



Pre-service Teachers' Reflective Journal Writing on Practicum: Focus of Reflection and Perceptions

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to explore the content of Korean EFL pre-service teachers' reflection through practicum weekly logs during their practicum at Korean middle schools. The study has two main foci: finding the focus of pre-service teachers' reflection, and their perceptions of journal writing activities through practicum logs. The pre-service teachers in the study were 18 students at a Korean university. Data were collected via three sources: journal entries during the practicum, and interviews and questionnaires after the practicum. First, in order to understand the pre-service teachers' reflections, their journal entries were analyzed. At the same time, in order to see how they perceived of their journal writing activities, the data of journal entries, interviews and questionnaires were examined. As a categorization framework of focusing areas, Bain, Ballantyne, Packer & Mills's (1999) four areas of pre-service teacher reflection on journals in the practicum were employed: focus on teaching, self, professional issues, and students or class. The results showed that entries focusing teaching and self were prevalent. Of "focus on teaching", teaching demonstration and classroom observation were considerably discussed. Of "focus on self", feelings and learning teaching skills were frequently dealt with. The results also revealed that journaling writing had positive potentials: promoting reflective practice, further conceptualizing own views on the application of knowledge, and improving the English language skills.

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the 1980s, reflection has been desirable, mandatory, and dominant in pre-service teacher education (Collin, Karsenti, & Komis, 2013; Hatton & Smith, 1995; Kinsella, 2007; Loughran, 1996). In line with general teaching orientations, "banking" views of teaching in which teachers as "bankers" and learning is a process of consuming are practiced (Freire, 2005). Transmitting knowledge is central, and learning is passive and quantitative. Thus, teacher-centered approaches tend to be favored. In contrast, the underlying epistemological assumption of constructivism orientation in pre-service programs is that knowledge is

fluid and dynamic from pre-service teachers' prior knowledge and experience. Knowledge is constructed by using reflection, critical thinking on own perspective (Bigge & Shermis, 1999), problem-solving (Freire, 2005), and social engagement with peer trainees and trainers through meaning negotiation (Bruner, 1990; Vygotsky, 1978). In other words, knowledge is distributed through interactions between trainee-trainee and trainer-trainee, and situated within the teaching context (Gobbo & Girardi, 2001). Thus, teaching and learning are active and qualitative. Pre-service teachers are responsible, through reflective practice, for their own learning (knowledge construction) with the help of a teacher educator's coaching and scaffolding.

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folding.

Reflective teachers objectify their teaching experiences to change the way they teach (Pollard, 2008). Reflective practice follows Dewey's conceptualization of a process of reflection that "is an active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds supporting it and future conclusions to which it tends" (Dewey, 1933, p. 6). An important dimension of reflective teaching is finding an appropriate solution for an event, issue or problem (Hatton & Smith, 1995) by framing and reframing the puzzle of teaching practice (Schön, 1983). In other words, reflective teaching practice is a "special form of problem solving, thinking to resolve an issue which involved active chaining, a careful ordering of ideas linking each with its predecessors" (Hatton & Smith, 1995, p. 33). Reflective teachers continually learn from their teaching experiences by engaging a problem-solving process in which they "collect data about teaching, examine their attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, and teaching practices, and use the information obtained as a basis for critical reflection" about their own teaching practices (Richards & Lockhart, 1994, p. 1).

Journals, a form of reflective writing promoting reflective practice, are widespread in teacher education (Bailey, 1990; Boud, 2001; Farrell, 2007, 2008; Garmon, 2001; Gebhard & Oprandy, 1999; Richards & Farrell, 2005). Many studies have focused on the potential of journals in second language teacher education (Lee, 2004; Richards & Lockhart, 1994; S. J. Shin, 2006), including pre-/in-service teacher education programs in Korean contexts (H. Choi, & S. Park, 2006; Y. Kim, 2007; Y. Kim, & J. Yi, 2010, 2012, 2013; S. Park, & H. Choi, 2009). By introducing reflection to a pre-service teacher education program in Korea, this study aims to explore the focus of pre-service teachers' reflection on their practicum through practicum weekly logs. During the school-based practicum, pre-service teachers are required to keep a daily teaching practice journal in Korean in which there are four general sections of practicum activities: classroom teaching, classroom management, student behavior and discipline, and feelings. In contrast, this study further asks the students to focus on specific issues. Based on their daily journals, the students are expected to choose, expand and discuss specific issue(s) every week. Incorporating the daily journals of general issues or events in Korean, the practicum weekly logs focusing a specific issue or event in English could facilitate reflective practice, and possibly contribute to the English language practice. In line with this research objective, the research is set up to explore the following two research questions:

- 1) What were the focusing areas of pre-service teachers' reflections on practicum activities?
- 2) How did the pre-service teachers perceive of their reflective journal writing experiences through practicum weekly logs?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Journal Writing Activities in Teacher Education

