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# EFL Teachers' Reflective Teaching: A study of its Determinants, Consequences, and Obstacles

**Abstract:** Being reflective is one of the most paramount features that EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers need to be equipped with in the post-method era for their professional growth and development. The present study aimed to explore reflective teaching from a multi-dimensional perspective in terms of a) determinants that simulates teachers to reflect, b) consequences that teachers experience as a result of their reflective teaching, and c) obstacles that may arise and preclude teachers from reflective teaching. Qualitative data collection method was employed to gather data from 10 EFL teachers triangulating semi-structured interviews, diaries, journal, and observation. Data analysis via MAXQDA led to the emergence of three models for each dimension of the study. The results revealed that teachers not only reflect to respond to a problem, but also they reflect to diminish some negative factors like stress or anxiety on the part of both learners and themselves as well as improving, enhancing, or mending something in teaching or learning. The codes of determinants were also conceptualized into three broad categories of reflection-in-action, reflection-on-action, and reflection-for-action with the reflection-for-action used more frequently by the teachers. In the case of consequences, the codes were classified into two categories of internal and external consequences. It was also concluded that some of the consequences reinforce the reflective teaching and play the role of determinants motivating teachers to reflect again. Regarding the obstacles, after categorizing the codes into external and internal obstacles, it was observed that external factors are more robust.

**Keywords:** EFL teachers; MAXQDA; qualitative data collection; reflective teaching; triangulation

## 1. Introduction

Teaching is a complicated, personal, and social career and becoming a professional teacher is a complex process. Therefore, to become a teacher is not the end but the starting point of a developmental process. This developmental process requires novice teachers to take actions in order to be able to continue and be successful in their profession. Hence, there is a long path between being a novice teacher and becoming a professional one. The process of becoming professional in teaching is so demanding and challenging that not every teacher can survive from, as Helford (1998) has referred to teaching as “the profession that eats its young” (p. 34, as cited in Farrell, 2016).

English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers are constantly involved in a variety of issues regarding interlingual and intercultural aspects of language teaching. During the critical initial years of their career, they need to struggle for survival and as Richards and Richards and

Lockhart (1994) suggested gradually make their repertoire of their teaching strategies as they gain experience and those strategies comprise their teaching styles. They also need to learn from every moment of their teaching and promote their awareness of how they teach. This can be done through the concept of reflection that teachers require to employ to help them approach being professional in their career, to allow and bring about changes in existing practices (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988, as cited in Marcos, Sanchez, & Tillema, 2011), and to get rid of routines. They have to constantly reflect, analyze, evaluate, learn, and consequently change in order to get rid of the threat of being dismissed by the principals. They must continually learn by trial and error and benefit from this experience in planning and preparation for the future situations. The continuation of this process leads them toward becoming professional and successful teachers. Schon (1983) distinguishes reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action: “We reflect on action, thinking back on what we have done in order to discover how our

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knowing-in-action may have contributed to an unexpected outcome” (p. 26). Therefore, it occurs when teacher retrospectively considers and analyzes his/her teaching performance. By reflection-on-action, the practitioner evaluates his/her previous teaching experiences and finds any opportunity or alternative to acquire better outcomes in the future similar situation. It is the kind of reflection that involves teachers in *posteriori* of the situation.

In the realm of EFL teaching, reflective teaching gained its importance from post method era which transmitted value and responsibility from method to teachers. Post method teachers who are autonomous and confident and are not the slaves of the methods and theories are the most important elements of the educational systems. They “reconstruct local knowledge while working in the context of research communities” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle 1993, p. 68, as cited in Marcos, et al, 2011). They are valued people who are in charge of everything in their classes. They are cognizant of their own problems, and reduce their dependence on outside (external) expert knowledge (Cousin, 2000). They “theorize what they practice and practice what they theorize” (Kumaravadivelu, 1994, p. 30).

All of the mentioned features of a post method teacher are achieved by careful reflection and consideration that lead teachers to present effective teaching and be successful in their profession. Reflective practice is worthy enough to come into the teaching training courses (TTC). Trainees in teaching training courses and pre-service programs are taught how to reflect-in-action and on action through writing diaries, logs or journals, videotaping their classes, and group discussions with colleagues or supervisors.

From the first time that the reflection notion was introduced by Dewey (1933) up to now, it has been employed in different fields of professions as a key to professional development. In the field of education, reflection is defined as “the key to successful learning for teachers, and for learners” (Scales, 2008, p.8), and respectively in language teaching context as

a compass that enables teachers to stop, look, and discover where they are at that moment and then decide where they want to go professionally in the future. It allows teachers to stop for a moment or two and consider how they can create more learning opportunities for students (Farrell, 2012, p. 7).

Since its emergence in post method pedagogy, reflection has been one of the most noteworthy concepts in language teacher education and development programs and has been the focus of a plethora of research studies from different perspectives and dimensions (Akbari, 2007; Farrell, 2012; Farrell, 2016; Marcos, Sanchez, & Tillema, 2011). Reflective teaching refers to an approach to teaching and to teacher education which is based on the postulation that teachers can enhance their perception of teaching and the quality of their own teaching by the critical reflection on their performance. In teacher education programs, activities aim at add a reflective approach to teaching attempt to improve the skills of thoughtful and analytical appraisal of the teaching process as a way of paving the way for effective learning. This may involve

the use of: “1. Journals in which student teachers or practicing teachers write about and describe classroom experiences and use their descriptions as a basis for review and reflection; 2. Audio and video taping of a teacher’s lesson by the teacher, for purposes of later review and reflection; 3. Group discussion with peers or a supervisor in order to explore issues that come out of classroom experience” (Richard & Schmidt, 2002, p.451).

One of the most-widely used conceptualizations of reflective teaching was proposed by Schon (1996). In Schon’s view, reflective teaching is a tool that newcomers to the teaching profession can use to recognize how much their own practice is consistent with that of successful practitioners (Schon, 1996, as cited in Akbari, 2005). In this practice new teachers consider their practice in employing knowledge carefully as they are being supervised by professional teachers (Ferraro, 2000). Schon (1996) put forward three aspects of reflective teaching, reflection-for-action, reflection-in-action, and reflection-on-action. Teachers use reflection-for-action to the problems or situation that they predict will happen in their future teaching (Burhan-Horasanli, and Ortaçtepe, 2016). Reflecting-in-action refers to “reflecting while you’re doing it. When delivering the learning you have so carefully planned and prepared, you need to be constantly aware and monitoring the session as it develops. This awareness allows you to make changes as the situation demands, be able to think on his feet” (Scales, 2008, p. 11). Reflection-on-action is indeed reflecting after you have done it. When the session is complete, you can reflect on, analyze, and evaluate the learning and teaching. This post-action reflection then informs your subsequent planning and preparation leading to a cycle of continuing” (Scales, 2008, p. 11).

