



EFL Teachers' Levels of Reflective Teaching and their Conceptions of Teaching and Learning

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Article Info

Received: 15th December 2012
Accepted: 27th December 2012
Published online: 1st January 2013

ISSN: 2231-8275

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ABSTRACT

While most teacher educators and researchers have highlighted the importance of applying a reflective teaching approach and identifying Conceptions of Teaching and Learning (CTL), providing opportunities to achieve these goals is ignored by syllabus designers and teachers. The current study is an attempt to focus on the relation between EFL teachers' reflective levels and CTL. To collect the required data a sample of 30 EFL teachers (15 males and 15 females) was chosen randomly to participate in the study. The data were collected via classroom observation and TLCQ questionnaire. Then the data were analyzed by SPSS software through descriptive and inferential statistics such as mean, percentage, Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The analysis of the data revealed that EFL teachers are at the medium level of practicing reflective teaching. Also EFL teachers' CTL are approximately in the middle of being teacher-centered and learner-centered with tendencies towards learner-centered conception. In addition, the more reflective the teachers, the more learner-centered they are. The outcomes of the study could facilitate and foster teachers' practice in the classroom for the purpose of professional development in effective teaching; therefore, teacher education programs and methodology courses can take advantage of reflective teaching approach for preparing more reflective and learner-centered teachers which will finally lead to the improvement of educational system of teaching EFL.

Keywords: Reflective teaching, Conceptions of Teaching and Learning (CTL), Effective teaching, Professional development.

1. Introduction

Recently English language has been the language of "globalization" and widely is accepted as a lingua franca and international language for communication between peoples with different first languages. In this situation, learning and teaching English has become very crucial in second and foreign contexts. Therefore, effective methods and approaches of teaching English should be taken into consideration to develop the main goals of education: the students learning and the quality of teaching.

Teachers are aware of the fact that the question “what is the ideal and perfect method for teaching?” is remained without a convincing answer and there is no perfect method to follow. Due to the importance of teaching profession in our society reflective teaching is recommended as an innovative approach to improve teaching process. It “can positively affect professional growth and development by leading to greater self-awareness to the development of new knowledge about professional practice” (Imel, 1992).

The first person who proposed reflective teaching was John Dewey in 1933. He invited teachers to take reflective action which includes “active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds that support it and the further consequences to which it leads” (John Dewey, 1933, p. 9).

Bartlett (1990) pointed out that becoming a reflective teacher involves moving beyond a primary concern with instructional techniques, “how to” questions and asking “what” and “why” questions that regard instructions and managerial techniques not as ends in themselves, but as part of broader educational purposes. Asking “what and why” questions give us a certain power over our teaching.

Richards (1990) sees reflection as a means which can “help teachers move from a level where they may be guided largely by impulse, intuition, or routine, to a level where their actions are guided by reflection and critical thinking” (p. 5). In another place he also declared that “A reflective approach to teaching involves changes in the way we usually perceive teaching and our role in the process of teaching” (Richards, 1997). Reflective practice is used as a valuable means for teachers in order to assess and generate their concerns about effectiveness of their performances and students’ learning. In brief, Reflective teaching is a process of involving teachers in analyzing, discussing, evaluating, changing and developing their practices by adopting an analytical approach to their work (Coyle, 2002).

As it is evident, reflective teaching is one of the most important innovative approaches of teaching. It is a complex process in which teachers need their intuitions and teaching experiences to criticize themselves, evaluate their practices, observe their performances and be open-minded toward others criticisms in order to progress and develop in their teaching actions. Thus, Reflective practice is an influential process which finally leads to teachers’ professional growth. And since, teachers’ development is not possible without teachers’ serious intention to change; trying to change in order to improve teaching practices needs organized plan and experts’ support.

Teachers may start a process of reflection as a solution of a specific problem in the classroom or as a practical approach for understanding more about teaching effectiveness. In any case, as a result of reflective action they may make decisions to do something in an alternative and more dynamic way. Effective teachers reconsider the problems they face in the classroom to find a suitable solution. This re-evaluation affect their insights about why, what, how to teach and eventually lead to significant changes in certain teaching experiences (Goldstein, 2008; Wood & Bennett, 2000).

