

# TRANSMITTING REFLECTIVE TEACHING PRACTICE INTO INDONESIAN EFL EDUCATORS' PROFESSIONAL JOURNEYS

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## ARTICLE INFO

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## ABSTRACT

*It is important to understand that EFL educators' professional journeys are affected by varied internal and external factors such as school policies, particular curricula, and educational cultures. From this perspective, reflective teaching practice can act as a promising solution to transform EFL educators into more well-rounded and thoughtful learning facilitators, which in turn will improve their teaching qualities. The researcher initiated this current small-scale qualitative library study to exhaustively investigate the influential impacts of transmitting reflective teaching practice into Indonesian EFL educators' professional journeys. To fully attain this main study objective, the researcher employed a thematic analysis to review the specifically obtained research results derived from 25 reflective teaching studies. Based on the thematic analysis, it was deduced that through the constant internalization of reflective teaching practice, EFL educators can gradually transform into more professional language learning facilitators who are capable of promoting better-facilitated English learning enterprises.*

**Keywords:** *Reflective teaching practice, Professional journeys, Library study*

## INTRODUCTION

The centrality of EFL educators' professional development has rapidly permeated this 21st-century learning era. There is an agreement that high-quality language teachers can promote more efficient, meaningful, and supportive learning environments for diverse learners. Nurkamto and Santosa (2020) contend that considering intensive professional development programs, EFL educationalists will become more thoughtful decision-makers and innovative learning instructors by integrating enjoyable language learning dynamics where learners can elevate their target language competencies to the utmost level.

One of the promising teacher professional development trainings worthwhile for advancing the entire educational quality is through the constant activation of reflective teaching practice. With the accompaniment of reflective teaching practice, EFL educators can gain a more profound awareness of teaching methodologies, classroom learning situations, specific learners' learning needs, and particular learning issues hindering conducive learning processes. This contention is closely related to the theory of Aghaalikhani et al. (2018), who theorized that during reflective teaching practice, teachers are no longer deemed passive receivers of the specifically assigned academic tasks imparted by their educational institutions.

Rather, they are highly demanded to progressively transfigure into more proactive self-reflectors knowing the best learning enterprises working best for their classroom learning circumstances. The major aim of reflective teaching practice is to empower educators' critical thinking, self-awareness, decision-making, and evaluative

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skills in which they eventually recognize the specific drawbacks as well as strengths of their prior teaching practices. Having successfully identified these indispensable teaching elements, educationalists will have broader opportunities to remarkably foster their learners' target language proficiency to the fullest potential because the ongoing reflective teaching practices enable them to critically discern the learners' specific learning needs. The above-mentioned concept is in partnership with Poulou et al. (2019), who stated that worldwide EFL educators conduct constant reflective teaching practice to bring about better-quality language learning dynamics for their learners and to thoroughly fulfill all learners' learning needs. In a similar vein, with the continual internalization of reflective teaching practice, EFL educationalists are more capable of exhaustively reflecting on the already-received knowledge and frequently applied pedagogical practices, which in turn is useful for improving the quality of their prospective teaching learning processes.

Widodo and Ferdiansyah (2018) found that reflective language educators are more willing to conduct more in-depth reflections on their cognitive and pedagogical areas in which they finally notice specific areas for improvements to incorporate better teaching learning dynamics in the future. Apart from the advantageous benefits alluded to above, there are a certain number of requirements for EFL educators highly desirous of conducting reflective teaching practices in their professional journeys. By performing reflective teaching practices, EFL educators have to gradually become more adaptable learning facilitators, open-minded toward the novel ideas offered by their colleagues, confident in handling a wide array of educational complexities, and showcase sensible reactions to ever-changing educational dynamics. All these commendable actions resonated well with Cirocki and Farrell (2017), who mentioned that as reflective practitioners, EFL educationalists are requested to transform into more adaptable knowledge implementers, positively accept new ideas, bravely overcome a vast range of learning impediments, and give appropriate responses to unpredictable educational shifts.

