



## Reflective Teaching as a Modern Tool for Professional Development

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**Abstract:** Reflective teaching is considered as an example of teachers' professional development which involves constant analysis of your progress. When reflecting, you're as a teacher collecting information about what goes on in your classroom. When analyzing and evaluating this new information, you can identify and explore your own practices and underlying beliefs, which may lead to changes and improvements in your teaching. The main aim of the article is to explore teachers' reflection through journal writing and discuss the results of how journal writing had a positive potential in promoting a reflective practice. The qualities of reflective teacher, strategies for teachers to become a reflective teacher and journals as a tool to be reflective are discussed in the article.

**Key words:** reflective, journal writing, reflective teaching, professional development.

**Introduction:** Reflective teaching is a modern tool for professional development of teachers. Reflective teaching means that you take a look at what you do in your classroom, and think about why you do it. Then, you think about whether this works for your students and for yourself. This article is mainly focused on the research results of school ESL teachers who kept a journal and wrote their daily reflections after the lessons and keep the track of their lesson reflections. Schon [4] suggested that reflective teaching practice is a continuous process and involves learners thoughtfully considering one's own experience in applying knowledge to practice while being taught by professionals. It helps individuals to develop their own personality. Gibbs' reflective practice suggests that individuals develop an analysis of feelings, evaluation of experience, etc. As well, Jasper associated reflective teaching practice with lifelong learning, resulting in the development of autonomous, qualified and self-directed professionals. Engaging in reflective practice is associated with the improvement of the quality of care, stimulating personal and professional growth and closing the gap between theory and practice.

**Materials and research methods:** In order to explore teachers' reflection through journal writing and discuss the results of how journal writing had a positive potential in promoting a reflective practice, EFL teachers of different public school have been chosen as a subject group. The data for this research has been collected by 20 active participants of the Cascading program who were the part of English Speaking Program organized by Minister of Public Education and American Councils. The teachers who were selected to be subject group of this research were from different regions of Samarkand. Those EFL teachers were asked to keep a journal and record their teaching process including lesson planning, task differentiation, scaffolding and building a rapport. Among subject group, female teachers were more than male teachers. There were 17 female (85%), and 3 male (15%) teachers who were asked to write a journal for their reflection. They described different lessons with multi-level students they had. The research lasted for 2 months and the teachers were requested to keep and write their journals to be a reflective teacher

**Results and discussion:** The research was conducted applying primary source for data collection process, including teacher questionnaires, and interviews from teachers. They were asked to reflect keeping journal entries and to consider how it helped them to be critical thinkers of their joyful teaching. There have been designed 8 different questions about journal writing and teachers were asked to provide answers for the research about being a reflective teacher. These are the following questions designed for teachers to respond after 2 months of constant journal writing:

- What can you say about journal writing as a teacher?
- How often do you write in your journal?
- What do you focus on while writing your journal as a teacher?
- How does journal writing help both teachers and students?
- How did it help you become a critical thinker of your joyful teaching?
- What is your opinion about reflective teaching and ongoing professional development of teachers?
- Why is reflection important in teaching?
- What are your favorite motivational quotes for teachers to study and work hard?

**There were various responses to the first question by teachers as:**

Journal writing is a practice of taking time for ourselves. It boosts our confidence as a teacher. – **teacher Nargiza**

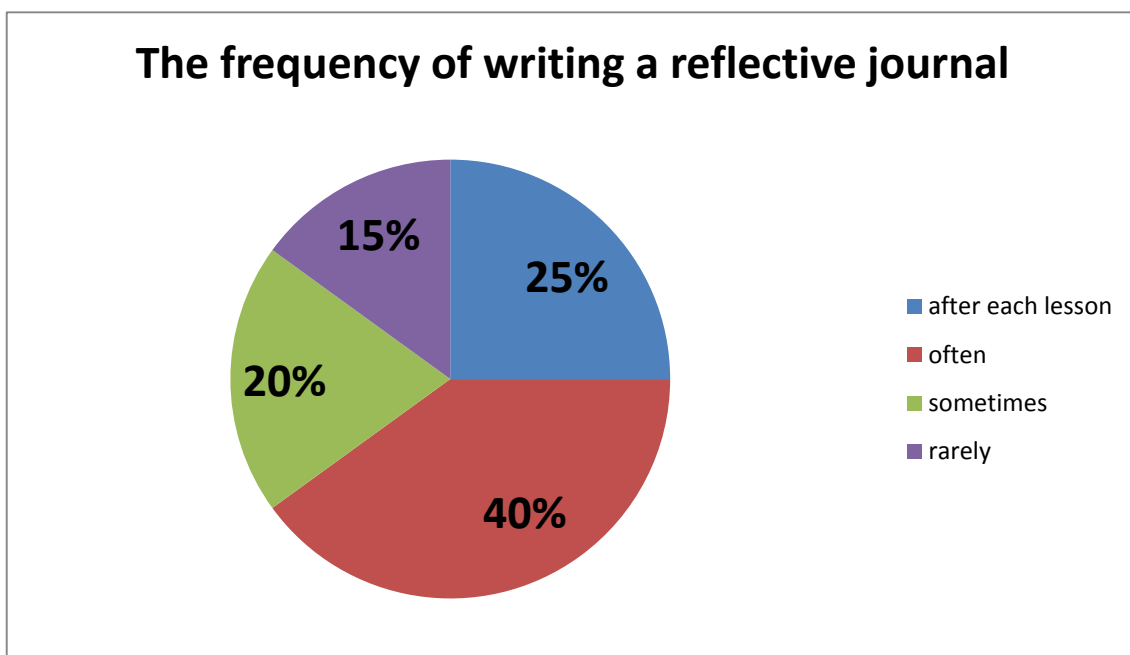
Journal writing is a measure of critical reflectivity. It is evidence of change and improvement - **teacher Feruza**

Journal writing provides me with both a clear goal and a way to teach learners. –**teacher Alisher**

Journal writing is an important step for teachers to teach classes. –**teacher Nafisa**

The answer to the next question is described in pie chart provided below:

**How often do you write in your journal?**



The following table shows what teachers mainly focus on while writing their reflective journals:

I especially pay attention to the pros and cons of my teaching experience.	Teacher - Nargiza
I try to focus on what I can't manage during my lesson and what I should improve.	Teacher- Sayyora
I focus on my errors and things which went wrong or if I could not achieve my objectives which were set before the lessons.	Teacher- Nigora
I focus on teaching methods in my journal.	Teacher- Sitora
To do my lesson better and to get the best results	Teacher- Nilufar
I draw my attention to improvements for the next lessons while writing my journal as a teacher.	Teacher- Ravshanbek
I mention my mistakes and highlight the cons and pros of my lessons.	Teacher- Khilola

**Conclusion:** Being a reflective teacher is a modern tool for professional development. Teachers are the innovators who bring innovations to the field of education. Teachers are always in demand of professional development. A good teacher is someone who often reflects on his or her own teaching experience. Throughout our teaching we learn a lot and by reflecting on own experience we can adopt, adjust and apply different methods and techniques. Keeping a reflective journal helps teachers to have one more chance to reflect on their teaching process. Teachers can clearly see and feel how to make lessons more student-centered creating an opportunity for the learners to practice language in a communicative way and collaborating with each other. The world around us is constantly changing with the introduction of technology to our modern life. Innovative education requires from the teachers to develop professionally for renewing the education system with innovative ideas so that great changes can be observed. I would like to say that teachers need to learn to step out of the box and try something new in teaching without being afraid of making mistakes. Teacher must be flexible and facilitator to encourage learners to acquire the language.

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