Reflective Practices for Teacher Education

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ABSTRACT

Studies on reflective practice in teacher education are increasingly getting more attention at least in the last 2 decades. This article discusses concepts of reflection and how it is implemented in educating pre-service teachers on their early stage of professional learning. The purposes of doing the reflection for pre-service teachers are not only for illuminating their professional learning experiences, but also to critically reflect their vocation as teachers, including the values which may be dictated to them through rigid regulations. Reflection in teacher education is crucial as it connects well with learning in that learners use reflection to exercise their mind and to evaluate their learning experiences. Besides, this article also highlights some perceived difficulties to implement reflective practice, as well as ways how to promote reflection.

Keywords: Reflective practice, critical reflection, pre-service teachers, teacher education

A. INTRODUCTION

Being teachers in the today's situation requires undeniably great commitment and true vocation as they are posed with multiple challenges as a result of more complex structures of social, political, and cultural changes. Sighted from the political position, schools are often used by the ruling power as a place to extend their authoritative control for the society order, for instance through the process of indoctrination. Teachers often must abide by all the technical teaching procedures and assessment, or administrative work required by government. This often engenders tensions among teachers when such administrative work turns out to become a priority task, for example accreditation purposes, in which written management performance is valued high regardless the real process of teaching and learning in class. Such a hard work on preparing the administrative reports can take up much of teachers' time, thus leaving tiny space for their own teaching creativity and innovative exploration. There is also precarious practice which may be prevalent in many teacher educations, the ones which adhere to rigid curriculum, strictly-modelled practice teaching inherited from the past, leading teacher educators eventually into a "lockstep of conformity" (Britzman, 2003, p. 45). Britzman maintains that such adoption is usually for the sake of practicality than transformative.

Therefore, in the age which is characterized by politicized education, the role of teachers is not simply to teach in class, but also to presume a call for their own empowerment and emancipation, which means "enabling teachers to examine ideologies critically and to consider the value basis of their own practice" (Calderhead & Gates, 1993, p. 2). Meanwhile, we need to be critically reflective in interpreting the word "call" or "vocation", not as a blind readiness to

dedicate and work hard as it may be intended in a hegemonic notion, but willingness to pursue and work rigorously on what we think truly important in our work as teachers (Brookfield, 1995). Teacher education needs to be aware of such circumstances so that they can prepare the future teachers who are ready to abide by the regulation, but also critically reflective of the context for their students development.

To be more specific of what schools can do to educate students, Dewey (1916, p. 22) strongly emphasizes that the effective development of young generation to engage actively in the society should not be done by merely transferring to them the knowledge, beliefs, or convictions, but by giving them conditions in such a way that they can absorb and interpret those knowledge or beliefs. In the context of teacher education, we must also be aware that regardless of the demands of skills and competences required in the work field as professionals, the system of education should be carried out in a way that the curriculum espouses room for creativity and heuristic learning. Learners need adequate time to allow the knowledge to be digested to make it meaningful for themselves and hence useful for other people. Dewey specifically suggests that curriculum design should be able to answer the needs of the community life which benefit the common good for the widest group by prioritizing the essentials to come first. Pertaining to this prioritization, Dewey reminds us that "there is the truth saying that education must first be human and only after that professional" (John Dewey, 1916, p. 191). This is a simple and yet fundamental sentence to be socialized for pre-service teachers before they initiate their practices for teaching either in campus-based or school-based practicum. Departing from such human perspectives in teacher education, the study of reflective practice for pre-service teachers need to be pursued as it will be explained in the following sections.

B. BACKGROUND OF REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

There are a large number of literatures and studies discussing the advantage and criticisms of reflective practices as an essential part of teaching and learning in schools. To name some, reflection as an essential means for learning has been discussed through the work of Dewey (1916, 1933) Van Mannen (1977), Schon, (1983, 1987), LaBoskey (1994), Loughran (1996), and more recently Pollard (2008). Before Dewey, however, reflection has long been initiated in the earliest time by Socrates, known as "Socratic Method" (Barnett, O'Mahony, & Matthews, 2004, p. 5). This method constitutes reflective questions that were initially used to educate Plato, one of his most brilliant students. In a more recent time, the idea of reflection as an essential part of learning is theoretically illuminated by Dewey. Dewey emphasizes that reflection is not simply the process for gathering data to generate our knowledge and belief, but also a means to help us understand assumptions we make for the future events.

