

**T.R.**  
**BOLU ABANT İZZET BAYSAL UNIVERSITY**  
**INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**  
**DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION**

**EFL TEACHERS' REFLECTION-ON-ACTION**  
**EXPERIENCE: A CASE STUDY ON WORKPLACE**  
**LEARNING**

**MASTER OF ARTS**

**SAMET ÇAKIROĞLU**

**ACADEMIC SUPERVISOR**  
**ASSOC. PROF. DR. ANIL Ş. RAKICIOĞLU-SÖYLEMEZ**

**BOLU, DECEMBER 2023**

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## APPROVAL OF THE THESIS

**EFL TEACHERS' REFLECTION-ON-ACTION EXPERIENCE: A CASE STUDY ON WORKPLACE LEARNING** submitted by **Samet ÇAKIROĞLU** and defended before the Examining Committee Members listed below in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **Master of Arts** in the **Department of English Language Teaching, Institute of Graduate Studies of Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University on 15.12.2023** by

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## ETHICAL DECLARATION

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Ethical permission for this study was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University with 2022/05 number.

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**Samet ÇAKIROĞLU**

## ÖZET

### İNGİLİZCE'Yİ YABANCI DİL OLARAK ÖĞRETEN ÖĞRETMENLERİN EYLEM ÜZERİNE DÜŞÜNME DENEYİMİ:

### İŞYERİNDE MESLEKİ ÖĞRENME ÜZERİNE BİR DURUM ÇALIŞMASI YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ

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BOLU ABANT İZZET BAYSAL ÜNİVERSİTESİ

LİSANSÜSTÜ EĞİTİM ENSTİTÜSÜ

YABANCI DİLLER EĞİTİMİ ANABİLİM DALI

İNGİLİZ DİLİ EĞİTİMİ BİLİM DALI

TEZ DANIŞMANI: DOÇ. DR. ANIL Ş. RAKICIOĞLU-SÖYLEMEZ

BOLU, ARALIK 2023

XII + 103

Bu çalışma, eylem üzerine yansıtma deneyiminin İngilizce'yi yabancı dil olarak öğreten öğretmenlerin işyeri öğrenmesi hakkında bir vaka çalışması yapılmasını amaçlamıştır. Bu çalışmada İngilizce'yi yabancı dil olarak öğreten öğretmenlerin öğretim eylemleri üzerine yansıtmayı nasıl gerçekleştirdikleri ve bunun mesleki öğrenimlerine nasıl katkı sağladığı araştırılmıştır. Yapılan bu çalışmada toplam dört katılımcı yer almış ve çalışma bir vaka çalışması olarak tasarlanmıştır. Katılımcılar İngilizce Öğretmenliği ve İngiliz Dili Edebiyatı olmak üzere iki farklı programdan mezun olmuşlardır. Dört katılımcı da Türkiye'nin batısında yer alan bir ilde özel bir okulda haftalık ortalama yirmi-yirmibeş saat çalışan ve İngilizceyi ilköğretim ve ortaokul seviyelerinde yabancı dil olarak öğreten öğretmenler arasından seçilmiştir. Katılımcıların meslekte çalışma yılları beş ile ondokuz yıl arasında değişkenlik göstermektedir. Bu vaka çalışması için veri, odak grup görüşmeleri, çalıştay uygulaması ve yansıtıcı günlükler aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Odak grup görüşmeleri çalıştay öncesinde, çalıştay süresince ve çalıştay sonrasında olacak şekilde uygulanmıştır. Çalıştay uygulamalarının tamamlanmasından sonra her bir katılımcının onbeş hafta boyunca kendi öğretim süreçleri üzerine yansıtıcı düşünmesini sağlayacak düzenli yansıtıcı günlükler tutmaları istenmiştir. Çalışma, İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğreten öğretmenlerin eylem üzerine yansıtma uygulamalarının işyerinde öğrenmelerine nasıl katkıda bulunduğunu araştırmayı amaçlamıştır. Ayrıca, aşağıdaki araştırma sorularına dayanarak tercih edilen uygulamaların kullanılmasının ardındaki nedenlere odaklanarak, İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğreten öğretmenlerin işyerinde öğrenme deneyimleri sırasında tercih ettikleri birincil yansıtma uygulamalarını incelemiştir: İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğreten öğretmenlerin, işyerindeki mesleki gelişimleri üzerinde eylem üzerine yansıtma uygulamalarının rolüne ilişkin algıları nelerdir? İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğreten öğretmenlerin işyerinde öğrenme deneyimleri sırasında tercih ettikleri yansıtma uygulamalarının algılanan faydaları ve öğretmenlerin işyerinde öğrenme yansımalarının arkasındaki nedenler ve destekleyici mekanizmalar nelerdir?

Çalışmanın bulguları göstermiştir ki eylem üzerine yansıtıcı düşünme uygulamaları, İngilizce'yi yabancı dil olarak öğreten öğretmenlerin sınıf içi öğretim stratejileri ve prosedürlerine olan bakış açılarını etkilemiştir. Mesleki gelişimi ve kendine güveni teşvik eden meslektaşlarla deneyim alışverişi, yabancı dil öğretiminde eğitimsel değişikliklerin etkili bir şekilde uygulanmasında öğretmenlik mesleğinin yeniden canlandırılması için yaşam boyu mesleki öğrenmenin vazgeçilmezliğinin altını çizmektedir.

**ANAHTAR KELİMELER:** İşbirliği, İşyerinde Mesleki Öğrenme, Yansıtıcı Uygulama, Eylem Üzerine Düşünme, Mesleki Gelişim

## **ABSTRACT**

**EFL TEACHERS' REFLECTION-ON-ACTION EXPERIENCE: A  
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XII+ 103**

The purpose of this study was to conduct a case study of teachers' experiences teaching English as a foreign language with reflection-on-action experiences on workplace learning. The study aims to explore how teachers who teach English as a foreign language reflect on their teaching practices and how this contributes to their workplace professional learning. The study involved four participants and was designed as a case study. The participants were from two majors: English Language Teaching and English Language and Literature. All four participants were selected from teachers who teach English as a foreign language at the primary and secondary levels and work an average of twenty to twenty-five hours per week in a private school in a province located in the western part of Türkiye. Participants were between five and nineteen years in the profession. Data for this case study were collected through focus group interviews, workshops, and reflective journals. Focus group interviews were conducted before, during, and after the workshops. After the workshops were completed, participants were asked to keep regular reflective journals for fifteen weeks to allow them to reflect on their teaching experiences and processes. The study aimed to investigate how EFL teachers' reflection-on-action practices contribute to their workplace learning. It also examined the primary reflection-on-practices that EFL teachers prefer during their workplace learning experiences, with a focus on the reasons behind utilizing those preferred practices based on the following research questions: What are EFL teachers' perceptions regarding the role of reflection-on-action practices in their professional development at work? What are the perceived benefits of reflection-on-practices do EFL teachers prefer during their workplace learning experiences? What are the reasons and supporting mechanisms behind teachers' workplace learning reflections? The results of the study revealed that reflection-on-action practices were frequently related to EFL teachers' perspectives on in-class instructional strategies and procedures. The exchange of experiences with peers, fostering professional growth and self-assurance, unequivocally underscores the indispensability of lifelong professional learning for the revitalization of the teaching profession in effectively implementing educational alterations in foreign language teaching.

**KEYWORDS:** Collaboration, Workplace Learning, Reflective Practice, Reflection-on-action, Professional Development

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS**

<b>CEFR</b>	: Common European Framework of Reference
<b>CPD</b>	: Continuous Professional Development
<b>EFL</b>	: English as a Foreign Language
<b>ELT</b>	: English Language Teaching
<b>IB</b>	: International Baccalaureate
<b>ICT</b>	: Information and Communication Technologies
<b>IT</b>	: Information Technology
<b>TOEFL</b>	: Test of English as a Foreign Language
<b>ZPD</b>	: Zone of Proximal Development

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to thank my advisor for her precious assistance, and endless patience. I appreciate the chance she gave me to learn from her experience. She paved the road, enlightened me along the way, and gave me important insights into how this study was developed. Working with her was a wonderful honor for me. Without her direction and insightful criticism, this work would not have been possible.

I would like to thank my wife, Hülya ERDİL ÇAKIROĞLU. I appreciate your support, being there with me on this journey. I owe you a sincere debt of gratitude for your unwavering affection, ongoing assistance and tolerance.

As I prepare for this work, I feel incredibly fortunate to have my lovely son Kerem in my life. I would like to thank him from the bottom of my heart. I appreciate your patience, my dear son. I love you.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background of the Study

In order to maintain the educational system's commitment to educating the whole student, schools must consistently adapt to the evolving needs of our global community (Fullan, 1995; Fullan et al., 2006; Glickman et al., 2009). Change necessitates genuine reflection, devoted work, support for all aspects of change, and a clearly expressed sense of direction and purpose (Fullan, 1993; Hargreaves, 1994; Kruse & Louis, 2008; Senge, 2000; Sparks, 2002). At the heart of this evolution is teacher development, a journey that is essential for teachers aiming to reach their fullest potential in their teaching practice. In relation, teacher qualification is the “most important school variable affecting student achievement” (OECD, 2005).

