A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION TEACHERS' USE OF ENGLISH PEDAGOGY AND THE IMPACT OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS.

Lin Liyun, Chandra Mohan

[1] Lincoln University College, Petaling Jaya, Malaysia.

ABSTRACT

When it comes to teaching a language, it is often challenging to keep things exciting. In order to ensure that their pupils are able to learn by doing and comprehend the material that they are being taught, they make an effort to include the most effective learning theories, methodologies, tools, resources, and aids into their courses. In order to find out how to solve difficulties using this strategy, they may collaborate with their friends and make use of the experiences that they have common with one another. The researchers often use this iterative procedure in order to overcome the social and psychological barriers that they encounter. With regard to the instruction of a second or foreign language, this is of utmost significance. One of the primary objectives of this attentive practice is to assist pupils in improving their language learning. The findings of the research are used as a guide by teachers, and they supplement their approach with educational publications and opportunities for professional development that might be of benefit. Not only does a teacher bring their knowledge to the classroom when they engage in reflection, but they also bring all of the things they have studied, the things they have done, and significant academic frameworks with them. When teachers' pay attention to how their students react, analyse data, and make adjustments to their teaching methods, they may assist their students in acquiring language skills more effectively. Educators could come to the conclusion that they need to modify or modernise their teaching methods if they take the time to reflect on themselves. The classroom functions in this manner as a laboratory, where you are able to put what you have acquired in the classroom into practice. By seeing how students interact with one another, teachers are able to get valuable information that assists them in making decisions on how to instruct.

Keywords: Professional development, Early childhood education, English pedagogy, Comparative study.

INTRODUCTION

Through the process of shedding light on the matter, the objective was to broaden their familiarity with and grasp of reflection, as well as the many sides of reflection

and the numerous methods in which educational reflection may be fostered. When it comes to successful lesson delivery, researchers, educator trainees, and classroom instructors have all reached the conclusion that reflective teaching is a vital component. It is conceivable that the concept of reflection was already present in the earliest forms of educational discourse. Because it helps educators identify and manage problems that may arise in their classrooms or during their professional development, it is simply impossible for educators to do their jobs successfully without its (Appleton et al., 2021). This is because it supports educators in detecting and resolving difficulties that may emerge. Should anything similar to place, they would be unable to give the assignment their whole attention since they would be unable to focus on it. If educators did not have access to this assistance, it would be difficult for them to carry out their responsibilities in an efficient way. Additionally, in order for them to carry out their tasks in a responsible way, it is essential for them to have access to it. Although the practice of teachers engaging in self-reflection is not a new phenomenon, the development of this practice into a cohesive theoretical framework within the field of TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) is a relatively recent phenomenon. TESOL stands for "Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages." On the other hand, this is the case in spite of the fact that reflection is not a new concept; it has been around for a substantial length of time. When referenced, the author states that instructors of English as a second language (ESL) have developed a more profound understanding of reflective practice as a direct consequence of the recent empirical research that has been carried out on the subject. The investigation that was carried out not too long ago was the most recent of these probes. The efforts that have been taken to encourage teachers to regularly engage in reflective practices are clearly connected to this, and there is a clear relationship between the two situations (Ryan et al., 2020).

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

A wide range of people, including applied linguists, devoted a considerable amount of time and attention to the process of building methods and frameworks for the production of instructional strategies and material in the early 1900s. This process was carried out in order to facilitate the development of instructional strategies and material. According to this particular occasion, the works of Richards and Rodgers were the ones that were referenced. Taking everything into consideration, this led to the establishment of the foundation that served as the basis for the development of contemporary language training. It is presently the case that the number of people who speak English as their first language is greater than the number of people who speak any other language anywhere in the world. The notion that its speakers were located in various regions of the globe has garnered a considerable degree of support from the members of the audience. In light of this, it is possible to fall into the trap of believing that English is the language spoken all over the globe, rather than a language that is exclusively spoken by native speakers globally. It was had