MerryField (1993) mentioned that “over the last decade there has been interest in reflection as a tool for improving practice in education. Numerous scholars have developed rationales, conceptualization and methods for encouraging reflection as an integral part of classroom teaching and teacher education” (cited in Ferwana 2006, p. 21). Therefore, it is

crucial for teachers to do their best to employ and enhance their cognitive skills as an opening point to improve teaching practice.

According to Jasper (2003) reflective teaching bridges the gap between theory and practice. It is long life learning which leads to the development of more autonomous, qualified and self-directed teachers. Moreover, reflective teaching is a cyclical process which has certain steps. Thus, In order to apply reflective approach in the classroom, collecting information, analyzing and evaluating them is crucial steps to make the best results from teaching.

Furthermore, reflective teaching consists of several levels. According to Day's (1993) classification of hierarchical levels of reflective teaching, as mentioned in Farrell (2007) there are three levels. The first level which Day called it (P1) level contains teacher's reflection on behavioral actions in the classroom. (P2) level entails teacher's justifications of their reflections according to teaching theories and (P3) level looks beyond theories and actions to the social context of teaching. According to Whitton et al (2004), reflective action is a process of analyzing our beliefs, values, and knowledge of our teaching experiences, and considering the results of that analysis.

In addition, there is a general assumption about the link between beliefs and actions. "People take actions depending on their beliefs and also change their beliefs through reflecting on their action" (Lee, 2011, p. 6). Importance of what teachers believed about teaching is determined when they, as a teacher, ask themselves what type of teachers they would like to be? To answer this question, teachers' knowledge about quality of teaching plays a significant role in identifying their conceptions of teaching and learning. Kember (1997) identified conceptions of teaching in two broad orientations: teacher-centered/content-oriented and student-centered/learning-oriented. He also recognized another category, student-teacher interaction, as a connector between these two orientations. A continuum including five conceptions ranging from (1) imparting information, (2) transmitting structured knowledge, (3) teacher-student interaction, (4) facilitating understanding, to (5) conceptual change constructs these orientations. And the present study uses this categorization which will be investigated to identify teachers' CTL.

Teacher-centered orientation is equivalent to traditional/transmissive conception of teaching where teacher is identified as authority and transmitter of knowledge in the classroom and behaves with students as passive recipients of knowledge. In such conception, learning occurs by receiving information from teacher and textbooks as a well-defined concept. In contrast, student-centered orientation is equivalent to progressive/constructivist conception which emphasized significant roles of creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration in learning context (Howard et al., 2000; Prawat 1992 as cited in Chan and Elliott, 2004).

Professional development researches pointed out teachers have arrived to the point that they should put theoretical knowledge into practice. We have learned so much theoretical knowledge about how classrooms work from researches, but we have done very few researches on how to make them work better in order to empower students to become more literate and critical thinkers. This kind of gap in studies, regarding teaching English as a foreign language, also has a long story in Iran. English language classrooms focus more on teacher-directed instructions and teacher-centered classrooms.

The current study is an attempt to explore the potential relation between teachers' levels of reflective teaching and their CTL to put theory into practice. In this regard, reflective teaching can be used as a means of achieving our goal. Reflective teaching provides insight into teachers' use of data both for research into effective teaching and for indication of student performance.

In spite of the importance of reflective teaching, no study has examined the teachers' levels of reflective teaching regarding their beliefs and CTL including concepts such as what it is, how it is created, how it is justified, and how it might change. While professional development is generally considered as a goal of education, little attention has been paid to teachers' reflective levels as an innovative approach toward teachers' growth and its relation to their CTL. Furthermore, no teacher education program has dealt with these inevitable issues in teaching English as a foreign language in Iran. Thus, there is a need to provide clear instructions and procedures on what we mean by reflection and how to help teachers develop as reflective practitioners.

Therefore, the present study is supposed to emphasize the valuable role of reflective approach into teaching process, to scrutinize why and how it is employed, and to investigate teachers' CTL as an influential issue for becoming a critically reflective teacher.

It is worth mentioning that "Collection of knowledge and beliefs which manifest themselves in teacher practice" constitutes what is labeled CTL (Bowen, 2009, p. 10). In most of the educational fields they are accepted as two overlapping constructs. Characteristics such as subjectivity, unconscious acquisition and implicitness allow for using the terms interchangeably to be representative of CTL (Alexander, Schallert, & Hare, 1991; Kagan, 1992; Parajes, 1992).

