

Developing Rukwangali Language Student Teachers of Reflective Practice Through Lesson Reflection

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Abstract: Lesson reflection is crucial for instructors' ongoing professional development, according to a wealth of literature in teacher education. In actuality, lesson reflection is a requirement that every teacher must carry out at the conclusion of every session provided. An effective teacher is required to reflect on each lesson effectively and critically after it has been taught. This a qualitative study which plugs its thrusts into John Dewey's and Schön concept of reflective practice. The purpose of this study was to ascertain the value of lesson reflection to Rukwangali student teachers and to understand the reasoning behind their distaste for it. 50 Rukwangali student teachers were purposefully chosen, and they were divided into 5 groups of 10 students each. Focused group discussions were used to collect data, which was then analysed thematically to identify emerging themes. The results show that student teachers are well aware of class reflection, its value, and the proper timing for doing it. Their only issue is that they lack knowledge and prefer to do tasks when there is pressure to submit them for grading.

Keywords: Rukwangali Student Teachers, Lesson Reflection, Continuous Professional Development; Reflection, Reflective Practice

I. INTRODUCTION

In teacher education, an abundant of literature (Richieri, 2017; Yalcin Arslan, 2019; da Ponte, 2017; Coşkun, 2017) have established the importance of lesson reflection to aid continuous professional development of teachers. Substantively, lesson reflection is a need that awaits every teacher to execute at the end of every lesson delivered. Lesson reflection is known to have close ties with lesson planning and lesson delivery, wherein it would be deemed unusual for one to talk about lesson reflection in seclusion. As studied by Kelly (2020) where she underscores that an effective teacher should be a reflective teacher who naturally reflect frequently to make alterations to instructions as reflection is a process and it keeps revolving. An effective teacher is required to reflect on each lesson effectively and critically after it has been taught. Lesson planning is a creative process that allows teachers to synthesize comprehension of first language acquisition and the language teaching pedagogy with teachers' knowledge of their learners, curriculum and the teaching context. This is the time where teachers envision the learning they want to occur and analyze how all the pieces of the learning experience should fit together to make that vision a classroom reality. Likewise, writing a lesson plan illuminates a number of important effects. First it

gives teachers the opportunity to think deliberately about the choice of lesson objectives, the type of activities that will meet these objectives, the sequence of those activities, the materials needed, how long each activity might take and how learners should be grouped. Teachers are able to draw lines between one activity and the next, the correlation between the current lesson and any past or future lessons, and the relationship between learning activities and assessment practices. Because the teacher has considered these connections, and can now make the connections explicit to learners, the lesson will be more meaningful to them. Hence, a teacher with a plan is a more confident teacher.

Equally important, as teachers are aware after every lesson planning, the next step is to deliver the lesson to a group of learners in that specific subject which will culminate into a lesson reflection. Bozkurt and Yetkin-Özdemir (2018) delineate that reflection is a process where by teachers draw conclusions on their performances regarding a specific task. At the end of the process, teachers are able to tell whether or not their teaching was successful or unsuccessful. This study aimed at determining motives why Rukwangali student teachers despise lesson reflections even when they know is a need for every teacher and develop ways to resuscitate the love for lesson reflection and encourage reflective teaching amongst student teachers in the language of Rukwangali.

A. Problem statement

The researcher has found that, from 2016 to the present, Rukwangali student teachers and other students who were observed during the teaching practise do not reflect on their lessons right away but rather wait until the teaching practise is over and only do so when asked to submit lesson plans taught along with their lesson reflections. Because of the passage of time, reflections might not be as accurate as those made immediately after teaching the lessons. Given this context, a study was conducted to determine the value and challenges of lesson reflections for teachers' ongoing professional growth and the recommended frequency of lesson reflections.

B. Delimitations

Students who do not major in Rukwangali as a school subject in the senior primary phase of the bachelor's degree in education Honours were excluded from this study. This is

because the study was limited to Rukwangali student teachers who are in their third year and fourth year respectively in 2022.

C. Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

- 1.3.1. What is the significance of lesson reflection for student teachers?
- 1.3.2. What challenges do Rukwangali student teachers encounter during lesson reflection?

D. Significance of the Study

Discovering reasons why Rukwangali student teachers do not have the courage to reflect on each and every lesson they teach shed more light on the following results:

- Increased teachers' understanding on the importance of lesson reflection towards their profession;
- Adoption of ways on how effective lesson reflection could be done.

