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Narrative Writing as Pedagogical Innovation: Developing a Reflective Framework from Teachers' Short Stories of Classroom Experience

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Abstract

This study examines teachers' short stories as reflective narratives of classroom experience and proposes an integrative framework linking pedagogical experience, dimensions of reflection, and narrative structure. Using a qualitative interpretive design, the study analyzes a corpus of 30 short stories written by practicing teachers from elementary, junior secondary, and senior secondary schools. The narratives are treated not as literary texts, but as reflective pedagogical artifacts through which teachers reconstruct and interpret classroom experience.

The findings show that classroom experience is predominantly represented through moments of disruption, uncertainty, and pedagogical tension rather than routine instructional activity. These moments include instructional challenges, student participation issues, socio-emotional dynamics, and assessment dilemmas. The analysis further identifies four interrelated dimensions of pedagogical reflection: cognitive, affective-relational, ethical, and action-oriented reflection. These dimensions emerge dynamically within narratives and are mediated through narrative structures such as plot development, conflict, retrospective perspective, and open-ended resolution.

The study also demonstrates that narrative form plays a crucial role in shaping reflective depth, as pedagogical meaning is constructed through storytelling processes rather than explicit explanation alone. Overall, the findings suggest that teachers' short story writing functions as a meaningful form of pedagogical innovation that transforms lived classroom experience into structured reflective understanding and professional learning.

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1. Introduction

Teaching involves far more than delivering subject matter. In everyday classroom life, teachers constantly interpret situations, respond to uncertainty, and make professional judgments. They encounter a wide range of pedagogical challenges, including differences in students' learning readiness, low participation, difficulties in conceptual understanding, socio-emotional tensions, interactional conflicts, and dilemmas surrounding assessment. Such situations call not only for immediate instructional responses but also for thoughtful interpretation of experience so that future pedagogical actions are informed by deeper professional understanding.

For this reason, reflection has long been regarded as central to teacher professional learning. Dewey (1933) ^[5] described reflection as an active, persistent, and careful consideration of experience and its consequences. Schön (1983) ^[8] later extended this perspective through the concepts of *reflection-in-action* and *reflection-on-action*, emphasizing that professional learning emerges when practitioners critically examine both their ongoing actions and their subsequent interpretations of practice. More recent scholarship has further shown that pedagogical reflection is not limited to technical evaluation but also involves cognitive interpretation, emotional awareness, ethical judgment, and future-oriented decision-making, all of which shape teachers' classroom practice (Chan & Lee, 2021; Marshall *et al.*, 2022; Gläser-Zikuda *et al.*, 2024) ^[2, 6, 7]. Despite its recognized importance, reflection in school contexts often remains limited in both depth and function. In many educational settings, reflection is institutionalized through lesson reports, reflective journals, or administrative evaluation documents. Although these forms may document classroom events, they frequently remain descriptive and procedural rather than critically interpretive. Under such conditions, reflection can easily become a formal requirement rather than a meaningful way for teachers to learn

from experience (Chan & Lee, 2021; Vogelsang *et al.*, 2025) [2, 9].

This limitation points to an important challenge in contemporary teacher education. Teachers need reflective spaces that allow them not only to record classroom events but also to revisit experience, examine pedagogical tensions, and construct new professional meanings from practice. One promising way of doing so is through narrative writing.

Within the tradition of narrative inquiry, experience is understood as fundamentally storied. People do not simply undergo events; they interpret, organize, and reconstruct them through narrative (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) [3-4]. From this perspective, classroom experience is not merely a sequence of events but a meaningful construction shaped by temporality, social relationships, and personal interpretation. Writing, therefore, can function not only as a mode of expression but also as a reflective act through which teachers reorganize experience and develop pedagogical understanding.

Among various forms of narrative writing, teachers' short stories offer a particularly rich medium for reflective inquiry. Unlike formal reports or routine reflective accounts, short stories allow teachers to reconstruct classroom experience through plot, point of view, conflict, and resolution. These narrative elements reveal not only what happened in the classroom, but also how teachers perceived events, responded emotionally, interpreted pedagogical dilemmas, and imagined possible pedagogical actions. In this sense, teachers' short stories can be understood not simply as literary products but as reflective pedagogical narratives. Because short stories selectively shape experience through narrative tension, perspective, and resolution, they make visible not only classroom events but also the reflective processes through which pedagogical meaning is constructed.

