The Relationship between Reflectivity in Teaching and the Sense of Self-Efficacy among Novice and Experienced Iranian EFL Teachers

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Abstract
This study intended to investigate the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers’ reflectivity in teaching and their sense of self-efficacy. Furthermore, the mediating role of teaching experience was taken into account. For the purpose of the study, two questionnaires including a Persian version of reflective teaching questionnaire (Ghadampour, Moradian, & Shokri, 2014) and the long form of teachers’ sense of self-efficacy scale or TSES (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001) were administered to both novice and experienced EFL teachers at private language institutes in Khorramabad, Lorestan Province in Iran. The analysis of data through the Pearson Product-Moment correlation signified a statistical relationship between reflective teaching and self-efficacy among Iranian EFL teachers. The results of the further analysis of data demonstrated that the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers’ reflectivity in teaching and their sense of self-efficacy was statistically significant among experienced EFL teachers. In other words, novice EFL teachers under study were less reflective and bore less self-efficacy in their act of teaching in the classroom. The findings of this study imply that EFL teachers should be aware of the positive effects of reflectivity and self-efficacy and do their best to teach as reflectively and efficaciously as possible.

Key words: Reflectivity in teaching, Self-efficacy, Novice and experienced teachers

1. Introduction
For many years in the method era, the role of language teachers was only to follow what language teaching authorities realized as “the theories of language, language learning, and of language teaching” (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 162). Now, it has been confirmed that language teachers should go beyond such insufficient traditional methods because the limitation of the notion of the method has paved the way for the emergence of this awareness that “method has little theoretical validity and even less practical utility. Its meaning is ambiguous, and its claim dubious” (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 170). Hence, in recent years, with the appearance of the post-method era and the ending of the method era, the role of teachers has been more and more scrutinized with regard to a wide range of variables which bring them to the limelight. In this way, attending the important role of education in each society, teachers should raise their consciousness in this context to improve their teaching profession. Bartlett (1990) says, in this regard, that “the development of teaching techniques is regarded as the most important means for helping teachers to improve their practice” (p. 202). Bartlett talks in favor of reflective teaching and says that reflective teaching is “another form of inquiry intended to help teachers improve their practice” (p. 202). Thus, reflective teaching is considered as an approach through which teachers are engaged in the improvement of their profession and know the real concept of teaching. Reflectivity in teaching refers to a process in which teachers enhance their professional practice (Borg, 2010) and learn how increasingly to promote an effective teaching by ongoing reflection on their actions and beliefs in the educational context (Farrell, 2004).
Reflective teaching has been positively associated with various beneficial outcomes in the teaching context such as increasing the interpersonal relationship between the teacher and students and among teachers themselves, making sense of this relationship, job satisfaction, and the enhanced sense of self-efficacy beliefs of teachers (Akbari, 2007). Lowery (2003) also concluded that reflective teaching has beneficial outcomes not only for students to succeed in the classroom but also for teachers to enhance their self-efficacy, autonomy, confidence, and competence in teaching. Lowery says that reflective practice is essential for both novice and experienced teachers to promote in the teaching
context. This process of promotion occurs in three steps of being aware of reflective practice itself, applying, and growing such reflective practice. Furthermore, Uzun, Yuksel, and Dost (2013) found a positive relationship between teachers’ reflection and their sense of self-efficacy so that reflective thoughts could predict both the personal self-efficacy among the teachers and the outcome expectancy which was one sub-element of teacher efficacy.