C. CONCEPT OF REFLECTION

The idea of reflection can be traced back as far as Dewey (1933) who underpins that reflective thinking initially is driven by a confusion and doubt. This confusion forces people to inquire, find, and resolve problems pertinent to their

doubt. Dewey holds that reflection involves active and persistent efforts "to explore, identify the nature of the problems, the generation of several potential solutions, and a means-end analysis of the alternatives" (John Dewey, 1916, p. 3). From this notion, it is obvious that the true reflection according to Dewey must engage the practitioners in real problems and attempt to resolve them in rational manner.

Whereas, Schon's (1983, 1987) argument in desigining reflective practice departs from the fact that many teachers teach using their tacit knowledge, thus they cannot actually explain what they know because they just do the teaching. If this remains a tacit knowledge, the teachers may not be able to work effectively as they cannot set and solve problems clearly as parts of the reframing process. When teachers just do what they know and from the knowledge of their previous experiences, Schon calls this 'knowing in action', different from what Dewey calls 'routinized actions'. According to Dewey, routine action is directed on the basis of several aspects such as tradition, habit, and institutional expectations. Routine action implies that it is quite fixed and not sensitive to the changing situation. To contrast with, reflective action engages teachers in continuous self-evaluation and development. Pollard, et al. asserts that reflective practice implies "flexibility, rigorous analysis, and social awareness" (2008, p. 14). Thus, it can be understood that reflection is a way of making complex and intricate problems to be considered in different ways of seeing (Shulman,1988 in Loughran, 1996). Reflective teachers attempt to see one-to-one problem and solution, but are willing to actively seek solutions from several angles.

D. IMPLEMENTATION OF REFLECTION IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Regardless of the flourishing benefits of reflective practice, reflection may be a tedious task which many teachers would avoid, not only because it may be time consuming, thus unpractical to write after the experience has been completed, but also because they may not want to ruminate themselves on past experiences which may be disagreeable for them. As yet, this may not be the only issue. Hart in the foreword of Barnett, O'Mahony, and Matthews' book (2004) asserts that the most problematic area of lack of reflection in teaching is perhaps the fact that some teachers are in fact unable to identify or name what they do not know. She hence urges that teachers need to focus on deliberately finding challenges in order that they could shape their inquiry into knowledge and action. This inquiry into knowledge as an essential part of reflection is important to grapple and build up knowledge because of the following reason:

> *As experiences and learning accumulate and inappropriate inferences and judgements are reduced, knowledge improves. As knowledge increases and you learn to draw inferences from past problems and features of new situations, the ability to draw appropriate inferences improves. The more difficult the problem, the more accelerated the learning if the problems is successfully resolved. (Hart in Barnett, et al., 2004, p. viii)*

From the above inferences, it is clear that reflection is a media or arena in

which people exercise their minds in order to eliminate weaknesess and alleviate good strengths of their practices in a given context. However, reflection is not merely to attend ineffeciency of learning as above. The more comprehensive role of reflection in learning is explained by Moon (2004) as follows:

a. Reflection is most prevalent when it is used in the deep approach of meaningful learning. Deep approach here purports that the learning shifts from merely 'meaning making', to 'working with meaning', and at last 'transfromative learning'.
b. Reflection takes place when learning is delivered meaningfully, for example in meaningful oral representation or the written one, including the 'act of teaching'.
c. Reflection occurs in the 'upgrading of learning', where non-meaningful learning. experience is made more meaningful.
d. Although rare, reflection could result in the presentation of new meanings which are not directly related to the previously existing knowledge.

The above understanding of reflection connects well with teacher education in that pre-service teachers are encouraged to make reflective practice as their habit in making meaning and to be mindful in their action. By doing so, pre-service teachers are expected to open their mind and be sensitive to their own learning on becoming teachers. Open-mindedness on learning also means perseverance to engage with problems longer. Problems, for some pre-service teachers, can often be interpreted as weaknesses. However, a more positive outlook for reflective pre-service teachers can also see weaknesses or problems as ways to access their hidden potentials. In this understanding, prolonged exposure on problems can generate pre-service teachers' potential on mapping out their problems and their creative solutions. Later on when they become teachers, their sensitivity on emerging learning problems faced by their students can become a good access to improve their ways of teaching.

