

Investigating the Relationship among EFL Teachers' Reflective Teaching, Reflective Thinking and Classroom Management

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Abstract

The present study is aimed at investigating the relationship among Iranian EFL teachers' reflective teaching, reflective thinking and classroom management ability. To this purpose, 102 male and female EFL teachers, aged between 25 and 40, with different academic background who were teaching at different levels, were chosen to fill in three questionnaires on reflective thinking, reflective teaching and classroom management. In this connection, the Spearman Rank-Order correlation was used as the analytical method to analyze the data and to come to the conclusion. The obtained result showed that there was a positive correlation between teachers' reflective teaching and class management. A strong relationship was observed between reflective thinking and class management and there was also a positive correlation between teachers' reflective thinking and reflective teaching.

Keywords: Class management; reflectivity; reflective teaching; reflective thinking

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.

In particular, there is lack of nuanced understandings of how EFL teachers successfully establish and manage classroom environments that support both engaged learning and positive social interactions among learners while one of the most important factors regarding teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) is how EFL teachers manage their classes (Brown, 2007). Although teachers may employ different styles in different teaching contexts in teaching English, they face the same issue to increase their teaching effectiveness and students' outcome with respect to classroom management.

Brown (2001) believes that the main step in the succession of practicalities for the language classroom is to grapple classroom management, “which encompasses an abundance of factors ranging from how you physically arrange the classroom, to teaching style, to classroom energy” (p. 293). Understanding the variables of classroom management would help one to sharpen his/her skills as a language teacher (Brown, 2001). An EFL teacher can dramatically influence the amount and quality of language learning for students (Brown, 2007) considering many different factors related to his/her personality, teaching methodology, and motivation (Korthagen, 2004).

There has been a concerted effort among teachers and instructors of higher learning to incorporate critical thinking into their curriculum. However, as evidenced by researches (Vaske, 2001; Black, 2005; Rudd, 2007; Choy & Cheah, 2009), students may not be able to think critically because their teachers are not able to integrate critical thinking sufficiently into their daily practice as it requires a certain amount of reflection. In addition, critical thinking is equated to higher order thinking skills of Bloom's Taxonomy: analysis, synthesis and evaluation (Bloom, 1976) and teachers find difficulty incorporating these levels into their lessons (Choy & Cheah, 2009).

In order to enhance critical thinking, the teachers take advantage of reflective thinking in their practices. Reflective thinking (Dewey, 1933) is thought to enhance critical thinking. It is part of the critical thinking process specifically referring to the processes of analyzing and making judgments about what has happened.

Learners who think reflectively become aware of the procedure and control their learning by actively accessing what they know, what they need to know and how they bridge that gap (Sezer, 2008). Therefore, critical thinking involves a wide range of thinking skills leading towards desirable outcomes and reflective thinking helps to integrate these thinking skills by helping with judgments (Shermis, 1999). An important role of reflective thinking is to act as a means of prompting the thinker during problem solving situations since it provides an opportunity to step back and think of the best strategies to achieve goals (Rudd, 2007). Therefore teachers who are able to use reflective practices will themselves be more attuned to using this strategy to help students think critically (Shermis, 1999).

In addition, reflective thinking as an active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge (Dewey, 1998) places teachers/students' learning on a constructivist and inquiry-oriented basis. It is the process of making informed and logical decisions (Taggart & Wilson, 1998), while recalling one's own experiences, beliefs, and perceptions (Campbell-Jones & Campbell-Jones, 2002). There has been concern about teacher education, claiming that teachers are trained as technical practitioners who have limited alternatives and lack careful consideration of teaching (Valli, 1997). Even though teacher education is dominated by technical rationality (Schön, 1983) and behaviorist models (Zeichner, 1983), reflective thinking has gained importance in teacher education (Crawford, O'Reilly & Luttrell, 2011; Korthagen, 2001; McCollum, 1997; Tsangaridou and O'Sullivan, 1994; cited in Tican & Taspinar, 2015).

Review of Literature

Arrastia et al. (2014) investigated the reflection levels, the use of future-oriented reflection, and reflective writings of 90 pre-service elementary school teachers enrolled in two different classes of a field experience course. The level of reflection in the writings of 35 percent of the pre-service teachers improved in complexity within a semester and only 10 percent of the pre-service teachers demonstrated the deepest reflection in their writings. Future-oriented reflection only accounts for 6 percent of all the language used in the writings of the pre-service teachers.

