

Mirroring Reflective Practices in L2 Teaching: A Dichotomy Between Novice and Experienced Language Teachers

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Abstract This paper is a response to the growing need for researchers who would document how reflective practices in language teaching help shape teachers' professional expertise and later on, positively impact student achievement. Two English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers teaching in a government-owned high school in the Philippines participated in the study: a novice (NLT) and an experienced language teacher (ELT). Both participants' reflective teaching practices were identified, compared, and analyzed using a standardized survey-questionnaire that gauges English language teaching reflections of practitioners. Moreover, the participants' reflective entries in their daily lesson logs were subjected to documentary analysis to describe their perceived successful teaching strategies, the difficulties they encountered in teaching, and the pedagogical innovations they employed. The results revealed that the ELT practiced majority of the reflective teaching components as compared to the shifting, inconsistent reflective practices of the NLT. The experienced practitioner also had more reflective entries and relevant accounts in her daily lesson log than the less experienced one. It was also revealed that in relation to teaching strategies and innovations, the ELT incorporated more varied, eclectic mechanisms in teaching English while the NLT adhered to more practical ones. Both participants also viewed students'

unpreparedness, inattentiveness, and absenteeism as factors that make language teaching difficult. As such, it may be assumed that wealth of experience may influence the extent by which a teacher observes reflective practices in L2 teaching.

Keywords: experienced language teacher, novice language teacher, professional experience, reflective accounts, reflective language teaching

Introduction

The devotion of energy and effort is apparent among teachers whose concerns are on students' academic progress. It also extends, in the same way, to how they could spend time focusing on students' weaknesses. However, in doing such, they may forget to pay attention to their own teaching performance. The question of how teachers respond to the call of introspection warrants re-examination of what makes a progressive, professional, and an effective teacher. As such, could reflection be the missing link in the (re) construction of teacher quality?

The first documented investigation of reflective teaching was carried out by Schon (1983) in his book *The Reflective Practitioner*; in which he described his pioneering model that holds approaches towards decision making and problem solving. In language teaching, Richards and Lockhart (1994) wrote a book that illustrates the application of reflective practices to second language classrooms. For them, it is through critical self-examination and reflection that decision making, planning, and action are initiated by teachers. The reflective approach to language teaching supports new methods where teaching is understood in its own principles (Richards & Lockhart, 1994). For Kumaravadivelu (2001), a post-method view to language

teaching would break the magical hold of methods to many language practitioners.

Reflective teaching is a process of self-observation and self-evaluation (The British Council, 2012). The importance of reflections in language teaching goes with identifying and exploring teachers' practices and underlying beliefs. When teachers are engaged in this kind of introspection, changes and improvements in teaching are expected to occur.

The reflective revolution in second language teaching education had gained great momentum in the last 20 years (Bailey, 1997; Brandt, 2006, 2008; Farrell, 2008; Mann, 2005; Wallace, 1991). Webb (1999) even describes the approach as a current grand idea, while other language scholars accepted it as valuable in teacher education (Valli, 1992; Zeichner & Liston, 1996). Other researchers would also provide evidence that nurturing reflective practice in language teaching is a mechanism of moving away from the traditional, applied science model, which treats theory and practice as separate entities.

Explorations on reflective language teaching were also identified in many researches. For instance, Noormohammadi (2014) determined the relationship between reflective teaching practices and the level of efficacy and autonomy of EFL teachers in Iran. The results showed that there was a positive relationship among teacher reflective practice, teacher self-efficacy, and sense of autonomy. Similarly, actual practices greatly depend on the teacher and his development (Halliday, 1998; Richards & Lockhart, 1994). Thus, reflective practice is becoming an important feature of ESL/EFL teacher education programs and has been established as center to teachers' professional development (Noormohammadi, 2014).

Reflective language teaching puts forward a more empowering approach to language education; however, there is still a dearth of genuine reflection that calls for a dialogic approach to feedback amidst strong focus on teacher reflections (Copland, Ma & Mann, 2009). Variations of reflection also add to the complexity of exposing teachers to its rudiments. As a response to the need for a clearer understanding of the construction of reflective language teaching, Akbari et al. (2010) even developed an instrument to gauge the reflective practices of ESL and EFL teachers, a tool which was later known as the English Language Teaching Reflective Inventory (ELTRI).

