Reflective Teaching Practice in an EFL Context: A Qualitative Study

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Abstract

The aim of the present study was to find the reflection factors at which Iranian EFL teachers reflect on their teaching practice. To this end, 18 Iranian EFL teachers at several language institutes participated in this research. Teachers were surveyed using in-depth interview. The results of study indicated that Iranian EFL teachers were practicing four underlying factors of reflection in their teaching including: practical, cognitive, meta-cognitive, and affective factors. Obviously, the practice of reflective teaching improves the quality of teaching practice and increases students' motivation towards language learning in classroom. The results call for paying further notice to important role of theses reflective teachers in Iranian EFL context and there is a need to raise knowledge and awareness of all language teachers of the importance of reflecting on their teaching practice.

Keywords: reflective teaching, practical factor, cognitive factor, meta-cognitive factor, affective factor, EFL teachers

1. Introduction

The education of a teacher is considered as a new concept in the realm of language teaching. The notion is going to supersede the place of traditional teacher training, through which the teacher was able the hold the power in the classes. One of the most significant issues in teacher education is that it enables the teachers to have a look on all skills of teaching from an expansive view in both teaching and learning leagues. To this end, reflective teaching which assesses the thoughts and behaviors of individuals has risen in importance (Akbari, Kiany, Naeeni, & Karimi Allvar, 2008).

What has been ignored in second/foreign language acquisition is the role of teacher reflection. Reflective teaching is a process of self-questioning about the practices in teaching, in general and the way one presents the materials in the classroom and establishes a relationship with other colleagues have the same question (Robertson & Yiamouyiannis, 1996). In other words, reflective teaching is a process of thought and realization of that in the classroom based on the experience acquired in the setting (Wellington, 1991).

Reflective teaching is a salient feature of a competent teacher, the main characteristic of teacher training programs, and one of the elements contributing enormously in teaching practice. Reflective teaching takes the flow of teaching in classroom into proper consideration, thinks about the do and don'ts of practices, and reflects on the workability of the materials. Within the process, teachers will be aware of the classroom setting, and using the collected data they could analyze their thoughts and the presented practices. This system of thoughts and amalgamation of actions could cause progress in teaching. The way a teacher ponders about the class brings about his/her progress. It's a process of self-assessment, thinking about what has been done in the class, and if required making the changes. Akbari, Behzadpoor, & Dadvand (2010) claimed that a reflective teacher is one who carefully appraises his/her teaching practices, takes new decisions based on his previous experience, and implements his/her goals systematically.

In addition to its effects on teachers, reflective teaching influences students, as well. It is argued in the literature that teacher involvement in the reflective teaching has a mutual effect on students' knowledge of reflectivity (Yost, Sentner, & Frolenza-Baily as cited in Akbari, 2007). Accordingly, those teachers who have gained the knowledge of reflective practice are more likely to transfer the behavior to their students (Nolan & Huebner, 1989).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Reflective teaching has been considered "peeling back the layers of teachers' own daily work, looking under the surface of their own teaching, making a conscious attempt to see their teaching selves as students see them" (Mcentee et al., 2003). Based on the benefits of reflective teaching a teacher can use various methodologies to assess the efficiency and the main goals of what is supposed to be studied. The teacher can get feedback from class experiences and make due changes for better instruction. Furthermore, the challenges in the classroom setting can be evaluated to present the materials in an efficient way. Therefore, the present paper has focused on reflective teaching to shed more light on its various aspects. The current study explored the following research questions:

1) Do Iranian EFL teachers employ the four reflection factors in their teaching practice?

2) What are the views of students to the reflective practices of their teachers in English classes?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Reflective Teaching

Reflection used by Dewy for the first time and reflective practice in his words was "a set of active, consistent and through study of thought and behaviors of knowledge within the domain of expected forms and its inclination" (1933). He added that reflection is a tool for aiding teachers in using their potentiality to help their students in meaningful learning and, as a result in in-depth understanding (Loughran, 2005). Therefore, reflection calls for an efficient system of thinking, analyzing, and decision making in the classroom setting (Korthagen, 1993).