Although a review of the literature illustrates a positive relationship between reflective teaching and self-efficacy, there are, to our knowledge, few empirical researches regarding the relationship between these two variables in the EFL context in Iran. Hence, it was the link between reflectivity in teaching and teachers’ sense of self-efficacy that was investigated in the present study. Taking the important roles of reflective teaching and self-efficacy into account, we would recognize the potential value to better understand and examine whether teachers’ reflectivity in language teaching and their perception of self-efficacy are interrelated; additionally, an attempt was made to see whether these two concepts may be impacted by such language teachers’ characteristics as their teaching experience. The research questions investigated in this study were as follows:

1: Is there a significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers’ reflectivity in teaching and their sense of self-efficacy?
2: Is there a significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers’ reflectivity in teaching and the components of self-efficacy?
3: Is there a significant relationship between Iranian experienced EFL teachers’ reflectivity in teaching and their sense of self-efficacy?
4: Is there a significant relationship between Iranian novice EFL teachers’ reflectivity in teaching and their sense of self-efficacy?

2. Review of literature

2.1. Reflective teaching

John Dewey is considered as the most well-known American philosopher in the field of education. His attitudes towards experience and reflection can be seen in the development of the educational context and the works of following researchers and scholars. Dewey (1933, 1938) lends credence to the concept of reflective thought and develops his educational ideas mainly in reaction to the traditional educational system. Dewey (1933) defines reflective thinking as “active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it, and the further conclusions to which it tends” (p. 9). He asserts that reflective thought creates a constant awareness in the context in which the ideas have been shaped. Finally, it draws teachers’ attention to the consequences of events. He believes that the concept of reflectivity is not concerned with the easy acceptance of others’ beliefs but growth through a real consideration of thought, knowledge, and experience. For this reason, it is favorable for teachers to stay away from the routine actions which are based on “preconception and prejudice” and move towards reflective practices which “have educational purpose, and can involve wider considerations of a moral and ethical nature” (Griffiths, 2000, p. 540). So, the process of reflective teaching is beneficial to our educational context because the reflective experience “is always seen as contributing to our understanding of something” (Van Manen, 1977, p. 217). Besides Dewey, in the early 1980s, the concept of reflective practice in the United States was being well known mainly by Schön (1983). He identifies teachers as reflective practitioners who can have better viewpoints towards teaching and distinguishes between two types of reflection including reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. Reflection-in-action, according to Schön, is thinking about the classroom events as they occur. This type of reflection is applied while the events are taking place and teachers are simultaneously thinking about the reasons as the events happen. As a consequence, reflection-in-action is “rapid interpretation of events and monitoring of actions” (Griffiths, 2000, p. 543). On the other hand, reflection-on-action, according to Schön, is the examination of what has been done in the classroom to access an obvious perspective of action especially in a complex situation. Thus, the main concern of reflection-on-action is the examination of and thinking consciously about previous events in the classroom.

Reflective teaching has three theoretical traits including open-mindedness, responsibility, and whole-heartedness (Dewey, 1933) as well as some practical aspects including action research, classroom observation, journal writing, and teacher development groups (Farrell, 2007). The theoretical traits refer to the active roles of teachers in the consideration of various dimensions of the subject matter...
and others’ judgments, attention of teachers to the results of actions, and finally their monitoring role over the teaching profession (Grant & Zeichner, 1984). The practical aspects of reflective teaching direct teachers to enhance their both personal and professional teaching through reflecting on the classroom problems, observing the classroom of colleagues or being observed by their colleagues, writing continuously about the classroom events (Farrell, 2007), and providing a development group with other teachers as “any form of co-operating and ongoing arrangement between two or more teachers to work together” in achieving improvements in their profession (Head & Taylor, 1997, p. 91). Therefore, reflectivity in teaching is viewed as the main part of teachers’ professional development because reflective teaching is considered “as a stance, a state of mind, a healthy, questioning attitude toward the practice of our profession” (Bailey, 1997, p. 12). In the same direction, all of the Iranian EFL teachers should be aware of how to effectively practice their theories in the classroom environment, how to reflect on their actions, experiences, and finally how to make decisions in the improvement of their teaching.

