

Video-Based Reflection:

Benefits and drawbacks for teacher professional development

Erna Hamidah*

SMP Negeri 51 Kota Bandung
Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia
Bandung, Indonesia

*ernahamidah@student.upi.edu

Fazri Nur Yusuf

Department of English Education, Faculty of Language and
Literature Education
Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia

Bandung, Indonesia
fazrinuryusuf@upi.edu

Abstract—Doing reflective practice is a hallmark of teachers’ professionalism in the world. One means to achieve it is through structuring the reflective practice via technology. Unfortunately, it was found rare in of Indonesian classroom practice. The central issue of this study is to uncover benefits and drawbacks of video-based reflection within Indonesian in-service teachers’ professional development. Qualitative case study design was used to illuminate and declared every details of them over triangulating through three kinds of data; three reflective writings, a semi structure interview, and three field notes of three videotaped-classroom observation. It was found that video-based reflection helped teachers to notice actual teaching and learning events which actually need their immediate “helps”. It also grants the teachers to recognize and evaluate their own aspect of teaching and also allowed the teachers to plan precise “response” to their subsequent lesson. The drawbacks of video-based reflection was detected on its technical constraints: condition of the device, teachers’ familiarity to the process, and involvement of other party who took part as the camerapersons. Time of the process conduction was also contributed as one of its drawbacks. It suggests to result in earnest and worthy circumstances of classroom practice that should be internalized into the teachers’ self-praxis to fulfill the advisability principle as a professional teacher and accompanied by device compliance to give optimum facilitation and accommodation for teacher professional development.

Keywords—reflective practice; video-based reflection; teacher professionalism development

I. INTRODUCTION

Having trained and qualified to do teaching profession, it is important to realize that this is not the end of the journey for the teachers, continuous development when professional teachers constantly develop and update knowledge and expertise is what separates the professional from the technician [1]. Accordingly, there are two things that teachers need to improve her/himself namely to measure themselves and to be open about what they are doing, the reflective process is one approach to cater this challenge [1]. However, reflecting on practice, after the event, is a luxury that most teachers say they cannot afford [1]. Thus, it was no wonder if reflective practice did not become teachers’ main praxis as they did it inconsistently, covertly and undertaken as informal in nature [1-3]. Nevertheless, reflective practice is a professional

standard for Indonesian teachers since it was mandated in Indonesian Ministry of National Education law no 16 in 2007. As a ‘standard’, it is expected that the teachers are not only ‘do’ this but also able to demonstrate to others evidence of this as their professionalism hallmark [1,4]. Therefore, there is an urgent need to support such practice in order to internalize it into the teachers’ routine to ensure their professionalism commitment.

The classroom does represent complex environment in which many things happen simultaneously. Teachers cannot pay equal attention to all classroom events and in fact only focus on their favorable events while critical events are overlooked either from teachers’ sight or memory whereas these critical incidents are the keywords for precise classroom practices improvement [5]. Video technology is said to be an effective medium to aid teachers to see what is happening in their classrooms as to ensure they could modify the classroom practice effectively [6-9].

A shift toward structuring reflection via technology, i.e. the use of videotape to record classroom practices, is on the rise. A number of empirical studies around the topic of reflective practice of in-service teachers through videotaping has been growing vastly worldwide [2,5,10-15,16,17]. Nonetheless, it seems that reflective practice studies by the implementation of videotaping have left the field of English Language Teaching in an Indonesian classroom context untouched.

As a matter of fact, video technology has been applied into the field of teacher education for more than 20 years in terms of pre-service teachers’ microteaching but it did not make them, whenever they turned to be in-service teachers, to continue to use it to their practices [18]. Based on her review, there were two requirements of video technology to be integrated into teacher education. First is its availability and the second is teachers’ previous knowledge of how to use the technology resources such as video camera [18]. Both requirements are obviously covered by today’s teachers, since they are part of 142% cellphone owners in Indonesia and they are said to be part of worldwide expert users and producers of video [19,20]. Thus, there should be other considerations for the absence of video technology usage in terms of using video recording to improve classroom practice of in-service teachers.