The Dichotomy between Novice and Experienced Language Teachers

Another growing consideration relative to the current reflective language teaching investigations is on how to characterize the reflective approaches of novice and experienced language practitioners. Eventually, Tsui (2005) did a comprehensive study of the distinction between the characteristics of a novice and an expert language teacher, respectively. Through analyzing related reviews and literatures, the researcher found that studies of expertise in teaching cater those that highlight the novice-expert dichotomy. They focus on the teachers' mental processes in planning and decision making, two important aspects that link thought and action. In a follow-up study, Tsui (2009) put premium on the critical differences between expert and non-expert teachers shown in three dimensions. They include integrating teacher knowledge and teaching act and focusing on the responses as regards contexts of work. It is interesting to note that along the given dimensions, the ability to engage in reflection and conscious deliberation was given more importance.

The findings in Tsui's (2005) case studies of ESL teachers in Hong Kong provide valuable insights into the

complexities of language teaching, and therefore contribute to understanding the tacit knowledge that practitioners could gain through experience. However, more studies on the sheer description of how expertise in language teaching is developed have to be done so as to better delineate the knowledge development that is experienced by both beginning and seasoned language teachers.

A more closely-related investigation on the premise of reflective practices among novice and experienced language teachers is laid out in the study of Okas, van der Shaaf and Krull (2014). The distinction was made based on the ideas culled from the reflective essays of the teacher-participants. Specifically, it highlights Estonian teachers' practical knowledge and beliefs about their profession through reflective writings. The results showed that the novice teachers stressed on technological teaching aspects such as skills in using ICT, while the experienced ones put emphasis on the development of students and the teacher's role as an educator. These were their conceptions when asked about the real image of a professional teacher.

Though distinctions were made and differences were established between the characteristics and cognitions of a novice and an experienced language teacher, none so far investigated on the teachers' conceptual understanding of reflective teaching and their practices to nurture such approach. Thus, this is a fertile ground that could attract germane research efforts in the language field.

Studies on Reflective Language Teaching

Any popular item would always attract the attention of interested parties, such as the case of researches on reflective language teaching. Since its conception in 1983, many language scholars have delved into the investigation of such practice and yielded different, but equally relevant results.

Komur and Gun (2016) conducted a study that determined the reflective approaches of EFL teachers in Turkey. The English Language Teaching Reflection Inventory (ELTRI) was used to gather data for the study. The results revealed that the teacher-participants were actively engaged in reflective teaching. More specifically, the teachers paid closest attention to the metacognitive component of reflective teaching, while learner-related or affective component was adjudged as less significant. The study concluded that the dimensions of reflective language teaching identified by the teachers were also visible in their teaching practice.

Using narrative inquiry to explore language, identity, and power in language teacher education, Barkhuizen (2016) argued using poststructuralist conception. He believed that this conception is important for teachers, through reflective practice or teacher research to become aware of and understand their professional identities. Other researchers like Farrell (2011) reported that there are varied means of fostering and generating teacher reflection without explicit solicitation: mentor-teacher meeting in ESL context (Waring, 2011) and the use of classroom observations.

Other ways of gathering information that strengthen reflective practice among language teachers include the use of survey-questionnaires (Komur & Gun, 2016), narrative inquiry (Barkhuizen, 2016), through videotaping meetings between a mentor and a mentee (Waring, 2011), or through the use of an observation chart to better engage language teachers to pedagogical introspections. Though methodologies and instrumentations are varied, the unifying aim of the aforesaid researches is to document how language practitioners reflect on their performance in the language classroom and more significantly, how to deepen their understanding of reflective teaching as a way to improve professionally, thereby positively influencing students' learning outcomes. Unfortunately, in the Philippines, the

area of reflective language teaching has not yet been strongly explored and cultivated as traced from the limited number of studies empirically conducted.

Reflective Language Teaching in the Local Context

The advent of the K to 12 Curriculum in the Philippines has paved ways for numerous developments in the educational scene. Aside from the fact that K to 12 teachers are trained and curriculum materials like textbooks are refined, new teaching paradigms and strategies are also introduced in order to meet the demands of the new curriculum. Just recently, with the aim of helping public school teachers improve the way they prepare lessons for K to 12 learners, the Department of Education (DepEd) recognizes the importance of instructional planning towards successful teaching and learning through a policy guideline on daily lesson preparation, which was released on June, 2016.

