Humming The Rhymes without Knowing the Lyrics: A Case of an English Lecturer’s Reflection
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Abstract

Reflection seems to be a practical choice to develop teachers’ continuous growth (Richards & Lockhart, 1996; Zeichner & Liston, 1996). This study intends to explore a reflective teaching of an English lecturer in a local polytechnic’s context. It is meant to identify her reflective teaching apart of her denial about being unfamiliar with the practice and unable to theoretically recall its concept. A participant was purposely selected due to her willingness and access to her teaching. Classroom observations, interview, and teaching journal were used to generate the required data. The content analysis was manually run to get the results. The findings reveal that participant’s reflective actions (specifically refer to reflection-in-action) constantly present in her teaching. Overall, participant is considered as a reflective practitioner regardless her oblivious thought about reflective teaching.

1. Introduction

Theoretically, reflection seems to be a practical choice to develop teachers’ continuous growth (Richards & Lockhart, 1996; Zeichner & Liston, 1996). In teacher development scope, reflection is described as a ‘must’ ability to be acquired during the teaching training stage or within in-service professional development practice (Yesilbursa, 2011). It is claimed that being reflective means one is critical, thoughtful, or evaluative towards his or her own self (Farrell, 2012; Ferraro, 2000) which contributes to the successful of teaching and learning process. However, much reliance on the research from the perspectives of teacher educators in looking at pre-service teachers invites invisible assumptions that similar features of reflection are applicable to the in-service teachers (Moon, 1999). Undeniably,
much has been written about effectiveness of reflection and reflective practice in many fields, teaching contexts or other professional practices, but there still remains a sense of lack of clarity about what it is and how it can be achieved (Farrell, 2012:8). Hence, this exploratory study intends to investigate reflection in English teaching practice from an in-service lecturer’s perspective in a local polytechnic’s context. The aim is that to explore the reflective teaching practice from a less explored English educators’ population in Malaysia (Suhaily & Faizah, 2014).

2. Literature review

Reflection is derived from Dewey’s concern regarding a routinized thought and action in one’s practice (Farrell, 2012; Moon, 1999). His alarm was based on the issue of one’s practice was guided by impulse, local work culture, customized rules which implies his or her practice leads to less meaningful exercise (Farrell, 2012). The rationale lays on the basis that theoretical ideas on a particular work procedure do not spell out the same practicality aspects into real life especially in term of teaching. It is because teaching invites constant changes and welcomes the multidimensional factors to the practice (Richards, Gallo, & Renandya, 2001). Hence, the principle of language teaching in a western context could be differently applied in similar level of proficiency students in eastern countries (e.g. Bray, 2012; Hayes, 2009). Moreover, hanging too much on the top-down guidance would probably fade the actual definition of being a teacher. The illustration given by Greene (1973, cited in Gebhard & Oprandy, 1999:3) may conclude the researchers’ view:

If the teacher agrees to submerge himself into the system, if he consents to being defined by others’ views of what he is supposed to be, he gives up his freedom to see, to understand, and to signify for himself. If he is immersed and impermeable, he can hardly stir others to define themselves as individual. If, on the other hand, he is willing…to create a new perspective on what he has habitually considered real, his teaching may become the project of a person vitally open to his students and the world…He will be forever new; he will feel more alive than he ever has before.

Reflective practice, in teaching, is viewed as an on-going process even there is no consensus on the definition of the term (Yesilbursa, 2011:105). It is an activity or process in which an experience is recalled, considered, and evaluated to improve one’s condition for a better change (Richards, 2005). It is a continuous evaluation process that can help teachers to identify and illuminate issues within their teaching practice, and alert them to any potential barriers to promote effective learning (Kahn & Walsh, 2006). That is why the result of a particular reflective action does not personally cater the proposed effective teaching guidelines for general use (Zeichner & Liston, 1996).

Hence, there comes a feature of reflective teaching as teachers’ private voice (Zandian, 2011). The practicality of any findings is more contextual and workable to be applied as it is a bottom-up solution (e.g. Farrell, 2001; Suhaily & Faizah, 2013). So, the measures taken are varied from one to another based on their current requirement to overcome their teaching issues. These conclude that reflection happens as teachers, who constantly deal with decision making, are able to identify and describe what is happening in their teaching and evaluate the process on why something goes wrong then act on it to fix the hassle.