Weber (2013) looked at whether reflective thinking skills developed after giving students overt instruction about reflective thinking applications. Findings of the paper showed that after an instruction given about reflective thinking for a term, 66 percent of the pre-service teachers were able to increase their total scores.

In a research conducted by Dervent (2012), the purpose was to investigate the effects of reflective thinking activities on physical science pre-service teachers' professional applications

and to determine the reflective thinking level of the pre-service teachers by using reflective thinking activities. He found that when micro-reflective teaching was used, the presentation performance of the pre-service teachers improved and their reflective thinking skills developed. At the end, it was found that a large majority of the teachers individually enhanced their reflective thinking levels.

Hagevik et al. (2012) reported that conducting action research (a) encourages students to carry out research on their own applications, (b) shows them that reflecting on their applications is a means of determining the ways of changing them, and (c) demonstrates that a cooperative learning environment improves critical reflection. Regarding classroom management, Rahimi and Hosseini (2012) investigated Iranian EFL teachers' classroom discipline strategies from their students' perspective. They asked 1497 students to answer the classroom discipline strategy questionnaire that assessed their perceptions about teachers' classroom management disciplines. The results of this study showed that Iranian EFL teachers appeared to use recognition/rewarding strategies more often to discipline their classes, while using aggression and punishment were the least common classroom discipline strategies. Female teachers used punishment, discussion, and aggression strategies more in contrast to male teachers. In order to explore Iranian EFL teachers' classroom management orientations and its relationship with teaching styles, Rahimi and Asadollahi (2012) asked three hundred EFL teachers to fill in the (ABCC) inventory and Teaching Activities Preference questionnaire. They found that most Iranian EFL teachers were interventionist with respect to their classroom management approaches. They concluded that teachers who were more interventionist in their classroom management used more teaching activities than those with interactionalist classroom management orientation.

Lambe (2011) explored how participation in class-based qualitative research enhances pre-service teachers' reflective thinking skills. The findings of the paper indicate that participation in such class based research supports knowledge-based professional dialog conducive to the development of reflective capacities of pre-service teachers. Hosseini Fatemi, Elahi Shirvan and Rezvani (2011) explored the effect of EFL teacher's reflection on their learners' writing achievement. Participants of their study included 100 EFL teachers teaching in Mashhad language institutes and their 1000 EFL learners. They used the Reflective teaching instrument designed by Akbari and Behzadpour (2007). They have also calculated the EFL learners' Grade Point Averages (GPAs) of their writing scores. An unstructured interview with 10 teachers of each group of highly reflective and low reflective teachers was also done. The results of the statistical analysis revealed that teachers' reflection significantly affects EFL learners' writing achievement. Learners with highly reflective teachers had higher writing achievement scores than those with low reflective teachers. Since the above mentioned issues have been appealing to many scholars, several researchers have focused on the investigation and evaluation of the concepts of reflection, motivation and classroom management.

A systematic review was conducted to identify evidence-based practices in classroom management to inform research and practice (Simonsen, Fairbanks, Briesch, Myers, & Sugai, 2008). These researchers initially reviewed ten classroom management texts to identify typical practices described within texts and then systematically searched the research literature to identify experimental studies that examined these practices. After their review, they recommended that researchers should focus on evaluating new class management strategies, establishing quantitative and qualitative standards of performing class management

strategies, and specifying decision rules which guide implementations of the continuum of consequences and instructional strategies (Simonsen et al., 2008).

There is a great amount of research on pre-service teachers' reflective thinking. Gencer (2008) employed a framework consisting of reflective activities in teaching a practice course of biology pre-service teachers to improve their reflective thinking skills and found significant improvement.

Taghilou (2007) tried to explore the relationship between reflective teaching practices and learning outcomes of the Iranian EFL students. In this study, he used two homogeneous groups of pre-university students. Using the same materials and similar pedagogical conditions, two different teaching practices on reflection was taught to the participants. One of the teachers was a strong supporter of the reflective pedagogy, and the other was a disbeliever in its use and effect on students' learning potential. The results of this study showed that the students' mean score was significantly lower ($p < 0.05$) in the disbeliever teacher category (control group) in contrast to the mean score of students in the believer teacher category (experimental group). In addition, in the experimental group, the students were more satisfied. He believed that the results of his study demonstrated the potential contribution of reflection and reflective teaching to the ease and effectiveness of learning on the part of the Iranian EFL students.

