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## Stances in Student-Teachers' Spoken Reflection: An Exploratory Linguistic Study to Enhance a Reflection Inventory

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### ABSTRACT

Reflective Teaching as a relatively new approach toward teaching and education can be traced back to Dewey's (1933) assertion of reflective action. To date, methodologies remain almost recursive. Arguably, the modality of written genres may tempt the teachers to produce cursory reflective writings. This exploratory paper presents the sorts of linguistic stance resources such as boosters, hedges and attitude markers culled from one-hour case of spoken, peer reflection with three English practice teachers. Themes were analysed from these linguistic stance resources. Overall, the student-teachers' reflection is enthused with a seesaw between force and conviction; mitigation, apprehensions, and misgivings of teaching-learning practices. Arguably, this pendulum results in the unstable positive and negative affective attitude about the teaching-learning process. Based on the themes, indicators for reflective practices were added to the reflective inventory designed by Akbari, Behzadpoor, and Davdand (2010). Limitations, linguistic research trajectories and implications for mentoring are offered accordingly.

**Keywords:** attitude markers; boosters; hedges; pre-service language teachers; reflective practice; spoken reflection; stance

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## Introduction

Reflective teaching is a relatively new approach toward teaching and education that serves as a fundamental principle of teacher education and development. In reflective practice (RP) research, many studies show interesting results that aim to provide teachers and researchers the directions and knowledge base of this method specially in the teacher education program (cf. Cephe, 2009; Chen, 2016; Firdiyewek & Scida, 2014; Geyer, 2008; Guthrie & McCracken, 2010;

Lamy & Goodfellow, 1999; Lord & Lomicka, 2007; Mills & Satterthwait, 2000; Roberts, 2016; Shoffner, 2009; Yun & Chanier, 2012). Books have also been published (Bailey, Curtis, & Nunan, 2001; Farrell, 2007; Farrell, 2008; Gebhard & Oprandy, 1999; Grant, 1984; Johnson, 1999; Richards, 2000; Richards & Lockhart, 1996; Taggard & Wilson, 1998; Van Manen, 1991; Zeichner & Liston, 1996). It was Schön (1983) who first proposed the notion of reflective practice as a "means of continuous professional development for educators and other professionals" (as cited in Walsh, 2011, p. 138). This vibrant and burgeoning research area has sparked interest among researchers and teachers alike who are fuelled by the idea that reflection helps teachers become effective practitioners and teachers (Cimer, Cimer, & Vekli, 2013; Farrell, 2007), and helps teacher education institutions empower teachers in the practice of their teaching profession.

Despite the spirited research undertakings in RP, however, naturalistic data-led tools (Walsh & Mann, 2015) are missing (Munalim, 2017). Recursive methods of describing and accounting for teachers' reflective practices are employed. In fact, the rich literature reveals the recursive use of written tools such as teacher's log, autobiography, peer observation, student feedback, observation, videotaping and recording, questionnaires through Likert scale; written reports, self-report, journal, narrative incident, diary, collaborate diary keeping, paper, online discussion, contrived situation, instrument feedback, electronic feedback, and the use of metaphor (Astika, 2014; Faizah, 2008; Farrell, 2013; Farrell, 2004; Fatemipour & HosseingholiKhani, 2014; Guthrie & McCracken, 2010; Harun & Al-Amin, 2013; Izumi-Taylor, Lee, Moberly, & Wang, 2010; Kapoor, 2014; Lally & Veleba, 2000; Rahgozaran & Gholami, 2014; Richards, 2000; Rodriguez, 2008; Roux, Mora & Tamez, 2012; Usha Menon & Alamelu, 2011; Zepeda, 2008; Zhu, 2014). Even in the terrain of dissertation, written forms of reflection continue to dominate. Example tools are journal entries (Hovanec, 2011), mechanical indicators like Reflective Attitude Survey (Rayford, 2010); teachers' field notes, and journal writings (Eyre, 2009), formal and informal observations, teacher quote, reflection journal and audiotape of meetings (Costantini, 2008) and multigenre writing (Rushing, 2011), to mention a few. Contrastingly, some other key reflective teaching strategies include note taking, requesting feedback, setting up checkpoints, reviewing course materials, and adjusting to improve practices (Giaino-Ballard, 2010).

