

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Reflective Practice has emerged as an effective tool for university teachers to analyze their practice and promote professional careers in teaching. Reflective practice in general is when university teachers take responsibility for looking at their teaching practices, as well as the philosophies, beliefs and theories that underpin those practices, both inside and outside the classroom, to make their teaching practices personally meaningful to them (Farrell, 2018). Reflective practices play an important role in teachers' attitudes and practices when implementing English language learning to students. Therefore, it is important to understand and study the different forms and levels of reflective practices, as well as how these practices contribute to choosing instructional approaches that meet the needs of teachers to teach English as a Foreign Language (Almutawa & Alfahid, 2024).

Schön (1983) explained that the concept of reflective practice is divided into two types, which are reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. Reflection-in-action is the process of thinking silently that accompanies action and constantly interacts with and modifies ongoing practice in such a way that learning occurs (Iqbal, 2017). Hatton & Smith (1995) explain that reflection-in-action, which can also be referred to as active or interactive reflection, is defined as the conscious thinking and modification done by the teacher while teaching. Similarly, Loughran (1996) states that reflection-in-action is used when facing unanticipated problem

situations, which consists of reframing the problem and improvising on the spot, so the experience will be seen in another perspective.

Reflection-on-action, on the other hand, can be described as thinking back to what we have done to discover how our knowledge-in-action can contribute to unexpected outcomes (Schön, 1983). According to Leitch and Day (2000), reflection-on-action is the serious consideration and retrospective analysis undertaken by teachers at different levels such as university teachers of their teaching performance to gain new knowledge from their teaching experience. More specifically, through reflection-on-action, university teachers think about previous teaching experiences and evaluate them to see if there are alternatives to reach either similar or even better results in the future (Burhan-Horasanlı & Ortaçtepe, 2016).

Reflective practice for EFL teachers can be done in various ways (Aryal, 2024; Korau et al., 2024). Cirocki & Farrell (2017) and Richards & Farrell (2005) describe several ways that EFL teachers can reflect including writing reflective journals/diaries, peer observation of teaching, lesson study with feedback from fellow teacher-educators, and reflecting with digital technology. The first method is writing reflective journals, also known as teacher diaries, which are valuable tools for teachers that can be used to experiment, constructively critique, and express frustrations during teaching practice (Bailey, 1990). The journal helps teachers become more aware of the teaching-learning process and their strengths and weaknesses (Cirocki & Farrell, 2017). In addition, Cirocki and Farrell (2017) also noted that reflective journals also contribute to building educational discourse, which is then shared with other reflective practitioners.

The second method to engage in reflective practice is peer observation. Peer observation is a platform for reflecting on pedagogical practice, which involves instructional collaboration between practitioners (Bell, 2005; Bell & Mladenovic, 2015). It can provide a dialogic space for practitioners to improve teaching practice, increase commitment, develop self-efficacy, put theory into practice, increase critical awareness of students' learning experiences, emphasize good teaching practice, improve feedback skills, develop a sense of collaboration, and model peer and self-assessment for students (Cirocki & Widodo, 2019; Hammersley-Fletche & Orsmond, 2006; Jones & Gallen, 2016; Sivan & Chan, 2009).

The third method for reflective practice is lesson study. Lesson study is an approach taken by teachers to study issues related to teaching and learning processes such as curriculum, teaching, and learning for students (Akiba et al., 2019). Lesson study also consists of structured planning, teaching, and reflection and aims to maximize student learning opportunities (Vescio, Ross, & Adams, 2008). Reflective practice in lesson study helps teachers to adjust their expectations and experiences regarding future learning processes. This technique is also another strategy to engage teachers in critical reflection, which allows them to examine their classrooms and learn from their actions in the classroom when conducting teaching practices (Mertler, 2012).

