

Pondering on Issues and Obstacles in Reflective Teaching in Iranian Context

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Abstract Travelling through time, we can trace the very first steps of writings on reflection in the works of Aristotle, Plato, and Socrates under the concept of “educational thinking” philosophy. Dewey[1] argues that reflective action entails a readiness to engage in regular self-appraisal and development. So in reflective teaching, critical thinking on the part of teachers is the central point. This paper is the second phase of a survey which was carried out to examine the status of reflective teaching in the Iranian educational settings. The method employed was as follows. In the first phase, 190 EFL teachers took part to reveal their pursuing reflectivity principles or skipping them by filling out a questionnaire. Afterward, based on the scores obtained, the initial participants were categorized into two main groups of “reflectivity-conscious” and “reflectivity-unconscious” teachers. In the second phase, which is the focus of this paper, five participants of each group were selected by means of purposive sampling to go through a semi-structured interview. The interview questions were fundamentally in line with the literature available on reflection and reflective teaching. Participants revealed their view points towards reflectivity and lack of reflectivity, its meaning, issues, problems, and the howness of bringing reflection to all educational settings. Reflection was scrutinized in relation to other trends in the field and the main themes and issues were pointed out based on the literature. Results of the analysis showed that the main problem contributing to the lack of reflection in Iranian context was the teachers’ ignorance towards reflective teaching principles. It could be concluded that this lack of knowledge, at the same time, could be explained pointing to the failure of Iran’s educational system in fostering reflective teaching and developing reflective teachers.

Keywords Reflective Teaching, Reflection, Critical Thinking, Postmethod Teachers, Action Research, Critical Pedagogy

1. Introduction

Teacher education is approximately a new notion in language teaching domain which is gradually replacing the traditional teacher training concept which condensed the authority of the teachers in organizing their dynamic classes. An important contribution of teacher education is its development of teachers’ abilities to examine teaching from a broad perspective of all the elements engaged in the teaching-learning practice. To this end, reflective teaching, which is defined as stepping back and thinking about one’s actions or thoughts[2], comes to the front line. Travelling through time, we can trace back the very first writings on the importance and significance of reflection to the Socrates’ (469-399 BC) philosophy which is known for the phrase “the unexamined life isn’t worth living” (quoted by Plato in *Apology*, as cited in[3]). Aristotle (384-322 BC) also put emphasis on reflection when he argued there is no virtuous

activity as timely as the activity of wisdom and philosophic reflection (as cited in[4]). John Dewey[1], who made a great contribution to the contemporary educational system by coining the term reflective teaching, described reflection as an “active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and further conclusions to which it tends” (p. 9). Dewey’s theory of reflection encourages educators to pose questions on the status quo circumstances while looking at the situation stepping back. He claimed that, through reflection, individuals are able to think critically and scientifically. As reflection has been identified as critical to the practice of teaching and learning ([5];[6];[7];[8];[9];[10];[11]) it is of high significance for educators to understand the reflective process and its impact on practice. In line with the new era of critical thinking and critical pedagogy, scholars attentions have been turned to reflection and being reflective more than any other time. To educationists reflection not only aids in the creation of new knowledge but also provides insight into prior learning ([1];[12];[10];[11];[13]). Dewey[14] stated that reflection is an important tool for teaching, since it lets us know where we are standing when we act. It transforms action that is “merely

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appetitive, blind, and impulsive into intelligent action” (p.12). Being reflective will make flexible practitioners eventually if practiced consistently[15]. Reflection offers an opportunity to be less conceited in our thoughts and actions, and develop a greater consciousness of different attitudes and possibilities[15].

2. Reflection Tied to Other Trends

Reflective teaching has been discussed repeatedly in association with other new trends in the field. Some trends that are very closely allied with reflection and inform the present study are the intersections of post-method pedagogy, critical pedagogy, and action research with reflective teaching.