The rise of post-method condition in ELT stimulated research on reflective teaching from various dimensions (e.g., Akbari, 2005; Burhan-Horasanli, & Ortaçtepe, 2016). Notwithstanding the fact that role of reflective teaching in different aspects of EFL teachers’ functioning has been studied in previous research, little attention has been paid to the multidimensional examination of the construct exploring the antecedents that push teachers to reflect on their practice, consequences which are felt or perceived by the teacher as well as the elements that may function as obstacles and impede reflection. Once determinants, consequences, and obstacles are investigated and recognized, it can give useful information and better understanding of the concept in order to enhance the quality and magnitude of reflection among the teachers. Therefore, the more reflective the teachers become, the more effective the teaching comes to be and as a result the learning improves.

In educational setting, the findings of the present study can help supervisors and institute administrators to primarily recognize the factors that affect and control teachers’ sense of reflection and subsequently, modify the factors that are attributed to them by reinforcing the antecedents, making the consequences more rewarding and diminishing the obstacles. This way they can optimize teachers’ reflection and benefit from teachers who are really reflective.

Second, it can help teachers to be more aware of the circumstances under which their reflection is influenced. This self-awareness gives them better and deeper understanding of the situations and accordingly they can control the factors that are on the part of themselves so that they can promote their reflectivity. Therefore, the present study aim to enhance teachers' reflection by delving into its influential factors from a multi-dimensional perspective and accordingly provide opportunities for teachers to become more successful. To attain the purposes of the study, the following research questions were posed and investigated:

1. What are the determinants of Iranian EFL teachers' reflective teaching?
2. What are the consequences of Iranian EFL teachers' reflective teaching?
3. What are the obstacles hindering Iranian EFL teachers' reflective teaching?

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Participants

The participants of the present study comprised 10 non-native EFL teachers, including one of the researchers. They were selected according to convenience or opportunity sampling. Their age ranged from 33 to 54, with an average age of 36.3. Their years of teaching experience varied from 5 to 22, with the mean number of years spent being 12.2. They were teaching at different levels of elementary, intermediate, and advanced. Two of the participants received Bachelor of Art (BA) degrees in English teaching and the remaining eight teachers received Master of Art (MA) degrees in English teaching, translation, or linguistics. Two participants were male and 8 were female.

The study was conducted in private institutes of Mashhad, a city in north east of Iran. It is worth noting that

the same participants took part in interview, diary, and observation.

The participants' names were coded in order to remain anonymous. The following table presents the background information of the participants:

### 2.2. Data Collection Method

#### 2.2.1. Interview

A semi-structured interview method was employed as the first method of data collection. First, the purpose of the study was explained to the participants and they were also informed on how their contribution could help the study to be conducted. They were also ensured that their names would remain anonymous and all the data gathered would be confidential so that they could feel comfortable sharing their views. After their agreement to take part in the research, they were invited to attend in a one to one interview. To have more reliable and relevant results from interviews, all participants were sent a brief definition of the conception of reflection as well as the questions they were going to answer, via Telegram application, the most popular massaging application in Iran. To observe consistency of the procedure, the Richard and Schmidt's (2002) stated above along with Schons' (1996) three-dimensional conceptualization was presented to the participants.

All interviews were audio recorded with the participants' permissions. Each interview lasted approximately for 20 minutes. Persian language was preferred for communication between the researchers and the participants to create a more comfortable atmosphere in which the participants would feel relaxed without being afraid that the researchers would judge their use of English. All the audio files were first transcribed and documented to be analyzed later. Then, the interview extracts were translated

**Table 1. Background Information of the 10 Interviewees**

Participant	Gender/age	Degree	Years of experience
Participant A	Male/54	BA in English teaching	22
Participant B	Female/33	MA in English teaching	12
Participant C	Female/34	MA in English teaching	13
Participant D	Male/ 36	MA in English translation	8
Participant E	Female/35	MA in linguistics	15
Participant F	Female/33	MA in English teaching	7
Participant G	Female/33	MA in English teaching	5
Participant H	Female/36	MA in English teaching	14
Participant I	Female/33	BA in English teaching	10
Participant J	Female/36	MA in English translation	16

into English. It was tried to retain the intention of the interviewees rather than attempting a literal translation.

The interview centered on five preplanned questions: 1) how do you look at the concept of reflection in teaching and how has it helped you to improve your job? 2) how has your reflection practice changed since you started your job up to now? 3) what factors or situations make you reflect on? 4) What consequences do you observe as a result of your reflection? 5) are there any obstacles on the way of your reflection? If yes, what are they?

The data gathered from interviews were used to address all three dimensions of the study that are determinants, consequences, and obstacles of EFL teachers' reflective teaching. The information from interviews were used to triangulate with the data collected from dairies, journals, and observation to reinforce the data.

### 2.2.2. Diary and Journal

To give weight to the study, event-contingent diary was applied to get detailed information regarding the events in which teachers reflect. This type of diary requires participants to provide a self-report each time a specific event takes place. In this study, the event implies whenever the teacher applied one of the three types of reflection, i.e. reflection-for-action, reflection-in-action, and reflection-on-action.

Participants were asked to voluntarily keep a diary elaborating the situations in which they felt they are required to reflect. To make it easy and encourage them to participate in this section, they were given the choice of reporting the situations to the researchers in person or recording their voice and sending it via Telegram.

Three female participants took part in this section, and totally, 8 pieces of events were accumulated. One of the researcher also concurrently wrote her journal on the subject. The data collected from diary and journal were used to identify the determinants and consequences of EFL teachers' reflective teaching.

### 2.2.3. Observation

To observe the effect of being reflective in teaching performance, three teachers who identified as highly reflective during interview sessions were selected. As most teachers feel uncomfortable when a colleague participates in their classes for observation, to persuade them to accept to be observed, they were ensured that the data would just be used for the study purposes and their teaching wouldn't be judged by the researchers.

After they permitted to be observed, each of them was observed for one whole session that was about one hour and half. All of them were female and their classes were at different levels of elementary, intermediate, and advanced. During the observation, it was tried to perceive the consequence of reflection in teachers' performance. All the information related to consequences of reflection was written down by the researchers and was employed to analyze the data associated with the consequences of reflective teaching dimension. The three indicators of reflective teaching stated earlier (Richard & Schmidt,

2002) informed the basis of observation: Keening journals or dairies, audio or video taping of lessons, group discussion with peers or supervisor.

## 2.3. Data Analysis

In order to scrutinize the qualitative data in the study, the data that were gathered by interviews, dairies, journals, and observation first were carefully studied by the researcher. Then, they were divided into 3 sections each of which covered one dimension of the study that are determinants, consequences and obstacles of the EFL teachers' reflective teaching.