Journal writing activities in teacher education have much potential. One benefit is that journal writing activities contribute to course subject knowledge construction by promoting trainees' reflections on what they learn and how they learn and feel (Garmon, 1998; Porter, Goldstein, Leatherman, & Conrad, 1990). Another benefit is that journaling helps trainees become autonomous learners (Farris & Fuhler, 1996; Good & Whang, 2002; Tsang & Wong, 1996). Also, writing journals can develop critical reflection in instruction by recording "criticisms, doubts, frustrations, questions, the joys of teaching, and the results of experiments" rather than merely focusing on mundane routines (Farrell, 2004, p. 39). In addition, it can aid the development of appropriate teaching approaches into individual teaching contexts (Bean & Zulich, 1989). Also, writing journals in English within English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts can significantly contribute to the development of the language skills by providing language practice (Tuan, 2010). On the other hand, some possible pitfalls must be considered. Merely listing and/or summarizing class activities, and "pleasing the teacher" by adding "evaluative comments" (e.g., an excellent lesson) (Jarvis, 1992) are the pitfall examples.

Journal activities in pre-service teacher programs come in various forms. Commonly used journal types in the programs are dialogue journals (Barkhuizen, 1995; Bean & Zulich, 1989; Garmon, 1998), response journals (Farris & Fuhler, 1996; Good & Whang, 2002), teaching journals (Garmon, 2001; Lee, 2007; Tsang & Wong, 1996), and interactive group journals (Cohen-Sayag & Fischl, 2012; Cole, Raffier, Rogan, & Schleicher, 1998). In dialogue journal writing activities, students individually engage in ongoing conversations with the teacher about the course. Teachers regularly respond to students' journals. In response journal writing activities, students individually reflect on the course module content or reading; here, a teacher's regular response is unnecessary. Teaching journals particularly focus on classroom teaching. This study employs reflective journal activities during the practicum periods.

2. Focusing Areas of Pre-service Teacher Reflection

Studies have focused on the content of pre-service teachers' reflection journal writing. The content of reflection varies according to contexts. Within a pre-service teacher education program in ESL settings, practicum-based studies on the content of reflection are in process (Bain, Ballaantyne, Packer, & Mills, 1999; Koc, 2011). A well-developed four major focusing areas (Bain et al., 1999) is an example. The four major categories are focus on teaching, focus on self, focus on professional

issues, and focus on students/class (p. 59). Each category includes sub-categories. Firstly, focus on teaching has four sub-categories: general teaching issues, specific lessons or incidents, behavior management, and others (lesson management, content, homework). Next, focus on self has three sub-categories: own skills/worth as teacher, own teaching approach, and others (feelings, identity, and learning). In addition, focus on professional issues has six sub-categories: relationship/discussion with supervising teacher, teaching as a profession, institutional issues, professional preparation, social/ethical issues, and out-of-class activities. Lastly, focus on students and/or class has four sub-categories: student/class behavior, student/class characteristics, relationship with specific students, and teaching of specific students.

In a Hong Kong EFL pre-service program, Ho and Richards (1993) present five focusing areas of journals: theories of teaching; approaches and methods to teaching; evaluating teaching; self-awareness; and questions about teaching. In another Hong Kong context, Lee (2004) also addresses ten focus areas of journal writing: comments on the course; relationship-building; seeking advice; asking questions, and seeking clarification about points raised in class; expressing pre-service teacher thoughts and concerns; discussing professional issues; drawing upon personal history, and personalizing learning; sharing ideas about English language teaching resources; self-evaluation, and reflection after microteaching, teaching practice, part-time teaching; and commenting on cognitive changes. Furthermore, these ten areas of reflection are cast into five categories (Lee, 2008): describing and recalling; interpreting, analyzing, and inquiring; evaluating; extrapolating and expressing personal voice; and interacting with the instructor.

Within a South Korean pre-service teacher education program, J. Paek (2008) outlines 15 focusing areas of reflection on microteaching: class activities; class interaction; class management; correction; instruction; lesson contents; monitoring; planning; questioning and responding; teacher's body; teacher's English proficiency; teaching materials; understating checking; visual aids; and emotions. S. J. Shin (2006) lists five focus areas of pre-service teachers' tutoring journal entries: "benefits of tutoring for teachers and students"; "experimenting with different teaching styles to meet individual student needs"; "training students to self-correct"; "what to address: content or mechanics?"; and teaching "issues" (p. 332).

To explore the focusing areas of the Korean EFL pre-service teachers' reflection through practicum weekly logs during their practicum, the study used the four major focus areas as a categorization framework (Bain et al., 1999). The framework is comparatively well developed and shares a similar context of practicum for pre-service teachers. Assuming the research context would have specific issues, the study planned to further adapt the sub-categories.