Professional development is a crucial component that allows teachers to continue their learning journey throughout their careers. It encompasses a diverse array of activities that contribute to their growth, including formal coursework, participation in seminars, attendance at conferences and workshops, engaging in online training programs, as well as structured mentoring and supervision sessions. This wide spectrum of learning opportunities, as emphasized by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2022), ensures that teachers can keep pace with the evolving educational landscape and maintain the effectiveness of their teaching methods. Thus, teachers must take a highly active role in order to evaluate their own work "in light of the professional standards and the progress of their own students in light of the standards for student learning" (OECD, 2005). Leading educational organizations globally recognize reflection as an essential element of professional learning and as a catalyst for transformative classroom practice. Nevertheless, there remains a critical need to ascertain teachers' personal perceptions and the value they place on reflective practice within their own professional development. Moreover, it is imperative to identify what teachers consider to be effective support for fostering reflective practice within their work environments.

Relevantly, reflection is a core element in teachers' continuous professional development, which is a significant factor in the teacher's self-development. Additionally, since reflection allows teachers to learn from their everyday experiences in the classroom, it is regarded as the foundation for professional learning (Mohamed et al., 2022). One of the first definitions of reflection in the context of learning was that it was a way for turning experience into knowledge (Boud et al., 1985). Therefore, through integrating past beliefs with theory and practice, bridging theory and practice, and reconstructing professional knowledge from experienced knowledge, reflection affects teacher effectiveness (Seng, 2001). The following studies suggest that reflection-on-action can help teachers improve their practice in various ways.

For instance, Christie and Kirkwood (2006) found that reflection can assist teachers in enhancing their practice and themselves as practitioners. Similarly, Olteanu (2017) found that reflection-for-action can help teachers improve the quality of their content. Additionally, Peitz et al. (2021) reported that reflection on teaching can have different effects on trainee teachers. Moreover, Prieto et al. (2020) revealed that reflection for action can help teachers reflect on everyday evidence. Therefore, reflection-on-action appears to be an accommodating tool for teachers looking to enhance their teaching practice regardless of their heavy workload. Despite the significant focus on the significance of reflective teaching practices for ongoing professional development, there is a conspicuous deficiency in case studies specifically pertaining to in-service EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers and their experiences with reflection-on-action in their workplace learning environments. Furthermore, there is an evident lack of research dedicated to understanding how to cultivate positive experiences for teachers and how to create collaborative learning environments that support their professional growth within their immediate context of teaching. This represents a critical gap in educational literature that needs to be addressed to fully understand and enhance the reflective practices of EFL teachers.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

A thorough exploration of workplace learning within varied cultural and organizational landscapes is imperative to uncover the root causes behind the existing shortcomings in research, notably the absence of systematic approaches to case-specific studies and the deficiency of suitable conceptual and methodological frameworks. A deeper grasp of these issues is crucial to developing targeted and potent strategies that boost reflective practices among teachers. Given that reflective practices are a hallmark of teacher workplace learning, it is essential to assertively examine teachers' experiences with reflection and their perceived impact on pedagogy. Doing so is not merely beneficial—it is a fundamental step in advancing our understanding of professional development in educational contexts.

One trend in school environments is to improve teaching and learning not only through formal methods but also by creating an informal learning environment using appropriate tools and methods. To effectively leverage formal and informal professional learning, decision makers, curriculum designers, and the administration in the school context must first gain a deep understanding of their workplace's professional learning environment. This includes identifying how teachers prefer to enhance their teaching practices, ways to learn, and which learning activities best meet their needs (Webster-Wright, 2009).

Therefore, it is possible to discover the unexplored potential of teachers' professional development in the workplace environment via reflection. In the relevant literature it is highlighted that reflective practice in a context of collaboration helps teachers enhance in their profession (Pandey, 2013). Chaudhary (2008) concludes that teacher development happens via reflection. By knowing themselves and their own behaviors, teachers may advance both professionally and personally. Reflective practice is the most crucial concept that they ought to consider in order to address how their attitudes, values, and beliefs impact the way they teach (OECD, 2009). Thus, the goal of this study is to explore the perspectives of in-service EFL teachers regarding the learning environment in their workplace. In sum, the present study will concentrate on two principal objectives: Firstly, it will examine the professional workplace learning practices of in-service EFL teachers through the lens of integrated reflective practices. This includes a close

examination of how they utilize reflection for self-improvement and the specific reflective methodologies they adopt. Secondly, the study will capture and present the perspectives of these teachers regarding the support that reflective practice provides for their professional learning within the workplace. This encompasses an analysis of the communities and networks that teachers participate in, their openness to knowledge sharing and expertise exchange, as well as their engagement in peer coaching activities. Together, these focus areas will provide a comprehensive overview of the role of reflection in professional development for in-service EFL teachers in workplace learning. Based on the examined data on teachers' reflections and feedback, the study aims to suggest guidelines for educational institutions to improve workplace professional practices and learning opportunities through the integration of reflective practices.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The concept of teachers enhancing their pedagogical approaches through reflection—a process of deep and systematic contemplation of their teaching practices—has a longstanding history in educational research (Farrell, 2014). Of late, reflective teaching has taken on a more prominent role in the realm of teacher professional development, setting its status as a crucial instrument. This shift recognizes that for teachers to foster dynamic, meaningful, and application-driven learning that is both autonomous and collaborative among students, their responsibilities are becoming more intricate (Vermunt, 2014). Mastery of the subject matter, the ability to steer student learning, and inspiring students to engage are now foundational expectations. The evolving educational environment demands that teachers also adopt multifaceted roles that include diagnosing, challenging, modeling, activating, observing, evaluating, and reflecting on student learning (Vermunt, 2014). Liu (2013) highlights in her literature analysis that one of the most important skills for teachers is the ability to assess and modify their instruction for students in certain social, cultural, and political situations.

Bartlett (1990) showed that reflective teaching produces not only a new idea for teacher education but also a new way to improve the quality of teaching. It has a positive meaning for teachers' professional development. Continuous professional development for teachers is inconceivable without a systemic approach to

reflection. Work-based learning is pivotal because it forges a direct connection between theoretical knowledge and practical application, incorporating academic insight with experiential wisdom (Lunenberg & Korthagen, 2009). It acknowledges the workplace as a rich learning environment on par with the traditional classroom. Yet, to unlock the full potential of such learning, a dedicated emphasis on reflective engagement with work practices is essential (Marsick, 2001). Therefore, it provides managers with the chance to overcome issues associated to teaching by reflecting on and learning from their actions, even in the face of the continual pace of pervasive change (Hußner et al., 2023).

Thus, the purpose of this study is twofold: First, the study aims to examine the professional workplace learning practices of in-service EFL teachers by means of reflection. Second, the study aims to present teachers' perspectives on how reflective practice supports professional learning in the workplace. Furthermore, it has the potential to offer additional assistance to educational administrators, scholars, and decision-makers by guiding the necessary stakeholders about how to support teachers' ongoing professional learning. It aims to guide these key stakeholders in creating and implementing supportive structures and policies that bolster the continuous professional development of teachers. The outcomes could assist in crafting targeted professional development programs, optimizing reflective practice initiatives, and designing institutional cultures that prioritize and reward ongoing teacher learning. In sum, this study is poised to contribute to the broader discourse on teacher professional development by highlighting the significance of reflection in the workplace and by advocating for systems that reinforce this practice, ultimately enriching the educational experiences of both teachers and their students.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

This study aims to examine the professional workplace learning practices of in-service EFL teachers by means of reflection. The study also aims to present teachers' perspectives on how reflective practice supports professional learning in the workplace. In this respect, the study sought answers to the following research questions:

1. What are EFL teachers' perceptions regarding the role of reflection-on-action practices in their professional development at work?

2. What are the perceived benefits of reflection-on-practices do EFL teachers prefer during their workplace learning experiences? What are the reasons and supporting mechanisms behind teachers' workplace learning reflections?

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study explores reflection through the lens of four in-service EFL teachers. By strengthening learning possibilities for students, the data analysis will offer more direction for teachers' continuous professional growth. By determining how teachers see the role of reflective practice in the course of a typical classroom, how in-service EFL teachers' reflection-on-action practices relate to their workplace professional learning could be observed in detail. It may be easier for lawmakers, educational researchers, and school administrators to make judgments in appropriate circumstances if there is more clarity regarding teachers' perspectives of their own reflection experiences.

This study can contribute to the field of foreign language teacher education in various aspects. First, a deeper examination of EFL teachers' reflection-on-action practices and their impact on workplace learning can yield significant findings regarding efficacious professional development approaches (Liu & Zhang, 2014). Through the identification of particular reflection practices that facilitate the learning of teachers, educational institutions and policymakers can develop focused training programs and interventions aimed at augmenting the professional development and efficacy of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers.

Second, this study has the potential to provide insight into the significance of reflection-on-action within the realm of teaching English as a foreign language. The study aims to investigate the primary reflection practices that are commonly utilized by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers during their professional development in the workplace. The findings of the research can offer valuable insights and suggestions for promoting a culture of reflective teaching.

The aforementioned practice has the potential to motivate teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) to actively participate in a structured process of introspection, critically evaluate their pedagogical methods, and judiciously select measures to enhance their teaching methodologies, organizational skills, and student involvement. As highlighted in OECD (2019) report on future of education and skills 2030, reflection nurtures a suite of skills including metacognition, self-awareness, critical thinking, and decision-making (Rolheiser, Bower, & Stevahn, 2000). Thus, these competencies are crucial for proficient anticipation. Engaging in any one of these skills has the potential to reinforce the professional practices. Specifically, reflection boosts individuals' ability to anticipate by enriching their understanding and experience concerning the consequences of their actions (OECD, 2019). The findings of the study have the potential to enhance the advancement of reflective teaching methodologies and the development of reflective professionals within the domain of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) pedagogy.