2.2. The sense of self-efficacy

One of the main intrinsic factors in human beings refers to self-efficacy which takes its origin from Bandura’s (1986, 1995) social cognitive theory. He defines this concept as “beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations” (Bandura, 1995, p. 2). Consequently, self-efficacy is not concerned with how much expertise the individuals possess, rather it deals with making evaluation of how successfully they can perform a set of actions with regard to their real capabilities (Bandura, 1986). Bandura highlights four informative sources from which self-efficacy beliefs are derived. In the first and foremost source of self-efficacy under the name of enactive mastery experience, individuals evaluate their capabilities in performing actions which depend on their previous successes or failures in task performances. Thus, the frequent successful actions raise individuals’ self-efficacy and experiencing failures declines their self-efficacy. Bandura’s second source of self-efficacy is vicarious experience defined as a “social model” which is the observation and modeling of others’ behavior, specifically if there is not an adequate personal experience. The third source is verbal or social persuasion which is “active encouragement or discouragement from others about one’s capabilities” (Hora & Ferrare, 2012, p. 5). It means that the verbal persuasion can either convince individuals to successfully perform an action, because they have the necessary capabilities or persuade them not to do an action, because they lack the efficacy in times of problems (Bandura, 1995). The last source of self-efficacy in Bandura’s view point is physiological states which include both physical and emotional conditions of individuals during performing their activities. He says that the positive affective conditions can increase individuals’ sense of self-efficacy and the negative and stressful conditions can decrease it.

One feature that might influence how teachers effectively perform their job in the classroom is their sense of self-efficacy. In this direction, Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, and Hoy (1998) define teacher self-efficacy as “the teacher’s belief in his or her capability to organize and execute courses of action required to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task in a particular context” (p. 22). Teacher self-efficacy can influence the various dimensions of the teaching profession. In relation to the effects of self-efficacy on the behaviors of teachers in the classroom, high self-efficacious teachers are more persistent in challenging situations, more resilient in unsuccessful situations, and more hard-working with struggling students (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). In contrast, teachers with a low sense of self-efficacy are less active in the educational and learning issues as well as in the domains whose self-efficacy is lower (Bandura, 1995). Therefore, as Woolfolk Hoy (2004) states, teachers’ sense of self-efficacy is viewed as a “cyclical process” in which more sense of self-efficacy causes more endeavour, persistence, and superior action resulting in an enriched sense of self-efficacy and vice versa.

In this regard, it can be perceived that the concepts of reflective teaching and teachers’ self-efficacy are not new in the educational context. The importance of these concepts is widely discussed where reflective teaching and the sense of self-efficacy have been considered the necessary parts of teachers’ professional development. Since the theoretical and practical aspects of reflectivity in teaching and teachers’ sense of self-efficacy have received increasing attention in the educational researches and settings everywhere, the Iranian EFL teachers are expected to make use of these two concepts in their classrooms. In fact, more studies with the promoting results should be carried out in the field of
language teaching in order to better understand the positive effects of reflectivity and self-efficacy on language teaching, and to provide more guidance to EFL teachers. This study tries to lead EFL teachers, teacher educators, and also institutes to make sense of the importance of reflective practices in the improvement and development of teaching processes and the importance of self-efficacy in the successful actions in the domain of teaching. Furthermore, this study stimulates EFL teachers to give more value to reflective teaching in their profession by perceiving its relation to other valuable characteristics in teaching such as self-efficacy.

3. Method
3.1. Participants
The participants who took part in this study were 135 EFL teachers at various proficiency levels in different private language institutes in Khorramabad, Lorestan Province. They also taught the English language to students at different levels of proficiency from beginning, pre-intermediate, and intermediate to advanced levels. They were heterogeneous in terms of their gender, age, academic degree, field of language study, and teaching experience. The sample of EFL teachers was selected in this study based on cluster sampling (Farhady, 1995); that is, a group of EFL teachers each of whom is called a cluster were selected. In this study, the EFL teachers under study were divided into two groups of novice and experienced teachers. Teachers with five years of teaching experience or less were considered novice EFL teachers and teachers with more than five years of teaching experience were considered experienced EFL teachers. Therefore, there were 65 (48.1%) novice EFL teachers and 70 (51.9%) experienced EFL teachers.

