



## **Exploring EFL Teachers' Reflectivity and their Sense of Self-efficacy**

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### **Abstract**

Features of EFL/ESL teachers have been investigated by educationists time and again in order to effectuate the education system in reaching its goal main goal, namely learning. Reflectivity and self-efficacy are two main characteristics of teachers which are not delved into thoroughly. Reflection, according to Richards (2008), refers to an activity or process in which an experience is recalled, taken into account, and evaluated, usually in relation to a broader purpose. Teacher self-efficacy, defined in different terms, has one fundamental kernel. It has been referred to as the individual teacher's beliefs in his/her own ability to carry out educational objectives. The present study, adjusting these two constructs, aims at observing whether reflectivity of EFL teachers and the main elements of this reflectivity are capable of predicting those teachers' sense of self-efficacy. On that account, 120 EFL teachers took part in the survey by filling out the related questionnaires. Multiple regression analysis revealed the predicting power of both reflectivity and its sub-elements on teachers' self-efficacy. Correlational results, correspondingly, indicated the relationship between every two components. It was identified that the association between the criterion and exploratory variables is moderately strong ( $R=.64$ ). Furthermore, the prediction model was statistically significant and accounted for approximately 39% of the variance of teacher self-efficacy. From sub-categories of reflectivity, ethical and critical issues had the highest share in this prediction.

**Keywords:** Reflective teaching, Teacher Self-efficacy, Critical thinking

### **INTRODUCTION**

A widespread consensus is that teachers are the key elements in successful education and that they play a pivotal role in giving rise to educational reforms (Suwandee, 1995). Sanders (1998), for instance, argue that the most important factor which affects academic growth of students is the effectiveness of individual classroom teachers. So it is not unexpected that an extensive range of research in the field of education targeted the features of successful teacher and the ways in which teacher education programs can encourage such features. Teachers, to this end, have been examined from different angles and with various psychological perspectives. A number of teacher variables such as teacher's knowledge and skills, teacher's thinking, teacher's styles, and teacher's strategies have been inquired by educationists. All of these studies have been done with one absolute intention; improving education and student learning. Unexpectedly, this practical emphasis on teachers has not found an esteemed place in second language pedagogy. Freeman





and Johnson (1998) were the first educationists who argued that teachers, apart from the method or materials they take advantage of, are fundamental aspects in understanding and improving English language teaching.

Teacher self-efficacy and teacher reflectivity are among the features addressed by scholars in this regard. Initiated in social-cognitive theory, teacher self-efficacy beliefs have been frequently accompanied with positive teaching behaviors and student outcomes. Historically, Bandura (1977) and Rotter (1966) took the leading role in efficacy studies. Bandura (1997) delineated self-efficacy as “beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments” (p. 3). Reflection or reflective teaching, by the same token, has its roots in writings of the prominent educationist, John Dewey (1933). To him, reflection entails a readiness to engage in regular self-appraisal and development. The essence of reflection, according to him, is critical thinking.

As it was mentioned earlier, countless studies have confirmed the prominence of teachers’ role in the process of learning in general and language learning in particular. Some of these studies have accentuated teachers' cognitive domains, some others took teachers' knowledge and skills into heed, and correspondingly some delved into teachers' affections. The present study aims at mirroring two main variables of EFL teachers recently heatedly debated, which are teacher self-efficacy and teachers' reflectivity, and reaching at a sound conclusion regarding their relationships. There are some correlational studies which reveal the togetherness of teacher's variables, self-efficacy and reflectivity among them. The present study, however, is to go one step further in incorporating teacher self-efficacy and the sub-elements of reflection as well. Thereupon teachers' critical thinking, focus on ethical issues, teacher's cognitive development, focus on teacher and learners as the fundamental issues of reflectivity are probed.

Regarding the purpose of the study, two main questions inform the present study:

1. Can the construct of reflective teaching predict teacher self-efficacy?
2. Can the sub-elements of reflectivity predict teacher self-efficacy?

## *Review of Literature*

### *Reflective Teaching*

The essence of reflection is deep thinking. To reflect, in its simplest form, means to step back, evaluate the status quo, and make a change to betterment. In Dewey’s (1933) terminology, reflection emancipates us from routine and ordinary actions and enables us to manage and direct our own activities in order to reach a clear and definite destination. The philosophical inspirations of the reflective model have its seats in the writings of the American educator John Dewey (1933). Early in the twentieth century, he improvised a way of teaching in which teachers were featured as active decision-makers. This line of thinking grew by other educators and





researchers like Donald Schön, who wrote about *The Reflective Practitioner* (1983), stressing the significance of values and decision-making. Throughout the following years, Dewey's theories of reflection and principles of pedagogy extracted from them found a revered place in teaching and learning doctrine. By the 1980's, researchers came again to the prominence of reflectivity and criticality. But now due to a variety of attitudes and perspectives, providing an unequivocal definition was not that facile.