The pedagogical innovation explored in this study lies not merely in the use of writing itself. Teachers have long engaged in journals, reports, and reflective notes. The innovation lies in repositioning short story writing as a structured reflective practice through which teachers reconstruct classroom experience, surface pedagogical tensions, and generate professional understanding. More specifically, this study advances an integrative analytical approach that connects three dimensions that are often treated separately: pedagogical experience, multidimensional reflection, and narrative structure. In this sense, narrative writing is treated not simply as a means of expression but as a mode of pedagogical inquiry and professional meaning-making.

Although scholarship on reflective practice, narrative inquiry, and writing as reflection has developed substantially, these areas have largely progressed along separate lines. Research on teacher reflection has predominantly focused on journals, portfolios, and formal reflective accounts (Marshall *et al.*, 2022; Gläser-Zikuda *et al.*, 2024) [6-7]. Narrative inquiry has often treated narrative primarily as research data rather than as a consciously produced reflective artifact (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) [3]. Meanwhile, studies of writing have commonly examined expression, identity, or literacy development, with comparatively limited attention to short story writing as a structured medium of pedagogical reflection (Gläser-Zikuda *et al.*, 2024; Coppe *et al.*, 2024) [6].

As a result, there remains limited conceptual work that systematically connects classroom experience, dimensions of pedagogical reflection, and narrative structure within a coherent analytical framework. More specifically, insufficient attention has been given to how teachers' short stories may function as a form of pedagogical innovation that transforms

narrative writing into a medium for reflective professional learning.

This study draws on a corpus of 30 short stories written by practicing teachers across elementary, junior secondary, and senior secondary educational contexts. These narratives constitute a particularly valuable empirical site because they emerged from lived classroom experience rather than being produced specifically for research purposes. As naturally occurring reflective texts, they provide insight into how teachers narratively represent pedagogical problems, interpret classroom tensions, and imagine professional responses.

Responding to this gap, the present study examines teachers' short stories as reflective narratives of classroom experience. Rather than approaching these narratives as literary texts alone, this study treats them as reflective artifacts through which pedagogical experience is represented, interpreted, and potentially transformed. Through this corpus of naturally occurring narratives, the study demonstrates how narrative texts can function not merely as reflective records but as analytical sites where professional judgment, ethical positioning, and future pedagogical action become narratively visible.

Accordingly, this article seeks to develop a reflective framework derived from teachers' short stories of classroom experience. By doing so, it contributes to scholarship on teacher reflection by offering a more integrative understanding of narrative writing as a meaningful medium for pedagogical reflection and professional learning.

This study addresses the following research questions:

1. How are pedagogical experiences and classroom problematics represented in teachers' short stories as narratives of classroom experience?
2. How are the dimensions of pedagogical reflection—cognitive, affective-relational, ethical, and action-oriented—manifested in teachers' short stories?
3. How do narrative structures, including plot, point of view, conflict, and resolution, articulate the depth of pedagogical reflection in teachers' short stories?
4. How can the synthesis of pedagogical experience, reflective dimensions, and narrative structure be conceptualized into a reflective framework for pedagogical practice?

2. Method

This study employed a qualitative interpretive design to examine teachers' short stories as reflective narratives of classroom experience. A qualitative interpretive approach was considered appropriate because the purpose of the study was not to measure frequencies or test causal relationships, but to understand how pedagogical experiences were represented, how reflective meanings were constructed, and how narrative forms mediated pedagogical reflection.

Within this perspective, meaning was treated as contextually situated and textually constructed. The study therefore focused on interpreting how teachers made sense of classroom experiences through narrative rather than on evaluating the literary quality of the texts.

More specifically, the methodological innovation of this study lies in treating teachers' short stories not merely as narrative texts or literary products, but as reflective pedagogical artifacts. Through this approach, narrative writing was analyzed as a structured medium through which teachers reconstructed classroom experience, surfaced pedagogical tensions, and generated multidimensional reflective understanding.

2.1. Data Source and Selection

The data corpus consisted of 30 teachers' short stories drawn from an anthology written by practicing teachers working across elementary, junior secondary, and senior secondary educational contexts. The anthology was selected because it provided naturally occurring reflective narratives produced from lived classroom experience rather than texts written specifically for research purposes.

The short stories were selected purposively based on three criteria:

1. the narrative had to depict a classroom-related pedagogical experience;
2. the story had to contain identifiable classroom problematics, such as instructional challenges, student participation issues, socio-emotional tensions, interactional conflicts, or assessment dilemmas;

3. the narrative had to provide sufficient textual depth to enable interpretive analysis of reflective meaning.