In addition, the self-voluntary exploration on one’s personal teaching practice promotes professional development (Gebhard & Oprandy, 1999). It is because reflection is a tool for teachers’ learning too (Avalos, 2011). Self-observation would offer extensive detail about practice, and the reshaping of practice, so that new ways of conceptualizing teaching about teaching might be possible (Loughran, 2006). The marriage of teachers’ received knowledge and their experiential learning (Wallace, 1991) produces a contextual competency in which teachers’ personal pedagogical knowledge is formed (Suhaily & Faizah, 2013). As they keep embracing this type of exploration, teachers are able to identify their weaknesses and act upon it based on the practical implementation that matches their students’ immediate needs, and towards certain extents, it compliments their present issue (Bray, 2012; Farrell, 1998; Hayes, 2009; Richards & Lockhart, 1996; Suhaily & Faizah, 2013, 2014). Hence, taking part in reflective teaching implies that teachers personally monitor themselves in the process of developing their teaching competency and professional growth.
2.1. Concepts of reflective teaching

Reflection is indeed a suitable tool for teachers to stay competent (Wallace, 1991). It also contributes the constant progress of the teachers’ status in becoming reliable resources in their fields. Being reflective in teaching does not only mediate teachers to acknowledge and act on the spotted flaws of their teachings, it also allows the teachers to revise their actions for planning future lessons (Suhaily & Faizah, 2014). Schon’s reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action concepts in reflective practice indeed provide a useful stimulus for teachers’ professional development (Zeichner & Liston, 1996). Identifying slight differences between both conceptions is a helpful task.

When teachers respond to and act on the immediate demands in their present circumstances especially during their teaching sessions, it represents the reflection-in-action act. For instance, an immediate change of classroom activity has been displayed in their teaching episodes, i.e. from an individual task to a group assignment due to students’ inability to work alone (Suhaily & Faizah, 2014). It is spontaneous in nature because it happens during the teaching and ‘happens quickly’ (Bailey, Curtis & Nunan, 2001). Moreover, this act is quite common in language teaching as it is an interactive process (Bailey et al. 2001). Hence, teachers must be able to respond to unexpected questions, to students’ errors and to learning opportunities that arise in order to promote an effective learning experience for the students.

In contrast, reflection-on-action represents the decisions displayed by teachers in their planning, preparation, and follow-up stage. Normally, the decisions are ordered, deliberate, and systematic in nature (Bailey et al., 2001; Suhaily & Faizah, 2014). Basically, reflection-on-action happens before and after teaching and learning process. It pinpoints to where the reviews on certain situations are required, and alternatives to solve or improve the situations are made. Thus, teachers might do next time in light of what they have encountered (Kahn & Walsh, 2006). In short, reflection-on-action occurs before a lesson when the teachers plan for and think about their lesson and after instruction when teachers consider what occurred (Zeichner & Liston, 1996).

Besides understanding both concepts, it is better to grasp the descriptions that characterize the dimensions of reflection. According to Zeichner & Liston (1996), there are five dimensions of reflection; rapid reflection, repair, review, research and, retheorizing and reformulating. These dimensions range from split-second on-line decision-making to long-term reformulation (Bailey et al., 2001). They are majorly derived from the abovementioned Schon’s concepts of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action.

Basically, these dimensions are consisted of two different concepts that refer to the moments when the reflection takes place. There is a range of time allocation as the processes involved at each level subtlety constitute the dimension of reflection. The design and pattern of the reflection taken become more rigorous and thorough as the outcomes and results of this action change from private to public. The scopes of the results move from being specific to general in assumption and application contexts. In Table 1, the summary of general concepts, descriptions, and examples of these five reflective dimensions based on Zeichner & Liston (1996) have been simplified.

| Table 1: Dimensions of Reflection |
|----------------------------------|
| Level | Concepts/examples | Descriptions/examples |
|-------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Rapid reflection | • Immediate and automatic  
| | • Reflection-in-Action  
| | • Teachers reflect immediately and automatically while they are teaching | • On-line decision making while teaching  
| | | • Nature of this decision making is very fast, almost constantly and often privately |
| Repair | • Thoughtful  
| | • Reflection-in-Action  
| | • Teachers pause for a quick thought before deciding whether to respond to their students’ request | • Occur while teaching  
| | | • Teachers make a decision to alter the lesson yet not automatically as the first level |
| Review | • Less formal  
| | • Reflection-on-action at a particular point in time  
| | • Teachers openly discuss or talk about their students, curriculum or lesson plan matters during their working hours, as a result, existing plans are modified | • Occur before or after teaching  
| | | • Systematic in nature |
2.2. Procedures of reflective teaching