The data related to each part were carefully studied for many times so that the codes emerged. The emerged codes for each dimension of the study were classified into different categories and subcategories and were revised several times. The ultimate ones were used for mapping and analyzing the data. The last version of Max Qualitative Data Analysis (MAXQDA) software that is MAXQDA 2018, a software program designed for analyzing qualitative data, was used to tabulate and analyze the data. All codes were traced and identified in the texts. The software provided visual maps of the classifications of the codes and their subcategories as well as their frequency tables for each of the dimension of the study. The visual maps and frequency tables were used for writing the result section.

## 3. Results

### 3.1. Determinants of EFL Teachers' Reflective Teaching

The data of determinants of EFL teachers' reflective teaching were coded according to the information gathered by interviews, dairies, and journal. In coding the information, data collected from observations were not taken into account as they didn't show any relevant information regarding determinants for reflective teaching. All data were carefully studied and classified into three basic categories of 1) educational setting, 2) learner, and 3) teacher, each of which is classified into different subcategories.

This finding is presented in Figure 1 that is created by MAXQDA 18 software and demonstrates all the factors that come into play as determinants of EFL teachers' reflective teaching.

After analysis of the data based on the codes of Figure 1, the frequency count of each code was tabulated accordingly (See Table 2 in the appendix). The ten frequent codes are ordered in the following list:

1. Needs/ wants and level (Learner, n=25)
2. Better/ different performance (Teacher/ Job-related factors/ Performance goal, n=22)
3. Ineffective learning ( Learner/ Performance, n= 16)
4. Personality (Teacher/ Personal factors, n= 15)
5. Feedback (Learner, n= 14) and Motivation (Learner/ Attitude/ perception, n= 14)
6. Boredom/ confusion (Learner/ Attitude/ perception, n= 13)
7. Effective learning (Teacher/ Job-related factors/ Mastery goal, n= 12)

- 8. New book/level (Educational setting, n= 11) and Teacher evaluation results/ comments (Learner, n= 11)
- 9. Satisfaction (Learner/ Attitude/ perception, n=10)
- 10. Workshops (Educational setting/ Institute/ Policy, n= 9)

According to the frequency list, learner' needs/wants and level came in the first place as it had the greatest frequency amongst other factors. Meeting learners' needs, goals, and preferences as well as adapting to learners' knowledge and lever are of high priority for teachers. This factor makes teachers reflect in order to look for potential

approaches or strategies to respond to them and satisfy their learners. Almost all participants cited this factor. For example, participant I in her interview said: "Learner's feedback, their interest and preferences make me think to find ways to adapt myself to them."

The same factor was also mentioned in her diary where she wrote:

Today, my students told me that they didn't want to take that extra oral test and they preferred to have just the written one. I thought about it and decided to change my mind in order to satisfy my students' desire.

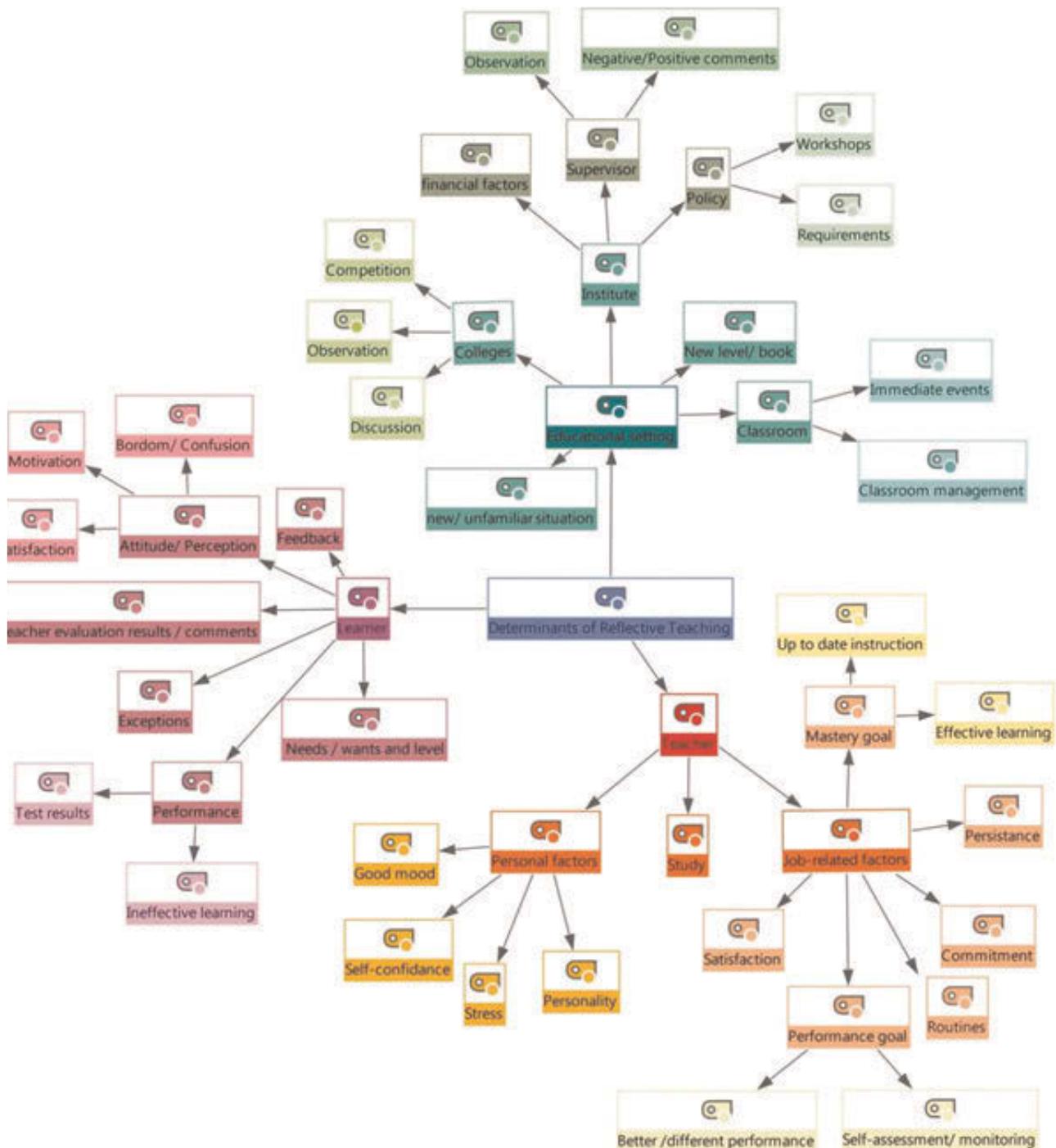


Figure 1. The model of the determinants of EFL teachers' reflective teaching

The second most frequent factor is teacher's performance goal of better or different performance. To have more effective or different performance is another reason that pushes teachers toward reflective teaching. Participants mentioned this important factor in both interviews and diaries. For instance, participant G in her interview said:

I particularly do reflection before my classes, I devote time to design my lesson plan and think about what different thing I can do in my class, especially for advanced levels, because advanced learners have seen lots of teachers' performance and have higher expectations.

