, 2015).

In a review of literature on reflective teaching, it can be discovered that there is much variance in the definition of reflective teaching. Amobi and Campoy (2006, 2010) cited in Murray (2015), highlighted reflection as having received considerable attention in the educational literature for decades.

Reflective practice, as defined by Dewey (1910), is the persistent and deliberate consideration of any belief or supposed form of cognition in the luminosity of the ground that hold it and the figure condition to which it is given. According to Dewey, reflection includes identifying and addressing such problems and eventually reflective teachers reflect upon the educational, social and political contexts in which their teachings are anchored.

In recent decades, reflective practice has become a key driver and an increasingly influential referent in the professional growth of teachers. Amobi & Campoy (2006, 2010) argue that reflection has received considerable attention in the educational literature. They also assert that reflective practitioners are better prepared to handle the challenges of teaching (as cited in Murray, 2015).

Richards and Nunan (1990, cited in Sadeghi, 2013) believe that improvement of teaching may be achieved through reflection. Reflection is more thinking and focuses on day-to-day teaching of the individual teacher as well as the institutional structures in which teacher and students work.

O'Donnell, Reeve & Smith (2012) opine that reflection is a complex phenomenon, and therefore is limited in several ways. Its multifaceted nature comes from the way that specialists in the field still have not come to an understanding as to whether reflection is an ability, activity or procedure. Pisapia (2009) characterizes reflection as a capacity to utilize observations, experience and data to have the capacity to shape decisions about what happened in the past or is occurring now to help with directing future activities. On the other hand, Boud, Keogh, and Walker (1985) characterize reflection as a psychological action in which individuals have an opportunity to remember, break down and assess their encounters. Kemmis (1985) sees reflection as a socio-political procedure, in which people reproduce social life through correspondence, choice making and social activity.

There is no question that reflection is important for professional growth and effective teaching as Gibbs (1988) contends that without reflecting, received experience may be overlooked or the learning potential lost, but there are some doubts whether teachers can be taught to practice reflective teaching. Reflection is not a process that can be learned but a holistic orientation to teaching that can be gained.

Meanwhile, Day (2001) stresses that participant must engage in critical thinking and best reflect when put into writing. Farrell (1998) believes that letting teachers act in carefully thought reflection will spare them from unvarying and habitual actions. Without critical reflection, teachers will not able to determine the outcome of their teaching styles to our varied learners. Thus, by practicing critical reflection they can address issues in the school that need to be settled and taken care. In this process it will enhance their teaching styles.

The best way to learn the effectiveness of teaching is through a process of critical reflection. Many literatures are talking about the qualities of effective teaching and teachers (Yates, 2005; Gurney, 2007). They all sanctioned that effective teaching obliges teachers to have reasonable goals, define standards in classroom order, monitor student's progress and feed backing, diagnose problems in classroom and address it. It promotes self-assuredness, the regular achievement of teaching goals, and motivated, critically reflective students. It is assumed that the collaboration of these qualities provides a foundation of good teaching creating an effective learning environment.

Reflective Language Teaching:

There are many evidences in the field of ESL teaching that language teachers hold complex beliefs about teaching and learning, and that these beliefs have a strong impact on classroom practices (Farrel & Bennis, 2013 as cited in Farrel & Ives, 2015). Farrell (2007) defined reflective language teaching as a bottom-up approach to teacher professional development that is grounded on the belief that experienced and novice language teachers can improve their knowledge of their own teaching by consciously and systematically reflecting on their teaching experiences (cited in Uzum, Petron & Berg, 2014).

According to Cirocki, Tennekoon and Calvo (2014) modern language education supports the model of a reflective teacher-researcher who is engaged in both individual and collaborative curriculum revision and teaching-learning environment improvement. In the Philippine teaching context, ESL teachers are called for a wide ranging discussion on reflective inquiry in the language classroom as theory and practice seem to be marching to a different tune. The roles of instructors and instruction strategies are modified to cater the increasing complex conditions of classrooms and the specific needs of the apprentices.

Johari (2006) asserts that a number of ESL teachers think about their teaching practices and have used an uncritical and mechanistic approach to their teaching for much of the time resulting to unfocused and unsystematic reflection. She also highlights the importance of recalling classroom experiences while teaching. Teachers should reflect backwards over the professional development and what exactly they want to happen in the classroom.

Related Studies:

In a study on student teacher at the University of Western Sydney conducted by Clarke (2004) entitled Reflection: Journals and Reflective Questions: A Strategy for Professional Learning, it was found out that reflection conducted through a variety of strategies can give proof of professional learning. A synthesis of each of the strategies used, that is, focus questions, specific reflective questions and journal responses and shared group discussion showed that student teachers used a form of learning. The results of the study further revealed that the student teacher's reflection was found out as an important component in teaching. Reflection was seen as a procedure to help them in raising their attention to their learning. Their journals revealed that they consistently reflected in their teaching practice and modifying their practice to accomplish enhanced student outcomes.

