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Pre-Service Teachers' Self-Reflections in Micro Teaching Class

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Abstract. This research was conducted in a Micro Teaching class which is offered for semester 6th students of the English Language Education Study Program of Sanata Dharma University. This research aims at investigating the preservice-teachers' self evaluation as part of their teaching reflections. Long time ago, Dewey (1916) already stated that teachers should take time to reflect on their observations, knowledge, and experience so that they can effectively nurture each child's learning and, according to Bartlett (1990), a reflective teacher involves moving beyond a primary concern with instructional techniques and "how to" questions and asking "what" and "why" questions that regard instructions and managerial techniques not as ends in themselves, but as part of broader educational purposes. In line with those two experts, reflections are considered important in my Micro Teaching class in which students are supposed to write weekly reflections qualitatively and quantitatively about their experiences in their class. This research might contribute insights to those who concern with preservice teachers' training.

Keywords: *micro teaching, pre-service teachers, self-reflections*

1. Introduction

In all teaching and learning processes, assessment is one essential component that should exist. Assessment refers to the systematic collection, review, and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving learning and development (Palomba & Banta, 1999). Micro Teaching class is included in these processes.

Assessment can refer to feedback as well. According to Lewis (2003), there are three sources of feedback. First, feedback which is given by teachers to students is called teacher feedback. The second source is from peers. Some experts considered that peer feedback is considered the most effective feedback compared to the others. the third one is self correction. It is the students themselves who correct their own works. Feedback can be given in the form of oral and/or written.

In my Micro Teaching class, there were several forms of assessment done and two of which are self-evaluation and personal reflection. These kinds of assessment are meant to train the students to be reflective teachers. Self-evaluation is an evaluation sheet which consists of 3 main parts: (1) preparation, (2) general teaching competence, and (3) basic teaching skills.

This self-evaluation is filled in every time the pre-service teachers finish their teaching, while personal reflection is written to record their weekly experiences and feelings during their processes in Micro Teaching class.

Having this process, in this article, I would like to share what the pre-service teachers think about their teaching experience.

2.   Literature Review

Literature review covers several related theories, namely (1) general areas of teacher competence, (2) what is reflection?, (3) types of reflections, and (4) Ignatian Pedagogy.

2.1.   General Areas of Teacher Competence

Smith (as cited by Cooper, 2011) states that a well-educated teacher should be prepared in four areas of teacher competence to be effective in bringing about intended learning outcomes. They are:

2.1.1. Command of theoretical knowledge about learning and human behavior

According to Smith, educational recipes and standardized procedures were formally and informally passed on to new teacher to help them survive in classrooms. While this practice still exists, many scientific concepts frompsychology, anthropology, sociology, linguistics, cognitive sciences, and related disciplines are now available to help teachers interpret the complex reality of their classrooms. These make up the theoretical knowledge of teaching. Those teachers who lack the theoretical background and understanding provided by such scientifically derived concepts can only interpret the events of their classrooms according to popularly held beliefs or common sense. Although common sense often serves us well, there is ample evidence that teachers who habitually rely on it will too often misinterpret the events in their classrooms.

2.1.2. Display attitudes that foster learning genuine human relationships

An attitude is a predisposition to act in positive or negative way toward persons, ideas, or events. Virtually all educators are convinced that teacher attitudes are an important dimension in the teaching process. Attitudes have a direct effect on our behavior;they determine how we view ourselves and interact with others.

2.1.3. Command of knowledge in the subject matter to be taught

Command of the subject matter to be taught is an obvious necessity for any teacher. But taking courses in biology or history or mathematics is not sufficient. A teacher's subject-matter preparation really has two aspects: (1) a study of the

subject matter itself and (2) a judicious selection of the material that can be transmitted successfully to the student.

2.1.4. Repertoire of teaching skills that facilitate student learning.

The fourth area of competence required of effective teachers is possession of a repertoire of teaching skills, which are the specific sets of identifiable behaviors needed to perform teaching functions.