Kumaravadivelu[16] defines *postmethod condition* as a sustainable state of affairs that compels us to fundamentally restructure our view of language teaching and teacher education. He calls for refiguring the relationship between theory and practice. He has proposed a three-level context sensitive framework consisting of three main parameters. These pedagogic parameters are parameter of particularity, parameter of practicality, and parameter of possibility. It is the parameter of practicality which is mainly in line with teacher education in general and with reflective teaching in particular. By applying this principle the border between “professional theories” and “personal theories” is diminished. Besides that, he argues, teachers need to theorize from their practice and practice what they theorize ([17],[16]). This context feeds and is fed by teachers reflectivity. Reflective thinking, he asserts would enable teachers to understand and localize the problems and choose the best solution at hand to meet the situation. “The parameter of practicality, then, focuses on teachers’ reflection and action, which are also based on their insights and intuition” ([16], p.173). In the same vein he parallels his reflective thinking with Prabhu’s[18] “sense of plausibility”.

The second trend related to reflective teaching is action research. *Action research* is defined as “taking action based on research and researching the action taken” ([19], p.538). The chief difference between action research and other types of research is that the primary purpose in action research is to take action to solve a problem or to improve a practice. It involves the cycle of reflect-plan-act-observe. Johnson[20] indicates that AR is one facet of reflective teaching and this legitimizes the status of professional knowledge. He denotes that professional knowledge gained as a result of action research will expand individual teacher insight. Sparks & Simmons[21] assert that action research is a form of professional development that encourages educators to become more reflective practitioners, more meticulous problem solvers, and more divisive decision makers. Sagor[22] goes on one step further to denote that the important purpose for action research is preparing the reflective practitioner.

One of the most pertinent movements in the field which

can be supposed to have the same basis as reflectivity is critical pedagogy. One of the main purposes of the practice of critical pedagogy in teacher education is preparing individuals for participation in a democratic society. According to Richards[23] the field of Second Language Teacher Education, as with other areas of language teaching, has also been influenced by issues posed by critical theory and critical pedagogy, enhancing reflection on the hidden curriculum that sometimes dominates language teaching policies and practices. Language teachers, in this line, have a particular role to play in promoting their learners’ more comprehensive participation in classrooms and societies on the whole. Ample body of literature on teacher education suggests that prospective teachers tend to uncritically and often unconsciously hold beliefs and attitudes about the existing social order that reflect dominant ideologies that are harmful to so many students ([24],[25],[26],[27]). Here the need for the marriage between teacher education and critical pedagogy and the significant role of teachers as the agents of change can be disclosed.

3. The Study

3.1. Research Question

As the study is conducted by means of a qualitative research method, questions were evolved during the study. But the main question we were to answer at the beginning of the study was: “what are the issues and obstacles in the process of reflectivity in the Iranian context?” This question was the trigger of conducting the study.

3.2. Objectives and Significance of the Study

With the ample pieces of evidence concerning the significance of teachers’ mission in all educational curriculums and also the authority given to them by post-method ideologies, it has been observed that teachers are yet following the traditional way of teaching with their mouths widely shut and their voices choked by just following some prescribed principles. Autonomous post-method teachers need to be learners of their own past experiences and their current situation. They also could do with reflecting on what they have learned through this *learner hood*. Even though many scholars have established their own theories in line with reflective teaching, they are by and large left at the theory level.

The study aims at illustrating the main reasons of the presence/absence of reflectivity in educational settings. To this end, the researcher is to offer some guidelines for reflective teaching to become the integral part of every classroom. As the study was done in the Iranian contexts, it attempted to add to the body of literature on reflective teaching and bring consciousness to the educational and training systems. Offering some content ideas about reflection, the study attempted to support and foster critical reflection in Iranian classrooms.

3.3. Participants and Sampling Procedures

As it was mentioned earlier, 190 EFL teachers took part in the quantitative part of the study by filling out the questionnaire. Based on the scores they received, they were categorized into two groups of “reflectivity-conscious” teachers and “reflectivity-unconscious” teachers. The first group seemed to be familiar with the concept of reflection and claimed that they followed the principles in their classrooms. The second group, however, was supposed to be ignorant of the principles. Five participants of each group were selected to go through the second stage of the study. In line with the objectives of the study, the participants were selected by means of “purposive sampling” procedure. “Reflectivity-conscious” participants of the second phase were chosen among those teachers who were familiar with the concepts of reflection, teacher education, and other innovative trends in the field of SLA. “Reflectivity-unconscious” participants were those who were seen as more helpful and supportive in the procedure of study. They took part in a semi-structured interview to unveil the issues and obstacles in the reflectivity process in Iranian context. In what follows, the participants are introduced shortly and through the study they are pointed by their abbreviations:

➤ Reflectivity-conscious participants:

P-1: Male, 26 years old; MA student of TEFL at Shiraz University; 5 years of teaching experience.