3.2. Instruments
In order to gather the data needed for the study and to measure variables of the study, two different types of closed or Likert-point form questionnaires, one on teacher reflectivity and the other on teacher self-efficacy, were administrated to the EFL teachers. In the present study, the Persian version of the reflective teaching questionnaire (RTQ) by Ghadampour, Moradian, and Shokri (2014) was utilized. This questionnaire consists of 27 five-point Likert type items ranging from 0 (never), 1 (rarely), 2 (sometimes), 3 (often), to 4 (always). This instrument encompasses six components of reflective teaching including practical, cognitive, affective, meta-cognitive, critical, and moral components. The Cronbach alpha coefficient employed to assess the reliability of instrument in this study indicated the reliability index of 0.93, which was considered highly satisfactory. Furthermore, in this study, the long form of teachers’ sense of efficacy scale (TSES) by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) was utilized including three components of student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management. The long form consists of 24 nine-point Likert type items ranging from 1 (nothing), 2, 3 (very little), 4, 5 (some influence), 6, 7 (quite a bit), to 8, 9 (a great deal). Each of the three components of teacher efficacy is measured by 8 questions. The Cronbach alpha coefficient was employed to assess the reliability of the TSES in this study. The reliability index of 0.97 was obtained, considered highly satisfactory.

3.3. Procedure
In order to carry out the main focus of the study, the two questionnaires on teacher reflectivity and teacher self-efficacy were simultaneously given to the EFL teachers functioning as the participants of the study by the researchers or the principals of the institutes to whom the necessary details were given. So, the data collection in this study was performed only by the direct method (Farhady, 1995) in which both questionnaires were directly given to teachers under investigation. Participation in this study was voluntary and only those EFL teachers interested in being involved in the study completed the two questionnaires. The EFL teachers were asked to mark their responses with care and attention. In most cases, the EFL teachers could not fill in the questionnaires at that time because they were busy with their job, so they were asked to take the questionnaires home, answer the questions, and then return them to the principal of the institute. Then, the returned questionnaires were measured.

3.4. Data analysis
This study is of a descriptive quantitative type. The EFL teachers’ responses to the items of the RTQ and TSES were computed and fed into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The mean scores and standard deviations of every computed score of the two measures of the study, that is, the reflective teaching, self-efficacy, and the components of self-efficacy were calculated. To ensure the normality of the variables, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test or (K-S) in addition to
descriptive statistics were employed. The Pearson Product-Moment correlation was the analytical method to analyze the data. The level of significance for all of the hypotheses in relation to the variables under study was set at \( p \leq 0.05 \).

4. Results
With regard to descriptive statistics of the two questionnaires (Table 1) and the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (Table 2), it was noted that there was a normal distribution of the variables, because the significant level of them in the study exceeded the value of \( \alpha \) at 0.05 (\( \alpha = 0.05 \)). Therefore, it can be seen that in teacher reflectivity, teacher self-efficacy, and in all the components of teacher self-efficacy including student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management, the participants in this study had a significant level of reflectivity and the sense of self-efficacy. The results showed that the EFL teachers’ idea about reflectivity in teaching (SD = 13.43) was more homogeneous than those for self-efficacy (SD = 22.93). In relation to teacher self-efficacy, each component’s mean and standard deviation was calculated. The results specified that the EFL teachers in this study felt more efficacious in instructional strategies (M = 57.48) than in classroom management (M = 56.82) and student engagement (M = 56.05). Additionally, the EFL teachers’ responses to instructional strategies (SD = 8.15) were more homogeneous than their responses to student engagement (SD = 8.25) and classroom management (SD = 8.39). Thus, the distribution of responses to classroom management questions with the highest standard deviation was more than student engagement and instructional strategy questions. Consequently, it is believed that the more homogeneous the items on the two questionnaires are, the more consistent the teachers’ scores are.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of the Two Questionnaires