Dieker & Monda-Amaya (1995) offered the advantages of reflective teaching, in which the teacher is able to use various methodology, can assess the efficiency and the main goals of what is supposed to be studied, is able to obtain feedback from class experiences and make due changes for better instruction, and can evaluate the challenges in the classroom setting for better presentation of materials. Moreover, Braun & Crumpler (2004) asserted that reflection improves the sense of self-competency and self-confidence in the teacher which helps him/her to establish a better interpersonal relationship with his/her colleagues. Furthermore, Richards (1990) considered reflection as a leading factor in teacher progress, as well. Therefore, for instance, "teachers who reflect upon their practice are constantly changing and making themselves a new for the diverse students in their charge" (Miller, 2015).

Reflective teaching is a system of study in teaching which asks for meticulous attention to theories and practices in whatever actions taken by the teacher thoughtfully (Bolton, 2010). It works as a comprehensive strategy which enables the teacher to reflect on their practices during the teaching experience. Dewy (1993) claimed that reflection is an intentional behavior to think about the teaching processes and brings about more advancement in teaching and learning procedures.

Schön (1987) coined the term "reflective practice", which is people's reflection on their experiences and the way they respond to the events. He also introduced two types of reflection, namely "reflection in action and reflection on action" (Schön, 1987), in which the former is everyday challenges a teacher is encounter with during his/her career. In other words, reflection in action is the teacher's ability to ponder, evaluate, and find solutions to unpredictable situations in the classroom. Past experience helps the teacher enormously in this type.

The latter is concerned about what happens after the event. It enables the teachers to reflect on actions, analyze what happened in the classroom thoroughly, adopt proper decisions, and make the required changes in teaching methodology. Cowan (1998) describes this type of reflection as a retrospective looking on the previous actions in the classroom which result in decision making for a better presentation in the classroom. It is worth mentioning that both types of reflections are meta-cognitive processes and are intended for a future action (Collier, 1999). Based on Schön classification, both type of reflection are necessary for an adroit teacher. It is believed that all forms of reflection are important in reflective practice. Using reflective practice, teachers can develop their knowledge of teaching.

Moreover, teachers could provide their essential daily experiences by reflection, act out confidently in the classroom, and enhance their knowledge of teaching, understand immensely, and feel the positive reflection (Farrell, 2003). To be a brilliant reflective thinker and knowledgeable decision maker, reflective thinking is an essential means of education (Cole & Knowles, 2000; Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004). Scholars assumed that teachers can only become dominant to their materials of teaching and explain their educational objectives through reflection on their own teaching (Zeichner & Liston, 1996). Larrivee (2006) claimed that teachers can be influential decision makers through systematic reflection on their profession and work as an active agent.

2.2 Reflective Teaching Approach

Richards (1990) believed that one can be a reflective teacher using different teaching approaches, including self observation and other observation, team teaching, and discovering teaching by writing. Hence, the three important approaches to reflective teaching are as follows:

2.2.1 The Event Itself

Lessons or any other form of classroom instructions is the starting point of teaching. Although critical reflection is a kind of teacher's teaching, self-reflection can be encouraged by observing peer teaching.

2.2.2 Recollection of the Event

Reflective evaluation of a teaching lesson is a process of what happened without any description or assessment. During the phase of recollection of materials, different processes are available in written description of an event, recording processes, or use of checklists and coding systems for details of an event.

2.2.3 Review and Response to the Event

By describing the objective of an event, the teachers take a look back on it and review the process. It makes the teachers more involved and some questions rise about the topic.

By assessing the approaches to decisive reflection the following reflection processes will be achieved.

2.3 Critical Reflection Approach

2.3.1 Peer Observation

Peer observation gives teachers an opportunity to see what more experienced teachers do in their classroom in order to learn different teaching styles from each other and help them improve their teaching. It provides occasions for teachers to reflect critically on their work.

2.3.2 Written Accounts of Experiences

Use of written versions of experiences is another helpful process of reflective teaching. Personal written documents are a conventional method of teaching, the significance of which is recognized by practitioners (Powell, 1985).

