

## INDONESIA EFL TEACHERS' REFLECTIVE THINKING AND THEIR TEACHING STYLES: EXPLORING POTENTIAL RELATIONSHIP

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### ABSTRACT

*Reflective thinking is an important factor that can affect a teacher's effectiveness when teaching in the educational setting. This study aims to investigate the relationship between reflective thinking of EFL teachers in Indonesia and their teaching styles. A descriptive-correlational design was employed in the quantitative research method, and a survey with fifteen EFL teachers from different Indonesian schools was used to collect data. With a correlation of 0.757 and a significance value (sig) of  $0.001 < 0.05$ , the statistical analysis's results demonstrated a strong positive or close to significant relationship between teachers' reflective thinking levels and their teaching styles. Additionally, the percentage of 53.3% indicates that EFL teachers in Indonesia tend to use the "All-round flexible, Adaptable teacher" teaching style when teaching students in English in the classroom. This finding illustrates that Indonesian EFL teachers who exhibit high levels of reflective thinking tend to have more effective teaching styles. Suggestions for future research include in-depth research to understand specific aspects of reflective thinking as it relates to teaching style.*

**Keywords:** *Correlation, Pedagogical Practices, Professional Development, Teaching Effectiveness*

### INTRODUCTION

The role of a teacher in the educational system and the classroom learning process is crucial. Teachers are crucial in fostering critical thinking and self-directed learning in their students, they also need to manage the classroom well and engage their students (Franklin & Harrington, 2019). The interaction of all elements of learning, including subject matter, content, learning strategies, resources, learning context, students, and teachers, is necessary for the complex action of teaching (Abdar & Shafaei, 2022; Campbell, 2008). And for many years during the method era, language teachers only followed what language teaching authorities recognized as "language theory, language learning, and language teaching" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). Even though Brown (2007) believes that the quality and quantity of English learning are influenced by the language teacher EFL, still, many EFL teachers who do not understand how to manage and build a classroom environment to support the learning process that produces positive interactions between students themselves (Abdar & Shafaei, 2022; Brown, 2007).

Reflective thinking is a useful technique or practice that contributes significantly to the development of a teacher's professionalism, influencing student achievement, encouraging students to think, and increasing their ability to think critically. Reflective thinking is "active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds that support it and the conclusion to which it tends" (Dewey, 1993; Rodgers, 2002; Zhu, 2014). Sezer claims that reflective thinking, according to Dewey, is a particular mental process that concentrates and regulates thought patterns (Chee Choy et al., 2012; Sezer, 2008). Reflective teaching is the result of an efficient teacher's quality reflective thinking. Reflective thinking can help a teacher discover or realize effective and efficient pedagogical practices in creating an environment that promotes effective learning (Afshar & Farahani, 2015).

Reflective thinking is not the only requirement; teachers, being the main source of knowledge in the classroom, also need to be able to teach and communicate their knowledge to their students. The teaching styles of the teacher is one of the elements affecting how effectively students learn. Teachers do not have or use a fixed teaching style because teaching style is a continuum that includes various elements (Grasha, 2002; Safaei & Shahrokhi, 2019). Because everyone learns in a different way, it is critical for a teacher to include or use a variety of different teaching styles when delivering their material (Safaei & Shahrokhi, 2019; Marzano, 1992). Therefore, it is pivotal for EFL teachers to understand how their students learn so that they can adapt their learning style to the context and learning objectives. Teachers must employ a variety of teaching styles that are meet their students' needs and the goals of their education (Abdar & Shafaei, 2022; Genc & Ogan-Bekiroglu, 2004). EFL teachers' teaching styles are influenced by a variety of factors, including their emotions (Heydarnejad et al., 2017), epistemological beliefs (Soleimani, 2020), and orientations to classroom management (Rahimi & Asadollahi, 2012). In addition, Grasha (1996) highlights that in order to improve their competency through learning difficulties, expert teachers give their students the information and abilities they require.