Boud, Keogh and Walker (1985), taking cognitive and affective side of reflection into heed, defined it as intellectual and affective abilities in which individuals engage to explore their own experiences in order to get new horizons of procedures. Milrood (1999) delineate reflection as the process of mirroring the environment critically for the sake of decision-making. Johnson and Bradley (1996) put emphasis on the impact of others in the procedure, suggesting that reflection means the acquisition of a critical stance or attitude towards one's own practice and that of one's peers. Reflection is a type of pedagogical practice that points to knowledge that practitioners use in problem solving and decision making; the role of reflection is the process of making sense of personal experiences (Urzua & Vasquez, 2006). Zeichner and Liston (1996) discussed that the practitioners who engage in reflection are those who do more than manifesting a set of teaching behaviors identified and prescribed by others. Reflective practitioners locate problems, question goals, explore contexts, analyze possibilities, and craft appropriate educational experiences to benefit learners.

In line with humanistic psychology, it cannot be assumed that reflection is void of affection. Reflective teaching, Minott (2009) believes, demands that teachers use and develop their affective skills as a means of improving their practice. Markham (1999, as cited in Minott, 2009), likewise, asserts that reflective practitioners would use their intuition, initiative, values, and experience during teaching, and exercise judgment about the use of various teaching and research skills. Reflection is also discussed in line with the principles of critical pedagogy. Posner (1989), for instance, denotes that reflective teaching involves critical thinking, which assists teachers in being intentional in devising new teaching methods, rather than being a slave to tradition or to challenge current ways that schools have always carried out in doing the tasks of teaching. According to Reiman (1999), reflective teaching practitioners demonstrate the ability to analyze the process of what they are doing, while at the same time make judgments to modify their practice so that it best matches the needs of students.

As reflection has been identified as critical to the practice of teaching and learning (Boud & Walker, 1998; Brookfield, 1998; Risko et al., 2002; Rogers, 2001; Schön, 1983, 1987) it is compelling that educators understand the reflective process and its impact on practice. To educationists reflection not only aids in the creation of new knowledge but also provides insight into prior learning (Dewey, 1933; Piaget, 1972; Schön 1983, 1987; Vygotsky, 1962). Dewey (1964) 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 appetitive, blind, and impulsive into intelligent





action" (p.12). Reflection also assists in reducing the feeling of confinement within teaching and allows instruction to be less plain (Donnelly, 2007). Furthermore, educational settings that encourage reflective practices benefit faculty in the refinement of their teaching skills (Killion & Todnem, 1991). Farrell (2003) denotes that reflection helps teachers to build their daily experiences, allows them to act in a deliberate critical and intentional manner, raises their consciousness about teaching, enables an insightful understanding, and triggers positive change.

As the relevance of reflection in educational setting has been accentuated time and again, various models have been put forward to weigh the aspects and features of reflection and reflective thinking (Bartlett, 1990; Day, 1993; Dewey, 1933; Farrell, 1998, 2004; Jay and Johnson, 2002; Killion and Todnem, 1991; Kolb, 1984; Mezirow, 1990; Piaget, 1972; Richard, 2008; Van Manen, 1991; Vygotsky, 1962, 1978). Dewey's prominent classification of action as "routine action" and "reflective action" can be viewed as the groundwork. According to Dewey (1933) routine action is conducted by factors such as tradition, habit and authority. Reflective action, on the other hand, entails a readiness to engage in regular self-appraisal and development. Among other things, it implies flexibility, precise analysis and social awareness. Schön (1983, 1987)'s name is also tightly allied with reflectivity. He talks about the importance of being a reflective practitioner and describes two major processes of reflection: reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. Reflection-in-action occurs at the time of action, when an individual reflects during the experience. Reflection-on-action refers to reflection beyond the occurrence of an event. A reflective teacher may reflect by looking back on several issues occurred in teaching and learning procedures. To Habermas (1972), interests and natural needs are the crucial factors and these interests are divided into technical, practical and emancipatory. Technical interests are grounded in teachers' needs to have various teaching skills, techniques and strategies so as to have control over certain variables. Practical interests, on the other hand, refer to teachers' needs to understand their students' beliefs and their social and cultural background so as to teach effectively. Emancipatory interest is different from the previous two and goes beyond them. It deals with the collaboration of people inside and outside the practice and cannot develop only through critical reflection.