Implementing reflective teaching practice also means that EFL educators should be more committed to becoming agents of change that promote significant advancement for the entire educational practice. Reflective EFL educators must not rigidly follow the daily-transmitted curricula addressed by their educational institutions. Instead, they are deliberately allowed to conduct more innovative, favorable, and holistic learning activities that precisely suit their learners' learning conditions, competencies, and preferences. This requirement is in the view of Widodo and Rozak (2016), who acknowledge that language educators who have been highly committed to engaging in reflective teaching practice are obliged to become more independent initiators and thoughtful decision makers toward their daily teaching–learning dynamics to fully fulfill learners' learning needs. Furthermore, EFL educators who are willing to participate in reflective teaching practices are simultaneously assigned to gradually transform into lifelong knowledge seekers. Among educators' professional journeys, becoming a lifelong knowledge seeker denotes the extent to which EFL educationalists dedicate their minds, hearts, and commitment to continuously enriching their cognitive and pedagogical competencies to become more professional learning facilitators.

When these teachers become more professional, they can clearly deliver the targeted learning materials and instructions to their learners. As a result, learners' targeted learning competencies can thrive significantly to the utmost level. This crucial reflective teaching value agrees with Cirocki and Farrell (2019), emphasizing the critical importance for EFL educators to become more lifelong knowledge discoverers throughout their professional careers in which they can release better-facilitated language learning processes for the learners to develop the desired target language proficiency to the utmost potential. In agreement with the above-elucidated conceptions, there are six principles of becoming reflective practitioners as proposed by Farahian and Parhamnia (2020), namely, embracing their true calling as lifelong learners, consistently instilling a higher sense of motivation to learn various beneficial things that matter most for their professional careers, knowing their self-identity as qualified educators, committedly attempting to promote high-quality educational enterprises for diverse learners, efficiently using a vast range of learning approaches to cater to their learners' particular learning needs,

and critically evaluating their previous teaching-learning enterprises to better locate effective solutions in conducting better-quality learning processes in future events.

In Indonesian EFL teaching-learning settings, the integration of reflective teaching practice can be considered sparse because most educational institutions in this nation merely require their educators to strictly follow the designated teaching plans, modules, and procedures with the minimum integration of their genuine, innovative, and creative ideas to be further forwarded in the daily classroom learning vicinities. In the same respect, Yanuarti and Treagust (2016) state that a predominant number of Indonesian educational institutions solely oblige the educationalists to exactly implement the already-written learning steps form in the lesson plans without liberating them to modify their ongoing learning enterprises following the existing classroom situations they are currently facing. If this situation persists, the entire quality of Indonesian EFL teaching-learning enterprises can gradually diminish and evade because language educators only internalize the most common teaching-learning routines without inquiring whether these pedagogical strategies can fulfill their learners' learning needs, objectives, and interests. Again, the further incorporation of reflective teaching practice in our country is of foremost importance since it will not only assist EFL educators to promote high-quality language learning enterprises but also habituate them to exhaustively reflect on their existing cognitive, affective, and pedagogical practices, paving a more enlightening pathway to successfully obtain the desired teaching-learning objectives. This belief is mutually interlinked with Nurkamto and Sarosa (2020) who highly recommended educational institutions to impart extensive liberation for Indonesian EFL educationalists to conduct more profound reflective teaching practice in their professional journeys to escalate their sensitivity toward the existing cognitive and pedagogical practices they internalize in their classroom vicinities leading them to successfully embody tangible learning goals.