Reflective thinking is a crucial aspect of teachers' professional growth and development, with a direct impact on their teaching style. Empirical studies suggest

that (Gipe & Richards, 1992) and (Orakcı, 2021) both discovered a positive or favorable correlation between teachers' capacity for reflective thinking and their ability to teach, with the latter also highlighting the need for in-service training to enhance reflective thinking skills. Many studies have discovered that there is positive correlation between EFL teachers' reflective thinking and their teaching styles (Abdar & Shafaei, 2022; Afshar & Farahani, 2015; Moradkhani et al., 2017; Soodmand Afshar & Farahani, 2018). Factors like gender and teaching experience have an impact on this relationship (Afshar & Farahani, 2015), assessment literacy (Ashraf & Zolfaghari, 2018), and the last is self-efficacy (Moradkhani et al., 2017). These findings imply that reflective thinking is important in determining the teaching style of EFL teachers and that it can be improved in a numerous way, such as through self-efficacy and assessment literacy.

Reflective thinking, as the ability of teachers to critically evaluate and improve their teaching practices, is believed to influence their teaching style. Not only that, but reflective thinking and this teaching style influence student achievement and an environment that promotes positive learning and active interaction among its components. English is studied and taught as a foreign language in Indonesia, which presents a challenge for teachers and students alike because it is difficult and complex to teach and learn. EFL teachers in Indonesia face difficulties when teaching English, and inexperienced EFL teachers are unaware that teaching English has a level of complexity that necessitates extensive reflection before changing their teaching methods. Examining the relationship between reflective thinking and teachers' teaching styles can assist in determining whether teachers' reflective thinking abilities influence their use of teaching styles.

However, despite the fact that each research variable had several discoveries or studies, the researchers realized that there is still very little research on the relationship between Indonesia EFL teachers' thinking and their teaching styles. There are also few literature studies on this topic, indicating a gap in this research. In response to the empirical GAP, this study intends to interview 15 Indonesian EFL teachers about their perceptions of these two research variables in order to learn more about how their reflective thinking influences their teaching style. It is hoped that by utilizing the relationship between two important variables, the

research findings will be able to close the gap in the literature caused by the lack of studies in this area. This research is expected to clarify the relationship between Indonesian EFL teachers' reflective thinking and their teaching styles. And with a better understanding of this correlation, potential improvements in the quality of English teaching and also learning in Indonesian schools can be anticipated. Based on the explanation above, the research questions are as follows:

1. Is there any relationship between the reflective thinking and teaching style of Indonesia EFL teachers?
2. Which teaching styles is most frequently employed by EFL teachers in Indonesia??

## **MATERIALS AND METHOD**

### ***Research Design***

In this research, a quantitative research methods with a descriptive-correlational design were used. According to Gulo (2008), descriptive correlational research examines not only the problem itself but also other variables related to that problem because these variables are described in terms of their factors. As Nazir (2013) highlights, the goal is to produce descriptions and correlations about the facts, traits, and connections between the phenomena under study in a methodical, factual, and accurate manner. This research design is ideal for use in this study because the goal is to determine whether there is a possible relationship between Indonesia EFL teachers' reflective thinking and their teaching styles. By focusing on specific aspects and frequently demonstrating the relationship between various variables, this correlational descriptive research will provide a clearer picture of the situation (Nasution, 2012).

### ***Research Participants***

Fifteen Indonesia EFL teachers, including 11 females and 4 males, volunteered to participate in this research. They are native speakers of Indonesian who teach English at various school levels ranging from senior to junior to elementary. Their teaching experience also varies; some have only been teaching for a year, while others have been teaching English for twenty years. Because researchers had limited access to English teachers and needed to conduct research quickly, this study was conducted non-probability using convenience sampling

techniques. Convenience sampling, according to Sugiyono (2018), is a sampling technique in which respondents based on anyone who happens to meet the researcher can be used as a sample if the person they happen to meet is suitable as a data source, with the main criteria being an Indonesian EFL teacher.

### ***Data Collection and Analysis***

This study employs a questionnaire-based data collection method to obtain the desired information. First, the researcher gave an explanation of the study's objectives before sending two questionnaires with closed and open-ended questions about reflective thinking and teaching styles to Indonesia EFL teachers who had consented via e-mail or other social networks. Questionnaires previously completed by participants will be collected and analyzed by researchers with the assistance of a statistician. The strength and direction of a linear relationship between two interval- or ratio-scaled variables can be determined using a correlation test such as the Pearson correlation test. The Pearson correlation test used by the researchers to measure and test the relationship that exists between reflective thinking and teaching styles. In order for the results of this test to be produced, the data must have a normal distribution. Researchers can determine the strength of the relationship between variables by using the correlation coefficient value, which is a result of the SPSS output.

