

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study aims to examine the reflective practices on teaching practice that mainly focused on philosophy and principles of teaching employed by an Indonesian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in-service teacher. This chapter provides an overview of the research background, scope, research questions, and objectives. Moreover, it highlights the significance of the research, presents the definitions of key terms utilized in this study, and outlines the structure of the thesis.

1.1 Background of the Study

Teachers need to perceive themselves as lifelong learners and consistently assess and enhance their pedagogy. Reflective practice is a pedagogical approach employed by teachers to assess the efficacy and quality of how they teach. In all ways, the concept is not entirely novel. The utilization of reflective practice by teachers as an approach to enhancing their professional development has been a subject that has consistently gained attention and support. Roffey-Barentsen and Malthouse (2009) assert that the integration of reflective practice into the educational setting provides considerable benefits. The primary objective of implementing reflective practice is to enhance teachers' perceptions of efficacy, thereby influencing the degree of academic achievement observed among their students.

In-service teachers who are currently working and have successfully finished their initial teacher education requirements (Richards & Schmidt, 2013) can encounter a range of problems within their respective instructional settings while they are engaged in the practice of teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Despite the difficulties and limitations they may face, it is necessary for teachers to have the ability to adjust to the varied needs and expectations of their

learners. Several authors, including Williams and Grudnoff (2011), Farrell (2015), and Brandenburg et al. (2017), have stressed the necessity of incorporating reflective practice into the professional development of EFL teachers. This approach provides teachers with the opportunity to actively and systematically analyze what they are doing to teach, identify areas in which they could improve, and make any required improvements.

While the concept of using reflective practice in language instruction began to take off in the 1990s, its origins were traced to John Dewey in his book *How We Think* (1910). Donald Schon built upon the work of John Dewey in his articles from 1983 and 1987. Reflective practice in education is extensively studied in the literature, with an emphasis on teachers' professional development. Burton (2009) and Zeichner and Liu (2010) highlight the importance of reflective practice in enhancing a teacher's skills. Additionally, Farrell (2007) and Richards (1998) detail the positive outcomes that can result from adding reflective practice to language instruction. They've pointed out how it can improve students' learning environments and make teachers more efficient.

Recognition of reflective practice as an important component of teacher professional development has resulted in its growing popularity as a necessary requirement in the teaching profession. According to Zeichner and Liu (2010), McGregor and Cartwright (2011), and Zwodiak-Myers (2012), this has a significant impact on teacher professional development. In the past few years, there has been a notable increase in the significance placed on reflective approaches in teacher education programs, particularly in the context of second language (L2) teachers (Richards & Lockhart, 1996; Lyons, 2010; Wong-Tsui, 2011; Yesilbursa, 2011; Roux et al., 2012).

Although reflective practice is recognized as a significant component of language teaching, there is a lack of consensus among scholars regarding the practical implementation of reflective practice for language teachers (Mann & Walsh, 2013). According to Farrell (2019), a limitation of existing frameworks is that they primarily focus on retrospective reflection, where participants reflect on

cognitive aspects by answering questions about classroom events without considering the role of the teacher in the reflection process. Freeman (2016) argues that those frameworks restrict reflection to a problem-solving process rather than utilizing reflection as a means to attain self-awareness and comprehension.

Farrell (2015) proposes a comprehensive framework for reflection that encompasses both cognitive and non-cognitive dimensions, distinguishing it from other existing approaches. He developed a comprehensive framework for English teachers to enhance reflective practice. This framework acknowledges the significance of teachers' inner lives, such as the spiritual, moral, and emotional aspects, which extend beyond their knowledge base.

In the Indonesian context, reflective practice was supported through government regulation. The initial implementation of reflection in Indonesia was conducted through the lesson study process as an effective strategy to address the challenges associated with inadequate learning methodologies, as outlined in Government Regulation No. 19 of 2005 pertaining to National Education Standards. Furthermore, the reflections of the teacher were also encompassed in Minister of National Education No. 16 of 2007 issued by the Republic of Indonesia, mandating teachers to employ reflective practices as a means to enhance the quality of education. However, it is regularly constrained to the area of teacher professional development through the utilization of classroom action research (Burns & Rochsantiningsih, 2006; Milligan, 2011; Sandra S.A. et al., 2011).

In relation to the 2013 curriculum, teachers are mandated to engage in reflection about the design and implementation of instructional strategies and evaluative measures. Nevertheless, existing regulations do not offer explicit guidance about the practice of teachers' reflection (Yanuarti, 2017).