III. METHOD

1. Participants and Study Context

The participants in this study were 18 of 36 enrolled students. They were all English Education students at a teachers' college in a province. All the students were in their final year. Typically, final year students undertake the school-based practicum at local middle schools for four weeks from week 11 of a spring semester. Upon graduating, the students were to obtain a secondary teaching license of language. To become secondary school teachers in the public sector, they are required to pass the annual state-run teacher recruitment examination. They all aspired to become English language school teachers. As for English skills, the students' scores on the Test of English for International Communication ranged from 620 to 955 (620 being equivalent to 71 on the Test of English as a Foreign Language via the internet; 955 being equivalent to 113). Some students (seven out of 18) had overseas experiences in English speaking countries for less than one year. More than half of the interviewees (11 out of 18) had no prior journal writing experience. The majority of students were female (14 out of 18). All students' names are reported here as pseudonyms.

The research was conducted as a component of a 16-week, three-credit core compulsory pedagogical course, English Logic and Writing, offered in a teachers' college in a province. The writing course intended to prepare the students for the state-run employment test for English teachers. Prior to the practicum, the course provided five sessions of genre-based writing practices—time order, argumentation, comparison and contrast, and summary writing. Each session lasting for approximately two weeks began with writing about ELT-related knowledge and issues; and then, involved the discussion and evaluation on the students' own writing samples through self, peer and teacher feedback. For ten weeks before the practicum, the students kept ten weekly learner journals in English only, reflecting primarily what they learned and how they were taught. Then, the practicum took place for four weeks from week 11 in eight provincial middle schools. Four or five students were allocated at each school. The students continued weekly journal writing in English, in contrast to the learner journals, reflecting some specific issue(s) while they engaged a variety of practicum activities. All the journal entries were submitted to the teacher educator/researcher via e-mails every week. Regarding the journal entries in this study, every student was required to submit four journals during the practicum. In case students failed the journal submission, the teacher reminded them of the journaling tasks with some greetings and concerns via e-mails. Regardless, some submitted their journals less than four. After the practicum, the class reviewed the content of the writing course, and ended with its final test.

The students' journal writing activity through practicum weekly logs employed three approaches. One is

providing a list of reflective questions. While writing practicum weekly logs, the pre-service teachers were expected to refer to the questions, rather than to fill up them. To encourage reflection on the practicum activities, the journal writing activity began with the provision of a list of questions derived from Gibbs' (1988) reflective cycle consisting of six stages: description, feelings, evaluations, analysis, conclusion, and action plan. The reflection questions included: *What happened?*, *What was I thinking?*, *What was good and bad about the experience?*, *How did that happen?*, *Why did it happen that way?*, and *Could it be different?* (Zalipour, 2015). With these questions in mind, the students reflected specific issues of practicum activities by referring the questions. Another is open journal entries. To incorporate chances for self-reflection, the students engaged in free and personal writing reflection by referring to a list of six reflection questions. The other was the use of the English-only policy within a minimum word length (i.e., 500 words). The policy was intended to help achieve the unit's purpose, developing writing competence, by requiring the pre-service teachers to practice writing skills on a regular basis.

2. Data Collection and Analysis

The study used multiple methods of data collection: weekly practicum journals, semi-structured post-practicum interviews, and questionnaires. The data were collected from 51 reflective journal entries, 17 post-practicum interview sessions, and 12 post-practicum questionnaires. The data of journal entries were in English, the interview data in Korean, and the questionnaire data in either English or Korean.

Firstly, the journal entries were free-choice-of-topic entries referring to a provided reflection question list as mentioned above. Journals involve a dialogic process between the pre-service teachers and the teacher/researcher, and the pre-service teachers were fully aware that their weekly journals would be read by the teacher/researcher. When journals expressed students' need for encouragement, questions, or desire for help, the teacher/researcher was able to respond directly. In case of failure of journal submission, the teacher encouraged the students to submit journal tasks via e-mails by reminding them that the tasks were necessary.

A total of 51 journal entries for analysis were from 18 students. Most students completed the four journal writing tasks; however, some failed to submit the weekly logs. Factors for the incomplete journal writing tasks were covered in the interview session the teacher and the students conducted. Considering the interview session right after the practicum, and a considerable number of journal entries from all 36 enrolled students for four weeks, lack of time for the appropriate data collection process seemed apparent.

Table 1 shows the word length of each journal entry collected. To analyze the focus areas of pre-service teachers' reflection, the data from the weekly journal

entries were first classified using four generic categories describing focus of reflection: focus on teaching, self, professional issues, and students/class (Bain et al., 1999, p. 59). Then, further analysis was performed by adapting the sub-categories of Bain et al. (1999). Focus on teaching has four sub-categories: general teaching issues, specific lesson or incident, behavior management, and other (lesson management, content, homework). Next, focus on self has three sub-categories: own skills/worth as teacher, own teaching approach, and others (feelings, identity, and learning). In addition, focus on professional issues has six sub-categories: relationship/discussion with supervising teacher, teaching as a profession, institutional issues, professional preparation, social/ethical issues, and out-of-class activities. Focus on students or class has four sub-categories: student/class behavior, student/class characteristics, relationship with specific students, and teaching of specific students.