2.3.3 Self-reports

Self-reporting means making an inventory or a checklist, in which the teacher reveals what has been practiced within a lesson or within a specified time period as well as the cycle of use during a week or even the whole course (Pak, 1985). Self-reporting enable the teachers to have a regular evaluation of the classroom lesson over the period of time. They can even asses to what extent their beliefs about their own teaching actions are implemented in their actual teaching actions.

2.3.4 Journal Writing

Journal or diary is a useful instrument for shaping the sense of critical reflection. The aims of journal writing are as following:

(1) To gather evidence of the major learning experiences happened in the setting; (2) to aid the teacher becomes familiar and holds in touch with their own development process; and (3) to provide a chance for teachers to state their personal development (Powell, 1985; Bailey, 1990). Regarding such various procedures for journal, the teacher usually holds a common set of learning or teaching experiences, keeps reflections on what has been done and also direct elaboration of actions, which may be useful in future reflection processes.

2.3.5 Collaborative Diary-Keeping

Journal writing can be processes by a group of teachers. For instance, within a 10-12 week, teachers take self-notes on their teaching practices, reflect on their peer diaries, and talk about their lessons and experiences on a scheduled basis (Rezaeyan & Nikoopour, 2013). They can record and later write down the group sessions and then assess these diary entries, the written reflections on each other's notes and the provided transcripts of the discussions to suggest how these three factors interacted and what happened to them again and again (Rezaeyan & Nikoopour, 2013).

2.3.6 Recording Lessons

In many cases, audio or video recording of teaching practice can be used as means of reflection. Although many valuable perceptions can be achieved using diaries and self-reports, they are not enough to seize the each moment of teaching process. Many things take place at the same time and unpredictably during a lesson, and

sometimes teachers cannot remember some aspects of teaching practice. Various important classroom actions may not have been checked by the teacher; for this reason it is needed to use journals with recording lessons. Pak (1985) proposed recording a specified period and then chose a cassette for detailed analysis randomly. The cassette could be used as a mean of an initial assessment. Recording lessons is always collects appropriate data for analysis. The basic aim is to record the interaction of the class, which refers to teacher to students interaction and student-to-student interaction.

2.4 The Importance of Reflective Practice in Teaching

It is believed that reflective practice helps teachers towards greater self-knowledge and self-challenge, which is a way to obtain useful personal development. Reflective practice is concerned to be useful for development of teachers as researchers who are in search of creating the knowledge of practice rather than pursuing a set of rules and applying existing theory to practice (Leitch & Day, 2000).

2.5 Components of Reflective Teaching

Akbari established a six-component model of teachers' reflection indicating practical reflection, cognitive reflection, meta-cognitive reflection, affective reflection, critical reflection, and moral reflection which are as follows (Akbari, Behzadpoor, & Dadvand, 2010):

1) Practical reflection: This element is about the different procedures and the actual reflection practices. Accordingly, these different procedures for the reflective practice, consisting of "journal writing," "lesson reports," "surveys and questionnaires," "audio and video recordings," "observation," "action research," "teaching portfolios," "group discussions," "analyzing critical incidents" (Farrell, 2003; Richards & Farrell, 2005)

2) Cognitive reflection: The second element is generally related to the role of teachers for improving their own professional practice. Carrying out an action research, attending conferences and workshops, and reading related literature are categorized in this domain.

3) Meta-cognitive reflection: This notion is concerns about teachers and their reflections on their own attitudes and behaviors, their description of their actions, and their emotional behaviors.

4) Affective reflection: The fourth reflection element relates to teachers reflection on their students, how students learn English language, and how students act emotionally in the classroom.

5) Critical reflection: This element has a look on teaching and reflections from the socio-political perspective. Items put in this class are mainly about reflection of teachers on the political importance of their action and presenting subjects concerning the race, gender and social class.

6) Moral reflection: this reflection element assesses reflection of teachers on moral issues.

Reflective teaching is a required characteristic of competent teachers, a most important factor of teacher education programs, and one of the elements which mostly impact on teaching practice. Accordingly, a substantial body of study has been conducted on it. However, it seems no study has investigated the reflection factors at which Iranian EFL teachers reflect on their teaching practice.

