



STUDENTS' FEEDBACK AS A TOOL FOR REFLECTION: A NARRATIVE INQUIRY OF AN INDONESIAN PRE-SERVICE TEACHER

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ABSTRACT

As one of the reflection tools for pre-service teachers, the students' feedback becomes the basis for improving and developing their teaching skills. This reflection is really valuable so that they can use to evaluate the way they behave in their EFL classroom and to gather information from the students about their perceptions of teacher practice. In this study, the contribution of students' feedback to the teaching performance of a pre-service teacher when doing teaching practicum was investigated. Using narrative inquiry design, this study focused on examining the experience of one of pre-service teachers during three months teaching practicum. Data were obtained from the diary written by the participant after teaching and getting feedback from six students in one of vocational schools in Tasikmalaya. Furthermore, the data were analyzed using narrative analysis (Ozyildirim, 2006) in order to find the use and contributions of this reflection tool for her teaching performance. The findings show that students' feedback becomes the valuable tool encouraging the pre-service teacher to frequently reflect and evaluate what she did in the classroom. It helps her to see the progress of her teaching performance from the students' point of view and also figure out her strengths and weaknesses in teaching. Therefore, she can usually create better teaching performance and provide effective interaction and techniques in the classroom.

Keywords: students' feedback, reflection, narrative inquiry

INTRODUCTION

Tresna, the pre-service teacher in Tasikmalaya, should join teaching practicum in her seventh semester. For her, teaching practicum is a very great experience. She narrated that she can do all the teachers' activities and has many lessons from her teaching practicum experience. When she was teaching in the class, she frequently felt that she had to improve her teaching skills. She realized that the lack of knowledge and experience she has in the teaching process can be a significant problem challenging her to help students get their learning objectives. She thought that her teaching abilities could be improved through reflection. This kind of activity is very essential because it is the vital factor to meet the breadth and depth of teacher professional knowledge (Claudia, 2015). Even now self-reflection in the context of sustainable professional development is used as a key concept of teacher education (Korthagen & Vasalos, Loughran; 2005). However, there are many tools she can use for reflection; Photovoice, Video, portfolio, and feedback (Bowers, 2017; Wade & Yarbrough, 1996; Anseel, Lievens & Schollaert, 2009). However, she preferred to

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use feedback because it provides useful information from the students' perspectives for measuring performance compared with expectations (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). In this context, she is the only pre-service teacher who used feedback as a tool to improve teaching performance at the school. Quinton & Smallbone (2010) stated that reflections made by the teacher can be supported by using feedback from students. She was impressed by her six students who faithfully gave feedback to develop her abilities in teaching. Students' feedback is an effective way to inspire and enhance a dialogue among teachers and students, because students are contributions from those who have experience of living mental illness (Patterson, 2016). In order for student feedback to be used effectively to change teacher practices, active involvement with data is needed to obtain good changes. The feedback provided by students can provide many benefits; one of them is to improve her professional development in teaching. She can get information about the effectiveness of their practices and the parts identified for further learning that is where she can improve her professional development (Mandout, 2018).

Hattie (2009) claimed that professional development in the students' feedback process is relatively untested, while professional development has been shown to increase teachers' knowledge and the impact on teacher practice and student learning are less significant. The recent studies stated that students' feedback gave a good effect for the teacher (Floden, 2016; Banoobhai, 2017; Calvert & Hilliam, 2018). However, from them all the methodologies they used have been revealed only by description, rarely using narrative inquiry. Therefore, this study is conducted in order to tell the story and obtain a deeper thoughtful of the ways of the pre-service teacher use students' feedback as the reflection tool for her teaching performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. The Use of Reflection in Teaching Professional Development