DepEd Order No. 46, s. 2016 otherwise known as “Policy Guidelines on Daily Lesson Preparation for the K to 12 Basic Education Program” aims to empower teachers to carry out quality instruction that recognizes the diversity of learners inside the classroom, while developing and assessing their learning across the curriculum (Department of Education, 2016). Interestingly, a significant part of this department order lies on the mandate that teachers should provide reflections as they plan for future instructions. This is a way of putting prominence to the need to practice reflective teaching to be cognizant of what learners need to know, how they learn, and how best to facilitate the learning process. The inclusion of reflective accounts in teaching started in school year 2016-2017 among public elementary and secondary schools in the Philippines. With this calibration on lesson planning, teachers are required to complete the reflection part in their daily lesson logs for future use.

With the vibrant research prospects that reflective language teaching provides, it is necessary to engage in a research undertaking that would fathom the reflective practices of language teachers in the country. Thus, this study explored the reflective teaching approaches of a novice and an experienced ESL teacher in the Philippines with the primary aim of creating a picture of how these language teachers make use of reflective accounts in teaching and how they go about the mandate of the Department of Education (DepEd) about the inclusion of reflections in lesson preparations.

Purposes of the Research

This case study involving a novice (NLT) and an experienced language teacher (ELT) aims to identify their reflective practices in relation to the components of reflective language teaching, and looks into how they comply to the need to provide reflective entries in their instructional plans. Specifically, this research sought answers to the following questions:

1. To what extent do the participants practice reflective teaching in terms of the following components:
 - 1.1. practical;
 - 1.2. cognitive;
 - 1.3. learner-related/affective;
 - 1.4. metacognitive; and
 - 1.5. critical?
2. How do the participants fulfill the need to provide reflective entries in their instructional plans in terms of the following:
 - 2.1. number of reflective entries; and
 - 2.2. successes, difficulties, and innovations reported?

Methodology

Research Design

This case study employed a quantitative-qualitative approach in exploring the reflective practices of the two identified participants. Data from an adapted reflective teaching inventory for language teachers and documentary analysis were considered as significant sources of reflective language teaching practices from the ESL teachers.

Participants

Two language teachers who are currently teaching in a government-owned resettlement high school (a government-owned high school built for people who were resettled due to Mt. Pinatubo eruption in Central Luzon plain) served as participants of the study. Furthermore, the participants were tagged as novice and experienced teachers considering their length of service in the teaching profession and the amount of exposure to professional trainings and seminars relevant to language teaching (Okas et al., 2014; Tsui, 2005). The following table describes the other demographic data of the participants.

Table 1. Demographic Data of the Participants– NLT and ELT

Personal Data	NLT	ELT
Gender	Female	Female
Age	21	35
Highest Educational Attainment	BSEd-English Graduate	MAEd-English Graduate
Teaching Experience	2 years	16 years
No. of Relevant Trainings/Seminars/Conferences attended	less than 15	more than 30

Instrument

The main research instrument used in the present study was the English Language Teaching Reflective Inventory (ELTRI) developed by Akbari et al. (2010). The ELTRI consists of 29 items, covering five components, which include practical, cognitive, learner-related/ affective, metacognitive, and critical components. The instrument has been used in recent researches concerning reflective language teaching which bears reliability index of .91.

Another source of reflective teaching data is the Daily Lesson Log (DLL) regularly accomplished by teachers of government-run educational institutions in the Philippines. It consists of different parts to help teachers log their daily lessons. The DLL covers a day's work or a week's worth of lessons and contains instructional objectives, content, learning resources, procedures, remarks, and reflection (DepEd, 2016). The calibration on lesson planning requires teachers to complete the reflection part of their daily lesson logs for future use. This reflection part includes the following entries: (1) no. of learners who earned 80% in the evaluation, (2) no. of learners who need additional activities for remediation, (3) no. of learners who have caught up with the lesson, (4) no. of learners who need to continue the required remediation (5) the teaching strategies that worked well (6) the difficulties encountered by the teacher, and (7) the innovations and localized materials which the teachers wish to share with their colleagues.

Data Collection Procedure

After identifying the participants for the study and requesting for an informed consent, the researcher requested the two language teachers to complete the English Language

Teaching Reflective Inventory (ELTRI) for 15 minutes. The data from the adapted survey-questionnaire served as data source to describe the reflective language teaching practices of the participants. Then, documentary analysis done onto their written reflective entries documented the ways in which the participants fulfill the need to be reflective as they go through teaching their everyday lessons. The focus of the analysis was on the entries of the participants in the template of the DLL for the reflection part.