P-2: Female, 29 years old, PhD candidate at Azad University; Shiraz Branch; 10 years of teaching experience; having some articles on reflective teaching and critical pedagogy.

P-3: Male, 30 years old; MA student of TEFL at Shiraz University; 8 years of teaching experience.

P-4: Female, 30 years old; MA student of TEFL at Shiraz University; 5 years of teaching experience.

P-5: Male; 43 years old; PhD holder; Faculty member and University Lecturer at Tarbiat Modarres University, Tehran; 15 years of teaching experience.

➤ Reflectivity-unconscious participants:

P-6: Female; 25 years old; MA student of TEFL at Shiraz University; 5 years of teaching experience; interested in critical pedagogy

P-7: Female; 25 years old; MA student of TEFL at Shiraz University; 4 years of teaching experience.

P-8: Male; 31 years old; PhD candidate of TEFL, at Kualalampure, Malaysia; 15 years of teaching experience.

P-9: Male; 34 years old; MA student of TEFL at Shiraz University; 15 years of teaching experience.

P-10: Female; 22 years old; BA student of translation, Azad University, Shiraz branch; 2 years of teaching experience.

3.4. Instrument and its Validity

The primary method of data collection was

semi-structured interview. A semi-structured interview is a verbal process consisting of predetermined semiformal questions. This approach allowed for additional clarification and/or exploration of a question or an answer when necessary. The questions were designed to elicit information from the participants based on their experiences with the concept. The semi-structured interview questions were developed from the information gleaned through exploring the literature. Questions were designed in two forms for the two groups of *reflectivity-conscious teachers* and *reflectivity-unconscious teachers* (Appendices 1, 2). Questions were prepared in two different forms with the same underlying concepts to elicit different issues from the two groups of participants. The aim of interview with the first group, who was familiar with the teacher education, reflective teaching, and other related concepts, was to directly glean information regarding the main issues and obstacles of reflective process. Interview with the second group, on the other hand, was to indirectly elicit themes that were considered as hindrance to reflection by means of what teachers believe and do in their classrooms.

To assure about the content validity, the researcher needs to examine the plan and procedures used in developing the instrument[28]. To this end a panel of experts was asked to examine the questions for their content relevance. The panel consisted of three faculty members of Shiraz University who had expertise and experience in the field of SLA in general and reflective teaching in particular. The expert panel made suggestions for modifications, and then pointed out that the interview questions provided the appropriate data to inform the research.

3.5. Data Collection

The participants went through a semi-structured interview. Based on their explanations, the study moved on to the next section of the study, which was scrutinizing the major sources of (lack of) considering reflectivity principles among EFL teachers. In this regard their answers were transcribed and the main themes and the general *raison d'être* of the principles were deciphered based on the current literature on reflective teaching.

3.6. Data Analysis

The transcriptions of the interviews were codified and categorized based on the literature available on reflectivity. As the reflectivity-conscious participants were familiar with the current trends in the field, their key words are summarized in the table below.

As it is evident from the key terms above, reflective teaching is something that needs time to grow, is closely tied to teacher autonomy and teacher development, and has critical pedagogy and critical thinking as its baseline. In what follows, we discuss the participants' excerpts and try to support and justify them referring to the literature on reflection and reflective teaching.

Table 1. Key terms definitions

	KW1	KW2	KW3	KW4	KW5	KW6	KW7
P-1	Related to Critical thinking	Is a life-long experience	Practice of silence in Iran educational system	Need for judicious programming	Research is critical	Teaching of reflection	We need modification in educational system
P-2	Continuous	Time-based	Goal-Oriented	Evaluative	Teachers as agents of change	Related to autonomy	Closed educational system in Iran
P-3	Goal-oriented	Affects on future actions	Self-assessment	Reflection on society	Need for social injustice examples	Teachers as agents of change	Action research
P-4	Teacher autonomy	Teacher development	Decision making power	Meaning making	Teachers as critical figures		
P-5	Practical outcome	Action research	Leads to teacher independency	Educating to reflection	Students' improvement	No incentive for improvement in Iran educational system	

4. Discussion

In this part we are going to delve into the concept of reflectivity in details. So, the issues, obstacles, and guidelines will be presented based on what the participants discussed.