In relation to pre-service teacher education context, Loughran (1996) explains that reflection as a good practice of how educators think in their classroom teaching increasingly receives more attention because there is a strong connection between reflection and learning. Reflection is believed to be an essential practice where people recall their experience, ponder it, and eventually evaluate it. The exercise of mind toward experiences is what determines success in learning (Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 1985).

Educators at least as far as Dewey (1910) have been suggesting that pre-service teachers should be encouraged to become thoughtful and alert students of education, rather than just proficient craftsmen. As the benefit of reflection is so critical for the pre-service teachers, the development of critical reflection deserves to be designated not only as the primary goal, but also as a means in teacher education program (Ross, 1987, in LaBoskey, 1994, p. ix). As goals, educators should find strategies to engage pre-service teachers in reflective practice so that they are aware of the beliefs, values, knowledge, and issues which are learned from the program. As means, pre-service teachers later will graduate and become professional teachers; therefore, teacher educators need to help them develop their mind-set, skills, and manner, so that they can maintain to be reflective teachers. Furthermore,

Laboskey mention three reasons why reflective teaching should be incorporated in the pre-service teacher education:

1. Credentials students must engage in acts of reflection in order to learn during the program and beyond;
2. Since the reflective process is an essential aspect of professional practice – of what teachers need to do with and for students – new teachers must develop their abilities of doing so;
3. As moral agents, pre-service teachers need to reflect critically on the injustice and inhumanity present in our society and our educational institutions.

(LaBoskey, 1994, p. 17)

Departing from the above goals, teacher education needs to inspire pre-service teachers with a good practice of reflection in such a way that they would continue it not only during their education, but also after their graduation, in their professional work as teachers. With regards to the third point, the role of teachers is not simply to share knowledge as well as to facilitate cognitive learning, but also what Van Manen calls it as, "the tact of teaching", according to which teaching practices are oriented to others, underpinned by the "capacity for mindful action" (1991, p. 142). As Van Manen further maintains, the tact of teaching manifested within reflective teaching is not simply an intellectual exercise, but "a matter of pedagogical fitness of the whole person" comprising of "cognitive and emotional and moral and sympathetic and physical preparedness" (Van Manen, 1991, p. 206). Thus, teaching tactfully means teaching students with the "whole embodied person: heart, mind, and body"; and teaching without heart means being insensitive to the needs of students, as well as being inconsiderate to the true calling of becoming a teacher.

Why is reflection so important? Van Mannen further attempts to differentiate between reflective and unreflective action: reflection is claimed to be thoughtful reflection if it discovers, thus fruitful; whereas unreflective action was usually done without tact or informed judgement. Therefore, for reflective teachers, they usually use their pedagogical experiences in the past to enrich the capacity of their teaching in the future, avoiding the act of teaching which is characterized by thoughtless routines. Thus, it is essential that pre-service teachers develop their capacity for reflection as they would be required to continue their learning not only during their education period, but also in the course of their professional work.

Due to the central role of reflective practices, Greene (1978) suggests that teacher educators should encourage the practices of self-reflection for their pre-service teachers so that they can become expertise in the world of teaching practice. Teacher educators and their students need to be motivated, as Greene calls, "to think about their own thinking, and to reflect upon their own reflecting" (Greene, 1978, p. 61) Greene argues that such practices can be intrinsically liberating and very likely can improve their capacity to teach. To reflect on reflection has also been essential in pre-service teacher education as revealed by the study of Kabilan (2007) in Malaysian context. His research purposes were to identify the professional development of

some English pre-service teachers through reflecting their learning journals. Kabilan describes that the research results were convincing as the participants demonstrated more positive attitude towards teaching and learning indicated in their creativity and critical thinking in the content and context of reflection. His participants were also able to name the aspects in which they can improve as effective future teachers. While studies as such needs to be conducted so as not to essentialise the notion of reflective practice, thus becoming uncritical, this article seeks to understand why reflective practice is increasingly needed in the work of teacher education.

E. DEBATES OF REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

This part discusses concept of reflective teaching and the debates around the concept and practices; why there are different interpretations of reflection since Dewey, namely mechanical versus transformative; some problems to implement reflection in classroom; and how reflective practice can be promoted for pre-service teachers.

