

giving evidence from your self-observation.

c) Read

If you think you need to find out more about a certain area, you can study books or magazines on pedagogy. You can even surf the Net and visit websites for teachers to get useful teaching ideas or more academic articles.

d) Ask

Pose questions to websites or magazines to get ideas from other teachers. Or if you have a local teachers' association or opportunities for in-service training, ask for a session on an area that interests you.

e) Try

The next time you go to the class, try the new ideas and practices. Again observe the class events and think about the results. Don't forget that reflection is a continuous cyclical process.

Conclusion

"Reflection practice offers practical options to address professional development issues. It encourages practitioners to generate and share their insights and theories about teaching." (Florez, 2006, P. 3). Reflective practice compels teachers to look at the reasons and theories behind their practices and forces them to examine factors such as beliefs and assumptions about learning, students' needs, and the teachers' relationship with the larger community. Although there are barriers to reflective teaching (e. g. lack of time, fear of failure, and fear of judgment by others, etc.), it is a really useful practice which prepares the teachers for serving the needs of their students and the community as a whole (Pickett, 2006). As a result of reflection teachers may decide to do something in a different way, or they may come to the conclusion that how they are doing is the best possible way of doing it. And this is what professional development is all about.

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work as they had never done something like this before. But I think because I demonstrated how to do the task by doing a sample task with Asifa, everyone had a much clearer idea of what they needed to do. I Should have done the demo with my 9B class too, rather than simply explaining what to do. It was actually a great success as everyone (even Hashim!!) was using English to talk with their partner and solve the picture riddles. I must find some more of these riddles for a later class. They really seemed to enjoy it!"

Excerpt taken from Mohamed (2006)

b) Record a lesson

You could audio or video record the lesson, making sure the students are aware of the purposes of the recording. Of course many students tend to be self-conscious and less willing to participate in a class if they are being recorded. Lesson recordings can help you determine how much you talk, how much time you allocate to student talk, whether you give equal attention to all students, your movements in the classroom, your tone of voice, the clarity of your instructions and explanations, where you stand, etc.

c) Obtain feedback from students

You can do this by speaking with the class as a group or individually. You can ask them to comment on what they like or don't like about your teaching as well as about the new things they like you to include. You could also ask them to complete a questionnaire; this may be related to your teaching practice in general, or a particular aspect of your teaching (for example, error correction). Students are generally quite open about what they think of your teaching, and provide some very good suggestions about new activities they like to try. You can also ask your students to maintain a learning diary as part of class work or as a regular homework activity.

d) Invite a colleague to observe you

By observation we mean a purposeful examination of teaching events through systematic processes of data collection and analysis. Formal observations be a superior can be embarrassing, so getting feedback on your teaching through a colleague is better. Again you may ask your colleague to focus on a particular aspect of your teaching (e. g. your patterns of interaction with students), or to comment on your teaching in general. The observer can take down notes. Immediately after the lesson discuss the points with your observer (Tice, 2006; Bailey, 2001).

● What to do next

a) Think

You may notice patterns occurring in your teaching through your observation. You may also notice things that you were previously unaware of. You may be surprised by some of the feedback of your students. You may already have some ideas for changes to implement. Think about and analyze the following questions:

- What were your goals (for a particular lesson)?
- How did you intend to achieve those goals?
- What actually happened?
- How do you feel about this?
- What could you do/ have done differently?

b) Talk

Just by talking about what you have discovered - to a supportive colleague, a friend, or your university professors - you may be able to come up with some ideas for how to things differently. To do this, you and your colleagues can meet to discuss issues. Or you can use a list of statements about teaching beliefs (e. g. "Pairwork is a valuable activity in the language class." or "Lexis is more important than grammar.") and discuss which ones you agree or disagree with, and which ones are reflected in your own teaching