All these methodologies may be insufficient to describe and generalize the concepts and nature of reflective teaching. Consequently, attempts have been initiated for naturalistic data-led tools for reflective practices (Walsh & Mann, 2015). For example, Munalim (2017) proposed the transitivity model in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) to generate the mental processes of language teachers during reflection. Based on the *phenomena*, emerging themes include: (1) commendations for the course professor, (2) writing process, its challenges, nature, and concepts, and (3) actual classroom experiences, learnings, and the subject or course being taken. Munalim concluded that the *phenomenon* in the mental processes may be an ideal situs of language teachers' human internal affairs as reflective practitioners.

Although there are a few cases of spoken reflection such as interview, recorded informal conversation, brainstorming, and group discussion (Costantini, 2008; Eyre, 2009; Usha Menon & Alamelu, 2011; Zhu, 2014), collaborative case study/collaborative dialog (Lazaraton & Ishihara, 2005), including Walsh's (2011) dialogic approach, there is a dire need to substantiate them with

more linguistic analytic tools such as boosters, hedges, and attitude markers in spoken, dialogic reflection. To the knowledge of these researchers, no studies have ventured into stances in describing teachers' spoken reflective practice. The true nature and features of reflection may be best understood only, one assumes, after examining student-teachers' stances which affect their strong reflective practices.

### Review of Literature

Varied definitions and understanding of the term *reflection* have been found across studies and scholars to date. For example, Nagamine (2008) contends that reflection is a continuous and deliberate examination of self, beliefs, attitudes, past and future behaviors, in and outside the class. Malatji and Wadesango (2014) also offer that self-reflection encompasses many aspects such as the process of asking questions about teaching, improving of weaknesses, looking back from the teaching; judging one's self; examining personal values, and engaging in self-observation. Teachers aver that reflective teaching involves looking at their achievements and failures; and identifying barriers for learning among students. These ideas sit well with other classic and recent notions of reflective practices (cf. Bailey, Curtis, & Nunan, 2001; Cowan, 2013; Day, 1993; Fat'hi & Behzadpour, 2011; Jay & Johnson, 2002; Johnson, 1999; Minott, 2001; Murphy, 2001; Schön, 1983; Stanley, 1998; Van Manen, 1991; Zeichner & Liston, 1996).

Furthermore, personal, cognitive, affective, and professional headways have been put on the fore in the context of reflective practice. Johnson (2000) and Gebhard and Oprandy (1999), assert that reflection helps teachers make sense of their professional experiences through right attitudes such as being introspective, open-minded, and showing willingness in the reflective process (Dewey, 1933; Usha Menon & Alamelu, 2011). The concepts of reflection are also directed towards teachers' moral and ethical ascendancy (Costantini, 2008; Izumi-Taylor, et al., 2010), including cognitive and affective development (Guthrie & McCracken, 2010), resulting in the "renewed enthusiasm for teaching, bringing fresh ideas and an awareness of a need for change" (Krishnamurthy, 2007, p. 21). In the process of reflection, teachers engage themselves in broader awareness of the historical, socio-political and moral aspects of schooling (Farrell, 2007; Nagamine, 2008). Reflective practice then is viewed as a complex process because of the involvement of self, the students, the school and society at large (Matthew, 2012).

Overall, research studies from simple to more complex investigations looked into teachers' reflective practices. For example, Kapoor (2014) presented some gaps in reflective practices in teacher education. Questions include the following: (1) How can reflective practices become an integral part in teacher education institutions? (2) What key areas need to be addressed while incorporating and systematising reflection in teacher education? (3) What would be the role of teacher educators to enable student-teachers to become reflective practitioners?

### Authors' Critique on Recent Models of Reflective Practices

Amid a number of models of reflective practices, Akbari, Behzadpoor, and Dadvand (2010), perhaps, have provided us with a breakthrough in the reflective teaching research. Their reflection inventory with six components, that is practical, cognitive, learner, meta-cognitive, critical, and moral has been cited 102 times (see Google Scholar index; Moradkhani & Shirazizadeh, 2017). The amalgamation of these indicators is admittedly tentative. They welcome more replication studies to further operationalise and polish the 42 indicators. However, while we are receptive to this reflection inventory, we have misgivings about the sources of these indicators. For example,

we find their nine interview questions as a direct elicitation from the participants, which may not suffice to engender different spheres and facets of reflective practice. Teachers may have also been unable to provide authentic responses because their actual context and the lived experiences as teachers are not the actual subject of the interview. This case may be also true among other inventories not surveyed here due to space constraints.

