CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives a brief explanation of the study. It consists of the background of the study, the questions and purposes of this research, the research significance, the research scope, the conceptual framework, and a review of previous studies related to this study.

A. Background

Teachers are responsible for organizing and facilitating the learning process in the school environment (Yasin et al., 2023). The learning process does not run effectively if the role of a good, appropriate, and correct teacher is not supported. Teachers are not only tasked with the complex responsibility of planning, implementing, and evaluating learning. However, they must also evaluate their teaching to support and improve their teaching as educators (Flavian, 2016). In this case, the quality of teaching cannot be achieved without the presence of professional teachers. One of the characteristics of professional teachers is self-awareness (Galiakberova et al. 2020), which is the ability to recognize oneself, including strengths and weaknesses. To develop this self-awareness, teachers need to conduct self-reflection as a professional development process.

Reflection is important in helping teachers train their thinking to identify aspects that need to be maintained or improved in their teaching (Kuswandono, 2017). In addition, according to Meierdirk (2016), reflection is one way to improve teachers' professionalism in carrying out their duties. This reflection is essential, especially for prospective teachers, who must review their teaching activities by looking back at the practices and experiences that have been carried out (Wahyuni 2023). Reflection helps teachers critically evaluate their teaching, correct mistakes, and apply more effective teaching methods. Therefore, reflection is a tool for continuous improvement and an essential means for deep professional development, ultimately improving the overall quality of teaching.

Implementing reflection in teaching is one way that teachers can improve their professionalism. Reflection allows teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of

their teaching methods, understand students' needs, and adjust their teaching strategies. According to Gheith and Aljaberi (2018), regular reflection allows teachers to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their teaching and develop a positive attitude. Their research also shows that teachers who frequently reflect are more receptive to constructive criticism and effectively improve their teaching quality. This finding is in line with Rahman's (2014) research, which found that self-reflection helps teachers understand students' needs and develop more effective ways to improve classroom interactions and learning outcomes. Thus, reflection is not only used as a tool to assess teachers' professionalism but also as an important factor in improving teaching (Seco and Cendana 2022).

Many problems arise in the teaching and learning process in the classroom, both from the side of students and teachers. On the student side, learning difficulties are often caused by a lack of language knowledge, concentration, low discipline, and a lack of confidence in communication. Meanwhile, teachers face challenges such as a lack of professional training and an understanding of effective teaching (Songbatumis, 2017). In this context, reflective teaching is one of the approaches to improve teaching practices, as it allows teachers to evaluate and improve their teaching. However, the implementation of reflection does not always go smoothly, as time constraints and heavy workloads are often the main obstacles. A study conducted at SMA Negeri 5 Kendari, Indonesia, found that although teachers recognize the importance of reflection in improving teaching effectiveness, they believe that these external factors hinder its optimal implementation (Sakti, 2017).

Several previous studies are related to this research topic. The first study was conducted by Wahyuni (2023), which focuses on the types of reflective teaching and the strategies used by English teachers to evaluate their teaching practices. The findings reveal that teachers tend to engage more in *reflection-on-action*, meaning they reflect after the lesson has ended, rather than during or before the teaching process. Common strategies include gathering feedback from students, attending workshops, and writing reflective journals. On the other hand, strategies like creating portfolios, conducting action research, using questionnaires, and peer observation are rarely practiced due to limited time, knowledge, and guidance. This

study highlights the importance of enhancing teachers' understanding of reflective practice to support their ongoing professional development in teaching. The second study, conducted by Miranda (2022), focuses on the perceptions of English teachers at an Islamic boarding school in Banda Aceh, Indonesia, regarding the impact of reflective teaching on their teaching performance. The findings show that teachers view this approach positively, as it helps enhance self-awareness, teaching skills, classroom management, understanding of students, and motivation for continuous growth. Reflective teaching also contributes to improving student learning quality, making it an effective method for supporting teacher professionalism and learning outcomes. In addition, the last study conducted by Gheith and Aljaberi (2018) focuses on the extent to which teachers apply reflective teaching and their attitudes toward professional development. The findings show that teachers generally reflect, especially in creating student-centered learning and self-evaluation. However, the strategies used are mostly personal, such as assessing teaching effectiveness or addressing classroom issues. More structured methods, like writing reflective journals or seeking student feedback, are still rarely practiced. This suggests that teachers' reflective practices remain individual and have yet to fully embrace collaborative approaches that could better support professional growth.