The last method, EFL teachers can reflect on their practice by utilizing digital technology. There are several studies that have revealed that the use of digital photography (photovoice), video recording, personal blogs, or Facebook can encourage teachers to analyze critical incidents in the classroom from various perspectives, understand them better, and find out why such incidents may occur

(Farrel, 2018; Kuswandono, 2014; Widodo & Ferdiansyah, 2018). In addition, Syndor (2016) revealed that reflective practice by using the development of digital technology can encourage teachers to closely observe classroom dynamics in action and replay critical incidents if necessary.

The concept of reflective practice is probably as old as the discourse on education itself. Although it has deep historical roots, reflective practice remains highly relevant in contemporary educational contexts. Mann and Walsh (2013) argue that reflective practice is a constructive and essential activity that plays a central role in teachers' professional development. Therefore, it should be continuously sustained and promoted within the field of education (Azizah et al., 2018). Reflection has long been recognized as a fundamental component of teacher development, as it forms an integral part of the teaching and learning process and enables teachers to identify and address problems in their instructional practices (Dewey, 1933; Farrell, 2015; Maharani et al., 2025).

In today's rapidly changing educational landscape (marked by technological advancement, diverse student needs, and evolving curricula) reflective practice becomes even more crucial. Farrell (2018) explains that through reflective practice, teachers can critically examine their relationships with students, their professional values, their abilities, as well as their successes and failures within practical teaching contexts. By continuously exploring their attitudes and beliefs about the teaching profession, teachers can refine their pedagogical approaches and ultimately enhance the quality of education experienced by their students (Aryal, 2024).

Farrell (2015) explains that the framework for reflecting on practice has five different stages or levels of reflection. The five-stage framework for reflecting on practice consists of philosophy, principles, theory, practice and beyond practice. The philosophy is to explore teachers as individuals and highlight that teachers' professional practices are guided by a basic philosophy that they have developed since birth. Teachers discuss their personal lives and how their past experiences have shaped their teaching philosophy. Then, there is principle as the second stage, which involves reflection on teachers' assumptions, beliefs, and conceptions about teaching and learning. These three elements are part of a single system; they are difficult to separate because of significant overlap, and they are also part of the same chain of meaning related to principle.

In the third stage, there is a theory, which explores and analyzes the choices made by teachers when analyzing specific skills to be taught or how to apply the theories they believe into their teaching practice. The fourth stage, practice, is divided into two parts: teachers reflecting on themselves while teaching (reflection-in-action) and after teaching (reflection-on-action). When teachers engage in reflection-in-action, they consciously step back while teaching, monitoring, and adjusting to various situations that arise in the classroom. When teachers engage in reflection-on-action, they analyze what happened in a lesson afterward, and this is a more delayed form of reflection compared to the previous one. The fifth and final stage, going beyond practice, encompasses the sociocultural dimensions of teaching and learning, which require exploration and examination of moral, political, and social issues that influence teachers' practices, both inside and outside the classroom.

Among the five levels of the framework for reflecting on practice outlined by Farrell (2015), one of the most important is the fourth level, namely reflective practice. As described by Cirocki & Farrell (2017), at this stage teachers begin to implement theory into practice, improve classroom practice, and enable teachers to develop professionally by learning from classroom-related experiences. This fourth stage also addresses reflection-in-action (reflecting while teaching) and reflection-on-action (reflecting after teaching), which are one of the topics in this study. Additionally, this stage helps teachers to become more aware of their strengths, weaknesses, and feelings in the classroom, which eventually leads to more effective teaching and stronger relationships with students.

Recently, reflective practice among EFL teachers in Indonesia has received increasing attention from researchers. Several studies have explored how teachers understand and apply reflection as part of their professional development. For instance, La Sunra and Sahril (2020) investigated the level of reflection among EFL teachers in Indonesian schools, emphasizing reflective practice as a way to evaluate teaching experiences and recognize both strengths and weaknesses. Using a qualitative approach with purposive sampling, the researchers collected data through observations, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and documentation involving seven junior high school teachers in Makassar. The findings revealed that teachers generally perceived reflective practice as an evaluative process that contributed significantly to improving classroom learning. However, their reflections remained mostly at descriptive and dialogic levels, while heavy workloads and limited understanding of reflective practice were identified as major obstacles.