Similar to the previous curriculum, the present Indonesian education curriculum, known as the "Merdeka" curriculum in 2022, is governed by Regulation No. 16 of 2022 issued by the Ministry of National Education of

Indonesia. This regulation emphasizes the importance of teachers engaging in reflection regarding the design and implementation of instructional activities and assessments. According to the book of Guidance of Learning and Assessment in the 'Merdeka' Curriculum in 2022, it is necessary for teachers to engage in reflective practices at least once every semester. However, the government has yet to put out clear guidelines or a comprehensive structure for teachers to engage in reflective practice. For that reason, many teachers are still not involved in this process on a regular basis. Other reasons for this may include a lack of time (La Sunra et al., 2020), understanding (Cirocki & Widodo, 2019; Derinalp, 2022), and support (Hajar et al., 2019) that reflection is a necessary or valuable part of their teaching practice.

A large number of studies have been conducted in Indonesia regarding reflective practice in EFL settings. The majority of research has primarily focused on reflection, which encompasses only cognitive aspects. As an illustration, several studies concern teachers' perceptions of reflection in teaching (Yanuarti & Treagust, 2016; Azizah et al., 2018; La Sunra et al., 2020; Derinalp, 2022; Permana et al., 2023). Some other studies focus on how it is implemented using tools and methods that can be used to support reflective practice (Azizah et al., 2018; Hamidah and Yusuf, 2019; Cholifah et al., 2020; Salim et al., 2021). As a sample, a study conducted by Ahsanu et al. (2020) explores how Indonesian English Language Teaching (ELT) practitioners engage in reflecting on their teaching practices. The study also investigates their efforts to incorporate new ideas and techniques into their classrooms. Thus, the aforementioned research focuses mainly on cognitive aspects, specifically examining how teachers acquire and incorporate new ideas and creative approaches into their instructional methodology that are achieved through the utilization of various reflection strategies that have been deemed beneficial.

In contrast to previous research that concentrated on how EFL teachers perceive and implement reflective practice, Saputra et al. (2020) and Sari et al. (2021) go farther by examining reflective practice as a mean to explore teaching

beliefs. Saputra et al. (2020) conducted a study among three EFL teachers in Indonesia. The findings of this study show that teachers' personal experiences as students and years of teaching experience both influence their beliefs. In a different investigation by Sari et al. (2021), the research use of reflective practice as a way to enhance the proficiency of Knowledge of Technology Pedagogical Content (TPACK). The research study discovered that the integration of reflective practice can serve as an effective method for enhancing the Pedagogical Content Knowledge Technology (TPACK) of teachers who are already in service. The process of teachers engaging in reflective practice enables them to effectively describe and communicate their personal teaching experiences. Through this practice, they are able to gain valuable insights from the experiences they encounter in the classroom. Furthermore, they can then apply the knowledge and skills acquired through this reflective process to enhance their future teaching. The beneficial process described highlights the significance of reflective practice for EFL teachers in effectively incorporating technology into their teaching methods.

Although those studies touched on non-cognitive aspects of reflective practice, the discussion was limited to reflection on their teaching practice to explore their current beliefs without delving into their origin or source. However, reflecting on teaching philosophy and principles is crucial because it can explore the root of the teacher's beliefs in the teaching practice. A philosophy of practice implies that every observable behavior of a teacher has a reason guiding it, even if that reason is implicit or not immediately apparent (Farrell, 2019).

Since a teacher's philosophy and beliefs are the inner self that guides their actual teaching actions (Palmer, 1998; Farrell, 2015), this study aims to explore a deeper understanding of the inner self of an in-service EFL teacher that drives the teaching approach by reflecting on the teacher philosophy and principles suggested by Farrell's (2015) framework. This reflection on teacher philosophy and principles leads to teachers' self-awareness which allows them to align their actions with their core principles and make intentional decisions in the classroom.

Additionally, the use of the narrative inquiry method in this study on reflection among EFL teachers in Indonesia offers a unique and valuable approach to understanding their beliefs and experiences. Through personal stories and narratives, this methodology has the potential to reveal the personal beliefs of EFL teachers explicitly. By making these beliefs explicit, teachers can engage in meaningful reflection, gaining insights into their backgrounds and past experiences and ultimately leading to better-informed and more effective teaching practices.

The inclusion of narrative inquiry in current research pertaining to reflective practice for in-service EFL teachers addresses a void in the current body of literature. It enhances the acquisition of knowledge by providing fresh insights, alternative perspectives, and innovative methodologies, particularly in the context of a diverse and multilingual country like Indonesia. By highlighting the experiences of EFL teachers in Indonesia with reflective practice, this research can help improve the quality of language education in the country and support teacher professional development.