There are several procedures that can be opted in order to reflect in teaching. Firstly, the most common reflective procedure is keeping reflective journal, or also known as teaching journal or log (Farrell, 1998). It is a first-hand written thought that provides permanent revelation on the actual events experiences by teachers. Teachers record their thoughts, actions, students and classroom events which stimulate their critical reflections towards their own practice. These written accounts enable teachers to evaluate their performance in a way that is unavailable through other tools (Richards & Lockhart, 1996). It can be used later for analysis purposes based on different resolutions required. Apart of their reflections are permanent, they can also be openly accessed by others, given that teachers permit it.

Next, peer observation is also an option to conduct the reflective teaching. It promotes a leisure opportunity for teachers to view each other’s teaching. In certain cases, it is formally conducted as a part of institutional requirement whereby the upper or senior staff would observe the novice or junior staff. Vice-verse, this collaboration would make teachers aware to different teaching styles within their community (Xu, 2009). Indirectly, it probably triggers critical reflection upon themselves and their practices (Bailey, et al., 2001).

Slightly similar to the aforementioned procedure is collaboration with a critical friend. It involves not only reflective teachers, yet other colleagues who share a similar professional circle. They benefit each other in a continuous learning environment. The rationale is that it fosters a process of engaging with self-initiated professional development and promotes a culture of self-directed and lifelong learning for teachers (Nasredinne, 2008). Without a doubt, these kinds of rapport encourage mutual trust and support that lead to positive learning environment which keep them continuously reflect.

Another procedure is teacher-initiated classroom investigation, or so-called action research. It is recommended in assessing teachers to systematically encounter issues and concerns of their own teaching (Richards & Lockhart, 1996; Xu, 2009). The results of action research voice out more private and situational solution as it is a bottom-up process. Action research illustrates the real situation in a teaching episode that needs to be evaluated in order to solve immediate conflict. In other words, action research strengthens the decision making on professional practice through critical thinking, identification of classroom situations, planning, observation, reflection, and intervention (Xu, 2009). This action research cycle is similar to the Kolb’s experiential learning cycle that promotes self-directed learning. All in all, these reflective teaching alternatives require teachers’ willingness to participate (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2008 & Xu, 2009).

2.3. Discouraging factors in reflective teaching

Though reflective teaching is beneficial for teachers, there are issues and concerns need to be addressed. Some of them are discouraging factors that can impede the practice. Time constraint seems to be the main issue in practicing reflective teaching (Richards, 2005; Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2008; Xu, 2009). Given that only 6-8 hours, which are
quite common practices worldwide, of working hours per day, one can imagine how things work for teachers who are not the solo agents in teaching and learning process. Let us say, new educational policies implemented, it implies an increase in the number of tasks teachers have to accomplish, without sufficient resources or time (Apple, 1986 in Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2008). Adapting and coping with the newly introduced policies and at the same time maintaining what have already been done are definitely time-consuming. This also coerces teachers to maximize their working time, which sometimes exceeds their working hours. Then, if let us say the teachers reflect and write journal, it takes a lot of dedication because they are time consuming in nature and can become laborious (Xu, 2009). Clearly, writing about their practices adds extra obligations to their teaching load (Nasredinne, 2008). These situational factors discourage the teachers to keep a journal and monitor their own growth.

Moreover, issues on trust (Nasredinne, 2008) and support (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2008) are also considered as discouraging factors in reflective teaching. It is about the internal working surrounding and community that hinders the willingness and commitment of the teachers to openly reveal their practices. For instance, novice teachers may hesitant to work with their other colleagues to observe their teachings due to anxiousness to be evaluated by others (Moon, 1999). Or, it can be senior teachers who are reluctant to collaborate with novice teachers as they are assigned to administrative matters that probably influence their existing teaching load. Drawing on those situations, the intention to reflect are gradually faded and discouraged. The rationale is that institutional environment or practice is one of the sources of the teachers’ belief (Suhaily & Faizah, 2013). Then, it also requires commitment to reinforce the practice which is salient to stay focused (Chong, Low & Goh, 2011).