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RTQ</td>
<td>68.10</td>
<td>13.43</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TSES</td>
<td>170.36</td>
<td>22.93</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Engagement</td>
<td>56.05</td>
<td>8.25</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Strategies</td>
<td>57.48</td>
<td>8.15</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Management</td>
<td>56.82</td>
<td>8.39</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Normal Distribution of the RTQ and TSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>K-S</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Value of RTQ</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Value of TSES</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Engagement</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Strategies</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Management</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the first research question which tended to find the existence of any relationship between reflective teaching and self-efficacy among the EFL teachers, the Pearson Product-Moment correlation between the total reflective scores and total self-efficacy scores of the participants (N = 135) was computed and presented in Table 3. The results of the data analysis showed that there was a statistically significant positive relationship between these two variables among the Iranian EFL teachers (\( r = 0.29 \) at \( p \leq 0.05 \) level).

Table 3: The Relationship between Reflective Teaching and Self-Efficacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
With revealing a positive correlation between reflective teaching and teacher self-efficacy, there was an attempt in the second research question to see if there is a significant relationship between reflective teaching and the components of self-efficacy among the EFL teachers. The Pearson Product-Moment correlation between the total reflective scores and every one of the self-efficacy component scores was calculated and presented in Table 4. The results illustrated a statistically significant positive relationship between reflective teaching and student engagement ($r = 0.35$ at $p \leq 0.05$ level), instructional strategy ($r = 0.25$ at $p \leq 0.05$ level), and classroom management ($r = 0.22$ at $p \leq 0.05$ level).

**Table 4: The Relationship between Reflective Teaching and the Components of Self-Efficacy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RTQ &amp; Student Engagement</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTQ &amp; Instructional Strategies</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTQ &amp; Classroom Management</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Correlation is significant at $p \leq 0.05$

The third research question examined the relationship between reflective teaching and self-efficacy among the experienced EFL teachers. To answer the question, the Pearson Product-Moment correlation was put forth. As it is observed in Table 5, there was a statistically significant positive relationship between reflective teaching and self-efficacy among the Iranian experienced EFL teachers ($r = 0.28$ at $p \leq 0.05$ level). Thus, the experienced EFL teachers were highly similar in terms of their reflectivity and self-efficacy in teaching.

**Table 5: The Relationship between Reflective Teaching and Self-Efficacy among the Experienced EFL Teachers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RTQ &amp; TSES</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.017*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Correlation is significant at $p \leq 0.05$

The fourth research question asked if there is a significant relationship between reflective teaching and self-efficacy among the novice EFL teachers. In spite of the previous research question, according to the correlational analysis shown in Table 6, it was specified that there was not a statistically significant relationship between reflective teaching and self-efficacy among the Iranian novice EFL teachers ($r = 0.17$ at $p \leq 0.05$ level). Therefore, the novice EFL teachers did not demonstrate a significant level of the relationship between their reflective practices and self-efficacy in the ELT context.

**Table 6: The Relationship between Reflective Teaching and Self-Efficacy among the Novice EFL Teachers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RTQ &amp; TSES</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.16*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Correlation is significant at $p \leq 0.05$

