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Standing on the Shoulders of Giants: Interpreting Reflective Practice in TESOL

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ABSTRACT

Reflective practice (RP) has become popular in many professions as a mark of professional competence. With this increase in popularity, many different definitions have developed alongside the many different approaches that have been advanced with many different theoretical underpinnings attached to these approaches. This is also the case within the field of education where although most educators agree some form of reflection is desirable, there is still no agreement on what RP is or how it should be implemented. RP has also been fully embraced within the teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) and unfortunately with the same lack of clarity as to what it is or how it can be implemented. One reason for this lack of clarity it that we seem to have forgotten where it originated and why it made a resurgence much later. In this paper I look back at two of the giants of the RP movement and then outline how I have interpreted their work and my own work in the implementation of RP for TESOL teachers. I also look to the future (reflect-for-action) of RP for TESOL teachers.

Keywords: reflection; reflective practice: TESOL; implementing reflective practice

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Introduction

Today many different professions consider reflective practice (RP) as a mark of professional competence (e.g., medicine, law, business, nursing) and it is safe to say that RP is seen as a crucial element of education and development programs in most of these professions including the field of education; and the concept of reflecting in general is advocated by most teacher educators as being an essential skill that needs to be nurtured in all teachers. I have had a long interest in the topic of reflection and reflective practice related to second language teaching and in particular teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL). Over the years, I have been lucky to work with many excellent pre-service, novice, and in-service TESOL teachers worldwide on a wide range of issues and I have learned a great deal from these wonderful professionals about reflection. Interactions with them have substantially contributed to my writings on topics such as novice language teachers' transition in the first year (Farrell, 2016a, 2016d, 2012c, 2008, 2003); the importance of RP in TESOL teacher education programs (Farrell, 2016c, 2012c); international perspectives on ESL teacher education (Farrell, 2015a); expectations and reality during the practicum (Farrell, 2007a); teacher beliefs and role identities (Farrell, 2016e, 2011); competencies and teachers' expertise associated with effective teaching (Farrell, 2015c, 2013c); framework for TESOL professionals (Farrell, 2015b, 2019a); development groups and collaborative discussions (Farrell, 2013a, 1999); reflective writing (Farrell, 2013b); teaching the four skills (Farrell, 2012b); mapping conceptual change through critical reflection (Farrell, 2009); Dewey and Schön's contributions (Farrell, 2012a); RP in action for busy teachers (Farrell, 2004); RP in both research and practice (Farrell, 2007b, 2018b, 2019b), and many more.

These topics and more importantly my interactions with all these teachers have informed and shaped my ideas about reflection and reflective practice and its importance for learner teachers and experienced teachers alike as they facilitate learners worldwide in their development of English language skills. Although many educators encourage some form of reflection there is still not agreement across the professions about how to define the concept or what it entails, and in addition, the literature does not provide a mutually agreed model on how RP should be operationalized within TESOL (Farrell, 2015b, 2018a). So in this introductory paper I will attempt to discuss my interpretation of this interesting, yet complex concept of reflective practice in TESOL. At the end of this paper, I will introduce the six excellent papers that form the core of this Special Issue on *Reflective Practice In TESOL*.

Giants of Reflective Practice

In a recent review of the research on RP in TESOL, Farrell (2018a) has noted an array of different definitions (if indeed reflection is defined at all), approaches, methods, and typologies that are designed to encourage teachers to reflect on their practice. In some instances Farrell (2018a) has noted that the terms reflection, reflective practice, and critical reflection are used interchangeably indicating that they mean the same thing, but they do not all mean the same thing. So although most language educators still agree that some form of reflection is desirable, the precise definition of RP remains vague with resulting misunderstandings about the philosophical traditions behind whoever's work is cited when attempting to define this interesting, yet complex topic. So first we need to return to the origins of RP in order to begin to be able to interpret what it is and how to approach it:

Reflective practice really took off with the seminal work of John Dewey in early 20th-century US. At that time Dewey noted that teachers who do not bother to reflect on their work become slaves to routine because their actions are guided mostly by impulse, tradition, and/or authority rather than by informed decision-making. This decision-making, Dewey insisted, should be based on

systematic and conscious reflections because he said that teaching experience when combined with these reflections can lead to awareness, development, and growth. Dewey (1933, p. 9) maintained that such reflection entails “active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds that support it and the further consequences to which it leads.” Dewey’s (1933) reflective inquiry is in fact an evidence-based approach to RP and encourages teachers to avoid making instructional decisions based on impulse or routine; rather, they are encouraged to use the data they have obtained so that they can make more informed decisions about their practice (Farrell, 2015b).