The final corpus comprised 15 narratives from elementary school teachers, 6 from junior secondary teachers, and 9 from senior secondary teachers. All 30 stories were treated as the primary units of analysis.

To ensure analytical transparency, each story was assigned a corpus code and catalogued by title, author, institutional affiliation, and school level.

In this study, the short stories were not treated as literary texts for aesthetic evaluation. Rather, they were approached as reflective pedagogical artifacts through which teachers reconstructed, interpreted, and gave meaning to their classroom experiences.

Table 1: Corpus of Teachers' Short Stories Analyzed

Code	Title	Author	School / Institutional Affiliation	School Level
S1	Tantangan Asesmen dan Ketidaksiapan Profesional	Rudi Jaya	SDS IT An Najma, Bekasi	Elementary
S2	Ketika Teguran Berubah Menjadi Pelukan	Khodijah	SD Negeri 2 Cintanagara, Garut	Elementary
S3	Nada-Nada yang Hampir Pudar	Ai Pipih (Ai Lundeng)	MTs Negeri Purwakarta	Junior Secondary
S4	Debu di Ujung Spidol	Uyun, S.Pd.I.	SDN 1 Jayamekar, Garut	Elementary
S5	Ketika Tawa Berubah Arah	Elis Nurhayati	SMAN 16 Garut	Senior Secondary
S6	Jembatan Empati yang Menghubungkan Hati	Histiyan	SMAN 2 Kotabaru	Senior Secondary
S7	Yang Salah Bukan Angkanya	Novita Kumalasari	SMAN 2 Kotabaru	Senior Secondary
S8	Transformasi Sandi	Bagja Maulana	SMA Negeri 27 Garut	Senior Secondary
S9	Revolusi di Balik Gerbang Besi	Eva Fauzi Nursiami	SMK Negeri 15 Garut	Senior Secondary
S10	Bangku Paling Sunyi	Hani Faturahmi	SDN 2 Padasuka, Garut	Elementary
S11	Aura Deep Learning Melibas Pembelajaran Konvensional di Sekolahku	Siti Sulaeha	SDN 4 Simpang, Garut	Elementary
S12	Perjuangan Pak Agus	Ema Iriani Hudaya	MAN Tanjungbalai	Senior Secondary
S13	Aku Ingin Menjadi Rumah Bagi Mereka	Rhima Milana Hakim	SDN 3 Mekarsari, Garut	Elementary
S14	Semangkuk Bakso dan Kursi yang Kosong	Hasby Amali	SDN Sawahlega 01, Bandung	Elementary
S15	Satu Tampanan, Seumur Hidup Penyesalan	Karmilawati	SMK Al Falah Garut	Senior Secondary
S16	Kegagalan Mengajar	Anang	SDN Munjul, Garut	Elementary
S17	Meretas Dupa Panas Ortodoksitas	Ahmad Fanani Mosah	SMP Negeri 3 Babat, Lamongan	Junior Secondary
S18	Menyemai Adab dan Sains	Komara Nur Ikhsan	SMP Darusalam Ciamis	Junior Secondary
S19	Pelajaran Terpenting Hari Itu	Shorihatul Inayah	MAN 1 Tuban	Senior Secondary
S20	Ambang Batas di Balik Layar Komputer	Desy Khoerunisa	SDN 3 Sindangsari, Garut	Elementary
S21	Merawat Harmoni di Ruang Kelas	Dianna Ummijathie	MI Nurul Hasan, Bondowoso	Elementary
S22	Tiga Kursi di Barisan Belakang	Lisnawati	SMPN 1 Bojongasih	Junior Secondary
S23	Guru yang Mengajarkan Hati	Muhamad Abdul Palah	SDS IT An-Najma 2 Serang Baru	Elementary
S24	Bangku Kosong di Kelas Belakang	Siti Aisyah Rohimah	SD Muhammadiyah 2 Garut	Elementary
S25	Siapa Saja Bisa Berubah	Apri Riyanti	SMP Syalafiyah Kebon Nanas, Jakarta	Junior Secondary
S26	Selembat Kartu Gambar Tak Terpuji Ditemukan	Muhamad Shidiq	Integrated Islamic Elementary School, Garut	Elementary
S27	Ramadan sebagai Madrasah Kedisiplinan Terbesar	Sri Sugiastuti	SMK Tunas Pembangunan 2 Surakarta	Senior Secondary
S28	Garuda di Dadaku	Mahmud Asari	SDN 4 Cikondang, Garut	Elementary
S29	Kelas yang Mengajarkanku	Ahmad Haenudin	SMPN Satu Atas 1 Pakenjeng, Garut	Junior Secondary
S30	Bagaikan Ikan dalam Kolam	Ai Roprop Uluwiah	SDN 3 Sanding, Garut	Elementary

