An Exploratory Study on the Impact of Video-stimulated Reflection on Novice EFL Teachers' Professional Development

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Abstract : The literature on teacher education foregrounds reflection as an important aspect of professional practice. Reflection for a teacher consists in critically analysing and evaluating retrospectively a lesson to see what worked, what did not work, and how to improve it for the future. Now, many teacher education programmes worldwide consider the ability to reflect as one of the hallmarks of an effective educator. However, in some context like Senegal, reflection has not been given due consideration in teacher education programmes. In contexts where it has been in the education landscape for some time now, reflection is mostly depicted as an individual written activity and many teacher trainees have become disenchanted by the repeated enactments of this task that is solely intended to satisfy course requirements. This has resulted in whitewashing weaknesses or even 'faking' reflection. Besides, the "one-size-fits-all" approach of reflection could not flourish because how reflection impacts on practice is still unproven. Therefore, reflective practice needs to be contextualised and made more thought-provoking through dialogue and by using classroom data. There is also a need to highlight change brought in teachers' practice through reflection. So, this study introduces reflection in a new context and aims to show evidenced change in novice EFL teachers' practice through dialogic data-led reflection. The purpose of this study is also to contribute to the scarce literature on reflection in sub-Saharan Africa by bringing new perspectives on contextualised teacher-led reflection. Eight novice EFL teachers participated in this qualitative longitudinal study, and data have been gathered online through post-lesson reflection recordings and lesson videos for a period of four months. Then, the data have been thematically analysed using NVivo to systematically organize and manage the large amount of data. The analysis followed the six steps approach to thematic analysis. Major themes related to teachers' classroom practice and their conception of reflection emerged from the analysis of the data. The results showed that post-lesson reflection with a peer can help novice EFL teachers gained more awareness on their classroom practice. Dialogic reflection also helped them evaluate their lessons and seek for improvement. The analysis of the data also gave insight on teachers' conception of reflection in an EFL context. It was found that teachers were more engaged in reflection when using their lesson video recordings. Change in teaching behaviour as a result of reflection was evidenced by the analysis of the lesson video recordings. This study has shown that video-stimulated reflection is practical form of professional development that can be embedded in teachers' professional life.

Keywords : novice EFL teachers, practice, professional development, video-stimulated reflection
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