Indeed, Dewey’s work has proved to be the basis of many future approaches to reflection and RP, as the concept (re)gained a resurgence in the 1980s with the work of Donald Schön (1983, 1987) and his work on practitioner-generated intuitive practice (although he did not write directly about teachers). Schön was interested in getting practitioners to articulate what they ‘know’ and ‘do’ by getting them to engage in what he called reflection-*in*-action, or as I would suggest ‘thinking-on-their-feet’. Schön’s (1983) reflection-*in*-action is in contrast to Dewey who encouraged teachers to reflect *on* their practice after the fact, and called reflection-*on*-action. However, I would suggest that Schön’s model also eventually leads back to reflection-*on*-action after the lesson, when the teacher reflects *on* the whole process that took place including what happened during (reflection-*in*-action) the lesson (Farrell, 2019b).

Dewey’s and Schön’s legacies are important because they moved the concept of reflection far beyond everyday simple wonderings about a situation (or mulling over something without taking action) to a more rigorous form of reflective thinking whereby a teacher systematically investigates a perceived problem in order to discover a workable solution over time.

I realize that I am attracted to their work because they were very pragmatic in their approaches so that they could help practicing teachers on the frontlines. In fact both scholars have very much impacted my own work over the years and I feel I am standing on the shoulders of giants when I cite them and talk about their wonderful contributions to our understanding of this complex concept as I have interpreted it for TESOL teachers.

Reflective Practice in TESOL: An Interpretation

Like Dewey, I too consider reflective practice as a form of systematic inquiry that is rigorous and disciplined; and like Schön, I am interested in how teachers ‘think on their feet’ or how they reflect in action, on action, and for action. Both of these wonderful scholars have had immense influence on my work and especially the development of my new framework for reflecting on practice (Farrell, 2015b).

Farrell’s (2015) *framework for reflecting on practice* is different from many other approaches because it encompasses a holistic approach to reflection that not only focuses on the intellectual, cognitive and meta-cognitive aspects of practice that many other approaches are limited to, but also the spiritual, moral and emotional non-cognitive aspects of reflection that acknowledges the inner life of teachers (Farrell, 2015b). Teacher educators can encourage preservice (and inservice) teachers to use the framework as a lens through which they can view their professional (and even personal) worlds, and what has shaped their professional lives as they become more aware of their philosophy, principles, theories, practices and how these impact issues inside and beyond practice. Figure 1 below illustrates this framework.

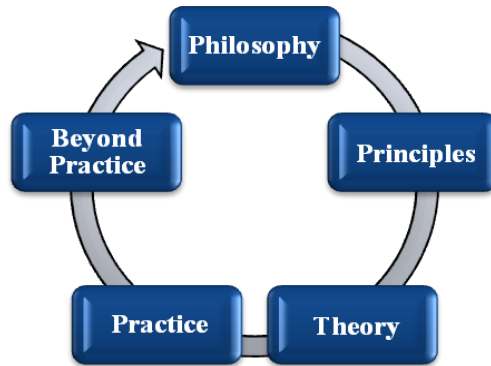


Figure 1. Farrell Framework for Reflecting on Practice (2015b)

As outlined in figure 1 above, the framework has five different stages/levels of reflection: *Philosophy*; *Principles*; *Theory*; *Practice*; and *Beyond Practice*.