The collection of pertinent research data in the present study lasted for a month, following the participants' completion of the reflective language teaching inventory. To be able to cull sufficient reflective entries from the participants' daily lesson logs, the data collected encompassed the first to fourth grading periods of academic year 2016-2017. The researcher waited for the last grading period to end before collecting the daily lesson logs of the two language teachers. Both data from the ELTRI and those from the reflection parts of the daily lesson log template provided descriptions on how the participants make sense of reflective language teaching.

Data Analysis

The conglomeration of data coming from the reflective language teaching inventory, and the analysis of the reflective entries of the participants from their instructional plans, account for the qualitative nature of the study. At first, data from the ELTRI were described based on the level of frequency the novice and experienced language teachers, respectively, practice the components of reflective language teaching in the instrument devised by Akbari et al. (2010). The responses of the participants were analyzed based on the comparability of the frequencies that reveal how often they practice the aforesaid reflective language teaching components.

For the analysis of the reflective entries, the frequencies or number of times the participants complied to the need to provide reflections for their everyday lesson were documented. Individually, the teaching successes, difficulties encountered, innovations and localized materials that the novice and experienced language teachers wish to share with other language teachers were also counted. Consequently, entries that have similarities, especially for the last three items found from the DLL – successes, difficulties encountered, and teaching innovations and materials, respectively, were tallied as one.

Results and Discussion

The following section provides for the similarities and differences of the novice and experienced language teachers in terms of their reflective language teaching practices, both taken from their responses in the ELTRI and actual reflective entries from their respective daily lesson logs. Discussions and interpretations were added to better qualify the research data presented.

The Reflective Teaching Practices of the NLT and ELT

The purpose of utilizing a reflective language teaching survey-questionnaire in the study was geared towards identifying the reflective language teaching practices of the two participants in relation to the five components presented in the instrument: $\frac{3}{4}$ (1) practical, (2) cognitive, (3) learner-related/affective, (4) metacognitive, and (5) critical.

On Practical Component

Practical component aims at dealing with the pragmatic consequence and actual practice of reflection. The tools used to gauge reflective practice among teachers include journal writing, lesson reports, surveys and questionnaires,

audio-video recordings, observations, action research, teaching portfolios, group discussion, and analyzing critical incidents (Farrell, 2004; Murphy, 2001; Richards and Farrell, 2005; Richards and Lockhart, 1994). Table 2 presents the similarities and differences between the participants based on their responses towards the practical component of reflective language teaching:

Table 2. Reflective Practices of the NLT and ELT on Practical Component

Item No.	Practical Component	NLT	ELT
1	I have a file where I keep my accounts of my teaching for reviewing purposes.	Sometimes	Always
2	I talk about my classroom experiences with my colleagues and seek their advice/feedback.	Always	Often
3	After each lesson, I write about the accomplishments/failures of that lesson or I talk about the lesson to a colleague.	Sometimes	Sometimes
4	I discuss practical/theoretical issues with my colleagues.	Often	Often
5	I observe other teachers' classes to learn about efficient practices.	Sometimes	Sometimes
6	I ask my peers to observe my teaching and comment on my teaching performance.	Rarely	Sometimes

From the given data on practical component, both NLT and ELT, respectively, made use of reflective teaching procedures with the same duration of practice. Both believed to have talked about classroom experiences and have sought advice/feedback at times, discussed practical/theoretical issues, have observed teachers' classes to get ideas at times also. On the one hand, both had different responses when asked to identify the extent to which they keep accounts of all aforementioned tasks.

These acts may then appear that the idea of “being evaluated” and asking help from others showed “weakness” and “dependency,” which were not fully welcomed by both participants in reflective language teaching. Though peer evaluation in teaching is highly encouraged (Northern Michigan University, 2017), the system may not sound favorable for other teachers because it causes tensions. For an instance, in the Philippine context, Filipino adults find it hard to accept constructive criticisms, a habit that Filipinos, according to Abello (2014), should try to avoid.

On Cognitive Component

The cognitive component concerns teachers’ professional development (Akbari et al. 2010). Conducting action researches, attending conferences and workshops related to one’s field of specialization, and reading professional literature are among the behaviors included in the foregoing component (Farrell, 2004; Richards and Farrell, 2005). Table 3 presents the dichotomies between the reflective practices of the participants in terms of cognitive component:

Table 3. Reflective Practices of the NLT and ELT on Cognitive Component

Item No.	Cognitive Component	NLT	ELT
7	I read books/articles related to effective teaching to improve my classroom practice.	Sometimes	Often
8	I participate in workshops/conferences related to teaching/learning issues.	Sometimes	Sometimes
9	I think of writing articles based on my classroom experiences.	Rarely	Sometimes
10	I look at journal articles or search the Internet to see what the recent developments in my profession are.	Sometimes	Often
11	I carry out small scale research activities in my classes to become better informed of learning/teaching processes.	Never	Sometimes
12	I think of classroom events as potential research topics and think of finding a method for investigating them.	Rarely	Sometimes

