

English Language Instructors' Beliefs about Implementing Reflective Teaching Strategy in EFL Instructions: A Mixed Method Research

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ABSTRACT

This study looked at the beliefs of English language instructors regarding the implementation of a reflective teaching strategy in EFL instruction with a focus on Wachemo University. The research design employed was a descriptive survey, which served as an explanation of the current trends in the study area. The study, which is primarily quantitative, used a mixed-methods approach and triangulated using qualitative data. For collecting questionnaire data, 33 study participants were chosen using the comprehensive sampling technique. Five Wachemo University instructors were purposefully selected to participate in semi-structured interviews. With SPSS version 20, descriptive statistics were used to conduct a quantitative analysis of the data collected through the questionnaire. Besides, thematic analysis was also performed on semi-structured interview data. The results of the study showed that while most university-level EFL instructors have positive beliefs about implementing a reflective teaching strategy in EFL instruction for the betterment of teaching skills, they perform practically poor due to various difficulties they run into when putting it into practice in EFL classrooms. Lastly, recommendations were forwarded in light of the scholarly debates and the study's findings. There is an avenue for future researchers to include several studies with a significant number of participants, and additional tools of data gathering to provide more information about the roles of EFL instructors' beliefs about implementing a reflective teaching strategy in improving their actual classroom practices to ELT skills of EFL teachers at university level.

Keywords: beliefs, reflective teaching strategy, EFL instructors, EFL instructions

Introduction

The pursuit of improved English language teaching methods has led to numerous variations in the field of language teaching over many decades. To reach effective language teaching methods, educators, methodology researchers, teachers, and other involved bodies transitioned from the traditional methods era to the post-method era. Nonetheless, the field of teaching English as a second language, or foreign language teaching has continued to grow in difficulty and complexity, requiring teachers to constantly adapt what they already know about teaching and learning. According to Richards and Farrell (2005), language educators need to continuously adapt their understanding of teaching and learning throughout their careers. Furthermore, according to Farrell (2004), educators can develop into more decision-makers who are capable of thinking, writing, and speaking about their work; observing their own and others' teaching practices; and assessing the

influence of their instruction on students' learning. Therefore, a paradigm shift is required to move from the ideas behind the conventional transmission model of teacher education to the constructivist approach, which opens the door for the application of a reflective teaching strategy that views teachers as "active, thinking, decision-makers" (Borg, 2011, p. 218). Effective English language instruction (EFL) requires teachers to use reflective teaching strategies, which help them assess their practices regularly, pinpoint areas for growth, and modify their approaches to better suit the needs of their students. As per Akbari (2005), language instruction is no longer viewed as solely a technocratic undertaking, and novel approaches are being investigated. It also gives teachers a chance to reflect on, write about, and discuss their lessons, approaches, and pedagogical strategies. Conversely, instructors' beliefs about incorporating a reflective teaching strategy into EFL instruction may have a positive or negative influence on the paradigm shift from traditional language teaching methods to a reflective teaching strategy. Language instructors' core teaching behaviors are shaped by their beliefs about what makes for effective instruction, claim Farrell and Ives (2015). Hence, a teacher's willingness and capacity to apply reflective teaching effectively are greatly influenced by their beliefs about it. Pickett (2004), reflective teaching forces teachers and students to consider the theories and motivations underlying their methods as well as elements like their presumptions and beliefs about learning, the needs of their students, and their relationship with the greater community. In addition, the beliefs of teachers directly influence how they perceive and evaluate the interactions between teaching and learning in the classroom, resulting in a variety of instructional approaches (Clark & Peterson, 1986). According to Pajares (1992), a teacher's beliefs, not their knowledge, determine how they plan and execute their teaching. These ideas may have an impact on the way teachers approach reflective practice; and how much of it they include in their regular lesson plans.

In this sense, several scholars have concentrated their research on reflective teaching in Ethiopian and other international contexts. To begin, the Beliefs and Practices of Reflective Teaching in English Language in Jerusalem study by Nadine M. (2010) concluded that EFL teachers lack the necessary orientation and training in the skills, practices, and strategies of reflective teaching for effective EFL instruction. Similar to this, Dereje, Desta, and Gemechis (2017) found that primary school teachers in Ethiopia lack a thorough understanding of reflective teaching; and how to apply it in the real classroom. In addition, Getachew & Daniel (2019), concluded in their study that the application of reflective teaching strategies in EFL classrooms is somewhat influenced by the behavior, attitudes, and teaching practices of teachers in the actual classrooms. The majority of the previously mentioned studies' settings, methodological flaws, and dearth of substantial empirical support—particularly about the subject of the current study—are generally seen as problems in various studies. The current researcher was unable to locate a sufficient number of studies, especially those carried out at the university level, which addressed the beliefs about English language teachers regarding the application of a reflective teaching approach in EFL instruction. Thus, the purpose of this study was to contribute by looking into the beliefs of instructors and present various methods, approaches, and strategies that could lead to better language-teaching abilities using a reflective teaching strategy in EFL instruction. What are English language instructors' beliefs about implementing reflective teaching strategies in EFL instruction?

Review of Literature

EFL teachers' beliefs

Teachers' perspectives and understanding of their teaching knowledge are referred to as their teaching beliefs. The teaching plan always governs the teaching behaviors, and the teachers' teaching beliefs influence students' understanding of instructional theory and teaching experiences. In addition, teachers' professional development is also influenced by their teaching beliefs, which also determine and influence their classroom practices (Schutz et al., 2020). Views on the nature of language, language learning and teaching, students, and teachers are just a few of the many complex concepts that make up teachers' beliefs. Borg (2001), states that a belief is a statement that one holds, whether consciously or unconsciously. They closely supervise language teachers as they modify their pedagogical approaches to meet the demands of their everyday work, affect their overall well-being, and ultimately mold the learning environment, motivation, and linguistic proficiency of language learners. As Borg (2001) forwarded, "a proposition is evaluative in that it is accepted as true by the individual and is; therefore, imbued with emotive commitment; furthermore, it serves as a guide to thought and behavior, whether consciously or unconsciously held" (p. 187).