Next, lacks of clarity on how reflective teaching works adds to the reasons why teachers do not reflect (Farrell, 2012). Since they are not evaluating themselves or being evaluated by others on their teaching, there is no urgency for them to change their routines or what they are comfortable on doing them. It happens because teachers’ professional growth is centered within their deficits rather than their strengths (Xu, 2009). Furthermore, their learning will be stagnated in which impedes teachers’ competency. It is because experience alone is insufficient as a basis for professional growth (Richards & Lockhart, 1996). Frequent checks on teachers’ personal pedagogical knowledge (Suhaily & Faizah, 2013) are required because being abreast with current needs or issues may avoid unrealistic expectations in teaching, especially among novices (Chong et al, 2011).

Last but not least, reflective teaching is indeed a practical tool to promote and sustain teachers’ growth. It is beneficial to understand the concepts and dimensions of reflective practice to avoid any misconceptions. Clarity on the theoretical aspects can establish any forms of starting points, at any procedures, in employing the practice. However, what if the opposite happens? Do teachers, who unable to define the theoretical aspects of reflection, are not aware of their teaching practice and not professionally developed? Hence, to answer those, this exploratory study is purposely conducted to investigate the reflective teaching in a second language classroom context by an English lecturer at the local polytechnic.

3. Methodology

This qualitative case study involved an exploration into an English lecturer’s teaching practice in a local polytechnic, in Malaysia. Polytechnics are higher learning institutions that are based on technical and vocational education and training (TVET) orientation. English is taught a compulsory subject to all students. Thus, English lecturers are bonded to teach all students in those institutions. However, the main objective is to investigate participant’s teaching practice in order to identify participant’s engagement in reflective teaching.

A guided question to explore this case study is:
“Too what extent does participant engage in reflective teaching practice?”

3.1. Participant

The research participant is an experienced language lecturer. She had been purposely selected due to her willingness to get involved in this study. She graduated from a local university and she has a TESL degree. She has served in polytechnic system for more than 5 years, teaching English to Commercial and Engineering students.
3.2. Instrumentation and data analysis

The data collection was conducted within 4 consecutive weeks due to the ‘saturation’ factor (Suhaily & Faizah, 2013). Three methods had been employed to obtain the information from the participant. They were namely non-participatory observation, informal semi-structured interview, and teaching journal.

Primary instrument was the non-participatory observation notes. Three classroom observations were conducted whereby the first one was done at the beginning of data collection duration. It was meant to discover initial insight of participant’s teaching practice. Then, the second one was carried out immediately a week after the first one. It was intended to establish any contexts of participant’s real practice. Later, the third non-participatory observation was carried out at the end of the data collection term. All the specific episodes of events happened in the classrooms were recorded in a self-built time-interval observation sheet that served as research field notes.

Next, participant was interviewed once the first non-participatory observation session was conducted to get information about her engagement in reflective teaching. Specific open-ended interview questions were constructed to generate responses. All responses were audio-taped with participant’s consent. The responses were then transcribed for content analysis purposes.

Simultaneously, participant kept a teaching journal. Overall, her teaching journal basically consisted of 2 to 5 entries per week. No specific templates were given to her on how to write her entries. Yet, she was suggested to share any classroom actions, works, or other related matters that she wanted to share. It was meant to preserve the ‘nature’ concept into the practice so the outcomes are authentic (Creswell, 2007).

Content analysis was employed to establish the results. Selected entries would be used to establish the coherences between the responses given, either in descriptive manner or direct written examples to what had been observed during the non-participatory observation and had been said earlier in the interview session. These were carried out to enhance the trustworthiness of the obtained data and to avoid biasness in researchers’ interpretation. It serves as a triangulation purpose too. Triangulation in qualitative data is welcomed in order to acknowledge the validity issue for the study (Clark & Creswell, 2010; Creswell, 2007). In this case, it is conducted via constant checks on multiple sources of data; observation notes, interview scripts, and journal entries.

4. Results and discussion

The main objective of this exploratory case study is intended to investigate reflective teaching practice of an English lecturer in polytechnic. Participant verbally claimed that she did not familiar with the concepts of reflective practice in teaching. Thus, this exploration aims to identify any types of engagement in her teaching practice that actually hums any reflection rhymes regardless of her claim on absent knowledge of theoretical reflection lyrics. The rationale is that, sometimes, actions speak louder than words, and all teachers reflect (Edwards & Thomas, 2010 in Yesilbursa, 2011).