been believed that every single individual on the earth would have at least a rudimentary knowledge of the English language (Blasé, 2019). This occurred as a result of the fact that English was used in a broad range of settings and for a large variety of causes. Currently, it is being taught in a broad range of circumstances, including as a foreign language or a second language, in a substantial number of countries all over the world on a global scale. Over the course of more than 150 years, the English Language Teaching (ELT) profession in China has a rich and storied history that dates back many decades. This sector of the economy is well-known for its illustrious and extensive history. In the present day, students attending a broad range of educational institutions, from elementary schools to universities, have the opportunity to participate in classes that provide them with an additional language choice. There was a large number of other countries in which the scenario was somewhat comparable to the one described. As of current moment in time, the English language is used in almost all professional fields and academic institutions. The use of this technology might possibly be beneficial to a wide variety of different sectors, including but not limited to politics, business, education, information technology, and science. In its whole, it makes a contribution to the education of the general public by shedding light on the events that are occurring in a variety of areas around the world at the current time. English is considered to be a second language by the vast majority of people all over the world. This is appropriate for the vast majority of individuals. There was one thing that could be said with absolute certainty: it includes a section of human history that is far more extensive than what was previously understood. Consequently, as a consequence of this, students of all grade levels are now obliged to actively seek out English language training and make an effort to improve their language skills (Uştuk & Çomoğlu, 2021).

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of this research is to investigate how early childhood English language teachers of professional development programs emphasising reflective practice impact their pedagogical approaches. This study is to determine the extent to which self-assessment and critical thinking support professional development by means of an inquiry into how participation in reflective teaching influences instructional strategies, classroom relationships, and general teaching effectiveness. The project aims to identify optimal approaches for teacher preparation that allow early childhood language instruction to remain flexible and always improvable. The results of this study will provide legislators, teachers developing professional development programs improving teaching quality and learning outcomes for young English language learners, analytical study for educational institutions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Early childhood ESL instructors are finding reflective thinking to be a useful tool for professional development that will enable them to increase their teaching practices

and development of their students. Recent studies highlight the need of reflective strategies for improving the teaching ability of professional development programs. Using a reflective professional development approach, (Zhang & Cook, 2019) for example aimed to improve early writing instruction for pre-kindergarten educators. Pre-planned reflection exercises apparently helped teachers increase their reading and writing production over that of their classmates. Comparatively considering how ECE teachers may enhance their reflective practice, one might yearn for a coach. After thorough coaching, results revealed that teachers were more open to evaluate and enhance their own instructional strategies. (Huynh, 2022) therefore enabled helping language teachers to develop professionally. Studies have shown that letting their students create their own learning strategies helps instructors improve their approach and motivate their passion in the field. The 2014 bleach also looked at early childhood teachers' reactions to elements of CPD courses including reflective practice techniques. Active self-evaluation against theoretical models allows professionals to generate new ideas and professional language required to appropriately control children's growth. Taken all together, these results confirm the theory that reflective practice might be a useful tool for enhancing the language arts education given by elementary school teachers and show the transforming power of it on professional growth.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

How do early childhood English language teachers' pedagogical techniques change after participating in professional development programs that stress reflective practice?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The above stated objectives were fulfilled by using the following methodological procedures:

Primary Sources of Data: Chinese elementary school and middle school English instructors were the major sources of information.

Secondary Sources of Data: To conduct the study, the researcher combed through a mountain of relevant online resources, including books, journals, papers, articles, research works, and more. The daily operations of the research endeavour were made simpler by doing this. In order to do this, the researcher combed through a mountain of prior work, citing instances from the likes of Phuyal, Wallace Richards, and Lockhart Ur, among others.

Population of the Study: This study's participants were volunteers from several Chinese schools that provide ESL classes. These individuals, who were from China, selflessly provided their expertise. The mission of these teachers was to help students in lower-level secondary school become more fluent English speakers.

Sampling Procedure: A selection technique that did not use randomisation in any manner was applied throughout the trial. The judges deliberated for a long time before deciding that twelve schools best reflected China's varied population. Twenty people from various academic backgrounds applied for the available teaching post, and one of them was hired. A minimum of one lesson was presented to the audience by each teacher. An important part of the data gathering process, which was a step in the approach, was to analyse twenty different classes.

Tools For Data Collection: The primary tools used to collect data from the selected schools were classroom observations, checklists, and questionnaires.