According to Huang et al. (2019), teachers' beliefs are a variable that is influenced by the interactions between students' meaning making, identity, and learning environment. However, it is also thought that teachers' beliefs have an impact on their actual classroom practices, either positively or negatively. Mak (2011) stated the strength of a person's beliefs influences how instructional decisions are made in the classroom and helps to reconcile conflicting beliefs. To elaborate, Richards (2000) views teachers' belief systems as the main influence on their methods in the classroom. Additionally, teachers need to understand that changing their behavior to align with their current teaching-learning beliefs will require conscious effort (Woods, 1996).

Research on this topic; show that teachers hold beliefs about every aspect of their profession. According to Calderhead (1996), teachers have been found to have significant beliefs in five main areas: subjects or curriculum, teaching, learners and learning, learning to teach, the self, and the nature of teaching. He also points out that these five areas are closely related to one another and may even be interconnected. Thus, teachers' beliefs are a crucial aspect of teacher cognition, influencing both instructional practices and student opportunities. They are an unobservable cognitive dimension of teaching (Borg, 2003). There are conventional practices within a school, personality factors, educationally or research-based, and systems founded on teachers' prior experience as language learners, what works best in their classes, and so on (Richard, Lockhart, 1996 cited in Farrell, 20113). In summary, a belief is always acknowledged as true by the individual and is "imbued with emotive commitment serving as a guide to thought and behavior" regardless of whether it is held consciously or unconsciously (Borg, 2001, p.186). As a result, teacher beliefs are complex concepts that have a significant impact on EFL teachers' perceptions of selecting appropriate teaching strategies and behavior when teaching and learning English in EFL instructions.

Reflective teaching strategy

The eclectic approach, which was proposed by practitioners in search of something other than method, caused a rift between theorists and practitioners. It is believed that factors necessitating the emergence of a reflective teaching strategy are that of considering instructors as passive technicians, the top-down criticisms about the methods, and the conditions perceived in the post-method era. Therefore, a reflective teaching strategy was introduced as a potential solution to the problem, neutralizing the conflict between the two camps (Akbari, 2007). In this regard, lecturers and trainee teachers have infused the results of numerous qualitative or case studies on reflective practices with enthusiasm for reflective approaches (Cornford, 2002). A reflective teaching strategy has arisen in response to an alternative to traditional methods since educators find little success with them in solving real-world issues (Richards and Lockhart, 1999).

Reflective teaching, therefore, is a strategy in which teachers look back at their classroom instructions reflectively to improve their teaching skills. Dewey (1933) states that "reflective teaching implies an active concern with aims and consequences, as well as means and technical efficiency; reflective teaching is applied in a cyclical or spiral process in which teachers monitor, evaluate, and revise their practices continuously." Similarly, Akbari (2007) asserts that teacher educators play a crucial role in promoting reflective teaching practices in the classroom and that reflection is a means of empowering educators and putting them on par with their academic counterparts. He goes on to say that while research shows that reflection can improve teachers' sense of self-efficacy, their interpersonal relationships with students and colleagues, and their job satisfaction, there is little proof that reflection will inevitably result in higher student achievement or better teacher performance.

The theoretical framework

As the current researchers' thorough reading about different scholarly ideas on language learning theories, some of the basic theories that are believed to support the effective employment of reflective teaching in EFLT are incorporated in this part. These are constructivism, cognitive constructivism, and social constructivism.

Constructivism

Constructivism is a theory based on observation and scientific study about how people learn. It proposes that people construct their understanding and knowledge of the world, through experiencing things and reflecting on those experiences. Raskin (2001) precisely defines constructivism as "A school of psychology which holds that learning occurs because personal knowledge is constructed by an active and self-regulated learner, who solves problems by deriving meaning from experience and the context in which that experience takes place." When individuals encounter something new, they have to accommodate it with their previous ideas. John Dewey (1933) underlines that one can learn only when one deal with a problem and find ways to resolve it. In addition, Wnet (2004), explain that when we encounter something new, we have to reconcile it with our previous ideas and experience, perhaps by changing what we believe, or by discarding the new information as irrelevant. In the classroom, the constructivist view of learning can be used to encourage students to use practical approaches to create more knowledge, reflect on and talk about what they are doing. Thus, the advantage of this philosophy in reflective teaching process, according to its advocates, is that when one constructs a solution to a problem on their own, the solution becomes part of one's own experience.

Cognitive constructivism

According to Jean Piaget (1985), knowledge is the result of the accurate internalization and reconstruction of cognitive meaning. Since reflective teaching asks for examining previous experiences of teaching, evaluating, and reflecting on future effective teaching career; therefore, this particular learning theory has significance to support the implementation of RT in ELT by constructing knowledge from their lived experiences as teacher.

Cognitive constructivism learning allows learners to develop their own understanding from learning resources (Hong, 2003). This teaching method is able to help learners integrate new information into existing knowledge and allow them to make proper amendments to their existing intellectual framework (McLeod, 2019). When teaching reflectively, instructors think critically about their teaching and look for evidence of effective teaching. Brookfield (2017) lays out four crucial sources for teaching reflectivity: "students' eyes, colleagues' perceptions, personal experience, and theory and research." Therefore, reflective teaching is a systemic approach to looking back at what happened in actual classroom teaching-learning process to intend for the betterment of future teaching career. This theory plays a significant role to enable teachers to think back to their teaching experiences, examine, evaluate, and construct their knowledge from previous experiences for future planned action.