Fortunately, because Akbari, Behzadpoor, and Davvand's inventory, and many other related inventories are equally valuable, we believe there is a dire need to substantiate and enhance them with the themes that come naturally from a spoken reflection. We argue that reflective practice should remain private, and methodologies and tools should maintain the privacy of the teachers' mental world. Researchers should spend efforts to mitigate the overt intellectualization of their reflection because "reflection is often seen as a solitary, cerebral and introspective affair" (Harper, 2009, p. xi). From there, phenomena and thematic categories can be threshed out using some linguistic stance resources with the argument that words, language, and representation are central aspects of reflective practices (Wright, 2009). Subsequently, the list of indicators can be generated from the themes and will be incorporated in the six-level reflection inventory. Munalim (2017) recently has addressed this gap of valid themes by using the phenomena of the mental processes through systemic functional linguistics. He has successfully identified the phenomena being felt, thought of, sensed, desired, and perceived by the sensers/teachers (Halliday, 2014) through the themes. However, the tools are still the canonical written reflection papers, still at the practical level. Mauri, Clarà, Colomina, and Onrubia (2017) also did an exploratory study on joint reflection by student-teachers, and identified seven segments of interactivity (SI) such as free exploration of situation, exploration of one event of the situation, focalisation, tutor's interpretation, interpretation with debate, and tutor's recapitulation. Their paper, however, was not grounded on any detailed attention to linguistic feature. With this appropriate backdrop in mind, this exploratory paper with two-pronged explorations, that is, the spoken reflection and the use of linguistic stance resources, intends to address the paucity of these research gaps.

### **A Spoken, Dialogic Reflective Practice: A Proposal**

Writing is undoubtedly an excellent way to monitor one's understanding (McGrath, 2005; Reid, 1989) as it has wide-ranging implications for thinking and learning (Cooper & Axelrod, 2002). However, written reflections may defeat true reflective practices. Writers are expected to adhere to the explicit knowledge of grammar, spelling, punctuation, and usage. They normally avoid numerous spelling errors, faulty punctuations, and inaccurate structure and organisation to do away with unintelligible papers (Murcia, 2006). Poignantly, there is a place of deliberate monitor in the process of writing to ensure that correctness of form is achieved. Conscious grammar is enjoyed to a great extent in writing (Krashen, 1982). The more conservative nature of written language also reflects the elements and prescriptive rules (Fromkin & Rodman, 1983) that writers have to obey. This situation must be plausible given that English language teachers are "language police" themselves who view colloquial variants and ungrammatical structures illegitimate (Tagliamonte & Denis, 2008).

Consequently, this mode of communication may have tempted the teachers to focus much on the grammar, mechanics, rhetoric, style, tone and register at the expense of the real purpose of the paper, that is, to reflect. This case may be predictable especially that many written reflections are produced, not because of personal volition, but because reflection papers are part of the subject requirements imposed by the teacher (cf. Munalim, 2017). Written language tends to be working around some institutional pressures while spoken language responds to an ongoing context (Volosinov, 1973), resulting in a haphazard reflective practice for the sake of compliance. This

manner defeats the purpose of reflection, making written reflections cursory, fake, superficial, and mechanical (cf. Hobbs, 2007), so to speak.

Spoken, dialogic reflection is an interesting approach characterised as natural, spontaneous, on-the-spot, genuine, spirited, and fluid. Articulation of thoughts has been apparent in an oral reflection. We wonder at how a series of spontaneous and overflowing connected thoughts are expressed when we are engaged in a critical discussion or reflection. Grammar rules, mechanics, punctuation, and other skills to master are eschewed, focusing only so much in the expression of real feelings. Little attention which is paid to the organisation and rules may ease up teachers' purpose, that is, to reflect. Moreover, Wells (1999) argues the legitimacy of spoken reflection as a crucial part of the reflection-action-further-action cycle, since it allows for clarification, questioning, and ultimately enhanced understanding. Put simply, conversation is the means by which new ideas are expressed, doubts aired, and concerns raised outright.

Likewise, it is through talk that we are able to gain better pictures of understanding. We also understand a new concept or a new idea in a new perspective. Walsh (2011) verifies that "conversation is often the best means of accessing new ideas and gaining closer understandings of complex processes such as teaching" (p. 145). The student-teachers' affective filter is also low during the process of peer-dialogic reflection, allowing them to be more expressive of their feelings, beliefs, cognition, etc. Vygotsky (2000) holds that there is always the hidden thought in people's speech. In the process of spoken reflection, teachers are likely to tell the true classroom experiences, whether they have achieved something or failed in their teaching strategies.