Third, the insights garnered from this study promise to significantly contribute to the development and enhancement of professional development programs tailored for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers. Reflective practice, as outlined by the OECD (2020), involves adopting a critical stance in the decision-making process—stepping back to reassess the known or presumed aspects of a situation from varied perspectives. By delving into the preferred reflective practices of EFL teachers and uncovering the reasoning behind their chosen methods, this research can offer valuable guidance for the structuring of both pre-service and in-service educational programs. This guidance is aimed at foregrounding reflective practice as a core component of teacher education, thereby equipping teachers with the skills necessary to critically evaluate and refine their pedagogical approaches continuously.

The aforementioned approach can facilitate the acquisition of essential competencies, expertise, and attitudes by prospective and current teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), enabling them to effectively engage in reflective practices after taking action (Pokhrel, 2022). The integration of these practices within the framework of teacher training can enhance the readiness of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers to effectively tackle the intricacies

and difficulties of language instruction while simultaneously promoting their continual growth and advancement within their profession.

Finally, the findings of the study have the potential to enhance the comprehensive comprehension of workplace learning within the framework of EFL instruction. Through an analysis of the impact of reflection-on-action practices on the learning of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers, this study aims to shed light on the underlying processes and mechanisms that foster professional growth and development in educational contexts. The aforementioned can potentially enhance the theoretical frameworks and models of workplace learning. This can lead to a more comprehensive comprehension of how teachers acquire, adjust, and improve their teaching methodologies within the constantly evolving and dynamic environment of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms.

## **1.6 Conclusion**

At the heart of educational systems lie the students, for whom maintaining interest and support necessitates that schools perpetually evolve to meet the dynamic demands of our times (OECD, 2020). Central to facilitating this adaptation is teacher development, a cornerstone of educational change that underpins the achievement of this goal. Reflection emerges as a critical tool within teachers' continuous professional development (CPD), serving as the bedrock of self-awareness in their professional practices. It is through this reflective self-awareness that teachers can fully comprehend their identity and actions within the classroom, enabling their personal and professional growth.

Through the eyes of four EFL in-service teachers, this study aims to convey teachers' perspectives on the role of reflective thinking in their professional learning as well as teachers' perspectives on how workplace learning is facilitated by reflective practice. The study aims to fulfill two main goals: first, to investigate in-service EFL teachers' reflective practices as a tool for professional self-improvement; and second, to gather and report on the teachers' views on how reflection aids their workplace learning, including their involvement in professional communities, willingness to share knowledge, and participation in peer coaching.

This dual focus will offer a succinct yet thorough understanding of reflective practices' significance in EFL teachers' workplace professional development.



## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Within this chapter, a thorough review of the literature that is pertinent to the current study is provided. The focal point of this research is to examine the reflection-on-action experiences of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers in the context of workplace learning. Hence, this literature review will probe into key thematic areas: the nature and implications of reflective practice, its integration and significance in teacher education, and the nuances of workplace learning as it pertains to the professional development of EFL in-service teachers. The objective is to dissect these domains to construct an all-encompassing, nuanced understanding of the theoretical foundations and practical applications relevant to this study's focus.

### **2.1 Reflective Practice**

There are many different ways to define reflective practice as reflective teaching. Reflective teaching, according to Pennington (1992, 49), is "reflecting on experience and mirroring experience." As stated by Richards (1990), the act of reflection has significant importance in the process of teacher development. According to him, the incorporation of self-reflection and critical thinking might facilitate a transition for teachers from a state of predominantly relying on instinct, intuition, or established patterns to one characterized by deliberate contemplation and analytical reasoning. Zeichner and Liston (1987) provide a definition of reflective action as the deliberate and thorough investigation of any belief or supposed kind of knowledge. Dewey (1933) highlights a further differentiation between teaching and learning by asserting that routine instruction involves encountering challenges in the tools employed, while the desired outcomes are assumed. On the other hand, he provided a definition of reflective practice as the cognitive process of actively and persistently engaging in thoughtful analysis of one's beliefs or purported knowledge, with a focus on the underlying justifications and the subsequent implications that arise from them.

In the relevant literature, it is stated that teachers who engage in reflective practice deliberately gather information about their practice and use it to guide decisions about their practice both within and outside the classroom (Farrell, 2007).

The process of thinking critically and honestly about all facets of professional work is known as reflective practice.

Reflective practice involves a systematic analysis of individual teaching methods to develop new strategies that enhance instruction. Given the distinct nature of each teacher, it is conceivable that varying cohorts of students may interpret the same words and actions in diverse ways. Classroom environments are inherently heterogeneous, and experienced teachers are cognizant of the importance of empathizing with their students' viewpoints. Reflective practice is advocated as a method for teachers to achieve a deeper understanding of their student's perceptions and experiences. In summary, reflection is essential to effective learning for both teachers and students. By assisting practitioners in understanding what they know and do when they reflect on what they learn from and through their teaching, reflective practice gives teachers a mechanism to explain the components of practice that are a part of that knowledge base in the classroom (Smyth, 1992).

According to Zwozdiak-Myers (2012), reflective practice is essential to a teacher's development as it facilitates the ability of teachers to study and evaluate the instructional processes taking place inside their teaching practice. And thereby enhance both the quality of their instruction and the learning opportunities available to their students. According to Dewey (1933), growth comes through "reconstructing experiences" (p. 87), and by reflecting on those experiences, we might reconstruct our own instructional strategies. Additionally, teachers who engage in reflective practice are better able to base their decisions regarding their instruction on hard data that has been systematically gathered over time (Farrell, 2020). Therefore, it is reasonable to claim that by bridging theory and practice, linking past beliefs to theory and practice, and rebuilding professional knowledge from experiential information, reflection improves teacher effectiveness (Seng, 2001).

According to the relevant literature, everyone in an educational institution benefits from fostering a culture of reflection. However, student learning is especially beneficial because confident teachers can better share their instructional strategies and foster an environment in the classroom that is conducive to learning for all (Farrell, 2020). According to an evidence-based approach to reflective

practice, teachers can make judgments about their practice based on the information gathered rather than preconceptions that may or may not be accurate (Farrell, 2007, 2013).

Because a teacher's teaching experience is now linked with systematic reflection on practice, there is a more robust general understanding of the teaching-learning process, which is the foundation of this intentional and informed decision-making process. Overall, teacher development and progress are also facilitated by such evidence-based reflective practice. The reflective practitioner evaluates how the circumstance may have been handled differently and considers what needs to change in the future while comparing the accomplished activity with prior similar activities. Collaboration with coworkers or other teachers can help this process produce shared reflections (Bontemps-Hommen et al., 2020; Burhan-Horasanlı & Ortaçtepe, 2016; Lavoué et al., 2015). Therefore, it can be claimed that integrating reflective practices can result in a deeper understanding of how teachers develop, modify, and enhance their pedagogical approaches in the ever-changing and dynamic context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. According to the relevant literature, everyone in an educational institution benefits from fostering a culture of reflection. However, student learning is especially beneficial because confident teachers can better share their instructional strategies and foster an environment in the classroom that is conducive to learning for all (Farrell, 2020). According to an evidence-based approach to reflective practice, teachers can make judgments about their practice based on the information gathered rather than preconceptions that may or may not be accurate (Farrell, 2007, 2013).

## **2.2 Reflective Practice in Teacher Education**

Reflective practice is believed to be necessary for teachers to learn from both their own and other teachers' teaching experiences. A deeper understanding of one's own teaching style and, ultimately, increased efficacy as a teacher are the main advantages of reflective practice for teachers (Hussain et al., 2011). Through school-based work experience (or practicum experiences) in teacher preparation programs, one first acquires teaching experience. Reflecting on the rationale behind teachers' adoption of particular tactics helps prospective teachers better comprehend

teaching practice (Alger, 2006). Because it is frequently insufficient to simply advise aspiring teachers to reflect on their experiences, reflective practice should be actively taught (Russell, 2005; Shoffner, 2008). Because it enables teachers to "see student learning: to recognize, differentiate, and describe the elements of that learning, to analyze learning, and to respond" (p. 231), Rodgers (2002b) emphasizes the systematic process of reflection. Many other studies (e.g., Yost et al., 2000; Yesilbursa, 2011) addressed that pre-service teachers writing about their own classroom experiences is the most fruitful place to start when reflecting because associations can be drawn between theoretical ideas and real-world situations.

The significance of fostering reflective practices within the sphere of teacher education cannot be overstated, as a considerable body of academic research attests to its critical role in professional development (Alsup, 2006; Halquist & Novinger, 2009; Zeichner & Liston, 1996). Approaches to teacher education that are grounded in reflective practice diligently scrutinize the dynamics of teaching and learning by engaging in systematic observation and thoughtful interpretation. The overarching objective in this pedagogical approach is to augment teachers' competencies by encouraging a culture of sustained reflection on their instructional methods. According to Lisle (2006), engaging in reflective practice is tantamount to 'learning in practice', a process through which teachers evolve by critically assessing their own experiences. Consequently, assessing the outcomes of teacher education programs with a focus on reflective practice becomes imperative to ascertain their success and impact on teaching proficiency.