Erginel (2006) investigated how pre-service teachers perceive reflective thinking and the topics on which the pre-service teachers reflected throughout the application. It was found that while reflecting during the application, the pre-service teachers focused on issues such as teaching methods, student motivation, and classroom management.

Another study on reflective teaching was conducted by Sim (2005) who invited a group of seventeen ESL learners enrolled in an intensive English course in Singapore to reflect on their English language learning experience. The instrument of this study was a summative diary administered towards the end of the course on how the students approached their learning. The analysis of the entries was carried out with reference to the learners' motivation, beliefs, attitudes, strategies and affective factors. Sim (2005) reported that the students' motivation was mainly instrumental and they had certain clear beliefs about language learning. They evaluated their progress though not regularly. He proposed that affective factors had a strong impact on their English learning experience. He went on to say that two important factors that surfaced were the importance of social support and the emphasis on effort.

In another study, Martin and Shoho (2000) investigated the relationship between teachers' age and perceptions of classroom management style. Data were collected from a total of 388 participants via the (ABCC) Inventory and a demographic questionnaire. They found a significant correlation between subjects' age and the people management sub-scale. They stated that as teachers increase in age, their beliefs and attitudes toward this dimension of classroom management become more controlling.

In addition to the individual studies reviewed so far, some other studies have been mixed and specified by different investigators to be influential management practices. A set of interventions were used including mystery motivators, token economy with response cost which also used antecedent strategies (public announcement of classroom rules, and teacher movement). They were accompanied by reinforcement strategies, for example, mystery motivator, as well as negative reinforcement practices to react to disruptive behavior employed productively to cut down on undesirable behavior (Mahmoodi & Izadi & Dehghanzadeh, 2014). During the treatment phase conducted in these studies, students' disruptive behavior was found to

be reduced. In a withdrawal phase, again the disruption rate was increased and once the intervention was reinstated, disruptive behavior was further reduced.

The body of experimental studies, to date, has concentrated on an array of class management strategies. Such investigations include modification of single typical aspects of teacher behavior to more extensive sets of such efforts as organization, structure, positive reinforcement, and behavioral incidences (e.g., Kelshaw-Levering, Sterling-Turner, Henry & Skinner, 2000; Langland, Lewis-Palmer & Sugai, 1998; Madsen; cited in Mahmoodi, Izadi & Dehghanzadeh, 2014). The major findings of these studies were that rules do not suffice to guarantee correct behavior in class. They need to be appropriately modeled by the teacher. Moreover, sometimes the teacher had better ignore inappropriate behavior and instead praise appropriate behavior. A great body of research of this sort employs a one-subject method to change different teacher management strategies to form an operational relationship with student behavior.

Serious works on efficient class management are, in fact, based on a one-year research conducted by Anderson, Evertson and Emmer in the late 1970s who gathered copious narrative records of teacher behavior in 28 third-grade classes within a whole school year. They later investigated the management styles of efficient teachers (Anderson et al., 1980).

It was Kounin's research (1970) that laid the specific groundwork for research in management and the organization of class by identifying several general characteristics of classroom management that were consistently related to good student behavior (as cited in Sanford, Emmer & Clement, 1983). In the early 80s, at the Research and Development Center for Teacher Education at the University of Texas at Austin, a series of studies were conducted to find out how teachers establish and maintain classroom management. They found out that effective teachers took time at the early days of school to instruct students how to follow classroom rules and procedures. After that they relied on whole-group class activities, so that they could keep control of all students constantly.

Although this review of the literature illustrates a positive relationship between reflective teaching and classroom management, there is, to our knowledge, few empirical research regarding the relationship between these two variables and reflective thinking in the EFL context in Iran. Hence, it was the link between reflectivity in teaching, thinking and teachers' management ability that is planned to be investigated in the present study. Taking the important roles of reflective teaching and thinking into account, we would recognize the potential value to better understand and examine whether teachers' reflectivity in language teaching and their perception of management are interrelated. Additionally, an attempt will be made to see whether these two concepts correlate with teachers' ability in managing language classes. To do so, the following research questions were raised:

Q1. Is there any statistically significant relationship between reflective teaching and class management?

Q2. Is there any statistically significant relationship between reflective thinking and class management?

Q3. Is there any statistically significant relationship between reflective teaching and reflective thinking?