Feiman-Nemser (1990), in the same vein, investigated five sets of ideas about the goals of teacher preparation and the means for achieving them. These are: (a) academic orientation, which assumes that teaching is mainly the transmission of knowledge and the development of understanding; (b) personal orientation, which proposes that learning to teach is a transformative process where the teacher get to the point that they need to understand, develop, re-socialize, and use oneself effectively; (c) critical/social orientation accentuates the teacher's commitment to students and society by promoting democratic principles of justice and equality and habits of questioning accepted principles about teaching, learning, knowledge, etc.; (d) practical orientation upholds the primacy of practice and experience as source of knowledge about teaching and a means of learning to teach; and (e) technological





orientation affirms the acquisition of principle obtained from the scientific study of teaching, preparing teachers who are able to implement the teaching tasks with proficiency. Henderson (1992) goes one step further to include ethicality in the practice of reflection. His ethicality based model of inquiry has three main elements. a) Ethics of caring, which involves understanding students ethically, is practiced through confirmation, dialogue, and cooperative practice. b) The constructivist approach to teaching: In addition to basic skills and academic content, reflective teachers need to be aware of the relationship between what he is trying to teach and students' past experiences (backgrounds) and a personal purpose (needs and interests). c) Artistic problem solving is more in line with practicality. Reflective teachers attempt to adapt the curriculum to students' backgrounds, interest and needs; they try innovative methods to get their students involved; and bring flexibility into the context to increase education quality.

The last framework, which is also the focus of present study, is Akbari, Behzadpour, and Dadvand's (2010) model of reflectivity. This model consists of six main components. The first component is *focus on the learner*. Learners, their needs and interests, and their academic achievement have been the purpose of schooling from the very beginning. Zeichner and Liston (1996) believe that this tradition goes with reflection about students, their cultural and linguistic backgrounds, thinking and understandings, their interests, and their preparation for completing particular tasks. *Focus on the teacher* is the second component. Teachers' background, their system of values and beliefs, and the way they look at their practice should be under scrutiny if any reflective practice is to be studied. *Focus on practical aspects* is the third one. Practical aspects of reflection refer to those tools and methods that teachers take advantage of for the sake of fulfilling reflective practice. The fourth is *focus on teachers' cognitive development*. Paying attention to his/her professional development, a reflective practitioner goes through the journey of reflectivity. Doing small-scale classroom research projects, attending the conferences and workshops related to one's field of study, and reading the literature are categorized under this heading. *Focus on critical/contextual aspects* is the fifth component of reflectivity here. By this, the link is made between individual teaching and the purpose of that in the greater society, that is to say political and cultural contexts and democratic issues. The last factor is *focus on moral/ethical parameters*. One of the necessities of reflective teaching is teacher's consciousness about the moral aspects of their teaching, for instance attending to students, listening to them, identifying their strengths and weaknesses.

#### *Teacher Self-Efficacy*

Teacher self-efficacy has been defined with different terminologies throughout its lifetime, but its kernel is teacher's perception of his/her capabilities in achieving the goals of education. Grounded in social-cognitive theory, teacher self-efficacy has been repeatedly investigated regarding its ties with other teacher variables. Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory states that individuals are able to self-regulate cognitive processes and behaviors, rather than simply react to events. This perspective is in close relationship with the belief that "individuals are capable of





exercising a degree of control over their thoughts, feelings, motivation, and actions” (Pajares, 2003, p.7) after a self-interpretation of performance. This control is likely to make a shift in subsequent actions and behaviors. Bandura presented self-efficacy as a mechanism of behavioral change and self-regulation in his social cognitive theory. The organization and execution of certain actions involves a thinking process that individuals as agents perform prior to their activities. Bandura (1986, 1997) believed that behavior is more efficiently predicted by the individuals' belief regarding their capabilities rather than what they are actually capable of doing. So this belief can be considered as a driving force behind any individual action that leads different activities. Ashton (1984) asserts that the teacher influences students, and that the intensity and ability of teachers represents their self-efficacy. Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy and Hoy (1998) defined teacher efficacy as a teacher's judgment of his or her capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of student involvement and learning, even among those students who may be difficult or unenthusiastic. Dellinger, Bobbett, Olivier, & Ellett (2008), whose framework has been utilized as the instrument in this study, distinguish between teacher efficacy and teacher self-efficacy beliefs. Referring to different studies (e.g., Armor et al., 1976; Berman & McLaughlin, 1977; Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Tschannen Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998), they define teacher efficacy as teachers' beliefs in their abilities to affect student performance. They assert that teacher efficacy, as defined in the literature, overlooks the unique and critical role played by teachers' beliefs in their ability to perform the wide range of teaching tasks required in diverse teaching and learning milieus. To them, self-efficacy is not a general concept, rather task and context specific.