### ***Research Instruments***

a. English Language Teaching Reflection Inventory (ELTRI)

ELTRI is the first tool utilized. A self-report questionnaire called ELTRI was created to evaluate teacher reflection in ELT settings. It was created and developed by Akbari et al. (2010) using a six-component reflective teaching model that encompasses moral, affective, critical, metacognitive, practical, and cognitive reflection. The five underlying factors assessed by the 29 items in the ELTRI are practical, cognitive, learner (affective), metacognitive, and critical reflection. A 5-point Likert scale, with 1 means never and 5 means always, was used for the participants' responses.

b. Teaching Style Inventory (TSI) by Grasha

On a 5-point disagreement to agreement scale, the 40 items in the self-reporting TSI assess each of these five teaching philosophies. The inventory

was created in 1980 by Anthony Grasha, and its validity was checked using confirmatory factor analysis. Numerous studies have used the TSI to examine teaching philosophies in diverse educational contexts and across teacher groups.

## RESULTS

Before correlation data analysis is carried out, the data is first tested for normality. The data normality test examines if the data is normally distributed or not. Normality test is one of the determinants of data quality in quantitative research, so it is important to conduct a normality test before conducting statistical analysis. If the data does not have a normal distribution, researchers should use nonparametric statistical analysis. The normality test results for the reflective thinking and teaching style data are as follows:

*Table 1. Normality test result*

		REFLECTIVE THINKING	TEACHING STYLES
N		15	15
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.125	.109
	Positive	.089	.109
	Negative	-.125	-.065
Test Statistic		.125	.109
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.200 <sup>c,d</sup>	.200 <sup>c,d</sup>

Table 1 above shows that the reflective thinking test data is normally distributed. The value of Asymp. Sig (2-tailed) exceeds the  $\alpha=0.05$  ( $0.200>0.05$ ). Asymp. Sig (2-tailed) values indicate data normality when compared to  $\alpha = 0.05$ . If the value of Asymp. Sig (2-tailed) is less than  $\alpha = 0.05$ , the data is not normally distributed but if the value is greater than  $\alpha = 0.05$ , the data is normally distributed. Additionally, the normality test was run on the teaching style test data, as shown in table 1. The results indicate that the distribution is normal, as Asymp. Sig (2-tailed) is greater than  $\alpha=0.05$  ( $0.200>0.05$ ). Because both data sets are normally distributed, parametric tests can be used to analyze the results.

## 1. Results of Correlation Tests

This study aims to explore the relationship between reflective thinking of EFL teachers in Indonesia and their teaching styles. How reflection on teaching practices can influence the way teachers approach teaching a foreign language is an important focus in understanding teaching quality in EFL environments. So, after the normality test was completed and the results were distributed normally, the data were processed using the computer program SPSS to determine the correlation coefficient, which could be used to explain the relationship between reflective thinking and teaching styles of EFL teachers in Indonesia. The analysis produced the following results.

Table 2. Pearson correlation test results

<b>Correlations</b>			
		REFLECTIVE THINGKING	TEACHING STYLES
REFLECTIVE THINGKING	Pearson Correlation	1	.757**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	15	15
TEACHING STYLES	Pearson Correlation	.757**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	15	15

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The teaching styles test's pearson correlation coefficient is 0.757, as shown in the above table. This indicates that there is a strong or close relationship between reflective thinking and teaching styles variables, as the correlation or relationship between them is 0.757, or close to 1. The range of *Pearson product moment* correlation is -1 to +1. The two variables under study have a perfectly negative linear relationship if the coefficient is -1. On the other hand, there is a perfect positive linear relationship between the two variables under investigation if the correlation coefficient is +1. Conversely, if the coefficient is 0, there is no connection between the two investigated research variables. In the correlation test, the significance value serves as the basis for decision-making; if the value is less than 0.05, it is correlated. Nevertheless, it is not correlated if the significance value is greater than 0.05.