Social constructivism

According to the pioneers of social constructivism, emphasis is given to education for social transformation and a theory of human development that situates the individual within a socio-cultural context. The subject of the study is the dialectical relationship between the individual and the social and cultural setting (Vygotsky, 1980). Consequently, schools and classrooms are socio-cultural settings where teaching and learning take place and "cultural tools" such as reading, writing, and certain modes of discourse are utilized. Moreover, the social context indicates "... a classroom is a socially defined reality and is therefore influenced by the belief systems and behavioral norms of the society of which it is part" (Tudor, 2001, p. 35). Thus, reflective teaching does not always lie in the theoretical knowledge that teachers gain from their training, but rather focuses on social and cultural aspects.

On the other hand, reflective teachers work with their colleagues to share their experiences and ask their students for feedback on their current classroom teaching-learning processes. Peer observation can provide opportunities for teachers to view each other's teaching, exposing them to different teaching styles and providing opportunities for critical reflection on their teaching. Teachers can also ask students' opinions and ideas about the teaching and learning process through direct questions or questionnaires. This theory helps to give a backup to the establishment of opportunities for students to collaborate with the teacher and peers in constructing knowledge and understanding. Kapur (2018) observed that social construction of knowledge takes place in various ways and at different locations. To conclude, this theory plays a crucial role in the effective implementation of a reflective teaching by pointing out additional insights into social and cultural issues as a knowledge source in the employment of it.

Related studies

In previous research works on a reflective teaching strategy in abroad, Dewey (1933) is the first one to regard teachers as reflective practitioners, who are the professionals that can bring the initiative into full play in education reforms. Then, several studies have been conducted in the last few decades on a reflective teaching strategy inspired by the work of Dewey (1933), Schon (1983), and Farrell (2004). Similarly, Sifuniso (2015)'s study on the implementation of a reflective teaching method in primary schools in Livingstone district of Zambia, revealed some disparities in the implementation of a reflective teaching among teachers. She found that factors that hindered implementation of a reflective teaching method, included time limitations, curriculum needs and class size. Disu (2017) in Portland revealed that teachers use reflective teaching practice to create meaning from their classroom experiences and enact necessary steps toward improvements. Moreover, domestic research works on implementing a reflective teaching are rather very few in Ethiopian contexts. Dereje, Desta, and Gemechis (2017) research entitled, " Practices and Challenges of Reflective Teaching," which focused on primary school teaching; showed that the primary school teachers have little understanding of reflective teaching and its implementation in the actual classrooms. The other thing in this study needs a big concern is that its setting is at primary school where teachers are not exposed to continuous professional development and other short training on the improvements of teaching skills. Wondwosen, & Tadesse (2015), stated in the research work entitled "an assessment of RT practices of secondary school teachers", that most of the high school teachers have good practices of reflective thinking and actual practices; however, few teachers' were found to be unreflective, and unengaged in reflective processes and practices. Getachew, & Daniel (2019), concluded that teachers' behavior, their attitudes, and their teaching practices in the actual classrooms affect to some extent that of the implementation of a reflective teaching strategy in EFL classrooms.

Methodology

Participants

A sample can be defined as a whole set of people, events, or objects to generalize the results of the study. Kothari (2008) defines sample size as "the number of things to be selected from the universe to constitute a sample." Hence, the researcher employed purposive and comprehensive sampling techniques for selecting the samples for the study, accordingly. Comprehensive sampling is a strategy that examines every case or instance of a given population that has specific characteristics (e.g., attributes, traits, experience, and knowledge) relevant to the study (Gray, 2004). On the other hand, purposive or judgmental sampling is a

strategy in which particular settings, people, or events are selected deliberately to provide important information that cannot be obtained from other choices (Maxwell, 1996). The study populations were 33 EFL instructors selected for the questionnaire, who were currently serving at Wachemo University. Since this study was based on a descriptive survey research design and even the samples were quite manageable, the researcher involved the total population for questionnaire data using comprehensive sampling techniques. Additionally, five English instructors were selected for an interview using a purposive sampling technique.

Instruments

The researcher intended to employ two sorts of data collecting instruments: quantitative data collecting instruments and qualitative data collecting instruments, since the study followed a mixed-method approach. It used quantitative data from teachers' questionnaires regarding beliefs about employing the RT strategy in EFL instructions. Similarly, the researcher also employed semi-structured interviews as qualitative data gathering tools. The questionnaire is a set of questions prepared to collect answers from respondents relating to the research topic (Buchi, 1974). A well-designed questionnaire can provide keen insights into how participants think and perceive the situation (Bernard, 2000). It is thought to be an effective and quick way to obtain a huge amount of information, especially to a large number of respondents in a short time. In this study, teachers' questionnaire regarding beliefs about implementing a reflective teaching strategy in EFL instructions was employed for quantitative data. Then, the researcher distributed the set questionnaire that was prepared as a close-ended questionnaire of the Likert-scale questions (1 strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3 neutral, 4 agree, 5 strongly agree) to 33 participants in the study, who were selected using a comprehensive sampling technique. Besides, the study employed semi-structured interviews with general questions regarding English teachers' beliefs about implementing the RT strategy in EFL classrooms. Askey and Knight (1999, p.2) say that interviewing may be a valuable research method because it allows the researcher to explore "data on understanding, opinions, what people remember doing, attitudes, feelings, and the like." It is believed that the semi-structured interview creates a good opportunity to remind the main issues in the research problem. As Dornyei (2007, p. 127) states, a semi-structured interview enables the respondents to "expound on the issues raised in an exploratory manner." Therefore, the current researcher involved university teachers from Wachemo University to realize a deeper insight into the identified problem of the study.