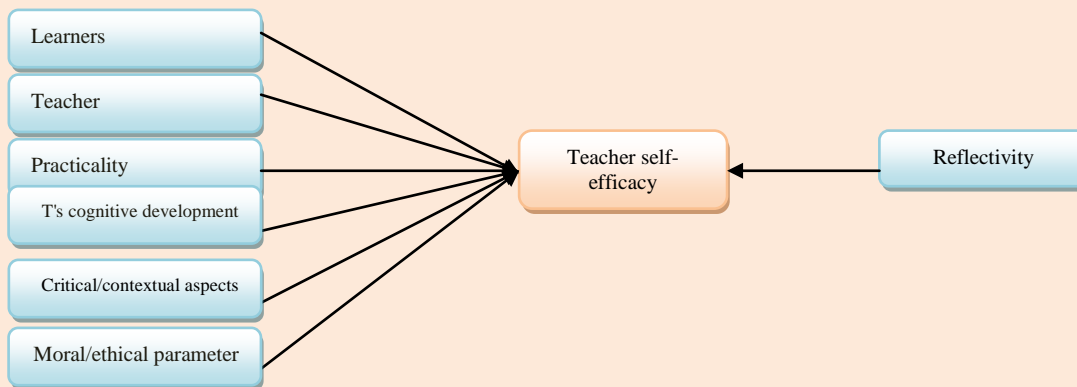
Based on social cognitive theory, Bandura (1986, 1994, 1997) expanded the construct of self-efficacy to the larger, social construct of *collective efficacy* within group settings. Schools are large group settings and teaching cannot occur in isolation. Beliefs of collective efficacy serve functions similar to those of personal efficacy beliefs and operate through similar processes. In collective efficacy, collective agency rather than personal agency is at work. Because the collective performance of a social system involves transactional dynamics, perceived collective efficacy is an emergent group-level property, not simply the sum of the efficacy beliefs of individual members (Bandura, 2001). The stronger the perceived collective efficacy, the higher the groups' aspirations and motivation will be to reach the desired perspectives. Moving to the second classification, Tai, Hu, Wang, and Chen (2012) defined the components as follows. *Teachers' personal teaching self-efficacy*: the teachers' belief in the efficiency of their own teaching, understanding of their students and belief that their methods can overcome the harmful effects of the external world on the students and on their own teaching. *Teachers' general teaching self-efficacy*: the teachers' belief in their impact on students' individual differences, belief in their impact on all students, and belief to overcome the destructive effects of students' family and society. *Teachers' professional teaching self-efficacy*: the professional belief and skill that could educate students to have professional skill and the professional knowledge of professional subjects and practice.



Teacher self-efficacy is a matter of degree, that is to say there are teachers with high, medium, or low level of sense of efficacy. Different studies have delved into the features of self-efficacious teachers and the relationship between the level of this efficacy and other teacher and student variables. Allinder (1994), for example, found that teachers with high teaching efficacy beliefs had a tendency to administer various methods in their teaching. Additionally, the higher the teachers' teaching self-efficacy is, the more self-assured they are in their instruction. In addition to that, the result of Allinder (1994), Woolfolk and Hoy (1990) specified that there was a significant negative correlation between teaching self-efficacy and student control ideology. That is to say that teachers who had high teaching efficacy had more humanistic orientation in controlling students whereas teachers with low teaching efficacy had a rigid control over students. Efficacious teachers persist with struggling students and criticize less after incorrect student answers (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). They are more likely to agree that a low Self Efficacious Student (SES) should be placed in a regular education setting and less likely to refer students for special education (Meijer & Foster, 1988; Podell & Soodak, 1993). Teachers with high efficacy tend to experiment with methods of instruction, seek improved teaching methods, and experiment with instructional materials (Allinder, 1994; Guskey, 1988; Stein & Wang, 1988).

## METHOD

Figure 1 shows independent variables, which are sub-elements of reflective teaching (focus on learners, focus on teacher, focus on practical aspects, focus on teacher's cognitive development, focus on critical/contextual aspects, and focus on moral/ethical parameter) and reflectivity as a whole and the dependent variable, teacher self-efficacy. Multiple regression analysis reveals the relationship between these independent and dependent variables.



**Figure 1.**  
*Research framework*



Participants of this study consisted of 120 EFL teachers, 30 males and 90 females, who teach English in a variety of English private institutes in Shiraz and Tehran, Iran. They teach English as a foreign language to the learners of diverse levels of proficiency. Their age ranged from 21 to 48. They had degrees in TEFL, English literature, linguistics, and a few of them majored in non-English fields. Their experience in teaching ranged from 1 to 21 years that classified them into novice, medium, and experienced teachers.

