

Reflective Teaching: An Approach to Enrich the English Teaching Professional Practice

Reflexión: un acercamiento para enriquecer la práctica profesional en la enseñanza de inglés*

Marian Lissett Olaya Mesa

marian.olaya@uptc.edu.co

Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia, Sogamoso, Colombia

This study provides an overview and exploration of 23 national and international reflective teaching research reports. The purpose of this study is to determine the extent that reflective teaching can become a strategy for language teaching professional development. Based on content analysis four main topics emerged: (a) reflective teaching as an approach to enhance the language profession; (b) impact on teacher's performance; (c) support, time, and effort; and (d) in-service professional development. Conclusions indicated that reflective teaching is an alternative to raise awareness about English language teaching, and as a means to encourage teachers to open their minds, update their teaching methodologies, and make adjustments to their lessons.

Key words: English teaching professional practices, professional development, reflective teaching, reflective teaching strategies.

El interés principal de este estudio es explorar la enseñanza reflexiva para contribuir con el mejoramiento de las prácticas profesionales de los profesores de inglés. Este estudio exploratorio se centra en la identificación y explicación de las estrategias de enseñanza reflexiva y la comprensión de veintitrés informes de investigación llevados a cabo en ámbitos nacionales e internacionales. Basado en un análisis

* Received: May 24, 2017. Accepted: February 8, 2018.

How to cite this article (APA 6th ed.):

Olaya Mesa, M. L. (2018). Reflective teaching: An approach to enrich the English teaching professional practice. *HOW*, 25(2), 149-170. <https://doi.org/10.19183/how.25.2.386>.

This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License. License Deed can be consulted at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>.

References

- Ahmad, I., Said, H. B., Zeb, A., Rehman, S., Ahmad, S., & Khan, W. (2013). How reflective practice improves teachers' classroom teaching skill? A case of community based schools in district Chitral, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. *Social Sciences and Humanities, 4*(1), 73-81.
- Al-Issa, A., & Al-Bulushi, A. (2010). Training English language student teachers to become reflective teachers. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 35*(4), 41-64. <https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2010v35n4.4>.
- Álvarez, J. A. (2009). *An exploration of Colombian EFL teachers' knowledge base through teachers' reflection* (Master's thesis). Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas, Bogotá, Colombia.
- Ashour, S. (2008). *Exploratory practice: An alternative tool for understanding life in the language classroom* (Master's thesis). University of Exeter, UK.
- Bailey, K. M. (1997). Reflective teaching: Situating our stories. *Asian Journal of English Language Teaching, 7*, 1-19.
- Bett, H. K. (2016). The cascade model of teachers' continuing professional development in Kenya: A time for change. *Cogent Education, 3*, 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2016.1139439>.
- Camacho, D. Z., Durán, L., Albarracín, J. C., Arciniegas, M. V., Martínez, M., & Cote, G. E. (2012). How can a process of reflection enhance teacher-trainees' practicum experience? *HOW, 19*(1), 48-60.
- Cárdenas, M. L., González, A., & Álvarez, J. A. (2010). El desarrollo profesional de los docentes de inglés en ejercicio: algunas consideraciones conceptuales para Colombia [In service English teachers' professional development: Some conceptual considerations for Colombia]. *Folios, 31*, 49-68. <https://doi.org/10.17227/01234870.31folios49.67>.
- Castro, A. Y., & Martínez, L. (2016). The role of collaborative action research in teachers' professional development. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development, 18*(1), 39-54. <https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v18n1.49148>.
- Christodoulou, I. (2010). *Teacher self-reflection* (Diploma thesis). Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic.
- Cote, G. E. (2012). The role of reflection during the first teaching experience of foreign language pre-service teachers: An exploratory-case study. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal, 14*(2), 24-34. <https://doi.org/10.14483/udistrital.jour.calj.2012.2.a02>.
- Ditchburn, G. M. (2015). Remembering reflection in pre-service teachers' professional experience. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 40*(2). <https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2015v40n2.7>.
- Erginel, S. Ş. (2006). *Developing reflective teachers: A study on perception and improvement of reflection in pre-service teacher education* (Doctoral dissertation). Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey.