dynamic approach to teaching which distinguishes him/her from an invariant teacher. The following are some of these differences: A reflective teacher is one who can design and implement an effective educational program by adapting his or her teaching skills and techniques to the specific school situation, purpose of the lesson, and the children's abilities, interests, and needs. An invariant teacher is one who uses one approach and predetermined curriculum or content in all teaching situations, regardless of the class/ school characteristics. A reflective teacher bases progression on such factors as the student's rate of improvement, physical skill needs, and interests, while an invariant teacher bases progression on such factors as six-week units, and amount of material to be covered in a semester. A reflective teacher modifies activities and lessons to available equipment and facilities, while an invariant teacher teaches only those activities and lessons that use available equipment. A reflective teacher attempts to understand management problems, seeks the causes, and then modifies teaching procedures accordingly, whereas an invariant teacher assumes that students are misbehaving and resorts to punitive measures to modify individual and class behavior. A reflective teacher assesses the students regularly and seeks

constructive criticism about his/ her teaching from children and colleagues but an invariant teacher assesses sporadically and often bases assessment on whether children liked the lesson, how long they remained interested, and how well they behaved (Pickett, 2006; Gimenez, 1999).

Becoming a reflective teacher_____

● **The first thing to do**

There is no one way to explore one's own classroom practices but it is important to begin by collecting information about what happens in the classroom. The following are some suggestions for gathering classroom data.

a) *Maintain a teaching diary*

This is a daily record of your professional experiences, particularly focusing on the events in the classroom. It will help to clarify your thinking. Include in your diary not only the events that occurred during the lesson, but also your own thoughts and feelings about it as well as your students' reactions and responses. The following is an excerpt taken from the diary of a teacher who teaches EFL to teenagers:

"I was apprehensive about whether it would

Introduction

By three methods, we may learn wisdom: first, by reflection, which is noblest; second, by imitation, which is easiest; and third, by experience which is the bitterest. (Confucius, Chinese philosopher, 479-551 B. C.). The word *reflection* generates connotations of mirroring, meditation, deep thinking or thoughtful consideration (Mohamed, 2006). Reflective teaching is a movement in education in which teachers analyze their own practice and consider alternative means of achieving their ends. Surely it doesn't simply involve thinking for example "Oh I don't think that activity went very well, maybe I'll try it in groups next time." Reflective teaching entails a systematic approach in which teachers collect data about teaching, examine their attitudes, assumptions, and teaching practices, and use the information obtained as a basis for critical reflection about teaching. It is a process of self-observation and self-evaluation. By collecting information about what goes on in our classroom, and by analyzing and evaluating the information, we identify and explore our own activities and the underlying beliefs. This may then lead to changes in our teaching (Tice, 2006; Richards & Lockhart, 1994; Pennington, 1992).

The nature of reflective thinking

Reflection is a specialized form of thinking stemming from doubt and perplexity felt in a directly experienced situation, and leading to purposeful inquiry and problem resolution. Bartlett (1990) proposes a model for reflection; this model includes five elements in the cycle of reflective thinking: 1) *mapping* which, with the emphasis on individual observations, addresses the question *What do I do as a teacher?*, 2) *informing* which, with the focus on the meaning of teaching, asks *What did I intend?*, 3) *contesting* which asks *How did I come to be this way?* and *How was it possible for my present view to have changed?*, trying to uncover the assumptions behind the

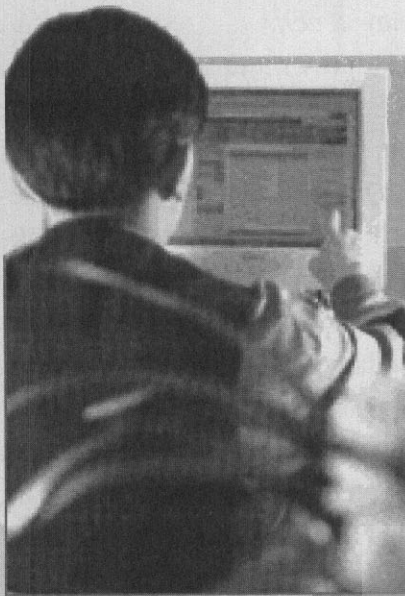
actions, 4) *appraising* which asks *How might I teach differently?*, leading to a search for alternative actions which are consistent with our new understanding, and 5) *acting* which asks *What and how shall I now teach?*