Similarly, Sadeghi (2013) conducted a study on the reflective approaches in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL). He found that in order to improve and develop teaching, research into the classroom is needed. It was also highlighted in his research that teachers should need to know what is actually happening in the classroom, what learners are thinking, why learners are reacting in the ways they do and what aspects of the classroom should be the focus to develop the most effective teaching. Another result of the inquiry is that teacher reflection is a necessary part of personal and professional growth.

Another study conducted by Cimer, Cimer and Vekli (2013) in Turkey on how reflection helps teachers to become effective revealed that reflection is a vital part of teacher's professional development because it calls teachers for ongoing exercise of their intellect, responsibility and professionalism. The breakthroughs of their study demonstrated that reflection advances deliberative activity in setting up and executing direction and progressing engagement with hypothesis and supports development in professional knowledge and learning as reflective teachers become more mindful of their

actions, more skilled in the use of evidence, more knowledgeable both in teaching about teaching and more able to identify and study the result of their actions. The study likewise uncovered that by picking up a superior comprehension of one's individual teaching styles reflective practice, teachers can improve their performance.

In a study conducted to English as Second Language (ESL) teachers in Sri Lanka, it revealed that reflective practice is an important and useful element of a teacher's career. Cirocke, Tennekoon, and Calvo (2014) emphasized that reflective practices has a positive impact on teaching performance and professional development.

Uzum, Petron, and Berg (2014) conducted a study to 28 female pre- service teachers in the United States of America (USA) which revealed that they reflected on their strategies and made connections between theory and practice and dealt with the need to provide language support for ESL learners.

A case study of Farrell (2013), investigating three experienced ESL teachers in Canada, suggests that teaching experience cannot equate to expertise unless teachers consciously reflect on their experiences.

The ideas and articles that relate to this study reaffirmed that reflection is essential in the teaching profession, that is, to look back what you have done in the class and what you can do better next time. Likewise, the studies additionally uncovered that reflective teaching connects theory to use. It gives the teacher chances to consider and investigate thoughts, methods, and methodologies. As such, they enable the instructor with the capability to educate in differed settings since it calls for the educator to create connections between their own convictions and what is going on in different teaching settings.

Reflective thinking is not a new idea. Dewey (1933) mentioned it in his early works. Only few researchers and practitioners use the term until Shon (1983, 1987) wrote about reflective practice in education and other discipline. Today many researchers worldwide have studied about reflective teaching. However, in the Philippines only few studies have been conducted regarding reflective teaching. Thus, this study aims to further the previous studies and investigate the relationship of reflective teaching and teaching performance of teachers.

Theoretical Framework:

A reflective practitioner is mindfully occupied with changing his practice to achieve the most profound and fullest encounters for himself and his students. According to Johnston (2007), reflection is subservient to the experience, yet essential to the task.

The early work that underpins this study is on John Dewey's pragmatism. Dewey is the pioneer in the concept of reflective practice in 1933. He associated reflective thinking to critical thinking. Dewey believed that reflection is not only an intellectual act but also an act that includes emotions. His themes revolved around problem, suggestions, reasoning, hypothesis, and testing.

Teacher's reflection was put into spotlight after Schon (1983) connects reflective thinking to professional practice. He expressed that professionals face a series of challenges that cannot be solved by rational methodologies. He postulated an approach that professionals can learn through reflection, that is, reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action, the reflection that happened in the midst of the action and after the action respectively.

Based on the studies reviewed, reflection is indeed a must for professionals especially in education. These previous studies have similar findings that the reflection produces a confidence that is the foundation for inspirational teaching and the basis for sustained achievement of teaching goals. Teachers should reflect what is going on in the classroom, why learners are behaving the way they did, and what should have be for the learners to sustain a good classroom experience that will lead to learning itself. Many researchers have conducted research about reflective teaching practices in education. Hence, this study targets to investigate the relationship between reflective teaching practices and teaching performance of Public Secondary English Teachers in Midsayap, Cotabato.

Conceptual Framework:

Figure 1 shows the interplay of the reflective teaching practices and strategies used and the teaching performance of teachers under study. It will determine the reflective teaching practices of teachers in the classroom while teaching, and on practices and strategies used. It will determine if the reflective teaching practices has significant relationship towards gender, length of service and level of education. It will also determine the relationship between reflective teaching practices and teaching performance of Public Secondary English Teachers.

It will be measured through the perceptions of English Teachers towards their own teaching styles.