2.1.5. Personal practical knowledge

Personal practical knowledge is the set of understandings teachers have of the practical circumstances in which they work. These understandings include teachers' beliefs, insights, and habits that enable them to do their jobs in schools. This personal practical knowledge tends to be time bound and situation specific, personally compelling, and oriented toward action. For years, researchers deniers have of the practical circumstances in which they work.

2.2. What is reflection?

According to Richards, reflection or "critical reflection", refers to an activity or process in which an experience is recalled, considered, and evaluated, usually in relation to a broader purpose. (taken from http://www.tttjournal.co.uk/uploads/File/back_articles/ Towards_Reflective_Teaching.pdf retrieved on June 30, 2014). 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. Another expert, Bartlett (1990) as cited by Richards, points out that becoming a reflective teacher involves moving beyond a primary concern with instructional techniques and "how to" questions and asking "what" and "why" questions that regard instructions and managerial techniques not as ends in themselves, but as part of broader educational purposes.

2.3. Types of reflections

In this part, several types of reflections are introduced:

2.3.1. Peer Observation

In his article, Richards states that, "Peer observation can provide opportunities for teachers to view each other's teaching in order to expose them to different teaching styles and to provide opportunities for critical reflection on their own teaching." The teachers identified a variety of different aspects of their lessons for their partners to observe and collect information on. These included organization of the lesson, teacher's time management, students' performance on tasks, time-on-task, teacher questions and student responses, student performance during pair

work, classroom interaction, class performance during a new teaching activity, and students' use of the first language or English during group work.

2.3.2. Written accounts of experiences

Another useful way of engaging in the reflective process is through the use of written accounts of experiences.

2.3.3. Self-Reports

Self-reporting involves completing an inventory or check list in which the teacher indicates which teaching practices were used within a lesson or within a specified time period and how often they were employed (Pak, 1985). The inventory may be completed individually or in group sessions. Self-reporting allows teachers to make a regular assessment of what they are doing in the classroom. They can check to see to what extent their assumptions about their own teaching are reflected in their actual teaching practices. For example a teacher could use self-reporting to find out the kinds of teaching activities being regularly used, whether all of the programme's goals are being addressed, the degree to which personal goals for a class are being met, and the kinds of activities which seem to work well or not to work well.

2.3.4. Journal Writing

Journal writing aims to provide a record of the significant learning experiences that have taken place, to help the participant come into touch and keep in touch with the self-development process that is taking place for them, to provide the participants with an opportunity to express, in a personal and dynamic way, their self-development, to foster a creative interaction.(Powell, 1985, Bailey, 1990 as cited by Richards)

2.3.5. Collaborative Diary Keeping

Journal writing can be done by a group of teachers. They can explore the value of collaborative diary-keeping as a way of developing a critically reflective view of their teaching

2.3.6. Recording Lessons

For many aspects of teaching audio or video recording of lessons can also provide a basis for reflection. Many significant classroom events may not have been observed by the teacher, let alone remembered, hence the need to supplement diaries or self-reports with recordings of actual lessons.

2.4. Ignatian Pedagogy Paradigm

As written in Ignatian Pedagogy: a Practical Approach (accessed in https://www.rockhurst.edu/media/filer_private/uploads/ignatian_pedagogy_a_practical_approach.pdf), Ignatian Pedagogy is inspired by spiritual experiences but it is very human and universal. It refers to ecclectic teaching methods which are inspired by the spiritual experiences of St. Ignatius. It is not merely meant for Jesuit schools, colleges, and universities, but it can be applied in every educational service as well since it is profoundly human and consequently universal.

There are five steps involved in Ignatian Pedagogy:

2.4.1. Context
It refers to context of learning that supports the learning process. It is about personal care of the student by the teacher and an environment for learning.

2.4.2. Experience
Experience is a key element in education. It does not only involve intellectual, but also affective. Ignatian pedagogy aims to ensure that the student will have a full learning experience of mind, heart and hand.