With those in mind, potential benefits of technology-based, in this case video-based, reflective practice for teachers' professionalism in the way it might improve their classroom practice has provided the impetus for the researcher to encourage reflective practice and to improve the classroom practices of EFL junior high school in-service teachers.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study aimed to explore experience of EFL in-service teachers' as present study participants from the practice of video-based reflection along with its benefits and drawbacks. The data gathered were in forms of words or texts, which were uttered or produced by the research participants. To gain a deeper understanding through the eyes of the research participants, the researcher did live in the natural setting of the participants and becomes fully immersed in the context [21]. A qualitative case study design was the most suitable research design choice for conducting this entire present study because it studied about a single unit or system bounded by space and time and the researcher was hoped to gain in-depth understanding of situations and meaning for those involved [22].

The study took place in a junior high school in Bandung. Its convenience and ease of accessibility of the school made the researcher decided to conduct the study there. Two EFL in-service teachers were purposefully and conveniently chosen. They were selected for they have been teaching for more than 15 years and they have the technology and active users of it.

III. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. *Benefits of Video-Based Reflection*

The use of video-based reflection also brings its benefits and drawbacks. It was seen from the research results that the teachers mentioned several benefits and drawbacks of using video-based reflection. The first benefits is that using video-based reflection helped the teachers to improve the teaching strategy, method, and media for upcoming lesson. It is clear that having a good strategy, method, and media in teaching is very essential. A convincing result from observing videotaped lesson are teachers may alter the way they review and reflect on video evidence with practice and it may lead teachers to make reasoned instructional decision [23].

However, a well-designed protocol which shaped and scaffold the whole reflection process is needed to ensure achievement of expected goals [24], to aid teachers focus on student understanding and thinking [16], to assist teachers to be more attentive of and intuitive about their own classroom practice and the requisite to reflect upon it [25] and to enhance the quality of reflection [26]. Therefore, through the video-based reflection, the teachers can reflect their own teaching especially in terms of recognizing their teaching strategy, method, and media.

Another benefits according to the teachers' experience is that using video-based reflection is a kind of awesome activity. Through video-based reflection session a teacher can remember all details in the teaching and learning process. It is normal that in every teaching and learning practice, the teacher

cannot remember the whole activities from the beginning until the end of the lesson. That is why, video-based reflection provides the details to make the teachers remember what they have done during the classroom activities. Teachers who watch their own teaching generally felt 'inside' the lesson and had their own instruction in mind [5]. Accordingly, by watching the recordings of their actual lessons as outside observers, teachers are more likely to remember or notice what actually happened in their lessons, which might allow teachers to write more detailed narratives and reflect at higher levels [27]. Video records of teaching have been used very successfully to support reflection in pre- and in-service teacher development [5,20,28].

The teachers were also asked to try to write a journal writing in order to reflect their own teaching. After watching the video, the teacher was supposed to write a reflective journal about their experience in using a video-based reflection in the classroom. One of the teachers mentioned that by watching the video reflection she could recognize which part that she should improve in her teaching practice. In other words, the video-based reflection helped her to determine the teaching aspects that should be improved. To that end, teacher must "determine the direction in which they will try to change" to make clear aim and path to go [16]. First video was the first fuel for the teachers to really see which aspect of their classroom practice which needed to be adjusted. Therefore, video based reflection provides a combination between memory and video to produce a thorough reflective writings.

Furthermore, video-based reflection also helped teachers to recall their mind about their teaching practice. A complete visualization can be fetched through this mean for video enable teachers to relive the elements of teaching scenario and verbalize unarticulated ideas [4,9] to review classroom experiences [6,28,29] and to reconsider classroom decision [4,16,20,30]. Therefore, it can be said that seeing the video are playing the memory inside the mind automatically.

The last, observing teachers' own video-taped of the teaching practice allows them to evaluate their teaching practice. As it has been mentioned in the previous section, the teachers have several aspects to improve in their teaching. Thus, video-based provides teachers with evaluation samples of their teaching or 'concrete evidence' by means of video captured episodes of their personal teaching [9]. The real and actual evidence which teachers might notice from their video recording lesson would act as fuel for a precise decision making for the classroom practice which indirectly give the required changes in the classroom and eventually reach expected improvement. By taking part in the practice of video-based reflection, it had hoped that the teachers have adequate desire to transform their teaching. Moreover, when teachers could see the need for improvement with their own eyes, they are reported that they could no longer deny or pretend that their teaching did not need improvement [16].

