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Vietnamese EFL Teachers' Trio-Reflections on Text-Driven Materials Development

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ABSTRACT

While Tomlinson's text-driven approach to materials development has garnered significant attention, there is limited understanding of how teachers reflect on their lived experiences and utilise these reflections in future planning. To address this gap, this qualitative multiple-case study examined the trio-reflections of three Vietnamese English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) teachers on developing materials using this approach. The study was guided by Schön's concepts of reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action, and Killion and Todnem's concept of reflection-for-action. Data were collected using in-depth semi-structured interviews conducted over three rounds and analysed using reflexive thematic analysis, which combined within-case analysis with a cross-case synthesis. Three themes emerged: 1) authentic texts as a shared reference for lesson coherence, 2) reported adjustments and challenges in material development practices, and 3) future planning intentions shaped by previous experiences. The findings indicate that developing coherent materials requires careful attention to text selection, task sequencing, language support, and transitions between teaching activities. The participants also aimed to refine their future decisions by using pedagogical strategies. Practically, these findings contribute to teacher education and materials development, while contextually, they provide new insights into teacher reflection on text-driven materials development in the Global South context, with potential applicability to similar settings.

Keywords: *EFL teachers, teacher reflection, materials development, text-driven approach, Vietnam.*

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INTRODUCTION

Materials development in English Language Teaching (ELT) encompasses the creation, adaptation, and evaluation of texts, tasks, and other learning resources to align curriculum objectives with learners' needs and the specific conditions of teaching contexts (Cirocki et al., 2024). This unique process relies on teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and their judgments regarding the selection, sequencing, and utilisation of such materials in diverse classroom settings, while integrating research with professional experience (Almunawaroh et al., 2024; Shu et al., 2024). Within the constraints of prescribed curricula, teachers must also navigate institutional expectations and tailor such resources to meet local instructional requirements, taking into account specific learner groups and the resources available within their institutions (Cirocki et al., 2024; Le et al., 2026). Tomlinson's Text-Driven Approach (TDA) offers a structured framework where engaging texts organise activities and evoke intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic responses to meaningful language use (Mamadjanova & Nurmukhamedov, 2025; Tomlinson, 2018, 2023a). Its focus on affect aligns with recent advocacy for explicitly addressing emotional dimensions in ELT materials design (Diao & Yu, 2026). Texts can bridge classroom activities with learners' experiences and prior knowledge, with language attention following initial engagement with meaning (Mamadjanova & Nurmukhamedov, 2025; Tomlinson, 2023a). Thus, materials development involves decisions on how learners encounter, interpret, and respond to texts, the sequencing of activities, and the integration of language support, rather than merely text selection (Bergström et al., 2023; Mamadjanova & Nurmukhamedov, 2025; Tomlinson, 2023a).

Following Tomlinson's TDA, teaching activities follow can six interconnected stages: readiness, experiential engagement, intake response, development, input response, and further development (Loi & Thanh, 2022; Tomlinson, 2023a). Readiness activities activate learners' prior experiences, visualisation, and inner speech before engagement with the text, prioritising mental preparation over discrete language instruction (Loi & Thanh, 2022; Tomlinson, 2023a). Experiential engagement supports personal mental representations, while intake response encourages learners to articulate their interpretations and feelings (Loi & Thanh, 2022). Development activities extend this engagement through purposeful language production; input response promotes interpretation and awareness of language and discourse; further development allows learners to revise or expand their work (Loi & Thanh, 2022; Tomlinson, 2023a). This progression connects text selection, activity design, and sequencing with learners' learning needs and contextual conditions (Cirocki et al., 2024; Tomlinson, 2023a). Examining teachers' accounts of these decisions can serve to clarify how research-informed principles are (re)interpreted and translated into materials development practices (Cirocki et al., 2024; Shu et al., 2024).