### **2.2.1 Reflection-in-action**

Reflection-in-action refers to a conscious effort to make professional acts more deliberate and intentional (Schön, 1987). Reflective techniques enable teachers to make sound decisions and accept accountability for their teaching-related practices. When action and reflection both take place at the same time, it is termed as reflection-in-action. During the process, the individual constantly modifies and adapts the new knowledge s/he learns during the action (Schön, 1987). Reflection-in-action enables practitioners to stop mid-activity, make appropriate corrections, wise decisions, and, if required, alter the way the task is carried out.

According to Schön (1983), action-based reflection ties thinking and doing together. Schön (1983) outlined how these two activities (i.e., thinking and doing) result in modifications to instructional strategies aimed at enhancing student learning.

Through a phenomenological lens, Yanow and Tsoukas (2009) explored the moment when reflection occurs in action. They showed that reflective practitioners are aware at all times while performing the activity, and that depending on how the activity is being performed, varying levels of reflection-in-action take place as opposed to this "backchat" of awareness. Reflection-in-action is simply realizing that no remedial action is necessary to handle an unanticipated occurrence. Teacher teachers are very interested in Schön's (1983) description of "reflection in action" as a process of "refraining" from experience during experience. This interest has been accompanied by a considerable degree of uncertainty, possibly as a result of the fact that "reflection" has a wide range of established definitions, some of which are already incorporated into official teacher education programs.

Schön's (1983) arguments help us comprehend teachers' professional knowledge because they highlight a number of characteristics that are fundamental to reflection-in-action. The process is initiated spontaneously by action. Even though it doesn't always work, it's always intriguing, at least in terms of better understanding one's involvement in a given situation. Reflection-in-action is, in the words of Schön (1983), "a central component of the 'art' that practitioners sometimes use to deal well with situations of uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and conflicting values" (p. 50). In certain circumstances, "feedback" from the action environment might result in puzzles or surprises that inspire fresh perspectives on what is happening, and a new "frame" can recommend an alternative course of action in response to the input. The varied potential outcomes encourage experimentation that can produce novel, effective strategies.

Additionally, the practitioner's experimentation is simultaneously an investigation, a testing of motions, and a testing of hypotheses when he reflects in action in a case one finds unusual, focusing on phenomena and bringing out his intuitive comprehension of them. The three purposes are satisfied by a single action. This characteristic gives experimentation in practice its unique character (Schön,

1987). According to Schön (1987), it is impossible to separate action from reflection because reflection is an integral part of action. According to Schön (1987), the key to how we learn from experience is reflection in action. Even so, it is much simpler for us to claim that such learning has occurred than to describe how it came about, even while we speak easily about learning from experience. Therefore, developing strategies for identifying reflection-in-action in the unique setting of the classroom and deepen the understanding of how teachers develop knowledge through teaching experience.

### **2.2.2 Reflection-on-action**

Learning is defined as “the process by which knowledge is created through the transformation of experience” in accordance with the experiential learning method (Kolb, 2015, p. 49).

Numerous academics (e.g., Boud et al., 1985; Dewey, 1933, 1963; Engestroem, 1987; Kolb, 2015; Schön, 1983) concurred that experience in and of itself is insufficient for learning; instead, it must be reflected upon. Reflection-on-action is viewed by Schön (1983) as "thoughtful reflection and retrospective analysis by the teacher of his or her own performance in order to gain knowledge from experience" (as cited in Leitch & Day, 2000). To accomplish this, teachers must critically examine their own instructional practices, beliefs, attitudes, and aspirations as well as those of their students, colleagues, and the larger teaching profession. To effectively engage in reflective inquiry, teachers need to understand the crucial link between theory and practice. This awareness, as suggested by Schön (1983), enables them to reflect on and learn from their work, guided by moral objectives and principles.

According to Schön (1983), individuals engage in reflective thinking after taking action, with the purpose of examining how their prior knowledge and actions may have influenced an unforeseen result. In doing so, teachers are expected to become aware of what they have done, are able to reflect on their actions, and interpret their experiences to help them decide what to do in the present and in the future. Therefore, reflection-on-action, which is utilized in a particular scenario, is a retrospective contemplation and study of prior behavior to discover the

development of one's knowledge. The reflective practitioner, thus, examines how the circumstance might have been handled differently and considers what needs to change in the future as they compare the task completed with prior similar tasks. In short, the development of shared reflections during such a process can also be aided by collaboration with peers or colleagues (Bontemps-Hommen et al., 2020; Burhan-Horasanlı & Ortaçtepe 2016; Lavoué et al., 2015).

According to Dewey (1933), the acquisition of knowledge is not solely derived from direct experience, but rather through the process of reflecting upon and analyzing our experiences. This quotation implies that thinking things through, a fundamentally human action, helps people learn. Schön (1987) later emphasized the idea of reflective practice as a way of professional development and promoted it as a crucial tool for aspiring teachers to enhance their practice.

In the evolving landscape of teacher education, a significant shift has been observed towards fostering reflective practice in teachers' professional learning. This approach, grounded in the belief that reflection is key to professional growth, emphasizes the need for teachers to critically examine their methods and pedagogical approaches. Reflective practice encourages teachers to delve beyond surface-level instructional strategies, prompting them to explore the deeper 'what' and 'why' questions of their teaching methods. In this context, the literature offers valuable insights into the effective implementation of reflective practices in teacher education. Bartlett (1990) notes that changing from a teacher who is primarily focused on instructional strategies and "how" questions to one who asks "what" and "why" questions that view strategies for management and instruction as pedagogical boundary conditions rather than as ends in themselves. By posing "what and why" inquiries, teachers have some control over instruction variety of different components of their lessons that their partners can watch and learn about, and teachers name these in a variety of different ways. These include how the lesson is organized, how the teacher manages their time, how well the students do on tasks, how well they spend their time on tasks, how well the students respond to queries from the teacher and to their peers, how well the class interacts, and how well they perform on new lesson activities.

It can be argued that utilizing reflection-on-action practices can significantly contribute to a teacher's professional growth (Schön, 1987). Engaging in such practices can help teachers gain new insights and perspectives on their teaching methodologies. This, in turn, can lead to the discovery of fresh information about certain aspects of their teaching that they may not have been aware of before. Ultimately, this approach can help teachers refine and improve their instructional strategies, which can have a positive impact on their students' learning outcomes and achievement.

Upon completing a task, “we reflect on-action, thinking back on what we have done in order to discover how our knowing-in-action may have contributed to an unexpected outcome” (Schön 1983, p. 26). By engaging in this process, learners develop an understanding of their actions, are able to assess their own performance, and gain insight from their experiences to guide their present and future actions. Reflection-in-action, on the other hand, occurs when the learner continuously modifies and adapts the newly acquired knowledge while simultaneously engaging in action and reflection. Through the process of reflecting in-action, individuals have the ability to pause throughout an activity, make any required changes, make informed choices, and, if needed, alter their approach to completing the task (Schön, 1987).

### **2.2.3 The Role of Professional Development in Teacher Education**

Merely having experience is not enough for one's professional growth. In order to effectively develop, practical experience must be coupled with theoretical knowledge, as pointed out by Lunenberg and Korthagen (2009) and Darling-Hammond (2010). Teachers have the chance to reframe their thinking about their own teaching so they can perform more successfully in the classroom when they are occasionally introduced to fresh ideas and practices of teaching. Similar to how pupils need to study a language, it is an expansion of knowledge that all teachers should acquire.

Effective professional development is crucial in the realm of education. It serves a dual purpose: firstly, it ensures the academic progress of students by equipping teachers with robust teaching methodologies and insights. Secondly, it

fosters a culture of continuous learning within educational institutions. Such a dynamic learning environment not only addresses the diverse needs of a varied student population but also significantly contributes to higher teacher retention rates. This symbiotic relationship between teacher development and student success, as highlighted by Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), underscores the integral role of professional development in enhancing the overall quality of education.

Studies indicate that the impact of teachers on the academic achievement of students can be moderated by their professional development. Dicke et al. (2020) reported that there is a positive correlation between the satisfaction levels of teachers and the academic success of students, which is influenced by their professional development. The research highlighted the significant role of professional development in mediating the relationship between teachers' satisfaction and students' academic performance. This relationship is shaped by the acquisition of skills required by teachers to achieve specific academic objectives.

It is frequently "bottom-up" in nature and frequently entails looking at different aspects of one's activity as a starting point for reflective examination. Richards and Farrell (2005) elaborated on the idea of teacher development by describing it as a longer-term objective and progress in teachers' understanding of teaching and of themselves as teachers. A long-term investment, professional development entails a process of growth and change, including an expansion of knowledge and abilities. Richards and Lockhart's (1994) observation that teaching languages is not typically viewed as a profession—that is, a vocation with distinctive qualities requiring specific skills and training and being a lifetime and respected career choice—supports this viewpoint. In light of these perspectives, it becomes evident that professional development in teaching, particularly language teaching, is not just a temporary endeavor but a lifelong journey. It involves a continuous process of self-examination, learning, and adaptation, enhancing both personal and professional capacities. This approach, as discussed the relevant literature (e.g., Richards & Lockhart, 1994), transforms teaching into a respected and skilled profession, marked by ongoing commitment and growth.

Furthermore, continuous dedication is necessary for professional progress. Teachers don't just engage in it throughout their undergraduate studies or at the start

of their employment as teachers. In other words, even the most seasoned teacher can pick up new ideas. There are undoubtedly many advantages to professional development for teachers.