Several previous studies have explored reflective teaching from different perspectives. First, while earlier studies predominantly employed descriptive qualitative approaches, qualitative data collection methods, and quantitative approaches, the present study adopts a qualitative case study design to explore teachers' reflective practices in greater depth and within their real teaching context. Second, prior studies have mostly focused on teachers' perceptions of reflective teaching (Miranda, 2022), the types of reflection practiced (Wahyuni, 2023), and teachers' attitudes toward professional development (Gheith & Aljaberi, 2018). In contrast, this study centers on how English teachers implement reflective teaching in their practices. It also investigates the practical challenges they face in doing so, such as time constraints, workload, and the lack of adequate training or mentoring, areas that have received limited attention in earlier studies. Third, in terms of data collection methods, this research integrates semi-structured interviews, direct

classroom observations, and document analysis, rather than relying solely on surveys or questionnaires. This methodological combination is expected to provide a more comprehensive and contextual understanding of how reflective practices are carried out by teachers.

This study aims to fill the gap by directly observing how English teachers implement reflective teaching in their instructional practices. It explores not only the strategies used but also how these strategies are applied in the classroom, such as through reflective journals, self-assessment, and student feedback. The study also highlights real challenges faced by teachers, including limited time, heavy workloads, and a lack of training or support to carry out reflection effectively. The study focuses on how English teachers engage in reflection, the obstacles they encounter, and the extent to which reflection helps improve their teaching. The findings are expected to contribute meaningfully to teacher professional development and the overall quality of English language instruction in schools.

B. Research Questions

Based on the background that has been explained, the identified problems are organized into research questions below:

1. How do EFL teachers implement reflective teaching in improving their teaching practices?
2. What are EFL teachers' challenges in implementing reflective teaching to improve their teaching practices?

C. Research Purposes

Referring to the problems formulated in the research questions, the objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To find out how EFL teachers implement reflective teaching in improving their teaching practices.
2. To find out what challenges EFL teachers face in implementing reflective teaching to improve their teaching practices.

D. Research Significances

The significance of this research in EFL teachers' Implementation of Reflective Teaching in Improving Teaching Practices is as follows:

1. Theoretical Significances

The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the existing knowledge regarding reflective teaching in the professional development of English teachers. By examining how reflective teaching can improve teaching practices, this research can provide a deeper theoretical understanding of reflective teaching methodologies and their impact on teachers' growth. This study can also serve as a foundation for future research exploring reflective teaching and its effectiveness in improving teaching practices in the English teacher context.

2. Practical Significances

This study can offer practical insights for EFL teachers, teacher trainers, and future researchers by highlighting effective reflection on teaching techniques that support improving teaching practices. The findings can inform professional development strategies, methods, and modules that focus on reflective teaching. In addition, the results of this study can guide educators in creating a more student-centered approach to teaching English, ultimately improving classroom learning outcomes and promoting better language proficiency among students.

E. Research Scope

This study focuses on implementing reflective teaching in the professional development of English teachers and how these practices contribute to improving English teaching practices. The study subjects are EFL teachers engaged in professional development through teaching practices at SMPN 1 Sukawening Garut, Indonesia. The data collected was qualitative through semi-structured interviews, observation, and document analysis.