Recent research investigates the text-driven and related materials development from complementary perspectives; yet, it allows for further investigation into teachers' reflective accounts. Bergström et al. conducted interviews with eight Swedish materials developers, revealing that engaging texts influenced vocabulary decisions, which were also based on

user expectations and professional intuition (Bergström et al., 2023). Their study focused on design principles rather than teachers' reflections across different orientations. Diao and Yu proposed an emotional design framework that connects materials with sensory appeal, meaningful interaction, and reflection, thereby providing conceptual guidance rather than examining TDA implementation (Diao & Yu, 2026). Loi and Thanh studied text-driven reading instruction with 62 Vietnamese teenage learners, emphasising reading performance and learner engagement (Loi & Thanh, 2022). Le et al. through focus groups with 64 teachers in a Vietnamese Master's programme, identified challenges in linking knowledge of TDA procedures with implementation under workplace constraints (Le et al., 2026). These varied units of analysis offer complementary evidence but address distinct aspects of materials development. Collectively, these studies underscore the importance of examining design decisions and contextual demands, while also highlighting the need to explore how teachers assess previous work, recall adjustments during development, and plan for future practices.

This focus is pertinent to Vietnam's Mekong Delta, where research has investigated text-driven learning and teachers' experiences with the TDA (Le et al., 2026; Loi & Thanh, 2022). The study analysed teachers' evaluations of past experiences, their recollections of adjustments made during material development, and their future planning intentions concerning specific pedagogical design issues. The theoretical framework is based on Schön's concepts of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action (Schön, 1987), as well as Killion and Todnem's reflection-for-action. Reflection-in-action refers to the reconsideration of decisions during professional activities (Killion & Todnem, 1991), whereas reflection-on-action involves a retrospective analysis of experiences (Schön, 1987). Reflection-for-action utilises insights from past and present experiences to inform future decision-making (Killion & Todnem, 1991). Collectively, these perspectives offer an analytical foundation for linking teachers' reported evaluations, remembered adjustments, and prospective plans within TDA-based materials development (Killion & Todnem, 1991; Schön, 1987).

Accordingly, this study addresses three research questions: (1) How do Vietnamese EFL teachers reflect on their past experiences of developing materials through TDA? (2) How do Vietnamese EFL teachers reflect on and adjust their TDA-based material development during practice? (3) How do Vietnamese EFL teachers use insights from their experiences with TDA-based materials development to inform their future practices?

By examining reflection across these three temporal orientations, this study seeks to deepen the understanding of materials development as an ongoing process in which teachers revisit experiences, examine decisions made during practices, and draw on earlier insights when planning subsequent work. The current study also brings Schön's concepts of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action into dialogue with Killion and Todnem's reflection-for-action in the context of TDA-based materials development (Killion & Todnem, 1991; Schön, 1987). This integration offers a way to examine how reflection connects teachers' past experiences to their present pedagogical choices and future planning. Situated in Vietnam's Mekong Delta, this study adds context-sensitive insights into how EFL

teachers interpret and adapt TDA to their teaching circumstances. As for its novelty, the study's contribution lies not in assuming that one approach will suit every single setting, but in tracing how teachers make sense of TDA and (re)negotiate its principles through materials development experiences.

METHOD

This study adopted a qualitative multiple-case study design (Yin, 2017). This design enabled an in-depth (re)examination of each teacher's experiences and comparisons across cases while retaining the context of individual accounts. Each teacher constituted a single case. An interpretive view guided the study, with Schön's concepts of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action and Killion and Todnem's concept of reflection-for-action informing interpretation (Killion & Todnem, 1991; Schön, 1987). The study was conducted at a public university in Vietnam's Mekong Delta, where all participants had completed curriculum and materials development within a Master's programme in theories and methods of English language education. The course covered curriculum development, course design, materials selection and adaptation, teaching methods, and assessment. The instruction comprised theoretical studies (50%) and practical work (50%). The assessment included a mid-term practical work (40%) and a final assignment (60%), requiring students to design a course using TDA.