Teachers participate in various activities to learn new material, improve their teaching skills, stay up-to-date with changes and innovations, and receive personal rewards like promotions, pay raises, and increased prestige. It's widely acknowledged that teachers require professional development to keep themselves updated with new developments in their field, but traditional forms of professional development are often considered insufficient for addressing the challenges that teachers face in the classroom (Lewis, 1997).

According to Richards and Renandaya (2002), the requirements and interests of teachers' careers might alter throughout time. They should look for more professional development opportunities as their careers evolve. Professional development processes, thus, can be examined in two contexts: pre-service and in-service teacher education.

#### **2.2.4 Pre-service Teacher Education**

Initial teacher education cannot alone supply the information and abilities required for a lifetime of teaching in the setting of an educational environment that is constantly changing (e.g., OECD, 2009). Teachers need to constantly improve their knowledge and abilities in addition to acquiring new ones. As a result, every teacher's education and professional development is an ongoing process that requires proper planning and funding. It is crucial to offer new teachers high-quality initial training and maintain a consistent process of ongoing professional development that aligns with the skills required in a knowledge-based society (REF).

Professional development refers to the methods through which prospective teachers gain knowledge about the appropriate activities to engage in (e.g., ref). This involves understanding how to effectively connect with others and think about teaching activities in the classroom. This perspective considers professional development as an internalization process, as well as social and cultural mediation

processes that shape the transformation of professional action. In the relevant literature, the social and cultural aspects of pre-service teachers' professional growth are frequently demonstrated using Wenger's (1998) work. The findings of this research illustrated how pre-service teachers gain professional knowledge through sharing shared resources, which are made up of the values, rules, and expectations of the professional community (e.g., Fiene et al., 2009; Gorodetsky & Barak, 2008; Richards, 2010). According to this viewpoint, professional development happens as a result of moving from the peripheral to the center of a community of practice and changing the modes of engagement (Sim 2006; Vescio et al., 2008).

According to Skilbeck and Connell (2004), pedagogical theory courses are frequently criticized, particularly by undergraduate students, new teachers, and principals. Early-career teachers complain about courses whose intellectual or practical value, in their opinion, is often low. Most people find it quite challenging to articulate how educational theory and research are relevant to what they are teaching. Levine (2006) echoes these worries when he claims that we run the risk of producing teachers who are well-versed in theory but lacking in practical knowledge. In fact, the disconnect between theory and practice appears to be practically universal in teacher education. In the early 1900s, Dewey (1904) identified this issue.

The debate over the balance between theoretical and practical knowledge in teacher preparation highlights a dynamic and evolving field of education (OECD, 2009). Traditionally, the emphasis was on imparting comprehensive theoretical knowledge, with the expectation that pre-service teachers would apply these theories in practice as needed (Gilardi & Lozza, 2009). This approach was underpinned by the belief that the skills and methods taught in teacher preparation programs would directly translate to effective professional practice (OECD, 2009). However, this assumption has been challenged by observations that such programs often fall short in preparing students for the practical realities they encounter in their professional lives (e.g., Meijer et al., 2011; Yayli, 2008).

In response to these challenges, recent shifts in educational strategies have acknowledged that effective teaching extends beyond the mere application of

theoretical knowledge (e.g., Schön, 1987; Yoo, 2016). The incorporation of reflective practices enables prospective teachers to connect their learning with real classroom situations, enhancing their understanding of both the content and the methods of teaching. This reflective approach, as noted by Aldahmash et al. (2017) and Lee (2008), is instrumental in helping teachers adapt their knowledge to practical scenarios and grow in their profession.

In conclusion, the evolution of teacher education programs reflects a more nuanced understanding of the interplay between theory and practice. As the field progresses, it becomes increasingly clear that the development of effective teachers requires a blend of theoretical knowledge and reflective practice. This balance ensures that teachers are not only well-versed in educational theories but are also adept at applying these theories in diverse and ever-changing classroom environments. By fostering a culture of continuous reflection and adaptation, teacher education can more effectively prepare individuals for the complex and rewarding journey of teaching (REF).

### **2.2.5 In-service Teacher Education**

According to Nye et al. (2004) and Sanders and Horn (1998), the quality of a child's education is significantly influenced by the quality of the teacher. Teachers of today are expected to be lifelong learners who can adjust to new circumstances and meet society's shifting needs in the classroom. Therefore, their ways of integrating professional development into their teaching practices play an essential role in establishing effective language learning/teaching contexts.

#### **2.2.5.1 Professional Development**

Policymakers, academics, and teachers all concur that supporting in-service teachers' professional development (PD) is essential to achieving the lofty objectives of educational reforms (e.g., Garet et al., 2001). In fact, it is currently widely accepted that an educational system's professors must also be of a high caliber (Barber & Mourshed, 2007). In order to increase teacher competency and student academic achievement, several countries around the world are investing in their teachers' ongoing education (Darling-Hammond et al., 2010). It is crucial for teachers to participate in professional development due to new trends in how we

see student learning. Many in-service teachers need to alter their present teaching strategies and self-perceived responsibilities in order to assist their students in developing new learning. Both when they were students and when they were student teachers, the majority of in-service teachers were brought up in a teacher-centered environment.

Many teachers regard themselves as the information source and transmitter due to their personal and professional backgrounds. This way of thinking about teaching and learning is so established that it is unlikely to evolve unless new experiences cast doubt on its applicability (Feiman-Nemser & Remillard, 1996).

Access to effective professional development is essential for a teacher's growth and expertise. According to Bransford et al. (2000) and Knowles et al. (2005), professional development opportunities should follow the principles of a successful learning environment. This means that teachers should have the freedom to take charge of their own learning journey and build on their existing knowledge and experiences. This approach not only deepens their expertise but also helps them become more comfortable and confident in their roles as lifelong learners.

Moreover, professional development should promote intellectual fellowship, where teachers can collaborate, share information and grow together. Kelly (2006) emphasizes the importance of continuous learning in advancing teachers towards expertise. It is crucial to expose teachers to a diverse range of theoretical, professional, and methodological perspectives, enriching their understanding of educational issues.

In addition to acquiring knowledge, teacher learning involves the ability to reflect on and share this knowledge with others. Reflection is a key component of professional development, as it encourages teachers to evaluate and refine their teaching methodologies critically. Professional development programs should provide opportunities for teachers to develop, reflect, and communicate their pedagogical insights. Doing so can play a pivotal role in shaping effective, adaptable, and reflective teachers.

### 2.2.5.2 Sociocultural Theory

The sociocultural theory holds that learning takes place in the social and cultural circumstances of daily life and the workplace (Vygotsky, 1978). By presenting learning as the result of a dynamic interplay between oneself, others, and cultural objects, which together account for the social construction of the individual cognition, Wertsch (1985) goes on to explain the phenomenon. Simply expressed, the fundamental tenet of this viewpoint is that all higher mental activities first go through external and social stages before becoming internally oriented (Vygotsky, 1997). The extended social world must also be examined, according to Vygotsky, because focusing solely on studying the individual can break down human functioning into smaller components that no longer function as well as the larger living unit (Rogoff et al., 2003; Rowe & Wertsch, 2002; Siegler & Alibali, 2005).

The zone of proximal development (ZPD), according to Vygotsky's (1978) definition, is "the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p. 86). The epistemological basis for the ZPD is that group collaboration is necessary for individuals to learn at their highest levels, and that learners can gain and internalize new knowledge, skills, and psychological tools through group collaboration (Shabani et al., 2010).

Sociocultural theory offers an alternative explanation for the learning process because it sees learning as an action that results from an individual's active engagement in a larger social practice that is mediated by social interactions and cultural resources. As a result, this idea suggests that learning is distinct from its social environment. Knowledge is described by sociocultural theory as "situated in specific cultural contexts created and developed overtime to solve real life problems that occur within that culture and society" (Eun, 2010, p. 405). According to this perspective, knowledge is jointly developed by experts (such as teachers, parents, and mentors) and novices (such as students, children, and adult learners) as a result of their participation in inquiry-based activities that aim to address real-world issues. Additionally, knowledge is considered as a product of human creativity

rather than a predetermined truth, and it is situated in the social and cultural context of learning rather than merely the learner's mind (Eun, 2010).

By breaking away from the "factory model" of learning that typically takes place in the classroom, sociocultural theory may be considered as a resource that offers more possibilities for how to improve teaching and learning in our classrooms. According to the sociocultural perspective, learning involves more than just a person's own personal effort and genetic aptitude. Instead, learning is a social process that requires communication between all parties involved, including students, teachers, parents, and others. Schools are merely one setting for education. People can learn about other social and cultural situations almost anywhere, including in the home, on the playground, in museums, at work, through the media, and through ICT. Therefore, teachers must provide more chances for students to observe, converse, clarify, interact, and learn from one another. Enhancing classroom discussion and problem-solving techniques can aid students in developing their knowledge, comprehension, and skills in accordance with their interests and needs (Trumbull & Pacheco, 2002).

Thus, Sociocultural Theory is a highly pertinent and illuminating theoretical framework within the realm of workplace learning experiences for in-service English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers. This idea is based on the research conducted by Vygotsky (1978) and emphasizes the significant impact of social interaction, collaborative learning, and cultural context on the educational process.