3. Method

3.1 Participants

The sample of this study was drawn from EFL teachers working in 3 language institutes (namely Safir, Mahan, & Parax) located in Mashhad, Iran and also their students. Data collection was done using purposeful sampling. The participants were 18 EFL teachers and 12 of their students. The participants gave written consent to attend the study. Out of total of 24 participants 18 responded to the questions voluntary. The teachers were graduated from different fields of study in English, including English literature, ELT, and English translation studies. They were EFL teachers at several institutes and taught English language to students with different levels of proficiency from pre-intermediate and intermediate to advanced levels. The latter group of participants included 12 upper-intermediate English students with different socio-economic backgrounds, and regarding the limited number of students under study both genders were used in the current study.

3.1.1 Participants' Demographics

Among 18 teachers 9 of them were females (50%) and 9 of them were males (50%). Their age ranged from 25 to 35. In the present study, teachers had been teaching between 5 up to 10 years. As mentioned earlier, the second group of participants included 12 upper-intermediate English learners and since changing or modifying the students was impossible, the age and gender of them were not observed and investigated by the researchers;

hence, both girls and boys in different proportions with age range of 16 to 22 participated in the study.

3.2 Instrumentation

Interview and some follow-up questions based on Akbari, Behzadpoor, & Dadvand (2010) "Reflective Teaching" questionnaire were used to measure variables of this study and to elicit information from the participants.

3.2.1 Interview

In-depth interview was employed in this section to achieve detailed and specific views and opinions in terms of EFL teacher's reflective approach. To measure teacher reflectivity, 12 questions of reflective teaching questionnaire called the English Language Teaching Reflection Inventory developed by Akbari, Behzadpoor, & Dadvand (2010) was used. The 12-question scale consists of four reflective constructs as: practical factor, cognitive factor, meta-cognitive factor, and affective factor.

The interviews were open-ended, and performed in a conversational style. Interview was carried out in a single session. The interview protocol contained a list of exploring, probing, open-ended questions. The interview protocols were analyzed to both yield a qualitative view and to render the required data. The participants will be given as much time as necessary to answer each question. EFL teachers can freely express their feelings and thoughts verbally with their native language. All interviews will be recorded and the interview time is expected to vary in length approximately from 10 to 20 minutes.

3.2.2 Follow-up Questionnaire

The follow-up Questionnaire which was designed to determine students' views, feedback and reactions to the reflective practices of their teachers in English classes was written based on the related literature and examined by two TEFL experts from Torbat-e- Heydarieh University. The follow-up Questionnaire contained 14 questions and was on a Likert- type scale, consisting of five scales ranging from *never, rarely, sometimes, often, and always*. The questionnaires were piloted in order to obtain information regarding the relevance and clarity of the questions, format, and time of allotment. They were then revised accordingly. Moreover, the questionnaire enjoys a high reliability of .73 Cronbach's alpha coefficient which was indicating acceptable internal consistency.

4. Results and Discussion

To analyze qualitative interview data, the audio-recordings were transcribed. Then the transcriptions were analyzed and the teachers' answers were classified regarding the four reflective constructs of the interview questions as: practical factor, cognitive factor, meta-cognitive factor, and affective factor.

4.1 Practical Factor

Reflective teachers were interested in improving their own teaching quality and enhancing their teaching information. They concerned about improving their teaching practice and use different tools or procedures to reflect about their performance. Here practical elements of reflection refer to those different procedures used by teacher for the reflective practice, consisting of "journal writing," "lesson reports," "surveys and questionnaires," "audio and video recordings," "observation," "action research," "teaching portfolios," "group discussions," "analyzing critical incidents" (Farrell, 2003; Richards & Farrell, 2005). In this regard, five of the interview questions were about practical aspects of reflection including "Do you write about your teaching experiences in a diary or a notebook?", "Do you talk about your classroom experiences with your colleagues and seek their advice/feedback?", "Do you discuss practical/theoretical issues with your colleagues?", "Do you observe other teachers' classrooms to learn about their efficient practices?", and Do you establish a clear set class rules and behaviors for your students to follow?". What follows are the analysis of interview answers.