Process of Data Collection: An observation checklist covering a wide range of possible curricular topics was developed by the researcher to get things off. Because of this, the researcher could put things in motion in the right manner. In order to acquire authorisation to conduct the research on campus, they went to each of the selected institutions and interacted with administrators. Also, they met with the selected teachers to go over his most recent study results and brainstorm ways to work together. Once they obtained permission to do so, the researcher went to their classes as a fake observer to gather data. The checklist was the main tool for providing direction and instruction throughout the whole classroom observation. Regardless, the study's primary emphasis was on teachers' actual implementation of reflective practices in the classroom. The data acquired during the observation was subsequently included in the report as a result of this. In order to gather information on the instructors' participation in reflective teaching, the author sent surveys and stressed the need of instructors returning them quickly with completed questions. This was done so that the required data could be gathered. He was able to achieve his objective of gathering information because of this.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
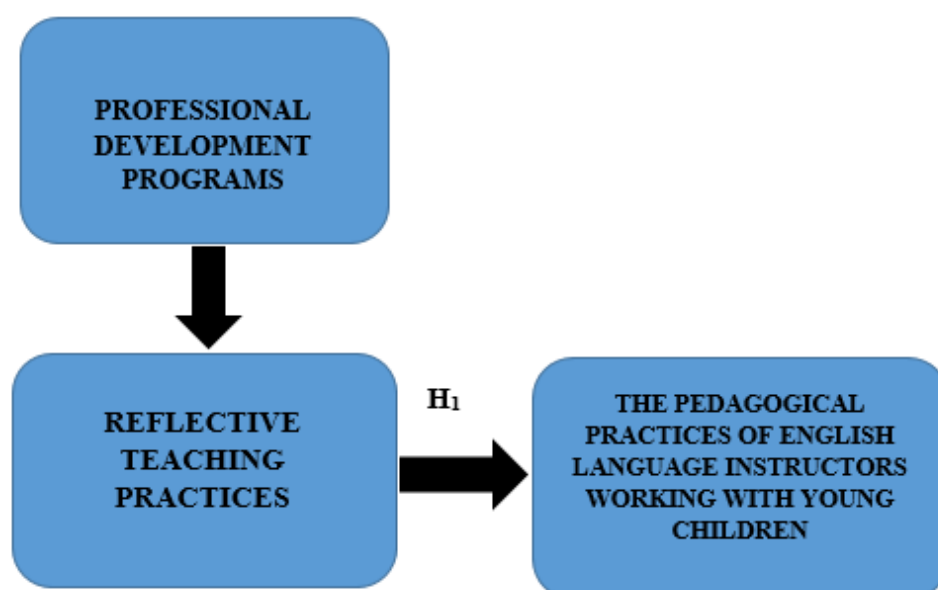
RESULTS

Analysis And Interpretation of Teacher's Views: This section mainly covered the many facets of reflective teaching, with a focus on those facets as seen by English teachers working in lower secondary schools. In order to examine these features of reflective teaching, the viewpoints of English instructors were used. This part was written with English teachers at lower secondary schools in mind. Those who teach English in elementary and junior high schools were the intended readers of this section. This focus was given since they are the main components of reflective teaching. That was the main reason for concentrating on those parts, as they make up the majority of it. The original goal of writing this section was to provide a hand to English teachers who were now working with students in lower secondary education. All of their work was driven by this one thing. Their children had a very hard time catching up academically in this area as neither parent was involved in their education. The questionnaires were the most important source of information as they supplied the bulk of the data acquired for the study that was the focus of this article. An ongoing examination and analysis are currently focussing on the teachers' responses to these surveys. This questionnaire aimed to gather as much data as possible on educators' reflective practice activities; it consisted of fifteen separate items. The goal of the survey was to collect as much information as possible from the participants. The level of reflective teaching and the general techniques used to create reflective practice by English language instructors while working in the classroom were the two most essential subjects studied throughout this research study. It was believed that these two factors were among the most important ones investigated. The study that was carried out primarily addressed these two key issues. This study also aimed to find out whether English instructors who work with students whose first language is not English use reflective methods in the classroom. Another area that was investigated was the level of reflective teaching practiced by teachers of languages other than English. This was one of the things that was checked. This specific item was among many that were inspected. Regarding this particular instance, this was among the items that were questioned. Since the UK was thought to be the best location for the study, that's where all the necessary research for the project would take place. The findings that the educators derived from these firsthand accounts became the basis for many subsequent sections that examine and analyse the educators' perspectives.

Table 1: Information Obtained from Teaching Diary.