Teachers employ reflective strategies to augment their professional development, and in this context, Sociocultural Theory serves as a framework for comprehending and evaluating their encounters. Through acknowledging the importance of engagement within a community of practice, these teachers are able to discern the ways in which their interactions with peers, exchange of pedagogical approaches, and collaborative resolution of challenges contribute to their instructional practices. Moreover, the theory's notion of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) becomes apparent when contemplating the ways in which mentorship, collaboration with more proficient peers, and even student interaction can enhance the effectiveness of instruction. This theoretical framework additionally emphasizes the impact of cultural artifacts, linguistic practices, and

genuine learning environments on the development of effective pedagogical strategies.

Through the process of reflection, in-service English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers have the ability to connect external observations and insights to their own teaching methods. This facilitates the creation of an environment that promotes the growth and success of both teachers and learners, as they engage in a dynamic interplay of culture, language, and collaborative learning.

### **2.3 Workplace Learning**

'Work' and 'learning' are notions that formerly belonged in different categories. Work was about creating or performing tasks to support oneself. Learning was about education; it took place in the years prior to employment. Workplace learning is a broad topic that goes beyond training and development, is difficult to describe, and is a complex issue (Matthews, 1999). Workplace learning is typically stated as contributing to the learning of both the individual employee and the company as a whole and mostly occurs through work-related interactions (Collin et al., 2011; Doornbos et al., 2008; Felstead et al., 2005; Fenwick, 2008). Workplace learning is defined by Fenwick (2008b) as taking place through the relationships and interactions between "individual actors" and "collectives" (2008b: 19). Additionally, workplace learning can improve both informal, narrowly focused abilities and skills that could lead to formal certifications (Stroud & Fairbrother, 2006).

Research indicates that 80 %of learning related to the workplace comes from informal activities including networking, coaching, and mentoring (Yeo, 2008). Because of this, workplace learning is usually casual in style but may have formal components as well. It is often included into routine tasks and interpersonal conversations at work.

Workplace learning takes into account both present and future skills. It entails investing in staff members' general and technical abilities. Additionally, it entails applying their expertise and abilities wherever they might be needed at any given time or location. Work-based learning specifically combines knowledge and experience, as well as theory and practice. It acknowledges that there are just as

many opportunities for learning outside of the classroom in the workplace. However, such learning must be oriented on reflection on work behaviors.

### **2.3.1 Formal Learning**

According to Marsick and Watkins (1990, 2001), formal learning is defined as structured learning that occurs "off-the-job" and away from the workplace, often in classroom-based formal educational settings. Formal learning in the workplace is comprised of structured learning exercises intended to help individuals acquire the knowledge, awareness, and abilities needed to do their jobs effectively. The majority of formal learning occurs through institutional sponsorship and endorsement of the training and development programs that firms offer. This notion implies that formal training takes place in a space designed exclusively for learning, which most likely means that learning happens outside of the workplace. It is believed that formal training is scheduled and that the learning experience is designed using a systems approach in order to accomplish the desired goals. A combination of practical and theoretical knowledge is required for competence, which is defined as a person's capacity to behave intelligently, successfully, purposefully, strategically, and reflectively in a given circumstance. A formal education typically enhances one's capacity to assimilate on-the-job informal learning.

This is mostly due to the fact that experiential learning assumes that the learning subject has access to conceptual tools and explicit information about the job and the work process that may be used to recognize and evaluate experiences (such as the outcomes of work actions). While executing somewhat complex activities, it has also been demonstrated that it is extremely challenging to acquire explicit knowledge from experience (Brehmer, 1980). The knowledge that can be learned from experience, however, has an implicit nature. Therefore, it appears that experiential learning assumes explicit knowledge that cannot be learned through experience. Inferring from this, it would appear that mechanisms for formal job-based education and training that complement informal learning at work are necessary. There is, however, a relationship that goes the opposite way as well. For formal education to be effective, informal learning must support it (Barnett, 1999; Ellström, 2001). According to this viewpoint, the office could develop into a

learning environment relevant to both employee and company growth. Conditions for reflective learning are formed when arrangements are made for both formal and informal learning in an educational setting. As a result, it can be argued that informal and formal education are complementary.

### **2.3.2 Informal Learning**

According to Doornbos et al. (2008) and Mallon et al. (2005), workplace learning is largely informal, social, and contextual, and often occurs unconsciously or unintentionally. It is a tacit process that occurs without explicit instruction or recognition. Similar to this, Yeo (2008) contends that informal learning typically occurs unintentionally and may do so with or without the organization's encouragement. Furthermore, according to Doornbos et al. (2008) individuals are capable of learning implicitly and are later able to recognize changes in their attitudes and behaviors. According to Marsick and Watkins (1990, 2001), informal learning occurs in situations when individuals possess the desire, drive, and circumstances that facilitate the acquisition of knowledge. According to Marsick and Watkins (1990), "incidental learning" is "a by-product of some other activity, such as sensing the organizational culture, or trial and error experimentation." This is regarded as a unique type of informal learning that emphasizes purposeful or accidental learning processes as well as the value of "tacit knowledge."

Informal learning recognizes that involvement in formal programs does not ensure the development of information and skills necessary for employment. Learning does, in fact, occur when it is most necessary and integrated into practice. Informal education, as opposed to formal education, occurs in places that aren't normally intended for learning, such as the workplace. Thus, it is argued that informal learning integrates and requires a number of distinct elements, such as self-directedness, intellectual curiosity, and self-efficacy (Beckett & Hager, 2005). Informal learning happens when an activity is prompted by a problem or situation that has to be resolved, even if learning may not be the main objective of the activity. Activities that are always changing, such as job shadowing, group problem-solving, hypothesis testing, mentoring, and coaching, can lead to informal learning.

According to Lohman (2005), informal learning is any learning that takes place in the workplace, is initiated by the employee, requires the person to exert mental, physical, or emotional energy, and leads to the growth of professional knowledge and abilities. Similar to this, Garavan et al. (2002) defined informal learning as a collection of processes that take place within particular organizational contexts and concentrate on the acquisition and assimilation of an integrated cluster of knowledge, skills, values, and feelings that lead to refocusing and fundamental behavior changes in both individuals and teams.

### **2.3.3 Workplace Learning Resources and Strategies**

The process by which people acquire knowledge, abilities, and attitudes that improve both individual and organizational performance in the workplace is known as workplace learning. Participating in formal and informal activities at the real job site or in other locations can lead to this learning, which frequently happens as a result of interpersonal interaction (Doyle and Young, 2003). Both formal and informal methods of learning are used in companies. According to Marsick and Watkins (2001), structured, teacher-led courses and programs that are frequently based in institutions produce formal learning. Informal learning usually takes place outside of the classroom and is more under the learner's control. People often aren't aware that they are learning, and incidental learning is typically unplanned and unexamined.

Incidental learning is informal learning that happens serendipitously by completing some tasks. However, not all learning is beneficial, and activities at work might teach people unsuitable information and unfavorable attitudes (Billett, 1995). Both formal and informal learning are significant in companies, even if the majority of learning takes place informally (Doyle & Young 2007; Zemke, 1985). It is helpful to approach organizational learning through the lens of workplace learning since it is multifaceted and includes informal learning tactics in addition to formal learning strategies (Matthews, 1999).

Learning techniques are ways for people to pick up new information, abilities, and perspectives. Human resource development specialists prefer autonomous learning activities over interactive learning activities, according to

Lohman's (2005) research. Internet searches were preferred above other activities by IT workers (Lohman, 2009). In addition, partners valued reading more than trainees did in the field of professional accounting, although trainees favored using e-learning over partners (Hicks et al., 2007).

Despite the fact that different groups have diverse preferences for learning activities, some of these groups do share some interests in common. Working with others, observing others, and reflection-on-action are some workplace learning techniques (Doyle & Young 2007, Hara 2001, Hicks et al., 2007). Working in teams (Day, 1998; Macneil, 2001), observing others, reflecting, practicing (Hara, 2001), engaging in action learning (Miller, 2003), and career development and planning (Cofer, 2000) are additional informal learning strategies. Hara (2001) has also advocated in favor of the creation of communities of practice to integrate professionals' formal and informal learning. The use of past knowledge and experience (Coyle & Ellinger, 2001; Cseh, 1999), intuition (Coyle & Ellinger, 2001), mentoring (Cofer, 2000; Coyle & Ellinger, 2001; Darwin, 2000), and formal and informal networking are additional strategies. Along with informal trial and error (Coyle & Ellinger, 2001), reading (Cseh, 1999; Fenwick & Hutton, 2000; Raffo et al., 2000), field excursions (Cseh, 1999) other tactics are also used.

Teachers' prior knowledge, curriculum and teaching materials, and time are three resources for workplace learning. In order for a teacher to learn via experience, they must have conceptual tools (such as pedagogical topic knowledge) and explicit knowledge of how instruction and pedagogical techniques affect student learning. In order to recognize and evaluate pertinent experiences during teaching, these conceptual tools and knowledge are crucial. They also play a crucial part in workplace learning. Different sources of curriculum and instruction materials encourage innovation in teaching methods and minimize obstacles to experimenting. These useful resources give teachers the chance to see what works in actual classroom situations. However, when used superficially, the same sources run the risk of having the opposite of the desired learning outcomes for students. This is because superficial implementation does not produce the desired student learning outcomes.