Purposive sampling was used to recruit teachers with relevant experiences. The eligibility criteria were as follows: (1) completion of the course and its TDA-based course-design assignment; (2) current employment as an EFL teacher; and (3) willingness and availability to complete three interview rounds. Twenty-five teachers were formally invited via email. Five met the criteria and consented to participate, but two subsequently withdrew due to time constraints. Three teachers completed all interviews. They worked in different educational contexts, allowing comparison across settings. Their characteristics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Paritcpants' Demographic Information

Case	Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Teaching experience	Teaching context
Case 1	Linh	Female	34	8 years	High school institution
Case 2	Minh	Male	39	11 years	Vocational college institution
Case 3	Thao	Female	32	6 years	Private language center

Data were obtained from three-round semi-structured interviews. Round 1 focused on reflection-on-action, inviting participants to revisit their experiences, pedagogical decisions, perceived strengths and limitations, and lessons learned. Round 2 explored participants' recollections of adjustments made during materials development and teaching, including responses to challenges and learners' learning needs. This addressed reflection-in-action through retrospective accounts rather than direct observation of decision-making as it occurred. Round 3 focused on reflection-for-action, examining participants' plans for future materials development, including text selection, teaching activities, instructional

procedures, and anticipated learners' needs. This round captured intended future practices, not actions verified through subsequent observation. Open-ended questions encouraged participants to describe their experiences in their terms, while follow-up questions elicited explanations of their decisions and responses. Table 2 summarises the interview protocol.

Table 2. Three-round Semi-structured Interview Protocol

Round	Focus	Objective
Round 1	Reflection-on-action	Participants' reflections on their experiences developing materials using TDA, including their decisions, perceived strengths and limitations, and lessons learned.
Round 2	Reflection-in-action	Participants' retrospective accounts of adjustments in materials development, including how they responded to challenges and learners' needs.
Round 3	Reflection-for-action	Participants reflected on how they intended to apply insights from previous experiences to future planning, including text selection, teaching activities, instructional procedures, and anticipated learners' learning needs.

Each participant participated in three interview rounds, resulting in nine interviews conducted in Vietnamese. These interviews lasted between 60 and 85 minutes each, with a combined duration of 640 minutes. Table 3 presents the duration of each of the interviews. With the participants' consent, the interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Transcripts were labelled using participant pseudonyms and interview-round identifiers (Linh-R1, Linh-R2, and Linh-R3) to facilitate data organisation and traceability during analysis. The nine transcripts constituted a complete dataset for analysis.

Table 3. Data Collected

Case	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Total
Case 1	75 minutes	65 minutes	80 minutes	220 minutes
Case 2	70 minutes	70 minutes	85 minutes	225 minutes
Case 3	60 minutes	60 minutes	75 minutes	195 minutes
Total	**205 minutes**	**195 minutes**	**240 minutes**	**640 minutes**

Data were analysed using Braun and Clarke's reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2022, 2023). The researcher first (re)read the transcripts to become familiar with participants' accounts, then generated initial semantic and latent codes capturing explicit meanings and underlying assumptions. Related codes were grouped into candidate themes, which were reviewed against coded extracts and the complete dataset. The researcher then refined the themes, clarified their central meanings, and assigned names that captured their analytical focus.

Each case was analysed individually before the cross-case comparison, preserving the contextual specificity of Linh's, Minh's, and Thao's lived experiences. The three cases were subsequently compared to identify shared patterns and differences in the TDA-based material development experiences. Schön's concepts of reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action, alongside Killion and Todnem's concept of reflection-for-action, served as

sensitising concepts rather than predetermined categories (Killion & Todnem, 1991; Schön, 1987). NVivo was used to organise all transcripts and store, retrieve, and compare coded excerpts. Table 4 summarises the within-case analysis and cross-case comparison.