Procedure and data analysis

Since the study's design is a descriptive survey, the researcher used a questionnaire to gather data in the beginning. Subsequently, semi-structured interviews were carried out to substantiate the data gathered from the survey. The researcher produced semi-structured interview questions and modified questionnaires from particular sources to gather ideas and responses from the study participants. Besides, the questionnaire underwent minor modifications based on an analysis of relevant literature and research conducted by Mohammed Aliakbarin, Mariya Adbpour (2018), and Akbari, Bezaadpour, & Dadyand (2010). Then, the researcher distributed the questionnaire and interviewed participants in order of precedence after assessing the validity and reliability of the questionnaire and semi-structured interview questions. The validity of interview questions was tested by making two senior university instructors conduct interviews. The quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS version 20 with descriptive statistics (such as mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage). Measures of central tendency (mean, median, and mode) and dispersion (range and standard deviation), which indicate how near values or responses are to central tendencies, were included in these data along with frequency and percentage response distributions (Dornyei, 2007). According to Lunenburg and Irby (2008), "descriptive research reports data as measures of central tendency, which include mean, median, and mode, and as measures of dispersion, which include deviance from the mean, variation, range, and quartile."

Besides, the interview data gathered through semi-structured interview questions were coded, and were transcribed. To understand the data, the texts—that is, the transcribed interviews—were read multiple times during the coding phase. According to Creswell (2018), "coding is the process of organizing the material into chunks or segments of text and assigning a word or phrase to the segment to develop a general sense of it." In addition, the pertinent themes and patterns were then highlighted and labeled in the texts (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 247). A thematic analysis was performed on the semi-structured interview data. Following separate analyses the data, the quantitative and qualitative data were combined during the study's discussion sessions. Therefore, the study used the sequential explanatory mixed method, which consists of two distinct phases: quantitative and qualitative (Creswell et al., 2003); as one of the possible mixing strategies to combine quantitative and qualitative methods.

Results

The results of the questionnaire

In this part of the study, the quantitative data that were gathered using a questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics with SPSS version 20 and tabulated. Besides, the reliability of the questionnaire was proven using Cronbach's alpha index. In this regard, it is calculated the internal consistency reliability and the validity of the questionnaire using the intra-class correlation coefficient. The reliability and validity of 15 items about English language instructors' beliefs about implementing a reflective teaching strategy in EFL instructions are significantly valid and reliable. Thus, the reliability of the whole questionnaire items with Cronbach's alpha index is 0.774, and the validity of the whole questionnaire items is 0.782.

Table 1: English Language instructors' beliefs about implementing a reflective teaching strategy in EFL instructions ($\alpha=.774$)

Items	No	Frequency and percentage						Central tendency		
			SD	D	N	A	SA	M	St. D.	V
1. I believe implementing reflective teaching strategy is a process enables instructors act more deliberately and intentionally, and free them from routine and impulsive acts.	33	F	2	2	2	13	14	4.06	1.144	1.309
		P	6.1	6	6.1	39.4	42.4			
2. I believe that implementing reflective teaching enables instructors to reflect on their attitudes and behavior for teaching skills.	33	F	1	3	1	17	11	4.03	1.015	1.030
		P	3.0	9.1	3.0	51.5	33.3			
3. I believe implementing reflective teaching is one of the effective strategies to have better understanding of the context-specific pedagogy.	33	F		1	2	14	16	4.36	.742	.551
		P		3.0	6.1	42.4	48.5			
4. I think implementing reflective teaching gives a chance for instructors to self- evaluate and self-observe their teaching process through classroom research.	33	F		1	1	15	16	4.39	.704	.496
		P		3.0	3.0	45.5	48.5			
5. I believe that implementing reflective teaching enhances instructors' autonomy, and their intrinsic motivation to improve teaching skills.	33	F			8	14	11	4.09	.765	.585
		P			24.2	42.4	33.3			
6. I believe that implementing reflective teaching helps instructors try out the new strategies and ideas to maximize students learning potential.	33	F			2	18	13	4.33	.595	.354
		P			6.1	54.5	39.4			
7. I think that implementing reflective teaching creates an opportunity for instructors to learn from their own experiences by questioning their personal theories and beliefs.	33	F		2	4	14	13	4.15	.870	.758
		P		6.1	12.1	42.4	39.4			
8. I believe that implementing reflective teaching helps instructors realize their strengths and weaknesses of their own instructions to plan for future actions.	33	F		1		14	18	4.48	.667	.445
		P		3.0		42.4	54.5			

Note: SD=strongly agree D= disagree N= neutral A= agree SA= strongly agree M= mean St. D= standard deviation V= variance F= frequency P= Percent

***The mean scheme: 1.0-2.4(negative) 2.5-3.4(neutral) 3.5-5.0(positive)**

The above table focuses on English language instructors' beliefs about implementing a reflective teaching strategy in EFL instructions. In this regard, 15 items were forwarded to the study participants. In the analyses, descriptive statistics (percent, mean, and St.de.) were used to find out the dominant factors that enabled the researcher to reach EFL instructors who have positive beliefs about implementing a reflective teaching strategy in EFL instructions. Thus, the results of the study indicated the dominant issues, which pointed out the positive beliefs of EFL instructors about implementing a reflective teaching strategy in EFL instructions. Based on the descriptive statistical scores, high ranked items that could indicate EFL instructors' positive beliefs about the implementation of a reflective teaching strategy in EFL instructions were used in the analyses of the findings. These are: item 2(Percent=84.4% Mean=4.06 St. D. =1.144); item

3(percent=90.5% Mean=4.36 St. D=0.742); item4 (Percent=94.0% Mean=4.39 St. D.=0.704); item6(Percent=93.9% Mean=4.33 St. D=0.595); item 8(Percent=96.6% Mean=4.48 St. D=0.667). As can be seen in the table1, the selected items are dominant indicators of EL instructors' positive beliefs about the implementation of a reflective teaching strategy in EFL instructions (see Table 1 above). Moreover, the percentage and the arithmetic mean value of these items indicate that majority of the study participants showed positive beliefs about the forwarded ideas. Besides, the values of standard deviation indicate that the data points close to the center of expected value. Hence, it is possible to deduce that the majority of English language instructors have positive beliefs about implementing a reflective teaching strategy in EFL instructions.