On the other hand, the researcher that is coded as participant F in her journal wrote:

I thought that I didn't provide enough examples, I wasn't well prepared to teach well and facilitate learning. So, to make up for my inefficacy and to teach more effectively, I studied those cases in detail after class and provided more examples to support my explanation.

Coming to the third frequent determinant, learner's ineffective learning is considered as another remarkable cause. Observing that students have learned the subject matter well is so essential for teachers that any signals from students showing that the desired learning has not attained force them to reflect. Participant E stated in her interview that:

I reflect to change my way especially when I don't see the effect of my teaching, for example when I teach grammar and then realize that students can't use the structure or haven't learned it well. So I conclude that I need to change my method.

The fourth frequent factor goes for teacher's personality. Different participants mentioned in their interviews that being reflective is not just associated with teaching, but it is a personality trait that leads them to reflect on actions. Participant D in his interview mentioned this factor: "Because it is a personality characteristic, if I had any other jobs, I would also reflect. If I were a taxi driver, I would still reflect because my customer feedback was important to me."

Participant I referred to this factor for several times in her interview: "Regarding my personality, it's not easy for me to change my way or be flexible. .... Being reflective is much in my personality. ....I am not the kind of person who has been constantly changing and developing."

Learner's feedback and learner's motivation together take the fifth place in the list. Teachers directly reflect on what they receive as feedbacks from their learners, no matter it is positive or negative. Participant D said: "sometimes the feedback that I receive from my learners in class whether orally or even from their facial expression or the way they look, make me reflect on the spot and change something in my teaching approach."

Participant I in the following statement cited both learner's feedback and teacher's better/different performance. She said:

I change myself in two ways when I see something does not work or students do not like it even if that is a right thing.

Therefore, students' feedback plays role. Another one is when I observe positive feedback from students. It makes me to perform better and present a new method. So both positive and negative feedback are reasons for my reflection.

On the other hand, motivation can be a cause for teachers' reflection in two ways. One is learners' lack of motivation and the other is learners with high level of motivation. For the first one, teachers do reflection in order to promote motivation in learners and for the second one motivation plays a reciprocal role. High motivation in learners is transferred to the teacher and works as a determinant for reflective teaching. Participant G in her diary wrote:

Some of them are great students. The majority of students are good but I've got problematic students that are not that motivated although, they are very energetic and lively.... I thought a lot about it and decided to talk to my manager about those students and he provided me with a very good and tempting suggestion

### 3.2. Consequences of EFL Teachers' Reflective Teaching

The information collected by all sources from interviews, diaries, journals and observation were studied and used to codify the consequences of EFL teachers' reflective teaching. The codes were classified into two main categories of learner and teacher.

Figure 2 illustrates the classification of categories that come to play as consequences of EFL teachers' reflective teaching.

After analyzing data by MAXQDA 2018 software, the frequency of the identified codes was tabulated (See Table 3 in the appendix). The six most frequent factors that EFL teachers observe as the consequences of their reflective teaching are as follows:

1. Promoted/ successful performance (Teacher/ Performance, n=21)
2. Satisfaction (Learner/ Perception, n= 15)
3. Effective learning (Learner/ Learning, n= 12)
4. Joy (Learner/ Perception, n= 11)
5. Self-awareness (Teacher/ Performance/ Effective teaching, n=9)
6. Self-efficacy (Teacher/ Perception, n=7), Satisfaction (Teacher/ Perception, n=7)

The most frequent factor observed by teachers as a consequence of reflective practice is promoted/ successful performance. After reflection, teachers see that their performance is successful or has enhanced in comparison with the similar previous situations. Considering this factor, participant H in her interview said:

When I teach a level for the first time, I do a lot of reflection and when I teach that level for the second time I see my teaching has changed a lot in comparison with the first time. And I observe that I have been more successful.

In observing participant C's performance, it was observed that she had reflected on the way of presenting