Table 4. Within-case Analysis and Cross-case Comparison

Step	Linh (Case 1)	Minh (Case 2)	Thao (Case 3)	Theoretical alignment
Initial coding	Text-based activities; lesson coherence; future text selection	Repetitive tasks, task sequencing, and vocabulary support.	Abrupt transitions and insufficient scaffolding.	Three dimensions of teacher reflection
Within-case analysis	Evaluating activities: Using texts to guide planning.	Evaluating task repetition and revising familiar routines.	Evaluating task progression and maintaining text-driven planning.	Reflection-on-action, reflection-in-action, and reflection-for-action
Candidate themes	Authentic texts as a source of connected activities	Sequencing and vocabulary support as design challenges	Task transitions and scaffolding as design challenges	Themes interpreted through the three reflective dimensions
Theme review and refinement	Text selection and connections among activities	Communicative purpose, task variety, and future self-monitoring	Textual coherence, task progression, and learner support	Shared and case-specific patterns across the three cases
Cross-case comparison	Opportunities offered by authentic texts	Emphasis on task sequencing and language support	Emphasis on transitions and scaffolding	Convergence and divergence

Before data collection, all participants provided written informed consent. They were informed of the study's purpose, the voluntary nature of participation, audio-recording procedures, the intended use of interview data, confidentiality, and their right to withdraw without any penalty. Pseudonyms were used, and identifying details were excluded from reporting where necessary. Audio recordings and transcripts were stored securely, treated as confidential, and accessible only to the research team. Formal ethical approval was not obtained; this is acknowledged transparently as a limitation of the study's procedures.

Trustworthiness was addressed using Lincoln and Guba's criteria (Lincoln et al., 1985). Credibility was supported through member checking, with participants invited to review their interview transcripts for accuracy and to clarify their meanings. Discussions with two peers familiar with qualitative studies examined the coding, candidate themes, and alternative interpretations. An audit trail documenting analytical decisions, coding revisions, and theme development supported the dependability. Transferability was addressed using descriptions of the participants' backgrounds and teaching contexts, allowing readers to assess the relevance of the findings to other similar settings. To support confirmability, the

researcher examined the interpretations against specific interview extracts and the dataset as a whole.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The findings are organised around three themes emerging from the participants' accounts. The first concerns the role of authentic texts in connecting teaching activities. The second focuses on the challenges the participants recalled and the adjustments they made to materials development practices. The third examines how these experiences informed their intentions for future planning.

1. Authentic texts as a shared reference for lesson coherence

A common thread across the three cases was the importance of authentic texts in guiding materials development. Not accepting the text as reading input, participants described using it as a reference point for developing activities and maintaining a sense of coherence in a lesson. However, each of them placed different emphases on how this relationship worked in practice.

For Linh, the text was central to the entire planning process. She emphasised this point directly: "*the text itself led everything in this approach, from my perspective, I must say so!*" She explained that "*once I focused on the authentic text, planning to me is much easier*," because the text suggested possibilities for different activities. As she put it, "*the text itself suggested questions for discussion, ideas for writing, and opportunities to explore language*." In this case, the selected text helped her see how discussion, vocabulary work, and writing could be connected rather than planned as separate lesson components. Linh also used the text to check the relevance of individual activities, noting that "*every activity could be checked against the same text then!!!*"

In another case, Minh valued authentic texts, although his reflections focused more on maintaining the purposes of the entire unit. He explained that "*having a text foundation meant the entire unit retained its core focus. Even after weeks of revisions, the materials did not lose their original communicative purpose*." This suggests that, for Minh, the values of the text extended beyond the initial design stage. It remained a point of reference when activities were revised, helping him consider whether the materials continued to serve their intended communicative purposes. He expressed his own concern about keeping the unit purposeful and cohesive.