2.2. Analytical Framework

The analysis was guided by three interrelated analytical lenses. First, the study examined the representation of pedagogical experience, focusing on how classroom events, instructional tensions, and learning-related problems were narrated. This analytical lens addressed the ways pedagogical realities were selected, framed, and made meaningful in narrative form. Second, the study analyzed the dimensions of pedagogical reflection manifested across the narratives. Four dimensions were used as interpretive categories:

- **Cognitive reflection** referred to how teachers understood, interpreted, and analyzed classroom situations.
- **Affective-relational reflection** referred to emotional awareness and sensitivity to pedagogical relationships involving students, classroom climate, and interpersonal dynamics.
- **Ethical reflection** referred to considerations of values, responsibility, fairness, and moral judgment in teaching.
- **Action-oriented reflection** referred to intentions, decisions, and strategies aimed at pedagogical improvement.

Third, the study examined how narrative structure—including plot, point of view, conflict, and resolution—articulated and mediated the depth of pedagogical reflection.

Narrative structure was analyzed not merely as a formal literary feature, but as a meaning-making device through

which reflective interpretation was organized and expressed.

2.3. Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis was conducted through interpretive narrative analysis in four stages.

First, each short story was read repeatedly to gain a holistic understanding of the narrative, its pedagogical context, and the broader experiential meaning conveyed by the teacher.

Second, textual segments that represented pedagogical experiences, classroom problematics, and reflective responses were identified and coded. Coding focused on episodes, statements, and narrative moments that revealed pedagogical meaning.

Third, the coded segments were interpreted in relation to the four dimensions of pedagogical reflection and the narrative structures through which reflective meaning was constructed. At this stage, attention was given not only to what was narrated but also to how reflective meanings were embedded, implied, and developed across the narrative.

Fourth, findings across the 30 short stories were compared and synthesized to identify recurring reflective patterns and conceptual relationships among pedagogical experience, dimensions of reflection, and narrative construction.

This final stage served as the basis for developing the reflective framework proposed in this study, in which narrative writing is conceptualized as a form of pedagogical innovation in teacher professional reflection.

Table 2: Coding Matrix of Reflective Dimensions Across the 30 Teachers' Short Stories

Code	Short Title	Cognitive	Affective-Relational	Ethical	Action-Oriented
S1	Tantangan Asesmen dan Ketidaksiapan Profesional	✓	○	✓	✓
S2	Ketika Teguran Berubah Menjadi Pelukan	○	✓	✓	○
S3	Nada-Nada yang Hampir Pudar	✓	✓	○	○
S4	Debu di Ujung Spidol	✓	○	○	✓
S5	Ketika Tawa Berubah Arah	○	✓	✓	○
S6	Jembatan Empati yang Menghubungkan Hati	○	✓	✓	○
S7	Yang Salah Bukan Angkanya	✓	○	✓	✓
S8	Transformasi Sandi	✓	✓	○	✓
S9	Revolusi di Balik Gerbang Besi	✓	○	✓	✓
S10	Bangku Paling Sunyi	✓	✓	○	○
S11	Aura Deep Learning	✓	○	○	✓
S12	Perjuangan Pak Agus	○	✓	✓	○
S13	Aku Ingin Menjadi Rumah Bagi Mereka	○	✓	✓	✓
S14	Semangkuk Bakso dan Kursi yang Kosong	○	✓	✓	○
S15	Satu Tamparan, Seumur Hidup Penyesalan	○	✓	✓	○
S16	Kegagalan Mengajar	✓	○	○	✓
S17	Meretas Dupa Panas Ortodoksitas	✓	○	✓	✓
S18	Menyemai Adab dan Sains	✓	○	✓	✓
S19	Pelajaran Terpenting Hari Itu	○	✓	✓	○
S20	Ambang Batas di Balik Layar Komputer	✓	✓	○	✓
S21	Merawat Harmoni di Ruang Kelas	○	✓	✓	✓
S22	Tiga Kursi di Barisan Belakang	✓	✓	○	○
S23	Guru yang Mengajarkan Hati	○	✓	✓	○
S24	Bangku Kosong di Kelas Belakang	✓	✓	○	○
S25	Siapa Saja Bisa Berubah	✓	✓	○	✓
S26	Selembat Kartu Gambar Tak Terpuji Ditemukan	✓	○	✓	✓
S27	Ramadan sebagai Madrasah Kedisiplinan Terbesar	✓	○	✓	✓
S28	Garuda di Dadaku	○	✓	✓	○
S29	Kelas yang Mengajarkanku	✓	✓	○	✓
S30	Bagaikan Ikan dalam Kolam	✓	○	○	✓

Note: ✓ = strongly evident; ○ = present but less explicit

2.4. Trustworthiness

To strengthen interpretive rigor, the analysis emphasized repeated reading, close textual examination, and constant comparison across narratives.