Henceforth, this study contributed to the existing literature in the field as very little evidence is there to indicate how important lesson reflection is to language student teachers. The results of this research may benefit the Rukwangali teachers, the lecturers as well as the Ministry of Education and the University of Namibia to come up with ways to ensure that all teachers and student teachers reflect on each lessons they teach without being forced. Moreover, through the data and analysis this research provided future researchers with information to explore other approaches to lesson reflection in preventing educators from falling short in lesson reflection.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The guiding thread that wove this study is the concept of "reflective practice," for two of the most influential theorists, Dewey (1933) and Schön (1983), who have provided some basic ideas for a common understanding of the term. Dewey sees reflective practice as a systematic thinking task where teachers use evidence obtained from past experience and their knowledge or beliefs to make sensible decisions about their teaching instead of reaching poor decisions based on routine. In other words, reflective practice and problem-solving tasks are similar in Dewey's view. Building on Dewey's work, Schön (1983) extends the concept of reflective practice to account for the continuity of the thinking process by introducing the aspect of timeframes in which reflection takes place. Reflection can happen both before and after obtaining teaching experience (reflection-on-action), as well as during the actual teaching process (reflection-in-action). Schön claims that teachers base their decisions regarding their upcoming teaching experiences on their understanding of their prior learning. Teachers look at what they have encountered while teaching in an effort to "correct" the mistakes they have made (or reflection-as-repair as termed by Freeman, 2016).

The concept of reflective practice is related to this study in the sense that the study aimed determining the value of lesson reflections for teachers' ongoing professional growth and the recommended frequency of lesson reflections. This concept of reflective practice talks about the aspect of timeframes in which reflection takes place, in this case the frequency of Rukwangali student teachers on lesson reflection and also look at what they have encountered while teaching in an effort to "correct" the mistakes they have made.

A. The notion of lesson reflection and its importance

Reflection has been extensively discussed by academics, who have also classified it in many ways. Based on its purpose, structure, and timeframe, Chang (2019) compiled a list of the various types of reflection that academics have discussed. According to function, reflection includes introspective thinking and reflective practise in the classroom. According to structure, scaffolding, reframing, and debriefing, reflection also includes introspective thinking about past actions, contemporaneous thinking about current activities, and anticipatory thinking (reflecting on future actions). Heyler (2015) argued that reflection is all-encompassing and involves more than merely recalling the past. People naturally reflect on their experiences in an effort to better comprehend what has transpired and make sense of it; the concept of learning from the past, particularly when attempting to avoid repeating mistakes, is good standing.

The impact of reflective teaching practises on teachers' classroom and teaching skills was examined in a study on Pakistani teachers conducted by (Nilsson, Andersson, I., & Blomqvist, K. (2017).; Orakcı, 2021) the researchers discovered a notable improvement and increase in the teaching skills of teachers who received reflective practise training. Additionally, it was discovered that the teachers created more creative lesson plans for themselves, offered practical answers to issues that arose in the classroom, and had more productive interactions with their coworkers, students, and parents.

Reflective teaching practises contributed to a rich environment and resource for realising English language skills, a purposeful learning-teaching process, a reflective and interactive teacher-student communication, a significant increase in students' success, as well as a significant contribution to teachers' professional development—a finding that was also considered to be significant in Aydomuş's (2017) study.

B. Approaches to lesson reflection for teachers

Several studies have concentrated on the recording and evaluation of video classes to encourage reflection (Es, & Dryer, 2015; Santagata, Zannoni, & Stigler, 2007). Some of these plans only call for the implementation of video recording hardware, while in other instances video annotation and coding software is also used (e.g., Clarke, Chen, Bickel, Sherer, & Resnick, 2015; McFadden, Ellis, Anwar, & Roehrig, 2014). Such retrospective video analysis promotes reflection throughout the teaching cycle, aids in zooming in on specific

instances to find patterns and connections between teacher movements and student learning, and facilitates joint discussion and reflection with peers and supervisors (Mosley Wetzel, Maloch, & Hoffman, 2017). (Melville, Bowen, & Passmore, 2011).

III. METHODS

The purpose of qualitative research, according to several eminent qualitative researchers (Creswell 2002; Pope & Mays 1995; Denzin & Lincoln 1994), is to in-depth analyse, interpret, and explain social occurrences in their contexts. For this reason, the study used a qualitative research design. The purpose of this study was to ascertain the value of lesson reflection to Rukwangali student instructors and to understand the reasoning behind their distaste for it. 50 Rukwangali student instructors were purposefully chosen, and they were divided into 5 groups of 10 pupils each. Focused group discussions were used to collect data, which was then analysed thematically to identify emerging themes.