- Philosophy, the first stage of the framework, examines the ‘teacher-as-person’ and suggests that professional practice, both inside and outside the classroom, is invariably guided by a teacher’s basic philosophy which has been developed since birth. Thus, in order to reflect on our basic philosophy we need to obtain self-knowledge and we can access this by exploring, examining and reflecting on our background—from where we have evolved—such as our heritage, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic background, family and personal values that have combined to influence who we are as language teachers. As such, teachers talk or write about their own lives and how they think their past experiences may have shaped the construction and development of their basic philosophy of practice.
- Principles, the second stage of the framework, include reflections on teachers’ assumptions, beliefs, and conceptions of teaching and learning. Teachers’ practices and their instructional decisions are often formulated and implemented (for the most part subconsciously) on the basis of their underlying assumptions, beliefs and conceptions because these are the driving force (along with the philosophy reflected on at stage one) behind many of their classroom actions. One of the means that teachers have at their disposal when accessing their principles (assumptions, beliefs and conceptions) is by exploring and examining the various images, metaphors and maxims of teaching and learning.
- Theory, the third stage of the framework, considers all aspects of a teacher’s planning and the different activities and methods teachers choose (or may want to choose) as they attempt to put theory into practice. As they reflect on their approaches and methods at this level, teachers will also reflect on the specific teaching techniques they choose to use (or may want to choose) in their lessons and if these are (or should be) consistent with the approaches and methods they have chosen or will choose. In order to reflect on these, they will need to describe specific classroom techniques, activities and routines that they are using or intend to use when carrying out their lessons.
- Practice (see also below), the fourth stage of reflection in the framework, begins with an examination of observable actions while teaching as well as students’ reactions (or non-reactions) during lessons. Teachers can reflect while they are teaching a lesson (*reflection-in-*

action), after they teach a lesson (reflection-*on*-action) or before they teach a lesson (reflection-*for*-action).

- Beyond Practice, the fifth stage of the framework entails teachers exploring and examining the moral, political and social issues that impact a teacher's practice both inside and outside the classroom. Such a critical focus includes teachers examining the moral aspect of practice and the moral values and judgments that impact practice. Within the TESOL profession, the moral dimensions of teaching have received relatively little analysis or discussion, yet language teachers deal with moral issues in their everyday teaching, such as deciding which materials to use in lessons. Morality and teaching English to speakers of other languages has recently included the idea of religious beliefs as part of teacher knowledge (Farrell, 2015b). Baurain (2012, p. 312) has argued that "spiritual and religious beliefs should be part of academic conversations and research about teacher knowledge, especially because spiritual and religious beliefs already fit the area of inquiry the field has defined for itself."

Specifically from Schön's work, I was attracted to the idea of teachers reflecting while they are teaching and how this would fit into an overall model of RP, because I was also interested in how teachers 'know' through their practice and also realized that they 'know' more about their practice than they can articulate. Thus I was interested in taking Schön's pragmatic approach into the TESOL classroom and over the years have attempted to facilitate teachers as they reflected on what they think they do (their beliefs) and what they actually do (their practices) while they are teaching (e.g., most recently: Farrell, 2014; Farrell & Bennis, 2013; Farrell & Ives, 2015; Farrell & Jacobs, 2016; Farrell & Kennedy, 2019; Farrell & Mom, 2015; Farrell & Vos, 2018; Farrell & Yang, 2017).

So, at this stage we may well ask has TESOL as a profession embraced the concept of reflective practice for the education of TESOL teachers (pre-service) and their development (in-service). Well there was, and probably still is, a lot of skepticism associated with this concept and mostly voiced by academics who perhaps have a different academic agenda that does not include teachers in real classrooms. For example the term 'bandwagon' has been used by some academics to describe RP, with some scholars (I will not name them) being very disbelieving about the whole RP movement in TESOL possibly because when used *by*, *with* and *for* teachers it does not offer these academics any usage to develop their academic empires. I hear a lot about teacher cognition research as being more academic but this is research *on* teachers *by* academics *for* academics and rarely gets back to the teachers who are the focus of the research.

Indeed, the current push for practicing teachers to conduct research and especially action research or what is sometimes called collaborative action research in certain countries has been coopted by administrators, policy makers and academics for *their* use and has been twisted out of any recognition of what all this classroom research is supposed to do to help teachers to clarify, test, and develop their practice and gain an understanding of what really underpins their practices. Some academics have hijacked the whole process of helping teachers look at their own practice by emphasizing the power relations between the teacher and the academic by attempting to give the teachers' ideas of their practices the status of 'academic jargon' so that these power relations persist as academics continue to control and manipulate teachers' thinking; this to me does not lead to enlightenment but rather it is a form of academic malpractice.