In the cognitive dimension to improve teaching, participants are commonly participating in workshops/conferences related to teaching/learning issues, having a verbal description of “sometimes.” This reflective rating may be a consequence of limited training opportunities provided by education agencies both in the past and at present. The results revealed that the NLT observed such research-related practices “at times” and even “rarely” and “never.” In contrast, the ELT did it “sometimes” to “often.” This may further show that although the NLT observed her own reflective practices, using reflective teaching accounts to do researches and solve learning problems is not yet fully realized. Hence, the NLT gives more focus on teaching more than research. This may be due to the reason that the NLT only has limited professional exposure towards such issues and conceptions in teaching, considering her length of service. On the contrary, the ELT is well-informed of the procedures prior to and during the conduct of an action research. Her length of service and other professional experiences like having earned a master’s degree in language teaching may have exposed her to various research activities.

Unfortunately, what is apparent among present language teachers in the field, particularly in the Philippines, is the teachers’ repulsion towards the conduct of action researches. This is because teachers view conducting action research of any type as an endeavor that necessitates time and devotion, not to mention the undervalued contribution of research towards professional development (Savaskan, 2013). On the one hand, Morales, Abulon, Soriano, David, Hermosisima and Gerundio (2016) concluded that what keeps Filipino teachers from conducting researches is time constraints, owing to the many work-related papers they have to accomplish. Hence, in order to better guide language teachers, novice or experienced, towards the

effective conduct of action research as handmaiden of reflective practices, professional development training programs and a review of teachers' workloads must be done. For Valencia (2016), teachers must be given adept provision of development in eliciting from them problem-based solutions so as to further improve instructional practice.

On Learner-Related/Affective Component

Learner-related component or affective component includes reflections of the teaching-learning process with emphasis on how the learners perform academically (Akbari et al. 2010). Accordingly, this tendency "emphasizes reflection about students, their cultural and linguistic backgrounds, thinking and understandings, their interests, and their developmental readiness for particular tasks" (Zeichner & Liston, 1996, p.57). Table 4 presents the distinctions between the novice and experienced language teachers, following the reflective practices on learner-related/affective component:

Table 4. Reflective Practices of the NLT and ELT on Learner-Related/Affective Component

Item No.	Lear-Related/Affective Component	NLT	ELT
13	I talk to my students to learn about their learning styles and preferences.	Sometimes	Always
14	I talk to my students to learn about their family backgrounds, hobbies, interests, and abilities.	Often	Always
15	I ask my students whether they like a teaching task or not.	Sometimes	Sometimes

The affective element in reflective language teaching also concentrates on students' emotional responses in the language classroom (Hillier, 2005; Pollard et al.,

2006; Richards and Farrell, 2005; Richards and Lockhart, 1994). Based on the presented data, both NLT and ELT did not practice at a great extent asking students whether they like the given teaching task or not. Owing to the previous responses about evaluation and observation, it is still apparent from the result that both participants were not completely at ease of being evaluated. Consequently, even student's evaluation makes these teachers anxious.

A gap between how the participants regarded learners in their teaching could be gleaned from the results. First, the NLT did not fully and strongly regard the affective component in her reflective practices. This is entirely different when compared to the rest of the responses of the ELT, who observed the other two practices "always." Although teaching that highlights the affective component is viewed as contributing to students' social adaptation and intellectual success at school (Essays UK, 2017), not all teachers take advantage of it. For example, in the study of Noormohammadi (2014), Iranian language teachers' least reflected component was the affective one, and results seemed to be more equal among them. However, reflective practices in relation to the affect or learners' welfare were strongly practiced by Turkish teachers in the study of Komur and Gun (2016).