Table 1: Continue

Items	N o	Frequency percentage					and SA	Central tendency		
			S D	D	N	A		M	St. D.	V
9. I think implementing reflective teaching helps instructors find out better solutions for unexpected teaching situations in EFL instructions.	33	F			6	15	12	4.18	.727	.528
		P			18.2	45.5	36.4			
10. I believe that implementing reflective teaching enables instructors reflect on how the students' learn English language and act emotionally in EFL classroom.	33	F	1	3	2	17	10	3.97	1.015	1.030
		P	3.0	9.1	6.1	51.5	30.3			
11. I believe that reflective teaching helps instructors consider alternative perspectives and possibilities to create a good learning environment for students.	33	F	1		5	14	13	4.15	.906	.820
		P	3.0		15.2	42.4	39.4			
12. I think that implementing reflective teaching process helps instructors enhance their knowledge about professional growth.	33	F		1	4	12	16	4.30	.810	.655
		P		3.0	12.1	36.4	48.5			
13. I think that implementing reflective teaching equips the instructors with the open-mindedness, responsibility, and wholeheartedness.	33	F	1	2	1	14	15	4.21	.992	.985
		P	3.0	6.1	3.0	42.4	45.5			
14. I believe that implementing reflective teaching can be enhanced by learning new instructional methods from colleagues' teaching activities.	33	F	1		3	13	16	4.30	.883	.780
		P	3.0		9.1	39.4	48.5			
15. I think that implementing reflective teaching is improved by gaining feedback from colleagues and learners.	33	F			7	9	17	4.30	.810	.655
		P			21.2	27.3	51.5			
		Grand mean=4.493 Grand St. Deviation=.843								

Note: SD=strongly agree D= disagree N= neutral A= agree SA= strongly agree M= mean St. D= standard deviation V= variance F= frequency P= Percent

***The mean scheme: 1.0-2.4(negative) 2.5-3.4(neutral) 3.5-5.0(positive)**

Similarly, the results of the study indicated that dominant issues that pointed out the positive beliefs of EFL instructors about implementing a reflective teaching strategy in EFL instructions. Some of the high-ranking

items are: item 11(Percent= 81.8% Mean=4.15 St. D. = 0.906); item 12(Percent=84.9% Mean= 4.30 St. D. = 0.810); item 14(Percent=87.9% Mean= 4.30 St. D=0.883). (See Table 1. Continued above). In examining the relationships of items of English language instructors' beliefs about implementing a reflective teaching strategy in EFL instructions, Intra-class coefficient correlational analyses were conducted. The results of these analyses illustrated that there existed significant relationships between these items (0.01). To conclude, the grand mean value of the whole items, i.e., 4.493 in this particular table, indicates that majority of the study participants involved in responding to the items have positive beliefs about implementing a reflective teaching strategy in EFL instructions.

Results of qualitative data

The semi-structured interview data

In this session, the researcher involved five instructors who were purposively selected for interview data. Seven semi-structured questions were forwarded, mainly focusing on beliefs about implementing a reflective teaching strategy at university EFL instructions. The data obtained from interviews was presented after reviewing different scholarly recommendations in the area of qualitative data analysis. The total number of minutes used to complete each interview session was 30-35 minutes. Besides, the researcher employed an inductive process that incorporates transcribing, coding, looking for themes, interpreting meanings, and presenting results (Fei Ma, 2015). As they were forwarded, the first step was transcribing the interview data by listening repeatedly to the audio recorded. Then, after reading and rereading the transcripts, the data was initially coded, categorized into themes, and derived; and the derived themes and sub-themes were checked to see if they answered the research questions (Creswell, 2012).

Theme: English language instructors' beliefs about the implementation of RT in EFL instructions

At university level, English language instructors are highly engaged in conventional language teaching as the information gained from current semi-structured interview data. Most of the instructors' responses show that they are running with the already set school programs merely to complete the bulk of materials on a fixed schedule. Thus, they feel RT makes them burdened with additional responsibilities: reflect-on-action, reflect-in-action and reflect-for-actions, which were believed to have positive impacts in the course of improving reflective teaching skills. Under the main theme of interview data, two sub-themes are incorporated to analyze the findings. Where do these sorts of beliefs about its implementation emanate?

Instructors' beliefs about implementing RT

It is believed that the instructors are the main actors in the process of implementing reflective teaching and learning in the EFL classrooms. Thus, active involvement is a requirement to enhance the process of developing skills of implementing a reflective teaching strategy in EFL classroom instructions. In this regard, the researcher interviewed five English Language instructors' beliefs about the implementation of a reflective teaching strategy; however, most of them responded that they were not implementing a reflective teaching strategy in their EFL instructions because of the thought that they have about its character of time consuming and having burdensome activities. According to interviewee one,

I did not have the experience of implementing reflective teaching as a strategy in my classrooms. I feel that it is a new paradigm. However, it makes instructors to be engaged in different reflective activities: observe other instructors, or are being observed by others help them to evaluate their teaching career, but I do not come across with such insightful approach in my learning and teaching career. This is because it needs additional effort to come across the effective implementation of reflective teaching strategy.

From these points of view, this English language instructor has good understanding about the importance of implementing reflective language teaching plays significant roles in professional growth and English language teaching skills. However, he is not implementing it in his actual classrooms because of negative thoughts that he developed, as it is so burdensome to perform in actual classroom. For interview two, a reflective teaching strategy is more challenging to implement at university level than that of other type of teaching methods. He forwarded,

I think implementing reflective teaching strategy is challenging at university level. This is because it needs instructors' commitment and professional courage to implement it in their classroom sessions. It also requires having the expertise and skills to implement this as strategy in their EFL instructions.