There were five prior investigations relevant to the major theme of this study. Although these previous investigations have not yet touched upon reflective teaching practices in Indonesian EFL teaching learning contexts, these specifically generated research results have addressed some valuable contributions to the further advancement of our educational qualities. The first study was conducted by Arifani et al. (2021), who strongly advised Indonesian EFL educationalists to become more self-reliant in their ongoing teaching learning activities by stipulating more appropriate pedagogical strategies that are suitable for their classroom learning situations. Wijaya (2022) revealed that an overwhelming majority of Indonesian EFL educators had become more innovative, critical, and supportive learning facilitators when they were more capable of regulating their minds, hearts, and dedication accordingly. Wijaya (2021) highly recommended that Indonesian EFL teachers progressively transform into more resilient educators amidst the taxing educational obstacles they are currently confronting as they channel their energy, commitment, and endeavor to their teaching vocation. Mbato and Wijaya (2020) strongly advocated for pre-service Indonesian EFL teachers to establish, nurture, and reinforce their genuine identities as compassionate educators to enable them to become agents of change willing to advance all educational qualities. Yumarnamto (2019) found that a vast majority of Indonesian EFL teachers could continually promote a more positively-sound learning atmosphere where all learners' target language competencies can be fostered to the utmost level as extensive moral support and supportive working climates are imparted by their educational institutions. Notwithstanding their valuable research results, these studies have not yet investigated the critical importance of transmitting reflective teaching practices into Indonesian EFL educators' professional journeys. Thus, this current small-scale qualitative library investigation seeks to fill this void by unearthing the potential beneficial values addressed by reflective teaching practice for the further advancement of Indonesian EFL educators' professional development and language learning enterprises in this archipelago. Given these arguments, the researchers expectantly hoped that the subsequent research results can act as a turning point for Indonesian EFL educational stakeholders to start prioritizing the regular incorporation of reflective teaching practice in daily-based language learning enterprises to significantly foster educators' professionalism and teaching qualities that may be influential for promoting holistic educational outcomes for distinctive language

learners. Toward that end, the researcher attempted to provide reasonable answers to the this one single-investigated research problem named: what are the influential impacts of transmitting reflective teaching practice into Indonesian EFL educators' professional journeys?

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This present small-scale qualitative investigation was accompanied by a library study approach. In light of this research methodology, the researcher can potentially generate more trustworthy and rewarding research results since it heeds the researcher's attention to exhaustively dig out a considerable number of facts based on one major specific theme. To fulfill this main research objective, the researcher selected 25 previous studies of reflective teaching practice conducted in worldwide EFL teaching-learning contexts to be reviewed. Two major criteria encouraged the researcher to select these 25 previously published reflective teaching practices. The first aspect is mutually interlinked with the relevancy and eligibility of already generated research results that are applicable in nowadays Indonesian EFL educators' professional enterprises as supportive teaching-learning facilitators. The second feature is tightly interwoven with the specific research areas being investigated in these 25 prior reflective teaching studies. As the majority of these 25 reflective teaching researches exhaustively tapped into regular professional lives, practices, perspectives, and actualizations of Indonesian EFL educationalists, the researcher surmised that all yielded research results would potentially bring about a more enlightening understanding for Indonesian EFL stakeholders concerning the meaningful strategies for establishing a higher level of professionalism within second language educators' trudging career pathways through the means of efficient reflective teaching practice. By conducting this present small-scale library investigation, Indonesian EFL educationalists will have broader opportunities to actualize more holistic, enjoyable, positively-sound, and emotionally-supportive second language learning climates for divergent learners. The aforesaid aspiration is more likely to occur as Indonesian EFL educators having been more accustomed to participating in sustainable reflective teaching practice are more capable of locating their particular teaching strengths and weaknesses. By pondering more profoundly on these paramount pedagogical aspects, highly reflective Indonesian EFL teachers will be more eager to foster their professional competencies, which will be beneficial for the betterment of their prospective teaching-learning dynamics. Furthermore, the approaching research results disseminated by this current small-scale library study can potentially broaden Indonesian EFL educationalists' perspectives towards the major essence of educational objectives. Briefly repudiating, Indonesian EFL educators consistently making use of reflective teaching practice as one of the lifeblood invigorating their professional development are more prone to adjust their daily-based teaching-learning materials in agreement with the currently situated learners' learning contexts, needs, challenges, and proficiency. As a result of this transformative action, the designated teaching-learning enterprises will be executed in a more stress-free and less pressurized circumstances by which all learning community members are highly desirous of escalating their desired target language competencies to the fullest potential. During the data analysis stage, the researcher employed a thematic analysis approach. With the help of this research methodology, more constructive, comprehensible, and contextual research results are attained since the researcher subcategorized the most predominant findings into some major specific themes. After accomplishing this thematic analysis process, the researcher would delineate the subdivided research results argumentatively with the accompaniment of pertinent previous findings and theories derived from the experts to yield more robust research outcomes that are meritorious for the significant advancement of ELT fields resided in our nation.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This section purported to comprehensively explicate the beneficial values of immersing reflective teaching practice into Indonesian EFL educators' professional journeys. In particular, the subsequent research results were derived from an in-depth library analysis conducted beforehand by the researcher. Accompanied by