Thus, table 2 above indicates that reflective thinking and teaching style variables have a positive relationship because it receives a strong correlation (sig value of  $0.001 < 0.05$ ) and a correlation coefficient of 0.757.

## 2. Results of descriptive statistics for teaching style used by Indonesia EFL teachers

In an effort to understand more about the teaching styles EFL teachers in Indonesia, this study presents descriptive statistical analysis as a basis for presenting an overview of teaching practices among EFL teachers. Along with the urgency of this research, Thomas L. Good, an education expert, argues, "Effective teachers are those who can manage a variety of teaching styles to meet the needs of diverse students in the classroom." This statement reflects the importance of understanding a variety of teaching styles, especially in relation to learning a foreign language such as EFL in the Indonesian context. So, the researcher wanted to know what teaching styles the Indonesian EFL teachers used. The table below displays the results.

*Table 3. Teaching styles: descriptive statistics*

<i>Group</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
All-round flexible, adaptable teacher	8	53.3%
sensitive teacher, Student-centered	3	20%
Curriculum teacher	3	20%
No-nonsense teacher, Straight facts	1	6.7%

The descriptive statistical analysis reveals that the majority of Indonesian EFL teachers employ the 'All-round flexible, adaptable teacher' teaching style, accounting for 53.3% of all Indonesia EFL teachers. Next, the teaching styles of 'Curriculum teacher' and 'sensitive teacher, student-centered' have a frequency of three and a percentage of 20%. Lastly, with a percentage of 6.7%, the teaching style that EFL teachers in Indonesia employ the least is the 'No-nonsense teacher, Straight facts'.



## DISCUSSION

Reflective thinking and teaching style are regarded as two important and influential factors in the educational process (Abdar & Shafaei, 2022). Reflective thinking is the ability of teachers to reflect on and evaluate their teaching practices, identify strengths and weaknesses and develop improvement strategies (Dewey John, 1993). Reflective thinking, which is characterized by inquiry and critical thinking, is vital for both teachers' and students' learning and has a vital role in determining the teaching style and approaches used by teachers or educators (Rodgers, 2002). Numerous research have looked into the relationship between the reflective thinking and teaching style of EFL teachers and discovered a favorable or positive correlation between the two, indicating that teaching style is influenced by reflective thinking (Abdar & Shafaei, 2022). This is supported by Ashraf et al. (2016), who determined that affective, cognitive, metacognitive, and practical elements are essential to reflective teaching practice. Nurfaidah et al. (2017) further showed how EFL pre-service teachers have been developing reflective teaching practices with an emphasis on dialogic reflection. Lastly, Afshar & Farahani (2015) emphasized the importance of gender and prior teaching experience in reflective teaching and thinking, finding notable disparities. All of these studies highlight how crucial reflective thinking is in determining the teaching style of EFL teachers.

The findings indicated that the teaching style of 'All-round flexible and adaptable teacher' (53.3%) became dominant among EFL teachers in Indonesia. The findings provide an interesting picture of how teachers' reflective thinking and their teaching style preferences have a relationship, which can overall shape a responsive teaching approach that suits students' needs. They can easily change learning strategies according to students' needs and classroom conditions (Farrell, 2012a). Teachers who think reflectively will naturally seek ways to overcome challenges and make necessary adjustments for successful student learning (Kember et al., 2000). The findings show that there is diversity in EFL teachers' teaching approaches in Indonesia. 'Student centered, sensitive teacher' and 'Official curriculum teacher' teaching styles (20%) are the second most frequently used teaching styles by EFL teachers in Indonesia with emphasis on student empowerment and sensitivity to individual needs, creating a responsive learning

environment. This is in line with the view that effective teaching should actively involve students (Brown, 2014).

Teachers' teaching styles and methods are influenced by reflective thinking, which is also crucial for their professional development. Improved student-centered educational practices can result from teachers' comprehension of and encouragement of reflective thinking. On a practical level, this relationship reflects on the teaching style of EFL teachers in Indonesia. Teachers who think reflectively can be more flexible and responsive to students' learning needs, adapting their teaching approaches to better suit classroom dynamics (Akbari, 2007). The relationship between teachers' reflective thinking and styles of teaching in the context of teaching EFL in Indonesia is an interesting and relevant research topic.