On Metacognitive Component

The metacognitive component deals with teachers' reflections about their beliefs and personality and the way they manage themselves emotionally (Hillier, 2005; Pollard et al., 2006; Richards & Lockhart, 1994; Stanley, 1998; Zeichner & Liston, 1996). It is a way of "thinking about their teaching." Table 5 shows the reflective teaching practices of the novice and experienced language teachers, focusing on the metacognitive component:

Table 5. Reflective Practices of the NLT and ELT on Metacognitive Component

Item No.	Metacognitive Component	NLT	ELT
16	As a teacher, I think about my teaching philosophy and the way it is affecting my teaching.	Sometimes	Always
17	I think of the ways my biography or my background affects the way I define myself as a teacher.	Sometimes	Sometimes
18	I think of the meaning or the significance of my job as a teacher.	Sometimes	Always
19	I try to find out which aspects of my teaching provide me with a sense of satisfaction.	Sometimes	Always
20	I think about my strength and weaknesses as a teacher.	Often	Always
21	I think of the positive/negative role models I have had as a student and the way they have affected me in my practice.	Sometimes	Always
22	I think of inconsistencies and contradictions that occur in my classroom practice.	Often	Always

The only similarity exhibited by both participants is the way they defined themselves as teachers based on their biographies or backgrounds, which was given “sometimes” as verbal description. Both the participants of the study may have less understanding of their backgrounds as teachers, leading them towards not consistently acknowledging their own beliefs system in language teaching, an idea conforming to Franckowiak’s (2015) principle that the teacher’s identity provides either positive or negative influences on classroom environment. These principles may be viewed as the teachers’ way of centering or focusing on the background and needs of their learners, more than their own.

The ELT could be described as more metacognitive than the NLT in dealing with students in her classroom. It is

apparent from the responses that the ELT “always” observed metacognitive mechanisms in carrying out language teaching tasks. These practices include accommodating her teaching philosophy, thinking about the meaning or significance of her job, the sense of satisfaction she has towards the profession, and the strengths and weaknesses she possesses as a language teacher. Furthermore, the ELT was more accepting of the ideas that there could be positive and negative role models in teaching and that inconsistencies and contradictions may occur in her language classroom. Consequently, the NLT reported these reflective practices as “sometimes” practiced.

On Critical Component

Critical component refers to the teachers’ reflective considerations of socio-political aspects of pedagogy (Akbari et al., 2010). Furthermore, this component taps on the use of reflections involving the political significance of teacher practice, alongside the introduction of critical issues of race, gender, social class, and human empowerment (Bartlett, 1997; Day, 1993; Jay & Johnson, 2002; Zeichner & Liston, 1996). Table 6 presents the practices of the participants in terms of the critical component of reflective language teaching:

Table 6. Reflective Practices of the NLT and ELT on Critical Component

Item No.	Critical Component	NLT	ELT
23	I think about instances of social injustice in my own surroundings and try to discuss them in my classes.	Sometimes	Often
24	I think of ways to enable my students to change their social lives in fighting poverty, discrimination, and gender bias.	Often	Always
25	In my teaching, I include less-discussed topics, such as old age, AIDS, discrimination against women and minorities, and poverty.	Sometimes	Always

26	I think about the political aspects of my teaching and the way I may affect my students' political views.	Rarely	Always
27	I think of ways through which I can promote tolerance and democracy in my classes and in the society in general.	Sometimes	Always
28	I think about the ways gender, social class, and race influence my students' achievements.	Sometimes	Always
29	I think of outside social events that can influence my teaching inside the class.	Sometimes	Always

Table 6 reveals that the NLT did not strongly accentuate thinking about critical perspectives in the process of reflecting. The ELT, on the other hand, consistently made use of critical approaches. The result is consistent with previously discussed differences of the participants in terms of learner-related/affective component of reflective language teaching (a component closely-linked to critical component), which the experienced language teacher also practiced more strongly than the novice one. The result could also provide evidence that the ELT sees language teaching as a potential domain of inequality and injustice, and that through teaching, the “oppressed” like the learners could be empowered and emancipated (Farrell, 2008).

Similarly, in a study that reveals teachers' reflections on critical pedagogy, Katz (2014) concluded that most teachers do not think about how the classroom reproduces the power structure in society by reaffirming a certain set of beliefs and reinforcing the power of privileged students. This lack of concentration towards critical perspectives among teachers may be due to the lack of awareness about the aforesaid theory and that critical education too often approach K to 12 teachers' dispositions in ways that are best unproductive and at worst harmful to critical change efforts (Neumann, 2013). In the Philippines, there is a dearth of researches and pedagogical efforts to strengthen critical pedagogy in the present educational system. As regards

the novice-experienced language teachers' dichotomy, and in relation to the findings of the present study, Aliakbari and Faraji (2014) reported that critical pedagogy items in their study represent a positive relationship with age. The foregoing researchers also noted that less experienced teachers had a lower level of agreement with the principles of critical pedagogy. These findings may also explain why the experienced language teacher in the present study appears to be more accommodating towards critical language teaching than her novice counterpart.