Reflection is a tool that teachers can use to observe and evaluate the way they behave in their EFL classroom. Kind of self-awareness is a power for a teacher, especially when there are so much of what and how they teach can change in the moment. According to Cruickshank (1981, p.553) in *Reflective Language Teaching from Research to Practice* (Farrell, 2015), reflection as a process that helps the teachers to think about what happened, why it happened, and what else could have been done to reach their goals. It is a response to past experience and involves conscious recall and examination of the experience as a basis for evaluation and decision-making and as a source for planning and action. Besides, reflection gives many benefits to the teachers in the following ways (Farrell, 2015):

1. It frees the teacher from routine and impulsive action.
2. It helps teachers become more confident in their action and decisions.
3. It provides information for teachers to make informed decisions.
4. It helps teachers to critically reflect on all aspects of their work.
5. It helps teachers to develop strategies for intervention and change.
6. It recognizes teachers are professionals.
7. It is cathartic experience for practicing (and novice) teachers.

The process of reflection supports the professional development of teacher in EFL classroom. The use of reflection in professional development is based on confidence which can improve teaching by consciously and systematically reflecting on their teaching experience (Farrell, 2004). Wallace in Markovic (2007) said that professional competence will emerge if the cycle of professional development, practice and reflection is repeated. In addition, Zalipour (2015), claims that the practice of reflection in teaching shows several objectives, including:

1. Teacher's self-reflection as a tool for self-knowledge
2. Reflection for professional development
3. Reflection to aid research on teaching

4. Reflection to enhance student learning experience
5. A teaching and assessment tool (e.g. Reflective journal)

Reflection becomes building block of the professional development of teachers as a basis for continuous professional education, which starts in the preparatory education. Supriadi in Hasan Tanang & Baharin Abu (2014) states to improve professional development a teacher should be have five aspects, there are:

1. Teachers are committed to students and their learning.
2. Teachers are mastering the subject and how to teach.
3. Responsible to monitor student learning outcomes through various means of evaluation.
4. Able to think systematically.
5. Teachers should be a part of the learning community within the profession.

Becoming the teachers does not mean that they can stop learning but they usually need to reflect and evaluate their practices in the classroom. Teachers need to usually have a commitment to their students and learning so that they can deepen their mastery to the subject and develop their method in teaching. In addition, teachers also need to be responsible to help students get their learning objectives. Because teaching is not only the way to deliver the material but also the process to help learner develop their language skills. Finally, they also need to have their learning community to usually have an insight about pedagogical knowledge. Therefore, they can grow in their own and develop their teaching professionalism.

B. The Concepts of Students' Feedback

Students' feedback can be defined as the use of formal processes to gather information from students about their perceptions of teacher practice, teacher effectiveness and the quality of educational programs (Richardson, 2005). Hattie (2012) defines feedback as pure information "provided by agents (eg teachers, peers, books, parents, experiences) regarding aspects of one's performance or understanding". However, researchers are generally agreed on Ramaprasad' definition about feedback: "feedback is information about the gap between the actual level and the reference level of the system parameters used to change the gap in a certain way" (Ramaprasad, 1983). Based on the statement, the feedback should include information about the given goal (feed-up), the level of students' actual performance (feedback) and what should be done to approach the criteria (feedforward) (Black & William, 2009; Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Ramaprasad (1983), emphasizes that the changes for information to be feedback, must be "used to change the gap in a certain way". Feedback is not just information, but the whole process: "Effective feedback can be defined as feedback where information about performance was previously used to promote positive and desired development" (Archer, 2010).

Usually, the most common method for gathering feedback is through assessing students the level of their satisfaction and perceptions of learning outcomes at the end of the subject. Mars and Dunkin (1992) identified four main uses of student feedback:

1. Providing feedback to teachers on their practices
2. As a measure of teacher effectiveness for administrative purposes
3. To provide information for prospective students in course selection
4. Data for use in research on teaching

Students' feedback becomes the valuable tools helping teachers to have the information about her teaching practice viewed from the students' point of view. By having feedback from the students, teacher can evaluate and measure the effectiveness of her teaching in order to see her weaknesses in the classroom and develop her teaching. Moreover, it also becomes the sources for the teacher in order to know the students' understanding and can be used for research and evaluation in the classroom. By having this kind of tool, she can effortlessly reflect how much students understand the material and plan the effective strategies for the next teaching performance.