F. Conceptual Framework

Reflective teaching is a teaching approach where teachers systematically reflect on and evaluate their teaching practices to understand the effectiveness of their methods, strategies, and interactions (Seminar et al. 2024). Through reflective teaching, teachers can recognize the strengths and weaknesses of their teaching methods and look for ways to improve or adjust their approach. According to Dewey (1910), teachers need to rethink what they see, know, and experience in

teaching (Pitsoe and Maila 2013). Reflection is not merely a habitual or routine action but a conscious and intentional process involving logical and in-depth analysis. Unlike routine thinking, which follows established habits, reflection emerges particularly when teachers encounter confusion or challenges in teaching, such as when classroom events do not go as planned. According to Dewey (1910), such difficult moments are essential for learning. Reflection helps teachers understand problems and find solutions, especially when there is no clear or definite answer in teaching and learning situations. Reflection is described as an active and careful consideration of beliefs, supported by the reasoning behind them (National Council of Educational Research and Training, 2021).

Based on this understanding, Schön (1983) categorized reflective practice into three types: reflection-in-action, reflection-on-action, and reflection-for-action. These categories help explain how and when teachers reflect on their teaching practices, either during, after, or in preparation for future lessons. Reflection-in-action occurs while teaching is taking place. Teachers make real-time judgments and adjustments when something unexpected happens in the classroom. Reflection-on-action, on the other hand, takes place after a lesson, where teachers analyze what went well and what needs improvement. Meanwhile, reflection-for-action involves planning for future lessons based on insights from past experiences (National Council of Educational Research and Training, 2021). These types of reflection not only describe the timing of reflective thinking but also highlight the dynamic and continuous nature of professional growth through reflective teaching.

From these categories, it becomes evident that reflective teaching plays a significant role in supporting teachers' professional development. The purpose of reflective teaching is to encourage teachers to actively evaluate and improve their teaching practice through a process of critical and continuous reflection. By reflecting on the teaching experience, teachers can recognize the strengths and weaknesses of the methods they use and continuously improve them. The benefits of this approach are a deeper understanding of learning strategies, increased student engagement, and continuous professional development for teachers. Additionally, the use of student feedback and classroom observations allows teachers to adapt

their methods to better suit learners' needs and create more effective learning environments (Shalabi et al. 2018).

However, the process of implementing reflective teaching is not without challenges. Constraints such as limited time and heavy workloads are among the most common obstacles faced by teachers (Sakti, 2017). Despite these challenges, there are various strategies that can support reflective teaching. These include keeping a journal, reviewing personal materials, self-evaluation, and analyzing recorded classroom sessions. By using a reflective journal, English teachers can record their experiences and thoughts and then review them to see how their teaching is developing. Keeping a regular journal not only records what happens in the classroom but also helps teachers understand how those events affect their teaching and the strategies they use. For example, a teacher who is new to teaching speaking skills can use a reflective journal to see if the methods used are effective in helping students speak more fluently. With the help of these reflective journals, teachers can continue to learn and improve their teaching (Robinson, Anderson-Harper, and Kochan 2001).

In conclusion, reflective teaching is not an additional activity, but an important part that has a direct impact on the quality of teacher and student interactions, the selection of appropriate learning methods, and the improvement of learning outcomes. Through reflection, teachers can evaluate and improve teaching strategies to create more effective learning. Reflection also helps teachers build better interpersonal relationships with students and understand the social impact of their teaching actions (Patty and Que 2023).

G. Previous Study

There are several previous studies related to this research. The first study was conducted by Miranda (2022). The focus of this study is to explore the perceptions of English teachers about the impact of reflective teaching on improving their performance. This study used a qualitative approach through semi-structured interviews with six English teachers as participants. The findings showed that the teachers had a positive attitude towards reflective teaching and believed that it helped them improve their understanding of their performance, develop

classroom management skills, and understand students' needs. Reflective teaching also helps teachers improve their teaching abilities, enhance their sense of creativity, and prepare them to face challenges in the classroom.