TABLE 1

Individual Students and Their Journal Entries in Word Length

Participants	Journal 1	Journal 2	Journal 3	Journal 4	Total
P1	575	771	478	500	2,324
P2	530	515	503	N/A	1,548
P3	501	518	N/A	N/A	1,019
P4	380	707	614	522	2,223
P5	495	496	514	N/A	1,505
P6	575	473	548	345	1,941
P7	N/A	N/A	N/A	484	484
P8	636	N/A	N/A	434	797
P9	353	N/A	511	N/A	864
P10	509	N/A	524	591	1,624
P11	641	745	464	933	2,783
P12	507	N/A	502	528	1,537
P13	482	492	324	N/A	1,298
P14	N/A	N/A	N/A	384	384
P15	N/A	N/A	N/A	354	354
P16	410	415	N/A	N/A	825
P17	331	522	613	603	2,069
P18	931	504	513	508	2,456

Secondly, 17 individual interview sessions were conducted over four days to investigate perspectives on the practicum: July 4, 6, 7, and 8, 2016. It was a semi-structured interview in which "each interview question can be evaluated with respect to both a thematic and a dynamic dimension: thematically with regard to its relevance for the research theme, and dynamically with regard to the interpersonal relationship in the interview" (Kvale, 1996, p. 129). The three areas of questions are as follows: journaling experience, perceived benefits, and difficulties. Each audio-taped interview session lasted 30 minutes.

Lastly, the data for the questionnaire used in this study were the two open-ended questions: 1) *How do you feel about free-topic journal writing activities?* and 2) *How would you rate the importance of keeping a journal, on a scale from 1 to 10, as a means for self-understanding?* In order to encourage interviewees to talk about the research

topics freely, and at length, the study used open-ended questions. Unlike the journals and interviews, the questionnaires were anonymous to help students freely express their feelings and opinions. After distributing the questionnaire sheets in class, students had one or two days to fill out the forms and individually returned them to the researcher's mail box in the faculty office. There were a total of 12 completed questionnaires.

In the interpretation of the findings, the research employed two strategies of triangulation: data triangulation and methodological triangulation (Denzin, 1978) to reduce the possibility of bias. The study collected "a broad database of information to provide grounding for the interpretations that emerge from the data" (MacLean & Mohr, 1999, p. 120) such as questionnaires, reflection journals and interviews. Further the study adapted a mixed methods approach of data analysis, quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative data analysis dealt with the questionnaire data (Q2), asking the students to rank the degree of importance of journal writing for self-understanding. Also, the other data after coded thematically were initially dealt with the frequency of each coded entries. Apart from these quantitative processes, the data analysis primarily used qualitative methods.

In the process of coding, all the data except those of journal entries shared the students' names, for example, "Student 1" and "Student 2". The data of questionnaire which were anonymous used different student names such as "Student A" and "Student B". The data were coded and analyzed by thematic analysis, which is intended to be "working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 157). To do so, the study used NVivo 11, which can manage descriptive documents and transcripts, enabling storing, browsing, indexing, and coding of all text. As far as the process is concerned, the data from each research tool were treated in a number of ways: A separate document for the data was created in NVivo; documents were allocated to sets (e.g., journal entries from other research tools); each document was coded and indexed in terms of four focus on reflection and perceptions of journal writing; and parent and child trees were developed. NVivo showed the data categorized in tree and sub tree codes with the frequencies (see Appendix 1).

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. Focus of Pre-service Teacher Reflection on Practicum

The journal entries were categorized into four major focus areas of pre-service teachers' reflection during a practicum (Bain et al., 1999): focus on teaching, focus on self, focus on professional issues, and focus on students or

class (see Table 2). English in the excerpts shown in the followings was original due to the English only policy in Journal writing activities.

TABLE 2
Frequency and Percentage of Each Focus Area
(journal entries, $n = 224$)

Generic focus areas	<i>F</i>	%
Focus on teaching	98	43.8
Focus on self	71	31.7
Focus on professional issues	36	16
Focus on students or class	19	8.5

Of the four generic focusing areas, "focus on teaching" was most frequently dealt with (43.8%, 98 out of 224), followed by "focus on self" (31.7%, 71 out of 224). The generic areas are further categorized. Focus on teaching, the most frequent generic theme, has three sub-categories: general teaching issues, teaching demonstration, and classroom observation. Next, focus on self, which is the second highest, is further categorized into three areas: own skills, own teaching approach, and feelings and learning. Focus on professional issues has three sub-categories: fellow intern teachers, institution and school activities, and discussion with supervising teachers. Lastly, focus on students or class has four sub-categories: student and class characteristics, building rapport with students, and teaching and consulting specific students. By adapting the sub-categories of Bain et al. (1999), these four generic focus areas were subsequently analyzed, as shown in Table 3.