According to Chan and Elliott (2004), teacher's belief about preferred way of teaching and learning, including its meaning and the roles of student and teacher, constructs CTL. In other words, CTL incorporate knowledge and beliefs about learners and learning strategies as well as teachers' management of students' behavior and lesson conceptions in the classroom (Lee, 2011). In reality, answering the questions such as how to create an appropriate learning context regarding students' needs constitutes teacher conceptions or beliefs about teaching and learning.

"Teachers' beliefs and implicit theories about learning, motivation, and instruction influence their actual instructional behaviors in the classroom although teachers may not be aware of the influence on their behaviors" (Patrick & Pintrich, 2001, cited in Lee, 2011). The relationship between teachers' beliefs and their actions is confirmed by several empirical studies (Anning, 1988; Cornett, 1990; Short & Short, 1989).

Ferwana (2006) in his study investigated the reflective teaching levels of EFL student teachers and concluded that most of them are at the medium level of reflection.

Smith and Pape (1991) conducted a study to identify the relationship between Reflective Judgment levels and practice. Elementary and secondary student teachers were participated in the Reflective Judgment Interview to determine their RJ level. They just found the differences of the classroom practices among the subjects and no relationship between reflective judgment and their scores in reading course or journal writing. Student teachers at the lower level of RJ (stages 1-3) depended on instructional patterns such as teacher guide and their classes were characterized as teacher-centered. "Most often these students lectured or

told pupils what to learn, displaying little flexibility with regard to teaching method” (Smith & Pape, 1991, p. 4). For student teachers at higher level of RJ model, learning is a collaborative process and they used different innovative methods to establish student-centered classrooms.

Other studies concerning teacher conceptual perspective revealed that teachers at a higher level of cognition would be more creative and flexible in response to challenges. They are at the reflective level of RJ model and modify instructions to match the students’ needs, promote students to be reflective and demonstrate ambiguity tolerance for ill-structured problems. Teachers at the lowest levels of cognition are less motivated for being creative. These teachers tend to be the authority in the classroom and use prescribed curriculum (Hunt, 1971; Hunt & Joyce, 1967). Teachers between these two levels were aware of differences between theory and practice but most of their innovations were imitative rather than creative. Most of the teachers were at this level, preferred moderate structure in their classrooms and wanted to use new innovations, but lack of understanding underlying principles and implementing new approaches limited their practices (Miller, 1981).

Chan and Elliott (2004) also stressed the influential role of CTL and classroom practice on teachers’ decision making. They mentioned “As part of everyday interactions, teacher has to make many decisions that influence his/her behavior. Such decision making is meta-cognitive in nature and probably affected by the classroom context and the teacher’s beliefs about the nature of knowledge and knowledge acquisition” (p. 819).

Parajes (1992) referred to the significant role of identifying teachers’ CTL by pointing to its practical impact on classroom action and mentioned that “attention to the beliefs of teachers and teacher’s candidates can inform educational practice in ways that prevailing research agendas have not and cannot” (p. 329). Eley (2006) also, insisted the indispensable influence of developing teachers’ knowledge and beliefs on the progress of their approaches in teaching in order to put this theory into practice. He also proposed that, teachers’ CTL might be the result of reviewing their teaching experiences (reflection).

Snider and Roahl (2007) distributed a 12 items survey to 344 teachers with a continuum from constructivist to non-constructivist conceptions of teaching. Results indicated that teachers agree with both approaches. Thus the researcher concluded that “many teachers have neither philosophical mornings nor empirical evidence to guide their practice. They are guided by pragmatic considerations related to student characteristics, availability of curriculum materials, experiential factors, and what is popular.

Several studies pointed out that, learner-centered conceptions of teaching and learning lead to problem-solving activities, meeting students’ need and providing effective teaching and learning strategies (Hashweh, 1996; Olafson & Schraw, 2006). Other studies claimed that there are no significant differences between teachers’ CTL and their teaching practices (Hativa et al., 2001; Schraw & olafson, 2002; Wilcox-Herzog, 2002).