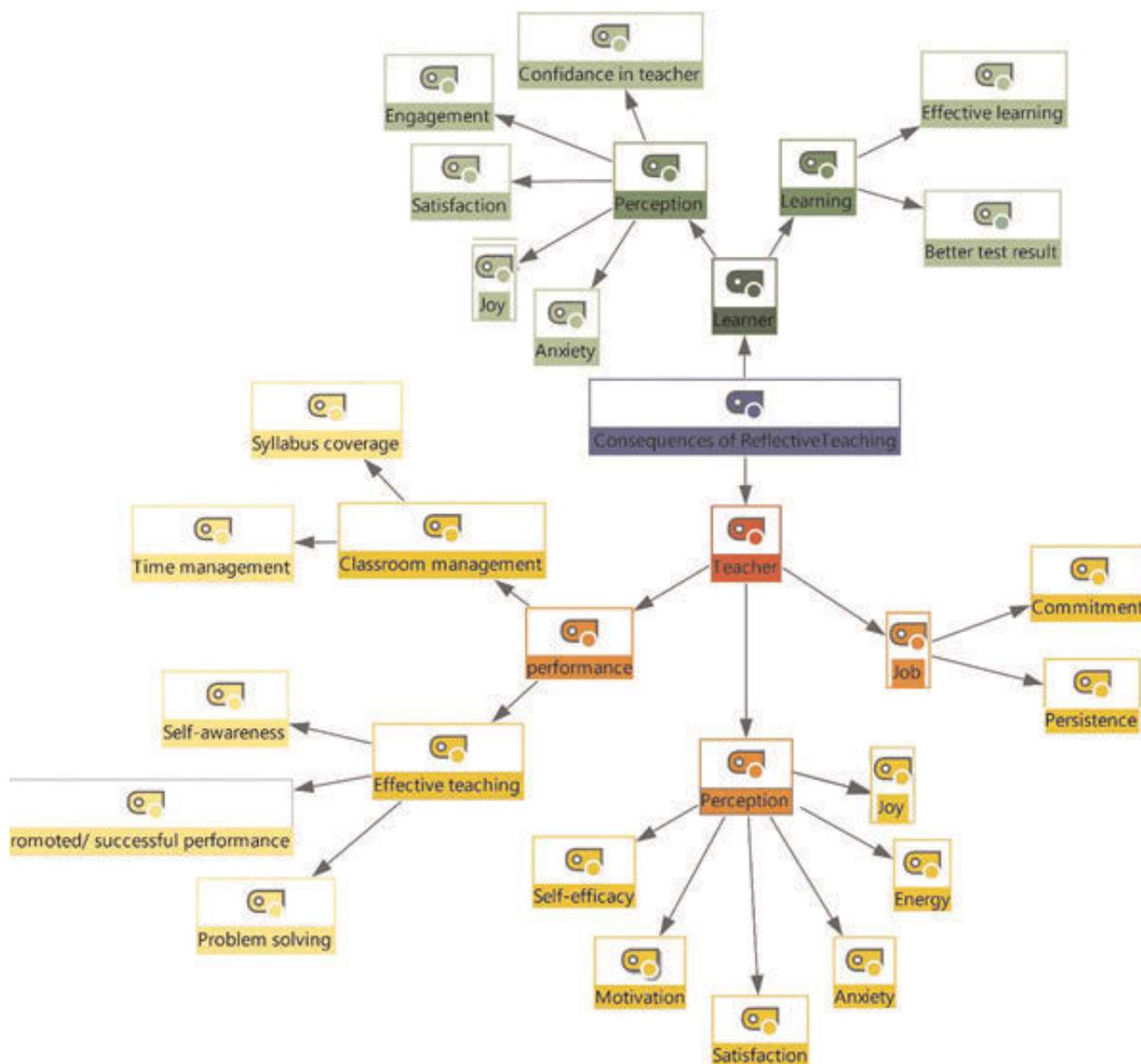


Figure 2. The model of the consequences of EFL teachers' reflective teaching

the lesson before class because she had a lesson plan. Her performance was satisfactory and successful.

The second frequent factor is learner's satisfaction. It is obvious that the more teachers reflect, the better they teach and as a result the more satisfied and pleased students are. Regarding this consequence, the researcher wrote in her journal:

After half of the term, in the middle of semester, I thought that the procedures and strategies I use may become routine or boring for students. Therefore, I decided to change some procedures in my class..... This way they learned some new words and expressions. They said that they were pleased, liked the new way and learned some extra new words.

### 3.3. Obstacles of EFL Teachers' Reflective Teaching

To codify the obstacles of EFL teachers' reflective teaching, only the data that were gathered by interviews were used, as the other sources of data didn't show any pieces of information regarding the obstacles of reflective

teaching. The information was first studied, then was coded and classified into three main categories of 1) educational setting, 2) learners and 3) teacher.

Figure 3 demonstrates what the obstacles of EFL teachers' reflective teaching are.

After mapping the codes and analyzing the data by MAXQDA 2018 software, the frequencies of codes for factors that work as obstacles of EFL teachers' reflective teaching were tabulated (See Table 4 in the appendix). The four most frequent factors were listed as follows:

1. Low payment (Educational setting/ Institute, n= 8)
2. Lack of motivation (Teacher/ Personal factors, n= 6)
3. Supervisor's neglect (Educational setting/ Institute, n= 5) and Indifference (Learners/ Performance, n=5)
4. Load of work (Educational setting/ class, n=4), Repetitive classes /no variety (Educational setting/ class, n=4), Burnout (Teacher/ Job-related factors, n=4), Teaching experience (Teacher/ Job-related factors, n=4), Personality (Teacher/ Personal factors, n= 4)

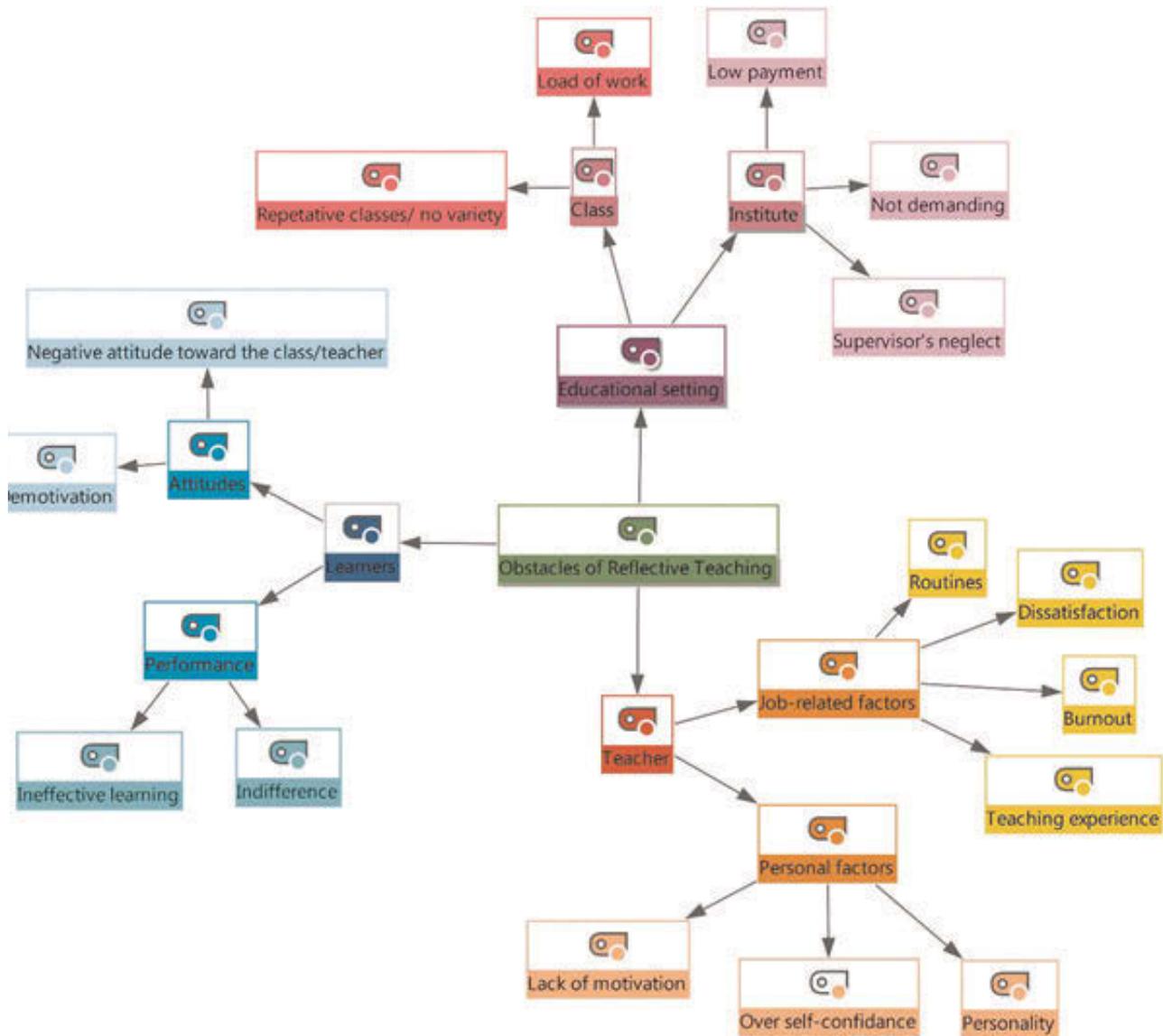


Figure 3. The model of the obstacles of EFL teachers' reflective teaching

According to the list, the most frequent hindering factor is low payment. Therefore, low payment can be regarded as a critical obstacle that teachers encounter in the way of reflection. In this respect, participant C said: "When you work hard and do your best but get not enough money, you will not be reflective enough."