Time is a valuable resource for both formal learning activities and reflection as part of continuing job processes, particularly when combined with other related elements like school timetables. To ensure knowledge, competence, and confidence gains, professional development activities should be carried out often and for a sufficient amount of time. As a resource for teachers to learn, formal availability of time for professional development is vital yet insufficient. In-depth and time-consuming collaboration is frequently relegated to the fringes of teachers' workdays (on Sunday afternoons or through the weeknights at teachers' homes). In order to give teachers a fair chance to take advantage of the time available for learning and growth, daily tasks in schools should be scheduled and managed. Without these organizational safeguards, the pressure of event chains and everyday routines will cause learning time to vanish. In schools, there is a complicated trade-off between time for production and time for learning (Ellström, 2001).

#### **2.3.4 Workplace Learning in Teacher Education**

Pre-service teacher education has been looked at from a number of angles, including how the curriculum is organized, why it is important, and how it affects pre-service teachers' academic and professional development (Darling-Hammond et al., 2010; Flores 2011).

The organizational aspects of pre-service teacher education and the function of colleges and schools in the teaching-learning process have been extensively discussed in the literature. The debates surrounding pre-service teacher education in Europe and abroad have focused heavily on diversity in its form and content (including various kinds of governmental intervention), as well as concerns about its quality and outcomes (Flores 2011). Despite this, extant literature supports the notion that teacher education can influence the quality of teachers and teaching in schools.

Zeichner and Conklin (2008) make the case for the complexity of pre-service teacher education programs and all of their different parts, as well as the necessity of discussing the significance of both their structural and content-related attributes. According to Cochran-Smith (2005), who reviewed the literature, pre-service teacher education programs have a consistent vision, strong partnerships

between universities and schools, fieldwork in schools and communities, and the efficient use of specific teacher education strategies. According to a review of the literature, one of the key components of pre-service teacher education has to do with the (missing) connection between theory and practice, which is referred to as the "perennial problem of teacher education" (Korthagen, 2010). The complexity of teaching itself, the learning process within teacher education, the epistemological nature of the transfer process, the lack of attention to the affective dimension in the technical-rationality approach, and a number of other factors are cited by Korthagen (2010) to explain this gap.

Our modern labor market is putting new demands on students and professionals at work in line with a quick transition to a global knowledge society. One of the main objectives of higher education with a professional focus is to prepare students for their future professional activity. To equip future workers with all the essential knowledge, skills, and attitudes, formal learning programs alone are unable to keep up with the rapid changes in society. Higher education has come under fire for failing to provide students with the skills they need to succeed in the workplace (Boyatzis et al., 2002; Segers et al., 2006). Nevertheless, workplace education has been recognized for promoting learning transfer, or using what has been learnt in the workplace (Billett, 2004; Eraut, 1994).

There are many opportunities for learning in daily work practice. These learning opportunities at work can be very beneficial and essential for developing professional skills (Billett, 2004; Eraut, 1994). Internships are offered as a necessary component of education for professional competitiveness in many professional domains. In a society marked by economic and social change, as well as growing uncertainty, it is crucial that teachers continue to have critical insight into the changing nature of their work. Career-long learning of a systematic nature is now a prerequisite of the profession, and a significant portion of that learning can and does take place in the workplace (Retallick, 1999).

## **2.4 Conclusion**

This chapter has delved into the intricacies of professional learning within an educational context, highlighting its multifaceted and dynamic nature. It

underscores the complexity of teachers' professional development, which encompasses a spectrum of informal learning strategies aimed at enriching their knowledge and skills. The chapter also notes that teachers' preferences play a significant role in shaping their chosen methods of workplace learning. Central to this discourse is the concept of reflective practice, identified as a vital component for personal and professional growth among teachers. This practice of introspection and critical analysis of classroom dynamics is instrumental in enhancing teaching capabilities, ultimately fostering an enriched learning environment for students. Overall, the research indicates that encouraging the use of reflective practices in teacher education is ultimately intended to give teachers the ability to reflect on their ideas, experiences, and routine teaching methods.



## **3. METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Overview of the Chapter**

In this chapter, the approach utilized for conducting the research is discussed. Initially, the section describes both the methodology utilized and the research design employed in detail. Then, the chapter addresses aspects such as participants' involvement in the study's implementation, data collection tools adopted, and testing of survey measures used to gather information from the participants, followed by fundamental procedures during the data collection phase. Finally, techniques applied for scrutinizing gathered data are mentioned later on.

### **3.2 Research Design**

The goal of this chapter is to provide information with regard to the research methodology employed in the investigation. The aim of this qualitative research was to carry out a case study on the experiences of teachers who instruct English as a foreign language, while also reflecting on their actions in the professional setting. The different methodologies and their corresponding amounts in qualitative research have grown more noticeable over the 1990s and into the 21st century. Qualitative research has its roots in disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, the humanities, and evaluation, which have a rich historical tradition. Literature has provided a comprehensive overview of diverse qualitative inquiry methodologies, and detailed methodologies are presently accessible for specific approaches (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Stake (1995) and Yin (2009, 2012, 2014) have proposed methodologies that are integral to the case study research process.

Case studies are a prevalent mode of inquiry utilized across various disciplines, particularly in the realm of evaluation. This approach involves the researcher conducting a comprehensive examination of a specific case, which may pertain to a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals. According to Stake (1995) and Yin (2009, 2012, 2014), cases are defined by both chronological and spatial constraints, and researchers get extensive data over a prolonged period of time using a variety of collecting methods.

Creswell (1994) proposed a definition of a case study as a singular instance of a confined system, such as a child, a clique, a class, a school, or a community. However, Yin (2009) has challenged this definition by asserting that the boundary between the phenomenon and its context is indistinct. According to Yin (2009), a case study is an examination of a case within its context, emphasizing the importance of contextualizing the subject. This approach provides a unique depiction of real people in genuine situations, enabling readers to grasp concepts more clearly than they would through theoretical frameworks or principles alone. Yin (2009) suggests that a case study can facilitate readers' comprehension of the integration of ideas and abstract principles. Case studies recognize that there are several factors in one case, thus understanding the significance of these variables usually requires using a variety of data gathering methods and evidence sources. (Yin, 2014). Case studies are capable of establishing causality, specifically in terms of the "how" and "why" of a given phenomenon.

Furthermore, case studies are recognized for their capacity to provide comprehensive insights into a particular case (Yin, 2014). The present study examined how English as a foreign language (EFL) in-service teacher working at a private secondary school the extent to which teachers who instruct English as a foreign language engage in reflection practices regarding their pedagogical methodologies and how this process enhances their sense of professional development. The study employed a variety of data collection methods, including focus group discussions, workshops, and reflection logs. The study sought answers to the following research questions:

1. What are EFL teachers' perceptions regarding the role of reflection-on-action practices in their professional development at work?
2. What are the perceived benefits of reflection-on-practices do EFL teachers prefer during their workplace learning experiences? What are the reasons and supporting mechanisms behind teachers' workplace learning reflections?

### **3.3 Participants**

This study was conducted with four participants working at a private school in Turkey. All four participants volunteered to participate in the study. The goal of

qualitative research is to deeply examine a central phenomenon rather than to generalize to a population (Creswell, 2012). In the present study, the researcher cannot claim with absolute certainty that the participants are representative of the population. However, the sample can provide helpful data to address research questions and hypotheses. Convenient sampling, also known as chance sampling or availability sampling, can be a useful method for quickly and affordably gathering preliminary data on specific research questions in some situations (Creswell, 2012).

Although there were other volunteer participants, they were unable to participate in the study due to their heavy workloads. All four female participants were selected from teachers who teach English as a second language in primary and secondary schools and work an average of twenty to twenty-five hours in a private school. The participants were between five and nineteen years in the profession. The participants were pursuing two different majors, English Language Teaching and English Language and Literature. Two of the participants have been working as an EFL teacher at the same school for more than five years, one has been working for two years and one has been working for one year. The research was carried out with a group of four individuals employed at a private secondary school. They were all female teachers.

Participant 1 is a graduate of the English Language and Literature program in 2003 and has been working for the school for the last 7 years. She is 42 years old and has been the Head of the Kindergarten and Primary School English Department for the last 4 years, while also being one of the main course teachers at the school. She is a certified teacher trainer for the school and a mindfulness trainer for kids and adults. She is eager to stay a lifelong learner forever while experimenting with the most innovative ways of teaching the new generation of young learners.

Participant 2 is a graduate of the English Language Teaching program in 2006. She is 38 years old and has been teaching English for 17 years. Previously, she was the head of the Foreign Languages department and the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program coordinator. She has been working with middle and high school students since she started her career. She also provided training to teachers on IB programs. She is currently teaching English at a private school. She is open to innovation and eager to see different cultures and places

around her. Apart from the education sector, she is interested in design and organization.

Participant 3 is a 28-year-old EFL teacher who joined the department in 2017 when she graduated from English Language Teaching program. She is currently teaching English at a private school. She has been working with middle school students since she started her career. She also provided training to students who are interested in international exams such as the TOEFL and Cambridge Assessments. She is interested in different cultures, and she is eager to improve herself in the education sector.

Participant 4 is a 42-year-old EFL teacher who has been working for 19 years. She was graduated from English Language Teaching program and has been working for five years at the same middle school. She is currently teaching English at a private school.

### **3.4 Setting**

The school follows the national curriculum in students' mother tongue. The school's English curriculum is based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and approved by the Ministry of National Education. The school aims to raise individuals who can use English fluently as an effective means of communication, who have reached a nationally and internationally recognized level of proficiency in English, and who have creative and critical thinking skills. The school's EFL teachers provide opportunities for all grade students to express themselves effectively in all language skills: reading, speaking, writing, and listening.