This may sound harsh but recently I was invited to review two books on Teacher Research (Farrell, 2016f) and after I noted that although the books will be of great use to practicing teachers, the extent of their usefulness will probably depend on the teacher's familiarity with all the different and confusing approaches to teacher research that has been drummed up by

different academics in this academic empire building that suggests we give new names to old practices to further one's career. For example, the 'new' action research movement finds its roots in Dewey's (1933) reflective inquiry model that has five main phases very similar to the cycles of action research; however, this is never acknowledged in the literature (see Farrell, 2019b for more on the different typologies of reflective practice). In addition, these books that encourage TESOL teachers to conduct action research seem to focus on a deficit model of professional development as the person (the teacher) at the center of *all* of the research seems to have been omitted somewhat in favor of fixing some perceived problem in classroom practice. In other words, the current action research approach places TESOL teachers in a bubble where they are only required to find ways to fix some problem and they are not included in any personal manner regarding the issue they are taking 'action' on. This in fact was summed up by one of the participants (I contacted all the participants of each of the books I reviewed and asked them about their experiences conducting action research) in one of the books I reviewed who cautioned us all in academia:

The academia has created rules that suit their academics. Teachers outside of the academia have other times and responsibilities... it is unfair to ask teachers to adapt themselves to the academic's lifestyle when it comes to doing research. Teachers are capable of researching their own practice which should be done in a way that fits the nature of their work (Farrell, 2016e, 253)

I believe that it matters *who* the teacher is and that the reflective practice movement (of which I am happy to note I did not start and am only standing on the shoulders of giants) is grounded in the beliefs that teachers are whole persons and teaching is not one-dimensional problem-solving, but multi-dimensional and includes the *moral, ethical, spiritual, aesthetic* aspects of our practice.

In addition some TESOL scholars persistently ask questions such as: will engaging in reflective practice improve the quality of teaching, will reflection result in better teacher performance, and the like. Yes, these are difficult questions to answer, because, when one says 'improved quality' or 'better performance' in teaching, then do we assume that we have an agreed baseline of what 'good quality' or 'good teacher performance' is in order to make judgments about any improvements to these? In this section I will outline and briefly discuss the findings of my own reflections on RP in TESOL (from Farrell, 2018a); as Akbari (2007, p. 205) noted: 'It is good to reflect, but reflection itself also requires reflection.'

I reviewed studies in academic journals on the practices that encourage TESOL teachers to reflect (I did not include books, monographs, chapters or the like) and I discovered a robust number of articles devoted to TESOL and reflection: 138. These were evenly divided between pre-service and in-service TESOL teachers, with only a few studies having both pre-service and in-service teachers as participants. That nearly 50% of all the studies reviewed focused on the practices that encouraged in-service/experienced TESOL teachers to reflect contradicts what some TESOL scholars have recently suggested about the paucity of RP research related to in-service/experienced teachers' reflections on their work. So right from the start, the answer is yes, TESOL has embraced the concept of RP because it leads to enhanced awareness of important issues for both pre-service and in-service TESOL teachers (Farrell, 2018a; also 2016b).

More specifically, Farrell (2018a) noted that when TESOL teachers were encouraged to reflect on their *philosophy* (mostly through accessing their personal histories) most studies reported that teachers can better understand their teacher identity origins, formation, and development. When TESOL teachers were encouraged to reflect on *principles* (mostly through metaphor analysis and reflective writing), most (but not all) studies reviewed reported that, as teachers became more aware of their previously tacitly held assumptions, values, and beliefs about teaching and learning, they were better able to re-evaluate them in light of their new knowledge. When teachers were encouraged to reflect on *theory* (mostly through lesson planning) the studies reported that pre-