To respond to the first question on the concepts of practical reflection element the more than half of the teachers' responses (72%) was yes and teachers asserted writing about their lesson plans before their class and writing teaching experiences after their class. Some of the responses for the first question are as follows:

> Yes, I always write my experience after each class and it helps me become more experienced.

> Yes, I always write my lesson plan for each class and after class I try to write my teaching experiences. I mean if I have time, I write my experiences.

This finding implies Iranian EFL teachers spend some time to think and reflect on their own teaching practices in order to improve their teaching quality. The teachers in their thought refer to the past experiences to help them improve their performance. They reflect on what they did in lessons which help them teach effectively.

The clear respond of the majority of the teachers (94%) to the second and third questions emphasized the vital

importance of talking with colleagues about class experiences and lessons and seeking for their feedback and comment on teaching performance. What follows are some factors which teachers stated:

> Every day I talked with my experienced colleagues about some parts that I m not sure about that and we share our experience, materials and new information.

> We talk about the experience we have with our students and the lesson we taught to them and ask for their advice.

> We always talk about practical issues for example how to integrate this special topic into the tasks that would be useful for them.

> We talk about grammar structure and vocabulary.

The results showed that by discussing classroom experiences the teachers reflect on their own action, offer practical feedback and ideas to other teachers and develop themselves. Through discussion, teachers can be more confident about their qualifications since they could share responsibility with other teachers and improve their teaching. It was found that the teachers in general seemed required support and feedback from their colleagues to help them identify problems they have with lessons and improve their practices more. This would imply that the teachers were interested to receive feedback from other teachers and took their feedback seriously. This indicated they concerned with developing their teaching skills in the classroom and reflect on their teaching practice.

Probing the answers to the forth question, small number of the participants (27%) had opportunities to observe other teachers' classrooms to learn about their teaching practice. Here are two examples from the interview transcripts:

> Yes I did it. I like to observe other teacher classrooms to get their experiences or teaching methods.

> I did it a lot. I ask other teachers to observe their class.

To answer the fifth question on the concept of practical reflection factor the majority of teachers (94%) declared that the main teaching strategies they used in classroom is to set up a comprehensible class rules and behaviors for students to follow. The transcripts of teachers' interview are listed as follows:

> I set rules for learners to follow up in each session like homework and warm up.

> Yes I especially have some plan for starting, maintaining, monitoring the class such as home work, class tasks and so on…

Consequently, the results are in line with those of Rezaeyan & Nikoopour (2013) who found Iranian teachers examine and evaluate their own teaching progress in order to make informed decisions about developing their own teaching behavior, attitudes and practices which impact on the students' attainment and progress. In addition, these teachers talked about teaching and learning with other teachers that lead to positive change in teaching strategies. The effect of this reflective practice could be on the teachers awareness about themselves and others of what is happening in the class which would lead to changes in teaching instruction and evaluation and bring about positive change in students learning (Pacheco, 2005).

4.2 Cognitive Factor

Reflective teachers attempt for shaping their professional development. In this regard, they employ cognitive factor which can influence on their teaching practice. Hereupon, it is obvious that parameters including carrying out an action research, attending conferences and workshops, and reading related literature could help teachers to improve their teaching skills (Richards & Farrell, 2005). Therefore, in this study the researchers tried to find the teachers answers to the questions about cognitive reflection factor, consisting of "Do you think of using/introducing new teaching techniques in your classes?", Do you read books/articles related to effective teaching to improve your classroom performance?", and "Do you participate in workshops/conferences related to teaching/learning issues?" The analyses of interview answers are as following.

To answer the sixth question, more than half (72%) of the teachers declared they tend to follow innovative because using new teaching material and technology help them to make connection between new teaching techniques to traditional one, and consequently improve and modify teaching strategies. Some of the responses for this question go as:

> I love my job and I always searching for new or useful thing out of that, like a new task or a new teaching technique.

> Definitely yes, I want to be different every session. For example video project can help us not to write something on the board and just show them or telegram helps us to solve some students' problems.

Teachers know that each student is unique and learns differently and require new teaching strategies to teach their lessons. For this reason, they were of the opinion that they needed to use new teaching material and technology to make connection between new teaching techniques to traditional one so as to increase student's motivation and also their attention to learning. This finding is in accordance with those of (Ball, 2009) who declared reflective teachers must be willing to change their own teaching strategies.