### **On Linguistic Analytic Features: An Exploration**

How do stances curate or shape teachers' reflective practice? In this regard, the better definition shared by Boud, Keogh, and Walker (1985) will be adopted: "Reflection is a generic term for those intellectual and affective activities in which individuals engage to explore their experiences in order to lead to new understandings and appreciation" (p. 3). In the process of intellectual and affective activities, language teachers are evaluating their beliefs, assumptions, judgements, prejudices, emotions, and feelings, including actions and their consequences (Kapoor, 2014). It is given that language features are used when they speak and write which indicate their judgement of probabilities and obligation, signal factuality, certainty and doubt (Machin & Mayr, 2012). There are language features and items such as hedging, modal verbs, modal adjectives, and their adverbial equivalent (Fairclough, 2003) that express speaker's and writer's personal opinion and commitment in their utterances. To note, *hedges* project the interlocutor's hesitation, while *boosters* function otherwise, as they claim certainty and emphasis of the proposition at stake. *Attitude markers*, on the one hand, are used to express the writer's assessment of propositional information, that is, to convey surprise, obligation, agreement, importance, etc. (cf. Hyland & Tse, 2004; Munalim & Lintao, 2016; Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, & Svartvik, 1985; Vande Kopple, 1985). After all, language may be used to conceal, reveal, or deceive (Machin & Mayr, 2012) the teacher in charge and their peers in the process of reflection.

It is possibly crisp to assert that in the process of oral reflection, teachers may intentionally or unintentionally choose the stances to utter the things they value, feel, believe, think, and support. They are likely to use boosters, hedges, and attitude markers to trace underlying experiences, and to unpack true feelings toward specific classroom circumstances. Their reflection must be loaded with language features ready to be deciphered so that we can fully describe and analyse the other important features of reflection. These stances may resonate more empirical data and systematic descriptions of reflective practice, and the way teachers use stances tells us another angle or

perspective of reflection. Put another way, reflection is realised by the set of language features which could be the situs of the elements of reflective practices.

### **Authors' Position: A Synthesis**

We clearly take a strong, but a straightforward position: reflection should be in a form of spontaneous and unscripted overflow of emotions and feelings; and should be unconstrained under stringent rules in writing. While we also support the need to measure the levels of teachers' reflective practices, as operationalised in quantitative instruments, we hold that winnowing "what's on your minds" is primarily our first goal if our intention is to improve teachers' professional lives. The things on the teachers' minds may be only infiltrated if on the onset, the method of culling their mental world is natural-like. We argue that spoken reflection may be the sole best method of wringing what they believe, think, and feel (Borg, 2003).

In totality, written and spoken language may be summarized based on their dichotomy: informational vs. involved production; elaborated vs. situation-dependent reference; and abstract vs. nonabstract style (Biber, 1988; Biber & Finegan, 1993). These notions are aligned to the assertion that a conversation contains context, co-construction, sequential organization or real-time processing, discourse management, and relation management (Rühlemann, 2007), and the explicitness and context-free character of written language, and the implicit and context-dependent nature of oral language (Chafe, 1982). Therefore, the strong favor for the spoken language has yielded us a solid ground for proposing a spoken reflection, not the written one. We assert that doing reflection in spoken form is the most powerful and most natural method to use to cull teachers' hidden values, attitude, judgement, perceptions, cognitions, etc. Language tends to be loaded with emotions, including the "history of a people's feelings about the world" (Postman & Powers, 2000, p. 418). It is through authentic conversation wherein people can make sense of and articulate their lived experiences, implicit theories, hopes, and fears in the intellectual and emotional company of others (Clark, 2001)<sup>1</sup>.

Seen in this light, we also propose that teachers' spoken reflection may be analysed via some linguistic spheres of stances such as boosters, hedges, and attitudes. Stance is a way of expressing "personal feelings, attitudes, value judgements or assessment" (Biber, et al., 1999, p. 966), or "personal views, authoritativeness, and presence" (Jiang & Hyland, 2015, p. 529). It is only through this linguistic lens that we may generate thematic categories that will inform us of the phenomena that are being reflected on, sensed of, and felt (Halliday, 2014). These linguistic resources are used to dress up teachers' "layers of their reflection that hid behind their perceptions" (Fix, 1993, p. 44) during reflective practices. Consequently, these themes may now form valid indicators for a reflection inventory.

We hypothesise that the presence of linguistic stance resources will inform us that reflective practice is enthused with a push-and-pull relationship between force and conviction about language teaching-learning process; and mitigation, apprehensions, and misgivings about pedagogical practices. This relationship will result in an increase or decrease in the level of affective attitude and perception about their teacher-learning process. Hence, this exploratory linguistic study aims at answering these research queries (RQs):

- RQ 1:                   What sorts of linguistic stance resources such as boosters, hedges, and attitude markers reside in the sample corpus of spoken reflection?