Methodology

Participants

The participants selected for the present study, were 102 EFL teachers (N=102), males and females, aged between 25 and 40, at various proficiency levels in different private language

institutes in Sary, Mazandaran Province. They also teach English language to students at different levels of proficiency from beginning, pre-intermediate, and intermediate to advanced levels. They were BA and MA graduate in the field of TEFL, translation and English Literature. Their teaching experience varied from two to 20 years. All of them were native speakers of Persian, and from different social and economic background.

Instrumentation

Personal Identification Form: that was prepared by the researcher providing information about four variables such as genders, age, professional status, educational background and the number of students who are currently taught by these individuals.

Reflective thinking questionnaire: The scale for determining the level of reflective thinking of class teachers” was used. This scale is implemented with the aim of analyzing the reflective thinking skills that is taken from the graduate thesis with the name of “Evaluation of Levels of Reflective Thinking Skills of Class Teachers” by Dolapcioglu (2007; as cited in Choy & Oo, 2012). The topics for the questionnaire were created based on research by Hamilton (2005) on the development of reflective thinking. The statements cover three major areas of development; ability to self-express, awareness of how one learns and developing lifelong learning skills. This scale is a five-point likert scale. The scale includes the options of ‘Never (1)’, ‘Rarely (2)’, ‘Sometimes (3)’, ‘Often’ (4), ‘Always (5)’. The current study was needed to employ Cronbach alpha consistency coefficient for the reliability of scale that was found to be 0.93.

Teacher reflectivity questionnaire: The teacher reflectivity questionnaire used in this study was the one proposed by Akbari, Behzadpour and Dadvand (2010) which was developed based on five reflectivities named affective, cognitive, metacognitive, practical and critical. The questionnaire included 29 items on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1=never to 5=always. The validity and reliability of the present questionnaire had been checked several times with different datasets. In this study, Cronbach’s Alpha was used to compute a reliability score for the scale. Based on the findings, the reliability of the teachers’ reflectivity questionnaire was found to be 0.838.

Teachers’ Sense of Efficacy Scale: That is a questionnaire about classroom management (Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2001) to investigate the classroom management efficacy of the participants. Within this study, classroom management style is defined as a multi-faceted construct that includes two independent constructs; behavior management and instructional management. The continuum of control posited by Wolfgang (1995) provides the theoretical foundation for each of the two components. An analysis of the Behavior Management subscale revealed good internal consistency (i.e., Cronbach's alpha) for the six items (0.774), with an average inter-item correlation of 0.377 (sd= 0.091). The average corrected item-total correlation for this sub scale was 0.529 (sd= .071), which suggests the items have good discrimination. Results for the Instructional Management subscale also showed a good internal consistency for the six items (0.770), with an average inter-item correlation of 0.365 (sd= 0.092). The average corrected item-total correlation for this subscale was 0.522 (sd= 0.086), which again suggests good item discrimination.

Procedure

The study started with 102 heterogeneous practicing EFL teachers from different language schools in Sary, Mazandaran. First, the teachers were given a personal identification form to gather some information about the individuals in connection with their gender, age,

experience and issues alike. Then three questionnaires on reflective thinking, reflective teaching and class management were simultaneously given to the teachers who were functioning as the main participants of the study. The questionnaires were distributed by the researcher or the head of the institutes to whom the necessary details were given.

Additionally, the data collection in this study was performed through the direct method (Farhady, 1995) in which all questionnaires were directly given to teachers under investigation. Due to the teachers' busy schedule, some EFL teachers had difficulty in filling in the questionnaire at the time. In such cases, they were allowed to take the questionnaires home, answer the questions, and then return them to the head of the institute. Then, the returned questionnaires were scored. Finally, all the data was collected, analyzed and the correlation between the variables was tested.

Data Analysis and Results

Since this study was related to English language teachers, no test of language proficiency was used. The demographic information of the teachers who participated in the study is presented in the following table.

Table 1. *The Demographic Information of the EFL Teachers*

N	Education	Age	Experience	City
Male 50	B.A.	25-40	More and less than five years	Sary
Female 52	B.A.	25-40	More and less than five years	Sary

Table 1 shows the demographic information of the participants. As it is seen, the participants consisted of 50 males and 52 females, aged between 25 and 40.

