

Reflective Teaching: Situating Our Stories

Kathleen M. Bailey

*The Chinese University of Hong Kong and
Monterey Institute of Language Education*

This paper combines the research tradition of the literature review and the literary device of flashbacks, in the form of vignettes, to examine the notion of reflective teaching. The paper answers four questions: (1) What is reflective teaching? (2) How is reflective teaching different from what we've always done? (3) How is reflective teaching different from action research? and (4) Why is reflective teaching worth doing? Examples from the author's professional history are used to illustrate three conceptions of teaching (Freeman, 1996): teaching as doing (the behavioral view), teaching as thinking and doing (the cognitive view), and teaching as knowing what to do (the interpretivist view). A case is made for the value of reflective teaching as a practice, an attitude, a way of being professional, and as a source of potentially insightful solutions to problems.