- RQ 2: What thematic categories or phenomena being reflected on emerged as enthused in these linguistic resources?
- RQ 3: Based on these themes, what possible indicators can be added to the reflective inventory by Akbari, Behzadpoor, and Dadvand (2010)?
- RQ 4: What does the presence of these linguistic resources say about the student-teachers' reflective practices in the teaching-learning practice?

## Method

### *Participants*

Three pre-service teachers from the Bachelor of Secondary Education, major in English program joined in the casual reflections of experiences during their practice teaching at three different high schools in Metro Manila, Philippines. They were all 20-year-old female student-teachers. Their practice teaching was carried out in 10 weeks, a total 300 hours (6 hours a day; 30 hours a week), as mandated in the curriculum, from October 2016 to December 2016. It should be noted that at the end of the duration of practice teaching, student-teachers had to write reflection papers attached to their portfolios. Kim, Heidi, and Pam were all scholars who had maintained impressive academic performances.

### *Procedure*

One session of spoken and peer reflective practice was recorded after the same group of student-teachers had had several similar reflective sessions with the first author. During open reflections, one of the researchers in this present study occasionally butted in the process which was considered unthreatening. He also prodded short reflective questions so that students were encouraged to think and reflect. It is believed that the questions raised by the observer as a professional teacher, as pointed by Walsh (2011), serve as a scaffolding or assistance in making sense of their experiences, and thus will help them acquire deeper insights. It is worth mentioning that the session under analysis, just like many sessions before, was unscripted, and the questions used were never prepared beforehand due to the unpredictability of the contents of the talk, that only proceeded without any conscious plans (Wardhaugh, 2006). Turns are solely designed based on an understanding of the prior speakers' turn (Drew, 2001; Huth & Taleghani-Nikazm, 2006; Lerner, 2003). The moment-by-moment interactions are also in conjunction with and in response to the social actions demonstrated by other participants in an ongoing discourse (Garcia, 2006). Therefore, the mentor-teacher's short prodding questions were formed linguistically in an ongoing social action, depending on its sequential environment. Support questions only included, but were not limited to: (1) *Tell me more...* (2) *Why?* (3) *Why do you think so?* (4) *Abub*, (5) *How about ...?* (6) *And then...*, and other backchanneling mechanisms to support and assist them socially and emotionally.

Moreover, what added to these spontaneous reflective sessions is that student-teachers were never oriented to a prescribed language; teachers freely code-switched from Tagalog to English, vice versa. Furthermore, English dominated during these sessions. Fortunately, Tagalog expressions and words have equivalent linguistic terms in English with regard to boosters, hedges, and attitude markers. Meanwhile, the data were transcribed selectively based on the presence of some linguistic features under study. Based on these features, the context was explicated qualitatively in

order to describe the student-teachers features of reflective practice, and to identify the thematic categories that surround these linguistic features.

### *Sample Corpus and Analysis*

One case of an-hour recorded reflection session was used as an exploratory data. For practical purposes, the research adhered to a clandestine or illicit recording (Bowern, 2008), as candid recordings may have little value for linguistic research (Labov, 1984). However, this manner of recording should not be treated as a violation of research ethics, and to the student-teachers' human dignity. The sample session under study was only one of the many cases of regular sessions with the student-teachers. In fact, Kim, Heidi, and Pam were all twenty-years old, and had been the researcher's students in English major subjects for three years; thus, rapport was considered utmost during the reflective discussions and conversations. It is personally believed that student-teachers were most relaxed, most spontaneous, and most themselves (Paltridge, 2012) during the spoken reflection. Consequently, the spoken reflection is considered a natural interaction that fully and faithfully caught the essence of the reflective practice. Meanwhile, the study employed the quantitative-qualitative, a mixed-methodological approach within the linguistic research enterprises (Dörnyei, 2007). Selected snippets of dialogue were transcribed (Jefferson, 2004; Ten Have, 1999) where linguistic resources such as boosters, hedges, and attitude markers reside in the corpus. The qualitative content analysis was used to identify the thematic categories that teachers reflected on. The examination of themes was done inductively until the clear-cut themes had been identified (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). No external expert was invited to the coding stages, primarily because the set of data was limited and there were very limited hits of linguistic stance markers. Future researchers are encouraged to invite external experts for the coding processes, especially when the corpus is at least 200,000 words (see limitations and recommendations sections).

## **Results and Discussion**

This section presents the linguistic stance resources such as boosters, hedges, and attitude markers culled from the sample corpus of spoken reflection. Linguistic features are in boldface.