Interpretations were developed through careful attention to both the content of the narratives and the narrative forms through which meanings were constructed.

Rather than seeking statistical generalization, the study aimed for interpretive credibility by preserving the contextual meaning of each story while identifying cross-text conceptual patterns.

Analytical consistency was further supported by the use of common interpretive categories across the corpus, particularly the four dimensions of pedagogical reflection and the narrative structural elements used in the analysis.

This process enabled both contextual sensitivity and analytical synthesis in the development of the reflective framework proposed in this study.

3. Results

3.1. Representations of Pedagogical Experience and Classroom Problematics

Across the selected short stories, classroom experience was rarely narrated as routine instructional activity. Rather than describing ordinary teaching sequences, teachers tended to organize their narratives around moments of disruption, uncertainty, and pedagogical tension. These moments formed the narrative core through which classroom experience acquired reflective significance.

A recurring pattern across the stories was the presence of instructional challenges. Several narratives portrayed situations in which planned teaching strategies did not produce the expected learning response. In some stories, teachers described students' difficulty in understanding abstract concepts despite repeated explanations. In others, the mismatch appeared between instructional pacing and students' learning readiness.

For instance, in *Tantangan Asesmen dan Ketidaksiapan Profesional* (S1), instructional planning became a central pedagogical concern when classroom responses failed to align with the teacher's expectations. Likewise, *Aura Deep Learning Melibas Pembelajaran Konvensional di Sekolahku* (S11) narrated the challenge of designing learning experiences that moved beyond superficial content coverage toward deeper conceptual engagement. Similar instructional tensions also appeared in *Revolusi di Balik Gerbang Besi* (S9), where institutional constraints and classroom realities shaped pedagogical decision-making.

Such moments were not represented simply as technical problems of method, but as pedagogical situations that prompted teachers to reconsider assumptions about teaching and learning.

Another prominent thematic pattern concerned student participation and engagement. Teachers frequently narrated moments in which students remained silent, disengaged, or resistant to classroom tasks. These moments were often experienced as unsettling because they interrupted the teacher's expectation of reciprocal classroom interaction.

For example, *Bangku Paling Sunyi* (S10), *Tiga Kursi di Barisan Belakang* (S22), and *Bangku Kosong di Kelas Belakang* (S24) all centered on silence, absence, or marginal classroom positioning as narrative entry points. Importantly, these narratives rarely reduced student passivity to individual deficiency. Instead, teachers gradually shifted toward

questioning the conditions of participation itself—whether classroom climate, instructional approach, or relational distance contributed to students' withdrawal. This theme was also reflected in *Semangkuk Bakso dan Kursi yang Kosong* (S14), which highlighted absence and emotional distance as pedagogical signals.

In addition to instructional concerns, many stories foregrounded socio-emotional and relational tensions. Conflict among students, emotional outbursts, visible anxiety, and subtle interpersonal disconnection emerged as significant narrative events.

Stories such as *Ketika Teguran Berubah Menjadi Pelukan* (S2), *Jembatan Empati yang Menghubungkan Hati* (S6), and *Aku Ingin Menjadi Rumah Bagi Mereka* (S13) revealed that the classroom was narrated not merely as an instructional setting but as a social and affective space in which pedagogical decisions were inseparable from relational sensitivity. Similar affective tensions were also evident in *Perjuangan Pak Agus* (S12) and *Semangkuk Bakso dan Kursi yang Kosong* (S14), where emotional and relational dimensions shaped classroom meaning.

A further category involved assessment and decision-making dilemmas. Several stories narrated situations in which teachers confronted tensions between formal assessment criteria and broader pedagogical considerations.

In *Yang Salah Bukan Angkanya* (S7), assessment became a site of moral tension when numerical outcomes appeared insufficient to capture the student's actual learning condition. Similarly, *Satu Tampan, Seumur Hidup Penyesalan* (S15) and *Selembat Kartu Gambar Tak Terpuji Ditemukan* (S26) presented situations in which disciplinary judgment required more than procedural application of rules.