2.4.3. Reflection
This is the KEY to the Ignatian pedagogical paradigm. Reflection is the process whereby the student makes the learning experience his/her own, gets to the meaning of the learning experience for self and for others.

2.4.4. Action
Action is not mere activity. It is rather the student's attitudes, priorities, commitments, habits, values, ideals, internal human growth flowing out into actions for others.

2.4.5. Evaluation
This is an evaluation of the student's growth in the acceptance of the school's aims and objectives for the student.

3. Method

This study employed a survey method with a questionnaire and reflection books as the main research instruments. This study was conducted in the English Language Education Study Program of Sanata during the even semester of 2013/2014 academic year in which 19 students of Micro Teaching participated as the respondents.

The questionnaire was in a form of a self-evaluation sheet which was filled in after the preservice-teachers did their teaching in Micro Teaching class. The questionnaire consisted of 3 main parts: (a) preparation related to lesson plans, (b) general teaching competence which includes material mastery, appearance, class management, confidence, pronunciation, basic grammar accuracy, speaking fluency, and (c) basic teaching skills involving set induction, set closure, delivery and stimulus variation skills, questioning and reinforcement skills, teaching strategies.

The second instrument analyzed in this study was preservice-teachers' reflection books. Reflection books contained pre-service teachers' reflections during their processes in Micro Teaching class. Their reflections were written at home and submitted weekly after the class. They were free to write all their experiences, feelings, lessons they underwent in the class.

4.   Findings and Discussion
4.1. Questionnaire Results
The questionnaire which was in the form of self-evaluation after teaching. It was done twice: after their mid-term performance and after their final performance. In this questionnaire, the pre-service teachers should score themselves between 1 – 5 (very poor – very good). The following is the result of their first self-evaluation:

Respondents	Aspects # (scales 1 – 5)													Mean
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
1	5	5	4	5	5	4	4	5	3	3	3	4	2	4.00
2	4	3	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	5	3	4	4	4.08
3	5	4	5	3	4	4	4	5	5	5	4	4	5	4.38
4	4	4	5	4	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4.23
5	4	2	5	3	5	2	3	4	4	5	4	2	2	3.46
6	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	3.85
7	4	5	4	4	5	5	4	5	5	3	4	4	4	4.31
8	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	3.38
9	3	5	4	3	3	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	3	3.77
10	5	4	5	4	3	3	3	4	4	4	5	5	4	4.08
11	5	4	4	4	3	3	3	4	5	5	4	4	4	4.00
12	4	4	5	4	5	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	4	3.77
13	5	4	4	3	5	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	3.92
14	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	4	4	4			4	3.82
15	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	3.69
16	5		5	4	5	4	3	4	4	3	4	3	3	3.92

167

Respondents	Aspects # (scales 1 – 5)													Mean
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
17	5	4	5	4	4	3	3	3	5	4	4	3	4	3.92
18	5	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	5	5	4	4	4	4.08
Mean	4.28	3.94	4.33	3.67	4.28	3.67	3.50	3.94	4.17	4.06	3.76	3.72	3.71	

Table 1: Pre-service teachers' self-evaluation 1

Notes:

Aspect 1	: lesson plan	Aspect 8	: speaking fluency
Aspect 2	: material mastery	Aspect 9	: set induction
Aspect 3	: appearance	Aspect 10	: set closure
Aspect 4	: class management	Aspect 11	: delivery and stimulus variation skills
Aspect 5	: confidence	Aspect 12	: questioning and reinforcement skills
Aspect 6	: pronunciation	Aspect 13	: teaching strategies
Aspect 7	: basic grammar accuracy		

Table 1 shows that the pre-service teachers scored themselves good with the score range between 3.38 – 4.38 out of 5. It means that they have confidence about their teaching. Meanwhile, the data of the mean score for each aspect show that the lowest score (3.50) is on aspect number 7, which is basic grammar accuracy. It means that the pre-service teachers were aware that their grammar accuracy needed to be improved. The second lowest scores were on aspect number 4 and 6, i.e. class management and pronunciation. The highest score (4.33) was placed on aspect number 3 (appearance) and the second highest scores (4.28) were on aspect number 1 (lesson plan) and 5 (confidence).