Sparks-Langer and Colton (1991) list three elements important to reflective thinking: the cognitive element, the critical element, and the teacher narrative. *The cognitive element* describes how teachers process information and make decisions; here six categories of knowledge are to be addressed: (1) content/ subject-matter knowledge, (2) pedagogical methods and theory, (3) curriculum, (4) characteristics of learners, (5) teaching contests, and (6) educational purposes. *The critical element* focuses on experiences, goals, values, and social implications that drive thinking. *The teacher narrative* refers to the teacher's own voice and interpretations of the context where professional decisions are made. The main purpose of reflection is to raise consciousness among educators, to challenge attitudes and beliefs, and to engender a high degree of professional practice and development through a continuous cycle of self-observation and self-evaluation (Florez, 2006; Richards & Lockhart, 1994).

Some scholars differentiate between *reflection-in-action* which is during teaching with the aim to find ways to solve unexpected problems while teaching, and *reflection-on-action* which is after teaching with the aim to decide whether what went on in the class was fruitful or changes are necessary (Pickett, 2006; Tice, 2006). Gimenez (1999) adds one more to these, *reflection before teaching*, which refers to the preparation needed before a teacher starts his/her teaching. So a teacher should include reflection as an important part *throughout* the cycle of teaching.

The differences between a reflective teacher and an invariant teacher

A reflective teacher follows an active and



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How to Become a Reflective Teacher

چکیده

تدریس اندیشه‌ورزانه رویکردی است با این پیش فرض که معلمان می‌توانند، کیفیت تدریس خود را با تفکر انتقادی درباره‌ی تجربیات خود در کلاس‌هایشان بهبود بخشند. این رویکرد، یعنی مشاهده‌ی آنچه در کلاس انجام می‌دهید، فکر کردن به این که چرا آن را انجام می‌دهید، و این که آیا روش شما کارآمد است یا نه [ریچاردز و دیگران، ۱۹۹۲].

نوعی تدریس همراه با کاوش و بررسی است که معلمان را در چرخه‌ی تفکر و عمل - براساس تجربیات حرفه‌ای - درگیر می‌کند. لازمی انجام این کار، برخورداری از رویکردی نظام‌مند است که به بسط عمق و دامنه‌ی سؤالاتی منجر می‌شود که معلمان درباره‌ی تدریس خود می‌پرسند [پیکت، ۲۰۰۶].

در این مقاله، ابتدا ویژگی‌های تفکر اندیشه‌ورزانه مورد بحث قرار می‌گیرد و سپس تفاوت‌های معلم اندیشه‌ورز و معلم سنتی و تغییرناپذیر مشخص می‌شود. در نهایت نیز مراحلی که معلمان برای تدریس اندیشه‌ورزانه باید طی کنند، ارائه می‌شوند.

کلید واژه‌ها: تفکر اندیشه‌ورزانه، تفکر انتقادی، معلم اندیشه‌ورز، معلم تغییرناپذیر.

Abstract

Reflective teaching is an approach to teaching based on the assumption that teachers can improve their understanding of teaching and its quality by thinking critically on their teaching experiences in their classes to improve classroom practices. Reflective teaching means looking at what you do in the classroom thinking about why you do it, and thinking about if it works (Richards, et al, 1992). Reflective teaching is a kind of inquiry-oriented teaching practice which engages educators in a cycle of thought and action based on professional experiences. It requires a systematic approach and leads to the expansion of the depth and range of questions teachers can ask about their own teaching (Pickett, 2006). In this article, first the nature of reflective thinking, then the differences between a reflective teacher and an invariant teacher, and finally the procedures of becoming a reflective teacher are discussed.

Key Words: *reflective thinking, critical thinking, reflective teacher, invariant teacher.*