Since the time of Dewey, reflective practices spurs into different theories and practices. They derive into different branches due to different interpretations of what makes reflection effective and the consequences it entails. Along with its growing multi-interpretations, however, Dymoke and Harrison (2008) warns that the meaning of *reflection* and *reflective practice* now could be in a danger of reductionism in meaning (also see Waks, 1999). Some people may interpret that its practice could simply be set as procedural by listing a standard competence which should be mastered by teachers, the case of which *reflection* will merely become an end in itself. Dymoke and Harrison (2008) emphasize that reflection and action should become a habit which works along together, rather than a standardised skill imposed to teachers. On the other hand, reflectice practice may be interpreted as developing critical inquiry to sustain the equity, justice, and moral development of wider society. Among the debates, the essential argument highlights whether reflection can develop students' critical awareness of their own learning as discussed in the following section.

F. REFLECTION AND CRITICAL REFLECTION

While there are areas in which reflective practice have become the burning issue of debate arising from the different theoretical strands and practices, such as different framework of thoughts between Dewey and Schon and procedural or principles orientation of reflection, it is worthwhile to learn the ideas of Brookfield who underlines the significance of critical reflection.

Brookfield (1995) has pointed out that the terms reflectice practice is undergoing distortion as it gains its popularity. Reflection by definition is not necessarily critical when it is simply used to describe the interactive process of the classroom. Reflection is considered critical if it is engaged "to understand how considerations of power undergird, frame, and distort educational processes and interactions; to questions assumptions and practices that seem to make our teaching lives easier but actually work against our own best long-term interests" Brookfield (1995, p. 7). Thus, being critical means having the capacity not to always taking for granted for events which are considered normal. Experiences of education which are considered normal but which may carry

ambiguity are explained by Brookfield (1995, pp. 9-14). Ambiguity here means what teachers believe as worthy may not be always considered virtuous by the others (e.g. students). Here are some examples:

1) Sitting in a circle is democratic and liberating because each student get the opportunity to speak out. However for shy students, sitting in a circle can be a humiliating experience. This can lead to untrust to teachers as they are seen by students as depriving of their privacy or rights not to participate.
2) Providing most opportunities for students to talk in groups, hence encouraging least teacher domination, seems to be very sensible. Similar to the first case, however, students who fear public embarassment and do not want to look stupid may decide to keep silent. Unless the teacher give warm and non-threatening encouragement for everbody to speak out, the students will not yearn to step out of their comfort zone.
3) Teachers may refuse to answer questions and withhold their voices to respect the students' voices first. However, students may think that actually the teachers have answers but purposively do not want to share. Students who end up in wrong answers may feel that they have been tricked by the teachers. It may create untrustworthiness.

Based on the above examples, critical reflection for teachers are really essential if we want to alleviate students as a whole human being (embodied person). Brookfield (1995) explains that there are at least six reasons why critical reflection is significant:

1) It aids teachers to carry out informed actions:
   This shows that our actions can be explained and justified, should anyone question our actions. Our words which are in accordance with our actions in class may sometimes be considered as unrelated by others. The opinions from any other parties can improve our position to incorporate that what we speak and behave are consistent.
2) It assists teachers to build on rationale for practice:
   Critically reflective teachers know why they believe what they believe. They base their words and actions from informed assurance.
3) It assists teachers to prevent self-laceration:
   Teachers who are working too seriously may blame themselves as pedagogically incompetent when they found that the students fail to learn effectively. Posed with such situation, critically reflective teachers, on the other hand, endeavour to search for solutions from the root of the students' learning problems.
4) "It grounds us emotionally":
   Critically reflective teachers attempt to avoid the situation of "Magical consciousness" (Freire, 1993) where the education process is entirely subject to fate rather than "human agency". According to those who believe that we can reach success of educational process may be accounted by luck factor, educational process is so arbitrary which is "governed by a whimsical God."
5) "It enlivens our classroom":
   Osterman as cited by Brookfield argues that, "Critically reflective teachers – teachers who make their own thinking public, and therefore subject to discussion – are more likely to have classes that are challenging,

interesting, and stimulating for students" (Osterman, 1990, p. 139, in Brookfield, 1995, p. 25). Thus, teachers who attempt to model themselves as critical inquirer in their own teaching are more likely to stimulate the students for critical thinking.

6) It improves the atmosphere of democratic trust:
The ways we treat students, such as answering questions or discouraging questions to occur, actually reveals our political stance. Teaching cannot be separated from political culture. Yet, critically reflective teachers are very much alert on the presence of authority in class, and the danger of its misuse. It is the trust on both parties that can create democratic classroom. Brookfield mentions that a good model for critically reflective teachers are the ones who invite criticisms from students if they did any oppressive action and are willing to fix it in response to the students' criticisms.