Although there are strong evidences which show an interactive and consistent relation between teachers’ conceptions and their teaching approaches (Trigwell & Prosser, 1996a; Kember, 1998), Mellado (1998) reported that there is only partial relationship between educational conceptions and classroom action.

While a few studies have dealt with the relation between levels of reflective teaching and CTL directly, one of best works in this field was done by Bowen (2009) who used Reflective Judgment Model as a theoretical framework to measure the reflective levels of English language arts' teachers. The finding of the study suggested that there is a negative relationship between reflective judgment and teacher-centered classroom and teacher-directed instruction. The results showed that teachers who access higher levels of reflective judgment are more enthusiastic to describe learning as an interactive process between students and teachers rather than teacher-centered learning environment.

Investigating the correlation of teachers' reflective levels and their CTL facilitate teachers' practice in the classroom for the purpose of effective teaching; therefore, teacher education programs can benefit from reflective teaching approach for preparing more reflective teachers which will finally lead to the improvement of educational system of teaching EFL. This study attempts to encourage EFL teachers to employ reflective teaching approach in order to reach positive, efficient and professional changes in their teaching performances. The study highlights the critical reflection as a succinct, authentic and intelligible classroom practice is recommended to address EFL teachers' future classroom performances. Furthermore, CTL are viewed as the most influential factors in this process which help teachers to recognize their beliefs toward teaching efficiently.

2. Research Questions

2.1 What levels of reflective teaching are held by the Iranian EFL teachers?

2.2. What is the Iranian EFL teachers' understanding of the Conceptions of Teaching and Learning (CTL)?

2.3. What are the relation between Iranian EFL teachers' reflective teaching levels and their Conceptions of Teaching and Learning (CTL)?

3. Research Hypotheses

3.1 Most of the EFL teachers are at the first level (planning or pre-reflective) of reflective teaching approach.

3.2. The more learner-centered the EFL teachers are, the more willing they are to use reflective teaching approach.

4. Method

4.1 Participants

The study was conducted in Shiraz, and 30 participants, (15 males and 15 females) who were teaching at Bahar Language Institute ranging from 21 to 35 years old were chosen randomly for data collection. Among them 26 had M.A. and 4 had B.A degree and their teaching experience ranged from 3 to 14 years.

4.2 Instruments

In order to solicit the relation between EFL teachers' reflective levels and their CTL at language institutes, two instruments were employed to collect the data for three research questions. 1) Ferwana's (2006) Observation Card which measures the levels of practicing reflective teaching among the teachers. 2) Chan & Eliot's (2004) questionnaire: Teaching and Learning Conceptions Questionnaire (TLCQ) which identifies the teachers' CTL.

The observation card consists of three phases: 1) Planning, 2) Operation and roles, 3) Analysis and reactions. The first phase: planning (level 1 or pre-reflective) consists of 9 items to measure the extent to which EFL teachers follow the reflective approach in their planning for the lesson. The second phase: operations and roles (level 2 or quasi-reflective) consists of 12 items to measure the extent to which EFL teachers apply the reflective approach in their teaching performance. The third phase: analysis and reactions (level 3 or reflective) consists of 8 items to identify the EFL teachers' ability to judge the lesson and give clear perspective concerning reflective teaching process. The questionnaire is arranged in a measuring scale format ranging from (1) to (5) where (1) represents the lowest mark and (5) represents the highest one.

TLCQ is a thirty-item questionnaire; it is worth mentioning that the researcher added a Likert scale from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" in order to be answered more easily by participants. This proposed questionnaire generally refers to two different dichotomies of teaching and learning conceptions which are labeled as Traditional (teacher-centered) and Constructivist (learner-centered). What's more another category, student-teacher interaction, is proposed as a link between these two orientations (Kember 1997).

4.3 Procedures

To fulfill the aim of the study, related literature was reviewed to take advantage of previous studies in this field and new research questions were derived according to the gap in the literature. Then instruments for answering the research questions were organized. When the data collection procedure was completed the data were analyzed through SPSS software to reveal the results of the study. And finally the study concludes by the discussion of the study based on the results.