After, filing out the questionnaires by the participants, the descriptive statistics were analysed. The result is as follows:

Table 2. *Descriptive Statistics for the Reflective Thinking and Classroom Management*

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Reflective_Teaching	102	67.00	73.00	140.00	105.3039	17.89617	320.273
Classroom_Management	102	44.00	51.00	95.00	76.4804	11.51042	132.490
Valid N (listwise)	102						

The means and the standard deviations of reflective teaching and classroom management are 105.30, 17.89 and 76.48, 11.51 respectively. The result of the inferential test is presented below.

Table 3. *The Spearman Rank-Order Correlation Test for Reflective Thinking & Classroom Management*

	Reflective_Teaching	Classroom_Management
Spearman's RT Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.487**

rho	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	102	102
CMCorrelation Coefficient		.487**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	102	102

The Spearman Rank-Order Correlation was run to determine the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' reflective teaching and classroom management. There was an average positive correlation between these two variables, which was also statistically significant ($r_s = .487$, $p < .05$). Thus, it is concluded that there is a statistically significant relationship between reflective teaching and classroom management.

Table 4. *The Descriptive Statistics for the Reflective Thinking and Classroom Management*

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Reflective Thinking	102	54.00	87.00	141.00	107.7059	15.71755	247.041
Classroom_Management	102	44.00	51.00	95.00	76.4804	11.51042	132.490
Valid N (listwise)	102						

The means and the standard deviations of the reflective thinking and classroom management are 107.70, 15.71 and 76.48, 11.51 respectively. The result of the inferential test is presented below.

Table 5. *Spearman Rank-Order Correlation Test for reflective thinking and Classroom Management*

		Reflective Thinking	Classroom_Management
Spearman's rho MTT	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.456**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	102	102
CM	Correlation Coefficient	.456**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	102	102

The Spearman Rank-Order Correlation was run to determine the relationship between Iranian EFL reflective thinking and classroom management. There was an average positive correlation between these two variables, which was also statistically significant ($r = .456$, $p < .05$). Therefore, it is resulted that there is a statistically positive relationship between reflective thinking and classroom management.

Table 6. *The Descriptive Statistics for the Reflective Teaching and Reflective Thinking*

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Reflective_Thinking	102	54.00	87.00	141.00	107.7059	15.71755	247.041
Reflective_Teaching	102	67.00	73.00	140.00	105.3039	17.89617	320.273

Valid N (listwise) 102

The means and the standard deviations of the reflective thinking and reflective teaching are 107.70, 15.71 and 105.30, 17.89 respectively. The result of the inferential test is presented below.

Table 7. *The Spearman Rank-Order Correlation Test for the Reflective thinking and Reflective Teaching*

	Motivation_Thinking	Reflective_Teaching
Spearman's rho	1.000	.879**
MTT		
Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.879**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
N	102	102
RT		
Correlation Coefficient	.879**	1.000
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
N	102	102

The Spearman Rank-Order Correlation was run to determine the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' reflective thinking and reflective teaching. There was a strong positive correlation between these two variables, which was also statistically significant ($r_s = .879$, $p < .05$). Henceforth, it can be said that there is a statistically significant relationship between reflective teaching and reflective thinking.

Discussion and Conclusions

Based on the obtained results, reflective thinking and reflective teaching are positively correlated. A positive relationship is seen between teachers' reflective thinking and class management and the relationship between reflective teaching and class management is also significant.

In line with these results, a study carried out by Choy and Oo (2012) indicated that a majority of the teachers were self-assessing only to ensure that they were doing their jobs properly. There was no indication that they wanted to improve in their own performance in order to enhance and enrich student-learning. Ball (2009) noted that in order for teachers to become reflective of their teaching practices they must be motivated to change their teaching strategies when needed. Furthermore, he indicated that only a few of teachers who were interested in continued assessment of their own discipline. They seemed ambiguous about using feedback from students to improve their lessons. They knew the importance of getting feedback but at the same time felt that they could not trust the feedback given which could provide valuable insights for them to learn about themselves. They did not seem able to carry out reflection-on-action as suggested by Schon (1983). Boody (2008) and Rudd (2007) also state that reflection is a necessary part of the process to analyze and articulate problems and make a connection with what they did in the classroom. In Choy and Oo's (2012) view, it seems that teachers use reflective thinking to enhance the quality of their teaching, but for many it was in terms of personal performance and expectations rather than as a tool for social changes (Ball, 1997).

The content of reflective thinking addresses the teachers' main concerns and the depth of reflective thinking evaluates how they develop the thinking process. For the contents of reflection, teachers usually focus on the purpose of their teaching the procedure and reasons

behind their teaching and evaluation of their teaching that is what they did and how they did it, why they did things to achieve their goal whether they succeed or not, the reasons for their failure to achieve it and how to improve it .