METHOD

The study was taken based on the experience of the pre-service teacher written on the diary. Using narrative frame, the told story of pre-services teacher using students' feedback as the reflection tool was investigated to find out its contribution on her teaching performance. Fontana and Frey (2008) explained that narratives are vehicles that can bring the words and stories of the participants alive.

This research was conducted during three months in one of Vocational High Schools in Indonesia. The participant was the 21 years old female student who was at seventh semester at the university in Tasikmalaya. She had limited teaching experiences and usually had desire to improve her teaching skills using reflections from the students' feedback. After teaching, she usually asked her 6 students to give her feedback related to her teaching performance to find out their point of view about her teaching. It is conducted to help her reflect and evaluate what she did in the classroom and to develop her weaknesses and improve teaching performance (Okumus & Yurdakal, 2016). Furthermore, data came from diary made by the participant after getting students' feedback. There are fourteen diaries that were made after each teaching while doing teaching practicum. Finally, data were analyzed using narrative analysis; it is used to develop an in-depth perspective of participants' experiences in relation to certain phenomena (Reismann, 2002). Therefore, narrative analysis was conducted to focus on the stories, as a focus of exploration in this study. Ozyildirim (2006) claimed that there are six phases narrative analysis that explore language learning and teaching experiences (as cited by Akinsanya & Bach, 2014): Abstract, Orientation, Complication, Resolution, Evaluation, and Coda.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Through Narrative Analysis, She finally found that students' feedback can encourage her as pre-service teacher to develop her teaching performance. Teaching practicum is a very memorable experience in her mind, because it was the first time she taught at school. Previously, she has taught English in TELL course for the needs of the assignment and it was only peer teaching. So, her teaching experience is quite low even though she has learned the material of teaching. The lack of her experience in teaching led her to a number of problems. She always feels that her teaching performance was not good as she previously expected and she still needs to improve her ability in teaching performance. However, as a teacher, of course she wants to create an effective learning atmosphere, so that every learning goal is achieved.

Oct 26th 2018

They rushed to answer the question I gave, so the class became active. But still, students say that I speak too fast.

Oct 24th 2018

They were still not happy when I used English as a whole, they asked me to explain in two languages.

Oct 5th 2018

I see students less interested when I teach only used power point by explaining using full English.

When she was first placed at the school, she was immediately placed in the safekeeping class. When teaching the class, many things happened that were out of her control. These things actually affected her too. She planned to use teaching method and the material, but then suddenly they had to be changed to be suitable with the class situation. From this experience, there arose a sense of awareness that she needed to change. She finally asked the students to write feedback in the last of teaching learning process. Henceforth, she could know students' point of view about her performance in teaching, it helped her improve her Teaching Professional Development and know her weaknesses in teaching and she could know what the students' want in teaching learning process. Here is the students' feedback made by students based on the learning process they have received. Feedback forms the basis for the progress of the changes that she has to make.

Students' Feedback #1: First Trouble

I think sometimes you explained with a sentence that I don't understand and make me confused. (Student 1)

The learning explained by the teacher is very clear, but the teacher is in such a hurry that I cannot record the material. (Student 2)

When explaining it, it is not too long winded but that makes students less understanding when explained use full English. (Student 6)

As in feedback #1, the problem occurred that students did not understand the material she has explained by using full English. In Addition, the students could not get the entire material because she explained it too fast. Unconsciously, it becomes a problem in the learning process. Moreover, she learned how to control some words she spoke to them during teaching. Sometimes she used to speak faster and try to change it slowly when explaining the material by using English. It can be concluded that there is a tendency for her as a pre-service teacher to control communication ways. This control comes from the way she uses language. Learning foreign language with the help of Indonesian language is not something new and has been widely debated and discussed. Most studies showed good perception towards the use of first language in second language classroom (Latsanyphone & Bouangeune, 2009; Castilla, Restrepo & Perez-Leroux, 2009; and Paradis, 2010). Basically, speech rate, as one of the main factors, caused one of the major difficulties in evaluating comprehension. Slow rate of speech is generally believed to be usually easier to comprehend than natural speech rate; this gives the students enough time to process the stream of information at a slower rate of delivery (Hayati, 2010).