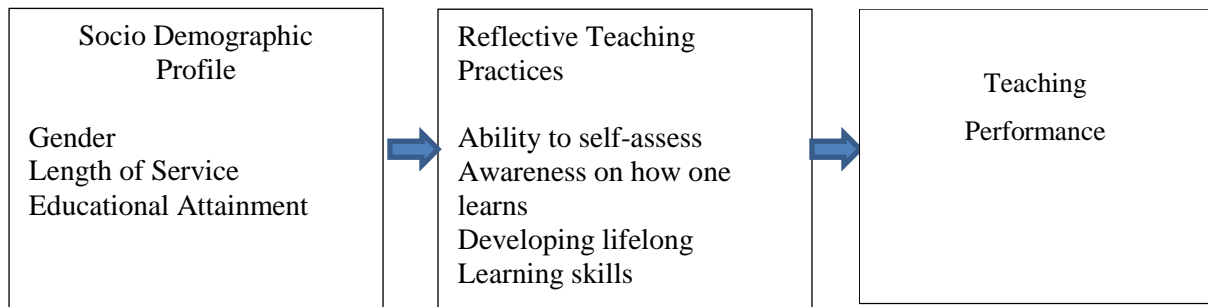


Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study

Definition of Terms:

Ability to Self-Assess. The ability of the public secondary school English teacher to self-reflect in his/her teaching and evaluate teaching strategies used to improve students' learning experience.

Awareness on How One Learns. The approach of the public secondary school English teacher to determine different teaching styles in teaching students. Feedbacks from students and superiors are welcomed to enhance teaching experience.

Developing Lifelong Learning Skills. The action of the public secondary school English teacher to improve future teaching performance by analyzing feedbacks received.

Reflective Teaching Practice. The ability of the teacher to introspect on his/her teaching practice in terms of ability to self-assess, awareness on how one learns and developing lifelong learning skills.

Teaching Performance. The performance of Philippine public school teachers in terms of Instructional Competence, Professional and Personal Characteristics as measured by the PAST Form. Teacher performance is described using the following scale. 10-Outstanding, 8-Very Satisfactory, 6- Satisfactory, 4-unsatisfactory, 2-Poor.

III. METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research design, locale of the study, respondents of the study, sampling procedure, instrument of the study, data gathering procedure and data analysis.

Research Design:

This study is descriptive correlational research. Questionnaires will be used to obtain data. It will investigate the reflective teaching practices of Public Secondary English Teachers. Moreover, it will determine the relationship between reflective teaching practices and teaching performance.

Locale of the Study:

The study will be conducted in Public Secondary Schools in Midsayap, Cotabato. The schools included are: Midsayap-Dilangalen National High School, Agriculture National High School, Agriculture National High School (Baliki Annex), Arizona National High School, Kimagango National High School, Malamote High School, Olandang National High School, Dabpil Sampulna- Olandang High School, Salunayan National High School, Salunayan National High School-Kapinpilan Annex, Villarica National High School, Juan Dillo High School, Elpidio Singco High School, Nabalawag High School and Patindeguen High School.

Respondents:

The respondents of this research will be 56 Public Secondary English teachers of Midsayap, Cotabato. This study will be conducted to public secondary English teachers in Midsayap, Cotabato because no study involving them has been conducted yet on the relationship between reflective teaching practices and teaching performance.

Table 1. Distribution of English teachers

Midsayap Public High Schools	No. of English Teachers
Midsayap-Dilangalen National High School	15
Agriculture High School	5
Baliki High School	2
Arizona High School	2
Kimagango High School	4
Malamote High School	3
Olandang High School	1
Patindeguen High School	3
Dabpil High School	1
Salunayan High School	4
Kapinpilan High School	3
Villarica High School	6
Juan Dillo High School	2
Elpidio Singco High School	2
Nabalawag High School	3
TOTAL	56

Research Instruments:

The data will be gathered using questionnaire adapted based on research by Choy and Oo (2012) on the development of reflective thinking. The statements cover three major areas in reflective teaching: ability to self-express, awareness, awareness of how one learns and developing lifelong skills.

Data Collection Procedure:

A letter of approval to request the form B-2 Performance Appraisal System for Teachers (PAST) S.Y. 2014-2015 will be sent to the Schools' Division Superintendent. Another letter to conduct the study and to administer the survey to all English teachers will be sent to the Schools' Division Superintendent and secondary school principals. A letter of consent will be sent to the Public secondary English teachers to use the forms needed in the study. The anonymity of their identities and the confidentiality of the documents requested will be strictly observed by the researcher.

The questionnaires will be answered during their vacant period so as not to disturb their classes and will be retrieved immediately. This will be done to ensure 100% retrieval. Data will be gathered, tabulated and summarized.

Statistical Treatment of the Data:

Descriptive statistics such as frequency, weighted mean and standard deviation will be used in this study. A five-point scale will be used to investigate the reflective teaching practices of Public Secondary English Teachers.

Analysis of the data will be done using the frequency of responses to each of the 1-5 scales in the questionnaire. The result will be used to answer the research questions.

This paper shows the basic format of research paper preparation and can be used as template writing research paper. Conclusion of research paper is between 150 to 350 words.

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