4.4. Data Collection

The data required for the first research question was collected by classroom observation of 30 EFL teachers (15 male and 15 female) and the observation cards were filled out by the researcher; this process took about 60 hours in 3 weeks. The participants were also expected to answer the TLCQ questionnaire to collect the data for the second research question.

4.5. Data Analysis

To address the first and the second research questions, the obtained data from TLCQ and observation cards were analyzed by descriptive statistics mean and percentage. Furthermore, to answer the third research question inferential statistics Pearson Moment Correlation was employed to investigate the relation between EFL teachers' reflective levels and their CTL.

5. Results

This section provides the readers with answers to three research questions which explore the relation between EFL teachers' reflective levels and CTL.

5.1 Answer of the first research question:

To answer the question, 30 observation cards were filled out in classrooms' observation to measure EFL teachers' reflective levels. The results of the study for this research question were computed based on participants' highest and lowest total scores at each level in general. Table 4.15 presents the results of these scores in each level individually.

Table 5.1 Results of observation card scores (low-high)

Level	Number of Items	Low	High
Planning (1)	9	9	45
operations & roles (2)	12	12	60
analysis & reactions (3)	8	8	40

As Table 5.1 shows, the highest score for reflective levels belongs to level 2 "60". It shows that most of the participants were at this level of reflection. This level is equivalent to quasi-reflective level; participants at this level are able to get useful feedback, improve their teaching performances according to feedback, gather information about their performances by different techniques, and solve the problems that arise in their classrooms. And the lowest score "8" belongs to level 3 (reflective level), so it can be inferred that the participants are not skillful enough to determine the strengths and weaknesses of their lessons, benefit from gathered information of reflection, analyze them, and employ alternative teaching strategies whenever they meet critical situations in their classrooms.

5.2 Answer of the second research question:

To answer the research question, the data which were collected by TLCQ questionnaires were analyzed at descriptive level by reporting the percentage of participants' answer to each item. The results of TLCQ are presented in Table 5.2 and according to it the most significant results are as follow:

The results show that more than half of the EFL teachers prefer learner-centered conception towards teaching, for instance they believe in students' individual differences and needs, problem-solving activities, heuristic activities, discussion, increasing critical thinking and self-confidence. On the other hand almost half of the EFL teachers believe in both learner-centered and teacher-centered conceptions (student-teacher interaction), and only a

few number of them believe in teacher-centered conceptions such as: transmitting knowledge to students, highly control of students' practice, presenting materials rather than discovering, memorization, authority in the classroom and immediate error correction.

Table 5.2 Results of TLCQ

Item	Strongly agree		Agree		No comment		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Total	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Q1.	39	39%	47	47%	10	10%	4	4%	-	-	100	100%
Q2.	74	74%	20	20%	6	6%	-	-	-	-	100	100%
Q3.	50	50%	48	48%	6	6%	-	-	-	-	100	100%
Q4.	18	18%	25	25%	16	16%	35	35%	6	6%	100	100%
Q5.	59	59%	31	31%	7	7%	3	3%	-	-	100	100%
Q6.	15	15%	54	54%	28	28%	3	3%	-	-	100	100%
Q7.	39	39%	31	31%	24	24%	3	3%	3	3%	100	100%
Q8.	24	34%	24	24%	28	28%	18	18%	6	6%	100	100%
Q9.	27	27%	52	52%	18	18%	3	3%	-	-	100	100%
Q10.	53	53%	38	38%	9	9%	-	-	-	-	100	100%
Q11.	38	38%	37	37%	22	22%	3	3%	-	-	100	100%
Q12.	53	53%	44	44%	3	3%	-	-	-	-	100	100%