It is true that EFL instructors thought to have good theoretical understandings about a reflective teaching strategy and ways of effective implementations about it because of HDP training in this regard. Besides, their negative outlook they have about the essence of implementing a reflective teaching strategy in EFL instructions need to be changed in a way enable them develop expertise in it, especially at university level. In addition, interviewee three said that implementing a reflective teaching strategy plays a significant role in upgrading instructors' creativity in EFL instructions. He said,

As his expressions, of course, it is very important to implement reflective teaching as a strategy for its emphasis on examining the effectiveness of teaching-learning process. I think it upgrades teachers'

creativity in teaching-learning process. Therefore, I am happy to implement reflective teaching in my EFL classrooms as much as possible.

Similarly, interviewee four told that he is trying to implement a reflective language teaching strategy in EFL instructions because of the attitudinal changes he gained from HDP training sessions. As to him, university EFL instructors in Ethiopia took the training as a mandatory activity for teachers' professional developments so that they come across with training sessions and certified for their participation. Therefore, EFL instructors got the chance to hear about a reflective teaching strategy and its importance in the process of improving EL teaching skills though they are not implementing it effectively in their actual classrooms. As interviewee four,

I am using reflective teaching as a strategy in my classroom instructions sometimes. Because I took training about it in HDP training session; thus, I am very happy to implement it in my classroom session though there are inconveniences for its effective implementation in EFL instructions.

However, as the idea forwarded by the fifth interviewee, EFL instructors have good understanding about the importance of implementing a reflective teaching strategy in their EFL instructions, because of lack of obligatory rules and regulations in the institutions that can push instructors implement conventional methods than a reflective teaching strategy. He forwarded,

As to my understanding, reflective language teaching needs to be implemented at university EFL classrooms, but one of the problems is that the university instructors failed to take it as a mandatory action.

In general, the data obtained from interview indicated that almost all interviewee instructors have shown their positive beliefs about implementing a reflective teaching strategy in their EFL instructions. This is because of the HDP training that gain about it. However, based on the findings in this regard, EFL instructors were not implementing a reflective teaching strategy in EFL instructions effectively in their actual classrooms though they have good understandings and positive beliefs about the importance of implementing it.

Instructors' learning and teaching experiences

Instructors' experiences as learners and teachers thought to have either positive or negative impact on one's teaching strategy. In this regard, the researcher asked five English language instructors to explain about the impact of their learning and teaching experience on the implementation of a reflective teaching strategy in EFL instructions. One of the interviewees told that if the instructors came across with the experiences of interactive language teaching and learning in pre-service training, they thought to have the positive outlook to the implementation of a reflective teaching strategy in EFL instructions. Though he has positive attitude towards the employment of a reflective teaching strategy, he had no experiences of coming across in employing it as language learner in pre-service trainings, and even as university instructor as well. As interviewee one,

I do not come across with such insightful approach in in my learning and teaching career. As far as my observation is concerned, this teaching strategy is not implemented well by EFL instructors at university level for different reasons. However, I feel good if it is implemented at university level in Ethiopian contexts.

Moreover, instructors' experiences as teacher and learner thought to play great roles in process of implementing a reflective teaching strategy, and becoming reflective practitioners. In this point of view, interviewee two forwarded that,

It is believed that the instructors' attitude is built in the way they are trained; therefore, these orientations can be positively or negatively affect the classroom engagements of reflective language teaching. The other issue is that the teachers' experiences as a learner and as a teacher can be considered to affect its effective implementations.

Therefore, instructors' interview showed that the experiences that they came across as language learner and as a teacher might have either positive or negative impact on the implementation of a reflective teaching strategy in the EFL classroom instructions.

Discussion

Based on the results of the study, English language instructors were thought to have positive beliefs about the implementation of a reflective teaching strategy in the EFL instructions. In this session, questionnaire data and extracts from semi-structured interviews, together with relevant scholarly ideas, are discussed as follows. To begin with, it focused on high-ranked issues of descriptive analyses that are considered major findings; and are believed to be the indicators of EFL instructors' positive beliefs about implementing a reflective teaching strategy. Implementing a reflective teaching strategy in EFL instructions believed to enable instructors to reflect on their attitudes and behavior for teaching skills, identify context-specific pedagogy,

help self-evaluate and self-observe their teaching process, try new strategies and ideas to maximize students' learning potential. It also helps to realize their strengths and weaknesses of their classroom performances. In addition, implementing a reflective teaching strategy enable EFL instructors to consider alternative perspectives and possibilities to create a good learning environment upgrading their knowledge and professional growth, and helps them learn new teaching methods by observing colleagues' actual classroom performances.

Moreover, the results revealed that implementing a reflective teaching strategy paves the ways for EFL instructors to reflect on their attitudes and behaviors towards their teaching performances; and help them engage in a creative and interactive approach to EL teaching process. As the information gained from the interviewees, EFL instructors also showed their positive beliefs about the capacity that implementing a reflective teaching strategy has on enabling them to reflect on their attitudes and behaviors of their teaching performances. As Bolton (2010) stated, reflective teaching demands, "paying critical attention to the practical values and theories that inform everyday actions by examining practice reflectively and reflexively" (p. 22). Besides, the implementation of a reflective teaching strategy in EFL instructions paves the way for a better understanding of context-specific pedagogy. Here, the majority of the respondents showed their beliefs about the implementation of a reflective teaching strategy in EFL instructions help them have a better understanding of their context-specific pedagogy. The result goes in line with Kayapinar (2013) statement describing that reflection enables teachers to form a habit of continually learning from their own experiences by framing problems of practice in light of various perspectives, critiquing and reframing problems within broader perspectives, and taking action that is fostered by such reframing". It also requires having the expertise and skills to select the appropriate strategy and context to implement this strategy in their EFL instructions effectively. Ma and Ren (2011) forwarded in their research findings that a reflective teaching strategy had an impact on one's professional growth; thus, it enables the understanding of the selection of appropriate teaching methods for the student's level and context.