### ***Instrumentation:***

#### *Teacher Reflectivity Questionnaire*

The teacher reflectivity questionnaire used in this study was developed and validated by Akbari, Behzadpour and Dadvand (2010). The inventory includes 42 items with a standard questionnaire format having five-point Likert scale ranging from 1=never to 5=always. The main elements of reflectivity underlying the questionnaire, which were discussed in more details previously, are focus on the learners, focus on the teacher, focus on the practical aspects, focus on teacher's cognitive development, focus on critical/contextual aspects, and focus on moral/ethical parameters. The reliability index for the sample in the present study was found to be .87 using Cronbach's Alpha reliability. The construct validity of the instrument has also been checked through factor analysis including both exploratory and confirmatory analyses by the constructors.

#### *Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs System: TEBS-Self*

Teachers' sense of efficacy was measured using the Teachers' Efficacy Beliefs System-Self (TEBS-Self), which has been developed by Dellinger, Bobbett, Olivier, and Ellett (2008). This measure is based on the premise that teacher self-efficacy, different from teacher efficacy and the inventories vastly used beforehand, is task and context specific. It consisted of 31 items on Likert scale format, ranging from 1=very weak belief in my capabilities to 5=very strong belief in my capabilities. Reliability index was estimated for the present sample as  $R = .89$  using Cronbach's Alpha reliability.

#### *Data Collection and Data Analysis*

Data were gleaned from 120 participants of the study who filled out the questionnaires of reflectivity and self-efficacy. Six sub-categories of the reflective instrument and reflectivity as a whole were considered as independent variables or predictors and the self-efficacy scale as dependent variable of the study. For the purpose of investigating the hypotheses put forward in the study Multiple Regression Analysis was used as the main statistical procedure. Besides handing in the  $R$  value, this statistical procedure gives us the individual correlations between any two variables in the study.





## RESULTS

As stated before, the present study aimed at investigating the relationship among the reflective teaching subcategories and reflectivity itself as predictors of the variable of teacher self-efficacy. To answer the research questions posed, a multiple regression analysis was run which provided the following results:

**Table 1.**

*The descriptive statistics for the variables and their components*

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
efficacy	1.1196E2	18.74033	120
learners	39.2167	7.13752	120
teacher	21.6417	5.18692	120
practical	19.9750	5.29382	120
cognition	20.1500	4.34180	120
critical	19.8000	4.13552	120
ethical	19.6500	3.77442	120
reflective	1.4043E2	20.96405	120

**Table 2.**

*The Regression results for the hypotheses: Variables Entered/Removed b*

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	ethical, teacher, critical, practical, cognition, learners <sup>a</sup>		Enter

a. All requested variables entered.

**Table 3.**

*The Regression results for the hypotheses: Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.645 <sup>a</sup>	.416	.385	14.70017



**Table 4.**

*The Regression results for the hypotheses: Coefficients a*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1					
(Constant)	39.599	9.165		4.321	.000
Learners	.403	.298	.154	1.352	.179
Teacher	.529	.322	.146	1.642	.103
Practical	.019	.308	.005	.061	.951
Cognition	-.408	.409	-.095	-.998	.320
Critical	1.573	.469	.347	3.356	.001
Ethical	1.109	.531	.223	2.089	.039

Correlation and multiple regression analyses were conducted to examine the relationship between teacher self-efficacy and reflective teaching. A multiple regression analysis was applied to evaluate how well learners, teacher, practical aspects, teacher's cognitive development, critical/contextual aspects, and moral/ethical parameter as predictors can predict teacher self-efficacy. As Tables 3 and 4 show, the association between the criterion (dependent) and exploratory (independent) variables is moderately strong ( $R=.64$ ). The six predictor model was statistically significant  $F(6, 113) = 13.40$ ,  $p < .001$ , and was able to account for approximately 39% of the variance of teacher self-efficacy ( $R^2 = .042$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = .39$ ). Criticality and ethicality parameters ( $\beta = .347$ ,  $\beta = .223$  respectively) received the strongest weight in the model followed by the parameters of teacher, learner, and practicality ( $\beta = .146$ ,  $\beta = .154$ ,  $\beta = .005$ ), which have moderate predicting power.