Q13.	42	42%	49	49%	9	9%	-	-	-	-	100	100%
Q14.	9	9%	37	37%	16	16%	28	28%	10	10%	100	100%
Q15.	24	24%	33	33%	24	24%	13	13%	6	6%	100	100%
Q16.	3	3%	12	12%	13	13%	52	52%	20	20%	100	100%
Q17.	29	29%	15	15%	31	31%	12	12%	13	13%	100	100%
Q18.	6	6%	28	28%	15	15%	35	35%	16	16%	100	100%
Q19.	21	21%	29	29%	17	17%	30	30%	3	3%	100	100%
Q20.	3	3%	9	9%	6	6%	38	38%	44	44%	100	100%
Q21.	-	-	30	30%	27	27%	34	34%	9	9%	100	100%
Q22.	9	9%	15	15%	28	28%	42	42%	6	6%	100	100%
Q23.	9	9%	47	47%	29	29%	9	9%	6	6%	100	100%
Q24.	12	12%	19	19%	16	16%	24	24%	29	29%	100	100%
Q25.	-	-	12	12%	3	3%	49	49%	36	36%	100	100%
Q26.	6	6%	21	21%	12	12%	49	49%	12	12%	100	100%
Q27.	-	-	6	6%	15	15%	39	39%	40	40%	100	100%
Q28.	6	6%	9	9%	12	12%	47	47%	26	26%	100	100%
Q29.	3	3%	3	3%	12	12%	49	49%	33	33%	100	100%

Q30.	13	13%	35	35%	16	16%	30	30%	6	6S%	100	100%
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According to the results presented in table 5.3, the frequency of the medium score for TLCQ is 65. It indicates that more than half of the participants are enthusiastic towards student-teacher interaction. In other words, their CTL are approximately in the middle of being teacher-centered and learner-centered with more tendencies toward learner-centered conception.

Table 5.3 Results of TLCQ scores (low-mid-high)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Low	20	20.0	20.0	20.0
Mid	65	65.0	65.0	85.0
High	15	15.0	15.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Also regarding Table 5.4 the mean score of TLCQ is 80.68, which confirms that EFL teachers are not completely learner-centered and have some inclination towards teacher-centered conception (student-teacher interaction).

Table 5.4 Results of descriptive statistics of TLCQ

N	Valid	100
	Missing	0
Mean		80.6800
Median		81.0000
Mode		88.00
Std. Deviation		12.54799
Range		53.00

5.3 Answer of the third research question:

To measure the relation, the obtained data from 30 observation cards and 30 TLCQs of the same teachers were analyzed by Pearson Correlation Coefficient (CC).

5.3.1. Results of correlation coefficient between reflective teaching level 1 and TLCQ:

According to the results presented in Table 5.5, correlation coefficient between level 1 and Learner-centered (Lc) conception is 0.601 (sig: 0.000) which is significant at the confidence level of 99%. In other words, there is a medium and positive relationship between Lc conception and level 1. It means that if the teachers are at the first level of reflection, they are more learner-centered and vice versa. In addition according to correlation coefficient obtained from the relation between level 1 and Teacher-centered (Tc) conception, (CC: .283, sig: .036), there is a weak and positive relationship between level 1 and Tc at the confidence level of 95%. All in all we can infer that EFL teachers at this level believe in student-teacher interaction.

Table 5.5 Results of correlation coefficient between level 1 and CTL

		Student	Teacher
(planning)	Pearson Correlation	.601	.283
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.036
	N	30	30

5.3.2. Results of correlation coefficient between reflective teaching level 2 and TLCQ:

According to the results presented in Table 5.6, correlation coefficient between level 2 and Lc conception is 0.401 (sig: 0.000) which is significant at the confidence level of 99%. In other words, there is a medium and positive relationship between Lc conception and level 2. It means that if the teachers are at the second level of reflection, they are more learner-centered and vice versa. In addition according to correlation coefficient obtained from the relation between level 2 and Tc conception, (CC: .191, sig: .312), there isn't a significant relationship between them at the confidence level of 95%.

Table 5.6 Results of correlation coefficient between level 2 and CTL

		Student	Teacher
(operations & roles)	Pearson Correlation	.401	.191
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.312
	N	30	30

5.3.3. Results of correlation coefficient between reflective teaching level 3 and TLCQ:

According to the results presented in Table 5.7, correlation coefficient between level 3 and Lc conception is 0.380 (sig: 0.110) which is significant at the confidence level of 99%. In other words, there is a medium and positive relationship between Lc conception and level 3. It means that if the teachers are at the third level of reflection, they are more learner-centered and vice versa. In addition according to correlation coefficient obtained from the relation between level 3 and Tc conception, (CC: .096, sig: .612), there isn't a significant relationship between them at the confidence level of 95%.