The above reasons need to be well understood and practiced by pre-service teachers during their teacher education period. However, carrying reflection or critical reflection is not immune to problems. The following part discusses some difficulties of conducting reflection in educational context.

G. DIFFICULTIES OF IMPLEMENTING REFLECTIVE TEACHING

LaBoskey (1994) note that there are a variety of results conducted to research on the impact of reflective teacher education program. LaBoskey reports that the findings several on studies that looked at general outcome effects, were not encouraging. LaBoskey was arguing that practices in pre-service education and in schools seemed to be lagging far behind the theories. From situational perspective, institution and the teaching profession of the schools often are not going hand in hand with the goals of reflective practice. Teaching often involves old-fashioned activities, including the lack of evaluation standards and the structure of reward for them. All these contribute to the perpetuation of the traditional teaching.

Thus, the problems of implementing reflective teaching may come first of all from institutional perspective due to lack of design, process of implementation, and measurement. Such lack of program design may also come from the deliberate pre-emption that the incorporation of reflective practice/s into pre-service programs may consume so much time and need so much persistent endeavors, that institutions find it difficult to effectively teach it (Kuit, Reay, & Freeman, 2001). Hence, changes in pre-service teacher knowledge or practice may not be immediately evident in the pre-service teacher education period. Besides, from my anecdotal experiences and observation in the teacher education, pre-service teachers' unpreparedness to teach was often caused by the absence of the solid structure of design, implementation, and evaluation on their reflection on learning.

Second, LaBoskey (1994), borrowing the idea from Sparks-Langer and Colton, warns that reflective practice is often not implemented properly as practitioners may not clearly understand "how one best promotes or assesses teacher reflection about political, ethical, and moral values, beliefs, and attitudes" (Sparks-Langer & Colton, 1991, p. 41). Although some reflective programs have been developed, there is still little evidence that the intended activities,

interactions, and outcomes actually occur. This measurement is more difficult for pre-service teachers as they may already engage in too many activities to digest, from learning the micro skills with a set of rubric to classroom management, from the administrative requirement prior to practice teaching to a set of evaluative measures. All of these confusions for beginning pre-service teachers are enough to overwhelm them that, as argued by Sparks-Langer and Colton, they cannot critically reflect "political, ethical, and moral values, beliefs, and attitudes." Although many pre-service teachers could enhance their awareness about their own practice at technical level, most of them fail to address their awareness on wider context related to education, namely moral, political, and ethical context (McIntyre, 1993). This also corroborates to the study of Valli (1993) who investigated seven pre-service teachers carrying out reflection in their practice. Valli concludes that the content of reflection should be given in such a way that it could espouse larger focus of educational purposes, such as social-political issues and ethics. If reflection is becoming too process-oriented, however, it may be "unconstructive and debilitating" (Calderhead & Gates, 1993, p. 9). From this notion, it is clear that attention of reflection should be equally paid to the content and the context where reflection takes place.

Third, according to Main, "reflection comes slowly to some people because they have little sense of involvement in their own learning" (Main, 1985, p. 97 in Loughran, 1996, p. 19). Involvement means immersing themselves in learning so that they really know the problems they face. It is the essential aspect which support the development effective reflection. Low sense of involvement, however, may be caused by poor understanding of reflective practice. Poor understanding of reflective practice as such may make reflections carried out by pre-service teachers very superficial. Making clear of what makes a good reflection is significant for pre-service teachers as it is expressed as follows:

> We have often asked our students to reflect on field experiences without ever discussing the qualities of good reflection, often with disappointing results. Students do not automatically know what we mean by reflection; often they assume reflection is an introspective after-the-fact description of teaching. Reflection, meant to make teaching and learning understandable and open, has itself been an invisible process to many of our pre-service teachers.
> (Ward & McCotter, 2004, p. 255, in Russell, 2005, p. 200)

Nevertheless, parts of the problems may not solely reside on the pre-service teachers' limitations, but also emanating from the design of curriculum in teacher education which may have not incorporated reflective practice in some of the courses. Reflective practice cannot be theoretically taught to pre-service teachers, unless the design of the curriculum allows spaces for this practice. Due to heavy load of curriculum and content materials, reflective practice sometimes only remains a slogan rather than the culture of learning which is acknowledged and practiced by the teacher educators and students.