Analyzing the answers to the seventh question, a slim majority of the teachers (88%) highlighted the importance of reading articles and books related to teaching techniques so as to identify alternative ways of representing ideas and concepts to EFL learners. Some selected responses from teachers in interview could be as following:

> Every night I read the books or articles that relate to method of teaching and learning because I want to learn something more.

> My major is teaching so I read a lot in language teaching and testing. For example TBLT approach helps me to design some kinds of task in order to improve my class routine.

The results indicated that the teachers were willing to learn from reading related literatures and use them to improve their teaching.

The answers of the more than half (72%) responses to the eighth question on the concept of cognitive reflection element showed that teachers seek ways to improve teaching practice and developing their teaching knowledge through participation in workshops and conferences. The two examples from the interview transcripts are as following:

> Yes I try to attend to some useful conferences and some workshops which relate to my field and they help me a lot.

> Yes I like to participate in conferences and I learn something more about teaching practice.

It is interesting to note that teachers generally acknowledged the idea that they like to improve their teaching skills. In this regard they were interested in participating in conferences to improve their teaching knowledge and performance in order to enrich and enhance student learning.

4.3 Meta-cognitive Factor

Akbari (2007) states, "Teachers' personality, beliefs, values and more specifically their affective make up, can influence their tendency to get involved in reflection and will affect their reaction to their own image resulting from reflection". Hence, the researchers try to find the answers to the ninth and tenth interview questions related to meta-cognitive reflective teaching, including "Do you think about your teaching philosophy and the way it is affecting your teaching?", "Do you think about your strengths and weaknesses as a teacher?"The analyses of interview answers are mentioned as follows.

For the majority of the teachers (88%), one of the most important techniques to reflect and evaluate teaching practice is to think about teaching philosophy which helps them to set goals for the future. What follows are some of the teachers' answers:

> All the time I think of my goals as a teacher, how I can teach students better, why I select these assignments for my students and what teaching procedure is better for them.

> I always think about my aims and the outcome of my teaching.

Therefore, the teachers knew about the importance of teaching philosophy and how it could impact on teaching performance. Hereupon, they examine their behavior and attitude throughout the course. This could help them to recognize obstacle to learning and changing strategies to achieve teaching objectives (Ball, 2009). Therefore, this finding confirms those of previous studies which suggest that there were a relationship between teaching philosophy and teaching practice (Afshar & Farahani, 2015).

Moreover, regarding to answer the ninth question the vast majority (94%) of the teachers claimed to think about their teaching strengths and weakness and the parts of the lessons the learners doesn't like. Here are two examples of the interview transcriptions:

> I usually think about positive and negative aspects of my teaching and try to find solution for the weaknesses.

> In every class I learn something about my weaknesses and strengths points.

The results revealed that teachers eager to learn from their mistakes, and they were willing to change and move forward. It is for this reason that they believed their past experiences helped them improve their performance.

They perceived that their performance in the classroom would influence student performance. Teachers knew that their strengths and weaknesses require regular monitoring and evaluation to be effective teacher. This means that teachers have meta-cognitive knowledge of own strengths and weaknesses which would influence to the way they teach (Burden & Williams, 1997).

Consequently, it can be understood that teachers with meta-cognitive characteristics concerns about their reflection on own attitudes and behavior and have reflective thinking. They think more on their own actions; so they have more conducive classrooms and more successful learners. It can be concluded that teachers with meta-cognitive reflection reflect on their own emotional constitutes, increase students' learning outcomes, and improve students' results. Hence, this finding is in accordance with those of (Ghorban Dordinejad & Rashvand, 2014) who found that those teachers who reflect on meta-cognitive element impact on the learners' success.

4.4 Affective Factor

The reflective teacher focuses more on student's attitudes towards learning. According to Zeichner & Liston (1996) "teachers reflect about students, their cultural and linguistic backgrounds, thinking and understandings, their interests, and their developmental readiness for particular tasks". Therefore, in this study the researchers wanted to clarify EFL teachers' perspectives about affective aspects of their teaching by asking two questions including "Do you think about your students' emotional responses to your instructions?", "When a student is having an emotional problem or is neglected by his/her peers, do you try to spend more time with him/her?" qualitative content analysis of interview answers are as follows.