Building on the issue of teachers' limited knowledge, Nurkamto and Sarosa (2020) reported the results of an intensive reflective teaching training program organized by the English Education Department of Sebelas Maret University. The program involved 30 English teachers from Islamic senior high schools in Surakarta and aimed to develop reflective teaching habits. The study found that many participants initially struggled to implement reflective practices due to insufficient understanding. Nevertheless, after completing the training, their awareness and comprehension of reflective teaching improved, suggesting that professional development programs can play a crucial role in fostering reflective habits.

In addition to experienced teachers, reflective practice has also been examined among novice educators. Derinalp (2022) explored how beginning English teachers in Indonesia conceptualize reflective practice. Conducting qualitative interviews with six novice EFL teachers from junior and senior high schools in West Java, the study employed thematic analysis to interpret the data. The findings indicated that participants primarily understood reflective practice as a problem-solving strategy. Several themes emerged, including knowledge-sharing activities, reflective processes to enhance teaching, and professional development tools. The study recommended that teacher education programs provide reflective practice as a distinct module to support teachers in developing a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the concept.

Similarly, reflective practice among experienced teachers was further examined by Permana et al. (2023), who focused on six professional English teachers in West Java with more than ten years of teaching experience and who had completed the teacher professional education program (PPG). Through a qualitative

case study design involving interviews, observations, and document analysis, the researchers found that reflective practice was still applied in a limited way despite teachers' experience. Participants viewed reflection mainly as evaluation and introspection that supported professional growth, but they relied heavily on student feedback and peer observation. This suggested that their understanding of reflective practice was not yet fully developed.

To gain a deeper perspective on reflective teaching among professional educators, Maharani et al. (2025) conducted a qualitative case study investigating how reflection shapes teachers' philosophies and professional identities. The study involved three Indonesian EFL instructors with master's degrees and over nine years of teaching experience. Data was collected through six rounds of semi-structured interviews and reflective journals guided by a reflective framework. The findings demonstrated that teachers' pedagogical beliefs and practices were strongly influenced by personal experiences, contextual constraints, and reflective engagement. Reflective practice was shown to support identity development and enhance teachers' responsiveness to students' needs, aligning Indonesian findings with global reflective teaching research.

While many studies have examined reflective practice in school contexts, understanding reflective practice at the tertiary level remains essential. Addressing this gap, Picauly (2024) explored the types of reflective practices commonly used by EFL teachers in higher education. This qualitative study involved questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with eleven tertiary-level EFL teachers from a private university in Salatiga. The findings revealed that participants demonstrated a strong commitment to reflection through reflection-in-action, reflection-on-

action, and reflection-for-action. The study emphasized that reflective practice plays a key role in fostering continuous professional growth through self-awareness and self-assessment.

Although the number of studies examining reflective practices among English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers in Indonesia continues to increase, there are still several important gaps in existing research. Previous studies have mostly focused on reflective practices at the school level, involving EFL teachers at the junior high and high school levels (La Sunra & Sahril, 2020; Derinalp, 2022; Permana et al., 2023), while few studies have explored how reflective practices are applied in the context of EFL teaching at the university level. Although some studies have discussed reflective teaching practices among experienced educators and highlighted their influence on professional identity and pedagogical philosophy (Maharani et al., 2025), detailed investigations into how EFL teachers at the university level engage in reflection during their teaching practices are still limited.