First and foremost, based on the observation notes, participant displayed unscripted teaching episodes in her actions. There was sense of reflection-in-action throughout the observed sessions. These exhibited actions were categorized as impromptu actions that participant employed to respond to students’ unexpected reactions during the class sessions. Below is the summary that had been gathered from 3 non-participatory classroom observations:

| Elements     | Observation #1                | Observation #2                | Observation #3                |
|--------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Class mode   | Assessment – Listening        | Tutorial                      | Assessment – Oral presentation |
| Duration     | Single slot – 60 minutes      | Single slot – 60 minutes      | Double slot – 120 minutes     |
| APL (f)      | 13 displayed actions          | 12 displayed actions          | 41 displayed actions          |
| ADM (f)      | 5 displayed actions           | 59 displayed actions          | 21 displayed actions          |

*f = frequency

The total duration of these observed sessions accumulated of 240 minutes all together. Two out of three sessions were single slots and another one session was a double slot class. There were two types of classroom modes...
involved which were assessment and tutorial. Next, two types of displayed actions had been recorded; 1) actions based on lesson planning (APL), and 2) actions based on impromptu decision making (ADM). The exhibited actions that were displayed by participant are quite synchronized. It means that there are minor tunes can be captured based on the frequency of her actions; APL and ADM.

Based on the 3 observations; participant conducted more APL than ADM in her assessment classes. In the first observation, the frequency of APL is 13 actions as compared to 5 actions of ADM. The first observation was conducted during her 60-minute-listening-test session. Similar pattern found in the third observation whereby the frequencies of 41 APL actions were displayed throughout 120 minutes session. This session was meant for her students’ oral presentation slot. So, participant relied more on her planning and pre-conceptual guide that she had. In both sessions, participant seemed to follow her ‘script’ well. There were not much of interactions between participant and her students. In fact, it was not anticipated during those sessions. The rationale is that a nature of assessment slot is merely one way communication. It was either participant instructed the students for listening test or the students presented their group task to participant as an evaluator.

Yet, it was inevitable for participant to respond to her immediate situation during those sessions. It can be seen through her ADM actions. There are 5 actions of ADM were being displayed during the first observation. The ADMs were meant to counter-respond to what had been asked by students to clarify on the task given (during listening test). Besides that, there is frequency of 21 ADMs displayed during the third observation. Participant acted on her impromptu decisions during students’ presentation due to the improper performance by the students such as weak eye contact, mumbling or whispering, reading from scripts etc. Therefore, she prompted those students so that they were aware of their mistakes and immediately improved their performance for a better mark. Thus, it explains why participant’s actions are systematic and in line with her lesson plan. In short, the first minor tune played by participant during assessment slots is that she moved on her APLs more as compared to her ADMs due to nature of the slots.

Next, another minor tune was traced from the second observation. Participant jiggled more on her ADM actions rather than APLs during her teaching session. Even the tutorial slot was meant for 60-minutes session, the frequency of her ADMs (59 displayed actions) occupied more than a half exceeding her APL actions (12 displayed actions). One incident had happened during the session. It was a technical failure. Initially, participant planned to use PowerPoint slides and LCD projector as her teaching aids to display the lessons on phonetics symbol. Unluckily, the LCD was, unexpectedly, broken at that time. So, she had no other option besides turning to opt for a conventional method, which was via chalk-and-talk, after assessing other options; 1) looking for another LCD and wasting time, or 2) postponing the class. Hence, it reflects the concern on why her ADMs were far more than her APLs during this slot even it was meant for 60 minutes. Her spontaneous decision did not alter her confidence to deliver the contents to her students though a lot of teacher talks involved. She executed her lesson plan quite smoothly with some struggles in term of giving animated examples to make her point clearer. But, she managed and finished the lesson accordingly. Subsequently, the strong image of her reflection-in-action was visibly spelt out and audibly heard throughout this session.

These tunes are not in a similar note range given by participant in her verbal responses during the interview. She seemed to be quite oblivious about what reflective practice is and how it is conducted. This can be identified in the following excerpts:

Ok, since just now you said you were exposed to TESL background, are you familiar with the term reflective practice?
Reflective practice?
Yes, reflective practice
Ok, elaborate on it?
Ahh…reflective practice is an activity…that is related to improve teachers…to actually monitor their own professional development on reflective practice
Ok. Sorry, I’m not familiar
Ok. What about if I say reflective journal?
Umm [pause]
Meaning you need to write what have you
carried out. What you feel about your work that day. That’s what we called reflective journal. It doesn’t mean immediately after the class but might be after the whole lessons for that day and then you write... Are familiar with this activity?