B. *Drawbacks of Video-Based Reflection*

Talking about the drawbacks of video-based reflection, the teachers said that the problems are not in its drawbacks. It was just the matter of teachers' experience and readiness. The teachers felt uncomfortable in the first meeting because it was the first time for them to involve in such kind of activity.

Furthermore, the presence of other parties, in this case, a camera person who helped teachers to record the whole lesson, gave other awkward situation for the teachers and the students. Besides, their existence also made the classroom atmosphere looked unnatural. Moreover, it was also known that video-based is sometimes stressful to be observed by the teachers. Superficiality of teachers' reflection was found to be another concern as the result of stressful of observing themselves on video [31]. It might happen because the teachers seemed to learn only from negative experiences [32]. However, a continuous practice of video-based reflection would make it as regular or even routine activity which could lessen this unfamiliarity and un-readiness and also lessen the level of students' awkwardness. Meanwhile, the camera tripod or a built in camera in the classroom would replace the presence of the cameraperson for the sake of optimum practice.

Furthermore, the limitation of facilities is also one of the things that become the drawbacks of using the video-based reflection. According to the teachers' perspectives, it will be difficult for them to continue the practice of video-based reflection unless they were equipped with sufficient facilities. The use of video brought along a logistic shortcoming due to its high expense and practicality and a lack of outlined procedures and system for video application [33]. To use video for research purpose at school was not only involving one layer side (teacher) but also other layers of *civitas academica* namely school and all students in the teacher's classroom. Each layer provide its respective drawbacks. At the school level, the caution was on whether the school had certain administration to ban any video use due to students' privacy. At students' level, students who were not accustomed to video recording would result in abnormal behavior so that it might portray imprecise condition of the classroom session. Meanwhile, at the teacher level, there were concerns about additional work, additional analysis, and further additional work with video as this may take up time inside and outside the classroom [34]. Therefore, regarding facilities shortcoming, it needs further action to facilitate teachers with sufficient media especially to improve their professional development. Regarding students' abnormal behavior, continuous practice of video-based reflection would regularize the activity to them, a presence a built in camera would make them unaware that they were being recorded.

A part from that, an ample consideration and selection of time, when was the most proper time to do the practice of video-based reflection, would also be regarded as focal aspect of the study. Despite its accomplishment, there would be a sounder and finer result when it could be done within the proper time.

IV. CONCLUSION

This process has proved that video-based reflection has rendered a line of promising benefits for teacher professional development which presumably could level up the teachers' performance and maintain their professionalism as they could give appropriate responses based on real needs of their classroom. Teachers should be able to take the process and let it become their daily praxis.

The drawbacks that they felt would decrease gradually for they were solvable. Things that all teachers need are their willingness to practice it constantly then positive consequences will be obtained as each of the drawbacks would melt down one at a time.

A series of benefits of video-based reflection should be taken wisely so that time or administration constraints will never become barrier for preserving this favorable practice in order to keep teacher professionalism on top.

V. FUTURE WORKS

In order to sustain this process, it will need a serious contribution from the school administrator to facilitate all required devices for teacher professional development and also accommodate the process by integrating it into annual program where each teacher is obliged to make one to three video records along with the reflective writings per semester as the evidence of their professional development..

Future works are to study about sustainability of the practice of video-based reflection for in-service teachers after they have preserved it for two academic years to find out whether the benefits and drawbacks of the process are getting better or else. A study should be taken to find out the process of video-based reflection for novice teachers and in-service teachers, a comparison and contrastive analysis can be carried out to find out which party get the most benefits.

Two EFL in-service teachers contributed as one of shortcoming for this present study. Therefore, it is recommended for future researchers to try to involve not only in-service teachers but attempt to compare between them and pre-service teachers, given that teaching is not a guarantee that a teacher has perfect teaching skills. Another shortcoming came from the time limitation of the research. In that case, it is hoped that the researchers interested in the same topic can carry out research for quite a long time so that the results will be more maximal and comprehensive.

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