Participant I viewed this factor from a different perspective as she said: "When your job is just a source of income for you."

Teacher's lack of motivation takes the second place in the list. Lack of motivation has been mentioned by participants as a result of another factor that in most cases, it is the result of low payment. Participant J in this regard said: "When you are motivated you take more care for your teaching. Financial factors are also at work. Low payment reduces the level of motivation."

The third position in the list goes for supervisor negligence together with learners' indifference. Teachers' reflection is negatively affected when teachers do not receive the attention they deserve for all their hard work

from people in authority. In this respect, participant B said: "My reflection decreases, when I see that supervisor doesn't notice all effort I put in my teaching." Participant G also said: "I grow despondent about reflection when I spend a lot of time to reflect and do my best, but supervisor doesn't even pay attention."

#### 4. Discussion

Based on the collected data and the data analysis regarding the determinants of reflective teaching, it was revealed that teachers reflect on the problems they face in the course of teaching. This is in accordance with what Dewey (1933) mentioned as doubt or perplexity that is the starting point of reflection and can be considered as a key element for learning; According to Dewey (1933), reflective action involves a way of facing and responding to problems by applying solutions after thinking about them. Schon (1983) also considers a state of puzzle as a starting point of reflection.

However, this state of puzzle or doubt is so general that needs to be specified through the findings of this study. This state of puzzle for teachers as a determinant of reflection can be uncertainty about what to do regarding the learners, such as:

- when the learners comment about something,
- their immediate feedback,
- their boredom or confusion,
- their needs, wants, and levels.

Regarding the last item, Farrell (2012) has asserted: "I do not teach "classes," I teach students, and there is no routine for me; it all depends how each student reacts or does not react" (p. 10). And Dewey (1933) suggests that teachers should be on guard against blindly following routine, because if we do that then we will certainly be teaching classes rather than students. This to Farrell is a form of reflective thinking.

It can also be related to the educational setting when teachers:

- question the usefulness of methods and procedures they apply in their classes after attending a workshop
- learn something new about teaching by studying
- face immediate events in class
- encounter unfamiliar or new situations.

Therefore, teachers reflect in order to solve a problem or come up with some ways to respond a state of uncertainty. On the other hand, encountering a problem or disequilibrium is just one side of the coin of reflective practice; there are many other determinants at work. Teachers also reflect to decrease some negative factors like stress or anxiety on the part of both learners and themselves as well as improving, enhancing, or repairing something in teaching or learning.

The other finding of the study showed that teachers also reflect to bring about change in their class as a reaction to routines, as Richard (1995) suggests, by reflective teaching, teachers "move beyond the level of automatic or routinized responses to classroom situations and achieve a higher level of awareness of how they teach, of the kinds of decisions they make as they teach, and of the value and consequences of particular instructional decisions" (p.59).

Based on the findings, teachers also reflect to self-assess or monitor their performance as Pacheco (2005) contended that "through reflection ESL/EFL professionals can react, examine and evaluate their teaching to make decisions on necessary changes to improve attitudes, beliefs and teaching practices." (p. 2). This was also mentioned by the respondents in Valdez1, Navera, and Esteron's (2018) study who believed that teachers' reflection is done in order to evaluate themselves and their effectiveness in facilitating learning in the classroom.

Having another look at the findings of the determinants of EFL teachers' reflective teaching, it could be concluded that the determinants lead teachers to reflect-in-action (Sshon,1983), reflect-on-action (Sshon,1983) or reflect- for-action (Van Manen,1991, as cited in Burhan-

Horasanl, & Ortaçtepe, 2016). Accordingly, the obtained factors for determinants of EFL teachers' reflective teaching can be conceptualized into three broad categories of:

1. Reflection-in-action, (in)
2. Reflection-on-action, (on)
3. Reflection-for-action, (for)

The classification is presented in Table 5 in the appendix. It was found that most determinants are *for* action which clearly demonstrates teachers in the present study were more inclined to employ reflective practices for future actions to improve or change their practices.

Contemplating upon the consequences of EFL teachers' reflective teaching, we can obviously see that some of the findings are in accordance with previous research studies. According to the findings, reflective teaching for teachers can bring about:

- Self-awareness of their teaching and educational setting. According to Richards and Lockhart (1994), reflection-driven exploration of teaching can have many merits. It can facilitate the process of gaining better insights into teaching from both a theoretical and a practical perspective.
- Satisfaction, reflective practice can act as a spring-board for self-appraisal and consequently is extremely crucial when it comes to professional development. Richards and Lockhart (1994). Akbari (2007) also argues that reflection can bring about an increase in teacher job satisfaction.
- Self-efficacy, reflective teaching makes teachers more confident in addressing learning/ teaching difficulties they experience while teaching (Ferraro, 2000)
- Successful/ promoted performance which can enrich teaching and learning processes (Richards & Lockhart,1994). In addition, the study of Valdez, Navera, and Esteron (2018) revealed that reflective teaching is viewed by the participants as synonymous to improving teaching and learning.
- Problem-solving. In this regard, Fat'hi, Golestani, and Parsa (2015) believe that reflective teachers observe their teaching, evaluate the results, identify problems, find solutions, and try new techniques.

Rethinking about the consequences of EFL teachers' reflective teaching, it becomes obvious that the consequences can be seen as:

1. Internal (I)
2. External (E)

The consequences of EFL teachers' reflective teaching in terms of its locus (internal vs. external) can be found in Table 6 in the appendix. It was demonstrated that most consequences are external in nature. Comparing the identified codes of determinants and consequences, it was also emerged that when the consequences are observed by the teachers as the result of reflective teaching, they play the role of determinants motivating

teachers to reflect again. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a reciprocal relation between some factors of the determinants and consequences in reflective teaching.

Regarding the obstacles of EFL teachers' reflective teaching, Valdez, Navera, and Esteron (2018) attempting to find some deterrents of reflective teaching revealed three challenges of administrative constraints, demand of load work, and challenges in classroom. All three obstacles were confirmed in this study. Similar to observations of Valdez, Navera, and Esteron (2018), the findings showed that teachers are often constrained by the tremendous workload they face in their daily professional lives. Specifically, the number of classes taught is a deterrent for teachers in seeking opportunities for reflection.