corresponding theoretical frameworks, prior research results, and argumentations, two main specific themes were subdivided as follows: (1) reflective teaching practice transforms EFL educators into more professional learning facilitators and (2) reflective teaching practice motivates EFL educationalists to promote high-quality learning enterprises.

**Theme 1: Reflective Teaching Practice Transforms EFL Educators into More Professional Learning Facilitators**

Theme 1	Authors
Reflective Teaching Practice Transforms EFL Educators into More Professional Learning Facilitators	Afshar and Farahani (2018); Afshar and Moradifar (2021); Aliakbari et al. (2020); Alsuhaibani (2019); Aslan et al. (2022); Faghihi and Sarab (2016); Gudeta (2022); Gutiérrez et al. (2019); Hung and Thuy (2021); Kurosh et al. (2020); Lubis (2018); Malmir and Mohammadi (2018); Moradkhani et al. (2017); Saputra et al. (2020).

Based on the above-enacted theme, it is of prime importance for educational institutions to establish more mutual collaborative networking with teacher training and education faculties to make EFL educators more accustomed to conducting reflective teaching practice as a part of their professional journeys. EFL educators experience a higher degree of satisfaction with their teaching vocation. When educators feel elated with their teaching job, they exhibit more satisfying teaching performances and escalate their professional development. This conception concurs with the reflective teaching theory postulated by Afshar and Moradifar (2021), who posit that by constantly cultivating EFL educationalists’ professional development through the insistent reflective teaching practice, there will eventually be broader opportunities for them to promote better teaching learning processes. To meaningfully enrich EFL educators’ professionalism, educational institutions are concurrently advised to compose more apprehensible reflective teaching practice guidelines to enable them to easily engage with this critical teaching reflection practice during their teaching career. Thus, it should be kept in mind that meaningful reflective teaching guidelines precisely assist EFL educators to discover their specific strengths and weaknesses and to notice the room for improvement, which in turn is beneficial for the betterment of prospective classroom learning dynamics. Alsuhaibani (2019) averred that for EFL educationalists to fully bring about more meaningful language learning enterprises in future events, reflective teaching guidelines should be designed in harmony with their teaching needs, strengths, and weaknesses.

Furthermore, it is worth underscoring that a higher sense of autonomy needs to be granted to EFL educators aiming to empower their professional growth by considering continual reflective teaching practice. Simply stated, educational institutions should gradually lighten the strict school lesson plans, teaching methodologies, and classroom learning routines that language educators must follow. By releasing this initiative, EFL educators can start infusing a higher sense of belonging and independence into their daily teaching-learning activities by orchestrating a range of efficient pedagogical strategies that are suitable for their learners’ particular learning needs, proficiency, and conditions. This suggestion is mutually associated with Faghihi and Sarab (2016), who advised worldwide educational institutions to progressively diminish the excessive and rigid daily teaching learning routines that EFL educationalists should impose. Rather, educational institutions need to provide a higher degree of liberation for them to adopt, adjust, and modify their daily classroom dynamics to thoroughly satisfy learners’ learning objectives. After EFL educators have successfully gained a higher sense of autonomy and robust professionalism with the accompaniment of reflective teaching practice, they can simultaneously transform into more confident language learning facilitators who bravely tackle a wide array of taxing educational hindrances hampering their teaching efficiency, erect positive rapports with other colleagues in inventing more up-to-date pedagogical approaches, and inculcate life-long learning characters to undergo significant intellectual empowerment. All aforementioned arguments strengthened the study of Gutiérrez et al. (2019), who mentioned three indispensable characteristics of becoming more professional EFL educationalists in the support of reflective teaching practice: becoming more resilient risk-takers among laborious educational impediments, adjusting the