IV. FINDINGS

As this study sought to unravel motives why Rukwangali student teachers despise lesson reflections even when they know is a need for every teacher and develop ways to resuscitate the love for lesson reflection and encourage reflective teaching amongst student teachers in the language of Rukwangali. The following findings were deduced from the semi-structured interviews conducted:

When asked to define what lesson reflection entails, they all said that lesson reflection is the type of reflection that is done immediately after the lesson was taught to evaluate results and find solutions to the problems encountered. From their explanation, one can deduce that the students know exactly what lesson reflection is and when it should be done.

When asked what discourage them from reflecting on their lessons after they have taught, most of them alluded that they normally emulate from their support teachers whom they find at the schools where they are placed as they have seen it a norm that the most important thing is to teach the learners not to reflect on the lesson. From this observation, the teachers in schools should foster a culture of lesson reflection amongst them so that the student teachers they are mentoring emulate good lesson reflection practices.

While the majority spoke on emulation, the others expounded that the reason for them not reflecting on lessons is because they see it that it wastes their time, because they have other important things to do such as planning 70 lessons and designing teaching aids for their lessons. And the only time they think is the right time to reflect on their lessons is when the tenure of teaching practice has lapsed and the lecturers are asking for their teaching practice files for grading.

When asked to speak on the experiences of reflecting on lessons after four to three months of delivering the lessons. They said that it is not an easy task as you cannot vividly remember how

the lesson went on, what went well and the hiccups. Instead, they ensure that the task is done by fabricating narratives on how each lesson went. As a result, most of the narratives are too short, lacks logic and not coherent, repetitive and does not reflect on what really happened.

When asked to speak on whether or not lesson reflection is important to them. The majority said lesson reflection is important to them according to how they were taught during the theory lessons at the university, however, not much emphasis is placed upon the task of lesson reflections as some lecturers when they observe them during their teaching practice they barely ask for their files and see whether or not the previous lesson was reflected on. They added that, to them it seems the focus of the lecturers is only on teaching not lesson reflection.

When asked how do they think they could be helped to cultivate the culture of lesson reflections amongst them, they said, they feel if the lecturers want to see that the students are reflecting on lessons everyday immediately after each lesson is taught, they should be strict by assigning each school with a mentor teacher who ensures that the teachers are reflecting on their lessons and report to the university using a spreadsheet and also look at the lesson reflections and sign. In so doing, the student teachers will take the task of lesson reflection seriously and ensure that they reflect accordingly.

When asked to speak on the role reflection play in professionals' teaching practice. They all said that lesson reflection helps student teachers and teachers alike by knowing what went well in their lessons, what did not and how they can change whatever did not go well in the lesson for the betterment of their learners and for them to facilitate lessons effectively.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to ascertain why it is challenging for student teachers to reflect on lessons right away after they have been delivered and to identify strategies for enhancing lesson reflection among student teachers of the Rukwangali language at the University of Namibia. We can infer from the study's findings that student instructors are fully aware of lesson reflection, its value, and the how and when to do it. Their only issue is that they lack knowledge and prefer to do tasks when there is pressure to submit them for grading. Thus, the analysis suggests the following:

- Rukwangali language student teachers should be under strict supervision while on teaching practise to make sure they reflect right away after lessons are delivered. Mentor teachers should be given the daily task of reporting to the University of Namibia's teaching practise coordinator on who reflected on lessons and who did not.
- Before reviewing the lesson reflection document for the prior lesson presented, lecturers should not observe students.
- Because this issue appears to be common to all students, more research is required to concentrate on

other courses provided at the University of Namibia's Rundu campus. This is because the study only included Rukwangali language education students.

- Additional investigation should be done to learn whether or not mentor instructors at schools reflect on the lessons they teach.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

It was the end of the academic year at the University of Namibia, and as lecturers, our time and attention were divided between finishing the final Exit Learning Outcomes to make sure that our students are prepared for their final examinations, putting continuous assessment marks together, and giving make-up assessments to students who were lacking in behaviour. We would like to thank the Almighty God for his favour that continues to reign. Nevertheless, against all the odds, we agreed and submitted this manuscript for publication.

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