This research contributes significantly to the understanding of the influence of reflective thinking of EFL teachers in Indonesia on their teaching style. The findings indicated that there is a strong or close positive relationship between teachers' reflective thinking and the teaching style they use when teaching EFL in Indonesia. The correlation or relationship between the variables of reflective thinking and teaching style is 0.757, with a sig value of 0.001 <0.05. Reflective teachers are capable of critically analyzing and assessing their own teaching style (Farrell, 2012). This creates opportunities for them to develop and improve their teaching strategies. Kember et al. (2000) findings and the results of this study are consistent, who highlighted the importance of flexibility in adapting teaching styles to students' needs. The results of this study bolster this theory by demonstrating that reflectively thinking EFL instructors in Indonesia typically adopt a more adaptable teaching style. The ability to change teaching styles quickly according to students' responses is a strong indicator of reflective skills.

The findings supporting the positive relationship between these two variables highlight the important role of reflective thinking in shaping effective teaching practices. Dewey (1933) has underlined the importance of self-awareness in teaching practice. This study reinforces that view by showing that Indonesian EFL teachers who think reflectively have a higher self-awareness of their teaching styles or methods. They tend to be better able to understand the effectiveness of their methods and respond better to students' needs.

Reflection is key to creating an effective and relevant teaching environment. Teachers who regularly reflect on their practice tend to create more meaningful learning experiences for students (Farrell, 2012). The findings of this study are also in line with Farrell's (2012) view that reflective teachers can create an effective teaching environment. In the Indonesian EFL context, the positive relationship between Indonesia EFL teachers' reflective thinking and their teaching styles indicates that teaching practices shaped through reflection can positively influence the accomplishment of learning goals. The existence of this positive relationship reinforces the concept that reflective thinking can be a major asset in improving teaching quality. As Schön (1987) explains, reflective thinking helps teachers deal with classroom complexities and make better decisions in dynamic teaching situations. In the Indonesian context, these findings could have a positive impact on efforts to improve the quality of English language education. EFL teachers who are encouraged to develop their reflective thinking skills can be more effective in addressing teaching challenges and responding to students' needs.

The findings carry significant practical implications for EFL teacher development in Indonesia. Teacher training programs should include a reflection component as an integral part to increase self-awareness and flexibility in teaching style. In addition, education and policy practitioners need to support initiatives that encourage teachers to be reflective to improve teaching effectiveness at the national level.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the research's findings and results, it can be concluded that EFL teachers in Indonesia's reflective thinking and style of instruction significantly positively correlate. The statistical significance of the relationship between the reflective thinking of EFL teachers in Indonesia and their teaching styles is demonstrated by the strong correlation of 0.757 and the significance value (sig) of 0.001, both of which are less than 0.05 ( $0.001 < 0.05$ ). Teachers who exhibit high levels of reflective thinking tend to have more effective teaching styles in the context of English language learning. Indonesia EFL Teachers who have a high level of reflective thinking tend to apply flexible and adaptable teaching styles. The

‘All-round flexible and adaptable teacher’ teaching style is the most dominant choice, with a percentage of 53.3%. These results support the view that reflective thinking is a critical element in shaping quality teaching practices (Dewey, 1933). By having a better level of self-awareness of teaching methods and the ability to respond flexibly to students' needs, EFL teachers in Indonesia can create a more dynamic and effective learning environment (Farrell, 2012; Kember et al., 2000).

The researchers suggest that the government or educational institutions should design a teacher training program that includes a reflection component as an integral part. This program would provide guidance and support to help EFL teachers in Indonesia develop their reflective thinking skills. And by integrating reflective thinking in teacher education programs at the national level can help create a reflective culture among teachers, which can then enrich the quality of teaching across the country. The researcher also encourages further research to understand more deeply how specific aspects of reflective thinking relate to teaching styles in the context of EFL teachers in Indonesia. This research could provide more detailed insights into the specific variables that influence teaching effectiveness.

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