newly discovered teaching-learning strategies that are appropriate with their classroom learning climates, and being willing to foster their specific target language knowledge as well as skills throughout their lifetime. In the end, through the sustainable employment of reflective teaching practice, EFL educators can eventually achieve professional success as a decent reward for their perseverance and struggle. This holistic educational value is attained because reflective EFL educationalists consistently channel their energy, heart, mind, and dedication to devising the most appropriate teaching learning activities in which language learners can elevate their target language competencies to their fullest potential. When EFL educators are highly satisfied with these rewarding educational outcomes, their professionalism is tremendously increased as they are more committed to maintaining or even magnifying the overall quality of ongoing teaching performances. All these above-explained arguments appear to affirm the theory of reflective practice and professional success proposed by Malmir and Mohammadi (2018), articulating that continuous reflective teaching practice can pave a more enlightening pathway for EFL educators to fully obtain their professional success as their effortful actions are always intended to maximize the utmost learners' academic potentials to greater development.

**Theme 2: Reflective Teaching Practice Motivates EFL Educationalists to Promote High-Quality Learning Enterprises**

Theme 2	Authors
Reflective Teaching Practice Motivates EFL Educationalists to Promote High-Quality Learning Enterprises	Ashraf and Zolfaghari (2018); Ashraf et al. (2016); Azizah et al. (2018); Cirocki and Widodo (2019); Dheressa (2022); Cirocki and Farrell (2019); Kharlay et al. (2022); Kheirzadeh and Sistani (2018); Nguyen (2017); Nurkamto and Sarosa (2020); Tuan (2021).

In conformance with this second theme, it is of foremost importance to highlight that reflective teaching practice can encourage EFL educators to induce more qualified learning enterprises. Better-facilitated language learning dynamics can truly occur as reflective EFL educationalists progressively transform into more judicious decision-makers and thoughtful learning planners at the start of teaching dynamics where they stipulate a series of learning activities that are compatible with the existing classroom learning vicinities they are confronting. Consequently, all learning community members are strongly motivated to improve their target language proficiency. Similar contention can also be discerned in Ashraf and Zolfaghari (2018), who posit that it is becoming progressively pivotal for educational institutions to equip EFL educationalists with reflective teaching practice at the onset of their teaching career to assist them in deciding the most corresponding teaching– learning enterprises that are suitable for their learners' specific learning needs, interests, and competencies. Moreover, reflective teaching practice can help EFL educators conduct more efficient teaching– learning dynamics in their habitual classroom learning contexts. In this trajectory, efficiency refers to the meaningful learning time experienced by all learning community members where clearer learning instructions have been successfully delivered. Through the employment of comprehensible learning instructions, language learners are more likely to experience a higher degree of learning enjoyment, thereby directing them to obtain more satisfying learning achievements. These above-explained conceptions aligned with the previous findings of Cirocki and Widodo (2019) who highly advocated globalized EFL educationalists to utilize reflective teaching practice before embarking the subsequent classroom learning activities to cultivate more meaning-making learning dynamics wherein all language learners are highly encouraged to foster their target language proficiency to meet the specific target language objectives.