More than half of respondents (72%) mentioned, they consider students emotional responses and feedback about their own teaching performance in order to evaluate their teaching practice and also enhance students learning. The transcripts of two answers are listed as follows:

> I ask students to reflect on my teaching method, what they learned, what they liked and what they didn't understand, clarity of instructions and explanations.

> I ask my students to write about my teaching performance and I collect their paper, so I learn from their response and improve my teaching practice in future.

According to the obtained results, it appears that teachers reflect on their action as proposed by Schön (1987). These EFL teachers knew the value of getting feedback from students. They knew that students' feedback give important information about their teaching and it is helpful for their teaching progress. It seems they noticed their student's feedback and used their feedback to improve their classroom teaching. They knew that students' feedback do play a significant role in helping them to teach in a better way and improve their teaching practice. The teachers perceived that students' statements about their teachers confirmed they were competent and effective teacher in what they were doing.

Additionally, to respond to the last question on the concepts of affective factor less than half of the participants (38%) declared that different students have different emotional needs so they spend more time with students to learn about their needs and interests so as to increase student's attention in classroom.

> I care and spend most of the time with students. They are human being so we have to pay attention to their feelings.

> I try not to be in details with my students but if her emotional problem distracts other students, I spend some time with her to talk about her problem.

It may be perceived that since the affective factor is about the teachers' reflection on their learners in the classroom, how students are learning English language and how they act emotionally in the class, it could be good for teachers to build effective interpersonal relationship in the classroom and improve their communication with students and pays further notice to the learner' wants.

4.5 Student Participant's Perspective

The follow-up questionnaire was administered to collect views of students to the reflective practices of their teachers. Hence, probing the responses to questionnaire revealed that more than half of the participants (75%) claimed teachers use four factors of reflective practice in their own teaching. Accordingly, the analysis of the results from students' answers to follow-up questionnaire confirmed the teacher responses in interview question.

5. Conclusion

The aim of this study was to investigate the factors at which Iranian EFL teachers reflect on their teaching practice. The results of this study revealed that these Iranian EFL teachers employ the four constructs of teachers'

reflectivity in their practice including: practical, cognitive, meta-cognitive, and affective factors. It seems that these four reflection factors effect on teachers' behaviors, attitudes, and their teaching practice in the classroom. In fact, by practicing these reflection components teachers can improve their teaching and use new teaching strategies to involve the learners in learning. It means that teachers' reflectivity and its four reflection elements have some important role in learner' success; so the reflective teacher gets the positive results based upon the learners' test scores. Rezaeyan & Nikoopour (2013) came to the same conclusion. They declared that "there is significant relationship between teachers' degree of reflectivity and students' achievement." In addition, the results of present study provide evidence that teachers' reflection improve the quality of teaching practice (Bolton, 2010). Robinson, Anderson-Harper, & Kochan, (2001) also concluded that "reflective practice is presented as providing faculty with the means to improve their teaching and become more thoughtful professionals." Moreover, these findings are in accordance with those of (Minott, 2008; Wunder, 2003) who found that EFL teachers employ all reflection factors in their teaching practice.

The results of the present study can improve EFL teachers' knowledge about the value of reflecting on teaching practices. Additionally, the findings of this study have implications for FEL teacher in Iran. There is a need to raise awareness of all language teachers of the importance of reflecting on their teaching practice and to foster six components of reflection in Iranian EFL teachers. Further opportunities must be offered for all teachers to be actively engaged with reflection components in their teaching practice. This study also has implications for policy makers to understand the significant character of these reflective teachers and appreciate their efforts.

5.1 Limitations of the Study

The limitation of the present study is that teachers were selected only from English language institutes in Mashhad, Iran, which may limit the generalizability of the study. Also, this study did not consider university teachers. Accordingly, it can be claimed that the findings of this research could be well fit with EFL teachers in language institutes.

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