Across these stories, pedagogical experience was represented not as straightforward application of instructional technique or institutional policy, but as situated judgment under conditions of uncertainty.

Taken together, these findings suggest that teachers' short stories do not merely recount classroom events. Rather, they selectively foreground moments of pedagogical disturbance. Such moments function as reflective entry points because they interrupt routine action and invite interpretation.

3.2. Dimensions of Pedagogical Reflection in Teachers' Short Stories

The narratives revealed that pedagogical reflection was manifested through four interrelated dimensions: cognitive, affective-relational, ethical, and action-oriented reflection. Although analytically distinguishable, these dimensions often overlapped within the stories.

3.2.1. Cognitive Reflection

Cognitive reflection appeared when teachers moved beyond simple event description and attempted to interpret why a pedagogical difficulty had occurred.

Across the narratives, teachers frequently revisited classroom incidents retrospectively, asking what factors might have shaped student responses, instructional failure, or classroom tension.

For example, *Kegagalan Mengajar* (S16), *Tantangan Asesmen dan Ketidaksiapan Profesional* (S1), *Yang Salah Bukan Angkanya* (S7), and *Revolusi di Balik Gerbang Besi* (S9) all showed teachers reinterpreting earlier classroom assumptions rather than merely reporting events.

These narrative moments suggest that short story writing

created space for pedagogical diagnosis. Rather than merely recording what happened, teachers engaged in interpretive reconstruction.

3.2.2. Affective-Relational Reflection

Affective-relational reflection was equally prominent. Emotional responses such as frustration, disappointment, hesitation, empathy, and concern were often embedded in the narrative voice.

In several stories, teachers initially narrated frustration in response to student disengagement. Yet as the narrative unfolded, emotional reaction shifted toward relational awareness.

This pattern was especially visible in *Ketika Teguran Berubah Menjadi Pelukan* (S2), *Jembatan Empati yang Menghubungkan Hati* (S6), *Guru yang Mengajarkan Hati* (S23), *Merawat Harmoni di Ruang Kelas* (S21), and *Semangkuk Bakso dan Kursi yang Kosong* (S14).

These findings suggest that narrative writing made visible the relational dimension of teaching. By reconstructing emotionally charged classroom moments, teachers did not simply express feelings but reinterpreted pedagogical situations through affective awareness.

3.2.3. Ethical Reflection

Ethical reflection emerged in stories that involved questions of fairness, responsibility, and pedagogical care.

These stories often revolved around moments when institutional expectations did not align neatly with teachers' moral judgment.

For instance, *Yang Salah Bukan Angkanya* (S7), *Satu Tampan, Seumur Hidup Penyesalan* (S15), *Pelajaran Terpenting Hari Itu* (S19), and *Ramadan sebagai Madrasah Kedisiplinan Terbesar* (S27) presented dilemmas in which formal rules and moral-educational values intersected in complex ways.

Compared with cognitive reflection, ethical reflection was often less explicitly stated. It was frequently embedded in hesitation, narrative tension, and the unresolved nature of decision-making.

3.2.4. Action-Oriented Reflection

Action-oriented reflection appeared when narratives turned toward future pedagogical possibilities.

In many stories, reflection did not conclude with interpretation alone. Teachers often used narrative resolution to imagine alternative strategies, reconsider classroom communication, or adjust instructional design.

This dimension was especially evident in *Transformasi Sandi* (S8), *Aura Deep Learning Melibas Pembelajaran Konvensional di Sekolahku* (S11), *Meretas Dupa Panas Ortodoksitas* (S17), *Bagaikan Ikan dalam Kolam* (S30), *Siapa*

Saja Bisa Berubah (S25), and *Ambang Batas di Balik Layar Komputer* (S20).

In some cases, action-oriented reflection involved concrete pedagogical intentions. In others, it remained tentative rather than definitive, indicating openness rather than closure.

Taken together, cognitive reflection appeared most explicitly, while affective-relational and ethical reflection often emerged more implicitly through narrative development. Action-oriented reflection was most visible near the end of narratives, where reflection shifted toward pedagogical possibility.

3.3. Narrative Structure as a Mediating Device of Reflection

The findings further show that reflective depth was not shaped solely by thematic content but also by narrative form.

Plot, point of view, conflict, and resolution functioned as mediating devices through which pedagogical reflection became organized and intelligible.