The two most frequent sub-categories of "focus on teaching" are "teaching demonstration" (20.5%), and "classroom observation" (19.2%). Accordingly, the two sub-categories were further analyzed. "Teaching demonstration" (46 entries in total) has four sub-categories: preparation (15 out of 46 entries), first class (two out of 46 entries), following classes (10 out of 46 entries), and the end-of-practicum class (10 out of 46 entries). The following journal segment shows how one pre-service teacher prepared for her own teaching demonstration class.

I have two more classes left and those classes are about while and post reading. Last post-reading class is a[n] open class so many other teachers and my companies will enter my class. I am very nervous and worried. I wrote teaching plan and my teacher and native speaker checked my plan. They gave many advices and I revised my paper again and again. (Journal 1, Student 3)

TABLE 3

Frequency and Percentage of Subsequent Focus Areas (journal entries, $n = 224$)

Focus areas	Sub-categories (1)	Sub-categories (2)	f	%
Focus on teaching	General teaching issues		9	4.0
	Teaching demonstration		46	20.5
		Preparation	(15)	(6.7)
		First class	(2)	(0.9)
		Following classes	(10)	(4.5)
		End-of-practicum class	(19)	(8.5)
	Classroom observation		43	19.2
		Faculty members' classes	(33)	(14.7)
		Intern teachers' classes	(6)	(2.7)
	Faculty feedback	(4)	(1.8)	
Focus on self	Worth as a teacher		2	0.9
	Learning teaching skills		15	6.7
	Feelings		19	8.5
Focus on professional issues	Fellow intern teachers		1	0.4
	Institution and school activities		1	0.4
	Discussion with mentor teachers		10	4.5
Focus on students or class	Student/class behavior		7	3.1
	Student/class characteristics		2	0.9
	Building rapport with students		15	6.7
	Teaching/consulting specific students		19	8.5

“Classroom observation” includes three sub-categories: faculty members’ classes (33 out of 43 entries), fellow intern teachers’ classes (6 out of 43 entries), and faculty feedback (4 out of 43 entries). The following journal excerpt is an example of classroom observation in which the pre-service teacher describes the supervising teacher’s class and interprets the principles of activities based on her ELT understanding and knowledge.

On Wednesday, I had a[n] observation of my guidance teacher’s lesson. The lesson was check and organization after a reading, so the teacher prepared various game activities; Pictionary game, Yes/No game, and *Igudongsong* game. The teacher divided the students into 9 groups (4-5 members) and made them to choose leaders of each group. The teacher gave out some whiteboards to each group respectively and the students seemed to be enjoying the activities using whiteboards. Also, she used to properly speak in Korean after speaking in English so that students understand easy classroom English. An important thing is that the teacher led consistently that the students can listen and repeat sentences which included answers. It gives a chance of speaking sentences to students. I think one weakness of the lesson is too excessive game time. Nevertheless, I guess that the teacher made various games to encourage students’ participation because the students took part in the lesson very actively. The observing lesson is very helpful to me. (Journal 1, Student 3)

Furthermore, the participants observed and reflected the classes of other subjects by theorizing the principles of the classes and comparing them with their own classes’

principles. The following is an example.

In Korean class, the class was related to Korean grammar. The class’s learning observation is that students will be able to make sentences with the past tense, the present tense, and the future tense. I would be in charge of English grammar so I focused on how to teach grammar in Korean. Korean tense is similar to English but making sentences with it is relatively difficult. Students were familiar our language but unfamiliar its grammar. So, this class consisted with teaching centered instruction. The Korean teacher taught them the grammar with comparing sentences of each tense. Then, students practiced the grammatical rule making sentences with their friends. After practice, they made some stories and announced their work. It is PPP model. I was little disappointed with her class because I would like to see various teaching method for grammar. I will study grammar teaching method more hard. With more activity and materials, I will lead student to be motivated and interested. (Journal 3, Participant 2)

Of “focus on self” (36 entries in total), frequent sub-categories are “feelings” (19 of 36 entries) and “learning teaching skills” (15 of 36 entries). The next major theme, focus on professional issues (12 entries in total), has a frequent sub-theme: discussing with supervising teachers (10 of 12 entries). The last theme, focus on students or class (43 entries total), has two frequent sub-categories: teaching/consulting specific students (19 of 43 entries), and building rapport with students (15 of 43 entries).

2. Pre-service Teachers’ Perceptions on Journal Writing Activities

The weekly journal writing activity used three approaches: provision of a list of reflective questions (Zalipour, 2015); open journal entries; and the use of English-only policy with at least 500 words (see Section 3.1).