service TESOL teachers were able to build repertoires and knowledge of instruction while in-service TESOL teachers benefited most from accessing their theory through collective and collaborative lesson-planning conferences. When TESOL teachers were encouraged to reflect on their *practice*, the results indicated that some kind of feedback during pre- and post-observation conferences in groups of some form (e.g., with or without video recordings of the lessons) can facilitate such reflections especially for pre-service TESOL teachers. For in-service TESOL teachers the results indicated that although most teachers reported an overall positive impact of classroom observations because they lead to enhanced awareness of theory and practice connections, they also noted the potential adverse reactions to being observed by others, so the affective side of classroom observations should be considered. The results also reveal that other forms of post-observation feedback, similar as with pre-service teachers – such as the use of teacher groups, teacher study groups, or critical friends – may not only stimulate reflection on theory/practice connections but also alleviate some of the affective issues and misgivings about being observed. When TESOL teachers were encouraged to reflect *beyond practice* in combination with philosophy, principles, theory, and practice, most of the studies reported that the teachers reflected well beyond their classroom teaching practices on such issues as: the textbooks they are given to teach, the syllabus and curriculum they are given, and their working conditions – especially what they are expected to do by the administration as against what they think their professional roles are.

Because most of the studies revealed that many TESOL teachers tended to focus their reflections on their practice while ignoring the critical aspects of their work, Farrell (2018a) recommended that teacher educators and teacher education programs expand their TESOL teachers' reflections to include philosophy and go beyond practice by incorporating some kind of community-based service learning project (that integrates classroom instruction with community service activities) into TESOL teacher preparation courses.

The results of Farrell's (2018a) review revealed the global reach and the robust nature of the concept of RP research within the TESOL profession. The study concluded that TESOL has embraced the concept of RP but it must be careful to be on guard against others using it as a tool to 'fix' problems because this keeps TESOL teachers down, treating them as technicians and consumers of research rather than generators of their own research. Thus we must now consider how we can make RP workable for all TESOL teachers.

There is growing research evidence within the field of language teacher education that encouraging language teachers, both pre-service and in-service, to engage in reflection is having a positive impact on their careers because teachers recognize the developmental value and transformative potential in reflective activities (Farrell, 2018a). Language teacher educators have various pedagogical tools at their disposal at the program and course level in order to encourage the habit of reflection – such as using technology, critical friendships, team-teaching, peer coaching, dialogue, writing, action research, and analysis of critical incidents (as outlined earlier in this book) to encourage learner teachers to engage in reflective practice. In addition, language teacher educators must themselves be aware of the nature of reflection and the required attitudes that go along with becoming a reflective practitioner. It is not enough to encourage reflection though; language teacher educators themselves must model reflection by examining their own practices. I agree with Tony Wright (2010, p. 267) when he says that the goal of second language teacher education is to produce “reflective teachers, in a process which involves socio-cognitive demands to introspect and collaborate with others, and which acknowledges previous learning and life experience as a starting point for new learning.”

Making Reflective Practice Workable For All TESOL Teachers

For sure, the reflective teaching model is a demanding one as it asks a lot of teachers, both pre-service and in-service teachers. Reflection can also be destructive if teachers continuously blame themselves for things not their fault such as a lesson not going according to plan; perhaps the students were not in the mood to study and it had nothing to do with the teacher or his or her planning and delivery. In addition teachers complain that they have no space or time to reflect although they perform informal reflections all of the time on the way to school or on the way home from school. So we must ask the important question of how we can make reflective practice workable for all teachers.

For example, many scholars wonder if pre-service teachers can really engage in any meaningful reflection given that they already have heavy demands placed on them in their foundation and theoretical courses as well as the cognitive overload they already experience in everyday lessons during the practicum or their first year teaching. I will attempt to answer these questions as I believe reflective practice is a workable approach to a teacher's professional development but we must encourage teachers to reflect in a realistic manner especially with what we ask the teachers to do.

