

**EXPLORING REFLECTIVE PRACTICE AMONG UNIVERSITY
ENGLISH TEACHERS IN YEMEN: A CASE STUDY**

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**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA
2014**

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Abstrak

Refleksi merupakan satu alat pengajaran yang penting bagi guru dalam pendidikan tinggi. Dengan membuat refleksi terhadap prestasi pengajaran, guru boleh memahami refleksi untuk pembangunan profesional serta pembelajaran dan pengajaran yang bermakna. Oleh kerana kepercayaan dan amalan adalah komponen yang penting dalam amalan reflektif, pemahaman yang lebih mendalam tentang cara guru melibatkan diri dalam amalan refleksi perlu diterokai. Kajian terdahulu memberi tumpuan utama kepada kepercayaan guru terhadap refleksi. Walau bagaimanapun, tidak banyak yang diketahui tentang cara refleksi yang diamalkan dalam kalangan guru Bahasa Inggeris di universiti di Yaman pada masa kini. Kajian ini meneroka cara refleksi diamalkan di sebuah universiti swasta di Yaman dengan menggunakan kaedah kajian kes kualitatif untuk mendapatkan gambaran tentang fenomena ini. Data telah dikumpul melalui pendekatan penyelidikan pelbagai cabang termasuk temu bual separa berstruktur, pemerhatian separa berstruktur, catatan jurnal, dan perbincangan kumpulan berfokus. Lima orang guru yang mempunyai sepuluh tahun pengalaman mengajar dipilih sebagai informan utama. Enam hingga sepuluh orang pelajar yang diajar oleh setiap informan telah mengambil bahagian dalam perbincangan kumpulan berfokus. Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan satu skim pengkodan. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa guru terlibat dalam pelbagai peringkat, jenis, dan corak refleksi. Elemen refleksi yang pelbagai memperlihatkan bahawa refleksi guru disebabkan oleh dua jenis faktor, iaitu faktor yang membolehkan dan faktor yang mengekang. Kajian ini memperlihatkan bahawa guru perlu sentiasa melibatkan diri dalam refleksi secara formal, berkala, serta perlu berkolaborasi dengan pelajar, rakan sekerja, dan pentadbir untuk tujuan pembangunan profesional. Kajian ini mempunyai beberapa implikasi. Secara teorinya, kajian ini memberikan kesedaran yang kritis pada peringkat refleksi yang berbeza. Secara praktiknya, kajian ini memberi maklumat yang mendalam tentang amalan reflektif yang berkesan kepada guru, pentadbir, dan pembuat keputusan, khususnya berhubung proses dan kesesuaian amalan ini dengan pendidikan guru. Dari segi metodologi, kajian lain boleh mengupayakan pendekatan yang sama untuk memahami fenomena yang kompleks berkaitan pembelajaran dan pengajaran. Kajian penyelidikan selanjutnya diperlukan untuk meneroka peranan pentadbir universiti dan penggubal dasar untuk menggalakkan refleksi yang berkesan.

Kata kunci: Amalan reflektif, Proses refleksi, Kepercayaan guru, Guru universiti, Yaman

Abstract

Reflection is an important teaching tool for teachers in higher education. By reflecting on the teaching performance, teachers can make sense of reflection for professional development and meaningful teaching and learning. Given that beliefs and practices are important components of reflective practice, more in-depth understanding of how teachers engage in reflection needs to be explored. Previous studies mainly focused on teacher's beliefs about reflection. However, little is known about how reflection is currently practiced among the university English teachers in Yemen. This study explores how reflection is practiced at one private university in Yemen by employing a qualitative case study method to gain insights into the phenomenon. Data were collected through a multipronged research approach including semi-structured interviews, semi-structured classroom observations, journal entry and focus group discussions. Five teachers with ten-years of teaching experience were purposively selected as the key informants. Six to ten students taught by every informant took part in the focus group discussions. Data were analyzed using a coding scheme. The findings indicate that the teachers engaged in various levels, types and patterns of reflection. The multifaceted elements of reflection revealed that teachers' reflection was caused by two types of factors namely enabling and constraining factors. The study demonstrates that teachers need to constantly engage in formal, regular and collaborative reflection with students, colleagues, and administrators for professional development. The study provides several implications. Theoretically, the study leads to a critical awareness of the different layers of reflection. Practically, it gives teachers, administrators and decision-makers in-depth information about effective reflective practice, in particular, its process and relevance to teacher education. Methodologically, other studies can employ a similar approach to understand any complex phenomena related to teaching and learning. Further research studies are required to explore the roles of university administrators and policy makers in promoting effective reflection.

Keywords: Reflective practice, Reflection process, Teacher's beliefs, University teachers, Yemen

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, my thanks should go to Allah Almighty for making this dissertation easy for me.

I would like to express my appreciation and thanks to my supervisor, Datin Dr. Minah Harun, for all her support, insights and valuable comments without which this dissertation would not be possible. I am very grateful to her. I will never forget her encouraging and motivational words which stimulated me to continue during the tough times of my PhD study. It has been an honor to be her first PhD student to graduate.

I am thankful to Mr. Al-Aasaly who was the first person to push me to pursue my PhD study.

I would like to acknowledge the support of many people at UST who assisted me to accomplish this research study: Prof. Dawood Al-Hidabi, Dr. Al-Bahji, Dr. Al-Mahjari, Dr. Al-Amrani, Dr. Mas'ood, Dr. Al-Mizgagi, Dr. Al-Athwari, Dr. Al-Ward, Dr. Al-Makhdari, Mr. Al-Hussaini, Mr. Shuja'a, Mrs. Al-Sharjabi, Mr. Al-Thahbani, Mr. Al-Mashni, and Mr. Al-Mua'yad.

I also acknowledge the efforts of the instructors and students who volunteered their times to be part of this research study.

I am very grateful to the committee members whose evaluation and comments contributed to the improvement of this dissertation.

Last, but not least, many thanks to all of my family members and all other friends whose Dua'a inspired me throughout my PhD study. Particularly, I wish to thank my parents, my wife and children, and my brothers and sisters.

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List of Abbreviations

UST University of Science and Technology

SU Sana'a University

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The concept of reflective practice is not new. Rather, it dates back to Dewey (1910) who was inspired by Plato. Today, this concept has become very common not only in education but also in some other fields like nursing, the police force, counseling, social service and clinical pharmacy, and appears in almost every professional training mission statement or policy document as an espoused objective of professional training (Barry, 1996). Stemming from this view, teachers' lifelong professional development can be achieved through reflective practice (Biggs, 2003) and the ability of teachers to professionally develop can be enhanced by constantly constructing knowledge through reflection (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2001; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1996; McAlpine & Weston, 2000).

The use of reflective practice in teacher professional development is based on the beliefs that teachers can enhance their own teaching professional development by consciously and systematically reflecting on their teaching practice (Farrell, 2007, 2008; Gimenez, 1999). Reflective practice can ensure that teachers' work is going smoothly (Bailey, 1997) and provide teachers with an opportunity to develop awareness of the beliefs and assumptions underlying their practices (Fook & Gardner, 2007). Previous research on teacher reflection (Fensom, 2007; Lyons, 2006; McAlpine & Weston, 2000; Mena Marcos, Sanchez, & Tillema, 2009; Munoz, 2007; Wlodarsky & Walters, 2006) reveals that the teacher can better understand his/her

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