Overall, the pre-service teachers expressed positive responses on reflective journal activities. One questionnaire question (*Q2. How would you rate the importance of keeping a journal on a scale from 1 to 10 as a means for self-understanding?*) asked the pre-service teachers’ perspectives on journaling as a means for self-understanding. Of the 12 students participating in the questionnaire, nine responded positively, one negatively, and two left the question unanswered. Among positive responses, three students rated eight out of ten, four students gave a nine out of ten rating, and one student gave full marks (10 out of 10).

The benefits of journaling during the practicum according to the pre-service teachers in both the interview and the questionnaire included practicing reflection on the practicum, further conceptualizing deep and personalized views on how to use awareness and knowledge in own class, and developing English skills. First, reflective journals encouraged the pre-service teachers to engage in reflection on their practicum including classroom observation.

This was my first time to see other classes like this. What is more, I wrote about how I saw the classes. It was a very new experience. (Interview 15, Student 15)

While the reflective process, some developed and applied learnt ELT knowledge during the course prior to the practicum.

Teaching journals need some ELT-related English and I don't know some terms. So I review what I learned during the coursework. It's a kind of reviewing the course. (Interview 8, Student 8)

During the reflective process, some developed and applied the ELT knowledge they acquired during the course, and prior to the practicum.

Practicum journals need some ELT-related English and I don't know some terms. So I review what I learned during the coursework. It's a kind of reviewing the course. (Interview 8, Student 8)

Furthermore, reflective journaling encouraged students to apply a wide range of knowledge from classroom observation to ELT course into their own classes.

It is very interesting writing in respect to reflection. Also journal writing offers me opportunity to apply learnt knowledge. (Questionnaire item 1, Student D)

Journal writing activities helped the pre-service teachers' reflective practice while they described events such as classroom observation, explored classes based on various types of knowledge such as ELT-related subject knowledge, and further applied whole knowledge into their own teaching approaches. In other words, the pre-service teachers reflected on their day, thus practicing reflective thinking skills (Otienoh, 2011).

Second, keeping reflective journals further seemed to help the pre-service teachers conceptualize personalized views on how to use their awareness and knowledge in their own classes by integrating a wide range of factors: individual, contextual, and professional. While involved in the reflective journal writing activity, some students developed critical perspectives on a number of factors in the practicum including themselves, school context, and teaching. Some expressed this process as "personal evolution" or personal growth. .

I will place it (10 out of 10) for personal evolution. I can think a lot of things in my daily life through it. (Questionnaire item 1, Student C)

In comparison to the learner journals students kept prior to the practicum, reflective practicum journals reduced anxiety levels in writing. Within the context of open journal prompts, students autonomously chose and explored journal topics.

Writing the student journals was tough. Yet, this teaching journal is comfortable. I take the lead of all the information. (Interview 16, Student 16)

Some students gave detailed descriptions of their attempts to integrate various internal and external factors, and conceptualize their own views on the way to use knowledge in own classes. While involved in journal writing, some revisiting their daily practicum journals in Korean as well as their practicum weekly logs of this study maintained critical views on a range of the cultural contexts of the practicum. Examining classroom discourse events from learnt knowledge, becoming aware of the gap between theory and practice, and integrating awareness into their own teaching classes are some examples.

While observing others' classes, I think that I will write about this or that later on the teaching journal. Thus, I jot down some memo. Also, I sometimes recognize some part of the classes follow the theories of English Language Teaching. Some aspects that are not encouraged while we learn in the university are actually practiced in the school. Along with all these, I keep pondering how I design my own teaching demonstration class. (Interview 17, Student 17)

In other words, the pre-service teachers developed deeper and more personalized views on how to use awareness and knowledge in their own classes, rather than merely understanding the book knowledge they learned prior to the practicum. This process is a form of critical reflection or reflexivity in which the pre-service teachers developed a full understanding of experiences, so they could manage similar future teaching situations in their own classes (Rolfé, Freshwater, & Jasper, 2011; Thompson & Thompson, 2008).

Lastly, a substantial number of students stated that reflective journal activities helped them practice the language. This echoes Tuan's (2010) claim that English language journal writing activities in EFL settings has potential to improve the language. One possible factor for language improvement in this study is the use of substantial amounts of English (i.e. 500 words) on a regular basis. Unlike English as a Second Language (ESL) context, EFL settings have mainly instrumental purposes (e.g., high score of English examination) rather than daily use. Therefore, the provisions of English writing practices such as the weekly journal activity seemingly played a role in improving language skills. Another factor is the meaningful use of language or, in other words, language for the purpose of communication. In a dialogic process between the pre-service teachers and the teacher. Journal writing activities played a role as a communicative tool. Along with these two apparent factors, some pre-service teachers expressed their sense of competent use in the language.