The correlations table (Table 5) also reveals that self-efficacy and other independent variables except for practicality aspect of reflection ( $r = .20$ ,  $p < .01$ ) are significantly related. Teacher self-efficacy (DV) has a moderate level of correlation with the parameters of learner, criticality, and ethicality ( $r = .55$ ,  $r = .58$ ,  $r = .50$  respectively) and a poor level of correlation with the parameters of teacher, practicality, and teacher's cognition ( $r = .33$ ,  $r = .20$ ,  $r = .9$  respectively). As it was expected, an approximately high level of correlation was observed between some of the reflectivity sub-elements. Focus on learners and focus on critical aspect have a correlation of  $r = .69$ , focus on learners and focus on ethical issues have a correlation of  $r = .61$ , and focus on teacher and practical issues have a correlation of  $r = .87$ .





**Table 5.**  
*Correlation of main variable*

		efficacy	reflective	ethical	critical	cognition	practical	teacher	learners
Pearson Correlation	Efficacy	1.000	.583	.498	.572	.291	.207	.332	.545
	reflective	.583	1.000	.789	.705	.686	.516	.637	.849
	Ethical	.498	.789	1.000	.490	.435	.518	.334	.611
	Critical	.572	.705	.490	1.000	.388	.106	.310	.693
	cognition	.291	.686	.435	.388	1.000	.115	.576	.447
	Practical	.207	.516	.518	.106	.115	1.000	.087	.305
	Teacher	.332	.637	.334	.310	.576	.087	1.000	.372
	Learners	.545	.849	.611	.693	.447	.305	.372	1.000
Sig. (1- tailed)	Efficacy	.	.000	.000	.000	.001	.012	.000	.000
	reflective	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	Ethical	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	Critical	.000	.000	.000	.	.000	.124	.000	.000
	cognition	.001	.000	.000	.000	.	.105	.000	.000
	Practical	.012	.000	.000	.124	.105	.	.174	.000
	Teacher	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.174	.	.000
	Learners	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.
N	Efficacy	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
	reflective	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
	Ethical	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
	Critical	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
	cognition	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
	Practical	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
	Teacher	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
	Learners	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120

## DISCUSSION

### *Teacher Self-Efficacy and Reflectivity*

To the researchers' best of knowledge, it was expected that the two main variables of teachers, that is to say self-efficacy and reflectivity, go hand in hand in a successful educational program. The significant relationship between the two features is a proof of this anticipation. The reason for this significant relationship is best manifested in the similar sources of self-efficacy and reflectivity. Teachers who possess a high level of efficacy show a strong commitment to teaching, spend more time in subject matters in their areas of perceived inefficacy, and dedicate more time to academic matters (Good & Brophy, 2003) which are closely tied with reflection as well. Self-efficacious teachers are much more likely to plan more effective lessons,





persist when students face challenges, and search extensively for appropriate strategies and materials to improve student achievement. In addition, they are more likely to remain committed to their work and tend to overcome situations that challenge their ability to teach. They are more optimistic and take personal responsibility for their failures and successes. On the contrary, teachers with low self-efficacy tend to blame extraneous sources for their failures (Ware & Kitsantas, 2007). Reflective teachers, correspondingly take the same stance in which "they can improve their understanding of teaching by reflecting critically on their teaching experiences" (Richards and Schmidt, 2002, p. 451). Reflective teaching uses reflection as the main tool and encourages teachers to analyze, discuss, evaluate, and change their practice by an analytical approach to their context of teaching (Coyle, 2002).

Some other studies in the realm of education which have examined the association between efficacy and reflectivity have come to the equivalent results. Lowery (2003), for instance, sees reflectivity and sense of efficacy as closely related concepts and believes that benefits from reflective teaching include increases in confidence, autonomy, and self-efficacy for teachers. The same goes with Iran-Nejad and Gregg (2001) who reported that reflection is one type of self-appraisal. Thus, they believe, there is a strong likelihood that engaging in reflection will strongly affect a teacher's self-efficacy since self-efficacy is in close connection with self-regulation. Akbari, Imani Naeeni, Karimi Allvar, & Kiany (2008) investigated the influence of three main features of teachers, teacher self-efficacy, teacher style, and teacher reflectivity, on students' achievement. Besides the great influence of the variables that they reported, they concluded that there is a high level of correlation among teacher variables.

