

Perceptions and Practices of EFL Pre-service Teachers about Reflective Teaching

Zainab Alsuhaibani

Department of English language and Literature,
College of Languages and Translation
Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Abstract

Current theories of teacher education and teaching expertise as a process consider teacher/ student teacher reflection one of the main ways of learning how to teach effectively. Such theories of teacher expertise reinforce the claim that teachers who engage in reflective practices can develop a deeper understanding of their teaching, assess their professional growth, develop informed decision-making skills, and become proactive and confident in their teaching. Given the importance of reflective teaching, this case study focused on exploring pre-service teachers' perceptions and practices of reflection in teaching. Three student teachers took part in the study. Portfolios, reflective journals, observations and discussions were used to collect the data. The qualitative analysis showed that pre-service teachers generally believed that reflection was useful and helpful, particularly at the beginning of their teaching experience. Then, it became just a repetitive routine act. Analyzing pre-service teachers' practices, the study indicated that student teachers' reflection was general, brief, and mostly descriptive in nature. Pre-service teachers did not really engage in effective reflection practices. The study suggested that there is a need for reconsidering reflective teaching in undergraduate courses of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL).

Keywords: beliefs, English as a Foreign Language (EFL), expertise, portfolios, practices, perceptions, pre-service teachers, portfolios, professionalism, reflection, reflective teaching, reflective writing, student teachers, tacit beliefs, teachers

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