I would consider the following three prerequisites a basic necessity to make reflective practice workable:

- *Time*: All involved with the reflective process much consider how time is provided for. In my early model of reflective practice (see Farrell, 2004) I suggested the need to provide for four different types of time: individual (time to commit to reflection), activity (time to spend on each activity of reflection), development (set time to develop), period of reflection (time frame as a whole to reflect).
- *Opportunity for reflection*: There should be a provision of tasks/activities provided for teachers to reflect such as group discussions, journal writing and classroom observations and many more as outlined in Farrell (2019b) These can include the following:
 - Guided observation tasks (and written report)
 - Analysis of classroom data (e.g. lesson transcripts, lesson plans)
 - Written assignments
 - Journals
 - Dialogues with critical friends
 - Portfolios
 - Critical incident analysis
 - Case studies
 - Teacher beliefs inventories
 - Group discussion of readings
 - Problem-solving through brainstorming
 - Materials evaluation

- *Training*: Separate training in the sub-skills of reflection such as using data from other teacher's classrooms to help build reflective skills. We cannot just 'tell' pre-service teachers to 'reflect' without training them how to 'reflect'. Learning to teach is like learning to drive for the first time. Here we must concentrate consciously about every movement we make: change the gears from neutral to 1st by taking off my right foot from the brake and putting it gently on the accelerator while at the same time easing my left foot off the clutch. I also have to watch and steer the car while I am doing this. Can you imagine what you would respond if someone asked you to reflect on this while you were doing it (reflection-*in*-action) or right after (reflection-*on*-action) it was completed for the first time? Just like learning to drive, novice teachers may have no spare processing capacity for thinking while they are teaching. After the event, I have also found that teachers have little spare time to reflect because of the many demands placed on them by all the different courses they have to take. It is also difficult for novice teachers to detach themselves from the event that has just taken place. In the early stages of teaching novice teachers are too much involved with the events themselves. It seems that novice teachers tend to recall events of the lesson less accurately than do more experienced teachers. Also, they may not have the schema for making judgments. Therefore, reflective skills must be taught separately from teaching practice. This training in reflective skills should be separate from teaching practice because there would be too much cognitive overload involved if it were all presented together. Other sub-skills of reflection that teachers would need training in is how to make beliefs explicit; how to formulate questions about teaching; how to collect and record evidence about teaching (observe, collect data); how to understand the evidence obtained; how to explore alternatives; and how to apply insights.

The Future of RP in TESOL

When we talk about reflection and RP, too often this is of an implicit nature in terms of how we define these concepts. Some think that RP means teachers struggling to articulate their internal thoughts about teaching, while others think it is all about how teachers feel about how a lesson went without much evidence documenting what actually occurred. Such thoughts can be demoralizing because teachers may focus on what they think is the negative rather than what may have happened which in fact was positive. So, teachers and teacher educators should define what they mean by engaging in reflection and RP, and some of these definitions should at the very least involve teachers gathering evidence or data about their practices both inside and outside the classroom in their particular context and then sharing (through dialogue and/or writing) what they discover with other teachers, so that RP is more social than individual.

Yes, we must be on guard against superficial reflections but we must also be on guard against instituting recipe-following checklists that teachers 'reflect with compliantly' just to satisfy some teacher educator's need rather than their own need to question and challenge practice. RP is a means for promoting critical reflection rather than another educational tool that is used to exercise control and follow established conventions, which is not productive or developmental for anyone involved.

'Productive reflection' (Cressey, Bourd & Docherty, 2006) is contextualized and involves individuals reflecting on their practices in the company of other professionals. In such a manner, organizations such as schools should be involved because teachers do not work in isolation; rather they work in a community that includes students, teachers, administrators, and the outside community. All should be involved in the reflective process in the shared interests of the wider group and community. The results of such productive reflections are to generate new possibilities

for the group as a whole as well as the individuals who are reflecting within the group. In addition, one of the qualities of productive reflection that is identified by Cressey et al. (2006, p. 22) is that reflection is a dynamic, “open, unpredictable process” that changes over time. Thus TESOL teachers who engage in reflection and RP must develop a tolerance for ambiguity and as a result also develop a reflective disposition of open-mindedness, responsibility, and wholeheartedness so that they can acquire the resourcefulness and resilience necessary to face any future challenges and changes in their careers. We must constantly define what we mean by reflection and make sure that teachers are front and central of the process of reflection.

This Special Issue

I am honored now to present the six excellent papers that make up this special issue on reflective practice in TESOL.