I’ve heard about the journal but [pause]
But you didn’t employ in your working routine?

No

What about video-taping yourself and then from there you can evaluate yourself whether you’re good or whether you’re on the right track or whether there is thing that you need to improve. Have you tried?

No

What about audio-taping yourself?

No, never

What about during your degree years. Didn’t you are requested to go to the practicum session? Any reflective practices employed?

Oh yes. There was just a lecturer came and observed me. Then, gave comment, and I realized what was my weaknesses.

What about in current situation?

Yes, we have class observation

Oh ok. Could you elaborate?

Previous one is for the promotion DH44, for promotional purposes. There was also an evaluation by our Ketua Unit but she didn’t give any comments. It was what Ketua Unit needed to do for the SKT, our performance form.

Oh...part of the working procedure?

Yes, a working procedure

Ok. So meaning that obviously there’s none of the reflective practice activity by you and other lecturers here?

Umm...I think none…

From this excerpt, it is loud and clear that participant did not familiar with the concept of reflective practice. Though she recalled a little bit of the concept, based on her understanding what reflective practice was from researcher’s brief explanation, from her experiences that observations were considered as a reflective practice procedure. Apart from that, she never conducted any reflective procedures such as writing journal, self-evaluation through video-tapping or audio-tapping or peer observation.

However, she was practically perceptive about keeping a journal. She admitted that this procedure made her became more alert with what she did in class. Then, she said she always brought extra materials as her back up plan. Being prepared helped her to avoid wasting time which she could not afford to lose in regard to her current workload. In addition, participant had just completed her master degree as a part-time student. Still, she believed that there was still ‘room for improvement’ for her in upgrading her academic achievement and job performance. Collaborations with new staff and senior colleagues, and attending formal short term in-house training as well as external in-service courses were another sense of self-directed planning appeared in participant’s professional practice. Participant currently satisfied with her academic achievement and anticipated to share ideas from or with
her other colleagues. All these tunes are considered as humming-without-knowing-the-lyrics actions. Without participant’s ‘book definition’ of reflection, still she actively carried out the actions as they are parts of her professional growth in teaching.

Last but not least, written entries in participant’s teaching log also descriptively portrayed sequence of events that harmonize with her actions and responses that she is a reflective teacher. Based on the analyses, there are four emerging themes can be composed from her entries, as the following:

- Concerns about her students (8 subthemes)
- Concerns about her current practice (8 subthemes)
- Concerns about learning in general (4 subthemes)
- Concerns about her classroom management (3 subthemes)

Most of the time, participant recorded her concerns about her students. The concerns revolved around her narrations on her students’ emotion and reaction. For instance, she described how she motivated the students to perform or commented on the students’ proficiency. Her entries also depict on how she managed to identify students’ difficulties, disappointment, and dissatisfaction in learning. Moreover, her concerns touched on the students’ eagerness, reaction, and identity. Next, she wrote about the concerns of her current practice. Besides describing routines in the office, she expressed her frustration towards her career in term of inequality of job delegation and work culture. She shared her knowledge with others but, at the same time, addressed her weaknesses, and asked helps from others. Then, participant recorded about her concerns on learning in general. She had a positive view on adult learning. She made use of her experience as her teaching and learning tool. That is why she stated that her students’ reaction served as her instructional objective. Lastly, the least written concern identified is related to her classroom management. She was aware of classroom arrangement which was less conducive for her students especially lacks of complete desk-and-chair sets. Also, the failure of technical gadgets provided should be easily overcome if there were built-in equipment in each room. All in all, her recorded tales basically honk an obvious sound of her thoughtfulness and awareness towards her own immediate practice.

4.1 To what extent does participant engage in reflective teaching practice?

Overall, there are displayed actions and thoughts represent a reflective teaching practice in participant's current service. Though she frankly admitted that she was not familiar with the practice, her exhibited responses were saying the opposite. So, by merging the Schon's concepts and Zeichner and Liston's dimensions, it can be deduced that participant of this study is a reflective practitioner. How is it possible?