Thao's reflections centred on the relationships between the text and the activities as the materials evolved. She recalled that "*every revision helped me recognise another place where the lesson drifted away from the text*." This observation indicates that maintaining a text-driven orientation required ongoing attention; it was not necessarily achieved simply by selecting an authentic text at the beginning. Thao described how "*rearranging the activities allowed the discussion, reading tasks, and language work to follow a natural progression*."

2. Reported adjustments and challenges in materials development practices

Although all participants recognised the value of authentic texts, their accounts also revealed challenges in translating a TDA into actual materials development practices. Such challenges were not identical across cases. Minh was particularly concerned with task repetition and the tendency to return to familiar teaching routines, whereas Thao focused on transitions and the amount of support needed between teaching activities. Linh's reflections placed greater emphasis on organising activities around the text and checking their connections.

Minh described having to revise his materials several times because the activities still resembled conventional reading lessons. He recalled, "*I rewrote the lesson several times as the activities still looked like conventional reading exercises* […] *As I checked the sequence again, I noticed that I had returned to teaching vocabulary or grammar first*." This account reveals a tension between his intention to follow TDA and familiar practices that continued to shape his planning. Even when he attempted to develop text-driven materials, he found himself returning to vocabulary or grammar as a starting point. His difficulty was therefore not simply a matter of creating activities, but of reconsidering the assumptions that informed their sequencing.

He also noticed that some tasks did not offer sufficiently varied engagement with the text: "*certain reading prompts felt repetitive as they duplicated the same comprehension focus without exploring different dimensions of the text*." This reflection suggests that task design required more than adding several activities around a single text. The activities also needed to serve different purposes and encourage engagement with different aspects of the text. For Minh, the challenge was to maintain the text as an organising reference and, in doing so, avoid repetitive tasks and reconsider when language-focused work should occur.

In another case, Thao identified a different difficulty. In her account, the activities did not always build on one another smoothly, particularly when learners were expected to move from initial engagement with a text to more demanding work. She explained that "*the tasks demanded too much interpretive work without enough transitional support*" and that "*the jump from initial engagement to analytical writing was too wide*." These comments point to a gap between the intended progression of the lesson and the support built into the materials. Her reflections suggest that keeping activities connected to an authentic text was not, by itself, enough to ensure a coherent sequence. Attention also needed to be paid to the transitions between tasks and the support required at different stages.

Linh's account, by comparison, emphasised the centred role of the text in guiding the organisation of activities. Her reflection that "*every activity could be checked against the same text then!!!*" indicates how she herself used the text to reconsider whether activities belonged together within the lesson. While her own accounts did not foreground the same specific difficulties described by Minh and Thao, it reveals a related concern: activities needed to remain meaningfully connected to the text itself.

3. Future planning intentions shaped by previous experiences

Regarding reflection-for-action, the participants reflected on how their previous lived experiences might influence their future materials development practices. Their accounts moved beyond identifying what had long been difficult and (re)considered what they would prioritise, monitor, or approach differently in future planning. Although all three intended to retain a text-driven orientation, their future priorities reflected concerns they had identified in their earlier experiences.

For Linh, the main priority was to select an appropriate text. She stated that "*every new unit I design will start with the search for a truly compelling text*." This intention reflects her earlier experience of finding that the text could generate ideas for discussion, vocabulary exploration and writing. Rather than treating text selection as one step among many, she intended to make it the starting point for the subsequent planning. Her reflection also suggests that the suitability of the text would remain a critical consideration in shaping subsequent activities.

Minh's future plans were more closely related to monitoring the development process and anticipating possible difficulties in the future. He acknowledged some possible risks of returning to familiar routines, explaining, "*when I think about designing the next set of materials, I worry that I will fall back into old habits and rely too heavily on traditional vocabulary lists before letting the authentic text speak for itself*." To address this design concern, he intended to "*rebuild checkpoints into my future planning templates to catch those deviations early*." He also recognised the need to anticipate design difficulties rather than respond to them only after problems have emerged. As he explained, "*preparing for future units means I must completely rethink how I sequence tasks, because anticipating the friction between unvarnished texts and institutional expectations requires me to design alternative pathways right from the start rather than scrambling to fix broken blueprints later*."