Furthermore, there are also studies that rely on interviews or training evaluations (Nurkamto & Sarosa, 2020; Derinalp, 2022), with little emphasis on capturing reflective practices through diverse qualitative data sources simultaneously. To address this gap, this study aims to explore reflective practices among university-level EFL teachers in Indonesia using a qualitative approach that integrates classroom observation, reflective journal writing, and semi-structured interviews. Therefore, this study aims to explore the reflections of some EFL teachers teaching at university or higher education level on their reflective-in-action and reflective-on-action during their teaching practice by using Farrel's (2015) reflective practice framework.

1.2 Research Questions

This study was designed to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the reflection-in-action that in-service EFL teachers reflect on during their teaching practice in English Language Education Study Program at Universitas Negeri Jakarta?
2. What is the reflection-on-action that in-service EFL teachers reflect on during their teaching practice in English Language Education Study Program at Universitas Negeri Jakarta?

1.3 Purposes of the Study

Based on the research topics outlined above, this study aims to:

1. Find out about the reflection-in-action that in-service EFL teachers reflect on during their teaching practice in English Language Education Study Program at Universitas Negeri Jakarta.
2. Find out about the reflection-on-action that in-service EFL teachers reflect on during their teaching practice in English Language Education Study Program at Universitas Negeri Jakarta.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the reflective practices of English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers in higher education and their impact on the development of their teaching practices. The participants in this study consisted of three EFL teachers currently teaching at Universitas Negeri Jakarta, one of Indonesia's higher education institutions. The study was conducted over one semester and involved

systematic reflection on classroom activities and teaching approaches. During the semester, participants engaged in continuous reflection through various methods such as teaching journals and classroom observations, which aimed to explore how reflective practices contributed to their professional growth and improved teaching effectiveness.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The results of this study are expected to be useful for many parties both theoretically and practically, especially for English teachers and prospective teachers who want to know more about teaching and learning methods that have been carried out by other experienced teachers. Theoretically, it can be a reference for further research related to reflective practice at the tertiary level of education. This study can also be used as a review of issues related to the use of reflective practice in the teaching practice of in-service teachers who teach at the Tertiary level of education. In addition, this research can also be used as an evaluation study of the curriculum used in the English Education Study Program, Faculty of Language and Arts, Universitas Negeri Jakarta.

Practically, this study can be used as a valuable input for lecturers on the importance of reflective practice and will help teachers at the higher education level to improve the creation of a comfortable environment for students and reflect on the teaching process that has been carried out. This research is also expected to help prospective teachers to realize the importance of reflective practice in improving their teaching ability. In addition, this study can also serve as a reference for teacher

education programs in designing curricula that emphasize self-evaluation and continuous professional development.

1.6 State of The Art

Reflective practice is essential for teacher development in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, as it helps teachers better understand their decisions, evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching, and encourage improvements for student learning. Although there is already a lot of research supporting the importance of reflection for improving their teaching, there is still a significant research gap regarding EFL teachers at the university level, as most studies focus on school level teachers and pre-service teachers. The lack of research on university level EFL teachers is particularly critical because they face unique teaching demands and different professional expectations. By understanding their reflection processes, we can better describe existing teaching practices and identify areas that require further training or professional development.

1.7 Clarification of Key Terms

To ensure clarity and consistency throughout this study, several key terms are defined as follows:

1. **EFL (English as a Foreign Language)** refers to the teaching and learning of English that takes place in non-English speaking countries, where English is not used as the main language of communication in the daily lives of the people (Alonso, 2015).

2. **TLE (Tertiary Level of Education)** denotes the stage of education provided at universities or other higher education institutions, typically following the completion of secondary education (Franklin, 2008).
3. **RJW (Reflective Journal Writing)** is a process in which individuals, particularly teachers in this study, engage in regular written reflections about their teaching experiences, thoughts, and insights to enhance self-awareness and professional development (Amirkhanova et al., 2016).
4. **RP (Reflective Practice)** is the ongoing process by which educators critically examine their actions and decisions in the classroom to improve teaching effectiveness and promote continuous learning (Schön, 1983).