The first paper, *Reflective Practice in English Language Teaching in Indonesia: Shared Practices from Two Teacher Educators* by Andrzej Cirocki and Handoyo Puji Widodo discusses the shared practices of two teacher educators in Indonesia as they encouraged TESOL teachers (both pre-service and in-service) to reflect on their practice. Focus on reflecting-*before, during, after* and *beyond* lessons, and at the same time integrating Farrell’s (2015b) five-stage framework (see above) in their workshops for Indonesian TESOL teachers, the authors were able to operationalize reflective practice in constructive ways that encouraged the EFL teachers to reflect critically on their lessons.

The second paper, *Reflective Practice to Guide Teacher Learning: A Practitioner’s Journey with Beginner Adult English Language Learners*, by Skye Playsted, also uses Farrell’s (2015b) five stage framework (see above) as a means of a self-reflection for the author about her personal teaching journey in Australia. She used Farrell’s (2015b) framework as a lens to make sense of how her individual beliefs about teaching interact with her professional experiences, and how these interactions inform her decisions in the classroom. The author noted that along her teaching journey her interactions with mentors were influential as they guided and supported her along the way and thus they can mediate novice TESOL year teachers’ developing awareness of their beliefs and decisions about teaching in their early career years.

The third paper, *Collaborative Reflective Practice: Its Influence on Pre-service EFL Teachers’ Emerging Professional Identities*, by María Alvarado Gutiérrez, Mónica Neira Adasme, and Anne Westmacott, explores the professional identity development of pre-service EFL teachers in Chile also through Farrell’s (2015b) framework for reflecting on practice but this time focuses on the first four levels of RP described in the framework (*philosophy, principles, theory* and *practice*—see also above). The authors delivered 90 minute workshops using these four stages to encourage reflection on the teachers’ emerging identities. As a result the authors reported that the teachers were empowered by their developing awareness that they could define, deconstruct and resolve problems; they had had positive perceptions of collaboration; and they became more open to change. The authors conclude that collaborative RP could be implemented in teacher education programs to strengthen students’ emerging professional identities.

The fourth paper, *EFL Teachers’ Reflective Journal Writing: Barriers and Boosters*, by Shadi Donyaie and Hassan Soodmand Afshar, looked at one of the most popular tools to promote reflection, reflective journal writing (RWJ), and specifically, to which Iranian EFL teachers were familiar with RJW, and the possible contribution of a consciousness-raising interactive workshop to the participants’ individual and collective journal writing, and their perception of the barriers to RJW. Their study revealed that many teachers had only partial familiarity with RJW and that none of them had already been trained on RWJ. However, the authors reported that because they became

more familiar with the principles of RJW after attending a consciousness-raising interactive workshop on the topic, they were more favorable towards writing as reflection and this also had a positive overall impact on their teaching. They conclude that EFL teachers need training in such a tool for reflection rather than just be told to write their reflections.

The fifth paper, *English as a Foreign Language Teacher Immunity: An Integrated Reflective Practice*, by Teymour Rahmati, Karim Sadeghi, and Farah Ghaderi, explored the development of language teacher immunity among Iranian in-service English as a Foreign/Second Language (EFL) teachers and suggests that reflective practice should be an integrated undertaking involving reflection on personal, sociocultural, and educational factors rather than being limited to practice per se in order to counteract low self-confidence, and students' demotivation when teaching in High Schools. After identifying what is triggering disturbances of teacher immunity, the authors proposed reflective strategies that should be adopted by EFL teachers to deal with those 'disturbances'; in other words, the authors propose that teacher immunity be adopted within the reflective practice model as a valuable tool to help teachers explore the personal, sociocultural, and educational factors that impact their practices.

The sixth paper, *Co-Authoring in Action: Practice, Problems and Possibilities* by Marie Yeo and Marilyn Lewis, offers us a unique window into the reflections of two TESOL scholars reflecting on their co-authoring and collaborating on doing and writing research. As they note, although commonly practiced, we know little about its actual process. So they attempt to answer the following questions in their paper: How do authors choose their collaborators? How do they make decisions about the writing process? What obstacles do they face and how do they overcome them? What do they see as the benefits and pitfalls of co-authoring? They both conclude that co-authoring (especially less experienced with more experienced) is an important supportive and collaborative practice for professional development of all scholars.

I hope you enjoy this special issue on reflective practice in TESOL and that these papers encourage all teachers and teacher educators to reflect on all aspects of their practices both inside and outside the classroom.

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