Responses	No. of Teacher	Percentage
Not at all	0	0
Very little	2	10
A little	15	75
A lot	3	15
Total	20	

Sharing Experiences: Everybody can get something from an activity that promotes story sharing and centres on the subject of second language acquisition. Each party to a conversation stands to gain an advantage if, during a discussion, one person discusses their own experience and the other person shares the experience of another. Talking about someone else's experience while one person discusses their own makes the discussion useful for both people involved since they can learn something new. The purpose of this test is to help students identify their strengths and weaknesses so that they may work on those areas more effectively in future coursework. Because of this, they are able to get a leg up in their future studies. Since then, they've had plenty of chances to improve in all of these areas.
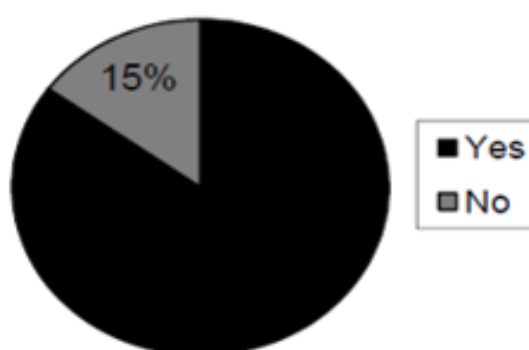

Figure 1: Sharing Experiences as a Language Teacher.

DISCUSSION

In especially with respect to the instruction of English, it is of the highest significance to investigate the ways in which the participation of early childhood education teachers in professional development programs effects the pedagogical methods that they use in their classrooms. The goal of these programs is to provide educators with the resources they need in order to have a positive influence on the lives of their pupils. This is accomplished via the use of creative methodologies. Structured professional development seems to have the ability to improve not just the teaching tactics that instructors use, but also their relationships with students in the classroom and the results of their students' learning. This conclusion is based

on the findings of the study that was conducted. When it comes to professional growth that is both effective and productive, one of the most important components is the establishment of a strong emphasis on practical application. Programs that include educational environments that are based on the real world, activities that need hands-on participation, and learning that is done in collaboration have a better chance of being successful in their attempts to win over instructors. The components in question not only provide educators with the tools they need, but they also cultivate an atmosphere that encourages them to experiment with different approaches to teaching. Being in an environment that is encouraging is essential because it will encourage teachers to put the knowledge, they have acquired in the classroom to use, which will eventually result in an increase in their ability to educate students. When doing a comparative research study, it may be advantageous to evaluate the instructional strategies used by teachers who have participated in a variety of professional development programs with those utilised by instructors who have not engaged in such programs. It's possible that this comparison may provide useful information. During the process of establishing which approaches are the most successful, the exact outcomes, which include student participation, changes to teaching tactics, and overall classroom performance, are taken into account. An approach that might be used to accomplish this goal is to examine certain results. Through comparison and analysis of the various methods, we would be able to get a more comprehensive comprehension of the manner in which professional development might be carried out in order to meet the particular needs of early childhood educators.

CONCLUSION

An EFL approved course's instructional strategies were the focus of an action research study meant to improve such strategies. Moreover, the study's overarching goal was to enhance the methods actually used by educators in the classroom. The goal of this study was to document the results of an action research project that aimed to improve the aforementioned class's teaching strategies. The project report was supposed to be handed in while this inquiry was underway. The study was planned to primarily concentrate on the techniques of education utilised in classrooms. The original intent of the paper was to provide a more thorough examination of these modifications. Conducting this study has as its primary objective the enhancement of the program's educational techniques. Furthermore, this goal served as the primary impetus for carrying out the strategy. This kind of research was conducted once it was found since the program was meant to be improved. This was not only the rationale for the operation, but it was also a major factor in the decision to proceed with the therapy. The study's overarching goal was to find ways the course's pedagogical techniques might be improved so that students may have a more tailored learning experience. The primary objective of the study was to discover workable ways to improve procedures. The researchers hoped to find a variety of approaches to enhancing the class's teaching practices as part of

the action research project, with the ultimate goal of identifying these unique approaches. Finding new ways of approaching existing teaching practices was the driving force behind the study.

REFERENCES

1. J. Appleton et al. (2021) Student engagement with school: Critical conceptual and methodological issues of the construct Psychology in the Schools.
2. R.M. Ryan et al. (2020) Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: Classic definitions and new directions Contemporary Educational Psychology.
3. Blasé, Joseph (August, 2019) Principals' Instructional Leadership and Teacher Development: Teachers' Perspectives. Educational Administration Quarterly, Vol. 35, p. 349-378.
4. Huynh, M. T. (2022). The role of reflective practice in professional development for language teachers. Vietnam Journal of Education, 37(3), 45-58.
5. Zhang, J., & Cook, A. (2019). A reflective professional development model for early childhood educators: Enhancing literacy instruction through structured reflection. Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education, 40(1), 22-39.
6. Uştuk, Ö. & Çomoğlu, İ. (2021). Reflexive professional development in reflective practice: What lesson study can offer. International Journal for Lesson and Learning Studies, 10(3), 260–273.