I have so many things to write. Yet I can't express them in English fully. I feel frustrated. Nevertheless, I like keeping writing. Plus, after I keep writing, I

write some decent expressions in English. (Interview 7, Student 7)

Journaling helped develop students' vocabulary. Some students spent time searching for English words using search engines and dictionaries. While discussing teaching contexts, students confronted many words requiring English translation: For example, *damdang sonseng-nim* (mentor teacher), and *gyojang sonseng-nim* (head teacher). Moreover, some culturally embedded vocabularies were challenging. *Gyogwamok damdang sonseng-nim*, for example, is a teacher in charge of all same-subject teachers in a Korean secondary school. *Danim sonseng-nim* is a type of class/form teacher in a designated classroom in which a group (approximately 35 students) stay and take lessons all day in a year. Since the Korean school system is different from that of English-speaking countries', which also vary, it took the students a great deal of time to search for the appropriate English words.

Some vocabularies like *danim sonseng-nim* are difficult to translate into English. It is not a 'homeroom teacher'. I felt strange about the translation examples from Jisikin [a Korean searching engine]. Eventually, I used the translation from a Korean-English dictionary. At least it is from a dictionary. (Interview 11, Student 11)

Further, some felt satisfied, and even proud of their competence in English writing as they wrote their journals in the designated room for the pre-service teachers.

During the practicum, I often wrote in English. Fellow intern teachers of the other subjects got impressed and said 'Wow, you write in English as you are in English education.' Well, if you read it, you will find that it is just a simple English though. (Interview 15, Student 15)

In other words, the English journal writing activity considerably promoted language practice such as writing and vocabulary, and further constituted to the confident feelings of their language use.

Altogether, open reflective journals focusing some specific issues during the practicum have three beneficial aspects: provision of reflection practice, conceptualization of own views on using knowledge in own classes; and contribution to the language practice. Nonetheless, journal activity has some potential problems. One, as previously discussed, is mere listing of teaching events or evaluative comments (Jarvis, 1992). Taking this into account, the study employed three approaches. One is the use of learner journals prior to the teaching practicum (see Section 3.1). The pre-service teachers engaged in a weekly learner journal activity for ten weeks, which encouraged them to add their feelings and questions about class activities rather than simply summarizing activities. Another is the provision of Zalipour's (2015) reflection questions as a

guide (e.g., *What was I thinking?* and *Could it be different?*). The pre-service teachers had the freedom to choose their writing topics so long as they referred to reflection questions. The other is teacher/researcher feedback to remind the pre-service teachers to include reflective aspects in the case of no sign of reflection (see Section 3.2). This seemed to lead to few journal entries which described simply teaching events. Instead, most journal entries showed that the pre-service teachers were aware of necessary inclusions demonstrating their thoughts, feelings, and/or questions.

V. SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

This study explored the content of pre-service teachers' reflection through practicum weekly logs and their perceptions of journal writing activities during a practicum. As an analytical framework for the content of reflection, four focusing areas of pre-service teachers' reflection during a practicum, focus on teaching, self, professional issues, and students/class (Bain et al., 1999) were initially employed and further categorized. Of the generic focusing areas, "focus on teaching" was taken up most in journal entries. This area has three sub-categories: general teaching issues, teaching demonstration, and classroom observation. Significantly, journal entries discussed the pre-service teachers' own teaching demonstration classes, and classroom observations of faculty members' classes and fellow intern teachers' classes including English and other subjects. Along with the content of reflection, the pre-service teachers' perspectives on weekly reflective journals were examined. It was found that journal writing activities had positive potential, including promoting reflective practice, further conceptualizing own views on the use of knowledge in own classes, and contributing to language practice and confidence of the language use. Where possible downfalls of journaling (e.g., mere description of teaching events) are concerned, some approaches such as teacher/researcher's reminding students to include reflective elements seemed to address the concerns.

This paper concludes with several important pedagogical implications. First, open journals referring to a list of guiding questions can help pre-service teachers' reflection during the practicum. Since pre-service teachers are naturally involved in many teaching events, an open journal approach can encourage teachers to choose and explore many issues. This also seems to help reduce anxiety levels around writing (see Section 2). Open journals referring to a list of reflective questions (Zalipour, 2015) can promote the pre-service teachers' reflection practice.

Second, writing predominantly in English contributes to the language use. By doing so, pre-service teachers can involve language practice and communication with a teacher/researcher. Word limits can be used in various ways. By gradually increasing the word count in specific courses, the students' anxiety pertaining to writing can be reduced. In order to reduce the anxious feelings of writing,

word limit can gradually increase up the actual word limit which a specific course aims. Writing in mainly-English rather than English-only is another important factor to be considered. The purpose of reflective journals in English within an EFL context like this study has two foci: promoting reflective practice, and contributing to the language practice. Therefore, the use of English with some exceptions is considered a practical approach.