4.1. What are the Main Themes of Reflection?

In order to find the main themes of reflection and what informs the concept of reflectivity, the reflectivity-conscious teachers were asked to define reflective teaching and the aspects of reflection which are important to them. The four prominent themes that emerged as follows:

Theme 1: Reflection is continuous.

This theme emerged as the participants talked about the dynamic nature of reflection, something that grows through time: The following are excerpts from the data revealing the theme:

- Reflective teaching is the result of teacher's life long experience that grows with their consideration (P-1).
- reflection is a continuous process which evolves through time (P-2).

Schon[10] in the same regard suggested that reflective teaching practice is a continuous process and involves learner thoughtfully considering one's own experience in applying knowledge to practice while being taught by professionals. Jasper[29], also, associated reflective teaching practice with lifelong learning resulting in the development of autonomous, qualified and self-directed professionals.

Theme 2: Reflection is tied to the broader context of society.

Nearly all reflectivity-conscious teachers and also some of the reflectivity-unconscious ones believed that reflection and reflectivity have the main standards of society as the pedestal point. It can be argued in relation to what they said on the whole but in some excerpts, it was proposed plainly:

- Reflection is a process in which an experience is recalled, considered, and evaluated, usually in relation to a broader purpose (P-2).

- From my viewpoint, as an EFL teacher, reflections on society, education in general, classroom, and self-assessment are enormously important (P-3).

- in other words, reflective teaching improves the ability of learners to be able to criticize social issues (P-1).

This issue is closely tied with the concept of critical pedagogy and will be discussed in more details in the following parts, but we refer to some social issues in reflective practice argued by different scholars. Giroux[30], for instance, argues that language teachers are not simply teaching English as a neutral vehicle, but they are able to function as moral agents in the society.

Theme 3: Reflection has critical thinking as its baseline.

The association between reflectivity and critical thinking has been repeatedly discussed by different pedagogues. In the present interview reflectivity-conscious teachers also pointed to the close bonds between the two.

- It is concerned with the application of critical thinking in the context of classroom. Critical matters can be thought of as everything which let teachers and learners think. In other words, reflective teaching improves the ability of teachers and learners to be able to criticize social issues (P-1).

- I believe teachers to be reflective need to be good thinkers. They should cast doubt on the status quo of the classroom and help learners to think in the same way also (P-5).

- I think the most important aspect of such an approach is equipping learners with critical thinking. No learning can be achieved without this strategy and if there is any it is of no use (P-3).

- I think the most important aspect of such an approach is equipping learners with critical thinking. No learning can be achieved without this strategy and if there is any it is of no use (P-4)

Reflective teaching strengthened by critical thinking, according to Breunig[31], encourages meaningful transformative educational experiences. Nurturing reflective teaching is the base of success for teacher education and

critical thinking and gaining a deep understanding of the teaching practice are considered to be the ultimate goal of reflective teaching[32].

Theme 4: Reflection is by all means goal oriented and evaluative.

Nearly all participants believed that reflection should be applied with regard to some goals in the teacher's mind. By means of self assessment, teachers may modify their teaching processes to reach the final results. These goals may be a change to the society, or a change in the way of presenting the materials or any other route to the improvement of teaching situation:

- Each activity should lead to a change and this change should be in line with human moral and social development. This is the goal of teacher which defines the change needed to be applied (P-1).
- When I reflect on my teaching I go back and contemplate what didn't work well, why that was, and what can be added next time to reach my teaching objective (P-3).
- For me, though, the evaluation aspect of reflection has played the most crucial role (P-2).
- From my viewpoint, as an EFL teacher, self-assessment is enormously important part of reflection (P-4).

Vieira and Marques[33] also support the idea of goal oriented reflectivity by stating that promoting critically reflective teachers is a value-laden goal, with direct implications for how one defines the direction of reflection, its aims and scope.