Thus, she was confused with the students who do not understand the material. She taught whether it is grammar error while speaking, the sentence was not clear, or they did not use English when learning. This makes her think that she needs to explain the material with English and Indonesia language. Here is the data:

Diary #1: Solution of The First Trouble

Oct 31st 2018

They showed a confused expression, difficult to understand even after I repeatedly explained the material, starting from using English, bilingual until finally I used Indonesian.

To overcome the problem, at the next meeting, she also tried to control her speech. If in the past she used full English and her speed was too fast, in the next meeting she tried to change it by speaking bilingually. Although the mentor teacher direction still requires me to use English, she again considers the ability of students and to achieve learning goals. It turned out that when she changed the way of her speaking, students were more focused and able to capture the material well. In addition, as stated by Casey & Carter (2016), the teacher first needs to know the skill level of the student and then match the method appropriately. It means teaching cannot always be implemented for every student. Students' ability is the main consideration for delivering lessons in the right way.

In addition, student also expresses that the media she used was boring while another student said the teaching learning process was not interesting. Here is the clarification of it:

Feedback #2: Second Trouble

I felt boring, the problem was just attacking the one from the PowerPoint. (Student 6)

She explained use the material by using PPT, I don't interest in the PPT because it makes us boring, because there are no interesting images and music there. (Student 2)

Miss Tresna uses PowerPoint, I don't think that there is a special learning activity today. (Student 3)

Even, we can see in the data #2 if they felt bored during the first meeting, maybe because they are already accustomed to see—presentations or teaching only using PowerPoint. They feel that there is nothing special about learning because there is no picture or music. It makes them less interested in learning and lack of enthusiasm. They were often sleepy, because the classroom atmosphere is quiet without any sound that improves mood like music, which is heard only by people talking in class, effects of slideshows and people walking outside the classroom so that their concentration is out of focus.

However, after getting feedback from students, she hesitates in considering media that she used in which the media could help the teaching process then get the goals of learning. She realized that media as tool which help her in teaching process is important. Without media, the process of teaching learning is hard to understand by the student, especially in complex material in English as foreign language. She immediately changed the media that she used by using other media that were more interesting and innovative. It was all proven by the diary she made at the time, as showed below:

Diary #2: Solution of The Second Trouble

Oct 17th 2018

The discussion began and I explained procedure text using PowToon media. Whatever happened, this time they were very orderly not like the first meeting. It turns out that giving videos makes students not feel sleepy, they feel interested.

She uses PowToon as a media which consist of effect and back song that make the student excited with the teaching process while delivering the material. Besides, she also provides the videos as a powerful way to get students to follow the learning process. They even seemed to enjoy learning by showing their singing while playing videos related to the subject matter. Sometimes she also used Prezi in learning, they seem interested because it is the first time they have learned to use new media such as PowToon and Prezi. This activity is implemented in every meeting. Arsyad (2011) pointed out that the use of teaching media in teaching and learning can generate new desires and interests, to encourage motivation and stimulation and learning activities, and even brought a psychological influence on students. With the use of teaching media in teaching and learning activities, students and teachers get more benefit changes.

Furthermore, student 3 faced another problem in Procedure Text material and provided suggestions that he felt in every teaching learning need practiced.

Feedback #3: Third Trouble

Actually, how to teach in the procedure text chapter, maybe it would be more fun if practiced. (Student 3)

Every time she delivered the material, sharpening the students' understanding are always done by giving students the task to review the material that has been taught. Tasks are given individually and in groups. Feedback is given by students who regret if group assignments are not presented in front of the class. He felt that the task given is useless or underappreciated. It makes him dissatisfied in appreciating the results of their thoughts because they cannot share what they have prepared to be presented in front of the class. Instead of that, in every teaching learning she always gives the exercise to master the material, but sometimes the time of the teaching is suddenly up because of some reasons such as the previous teacher took my time for teaching. She realizes that each group assignment given must be presented and given reward. The students revealed that they are enthusiast to become more active in the class.