Implementing a reflective teaching strategy can have the potential to enhance the self-observing and self-evaluating skills of the teaching process through classroom research. Self-observation and self-evaluation enable EFL teachers point out their strengths and weaknesses to re-plan for better performance in EFL instructions. Thus, it is paying critical attention to the practical values and theories, which inform everyday action by examining practices relatively and reflectively, (Bolton 2010). Hence, the participants responses to the questionnaires and interviews forwarded were that the implementation of a reflective teaching strategy enhances the ability of self-evaluations and self-observations to enhance their teaching process, which can be strengthened by classroom research. Ferdowsi and Afghari (2015) emphasized in their research that implementing a reflective teaching strategy is effective in assisting teachers in detecting problems in the classroom as well as in dealing with them effectively. In addition, it is a means of "looking at what you do in the classroom, thinking about why you do it, and thinking about if it works—a process of self-observation and self-evaluation" (Tice, 2011). Scholars who participated in the interview pointed out that self-evaluations and self-observations should not ignore instructors' learning, and teaching experiences believed to have either a positive or a negative impact on their actual teaching careers. The implementation of reflective teaching strategy paves the way for "the teachers thinking about what happens in classroom lessons and thinking about alternative means of achieving goals or aims" (Bailey et al., 2004, as cited in Liu and Zang, 2014). Furthermore, it was perceived to enable EFL instructors to examine the strengths and weaknesses of their performance in their teaching process. Olaya Mesa's (2018) study, self-reflecting on their teaching performances, can help teachers realize what they are good at, what they missed, or where they need to improve in their careers. Therefore, it is important to consider these issues as alternative ways to improve the skills of English language teaching in EFL classroom instructions. As the results obtained from the respondents indicated, the implementation of reflective language teaching helps EFL instructors develop their enthusiasms to search for alternative perspectives and possibilities to create a good EL teaching-learning environment.

Furthermore, the implementation of a reflective language teaching strategy in EFL instructions is believed to enable instructors to consider alternative perspectives and possibilities to create a good learning environment. In this regard, majority of the study participants expressed their strong beliefs about the importance of implementing a reflective teaching strategy in FL instruction to equip English language instructors with open-mindedness, responsibility, and wholeheartedness. Therefore, this idea goes in line with the ideas that Dewey (1933) stated reflective teachers have three distinguishing characteristics: open-mindedness, responsibility, and whole-heartedness. Besides, reflective teaching enhances EFL instructors' knowledge of English language teaching skills and professional growth. Pickett (2005) describes reflective teaching as expanding in-depth and the range of questions you ask about your teaching undertaking a more systematic approach to practices and collaborating with others, who have similar interests and questions. The results of the study in this regard indicated that implementing a reflective teaching strategy is thought to pave ways for EFL instructors to learn new methods from their colleagues' actual classroom performance. Thus, it

is possible to take peer observation, which is the act of two teachers collaborating and observing each other's teaching with the main goal of improving the quality of teaching. It is implemented to enhance teaching through critical reflection to reach the quality of teaching and student learning. Richards & Farrel (2005) said the key points of peer observation are looking deeper at the way the lesson is delivered and gaining some understanding related to the teaching and learning process. Peer observation creates opportunities for teachers to view each other's teaching, expose them to different teaching styles, and create opportunities for critical reflection on their teaching. Observing others' classroom performances, you are asked to note down negative and positive remarks about teaching practices (Lockhart, 1991).

Furthermore, the results indicated that the EFL instructors have positive beliefs about the implementation of a reflective teaching strategy in EFL instructions and its importance to EL teaching skills improvements. Its implementation plays a significant role in the process of improving English language teaching methods, in general; and a reflective teaching strategy, in particular. It is also possible to deduce from the results of the study that it has relevance to professional development and teaching skills improvement. The data contributed to a clearer understanding of EFL instructors' positive beliefs about the importance of implementing reflective language teaching strategies, which have significant roles in facilitating students' learning and mounting their teaching skills. In contrast to these findings, Dereje, Desta, & Gemechis (2017) conducted a study entitled "Practices and Challenges of Reflective Teaching," which focused on primary school teaching and showed that primary school teachers have little understanding of reflective teaching and its implementation in actual classrooms. Though the study context of the current study and the previous study were at different educational levels, the previous study findings indicated EFL teachers have little understanding of implementing a reflective teaching strategy. The results of the current study are contrary to the aforementioned studies.

Therefore, the current researcher is surprised with the results, as the majority of the study participants had positive beliefs about the importance of the implementation of a reflective language teaching strategy in improving teaching skills. At the very beginning, the researcher thought that EL instructors' had the negative beliefs about implementing a reflective teaching strategy in the EFL instructions, the reverse is true.

The findings that were obtained from the interviews indicated that they did not dare implement it in their actual EFL instructions for the mentioned reasons. According to Aguirre and Speer (2000), current definitions of teacher beliefs found in the education literature focus on how teachers think about the nature of teaching and learning, teachers' classroom experiences influence belief 'unconsciously and/or through conscious reflection' (Borg, 2006, p.283). However, investigation that is more detailed is suggested by taking document analyses to study on teachers' use of tools of reflective practices to see whether the results of reflective are taken further in their teaching performances. Therefore, it is difficult to generalize the findings of the study to other institutions because of its limited number of participants and other methodological factors. But, there is room to conclude university EFL instructors have positive beliefs about the overall importance of the employment of a reflective teaching strategy in EFL instruction and its roles in improving English language teaching skills.