Table 5.7 Results of correlation coefficient between level 3 and CTL

		Student	Teacher
(analysis & reactions)	Pearson Correlation	.380	.096
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	.612
	N	30	30

5.3.4. Results of correlation coefficient between reflective teaching levels and TLCQ in general:

As it is reported in Table 5.8, correlation coefficient between reflective teaching levels and learner-centered conception of teaching in general is .543 (sig: 0.000). It shows that there is a significant positive relationship between them. In other words, the more reflective the teachers, the more learner-centered they are and vice versa. Moreover, according to the results of correlation coefficient between reflective teaching levels and teacher-centered conception of teaching (CC: .156, sig: .061), there isn't a significant relationship between them at the confidence level of 95%.

Table 4.41 Results of correlation coefficient between reflective levels and CTL in general

	Student	Teacher
Pearson Correlation	.543	.156
Reflective levels Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.061
N	30	30

5.4 Test of hypotheses

5.4.1 Test of hypothesis one:

To test the first hypothesis, the obtained results from answering the first research question are used. The results indicate that most of the EFL teachers are at level 2. Therefore the first hypothesis is rejected.

5.4.2. Test of hypothesis two:

To test the second hypothesis, the obtained results from answering the third research question are used. The results indicate that there is a significant positive relationship between EFL teachers' reflective level and their learner-centered conceptions of teaching and learning. In other words, the more reflective the teachers, the more learner-centered they are. Thus, the second hypothesis is confirmed.

6. Discussion

This section provides a specific discussion based on the results of the study and makes an attempt to link each finding to the existing literature. The results of the study concerning the first research question show that most of the EFL teachers in the language institute at the present study are at the second level of reflection. This finding conflicts with Bowen (2009) which its participants attain higher level of reflection while it is in line with Ferwana (2006) which reported medium level of reflection and with Miller (1981) which reported that teachers at the second level of reflection are aware of differences between theory and practice, prefer moderate structure in their classrooms and tend to use innovations, but their lack of understanding underlying principles, limit their practices.

Findings of the second research question are broadly consistent with the view that CTL are best thought of, in terms of a continuum ranging from teacher-centered to learner-centered (Kember, 1997). Results of this research question indicate that teachers' CTL mostly are at the medium of continuum with more focus on learner-centered conception. These findings are similar to those proposed by Bowen (2009) which emphasized student-teachers interaction and learner-centered disposition. Also, it is in line with Snider & Roahl (2001) which showed teachers' willingness toward both conceptions.

Regarding the third research question, the study shows that there is a significant positive correlation between learner-centered conception and reflective level. It means that teachers with more learner-centered conception prefer to practice reflective teaching to reach higher level of reflection; this finding is similar to that of Bowen (2009). And also in line with Eley (2006) which proposed that, teachers' CTL might be the result of reviewing their teaching experiences. He also reported an interesting result that participants showed little enthusiasm to use both conceptions at the same time and they were more willing to be student-centered rather than teacher-centered. Also, Parajes (1992) referred to the significant role of identifying CTL by pointing to its practical impact on classroom action.

The study conflicts with findings of Hativa et al., 2001; Schraw & olafson, 2002 and Wilcox-Herzog, 2002 which claimed that there are no significant differences between teachers' CTL and their teaching practices. In addition it contrasts with Trigwell & Prosser, 1996a; Kember, 1998 and Mellado (1998) which reported that there is only partial relationship between educational conceptions and classroom action.

7. Conclusion

To build a culture of effective teaching, teachers require examining their CTL and engaging in recent innovative approaches of teaching which is research driven. Reflective teaching, as an invaluable theoretical and practical approach forms part of this effort in ensuring effective teaching. It appears that EFL teachers practice medium level of reflection and CTL. And although teachers have a partial familiarity with values and implications of reflective teaching approach, they were not highly reflective practitioner. Furthermore, while teachers highlighted the significance of learner-centered conception, they were somehow willing to be the authority in their classes, too. These outcomes happen due to several factors, because of the average quality of teaching which makes teachers reluctant to improve their professional growth. The above mentioned factors include the effects of: cliché teaching process, non-reflective teachers, spending lots of time and effort, lack of efficient teacher education programs and their economical, social and cultural status. Therefore, it can be concluded that the quality of teaching needs a positive change towards preparing more active and reflective teachers with learner-centered disposition.

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