A common narrative pattern involved movement from initial classroom normality toward disruption, followed by reinterpretation. Reflection often deepened as the plot progressed. What initially appeared as an isolated classroom incident gradually became a site of pedagogical meaning-making.

Most stories employed a first-person retrospective perspective. This narrative position created a productive distance between the teacher-as-experiencer and the teacher-as-reflector. Through retrospective narration, teachers were able to revisit earlier judgments, reinterpret emotional reactions, and reconsider the significance of classroom events. Conflict emerged as the central narrative mechanism that activated reflection. Whether instructional, relational, or ethical, conflict disrupted pedagogical expectation and generated interpretive movement.

For example, *Bangku Paling Sunyi* (S10), *Tiga Kursi di Barisan Belakang* (S22), *Yang Salah Bukan Angkanya* (S7), *Garuda di Dadaku* (S28), and *Kelas yang Mengajarkanku* (S29) each transformed seemingly minor classroom incidents into reflective turning points through narrative development. Narrative resolutions rarely offered complete closure. In many stories, resolution took the form of partial understanding, revised perspective, or tentative pedagogical intention rather than final solution.

This is analytically significant. The absence of definitive closure often indicated deeper reflection because it preserved the complexity of pedagogical life rather than reducing experience to simplified lesson-learned conclusions.

Taken together, the findings reveal recurring relationships among pedagogical experience, reflective dimensions, and narrative organization. These recurring patterns are analytically synthesized in Table 3 as the basis for the reflective framework proposed in this study.

Table 3: Cross-Text Analytical Synthesis of Findings Across the 30 Teachers' Short Stories

Results Section	Analytical Focus	Recurring Cross-Text Pattern
Representations of Pedagogical Experience and Classroom Problematics	Representation of classroom experience	Classroom experience was predominantly narrated through moments of disruption, uncertainty, and pedagogical tension rather than routine instructional activity.
	Instructional challenges	Recurrent mismatches emerged between planned instructional strategies and students' learning readiness, conceptual understanding, or participation (S1, S4, S8, S11, S16, S25, S30).
	Socio-emotional and relational tensions	Student silence, withdrawal, emotional rupture, empathy gaps, and interpersonal disconnection frequently became central narrative events (S2, S6, S10, S13, S14, S21, S23).
	Assessment and decision-making dilemmas	Teachers often narrated tensions between formal institutional expectations and contextual pedagogical judgment (S7, S15, S19, S26, S27).
Dimensions of Pedagogical Reflection	Cognitive reflection	Teachers retrospectively interpreted causes of classroom difficulty and reconsidered assumptions about learning conditions (S1, S7, S9, S16, S18, S22, S24, S29).
	Affective-relational reflection	Emotional responses frequently developed into relational awareness and greater sensitivity to students' classroom experiences (S2, S6, S12, S13, S14, S21, S23, S28).
	Ethical reflection	Reflection often involved dilemmas of fairness, care, discipline, and professional responsibility beyond procedural rule-following (S7, S15, S19, S26, S27).
	Action-oriented reflection	Reflection frequently culminated in imagined pedagogical alternatives, revised strategies, or tentative future actions (S1, S4, S8, S11, S17, S20, S25, S30).
Narrative Structure as a Mediating Device of Reflection	Plot development	Reflection typically unfolded through movement from routine classroom expectation to disruption and reinterpretation across all narratives (S1–S30).
	Narrative perspective	First-person retrospective narration created distance between immediate experience and later reflective understanding (dominant across S1–S30).
	Conflict and resolution	Conflict functioned as the primary trigger of reflection, while resolutions tended to remain partial, open-ended, and pedagogically generative (S1–S30, with strong exemplars in S7, S10, S22, S28, S29).

4. Discussion

The findings of this study suggest that teachers' short stories function as more than personal recollections of classroom events. They provide a reflective space in which pedagogical experience is reorganized, interpreted, and transformed into professional understanding.

Across the narratives, pedagogical experience became reflectively meaningful when classroom routines were disrupted by uncertainty, conflict, or tension. This finding resonates with classical conceptions of reflective practice. Dewey emphasized reflection as careful consideration of experience and its consequences, while Schön highlighted professional reflection as a response to situations of uncertainty. The present study supports these perspectives but extends them by showing that reflection is not only an individual cognitive act but is also mediated through narrative construction. In this study, reflection becomes visible through how teachers *tell* experience—through sequencing, focalization, and narrative closure.