5. Discussions
The findings showed that reflectivity in teaching and the sense of self-efficacy among the EFL teachers were related and correlated to each other. Consequently, the EFL teachers can develop professionally their job by enhancing their reflectivity in teaching and raising their sense of self-efficacy in the classroom. According to Bandura’s (1986) social cognitive theory, self-efficacy is derived from self-reflection and self-examination of the capabilities to accomplish the intended actions. Bandura identifies the self-reflective capability as the most significant characteristic in his social cognitive theory through which individuals can think carefully about their experiences and perceptions and expand knowledge about all aspects of their life. Based on such established thoughts, they can make judgments and changes in their beliefs. Under the examination of the thoughts and beliefs, according to Bandura, individuals take control over both their actions and the outcomes of their actions and make judgments about whether their level of thoughts is satisfactory for their tasks or it requires the necessary alternations for the future performances. Thus, it is important to know that “experiences become instructive through cognitive processing of efficacy information and reflective thought” (Bandura, 2009, p. 185). The results of this study also corroborate with some previous studies such as Lowery (2003), Yost (2006), Akbari, Kiany, Imani Naeeni, and Karimi Allvar (2008), Uzun, Yuksel, and Dost (2013) which revealed the relationship between reflectivity in teaching and self-efficacy. For example, Yost (2006) examined the reasons why novice teachers left their profession at early stages. Yost stated that reflective teaching and self-efficacy had a great deal of assistance to novice teachers in the development of their retention, persistence, and resiliency. Critical reflection was a useful tool to overcome the challenges in the classroom. And self-efficacy, which had its development from reflective teaching, successful teaching, and teaching experience, provided a hopeful teaching atmosphere for novice teachers. Moreover, in their study on reflective teachers, Korthagen and Wubbles (1991, cited in Killen, 1995) express the beneficial effects of being reflective in the teaching context. In addition to having more ability in successfully dealing with their students and engaging them in learning processes through their experiences taken from various investigations, say Korthagen and Wubbles (1991), reflective teachers feel more job satisfaction in their profession and are more efficacious in their teaching. In line with the same argument, Braun and Crumpler (2004) say that the growth of reflective teaching among teachers facilitates their enhanced sense of self-efficacy as far as teachers can believe in their capabilities to make changes in both their personal and professional life. Thus, reflection can be considered as “the second self” (Inchausti, 1991, cited in Braun & Crumpler, 2004, p. 60) through which individuals are concerned with a continuous exploration and awareness of themselves. They can also increase their sense of self-efficacy, develop themselves, find their real abilities and potentials, and engage in those decision-makings which close individuals to themselves (Colton & Sparks-Langer, 1993, cited in Braun & Crumpler, 2004).

As the findings of the second research question demonstrated a positive relationship between reflective teaching and the components of self-efficacy which included student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management, it is expected that through the growth of reflective teaching in the classroom, EFL teachers can first be successful in finding the ways to successfully engage students in the learning process (student engagement). Second, they can improve their personal and professional teaching capabilities in utilizing the newer and more applicable instructional strategies during their profession (instructional strategies). Finally, they can promote their capabilities in controlling and managing the classroom events (classroom management). It is worthy of note that more research is necessary to demonstrate if reflectivity in teaching would lead to an improved sense of teachers’ self-efficacy in student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management.

Regarding the third and fourth research questions, this study verified that experienced teachers are differentiated from novice teachers by a variety of aspects such as their level of reflectivity in teaching and sense of self-efficacy. There are various perspectives towards the main differences between novice and experienced teachers in terms of their thoughts, attitudes, aptitudes, professional growth, and their perception of performance in the classroom (Rodriguez & Mckay, 2010). Lowery (2003) believes that experienced teachers have a better understanding of teaching problems. This enables them to find ways of dealing with practical problems. In addition, they have more qualified information on both students and various classroom dimensions which helps them to be careful about what to choose to do. Gathering more experience during the years of teaching, according to Lowery
(2003), enables experienced teachers to have access to useful and typical sources of information that enhance their problem-solving skills. Thus, more years of teaching experience enable novice teachers to experience such skills in their teaching. It is perceived from this study that experience has a focal connection with both reflectivity and self-efficacy in the teaching context, because more teaching experience will lead to bringing up more self-efficacious teachers (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002, 2007) who carefully reflect on their teaching experiences and actions to develop their career (Lowery, 2003). In contrast, novice teachers as less reflective practitioners in this study can be considered, according to Richards and Schmidt (2010), as the teachers who are not well-developed professional teachers for their limited in-action performance. In fact, novice teachers are “teachers with less or no teaching experience” (Tsui, 2003, p. 4).