Summary of the Reflective Practices of the NLT and ELT

The summary of results shows that in terms of reflective practices in language teaching, the ELT reported more reflective engagement than the NLT. Hence, the former was more reflective or contemplative about her language teaching than the less experienced language teacher. It could then be underscored that in the case presented, experience had a large contribution to one's preference for reflective language teaching. This assumption is supported by the claim that to become an expert in teaching, there should be an approximate duration of 10,000 hours of practical work in a classroom (Berliner, 1994, 2001; Ericsson, 1996).

Reflective Practices of the NLT and ELT in Terms of Instructional Planning

In 2016, the Education Department (DepEd), mandated all public schoolteachers to adopt a more generic way of preparing lessons known as a "Daily Lesson Log" or DLL. This directive is contained in DepEd Order No. 42, series of 2016 or descriptively titled as "Policy Guidelines on Daily Lesson Preparation for K to 12 Basic Education Program." Hence, one of the aims of the current study was to look into how the participants satisfy the need for reflective practices in instructional planning.

On the Number of Reflective Entries in their Instructional Plans

The data deduced from the daily lesson logs of the novice and experienced language teachers, respectively, were the evaluation of the learners' performance for each learning episode, the strategies used by the teachers, the difficulties they encountered, and provisions on best practices (innovations and materials) in the language classroom. The entries in the said document covered teaching episodes for four grading periods or four quarters. The entries from the lesson log of the NLT were on Grade 8 English, while those from the ELT were relative to Grade 7 English under the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum in the Philippines.

Based on the number of times the subjects wrote reflective entries in their daily lesson logs, it is clear that the ELT had more reflective accounts than the novice language teacher. More specifically, the ELT had a total number of 25 reflection entries, while the NLT only had a total of six (6). The number of reflective entries would also reveal that the ELT was more religiously accomplishing the reflection part in her lesson log than the novice one. These quantitative data were therefore congruent with how the NLT and ELT regarded their practice in relation to reflective teaching when both were asked to complete the survey-questionnaire, wherein the experienced one emerged as more reflective. However, the participants were not able to meet the minimum number of reflections for the entire 201 school days during the academic year 2016 to 2017 in the Philippines.

On Successes, Difficulties, and Innovations Reported in the NLT and ELT's Reflective Entries

The reporting of teaching successes and failures is a significant part of reflecting on what transpires in the language classroom. As such, the lesson log format provided

by the Department of Education (DepEd) accounts for the documentation of the teachers' teaching strategies that worked well with the learners and the difficulties encountered, including those innovative teaching strategies and materials that they wish to share to their colleagues (Department of Education, 2016). Table 7 presents the reported teaching successes, difficulties encountered, and innovations both language teachers wish to share as best practices:

Table 7. Other Reflective Entries in Novice and Experienced Language Teachers' Lesson Logs

Reflective Entries	NLT	ELT
Successful Teaching Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving of many examples • Activating schemata • The use of ICT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group dynamics • Choral reading • Inductive method • Cooperative learning activities • Communicative approach • Scaffolding • Lecture-discussion method • Think-Pair-Share • The use of graphic organizers • Story telling techniques
Difficulties Encountered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inattentive learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevalent absenteeism among learners • Learners' level of preparedness and interest • Students' weak foundation in grammar • Learners' difficulties in spelling • Drills • Activating learners' personal experiences
Innovative Teaching Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using students' names for sentence examples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of video clippings • The use of localized materials • Cloze activities/ materials • Contextualized and localized examples

Based on the given table, the experienced language teacher had more entries than the novice one. The bulk of teaching strategies and difficulties identified by the ELT also provides evidence that she practiced reflective teaching more often than her counterpart. The limited number of entries from the NLT, on the one hand, further illustrates the lack of reflective practices she incorporates in her teaching. On a relative note, a more critical perspective about reflective teaching calls for proper structuring and scaffolding of reflections towards the development of reflective tasks more than asking teachers to write reflections without proper guidance (Orland-Barak & Yinon, 2007). For Zeichner (2008), teacher reflections must result to genuine teacher development. In the Philippines, Salud (2017) underscores that one of the many things neglected by teachers is their conscious effort to reflect on the things they are doing wrong inside the classroom. This may also lead to the present result where the NLT, as one of the participants, failed to provide reflective entries to back up her instructional planning.