EFL educators always have a sensible excuse to have an early departure from their current teaching vocation due to excessive stress levels, substantial working burdens, and unsupportive working environments. To better mitigate these debilitating mental issues, EFL educators should internalize reflective teaching practice in their regular professional journeys to enable them to instill more positive perspectives toward the existing teaching profession. This positive feeling needs to be sustainably nurtured unless the positively sound and emotionally supportive classroom learning climates are at the stake. This advice also hovers in the account of Dheressa

(2022), putting forward that it is never enough for EFL educators to possess a diverse field of knowledge and sophisticated pedagogical approaches while engaging in reflective teaching practice but also embrace all the educational adversities to continually preserve the conducive-friendly classroom atmosphere they set before. It is well-reasoned to assert that reflective teaching practice can probably allow more positive trajectories for EFL educators to become more considerate, insightful, and critical learning facilitators. These commendable characteristics occur because EFL educationalists exhaustively reflect on their present teaching knowledge, beliefs, and practices whether these pedagogical components operate well in their classroom learning surroundings or not. Because of this action, EFL educators can become more flexible and adaptable while incorporating a specific set of teaching-learning activities in their habitual classroom routines as well as open-minded toward novel teaching ideas shared by other colleagues. Cirocki and Farrell (2019) acclaimed that reflective teaching practice can gradually transform EFL educationalists into more transformative educational changers who instill a higher degree of inquisitiveness toward the recent pedagogical strategies addressed by other working colleagues and are highly adaptive to each abrupt educational shift happening in their surroundings. The beneficiaries of this holistic reflective teaching value are language learners. As they continually experience a convivial learning atmosphere, they can outstandingly foster their current target language performances and proficiency to more advanced development. As a result, more gratifying learning rewards will find them right after they accomplish particular teaching learning activities. Tuan (2021) pinpointed the saliency of habituating EFL educationalists to the continual reflective teaching practice by which they can inspire more emotionally-supportive learning enterprises in various classroom dominions eventually resulting in the full attainment of fruitful learning outcomes.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

In summary, it is worthwhile to re-emphasize that reflective teaching practice can promote two major advantageous values for Indonesian EFL educators: the remarkable escalation of professional development and the integration of more supportive language learning enterprises. This fact is supported by the above-reviewed research results from globalized reflective teaching scientific articles. Although these research outcomes may be slightly distinctive in worldwide and Indonesian EFL teaching-learning contexts due to the socio-cultural, classroom, and curriculum diversities, it is felt that Indonesian EFL educationalists are more likely to bring about a tremendous number of influential educational transformations toward their institutions as reflective teaching practice assists them to glean a particular set of teaching knowledge, beliefs, and practices meritorious to actualize better-facilitated English classroom enterprises in the prospective events. Above all, by becoming more reflective target language learning facilitators, EFL educators feel spirited to be loyal to their teaching vocation despite the vast array of educational complexities they face. This laudable behavior occurs because EFL educators have a robust tendency to continuously foster their subject-specific knowledge and teaching qualities during their professional journeys. It can also be said that through this lifelong learning character derived from professional EFL educators, language learners can benefit from the holistic learning processes in which their language proficiency empowerment is assured.

Detached from these rewarding research results, more exhaustive media on reflective teaching practice deserve further investigation in the future. Prospective researchers need to initiate more profound exploration regarding particular media that can corroborate the efficiency and meaningfulness of reflective teaching practice to be incorporated in Indonesian EFL educationalists' professional careers, such as daily journal writing, video recording, audio taping, and peer teaching observations. By investigating all these promising reflective teaching media, Indonesian EFL educators will feel more comfortable while developing their professional growth, teaching practices, and target language skills because they have successfully discovered the most suitable media that truly support their reflective teaching practice. Furthermore, as the successful implementation of reflective teaching practice hinges upon various internal and external supports addressed by educational stakeholders, future

researchers should examine the probable supportive and hindering factors that can either nourish or obstruct the meaningful implementation of reflective teaching practice in Indonesian EFL educators' professional journeys. By embodying this prospective investigation, educational institutions along with teacher training and education faculties can devise a series of reflective teaching practice programs that can bring about significant benefits to the further advancement of Indonesian EFL educators' professional nurturance and growth.

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