Although the more years of teaching experience in this study signified the more reflectivity and self-efficacy among the EFL teachers, the experienced and expert teachers should not be attended to the same concepts. Tsui (2003) states that it is possible to have the experienced teachers without having expertise in their profession. According to Tsui (2003), there are two reasons which make necessary reflective practices among teachers with more years of teaching experience. The first reason is their routine actions which do not always guarantee the desired outcomes in classrooms, and the second reason is the outdated expertise which do not always guarantee the desired outcomes in classrooms, and the second reason is the outdated expertise of such teachers which can be updated through reflection. Consequently, the years of teaching experience is not sufficient to consider a teacher as an expert because the main difference between novice and expert teachers is that “experts are characterized as possessing a body of highly organized and sophisticated knowledge, being able to engage in conscious deliberation, self-monitoring and self-evaluating as well as engaging in reflective practice” (Tsui, 2003, p. 17). Likewise, Dewey (1938) was well aware of this fact that not “all experiences are genuinely or equally educative” (p. 25). Dewey points out that teachers should realize some experiences as miseducative in that they actually destroy the development of more valuable experiences and “narrow the field of further experience[s]” (p. 26) while educative experiences pave the path for the development of more beneficial and helpful new experiences which facilitate the process of learning.

6. Conclusion

This study was an investigation into the relationship between reflectivity in teaching and self-efficacy among the EFL teachers. In addition, teaching experience was considered as a moderator variable to make a difference between the novice and experienced EFL teachers in terms of their reflectivity and self-efficacy in teaching. The results of the data analysis, in line with the previous researches, revealed a significant relationship between reflective teaching and self-efficacy and between reflective teaching and the components of self-efficacy among the EFL teachers. The results of the further correlational analysis demonstrated the existence of a significant relationship between reflective teaching and self-efficacy among the experienced EFL teachers while there was not a significant relationship between these variables among the novice EFL teachers. As a result, this study indicated that the EFL teachers entering the teaching profession may find their initial teaching efforts with less reflectivity and self-efficacy. Gradually, with gaining more experience and background, they will make themselves familiar with the various dimensions of the teaching profession. Accordingly, achieving more experience in the teaching profession leads teachers to giving a great deal of invaluable attention to the reflective process. In the same direction, the increased sense of self-efficacy, which is under the influence of gaining more experience and confidence in the teaching career (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998), provides the EFL teachers to raise their effort, continuity, and responsibility in order to achieve a successful accomplishment in their teaching. So, it can be claimed that gathering more experience in the teaching context raises the sense of self-efficacy among EFL teachers and makes a discrepancy between less experienced and more experienced EFL teachers. The findings of this study would have the useful practical implications to practitioners in teaching including the EFL teachers, teacher educators, and policy makers in the ELT context. While the role of reflectivity and self-efficacy has been frequently attended to the EFL educational context, there is also a need to cast more light on how effectively they predict each other. Generally speaking, through encouraging reflective thinking on practices in the classroom and reflective teaching in the teaching profession, the teacher educators and policy makers can fade the effect of the traditional teaching methods in the EFL educational context. Holding programs in the teacher training courses which
cover the theoretical and practical aspects of reflective teaching will be beneficial for bringing up more reflective teachers in the EFL institutes. Teacher educators and policy makers should also help the EFL teachers to enjoy more self-efficacy and independence in their practices through having beliefs in their teaching capabilities. Accordingly, as Kumaravadivelu (2006) confirms, teachers with a great deal of autonomy and efficiency in teaching can put into practice their theories in the classroom and also derive theories from their teaching practices. Apart from the personal understanding of the topic under investigation in the teaching context, we hope the results of this study provide both novice and experienced EFL teachers with useful views regarding the real nature of reflectivity in teaching and the sense of self-efficacy, familiarize them with the benefits of these two variables, and encourage both groups of EFL teachers to be aware of their practices and beliefs in seeking the professional development in the ELT context.

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