The second study was conducted by Wahyuni (2023), which investigated the reflective practices of teachers based on Schön's (1983) theory of reflection. The focus of this study is to analyze the types of reflective teaching and strategies used. This study used a qualitative approach, employing questionnaires and interviews with 17 teachers from the English Education Study Program to examine their reflective thinking and how they view themselves as reflective practitioners. The findings indicated that many participants were categorized as novice reflective teachers. While they expressed interest in self-development, their reflective practices were limited, which suggested that they struggled with self-evaluation and lacked awareness of improving their teaching practices.

The third study was conducted by Ghaith and Jabri (2018) in Amman, Jordan, involving 162 teachers from public schools and addressed teachers' reflective teaching and attitudes toward professional self-development. The study used a descriptive quantitative design and a questionnaire instrument. It showed that teachers' reflective teaching was at an acceptable level, and their attitudes towards self-development were positive, with a strong correlation between the two variables. The result is that teachers' attitudes towards professional self-development tend to be positive, and there is a strong relationship between reflective practice and attitudes towards professional self-development (Gheith and Aljaberi 2018).

The fourth study was conducted by Yuniari (2023) in Pekanbaru, Indonesia, focusing on the implementation of reflective teaching in the process of teaching and learning English at an Islamic school. The study aimed to explore how English teachers implement reflective teaching and to identify the supporting and hindering factors influencing its implementation. This research employed a qualitative approach with a case study design, using observation, interviews, and focus group discussions (FGD) as data collection instruments. The participants consisted of two female English teachers and four classes of eighth-grade students. The findings

revealed that the teachers implemented reflective teaching through reviewing previous materials using various media, presenting easy-to-understand materials, adjusting learning situations and time availability, and conducting self-evaluation. In addition, the study found that personal motivation and students' feedback supported reflective teaching, while limited time and additional school activities hindered its implementation. Overall, the results indicated that reflective teaching was implemented effectively in the English teaching and learning process at the Islamic school.

The last study was conducted by Hadi, Rosadi, and Lestari (2024) at SMA Negeri 1 Kuripan, Indonesia, focusing on teachers' reflective practices in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. The study aimed to examine teachers' level of understanding of the Merdeka Curriculum concepts and to explore how teachers apply reflective practices in evaluating lesson planning, teaching processes, and learning outcomes. This research employed a qualitative case study design, using in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis as data collection methods. The participants consisted of three teachers who were directly involved in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum at the school. The findings revealed that teachers' understanding of the Merdeka Curriculum was still limited and partial, and their reflective practices in lesson planning, teaching implementation, and evaluation were not optimal. Teachers' reflections tended to focus on technical aspects rather than the substantive values of independence and 21st-century skills. Overall, the study concluded that teachers need intensive assistance and training to strengthen their reflective practices in order to effectively implement the Merdeka Curriculum.

However, the present study differs from the five previous studies in several important aspects. First, although earlier studies employed qualitative approaches, descriptive quantitative designs, and case studies to explore reflective teaching, most of them focused either on teachers' perceptions (Miranda, 2022), types of reflection and reflective levels (Wahyuni, 2023), or the relationship between reflective practice and professional self-development (Ghaith & Aljaberi, 2018). Only limited attention has been given to how reflective teaching is actually

implemented by English teachers in their real classroom practices. Second, while Yuniari (2023) and Hadi et al. (2024) examined reflective practices in specific contexts, their studies focused on general implementation and curriculum-related reflection rather than deeply investigating English teachers' reflective teaching practices and the challenges they encounter in daily teaching activities. In contrast, the present study specifically centers on how English teachers implement reflective teaching in their instructional practices and explores the practical challenges they face, such as time constraints, workload, and limited professional support, which remain underexplored in previous studies. Third, in terms of methodology, this study adopts a qualitative case study design and integrates semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis to obtain in-depth and contextual data, rather than relying mainly on questionnaires or single data sources. This methodological combination is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of English teachers' reflective teaching practices in improving their teaching competence.