4.2. Reflective Teaching and Action Research

Taking heed of the importance of action research in education, Geiger[34] notes that in the current era research advances knowledge, cultivates and challenges education, and sustains a pool of wisdom that can be drawn upon. Farrell[35] refers to action research, his fifth element of five-part model, as a crucial part of reflective teaching. Action research, he supposes, is a vehicle through which teachers become researchers of their own and can be autonomous and independent. Johnson[20] indicates that AR is one facet of reflective teaching and this legitimizes the status of professional knowledge. He denotes that professional knowledge gained as a result of action research will expand individual teacher insight.

The present study also attempted to scrutinize this element in reference to reflective teaching. To this end, reflectivity-conscious participants were asked about the implementation of action research in their classrooms. By their answering to the question "what's the role of research in reflection? Elaborate on your answer please", the following excerpts were reached upon:

- There is a close relationship between reflectivity and action research. Reflective teachers consider themselves as researches and view their classes as research arenas. When a teacher is a researcher by her own, we can observe the real change we need in educational system (P-1).
- Reflection has been related closely to the concept of

action research. RT is a process of careful, persistent, and active evaluation of teaching as a basis for the betterment of the situation, and decision-making and as a source for planning and action. So it is an active interaction between teaching and evaluation of teaching; a process which is pursued perfectly in action research (P-2).

- I think the two go hand in hand. Reflection cannot be much of help unless it is accompanied by research. Although reflection may feed from theory, its maturity is undoubtedly contingent upon research (P-3).
- I deeply believe that research is the basis of change in education. By the means of research results conducted in the classrooms the field of education has experienced these paradigm shifts (P-4).
- For some people, action research and reflective teaching are the two sides of the same coin. One can view reflection as an alternative form of action research. By action research, reflective teachers evaluate themselves and their classroom stuff (P-5).

Taking a look at the excerpts above and the literature supporting the subject we came to the following themes:

Theme 1: Action research is the basis of change in educational system

This theme emerged as some of the reflective participants argued about the need to change to the betterment of educational system. As it is evident in the participants 1 and 4 comments, action researches done in the classrooms are considered as the triggers to enormous changes and sometimes even to paradigm shifts. Brown[36] noted that the results of studies done on teachers engaging in the processes of action research and reflective teaching place educators in a more able position to critically influence the future of teaching and learning.

Theme 2: Action research, like reflective teaching, has evaluative function

One of the key features of reflective teaching is teachers' pondering on their own teaching. In other words, teachers evaluate and reevaluate themselves based on their reflections and outcomes. Action research may act in the similar way, changing the direction of teaching based on the research results. The evaluative function of action research is mentioned in the comments of P-2 and P-5 and also supported by the literature on hand. Kumaravadivelu[16], discussing the parameter of practicality, takes the significance of action research in reflective teaching into heed and denotes that the teacher is proposed to do action research "by testing, interpreting, and judging the usefulness of professional theories proposed by experts" (p. 173).

4.3. Reflective Teaching and Postmethod Pedagogy

Post-method teacher is an autonomous teacher. Teacher autonomy, post-method defenders believe, is at the heart of this era's standards[17],[16]. The parameter of practicality, one of three parameters of post-method model offered by Kumaravadivelu, is principally in line with teacher education in general and with reflective teaching in particular. By

applying this principle the border between “professional theories” and “personal theories” is diminished. The parameter of practicality focuses on teachers’ reflection and action, which are also based on their insights and intuition[16].

Because of the close correspondence between teacher autonomy in post-method pedagogy and reflective teaching, we attempted to examine the participants’ attitude toward the issue as well. To this end the reflective participants, who are familiar with the subject, were to answer the question “Do you see any relationship between reflective teaching and teacher empowerment? How?”

- They are interwoven. RT asks and makes teachers to become autonomous in their teaching practice. This autonomy is the cornerstone to decision making and empowerment (P-2).

- Yes, I do. I say so because thinking is at the very heart of reflective teaching. What’s more, teachers reflect upon their teaching practice. Hence, teaching method, activities, and such like are always open to modification. This does mean that teacher is not a mere consumer of theorists and textbook writers. Instead, he, by integrating theoretical knowledge into his own theory-in-use, becomes a practitioner who is in control of his teaching practice and who has much of a voice (P-3).