The findings of this research can provide valuable insights for the enhancement of teacher education programs, curriculum designs, and professional development initiatives that are specifically designed to address the unique requirements of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers in Indonesia.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the research background, this study aims to address two primary research questions:

- 1) What and how is the Indonesian in-service EFL teacher's understanding of reflective practice?
- 2) How does the Indonesian in-service EFL teacher reflect on the philosophy and principles of teaching promoted by Farrell's (2015) framework?

1.3 Aims of the Study

In accordance with the research questions, the primary objectives of this study are as follows:

- 1) To acquire an understanding of reflective practice from an Indonesian in-service teacher.
- 2) To provide insights into an in-service Indonesian EFL teacher's reflective practice on teaching philosophy and principles.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on how an in-service EFL teacher in Indonesia understands reflective practice and how she reflected on her teaching experiences. A participant in this study was selected based on her teaching experience as an in-service teacher, her experience conducting reflective practice during her career as a teacher, and as an exemplary teacher. This study's conceptual framework was derived from Farrell's (2015) theories concerning reflective teaching practices. Through narrative frames and semi-structured interviews as the main data, supplemented by observation and document analysis, the participant reflected on her teaching in terms of philosophy and principles.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The results of this study are expected to contribute theoretically and practically to the existing body of literature on reflective practice among in-service English teachers in the classroom and shed light on the current state of the field more broadly. Theoretically, this research can address the gap in the literature on reflective teaching by examining the reflection process undertaken by in-service English teachers in Indonesia. It is hoped that the use of narrative frames for reflection can deepen the discussion of research techniques in the practice of reflective EFL teaching in Indonesia.

Furthermore, it is intended that the findings of this study lead to the most significant consideration of Indonesian EFL in-service teachers becoming

reflective practitioners in their current practice. Taking these things into account can help them advance their careers in a better way. As a result of understanding and practicing reflection, it is expected that teachers are able to continuously enhance and assess their actions to improve their teaching practice, consequently contributing to their professional development.

1.6 Clarification of the Key Terms

Throughout this work, there are a few key words that describe how things work, and it's important to explain what they mean to avoid confusion and miscommunication.

Reflection: In this study, reflection is defined as a proactive process of introspection, analysis, and evaluation of personal experiences, attitudes, beliefs, thoughts, and feelings. It is used to promote personal and professional development, enhance self-awareness, and improve performance in the context of classroom teaching.

Reflective Practice: In this study, "reflective practice" refers to a more structured and intentional approach to reflection where educators intentionally reflect on their own experiences and actions in their teaching in order to improve their effectiveness and student learning outcomes.

EFL Teacher: In this study, the term "EFL" refers to "English as a Foreign Language." It specifically pertains to the teaching of the English language to individuals whose first language is not English. The EFL teacher involved in this study is professionals who specialize in instructing non-native speakers of English.

In-service teacher: "In-service teacher", in this study refers to teacher who is currently employed and working in a school or educational institution. The teacher has completed her initial training and is actively engaged in teaching and carrying out her professional duties. She is also actively engaged in ongoing professional development to enhance her skills and knowledge.

1.7 Thesis Organization

This study has been divided into five chapters. The introduction is the first chapter. It includes the rationale or background of the study, the objectives and questions of the study, the scope of the investigation, the significance of the study, the definition of words, and the organization of the study.

The second chapter is entitled "Theoretical Framework," and it describes the theoretical underpinnings and dimensions pertinent to this study. This foundation is used as the foundational reference for this research. It was also utilized as the basis for developing the study's instruments, guiding data analysis and collection, and drawing the study's conclusion.

In Chapter III, Research Methodology, the research design utilized to answer the research questions in this study is described. It includes problem conceptualization, the design of the study, the participant, data collection, and data analysis.

Chapter IV contains the results and discussion. It examines the entire result and discussion discovered in this study based on the data collected using all techniques of this study's data gathering and evaluated using this study's framework.

Conclusions, limitations, and recommendations comprise Chapter V. This chapter addresses the conclusions drawn from the study's findings and debate. In order to provide recommendations for pedagogical practice and additional research on the issue of this study, the limitations and drawbacks of this study were also discussed.

1.8 Concluding Remarks

This section lays the groundwork for this thesis. The introduction opens with a discussion of the current study's context. Therefore, it presents the concept of reflective practice, which is the central subject of this study, and emphasizes the increasing significance of the field of English language teaching (ELT). This chapter continues by describing the research's objectives and methods. An

explanation of the current research's significance, its scope, and a definition of key terms follow. Finally, a research outline is offered.