- Fandiño, Y. J. (2011, May). Reflective teaching in EFL teacher education programs. *ASOCOPI Newsletter*, 13-21. Retrieved from http://www.academia.edu/647444/Reflective_teaching_in_EFL_teacher_education_programs.
- Giraldo, F. (2014). The impact of a professional development program on English language teachers' classroom performance. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, 16(1), 63-76. <https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v16n1.38150>.
- González, A. (2007). Professional development of EFL teachers in Colombia: Between colonial and local practices. *Íkala, Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura*, 12(1), 309-332.
- Impedovo, M. A., & Khatoon Malik, S. (2016). Becoming a reflective in-service teacher: Role of research attitude. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 41(1). <https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2016v41n1.6>.
- Jerez, S. (2008). Teachers' attitudes towards reflective teaching: Evidences in a professional development program (PDP). *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, 10(1), 91-111.
- Mathew, N. G. (2012). Reflective classroom practice for effective classroom instruction. *International Education Studies*, 5(3), 205-211. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v5n3p205>.
- Mizell, H. (2010). *Why professional development matters*. Oxford, US: Learning Forward.
- Núñez, A., & Téllez, M. F. (2015). Reflection on teachers' personal and professional growth through a materials development seminar. *HOW*, 22(2), 54-74. <https://doi.org/10.19183/how.22.2.151>.
- Pedro, J. (2006). Taking reflection into the real world of teaching. *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, 42(3), 129-132. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00228958.2006.10516449>.
- Rayford, C. R. (2010). *Reflective practice: The teacher in the mirror* (Doctoral dissertation). University of Nevada, Las Vegas, USA.
- Saylag, R. (2012). Self-reflection on the teaching practice of English as a second language: becoming the critically reflective teacher. *Procedia: Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 46, 3847-3851. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.06.158>.
- Schön, D. A. (1987). *Educating the reflective practitioner*. San Francisco, US: Jossey-Bass.
- Soisangwarn, A., & Wongwanich, S. (2014). Promoting the reflective teacher through peer coaching to improve teaching skills. *Procedia: Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 116, 2504-2511. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.01.601>.
- Tairab, H. H. (2003). The role of reflection in facilitating pre-service primary school teachers' professional growth. *Journal of Faculty of Education*, 18(20), 1-21.
- Trujillo, S. M. (2015). *Reflective inquiry on strategic reading instruction* (Master's thesis). Universidad de Antioquia, Medellín, Colombia.
- Viáfara, J. J. (2005). The design of reflective tasks for the preparation of student teachers. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*, 7, 53-74.
- Zalipour, A. (2015). *Reflective practice: Teaching development unit*. Retrieved from https://www.waikato.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/360861/Reflective-Practice-June-2015.pdf.

The Author

Marian Lissett Olaya Mesa holds a BA in foreign languages from Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia and an MA in English language teaching for self-directed learning from Universidad de la Sabana (Colombia). She has been an English language teacher for nine years in which she has gained a lot of experience teaching English for engineering programs. She is currently the coordinator of the international language institute in the city of Sogamoso (Colombia).

Appendix: Protocol Proposal

The purpose of this reflective teaching protocol is to provide teachers with an opportunity to grow professionally on their own by means of a set of reflective stages that can be conducted individually or with colleagues within a school. This protocol is designed to be implemented in a month. However, teachers have to bear in mind that reflective teaching is a process and must become a habit to provide concrete results. To reach the objective of a protocol the author of this study suggested the following stages based on the literature exploration carried out:

Observation Stage

1. Plan a 40 minutes lesson on the topic of your interest. Do it in your usual manner.
2. Set up the classroom in order to videotape your lesson.
3. When you are at home, in a calm area, watch the video and answer the following questions:
 - a). What were the aims of the lesson? Did you or your students reach them? How do you know that?
 - b) What roles did you play as a teacher within this lesson?
 - c) What difficulties did you have within this lesson?
 - d) How can you improve those difficulties next time? Set a suggestion list (e.g., look for articles or research papers that address those issues).
4. Ask a friend to watch the video; your friend must tell you about your weaknesses and strengths and some suggestions to improve your teaching.
5. Compare your suggestion list with your friend's advice and update a plan in order to improve on the issue you found.

Writing Stage

1. Keep a lesson report for four days in which you specify aims of the lessons, strategies you used to foster students learning process, your roles as teacher, the assessment and evaluation procedures, the outcomes, and the issues you may encounter.
2. Based on the lesson reports, write entries in your journal in which you reflect. Some guiding questions are: Are your lessons effective? Why/why not? Did you

find the same weaknesses you found during the videotaping stage? Why do you think the same issues keep appearing?

Action Plan

1. After videotaping and writing on your performance in class, set up an action plan in order to provide solutions to the issues you encountered and to improve your lessons.
2. Put your plan in action and keep writing lesson reports daily and a journal weekly.

Reflective Feedback

You can answer this stage after a month of the implementation of your plan. Ask the following questions:

- Are your lessons different? How?
- Do your strategies encourage an effective students' learning process? Explain.
- Is your role as a teacher different?
- Do you consider that this RT process has shaped your professional practices?