First, her exhibited responses mostly sing definite tunes of reflection-in-action concept as well as rapid reflection and repair dimension (Zeichner & Liston, 1996; Bailey et al., 2001). These can clearly been seen from her teaching efforts during the observed sessions. Her impromptu decisions display through her ADM actions. The executed measures were basically derived from reactions of her students. Her intention is easily interpreted as an effort to keep the learning progressed and became meaningful to her students. It is because connecting to the students and the subject taught is an inspiration for teaching among reflective teachers (Kahn & Walsh, 2006). Acknowledging this, instant modifications were altered by participant to simplify the explanation on the delivered content in enhancing students' learning.

Second, participant's effort to maximize students' chances to perform in their assessment tasks represented that she was a considerate and mindful lecturer. These characters are considered as personal connections to teaching, a distinguishing feature of the exploratory approach to teaching awareness (Gebhard & Oprandy, 1999). Moreover, it allows teachers to recognize their unique connections towards their immediate context. Thus, in this case, participant did not only work on her planning decisions (or reflection-on-action) but she simultaneously operated her interactive decisions (or reflection-in-action) (Suhaily & Faizah, 2014). Furthermore, her pre-planning was commonly relied on a standardized department semester teaching plan. These plans were drawn on a long-term and more systematic draft. They were composed based on participant’s previous classroom experiences in which indirectly promote the review reflection dimension’s sense into her practice. The rationale is that classroom investigation intended to complement the kinds of things teachers normally do as they teach, rather than impose additional chores on teachers (Richards & Lockhart, 1996). Moreover, participant believed that on-going evaluation towards her own practice and continuous learning effort are the forces which encourage her to blossom in her career. This is because what teachers do is a reflection of what they know and believe in which have been influenced by their experience of what
works best (Suhaily & Faizah, 2013) and their established practice (Richard & Lockhart, 1996).

Third, and probably last, tangible series of reflective notes were randomly floating in her responses. These notes have formed a subtle rhyme that practically reflects on the ‘book definition’ of reflection. Initial positive claim on keeping journal, progress display of cyclical learning from experience, and invisible planning on self-growth are few examples of participant’s reflection in which quite harmonize with other researchers’ ideal definitions of the practice (Avalos, 2011; Moon, 1999; Richards, 2005; Yesilbursa, 2011). Not forgetting, her recorded views on the students’ ability and reaction issues prove that she was aware of her current surrounding. The concerns on students’ emotion and feeling served as her instructional guide in making decisions to plan her lesson. As this commitment embraced by the participant, it alleviated her to internalize the disposition and skills to study her teaching and become better at teaching over time. These, continuously, become a central feature of the idea of the reflective teacher (Zeichner & Liston, 1996). This is very much welcomed in language teaching since it is an interactive process (Bailey et al., 2001). Hence, no doubtful concerns should be questioned on students and their learning as teachers’ sources of decision making (Suhaily & Faizah, 2014).

All in all, the aforementioned discussions prove that participant of this study is a reflective practitioner. Not exactly knowing the theoretical concept of the practice does not meant she is ignorance towards herself and her teaching. Yet, to what extent it was done? The answer is at both concepts of Schon’s reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action and it only reaches the third dimension of Zeichner and Liston’s, namely 1)rapid reflection, 2)repair, and 3)review. Hence, there is still room of improvement to participant’s professional growth particularly in enunciating her teaching into more noticeable verse of reflective practice so that her engagement is more visible. A refresher course on the basic teaching pedagogical could be one of the starting alternatives as a recommendation. Thus, there should be no more humming the rhymes without knowing the lyrics.

5. Conclusion

This exploratory case study investigated the engagement of an English lecturer’s reflective teaching in a local polytechnic context. The findings suggest that the research participant is a reflective practitioner besides her oblivious thought on theoretical concepts of reflective practice. Her reflective teaching is majorly based on reflection-in-action concept as well as rapid reflection and repair dimension that focus on the issues related to students’ emotion and reaction matters. Other than that, she also performed reflection-on-action in her lesson planning and review her decisions. Since this study is a case study, the generalization is limited due to the profundity of data analysis and sample size. Nonetheless, polytechnic English lecturers, or any educators, may benefit something about the importance to assess their own practice in synchronising their received knowledge and their experiential knowledge in keeping abreast with their professional growth demand. Finally, it is recommended that more related factors should be addressed in future studies so that the findings could be served to a wider context.

Acknowledgements

Endless thanks to my supervisor who never fail to believe in me and to the research participant who never stop to trigger my ‘academic’ senses.

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