A second important implication concerns the multidimensional character of pedagogical reflection. Previous studies have often emphasized reflection primarily as analytical evaluation of teaching effectiveness. The findings here suggest a broader understanding. Teachers' narratives revealed that reflection involved not only cognitive interpretation but also affective-relational sensitivity, ethical consideration, and future-oriented action.

This is theoretically important because it challenges the reduction of reflection to technical problem-solving. The data show that teaching is simultaneously instructional, relational, and moral. Cognitive interpretation is frequently intertwined with emotional responses, ethical hesitation, and anticipatory thinking about future pedagogical action. In other words, the

four dimensions identified in this study do not operate as separate layers, but as mutually constitutive processes within narrative meaning-making.

The study also contributes to narrative inquiry by demonstrating that narrative structure itself plays a constitutive role in reflection. Plot, point of view, conflict, and resolution were not merely literary devices; they functioned as mechanisms through which reflective depth is produced and organized.

Conflict, in particular, emerged as the central reflective trigger across the corpus (S1–S30). Classroom disruption did not simply interrupt teaching; it created the conditions under which pedagogical meaning becomes visible. Whether in instructional breakdowns (e.g., S1, S11), student silence and withdrawal (e.g., S10, S22, S24), relational tension (e.g., S2, S6, S13, S14), or ethical dilemmas (e.g., S7, S15, S27), conflict consistently marked the transition from experience to reflection. In this sense, reflection often begins not in pedagogical success, but in pedagogical uncertainty.

From the perspective of pedagogical innovation, the findings point to a more specific contribution. The innovation of teachers' short story writing does not lie simply in asking teachers to write. Teachers already engage in administrative reporting, lesson documentation, and reflective journaling. What is distinctive in short story writing is its capacity to reorganize pedagogical experience through narrative tension, character positioning, and interpretive resolution.

Unlike conventional reflective formats that often remain descriptive or procedural, short stories allow pedagogical experience to be restructured as a meaningful narrative arc. This includes the transformation of routine classroom events into moments of pedagogical significance, the positioning of students and teachers within relational dynamics, and the

opening of interpretive space through unresolved or partial endings. In this sense, short story writing functions as a structured yet flexible medium for professional inquiry.

At the same time, these findings should be interpreted with appropriate caution. The study focused on a limited corpus of written narratives drawn from a particular educational context. The aim was therefore not statistical generalization but analytical generalization: to propose a conceptual framework for understanding how narrative writing may function as a medium of pedagogical reflection.

5. Conclusion and Implications

This study examined teachers' short stories as reflective narratives of classroom experience and developed a reflective framework linking pedagogical experience, reflective dimensions, and narrative structure.

The findings show that teachers' short stories tend to foreground moments of disruption, uncertainty, and pedagogical tension rather than routine classroom activity. These moments function as reflective entry points through which teachers interpret instructional challenges, student participation, socio-emotional tensions, and ethical dilemmas in classroom practice.

The analysis further demonstrates that pedagogical reflection is manifested through four interconnected dimensions: cognitive, affective-relational, ethical, and action-oriented reflection. These dimensions are not isolated categories, but are dynamically mediated through narrative structures such as plot development, conflict, retrospective narration, and open-ended resolution.

Taken together, the study suggests that narrative writing can function as a meaningful form of pedagogical innovation in teacher professional learning. Its value lies not merely in documenting classroom experience, but in transforming lived experience into structured reflective understanding.

Implications

Theoretical implications

This study contributes to the literature on teacher reflection by proposing an integrative framework that connects pedagogical experience, multidimensional reflection, and narrative structure. It demonstrates that reflective meaning is not only explicitly stated, but also embedded within narrative organization, temporal reconstruction, and conflict development.

Pedagogical implications

For teacher education and professional development, short story writing can serve as a powerful reflective practice. Compared to procedural reflection formats (e.g., checklists or administrative reports), narrative writing provides richer space for exploring uncertainty, emotional complexity, relational dynamics, and ethical judgment in teaching.

Methodological implications

The study also highlights the analytical value of treating teachers' narratives as reflective artifacts rather than merely descriptive accounts. This approach enables systematic interpretation of how pedagogical meaning is constructed through language, structure, and storytelling strategies.

Limitations and future research

This study is based on a corpus of 30 short stories from a specific educational context in Indonesia. The findings are therefore not statistically generalizable, but analytically transferable. Future research may expand the corpus, compare across cultural contexts, or examine how narrative-

based reflection can be systematically integrated into teacher professional development programs.

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These works collectively support the understanding that teaching is not only a technical practice, but also a deeply reflective, relational, and interpretive profession.

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