### *Teacher Self-Efficacy and Reflectivity Sub-Elements*

The results of regression analysis revealed that reflectivity and all of its sub-elements can significantly predict the variable of teacher self-efficacy. The factors of criticality and ethicality have much share in this prediction. Other factors, though; have lesser predictive value. Criticality in the reflective teaching instrument presented in this study points to the link made by teacher between classroom context and greater social, political, and democratic values beyond classroom to which the learners belong. A teacher to be efficacious needs to be aware of students' needs and life both inside and outside of teaching context. Ravitc (1991) asserts that teachers need to have not only an understanding of democratic society, values, behavior and attitudes but also need to practice this knowledge and understanding in the classroom otherwise pure information about democracy would not work out in the long term. Shechtman (2002), in the same vein, argues that teacher effectiveness is maintained by democratic values and beliefs of teachers. Zehir Topkaya and Yavuz (2011) looked at the relationship experimentally and reported a positive correlation between teachers' self-efficacy and democratic values they present in their classrooms. They hold that teachers as change agents play a crucial role in inculcating democratic and social values in their learners not only by being good models but also by explicitly fostering these values in them. Similarly, Woolfolk and





Hoy (1990) reported that efficacious pre-service teachers are more likely to have a progressive orientation in that they display more humanistic tendencies and exercise less control over their students.

Regarding the focus on ethical and moral issues, it can be argued that an efficacious teacher is able to diminish the distance between self and the learners by touching upon the affective side of teaching and learning. As it was presented earlier, by ethicality and morality, we mean paying attention to students, to their weaknesses and strengths, and listening to them. According to Ahmad and Sahak (2009) teachers who communicate effectively with their students can give them appropriate and helpful feedback. Communication between the student and the teacher serves as a connection between the two, which improves the classroom atmosphere. Snook (2003) pointed out, because education aims to change people in particular ways, and uses methods which involve close, personal, hierarchical relationships, teaching is an occupation where ethical issues are central and therefore the provision of ethics education to support the code of professional conduct of teachers is crucial. Some empirical studies reveals the fact that interventions can raise the ability of pre-service teachers to deliberate moral reasoning issues and their self-efficacy to teach values (Cummings, Maddux, Maples, & Torres-Rivera, 2004; Nucci, et al., 2005).

Another element of reflective teaching, which had a significant relationship with teacher self-efficacy, is focus on learners. As the main goal of education is student achievement, it is obvious that constructs related to students go hand in hand with a self-efficacious teacher. The connection between these constructs can be justified by referring to the definition and the bulk of studies which juxtapose them. For one instance, teacher self-efficacy has been defined by Bergman, Mc Laughlin, Bass, Pauly, & Zellman (1977) as the extent to which the teacher believes he or she has the capacity to affect student performance. By the same token, an emerging body of research shows that teachers' self-efficacy is associated with student factors, like achievement and motivation (Caprara, Barbaranelli, Steca, & Malone, 2006; Moor & Esselman, 1992) and student self-esteem (Borton, 1991). Turner, Cruz & Papakonstantinou (2004) reported that teachers with high self-efficacy will often group students together and allow students to explore and guide their own learning. This communication and group work is critical as students often learn best by communicating with one another and by being exposed to a variety of models. Similar to focus on learners; focus on teacher had a predictive value in the present study. Focus on teacher is related to teacher's value system, attitude and backgrounds, which has, likewise, a close tie with the definition of self-efficacy. Some researchers put self-efficacy adjacent to teachers' behaviors and found that the first construct has a great influence on the behaviors (for example, Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) also argued that teacher efficacy actually is a joint, simultaneous function of a teacher's analysis of the teaching task and his or her assessment of his or her personal teaching competence or skill.

Regarding teacher's cognitive development, although a significant relationship was observed between these two constructs, high level of correlation was not resulted and teacher's cognition does not have strong predictive value for teacher





self-efficacy. It was to some extent unexpected for the researchers, as teacher self-efficacy has its roots in Bandura's social-cognitive theories. Important in understanding self-efficacy, Bandura (1993) claims, is the relationship between perceived self-efficacy and cognitive development and functioning. Within his research, Bandura (1993) described the four major processes: cognitive, motivational, affective, and selection that perceive self-efficacy as most influential. Parallel to teacher's cognitive development, focus on practical aspects of teaching does not weigh too much on the dependent variable's prediction. The results of the present study could not claim that teachers with high level of efficacy are necessarily those who use different materials and resources available for the sake of higher achievements.

## CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The results of the present study demonstrate that reflectivity itself and its sub-categories are critical factors to the construct of teacher self-efficacy. Looking at the teacher characteristics from the self-efficacy side, it can be argued that to have self-efficacious teachers, we can inculcate the power of reflection in EFL teachers. Stated another way, a reflective teacher budgets time and energy to speculate all ingredients of an operative teaching and learning experiment and this simply makes him/her an efficacious teacher. The prime inquiry here is that whether these constructs are teachable or not, and if the answer is yes, how can we bring reflectivity and self-efficacy to our educational system. If teachers are able to improve their insights towards teaching in the way that they would be more reflective and more efficacious, where this consciousness would be reared? In consequence, the main implication drawn from this study can target teacher education programs. Pre-service and in-service teachers need to be educated to go deeper inside in teaching journey and widen their horizons of thinking for the sake of improving teaching tasks. The methods of reflections on and in teaching (Schön, 1983) and the features of an efficacious teacher can be presented in these programs. Experienced teachers are not exception in this regard. They also need to re-inspect the way they approach teaching and classroom context and observe if they are efficacious enough to make changes in education system or not.