H. HOW TO PROMOTE REFLECTION?

For some people, doing reflection may be difficult as they may have no reason why they should do it, or more deeply, they do not know whether or not they have problems to solve. For some sceptics of reflective teaching, reflection may only be good to improve one's understanding of problems from several different viewpoints so that alternative solutions can be reached. However, the time constraint a teacher may encounter, combined by the fast-paced teaching activities in classroom setting makes it impossible in reality to carry out reflection. Zeicner and Liston (1996) argue that Dewey does not tell teachers to reflect everything as this surely impossible. Rather, Dewey suggests that teachers can balance between reflection and routine, as well as between thought and action. Dewey explains that doing routine as a result of secure belief is still necessary to keep the life manageable.

In order to promote reflection for pre-service teachers, above all, feeling of the individual participant must be considered, because emotions are an integral part of reflection and indeed of teaching itself (LaBoskey, 1994). LaBoskey's study corroborates with in that the "reflective process is a complex one in which both feelings and cognition are closely interrelated and interactive" (Boud, et al., 1985, p. 11). LaBoskey argues that based on her research findings, the propensity of pre-service teachers initial belief's on reflection (as she termed as 'Alert Novices') determines their engagement in their reflective practice. She points out that one distinctive qualities of Novice Teachers is their inclination to know the 'why' questions (internal motivation), despite their hesitation when they should reflect spontaneously or structurally. Meanwhile, for the Common-sense Thinkers, their motivation seems to be externally driven within the framework of the task. Quoting Buchmann (1985), LaBoskey mentions that one of the aims in teacher education is also to promote the Common-sense Thinkers to become Pedagogical Thinkers. Because they are externally driven, assignments for reflection could be made in such a way that eventually this can enhance their intrinsic motivation.

In more details, the following 7 underpinnings may be used to promote reflection:

1. Reflective teaching emphasises that the practitioners play an active role in understanding the goals, values, instruments needed to achieve the goal as well as the possible measurement to know its effectiveness.
2. Reflective teaching is carried out in a cyclical process and places the teachers to monitor for evaluation and revision where necessary.
3. Reflective teaching necessitates the skills to use methods to collect as much information as possible from classroom, analyze, and evaluate the results to develop a better standard of teaching.
4. Reflective teaching requires attitudes which Dewey (1933) calls open-mindedness, responsibility and wholeheartedness.
5. Reflective teaching gives freedom for teachers to make judgement based on what their empirical evaluation and theories provided by other researchers.
6. Reflective teaching, as applies to professional learning and personal fulfilment, could be much improved

through dialogue and cooperation with colleagues.

7. Reflective teaching enables teachers to "creatively mediate" requirements from external parties such as, regulation form government which is interpreted later by the reflective teachers using their values and educational principles.
(Pollard, et al., 2008, p. 14)

Those seven characteristics may look difficult to implement for pre-service teachers as they might still struggle with their own learning how to teach. Likewise, Pollard, et al. (2008) explains that teachers may be overwhelmed if they should apply every principle. The significance is rather to look at, firstly, the teachers' reflecting practice as the sources for learning experiences which they can use to evaluate new circumstances. Secondly, reflective practice is a gateway to move beyond what teachers call "common-sense" of teaching into professional thinking. Professional thinking involves meticulous observation and evaluation of evidences they gather in educational setting, replacing subjective judgement (as opposed to open-mindedness) which may have already been posed as aforementioned belief.

I. CONCLUSION

Reflective practice has been proposed by educators as early as Dewey as a way of making sense of experiences so that they can be seen and interpreted in a more meaningful way. Pertinent to pre-service teachers, reflective practice can be a potential tool to make meaning of their experiences during their professional learning in campus-based, but can potentially be carried with them in their professional growth beyond their teacher education. However, teaching how reflective practice can be implemented cannot be solely done by teachers or teacher educators if curriculum does not provide sufficient space for it.

Teacher education needs to be aware that regardless of the demands of skills and competences required in the work field as professionals, the system of education should be carried out in a way that the curriculum espouses room for creativity and heuristic learning rather than following what Britzman calls as "lockstep of conformity". Furthermore, reflective practice is essential as a lens to look into educational practices critically, even to make what may seem to be a commonly accepted ideology to be problematic. The purpose of reflection is to understand experience not merely as a common-sense thinker, but to be a pedagogical thinker who is sensitive to address the needs of the learners. In this sense, reflection also allows learners adequate time to digest their knowledge so as to make it meaningful for themselves and hence useful for other people.

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