- I believe that teachers are the most critical figures in every teaching-learning setting. Teachers are the individuals who enlighten the students, motivate them, and give them their voice and so on. Hence, they need to be enlightened first. They should be empowered to take every trick at hand to lead the class in the best way. And one more thing, they should be able to offer their theories based on what they have gained through teaching (P-4).

- Yes, reflection makes teachers to rely on their own resources and as a result become more independent (P-5).

As it was mentioned, reflectivity-conscious participants were familiar with the new concepts proposed in the ESL field; hence in their answers we can trace the principles of post-method pedagogy bluntly. Participant 2, for instance, considers teacher autonomy as the essence of teacher empowerment. Participant 3 and 4, similarly, view teachers as theorizers who are able to produce the voice of their own. So discussing the following themes is expected having the excerpts scrutinized.

Theme 1: Reflective teachers are theorizers

This evident theme was emerged based on what was presented earlier and the literature on reflective teaching and post method conjunction. Kumaravadivelu ([17],[37], and[16]) repeatedly argue that the border between professional theories and personal theories needs to be demolished. Besides that, he argues, teachers need to theorize from their practice and practice what they theorize ([17],[16]). This context feeds and is fed by teachers reflectivity. Our reflective participants identically believe that teachers need not to be consumers of professional theories as they are empowered by their own reflections.

Theme 2: Reflective teachers are autonomous teachers

Teacher autonomy theme, which is also an essential feature of post-method teacher, is simply detectable in the first group comments. It is closely related to their decision making capability which is expanded by means of regular self appraisal. Teacher autonomy has been discussed under different paradigms, but post method pedagogy has put more emphasis on the issue. Reflective teachers are meticulous decision makers who rely not just on their commonsense but on the enlightened decisions made on the basis of their enriched self-proposed theories. As an evident to support the case, we can refer to Kumaravadivelu’s statement as “postmethod pedagogy recognizes the teachers’ prior knowledge as well as their potential to know not only how to teach but also know how to act autonomously” ([16], p.178).

4.4. What are the Issues and Problems in the Process of Reflectivity in Iran?

The previous part of the study, which was investigating the status of reflectivity in Iran, came to the conclusion that Iranian teachers are reflective. Although most of our teachers are supposed to be reflective, sometimes even unaware of reflection principles, there are also those teachers who are completely unaware of reflectivity, teacher autonomy, action research, and critical pedagogy. For this reason we called them reflectivity-conscious not reflective teachers. What can we do to solve the basic problem in educational system by enlightening our EFL teachers about the critical mission they have in society. There should be some problems and obstacles contributing directly or indirectly to the lack of robust and comprehensive reflection practice in Iranian educational system. The issues and problems and some solutions will be offered in this section.

4.5. What are the Problems and Obstacles of Practicing Reflective Teaching in Iran?

To discover the problems discouraging the full-fledged practice of reflection in Iranian context questions 11 and 12 were asked of reflectivity-conscious teachers (Appendix 1). The following problems were attributed to the issue.

Issue 1: The role of decision makers.

Issue 2: Lack of critical thinking.

Issue 3: Teachers’ ignorance.

Issue 4: A closed, restrictive educational system with no freedom for teachers’ creativity.

Issue 5: Teaching being a poorly paid job with no incentive for growth and development.

The above mentioned issues are precisely elicited from participants’ excerpts, which are thoroughly supported by the literature available. Issues 1, 2, and 4 are closely related to the principles of critical pedagogy in Iran. Noroozisa and Soozandefar[38] also came to the same conclusion investigating the status of critical pedagogy in Iran. They argued that the language classes in Iranian context are just the practice of whatever the theories including the dominant ones impose. The easiest way to get on with the classroom is to stick to whatever the syllabus suggests. It’s obviously a

type of being after one-model-fits-all approach. Comparing Iranian society to Iranian families' norms, in which the father imposes and others obey, Ghanbari[39] notes that an Iranian person would be looking for an authority in whatever context s/he is positioned and is ready to accept that authority's hegemony. The role of decision makers in educational system is evident again in what Ghanbari[39] argues: in Iranian context where people do not have a big share and must follow whatever policy adopted by the government. This powerlessness of the people definitely has a considerable bearing on other social, political, and cultural issues. Lack of independence in thinking, deciding, and acting to a great extent is the outcome of the same phenomenon. In this context, whatever activities one is going to do needs to be completely in line with the government's benefits, be it a right or wrong activity.