Regarding the administrative constraints in the study of Valdez, Navera, and Esteron (2018), teachers claimed that reflective teaching sometimes seems difficult as different stakeholders (specifically administrators) appear to be unwilling to create favorable conditions for reflection. This is in line with the following identified codes in this study.

Concerning the challenges in classroom, teachers in the investigation of Valdez, Navera, and Esteron (2018) had difficulty in reflecting on their practice due to problems brought about by learners one of which is lack of cooperation. This is consistent with the findings of this study in the following codes: Attitudes/ Demotivation/ Performance/ Ineffective learning / Performance/ Indifference.

Like the consequences of the EFL teachers' reflective teaching, the obstacles can be categorized into:

1. External, (E)
2. Internal, (I)

The categorization represented in Table 7 of the appendix indicated that most (10 out of 16) of the obstacles are related to the external factors. Hence, it can be inferred that external factors have stronger influence on preventing teachers from reflective practice. Therefore, since external factors are more likely to be controlled whether by teachers or administrators, by taking the external factors under control, we can influence teachers' reflective practice positively.

## 5. Pedagogical Implications

Based on the findings of the present study, a number of recommendations can be put forward for English institutes' teachers, administrators, managers, and supervisors. Being aware of the fact that EFL teachers' reflective teaching is largely deterred by the educational setting can help the administrators to provide teachers with such conditions that minimize the effect of the obstacles on teachers' reflective teaching and as a result benefit from more reflective teachers. What administrators can take into account is as follows:

- They should make sure that they pay teachers sufficiently and raise their payment regularly in accordance with their effective performance. This encourages and motivates teachers' reflective teaching as well as preventing them from asking for or

taking more classes for earning more money which itself is considered as another obstacle for reflective teaching.

- Supervisors should have regular observations and comments on teachers' classes so that teachers feel that their effort is being seen and appreciated. Therefore, teachers would put more effort to apply reflective teaching in order to satisfy the supervisor.
- Teachers should not be forced to teach a large number of classes that would result in not having enough time and concentration for reflection.
- Teachers should not be given repetitive classes. Variety in classes as it demands for more reflection is of high importance in reflective teaching.

The findings can be informative for the teachers too. Knowing what factors can simulate them to reflect gives them the awareness of their strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, for being more reflective and consequently more successful teachers, they can reinforce or modify at least the factors that are on part of themselves so that they are more likely to reflect.

Regarding the consequences, the findings can make teachers cognizant of all benefits and awards that reflective teaching can bring about for them. This motivates and offers more reasons and incentives to them to apply reflective teaching so that they can have a better experience of teaching encompassing all those positive consequences. It is also plausible to presume teachers who are more reflective are more likely to cultivate their students' reflectivity. Accordingly, mentoring students to become critical and reflective thinkers tends to pave the way for effective functioning in their academic life (Ghanizadeh, 2016).

The present study, was, nevertheless, limited in some ways. The major limitation is the issue of self-report which is prone to social desirability bias, the researchers' idiosyncrasies, and Hawthorne effect. Another limitation concerns sample size and generalizability; although in this study, various methods for data collection were utilized, the number of participants was restricted.

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## Appendix

Table 2. Frequency of the Identified Codes of Determinants of EFL Teachers' Reflective Teaching

Position	Parent code	Code	All coded segments
1		Determinants of reflective teaching	0
2	Determinants of reflective teaching	Educational setting	0
3	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Educational setting	New book/ level	11
4	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Educational setting	New/unfamiliar situation	7
5	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Educational setting	Colleagues	0
6	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Educational setting/ Col-leagues	Competition	3
7	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Educational setting/ Col-leagues	Observation	3
8	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Educational setting/ Col-leagues	Discussion	1
9	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Educational setting	Classroom	0
10	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Educational setting/ Class-room	Classroom management	2
11	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Educational setting/ Class-room	Immediate events	3
12	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Educational setting	Institute	0
13	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Educational setting/ Institute	Financial factors	5
14	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Educational setting/ Institute	Policy	0
15	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Educational setting/ Institute/ Policy	Workshops	9
16	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Educational setting/ Institute/ policy	Requirements	2
17	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Educational setting/ Institute	Supervisor	0
18	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Educational setting/ Institute/ Supervisor	Negative/ positive comments	4
19	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Educational setting/ Institute/ Supervisor	Observation	2
20	Determinants of reflective teaching	Teacher	0
21	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Teacher	Study	6
22	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Teacher	Personal factors	0
23	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Personal factors	Good mood	2
24	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Personal factors	Self-confidence	2
25	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Personal factors	Stress	2
26	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Personal factors	Personality	15
27	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Teacher	Job-related factors	0
28	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Job-related factors	Routines	6
29	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Job-related factors	Commitment	8

Table 2 cont.

Position	Parent code	Code	All coded segments
30	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Job-related factors	Satisfaction	6
31	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Job-related factors	Persistence	3
32	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Job-related factors	Mastery goal	0
33	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Job-related factors/ Mastery goal	Up to date instruction	2
34	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Job-related factors/ Mastery goal	Effective learning	12
35	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Job-related factors	Performance goal	0
36	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Job-related factors/ Performance goal	Self-assessment/ monitoring	8
37	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Job-related factors/ Performance goal	Better/ different performance	22
38	Determinants of reflective teaching	Learner	0
39	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Learner	Exceptions	4
40	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Learner	Teacher evaluation results/comments	11
41	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Learner	Needs/wants and level	25
42	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Learner	Feedback	14
43	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Learner	Attitude/ perception	0
44	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Learner/ Attitude/ perception	Boredom/ confusion	13
45	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Learner/ Attitude/ perception	Motivation	14
46	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Learner/ Attitude/ perception	Satisfaction	10
47	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Learner	Performance	0
48	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Learner/ Performance	Test results	2
49	Determinants of reflective teaching/ Learner/ Performance	Ineffective learning	16

**Table 3. Frequency of the Identified Codes of Consequences of EFL Teachers' Reflective Teaching**

Position	Parent code	Code	All coded segments
1		Consequences of reflective teaching	0
2	Consequences of reflective teaching	Learner	0
3	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Learner	Learning	0
4	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Learner/ Learning	Effective learning	12
5	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Learner/ Learning	Better test results	2
6	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Learner	Perception	0
7	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Learner/ Perception	Confidence in teacher	3
8	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Learner/ Perception	Engagement	3
9	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Learner/ Perception	Satisfaction	15
10	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Learner/ Perception	Joy	11
11	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Learner/ Perception	Anxiety	3
12	Consequences of reflective teaching	Teacher	0
13	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Teacher	Performance	0
14	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Performance	Classroom management	1
15	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Performance/ Classroom management	Syllabus coverage	1
16	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Performance/ Classroom management	Time management	6
17	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Performance	Effective teaching	0
18	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Performance/ Effective teaching	Self-awareness	9
19	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Performance/ Effective teaching	Promoted/successful performance	21
20	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Teacher Performance/ Effective teaching	Problem solving	4
21	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Teacher	Perception	0
22	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Perception	Energy	4
23	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Perception	Anxiety	4
24	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Perception	Motivation	4
25	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Perception	Self-efficacy	7
26	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Perception	Satisfaction	7
27	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Perception	Joy	6
28	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Teacher	Job	0
29	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Job	Commitment	1
30	Consequences of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Job	Persistence	4