Conclusions

The importance of this study is to provide useful information for English language instructors to consider the implementation of a reflective teaching strategy as a significant practice that enables them to upgrade their beliefs about a reflective teaching strategy in improving ELT skills and developing a professional identity. Thus, the following conclusions are made in light of the data, discussions, and literature regarding EFL instructors' beliefs about employing a reflective teaching strategy in EFL instruction. However, due to the limited information obtained from the small number of study participants and the methodological issues raised as limitations, the study's findings might not be generalized to all Ethiopian institutions in all EFL contexts. Implementing a reflective teaching strategy at university EFL instruction is considered as beneficial and plays an important role in the process of improving the quality of teaching. Borg (2003) conceptualizes teacher belief what the terms 'teacher cognition' as teachers 'knowledge, theories, attitudes, images, assumptions, metaphors, conceptions, perspective about teaching, teachers, learning, students, subject matter, curricula, materials, instructional activities, and self' (p.81). It is believed that by applying a reflective teaching strategy, possible to cultivate changes in their beliefs and awareness that might benefit their professional development as reflective teachers.

Moreover, the results the study indicated that effective implementation of a reflective teaching strategy could improve teacher education through the introduction of a reflective teaching strategy as an insight into English language teaching methods. It also enables EFL instructors think about their own teaching process and teaching style and analyze positive and negative aspects of their teaching performances. Implementing a reflective teaching strategy ascertains the students' learning by bringing changes in teaching methods and the

learners' behavior. Similarly, through the implementation of a reflective teaching strategy in EFL classrooms, instructors gain an in-depth insight into the strategies of aspects of instruction: professional development, classroom management, teacher-student interactions, and improving the quality of English language instructors' teaching skills in EFL contexts. Borg's (2003) view of teachers as 'active, thinking decision-makers who make instructional choices by drawing on complex, practically oriented, personalized, and context-sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts and beliefs' (p.81). However, EFL university instructors disclosed that they did not have the trend of implementing a reflective language teaching strategy in their current EFL classroom instructions because of certain reasons. Some of the reasons were forwarded by them are low salaries, lack of opportunities to get incentives, the already-developed curriculum, lack of appropriate resources materials, inadequately equipped language rooms, the size of the classrooms, and lack of opportunities for appropriate training. In addition, limited timetable and workload were also some of the challenges that EFL instructors raised as hindrances to the effective implementation of a reflective teaching strategy in their EFL instructions.

In terms of limitations, the study was not exhaustive, as related studies might have been missed because of limited access to search for relevant empirical evidence in Ethiopian contexts, limited participants in the study, and the related methodological aspects. Therefore, there is an avenue for future researchers to include several studies with a significant number of participants, and additional tools of data gathering to provide more information about the roles of EFL instructors' beliefs about implementing a reflective teaching strategy in improving the ELT skills of EFL teachers at university level.

Appendix

Likert-scale questionnaire

1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

Teachers' beliefs on employing RT as a strategy						
No.	Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I believe reflective teaching is a process enables instructors act more deliberately and intentionally, and free them from routine and impulsive acts.					
2	I believe that reflective teaching enables instructors reflect on their attitudes and behavior for teaching skills improvements.					
3	I believe reflective teaching is one of the effective strategies for teachers' to have better understanding of their context-specific pedagogy.					
4	I think reflective teaching gives a chance for instructors to self- evaluate and self-observe their teaching process through classroom research.					
5	I believe that reflective teaching enhances instructors' autonomy, and their intrinsic motivation.					
6	I believe that reflective teaching helps instructors try out the new strategies and ideas to maximize students learning potential.					
7	I think that reflective teaching creates an opportunity for instructors to learn from their own experiences by questioning their personal theories and beliefs.					
8	I believe that reflective teaching helps instructors realize their strengths and weaknesses of their own instructions to plan for future actions.					
9	I think that reflective teaching helps instructors find out better solutions for unexpected teaching situations in EFL instructions.					

10	I believe that reflective teaching enables instructors reflect on how the students' learn English language and act emotionally in EFL classroom.					
11	I believe that reflective teaching helps instructors consider alternative perspectives and possibilities to create a good learning environment for students.					
12	I think that reflective teaching process helps instructors enhance their knowledge about professional growth.					
13	I think that reflective teaching equips the instructors with the open-mindedness, responsibility, and wholeheartedness.					
14	I believe that reflective teaching can be enhanced by learning new instructional methods from colleagues' teaching activities.					
15	I think that reflective teaching is improved by gaining feedback from colleagues and learners.					

Interview questions

1. What does reflective language teaching strategy mean to you? Elaborate.....
2. How do you feel about the employment of reflective language teaching strategy significant in EFL instructions at university level?
3. What do you think makes the reflective language teaching strategy more unique than that of other approaches of English language teaching in EFL instructions?
4. How do you believe about the essence of implementing reflective language teaching as a strategy in the improvements of EFL instructions at university level?
5. Would you say something about strategies/tools of reflective practices; and their importance in the course of improvements of reflective teaching strategy?.....
6. What do you think are the challenges of university instructors face as they implement reflective language teaching strategy English as a foreign language instructions?.....
7. What are the possible strategies to tackle the challenges of for the effective implementation of reflective language teaching as a strategy in EFL instruction?.....

ABBREBATIONS

EFL: English as a Foreign Language
 EFLT: English as Foreign Language Teaching
 ELT: English Language Teaching
 ESL: English as a Second Language
 ESP: English for Specific Purposes
 FLL: Foreign Language Learning
 HDP: Higher Diploma Program
 MOE: Ministry of Education
 PGDT: Post graduate Diploma training
 RT: Reflective Teaching
 SLT: Second Language Teaching

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Competing interests

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