### **RQ 1: The sorts of linguistic stance resources such as boosters, hedges, and attitude markers that reside in corpus**

#### **Extract 1**

Teacher: What did you do?

Kim: I **just** asked and asked so I **can** get answers from them=

Teacher: =And then?

Kim: It is **so::** hard Sir, it's **really::** **hard**=

Teacher: =What are you thinking now?

Kim: ...because literature in the K to 12 is **really** hard. Words are **advanced**. The texts are **too** long. They **all really** get lazy reading them. That's **really** where I find teaching hard=

Teacher: =So, what's your next step? Because that's where you're having difficulties with?



Extract 1 shows that Kim's reflection has been coated with instances of boosters. The lexical item "really" is consistently used to project her strong belief about the teaching-learning experiences in the classroom. The use of "just" and "can" is also part of the category of boosters. Paltridge (2012) confirms that boosters are used to emphasise certainty to convince people in the communication process. The use of boosters may hint the listener that the dialog has been closed. This may indicate that there is no point of discussing more about the proposition because certainty has been achieved. Looking at Extract 1, the teacher now asks, "So, what's your next step?" The teacher is closing the argument, and is proceeding to the next reflective question because he has been convinced that teaching literature with all these advanced words and long texts is indeed Kim's predicament. Moreover, Kim prefers not to use hedges in her reflection. The choice of direct and candid words confirms her being an honest, reflective teacher. Machin and Mayr (2012) expostulate that language expressed with 'padding' can soften the impact of the bluntness of the message. Kim could have used hedges in the process, but she did not.

Let us consider Extract 2 with Heidi, one of the three teachers who participated in the spoken reflection:

### Extract 2

Teacher: How about you?

Heidi: **Fortunately**, the teaching is fine. The other section is **really** hard to handle, but they are manageable **somehow**. And it's **really** with them, you know, in every activity, I **really** have to adjust to their level=

Teacher: = Why do you have to adjust=

Heidi: = **BECAUSE THEY CANNOT REALLY CARRY OUT THE ACTIVITIES** that I have prepared=

Teacher: =But how about the your lesson plan  
[preparations?]=

Heidi: **[Yes sir]**, I have alternative lesson plans. That's what I told my cooperating teacher about.

Teacher: Why do you think it's important? It takes time preparing more than one lesson plan. Do you think it's **eff[ective? ]**

Heidi: **[effective]=**

Teacher: Why?=  
=

Heidi: =**Effective** sir, **in a way** that. . . I don't need to think on the spot that, **ahh::** students **CANNOT** do this.

Extract 2 divulges that Heidi's utterances have been strewn with many cases of stance resources. Here, Heidi is only prompted with a simple question: "How about you?", but she is able to express many things about her teaching experiences. They include her attitude toward the teaching profession and preparation of the lesson plans. She also reflects on the ways she handles the students with different levels. In five talking turns, she generates instances of *boosters*, *hedges*, and *attitude markers*. Boosters include "really," "cannot," "yes, sir," and "effective." Analysing these lexical items, she flaunts her two faces. First, she demonstrates a kind of certainty, conviction, values, attitude and confidence in a certain pedagogical practice. Second, at the same time, she shows intentions of hedging such as the use of the words "somehow" and "in a way."

Using these words must be a kind of projection of herself as she is doing reflection with an expert teacher and with her fellow practice student-teachers. Marked with reservations, she may have considered herself novice who, by now, must not have fully grasped the totality of teaching English as a second language to her students. Her reservations attempt her to employ “somehow” and “in a way” that are considered lowering modality (Fairclough, 2003), thus a mark of apprehensions and misgivings.

Similarly, hedging has been noted by Machin and Mayr (2012) as the speakers' intention to avoid directness or commitment to a supposed notion. In contrast, Machin and Mayr concede that the absence of hedges makes the speech lose the elements that serve to soften its contents. In Extract 2, Heidi exhibits an intention to use those two hedges to project her identity as a novice language teacher. Lastly, we will look into the *attitude markers* in the corpus.

Teacher: How about you?

Heidi: **Fortunately**, the teaching is fine. The other section is really hard to handle, but they are manageable somehow. And it's really with them, you know, in every activity, I really have to adjust to their level=

Teacher: = Why do you have to adjust=

Heidi, after being asked with one simple question, “How about you?” promptly starts the dialog with the conjunctive adverb, “fortunately.” This is a discourse marker that indicates good news. Attitude markers express writers' attitude to the proposition (Paltridge, 2012). As Gee (2011) argues, reflection involves thinking in certain ways. It means that thought and language may have close relationship with each other (Machin & Mayr, 2012). To the point, Heidi's use of “fortunately” is a kind of reflection marked with personal values and beliefs in her teaching practices and the teaching profession itself.