**Table 4. Frequency of the Identified Codes of Obstacles of EFL Teachers' Reflective Teaching**

Position	Parent code	Code	All coded segments
1		Obstacles of reflective teaching	0
2	Obstacles of reflective teaching	Educational setting	0
3	Obstacles of reflective teaching/ Educational setting	Institute	0
4	Obstacles of reflective teaching/ Educational setting/ Institute	Low payment	8
5	Obstacles of reflective teaching/ Educational setting/ Institute	Not demanding	1
6	Obstacles of reflective teaching/ Educational setting/ Institute	Supervisor's neglect	5
7	Obstacles of reflective teaching/ Educational setting	Class	0
8	Obstacles of reflective teaching/ Educational setting/class	Load of work	4
9	Obstacles of reflective teaching/ Educational setting/ class	Repetitive classes/ no variety	4
10	Obstacles of reflective teaching	Learners	0
11	Obstacles of reflective teaching/ Learners	Attitudes	0
12	Obstacles of reflective teaching/ Learners/ Attitudes	Negative attitudes toward the class/teacher	2
13	Obstacles of reflective teaching/ Learners/ Attitudes	Demotivation	4
14	Obstacles of reflective teaching/ Learners	Performance	0
15	Obstacles of reflective teaching/ Learners/ Performance	Ineffective learning	1
16	Obstacles of reflective teaching/ Learners/ Performance	Indifference	5
17	Obstacles of reflective teaching	Teacher	0
18	Obstacles of reflective teaching/ Teacher	Job-related factors	0
19	Obstacles of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Job-related factors	Routines	3
20	Obstacles of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Job-related factors	Dissatisfaction	1
21	Obstacles of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Job-related factors	Burnout	4
22	Obstacles of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Job-related factors	Teaching experience	4
23	Obstacles of reflective teaching/ Teacher	Personal factors	0
24	Obstacles of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Personal factors	Personality	4
25	Obstacles of reflective teaching/ Teacher/ Personal factors	Over self-confidence	3
26	Obstacles of reflective teaching/	Lack of motivation	6

**Table 5. Classification of Reflection In, On, and For Action**

<b>Codes</b>	<b>Type</b>
Educational setting / New book or level	For
Educational setting /New or unfamiliar situation	For
Educational setting/ Colleagues / Competition	For
Educational setting/ Colleagues/ Observation	For
Educational setting/ Colleagues/ Discussion	For
Educational setting/ Classroom/ Classroom management	For
Educational setting/ Classroom/ Immediate events	In
Educational setting/ Institute/ Financial factors	For/ in/ on
Educational setting/ Institute/ Policy / Workshops	For
Educational setting/ Institute/ policy / Requirements	For
Educational setting/ Institute/ Supervisor / Negative or positive comments	For
Educational setting/ Institute/ Supervisor/ Observation	For
Teacher/ Study	For
Teacher/ Personal factors/Good mood	On/In
Teacher/ Personal factors/ Self-confidence	For
Teacher/Personal factors/Stress	On/ In
Teacher/ Personal factors /Personality	For/ In /On
Teacher/ Job-related factors / Routines	On
Teacher/ Job-related factors/ Commitment	For/ In/ On
Teacher/ Job-related factors/ Satisfaction	For/ In/ On
Teacher/ Job-related factors/ Persistence	For
Teacher/ Job-related factors/ Mastery goal/ Up to date instruction	For
Teacher/ Job-related factors/ Mastery goal/ Effective learning	For
Teacher/ Job-related factors/ Performance goal/ Self-assessment or monitoring	On
Teacher/ Job-related factors/ Performance goal/ Better or different performance	On/ For
Learner/ Exceptions	On
Learner/ Teacher evaluation results or learners 'comments	In/ On
Learner/ Needs/wants and level	On
Learner/ Feedback	In/ on
Learner/Attitude/ perception/ Boredom or confusion	In
Learner/ Attitude/ perception/ Motivation	For/ on
Learner/ Attitude/ perception/ Satisfaction	For/ on
Learner/ Performance/ Test results	For
Learner/ Performance/ Ineffective learning	On/ In

**Table 6. External vs. Internal Consequences of EFL Teachers' Reflective Teaching**

<b>Codes</b>	<b>Type</b>
Learner/ Learning/ Effective learning	E
Learner/Learning/ Better test results	E
Learner/Perception/ Confidence in teacher	E
Learner/ Perception/ Engagement	E
Learner/Perception/ Satisfaction	E
Learner/ Perception/ Joy	E
Learner/Perception/ Anxiety	E
Teacher/ Performance/ Classroom management/ Syllabus coverage	E
Teacher/ Performance/ Classroom management/ Time management	E
Teacher/ Performance/ Effective teaching/ Self-awareness	I
Teacher/ Performance/ Effective teaching/ Promoted/successful performance	E
Teacher Performance/ Effective teaching/ Problem solving	E
Teacher/ Perception/ Energy	E
Teacher/ Perception/ Anxiety	I
Teacher/ Perception/ Motivation	I
Teacher/ Perception/ Self-efficacy	I
Teacher/ Perception/ Satisfaction	I
Teacher/ Perception/ Joy	I
Teacher/ Job / Commitment	I
Teacher/Job / Persistence	E

**Table 7. External vs. Internal Obstacles of EFL Teachers' Reflective Teaching**

<b>Codes</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Educational setting/ Institute/ Low payment	E	8
Educational setting/ Institute/ Not demanding	E	1
Educational setting/ Institute/ Supervisor's neglect	E	5
Educational setting/class/ Load of work	E	4
Educational setting/ class/ Repetitive classes/ no variety	E	4
Learners/ Attitudes/ Negative attitudes toward the class or teacher	E	2
Learners/ Attitudes/ Demotivation	E	4
Learners/ Performance/ Ineffective learning	E	1
Learners/ Performance/ Indifference	E	5
Teacher/ Job-related factors/ Routines	E	3
Teacher/ Job-related factors/ Dissatisfaction	I	1
Teacher/ Job-related factors/ Burnout	I	4
Teacher/ Job-related factors/ Teaching experience	I	4
Teacher/ Personal factors/ Personality	I	4
Teacher/ Personal factors/ Over self-confidence	I	3
Teacher/ Personal factors/ Lack of motivation	I	6