Thao's intentions focused on maintaining a text-driven orientation while paying closer attention to the progression of activities. She observed that "*the next planning cycle is more likely to require strict discipline to avoid slipping back into old textbook routines*." In light of her earlier concerns about abrupt transitions and insufficient support, this intention suggests an awareness that the approach itself would need to be sustained throughout the planning process.

Table 5. Cross-case synthesis of findings

Finding	Shared pattern	Differences across cases
Authentic texts and lesson coherence	The texts served as references for developing connected materials.	Linh focused on generating activities; Minh on communicative purpose; and Thao on maintaining text–activity connections.
Reported challenges and adjustments	Participants reconsidered how the activities were designed and organised.	Linh emphasised activity organisation; Minh focused on task repetition and sequencing; and Thao highlighted transitions and scaffolding.

Future planning intentions	Previous experiences informed the anticipated changes to future practices.	Linh prioritised text selection; Minh planned checkpoints and alternative pathways; Thao emphasised text-driven planning and task progression.

4. Cross-case synthesis

These findings suggest that participants' experiences with TDA involved both a shared commitment to authentic texts and different levels of concerns about how to translate that commitment into materials development practices (see Table 5). Their reflections also show how specific design challenges informed their anticipated priorities for future planning. This cross-case analysis sets the stage for discussing these lived experiences through Schön's concepts of reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action, alongside Killion and Todnem's concept of reflection-for-action.

Discussion

This study examined reflections of three EFL teachers in Vietnam on the development of teaching materials using Tomlinson's TDA (Tomlinson, 2018). Their narratives linked the use of authentic texts with design decisions and future practice plans. While all three teachers viewed authentic texts as essential for creating coherent materials, their lesson planning priorities varied. Using Schön's concepts of reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action (Schön, 1987), alongside Killion and Todnem's reflection-for-action (Killion & Todnem, 1991), these accounts reveal experiences, reconsidered decisions, and anticipated practices. This analysis connects trio-reflection with pedagogical reasoning in materials design (Siegel, 2024). The participants' focus on authentic texts aligns with TDA's emphasis on meaningful engagement prior to language-focused analysis (Mackey et al., 2016; Tomlinson, 2018, 2023b). Authentic texts directed teaching activities and lesson planning, reflecting materials developers' reported emphasis on engaging texts (Bergström et al., 2023). However, task sequencing requires separate consideration, as research suggests that task order can affect L2 production (Abdi Tabari & Wind, 2025). Participants evaluated the purposes of activities, how each stage prepared learners for subsequent ones, and the support necessary for progression. Their concerns about repetitive tasks and abrupt transitions indicate that a shared text alone did not guarantee perceived coherence. These narratives highlight the practical challenges of translating principles into materials through context-sensitive design decisions (Cirocki et al., 2024; Siegel, 2024). Thus, selecting an appropriate text served as a starting point; yet, sequencing, language support, and transitions remained interconnected design considerations.

The variations observed across the three cases indicate distinct design priorities. Linh prioritised the text's ability to generate and connect activities, while Minh concentrated on repetition, sequencing, and the strategic placement of vocabulary and grammar, and Thao focused on transitions and support between stages. These priorities reflect diverse forms of pedagogical reasoning in materials design (Siegel, 2024). Minh questioned established

routines and the extent to which tasks engaged learners with different aspects of a text. His concerns underscore task sequencing as a critical design decision, aligning with evidence that task order can influence L2 production (Abdi Tabari et al., 2025). Thao evaluated whether learners received adequate support for teaching activities demanding substantial interpretation, resonating with research on planning and adapting scaffolding (Blair et al., 2024). Linh's focus on activities derived from the text corresponds with TDA's emphasis on connections between texts, learners' experiences, and subsequent tasks (Tomlinson, 2023b). Overall, materials development across the cases involved the coordination of text selection, task design, and lesson progression.