Reflective thinking is assessed on three levels; recall level that describes what they experienced, interprets the situation based on recalling their experiences without looking for alternative explanations and attempts to imitate ways that they have observed or were taught. Rationalization level that one looks for relationships between pieces of their experiences, interprets the situation with rationale, searches for “why it was” and generalizes their experiences or comes up with guiding principles. Reflectivity level is what one approaches their experiences with the intention of changing and improving in future, analyzes their experiences from various perspectives, and is able to see the influence of their cooperating teachers on their students’ values, behavior, and achievement (Lee 2005).

Clearly, teachers are responsible for creating and maximizing learning opportunities (Kumaravadivelu, 2003) in very complex ways, fulfilling both academic and social roles.

All in all, since based on the present study, reflective thinking is strongly connected to class management, and positive management ability will directly affect the learners’ level of achievement, in order for a language learning group to have a greater share of acquisition, the initial and fundamental step is to enhance the teachers’ reflective thinking ability.

The result of the present study presents a strong connection between teachers’ reflective teaching and classroom management. In another phase of the study a significant correlation is observed between reflective teaching and reflective thinking and consequently reflective thinking is also positively related to classroom management.

The importance of attending to both pedagogic and social priorities by the teacher (Senior, 2002) has been acknowledged and specific teacher behaviors that enhance learners’ motivation have been outlined in numerous theoretical frameworks. These include classroom environment research (see e.g., the Classroom Environment Scales in Moos, 1979), self-determination theory (Noels, 2003; Noels, Clément, & Pelletier, 1999; Reeve & Jang, 2006; Skinner & Belmont, 1993), goal orientation theory (Midgley, Kaplan, & Middleton, 2001; Patrick, 2004; Turner et al., 2002), or research on L2 anxiety (Spielmann & Radnofsky, 2001). They all posit that in order to enhance students' motivation to engage in learning, creating sufficient opportunities for cognitive development (by, for example, promoting autonomy, emphasizing mastery over performance goals, and providing informative feedback) seems to be equally important as creating a caring classroom climate.

A number of studies in L2 teacher education demonstrate that "behavioral change does not imply cognitive change, and the latter does not guarantee changes in behavior either" (Borg, 2003, p. 91). Indeed, we witness situations when teacher trainees, though they may have conformed to the training course requirements in terms of their teaching performance, did not share the same conceptions of what teaching entails (Almarza, 1996) or, on the other hand, when teachers' declared attitudes did not correspond with their practices (Kennedy, 1996). Either kind of change is incomplete; in the former case, behaviors are abandoned once teachers feel no pressure to conform to certain expectations while in the latter case, newly declared attitudes do not inform practice and thus have no impact on student learning.

To ensure, therefore, that TD initiatives promote "significant and worthwhile change" (Richardson, 1990) in teachers' practices, they "must account for how individuals learn to teach and for the complex factors, influences, and processes that contribute to that learning" (Freeman & Johnson, 1998, p. 407). This is the key premise that has led to reconceptualizing the language

teacher education knowledge-base. Two factors that have been found particularly influential in how teachers learn to teach include teachers' prior experience and the socio-cultural context.

Yet again, there are numerous studies and statements supporting reflective thinking and its effect on different aspects of language teaching. Taggart and Wilson (1998), state that teachers' lack of sufficient experience is generally reflected at the technical level. Graham, Holt and Parker (2001) claim that reflective teachers vary their methodology according to ability, characteristics of students, purpose of the lesson, and they modify their activities according to the available equipment, facilities, and classroom size. Valli (1990) states that effective teaching depends on taking moral responsibility and not on having technical skills. Calderhead and Gates (1993) provide an overview of the moral values that teacher training programs should include. In addition, Burgess (1999) stresses that one of the purposes of reflective teacher education programs is to train teachers with principles of moral subjects. Ballard (2006) states that journals and interviews used in reflection contribute to the development of the pre-service physical education teachers' reflective thinking. Tsangaridou and O'Sullivan (1997) suggest that physical education teachers could be more analytical and reflective through studies such as micro teaching, school observations, and specially prepared questions that improve reflective thinking. In another study, reflective strategies such as video analysis and writing blogs contributed to physical education teachers' professional development (Crawford, O'Reilly & Lutrell, 2011).

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