### **RQ 2: The thematic categories or phenomena being reflected on emerge as enthused in these linguistic resources**

In a nutshell, from the constructs of stances (Paltridge, 2012; Postman & Powers, 2000) this exploratory study shows that the sets of stance reside in the spoken reflection. We have successfully and initially described that stances explicate teachers' (1) confidence, conviction, honesty, and certainty of classroom circumstances; (2) identity as novice teachers; apprehension, and reservation of the strategies; and (3) personal values, attitude, and beliefs in language teaching and student language learning. All these linguistic features from spoken reflection that underlie these student-teachers' stances on their practice teaching experiences have not been explored in previous studies in reflective practice, although we understand that the thematic categories may be identical to the themes mentioned in previous studies (cf. Munalim, 2017).

### **RQ 3: The possible indicators to add in the reflective inventory by Akbari, Behzadpoor, and Davvand (2010) based on the themes**

Although the proposed indicators may have already been discussed in previous studies, these present indicators are novel in the sense that they sprang from the natural method of extracting the teachers' inner world. Overall, the proposed indicators below revolve around the themes identified from the linguistic stance resources.

Table 1

*Proposed Micro-indicators Culled from the Thematic Categories*

Components	Proposed possible indicators based on the themes from linguistic stance resources
Practical	1. I consult my peers and supervisors that I prepare alternative lesson plans in case one plan does not work for students' levels.
Cognitive	(none)
Affective/Learner	1. I deflect the course of my lesson the moment students show difficulty with the lessons because I know they cannot do the tasks.
Meta-cognitive	2. I feel I am a novice teacher when I am not sure of what strategies work for my challenged students. 3. I feel I am an expert teacher when I know what strategies work best for challenged students. 4. Even if I feel that I am a novice, I keep teaching and improving my teaching craft. 5. Language teaching is hard, but I will continue making a difference in the lives of my students who are academically challenged. 6. Language teaching is always both fun and challenging. This helps me develop good personal values and attitude worthy of emulation from my colleagues. 7. Language teaching is always both fun and challenging. This helps me constantly monitor my strengths and weaknesses as a teacher. 8. Students' progress, failures, and challenges in language learning make me both emotionally challenged and affected.
Critical	(none)
Moral	(none)

**RQ 4: What does the presence of linguistic resources say about the student-teachers' reflective practices?**

These language features under study provide us with the rich reservoirs of information and resources on how teachers communicate and feel about certain classroom circumstances. Student-teachers resort to boosters and hedges when they believe, feel, and think that what they are doing in the classroom with regard to teaching principles is right. Their cognition may have been responsible for the escalation of the use of boosters and hedges to express certainty, conviction, and mitigation. Aligned to this, attitude markers, on the one hand, play a key role in strengthening the persuasiveness of their argument and in the expression of their cognition and attitudes in the

teaching-learning process. Interestingly, the sample extracts clearly yield that the student-teachers display a kind of seesaw between hedges and boosters.

Enthused with these linguistic resources, student-teachers show a constant push-and-pull relationship that may eventually lead them to a kind of attitude in the teaching-learning process. The concoction of these linguistic resources, hence stance, is capable of making us cognizant of the various themes and phenomena they reflect on. Therefore, looking at these themes, reflective practice enables “ESL teachers to make sense of their professional worlds as well as make significant and worthwhile change within themselves and in their teaching practices” (Lakshmi, 2012, p. 194). Hence, this study also purports the unstable nature of reflection. Figure 1 below exemplifies the results:

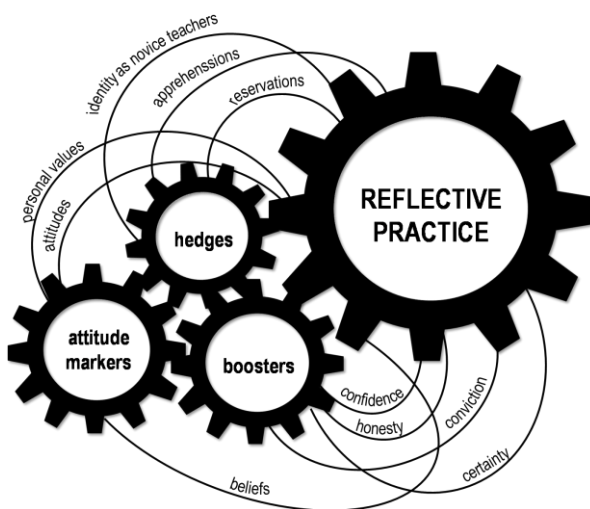


Figure 1. The three-pronged features or thematic categories in student-teachers' spoken reflection enthused by linguistic features such as boosters, hedges, and attitude markers (patterned from Munalim, 2017).