Schön's concept of reflection-on-action elucidates how participants revisited prior design decisions, assessed materials, and identified the limitations inherent in text-driven planning (Schön, 1987). This process of reconsideration links reflective practice to material design (Siegel, 2024). Reflection-in-action provides a provisional perspective on participants' recollections of the adjustments made during development. Minh described the process of rewriting a lesson while re-evaluating task sequencing and language-focused activities, whereas Thao recalled reorganising activities to achieve a more natural progression in the lesson. These narratives indicate that reviewing and revising decisions were integral to the participants' reported TDA-related experiences. Nonetheless, retrospective interviews were insufficient to independently determine the timing and sequence of these decisions. Research comparing memory-based and video-supported written reflections similarly suggests that recalled events necessitate careful (re)interpretation (Ovadiya, 2024). Consequently, reflection-in-action was inferred from the participants' recollections without direct observation of the design sessions, highlighting the acknowledged challenges in examining reflection as it occurs (Johannessen, 2024). These critical findings encapsulate remembered and interpreted design processes, the moment-to-moment development of which warrants further investigation.

The participants' future plans align with Killion and Todnem's concept of reflection-for-action and recent discussions on anticipatory reflection in language teaching (Burhan-Horasanlı & Hart, 2024; Killion & Todnem, 1991). Each participant identified a priority linked to previous design concerns. Linh aimed to initiate new units by selecting an engaging authentic text. Minh intended to integrate checkpoints into planning templates and consider alternative pathways to anticipate potential challenges. Thao planned to maintain a TDA and avoid reverting to conventional textbook routines. These plans illustrate various manifestations of reflection-for-action: establishing a guiding principle, implementing procedures for decision review, and maintaining a pedagogical focus. The connection between past evaluations and future planning is consistent with discussions on reflective materials design (Siegel, 2024). However, these statements merely document intentions; it remains uncertain whether they influenced subsequent practice, as later design cycles were not examined.

These findings align with recent research on TDA and teacher reflection. Tomlinson outlined the pedagogical principles that form the foundation of TDA (Mackey et al., 2016;

Tomlinson, 2018), whereas Loi and Thanh explored its impact on learners' reading performance (Loi & Thanh, 2022). This study contributes to the literature by incorporating teachers' narratives regarding design decisions related to task sequencing, language support, and activity transitions. Le et al. through focus groups with 64 Vietnamese novice teachers, identified challenges in applying TDA knowledge in practice (Le et al., 2026). Building on this focus, the current multiple-case design integrates participants' evaluations of previous materials, recollected modifications, and future plans. This approach connects reflective materials design (Siegel, 2024) with the relationships between past experiences and anticipatory reflection as investigated by Burhan-Horasanlı and Ortaçtepe Hart (Burhan-Horasanlı & Hart, 2024). The study's contribution lies in analyzing the interconnections among these three dimensions within accounts of TDA-based materials development, while differentiating reported experiences from directly observed practices.

The findings indicate significant implications for teacher education and materials development. Training in the Task-Based Approach (TDA) could address both the selection of authentic texts and the role of tasks in guiding lesson direction, aligning with principles of materials design (Siegel, 2024; Tomlinson, 2023b). The processes of selecting appropriate texts and constructing coherent sequences involve related yet distinct decisions. Consequently, guidance could encompass questions regarding task variety, sequencing, and the timing of language-focused activities (Abdi Tabari & Wind, 2025; Mamadjanova & Nurmukhamedov, 2025; Tomlinson, 2023a). This proposal addresses Minh's concerns about repetitive tasks and routines dominated by familiar vocabulary or grammar. Thao's observations suggest the need to review transitions and anticipated learner support, consistent with research on planning scaffolding (Blair et al., 2024). Minh's proposed planning checkpoints could also facilitate opportunities for self-assessment. Teachers could evaluate whether activities remain textually connected, whether their sequence serves a clear purpose, and whether potential challenges have been anticipated. Such anticipatory review aligns with the concept of reflection-for-action (Burhan-Horasanlı & Hart, 2024). These suggestions emerge from participants' concerns; their efficacy warrants further investigation in the context of teacher education and materials development.