It was also apparent that EFL teachers sometimes ignore the principles of reflectivity in their teachings. This issue was discussed by our reflective participants pointing to their low payments and their lack of teaching knowledge. This problem can be traced in teacher training programs which don't inculcate teaching knowledge in the teachers. Most of teachers go to their classrooms without getting prepared enough for the mission they have. Most of the recent trends in the field of teacher education are intentionally or unintentionally skipped.

5. Concluding Remarks: A Call for Change

As stated the problem discussed in the study was that reflectivity was not effectively practiced in the education system. When we come to the point that we need some modifications in our educational system and we know that reflectivity needs to be added by all means to our teacher education program, we may look for some solutions to this end. Reflective participants have suggested some points as guidelines to foster reflective teaching as the baseline for every teacher training program. Although the results of the first part of the study voted for the existence of reflectivity, the present discussion targets those teachers who don't take their roles as agents of change and the teacher education programs which don't encourage reflectivity in their student teachers. Based on the results of the study in conclusion we believe that:

- Teachers should be taught to reflectivity;
- We need to take remedial actions in teacher education programs;
- A social-based and cultural-loaded view instead of syntax-semantic-based should be encouraged in teacher education program.
- The recruitment system should be modified to let just those teachers who take teaching as a profession in.

These principles are all searched out from reflective teachers' suggestions to the betterment of the educational system. Rodman[40] suggested that repeated use of

reflection throughout the teacher preparation experience, and particularly in a structured reflection questionnaire, can be useful for encouraging growth and professional development. Taghiloo[41] also supports explicit way of teaching to thinking and reflectivity that would lead to teacher development. Gore and Zeichner[42] argue that decision makers need to have social responsibility in adapting any new way in teacher education program. Mosha[43] is one of the scholars who go for modifications in teachers' recruitment system. He has offered some meticulous guidelines in this process to involve just those teachers that are knowledgeable and conscious teachers who know what their missions are in society.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Reflective Teachers' Interview Questions

Name:

Age:

Sex:

Education:

Thank you for taking your time and answering the following questions. This is a part of my thesis to ponder upon reflective teaching in Iranian Context.

1. Are you familiar with the concept of Reflective Teaching? If so, how do you define reflection on teaching?

2. How does the experience of reflection inform your teaching and learning?

3. What aspects of reflection do you see reflection important?

4. Do you try to bring some examples of social injustice to your classroom and discuss them with your students? In what way do you do this?

5. Do you think that EFL teachers are able to change students' social lives with making them conscious about the context? In any way elaborate on your answer please.

6. What's the role of research in Reflection? Elaborate.

7. Do you see any relationship between reflective teaching and teacher empowerment? How?

8. How can we help teachers become reflective?

9. How do you think the teaching to reflection will influence the educational system?

10. What is the influence of reflective teaching on students?

11. What are the problems of practicing reflective teaching if there is any?

12. What are the obstacles in being reflective in Iranian context?

13. If you were in charge to revise teacher training in Iran, what would you add or modify?

Appendix 2

Non-Reflective Teachers' Interview Questions

1. Could you give me a short definition of "teaching" and

“EFL teacher” based on the image you have of yourself as a teacher?

2. Do you talk about your teaching experience with your experienced colleagues?

3. Do you think about your strengths and weaknesses as a teacher? If so, how?

4. Do you try to read some recent articles to get in touch with new trends in the field or not? If you do it what trends are practices now?

5. Do you think about your teaching process after each session? How?

6. Do you try to bring some examples of social injustice to your classroom and discuss them with your students?

7. Do you think that EFL teachers are able to change students' social lives with making them conscious about the context? In any way elaborate on your answer please.

8. What kinds of topics do you use in your classrooms for discussion? Why do you use these topics? Can you provide some examples?

9. Do you see any problems in Teacher Training programs in Iran (or in your institute)?

10. Do you want to add anything new to what you said?

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