It is desired that the same study be replicated with a larger group of participants in order to enhance the reliability and validity of the outcomes. Other inventories in teacher self-efficacy and reflective teaching can be utilized in order to report the results more precisely and confidently. Akbari et al. (2010) discuss the dearth of any research on the relationship of reflection and learners' achievement or efficiency of the instruction. Therefore, one of the urgent needs for further research would be finding the relation or effect of teacher reflection and efficacy on students' achievement and also on the success/failure of the instruction.





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## **İngilizce Öğretmenlerinde Yansıtıcılığın Özyeterliklerini Yordama Gücü**

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### **Genişletilmiş Özet**

**Problem:** Araştırmanın amacı yansıtmanın öğretmenlerin özyeterliğini yordama gücüne sahip olup olmadığını belirlemektir. Richards 'a (2008) göre yansıtma deneyimlerin önemsendiği, değerlendirildiği bir eylemi ya da bir süreci ifade eder. Öğretmen özyeterliğinin ise farklı şekillerde tanımlanmasına karşın tek bir önemli odak noktası vardır ki o da öğretmenin eğitimsel faaliyetleri yürütülebilme becerisine ilişkin inancıdır.

**Yöntem:** Araştırma 30 erkek 90 kadın olmak üzere İran Shiraz ve Tahran'da İngilizce öğretimi veren çeşitli özel kurumlarda çalışan 120 İngilizce öğretmeni ile yürütülmüştür. Öğretmenler yabancı bir dil olarak İngilizce öğretmektedirler. Öğretmen Yansıtma Ölçeği (Akbari, Behzadpour ve Dadvand, 2010) ve Öğretmen Yeterlik İnancı Ölçeği (Dellinger, Bobbett, Olivier ve Ellett, 2008) kullanılmıştır. Yansıtma ölçeği 6 alt boyutu ile birlikte bağımsız değişken olarak ele alınırken özyeterlik bağımsız değişken olarak ele alınmıştır. Araştırmada ortaya konan hipotezleri test etmek için çoklu regresyon analizi kullanılmıştır. Bu yöntemle araştırmanın iki değişkeni arasındaki ilişki ortaya konmuştur.

**Bulgular:** Öğretmen özyeterliğini yordamak için yapılan çoklu regresyon analizinde öğrenenler, öğretmenler, uygulayıcılar, öğretmenlerin bilişsel gelişimleri, eleştirel faktörler, etik parametreler kullanılmıştır. Araştırmada bağımlı ve bağımsız değişkenler arasındaki ilişki yüksektir ( $R=.64$ ). Tahminlenen model istatistiksel olarak anlamlıdır  $F(6, 113) = 13.40, p < .001$ , ve öğretmen özyeterliğinin %39'unu açıklamaktadır ( $R^2 = .042, Adjusted R^2 = .39$ ). Modelde kritik ve etik parametreler orta düzey yordama gücüne sahip öğretmen, öğrenen ve uygulayıcı parametrelerinden ( $\beta = .146, \beta = .154, \beta = .005$ ) sonra en yüksek ağırlığı almıştır ( $\beta = .347, \beta = .223$ ). Gözlenen korelasyonlar ayrıca özyeterlik ve yansıtmanın uygulanabilir yönü ( $r = .20, p < .01$ ) hariç diğer bağımsız değişkenlerle ilişkili olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Öğretmen özyeterliği öğrenen, kritiklik ve etiklik parametreleri ile orta düzeyde ( $r = .55, r = .58, r = .50$ ), öğretmen, uygulayıcılar ve öğretmenlerin bilişsel düzeyleri ile zayıf bir ilişki vardır ( $r = .33, r = .20, r = .9$ ). Araştırmada yüksek düzeyde bir ilişki yansıtma alt boyutları arasında görülmüştür.





**Sonuç:** Özyeterlik açısından öğretmen özellikleri incelendiğinde, özyeterliğe sahip öğretmenlerin yabancı bir dil olarak İngilizce öğretmesinde yansıtmanın etkisi önemlidir. Bir başka ifade ile yansıtıcı öğretmen zamanı ve işlemsel öğretimin ve öğrenme deneyiminin tüm içeriğini tasarlar ve bu da o öğretmeni etkili kılar.