Respondents	Aspects #													Mean
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
1	4	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	4.23
2	4	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	4.23
3	4	4	5	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	3.85
4	3	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3.85
5	4	5	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	4.31
6	5	4	5	3	5	4	4	4	4	4	5	3	4	4.15
7		3	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	4	3.58
8	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	3	3.69
9	4	5	5	4	3	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4.15
10	4	4	5	4	4	4	3	4	5	3	4	4	4	4.00
11	5	5	4	4	5	4	4	4	5	4	4	5	4	4.38
12	5	5	5	4	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	4.00
13		4	4	4	5	4	4	5	3	2	4	3	4	3.83
14	3	5	5	4	5	4	4	5	3	2	4	3	4	3.92

Respondents	Aspects #													Mean
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
15	4	4	4	3	5	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	3.85
16	4	4	5	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	3.77
17	5	5	4	4	5	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	4.62
Mean	4.13	4.35	4.53	3.71	4.29	3.88	3.82	4.18	4.06	3.82	4.00	3.71	3.88	

Table 2: Pre-service teachers' self-evaluation 2

Notes:
Aspect 1 : lesson plan
Aspect 2 : material mastery
Aspect 3 : appearance
Aspect 4 : class management
Aspect 5 : confidence
Aspect 6 : pronunciation
Aspect 7 : basic grammar accuracy
Aspect 8 : speaking fluency
Aspect 9 : set induction
Aspect 10 : set closure
Aspect 11 : delivery and stimulus variation skills
Aspect 12 : questioning and reinforcement skills
Aspect 13 : teaching strategies

The results of the second self-evaluation tend to be a bit higher than the first one. Table 2 shows that the pre-service teachers scored themselves good as well with the range between 3.58 – 4.62. Seen from the teaching aspects, there were 2 aspects obtaining the lowest score (3.71), namely class management and set induction. The second lowest score was on teaching aspect 10, i.e. set closure. Meanwhile, the highest score was 4.53. It was for aspect number 3, i.e. appearance and the next highest scores were for material mastery (4.35) and confidence (4.29). Here, the pre-service teachers had more confidence in these three teaching aspects.

From the results of the questionnaire, classroom management consistently, both in the first and second self-evaluations, appeared to be one of the most challenging aspects for the pre-service teachers since this aspect was always scored low. This brings an idea that the pre-service teachers were aware that they still need to pay attention more on the classroom management skills. Interestingly, there is also a consistency of the teaching aspects that are scored high, namely appearance and confidence. What is meant by appearance is anything related to the pre-service teachers' physical appearance, while confidence can be seen from the way they perform. In this case, the pre-service teachers thought that they had performed well.

4.1. Pre-service teachers' reflections

169

The pre-service teachers were also assigned to write their reflections about their teaching. The first example is about what the respondent thought about her preparation and confidence. " I had prepared the material well." Further, she said that "…I was full of confidence." She wrote these as her reflection of what went well about her teaching.

Another student wrote about her weakness in managing the class:
" Class management is my biggest weakness. I still can't manage a big group of people well. I tried to improve it but I still cannot do it better." Although she realized that she failed to manage her class, she made an effort to improve it.

These examples show that the pre-service teachers were able to evaluate not only their weakness, but also their strength. This way might bring them to be able to give an objective evaluation.

5.   Conclusion

Teaching involves several aspects that always need to be learned and trained and that involves internal and external factors. Internal factors contribute a big influence to the teaching skill development. It needs great self-awareness to always improve oneself by looking back what has happened and experienced, seeing what has gone well and what needs improvement. Self- evaluation and reflections can become a way to be reflective teachers.

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