It is interesting to note that varied teaching strategies like the use of ICT, cooperative learning strategies, the use of communicative approach, etc. are now penetrating Filipino teachers' language classes (Dela Rosa, 2016). As such, it may be justifiable to say that these language teachers no longer adhere to one, specific teaching technique or strategy to address instruction in the language classroom.

The difficulties encountered by language teachers were related to learner-related challenges than those that relate to teaching methods. Such factor may emphasize the perspective of the participants that effective teaching-learning process may be hindered by the kind of performance learners exude in their respective language classrooms.

Conclusion

This study put forward the distinction between the reflective teaching practices of a novice language teacher and an experienced one. On the basis of investigating the practices of the subjects towards reflective language teaching components and the reflective entries they documented in their instructional plans, the following conclusions are hereby given:

First, it was found that the ELT showed greater reflective practice than the NLT. This may be due to the context of experience and professional exposure that the ELT gained out of teaching in the field for a longer time. Professional experience contributed to the kind and depth of reflective practices illuminated by teachers. Such claim could prove the relevance of teaching experience in honing the reflective mechanisms of professional language teachers. Borko and Livingston (1989) observed in a study that the cognitive schemata of experienced teachers are elaborate, more complex, more interconnected, and accessible. It may be that, expert teachers have more wealth of qualified experiences as they engage further in planning and interactive teaching (Borko & Livingston, 1989; Tsui, 2005).

Second, the study also revealed that the ELT showed diligence in completing reflective entries in her daily lesson log compared to the NLT. A detailed analysis of the participants' reflective entries would justify that reflective accounts were more evident on the side of the experienced one. In the present study, the experienced language teacher has been teaching in the field for 16 years; hence, diligence and consistency in accomplishing reflective entries and in realizing reflective practices in her teaching were still observed. These are lacking from the practices of the NLT. The said discrepancy may be viewed as the effect of what Kagan (1992) describes as the transition that a teacher undergoes in his or her

professional years. This would further imply that a teacher at the beginning of his or her professional career engages most with himself or herself. Later, he or she will pay attention to teaching and students' learning outcomes. The development of a language teacher from novice to expert, gauged through his or her reflective language teaching practices, forms part of the aforesaid transition.

Third, the inadequacy of reflections the subjects generated may also provide an overall view of their practices, which could give input to school administrators and the Education Department in general. The implementation of an effective curriculum also involves acknowledging stories and novel practices teachers bring into the classroom. As Alsubaie (2016) asserts, there is a need to involve teachers in the curriculum development process so as to make it effective and to be able to propel schools towards performing effectively. It is through nurturing reflective practice among language teachers that administrators like school heads and head teachers could look into the ways teachers teach and of the practices they concretize in the teaching process. It is therefore high time that the Department of Education (DepEd) embarks on efforts to better strengthen provisions for teacher training and professional advancement, so as to guide teachers in fulfilling the demands of the profession. More importantly, in the present context, the aim of transforming Filipino teachers into reflective practitioners would enable them to produce well-prepared and well-planned lessons that are fundamental to ensuring the realization of quality teaching and learning in schools (Department of Education, 2016).

Finally, the findings of the present study inadequately represent the reflective language teaching practices of English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers in the Philippines. Increasing the number of Filipino language

teachers as participants may also provide more in-depth and generalizable characterizations of their reflective practices. Interviews may also be conducted to verify the participants' responses. The complex interrelationship of data from teachers' narrative accounts could also be understood using more reliable research approaches like the use of narrative inquiry (Barkhuizen, 2016). Ultimately, this supports the idea that it is through narratives of teachers, the (co)telling of stories, that identities are constructed (Rugen, 2013).

Recommendations

The present study could still be improved by sufficiently addressing its limitations. Prospective researchers may utilize relevant limitations found in the study as research trajectories that could possibly make use of reflective language as rich research source. As such, it is highly recommended, based on the results of the study, that researches centering on the utilization of teachers' reflections in instructional planning, including classroom-based researches and relevant action plans, be conducted. Also, the insufficiency of reflective entries traced from the lesson logs of the participants is a potential research topic that could probe on the reasons why language teachers fail to become reflective practitioners vis-à-vis action researchers. On a relative note, a thematic analysis of teachers' reflective entries, accentuating the novel experiences of Filipino ESL practitioners, may also trigger the creation of a Filipino-based English Language Teaching Reflective Inventory (ELTRI) instrument. Significantly, a Filipino version of an ELTRI instrument may serve as a pane towards attaining a better vista of Filipino ESL teachers' introspections and pedagogical cognitions.

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