Third, practicum-related vocabulary sessions prior to the practicum can help pre-service teachers discuss teaching events in their journals. Vocabulary can be divided into two categories: school-related words, and culturally different words. One suggestion is the use of project-based work to build vocabulary competence prior to school-based practicum.

Lastly, teacher/researcher feedback can enhance journaling's communicative role. Although the reflective journals in this study are different from dialogue journals, which require teacher feedback, teacher feedback seems considerably important. Feedback can remind pre-service teachers to communicate with the teacher. Further, feedback helps pre-service teachers become aware that they are involved in two communities: the practicum, and the college. Feedback can be a short note, not necessarily a long comment. Therefore, a modified form of reflection journals including a teacher's short feedback can be suggested in an EFL context.

The present study has some limitations. The study was conducted over a short period, in a specific context: a four-week teaching practicum in provincial middle schools. First, future study may be a longitudinal, comprehensive study within Korean teacher education programs. The use of reflective journal writing activities in other subjects such as "ELT theory" and "ELT theory and teaching" can be an alternative so that students can practice reflection in a broader and longer period. Second, further studies may explore levels of reflection of pre-service teachers while involved in reflective journal activities, and practical considerations, such as moving levels from description to critical reflection (Bell, Kelton, McDonagh, Mladenovic, & Morrison, 2011). Third, incorporating the individualistic and psychological nature of reflection, collective direction in reflection is needed. Sharing the experiences of reflective practitioners is an example (Smyth, 1992) via collective support devices such as discussion seminars, group learning activities, and e-forums (Collin & Karsenti, 2011). In order to link the devices to journal writing activities, Kelly and Cherkowski (2015) included seminars in teacher education programs. Also, Dong (1997) investigated a group learning activity via dialogue journal writing in a pre-service program. Interactive group journaling is another possible example of linking the collective support devices with journaling (Cole et al., 1998). Finally, future study may define and construct contextualized teaching guidelines of journaling that show its explicit expectations (Thompson & Pascal, 2012). Using some example journals is one possibility. Journaling is a foreign approach for EFL learners, such as the pre-service teachers of this study

of whom most wrote journals in English for the first time. To reduce anxiety around writing and accommodate the journaling approach, constructing a variety of contextualized explicit instructions seem significant.

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APPENDIX 1

Sample Tree and Sub-tree Diagram for Issues on the Use of Reflective Journals

The screenshot shows a software interface with a tree diagram on the left and a text area on the right. The tree diagram lists various nodes under '2. Practicum Journals' and 'Focus on Reflection Journal Writing'. The text area contains three references related to reflective journals.

Name	Sources	References
2. Practicum Journals	0	0
저널작성방법	0	0
영어글 자부심	1	1
Voca within context and culture	1	1
Term Use Chance	1	1
Reflection	2	2
Observation experience	1	1
Observation and application into own class	1	1
How the class changes	1	1
Critical thinking skills needed	1	1
Many Topics	6	7
Teaching demonstration	1	1
Little burden	1	1
Having control on writing	2	2
Increasing Word limit	2	2
Fun	1	1
Free writing-different context	1	1
Description of class	0	0
Student response	1	1
Critical incidents	1	1
Anticipation of micro-teaching	1	1
Focus on Reflection Journal Writing	0	0
4. Focus on students or class	0	0
3. Focus on professional issues	0	0
2. Focus on self	0	0
1. Focus on teaching	0	0

Focus on reflection (selected) | 1) Focus on teaching | 2) Teaching demonstratio | Specific lesson or incident

교수님! 다음 주부터, 제가 직접 아이들을 가르칩니다 ^^

리딩과 라이팅 부분인데, 제강연에 교수님께 배웠던 영어신문 자료 정말 유용하게 사용될 것 같아요!

무사히 수업 잘 마치고, 다음 저널 때 수업 어끠게 했는데 열심히 써볼게요 ㅎㅎ

Reference 2 - 7.84% Coverage

Teachers all are very respectable. I was really surprised that they are diligent and committed. Particularly, they tried to apply for various instructional method such as jigsaw and TBP. I did not know that these technique can be applied not only English but also other subject. Also, English class is divided with students' level. I visited both high level class and low level class. In high level, the teacher applied inductive approach for grammar. I have learned this approach in your class so I could know that easily. The teacher gave students some sentences concerning with to-infinitive. And she helped them to find similar and different sentences between them with comparing one another. In low level, the teacher seemed that he put the focus on motivation rather than instruction. Before the class, he turned a exciting video to wake students up. This video included dance and sing for shaking off sleepiness. Also, in the middle of class, he turned another video related to this class. Surprisingly, any other students did not sleep in this class. Even, they tried to participate in class. I think it would be for getting chocolate. (1st Journal)

Reference 3 - 14.02% Coverage

, one of student teachers, taught English class before me. So, I focused on his class to find