The limitations of this study merit careful consideration. This study involved three teachers enrolled in the same Master's program at a university in Vietnam's Mekong Delta. Although the multiple-case design facilitated an in-depth examination of their experiences, the findings cannot be generalised across institutions or among EFL teachers. The transferability of the results necessitates an evaluation of contextual similarities (Drisko, 2025). Future research should incorporate teachers from diverse institutions and backgrounds to explore contextual variations in TDA-based materials development. The reliance on semi-structured interviews implies that design decisions were reported retrospectively; reflection-in-action was inferred from participants' recollections rather than direct observation of design sessions. Integrating recorded observations with stimulated recall could link participants' reported reasoning to specific design events (Zhai et al., 2024), although such recall would still be retrospective. Lesson plans, worksheets, and other

artefacts were not independently analysed to verify reported revisions. Comparing drafts, annotations, and revised plans with interview accounts could elucidate the relationship between reflection and documented changes, following methodologies that combine reflective dialogue with teaching artefacts (Johannessen, 2024). Additionally, subsequent design cycles were not monitored, leaving the implementation of intentions unresolved. Longitudinal research could investigate whether plans regarding authentic texts, planning checkpoints, and task sequencing influence later materials development, in line with research that traces anticipatory reflection into practice (Burhan-Horasanlı & Hart, 2024). Overall, participants demonstrated a shared commitment to authentic texts but exhibited differing concerns regarding task design, lesson coherence, and future planning. Linking retrospective evaluations, recalled adjustments, and anticipated changes with the concepts of reflection proposed by Schön (1987) and Killion and Todnem (1991) provides insight into how experience informs pedagogical thinking.

CONCLUSION

This study explored how participants reflected on their experiences of developing teaching materials through Tomlinson's TDA. Their accounts highlighted the role of authentic texts in shaping materials development but also revealed the challenges involved in organising activities around those authentic texts. Task sequencing, language support, and transitions between activities were recurring considerations, although each participant approached these issues differently.

Looking at the three dimensions of reflection, the participants' data show how evaluations of previous experiences informed their understanding of the approach, their recollections of adjustments during practices, and their intentions for future planning. These dimensions offer a useful way of understanding reflection as an ongoing process rather than an isolated evaluation after the lesson. For teacher education, a development–review–revision cycle may be a useful starting point. Teachers can examine whether selected texts are suitable for their learners, whether tasks follow a meaningful progression, and whether sufficient support is available as learners move between activities. Planning checkpoints could help them identify potential gaps prior to finalising their material. However, further research is needed to determine the practical utility of these strategies. Examining successive drafts of teaching materials, observing design sessions, and following participants through later planning cycles would help clarify how reflective insights shape the actual design decisions. Such work would substantially extend this study by moving beyond experience to explore how TDA-based material development unfolds longitudinally.

CRediT Authorship Contribution

The sole author was responsible for conceptualisation, methodology, investigation, formal analysis, data curation, writing (original draft), and writing (review and editing).

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Ethics Statement

All procedures performed in the current study involving human participants adhered to institutional ethical standards and the ethical principles of the Declaration of Helsinki. Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included. Confidentiality and anonymity of participants were strictly maintained throughout the data collection, analysis, and reporting phases.

Declaration of Competing Interests

The author declares no conflicts of interest with respect to this study, authorship, or publication.

Declaration of AI use

In the preparation of this work, the author used artificial intelligence tools (ChatGPT-04) only for proofreading. Following the use of these tools, the author reviewed and edited the content as needed and took responsibility for the content of the published article.

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