### Future Directions: More linguistic Tools

While this study explored the stances in reflection, the sample episodes also showed indispensable linguistic tools in describing the elements of reflective practice. Future researchers may do future studies on reflective vis-a-vis (1) conversation analysis (CA), and the (2) suprasegmental features such as intonation and inflection<sup>2</sup>.

### Conclusion

For thirty-five years of reflective practice as first and officially introduced in 1983 by Schön—although historically Dewey (1933) also asserted reflective action—RP has been without critics and their misgivings (cf. Astika, 2014; Walsh, 2011). Research insights in RP have not been translated into practice because in the first place, no established guidelines and data-led descriptions in the process of reflection have been recorded (cf. Fatempour, 2009; Mann &

Walsh, 2013). *Fortunately*, our study has given us a bright hope for every RP researcher. We have shown that our exploratory method may be plausible. Our linguistic analysis through stances in a spoken, dialogic reflection has initially allowed us to consider and re-consider the three-pronged elements of teachers' reflection. Likewise, the possible convergence of different linguistic analytical tools for future studies will purvey us much more systematic operations and understanding of the phenomena being reflected upon.

This present study has limitations given that it is in its exploratory stage. We specifically acknowledge and emphasize two major limitations. First, this exploratory study uses a very limited corpus that almost produced nil linguistic features such as boosters, hedges, and attitude markers. When large corpora are used, it is possible that the stretch of linguistic features could generate themes that are likely to fall within the six domains such as practical, cognitive, learner, meta-cognitive, critical, and moral. From here, we can have cross-educational comparative studies with teachers across career stages such as beginning teachers, proficient teachers, highly proficient teachers, and distinguished teachers in the strands of content knowledge and pedagogy; learning environment; diversity of learners; curriculum and planning; assessment and reporting; community linkages and professional engagement; and personal growth and professional development (see Department of Education, Philippines, 2017; cf. Gonong, 2017a; cf. Gonong, 2017b). Secondly, if we also aim for analyzing naturalistic data (Walsh & Mann, 2015), then this present exploratory study may not be the best method. The presence of the student-teachers' mentor-teacher may have also affected the way they behave linguistically (Bower, 2008; Labov, 1984). It was also possible that power-dependency issues were taking place during the conduct of the recording, although good relationship has been established at the onset. Built-in recordings should be used to gather the corpus in the future.

Even at its exploratory stage, this study that proposed a naturalistic, data-led tool (Walsh & Mann, 2015) provides ensuing implications for mentoring with experienced language teachers (Babai & Sadeghi, 2009). The stances of apprehension, reservation, and the admission as novice English teachers may not be surprising at all (cf. Munalim, 2015; Munalim & Raymundo, 2014) after having freshly learned a number of theories in second language learning and acquisition. Knowing these stances will help mentors diagnose where they can assist the teachers accordingly. They need more time with the much more experienced language teachers (Babai & Sadeghi, 2009) as an individual teachers' judgements and perceptions can affect the outcomes of his or her classroom practices (Clark-Goff & Eslami, 2016; Farrell & Vos, 2018). In fact, the thematic categories from the analysis will remain inert knowledge unless mentor-teachers translate them into more post practice-teaching consultations.

For a satisfying closing, it is our fervent hope that this initial paper with its limited number of corpus has produced a new naturalistic tool and fresher insights that researchers and teachers themselves may use to generate, gather, and analyse data of reflection. One caveat, however, should be worth mentioning: We never argue to face out written reflections; both written and spoken modalities stay relevant and important, and should be used to complement and supplement each other. After all, Walsh and Mann (2015) are right: "One element of a move towards data-led RP is the need for appropriate reflective tools" (p. 360). We have initially shown and proposed one of these plausible tools, that is, the spoken reflection analysed through some linguistic analytic tools, which is considered a valid and more realistic way of looking into language teachers' reflective practice. We remain hopeful for more future studies, and will keep reflecting on how we can address the elusive nature of reflective practice.

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<sup>1</sup> Although we also consider Tannen's (1982) view that written language that is characterized by "involvement" is "oral-like" while oral language characterized by detachment is "written-like."

<sup>2</sup> Due to space constraints, the authors truncated this part. They are willing to provide the longer version of this section through email.