Feedback #4: Students' Feedback

Miss Tresna always gives rewards to active students and it becomes the enthusiasm of students to be active. (Student 5)

But, when Miss Tresna gives a reward for the material, I'm enthusiastic to get that reward. It tuned out that reward built me to be more enthusiastic in learning. (Student 6)

As a form of appreciation for them, rewards are given to groups that make the best presentations. Giving rewards is implemented not only during group presentations but also when reviewing previous lessons at the beginning of learning. Students also feel happy and enthusiastic to get a star so it is not uncommon for the class to be noisy because they scramble to answer the questions that she gives that will make them get a reward. Giving rewards to students in teaching activities provides many benefits; students will feel happy in learning, so indirectly they will try to be the best. There will be a good relationship between teacher and student, so students will feel comfortable and comfortable in learning. Training students to be more eager to understand and master learning and the last are to improve students' abilities and skills in learning (Payne, 2015). Reward is very good to use because it can increase students' interest in learning and motivation to achieve satisfactory student achievement. Reward also provides best stimulus to students.

From the first, second and third problems, which are the use of voice speed rate, the use of full English in delivering material and the use of instructional media, from those problems that the teaching learning done by the teacher must be developed, because as a good teacher, we need to know which one is the best teaching learning strategy for the student. Innovative teaching methods that provide contribute in learning experience can help improve student achievement (Riley et al., 2017). The goal can be achieved in various ways in learning, not just focusing on one way. Therefore, the reflection carried out by the teacher through feedback as a basis for adapting the material depends on the needs of the student can improve the teaching and learning process as a result and improve teacher professionalism in teaching (Vilegas, 2003).

Students' feedback can increase her professionalism in teaching. The students' feedback helped her to see the progress of her teaching performance. In addition, through students' feedback she learned about her strengths and weaknesses in teaching. For further teaching learning, she can know how to teach in an effective way without wasting time. It can obviously improve the ability of her abilities in teaching performance, as said by Guskey (2002: 382), increased learning makes changing the teacher's beliefs about certain aspects of teaching or teaching innovation.

The results of this study found some aspects that must be possessed to improve professionalism in teaching performance (Supriadi, 1998), namely the aspect of teacher in-depth mastering the subject and how to teach, responsible to monitor student learning outcomes through various means of evaluation and able to think systematically. Through students' feedback she can get information about what should she does in teaching such as showing videos and new innovative media in every lesson that makes students more interested in learning. Monitor students' knowledge by giving assignments and reviewing previous material by giving rewards to students who are active in the class making students more enthusiastic in learning. Feedback in the form of advice was made as reflection and was corrected as soon as possible in the next lesson. This proves that students' feedback greatly contributes to improve her professionalism in teaching performance. The results of this study corroborate the previous study carried out by Flooden (2016); Banoobhai (2017); Calvert & Hilliam (2018). The result of the study state that students' feedback can give a good effect for teacher. Moreover, the good effect given by students' feedback was also felt by her. It can improve the Teaching Professional Development that she has.

CONCLUSION

Students' feedback becomes a vital tool helping the pre-service teacher to usually reflect her teaching performance in the class. Having limited experience and knowledge about pedagogical competence encourages her to have feedback gathered from the students to enhance her professionalism in teaching. Students' feedback really gives contribution because it helps to see the progress of her teaching performance from the students' point of view and also figure out her strengths and weaknesses in teaching. Having known the students' voice related her teaching practices, especially about the use of media and method for teaching, she can usually create better teaching performance and provide interesting techniques in the classroom. Therefore, the teaching learning becomes effective and efficient.

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