The fundamental tenet of teaching English is that language is a social construct, and all levels of foreign language instruction are designed with the learner, learning, and critical thinking in mind. The school has a perspective focused on the development of high-level cognitive abilities—described as 21st century skills—that students must have in order to succeed in the information era that is embraced within the context of teaching foreign languages.

The school believes that students can effectively express themselves in all language skills, including speaking, reading, writing, and listening, in technologically advanced classrooms with computer and internet supported programs and with the assistance of international teachers. Through clubs run in English at various levels, school students are able to use and improve their language abilities outside of the curriculum.

### 3.5 Data Collection Procedures

The data was collected in the spring semester of the 2021-2022 academic year for fifteen weeks. Data for this study was conducted from February 2022 to June 2022. Table 1 displays the timeline of the data collection procedures.

**Table 3.1**

#### *Timeline of Data Collection*

Week	Date	Data Collection Activity
Week 1	February 21	Pre-workshop Focus Group Interview (recorded)
Week 3	March 2	Workshop on “reflection” (Google Forms-collected)
Week 5 (collected)	March 15	Workshop on “reflective models” (Google Forms-
Week 7 (collected)	April 1	Workshop on “reflection-on-action” (Google Forms-
Week 9	April 13	Post-workshop Focus Group Interview (recorded)
Week 10	April 22	Participant’s Weekly Reflective Log 1 (collected)
Week 11	April 29	Participant’s Weekly Reflective Log 2 (collected)
Week 12	May 6	Participant’s Weekly Reflective Log 3 (collected)
Week 13	May 13	Participant’s Weekly Reflective Log 4 (collected)
Week 15	June 1	Final Focus Group Interview (recorded)

The attendees were provided with a workshop regarding the utilization of reflection in their professional endeavors. The data collection tool utilized in this study was Google Forms, which facilitated the gathering of online data in real time

as participants provided their responses. The data collection focused on eliciting participants' perspectives on the concept of reflection. Additionally, three focus group interviews were carried out in total. The interviews were predominantly carried out in the Turkish language with the intention of enhancing the participants' comfort and self-assurance. The interviews were conducted via the Zoom platform utilizing online communication technology.

After completing the reflection workshops, the participants were instructed to keep reflection logs. The participants were provided with comparative reflection prompts to establish a framework (See appendix 7). However, they were free to keep their reflective journals the way they intended to, and the topic of reflection was also relevant to their topic of interest.

### **3.6 Data Collection Instruments**

This section provides details about the instruments used to collect data in this study, as well as the process of developing these instruments. In qualitative research, participants are asked open-ended, general questions, allowing them to express their opinions freely. To answer the research questions, various data is collected, and new information may even be added as the study progresses. Additionally, the researcher spends a significant amount of time in the area where the participants are located, collecting vast amounts of data. (Creswell, 2012).

Focusing on naturally occurring, typical events in a natural environment gives qualitative data its characteristic real life feel. Qualitative data are inherently well adapted for identifying the meanings people ascribe to the events, processes, and structures of their lives and for tying those meanings to the social environment in which they are situated because they place a strong emphasis on people's lived experiences (Miles et al., 2014). In relation, the study employed focus group discussions, workshops, and reflection protocols as means of data collection. Prior to and subsequent to the workshops, focus group discussions were carried out. Following the conclusion of the workshops, all participants were instructed to maintain consistent reflective journals to facilitate introspection regarding their pedagogical practices.

This study employs three distinct data collection instruments, particular workshops, focus group discussions, and teacher reflective journals. The previously mentioned concepts are clarified within this particular section.

### **3.6.1 Workshops**

The attendees participated in a series of three interactive workshops that focused on the topics of reflection, reflective practice, reflective models, reflection-in-action, and reflection-on-action. The primary objective of organizing the workshops for the participants was to assess their comprehension of reflection, reflective practice, and reflective models, and to furnish them with pertinent information.

The research activities were carried out and documented remotely via Zoom platform due to COVID restrictions. Each of the four participants attended every session. Throughout the workshops, the attendees were prompted to respond to inquiries pertaining to their overall comprehension of the subject matter through the utilization of Google forms. The initial workshop centered on the concept of reflection in a broad sense (See Appendix 1 for a sample session). Its primary objective was to acquaint attendees with the various interpretations of reflection and to furnish fundamental knowledge regarding models of reflective practice. The objective of the second workshop was to offer a comprehensive outlook on the various facets of reflective practice. The final workshop, on the other hand, centered on the application of reflective practice and contemplation of its implementation.

### **3.6.2 Focus Group Interviews**

In a focus group interview, a group of people—typically four to six—are interviewed to gather data. A few broad questions are posed by the researcher, who then requests responses from each participant (See Appendix 4). Focus groups are useful when participants engage to generate the most useful information and when participants are similar and cooperative. Additionally, they are helpful when gathering information is time-constrained, and subjects are reticent to divulge information (Creswell, 2012). Focus groups are a type of interview set up by an

investigator for unrelated individuals in small groups to explore a certain topic or themes (Barbour, 2008).

In relation, focus group interview questions were composed based on the framework proposed by Yıldırım and Şimşek (2005) in which the concepts that have to be taken into consideration in the process of composing the questions, and they cited their own work. The first aspect to consider is the utilization of clear, precise, and concrete queries, as this facilitates a comprehensive comprehension by the participants. It is essential to take into account the qualities and experiences of the participants. Furthermore, it is crucial to generate questions that are focused and specific rather than broad and vague. Moreover, it is imperative to generate open-ended inquiries that foster additional commentary and extended discussion on the topic. To mitigate the challenge of responding to complex inquiries, the questions included multiple distinct questions.

Firstly, participants were presented with different and probing questions in order to enhance their understanding of the subject by utilizing the alternative form of the question. Then, the types of questions posed were varied, since employing identical question formats can lead to monotony for the participants and hinder the provision of comprehensive and detailed responses. Lastly, the questions were arranged in a logical manner, commencing with introductory inquiries and progressing to easier-to-answer queries. This involved querying about their experience in relation to teaching-related instances.

Prior to conducting the interviews, an interview guide was carefully crafted and reviewed by two field experts who possessed extensive knowledge and experience in the domain of English Language Teaching, as well as qualitative research studies. These experts analyzed the interview questions to determine their appropriateness and ease of comprehension for potential participants. They provided constructive feedback on the wording of certain questions and the use of specific terminology within the workplace, particularly in regard to the role of the participant. The researcher then utilized this feedback to revise and refine the interview questions, ultimately omitting two questions that were deemed too specific in nature, pertaining to the frequency of resource usage and the reasoning behind participant preferences. Therefore, expert review of the interview protocol

was established, the appropriateness and comprehension of the questions were formed and wording and terminology was checked and revisions were conducted to establish the validity of the study.

Three interviews in total were conducted for this study. Although the interviews were done in Turkish to increase the participants' comfort and confidence, they occasionally spoke in English to express their opinions and ideas about specific phrases and concepts. To prevent technical issues, the interviews were done online using the Zoom platform and recorded on cloud-based systems. The duration of the interviews ranged from 23 to 44 minutes. The researcher transcribed the interviewees' recordings.

### **3.6.3 Reflective Logs**

The workshop provided instruction to participants on the implementation of reflective techniques in their pedagogical approach. The aforementioned sessions brought to the forward the advantages of engaging in reflective practice and introduced various models of reflective practice.

The workshop focused on providing guidance regarding the process of maintaining a reflective journal, including instructions on the content to include and exclude within such a diary. Reflective writing has been widely employed in the field of education for a considerable period of time (Borg, 2006). Journals and autobiographies have been extensively utilized in the realm of teacher education research to facilitate the examination and exploration of teachers' own insights on their own learning and instructional methodologies (Borg, 2006).

Reflective writing has been employed in the realm of teacher education to chronicle the growth of teachers, foster introspection, and serve as a mechanism for gathering input on teacher education programs, as shown by several scholars (e.g., Bailey, 1990; Johnson, 1994; Appel, 1995; Numrich, 1996; Sakui & Gaies, 2003). Keeping a reflective journal is commonly employed in teacher education research, alongside data obtained from sources such as observations and interviews. This is because journal writing has the potential to offer valuable insights into the cognitive processes of teachers (Borg, 2006).

In order to have a clear understanding, thus, in the present study, the researcher supplied the instruction. The instructions provided centered on the definition and significance of reflection, as well as the methods for maintaining a reflective journal. Upon completion of the reflection workshops, the participants were instructed to maintain a reflective log. Comparative reflection prompts were provided to the participants in order to establish a framework. The aforementioned prompts necessitated teachers to furnish additional elucidation regarding their pedagogical methodologies and professional development. Every individual submitted four logs of reflection on a weekly basis. The participants articulated their reflections and emotions regarding the positive and negative aspects of the lesson, their strategies for enhancing their pedagogical practices, and their attitudes towards disseminating their insights among their peers.

### **3.7 Data Analysis Procedures**

The study employed a qualitative approach to analyze data gathered from focus group interviews, reflective logs, and data gathered by means of Google forms during the workshops.

The aim was to investigate the perceptions of English as a foreign language teacher regarding their teaching practice and its impact on their professional development. Two methods are suggested by Straus and Corbin (1998) for the analysis of qualitative data. The first method is called "Descriptive analysis," and it involves finding, coding, and classifying the major patterns in the data in accordance with specified thematic units. The second is "Content Analysis" or "text mining" (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The meanings and connections between words and concepts are measured and examined in content analysis. The messages contained in the transcripts, as well as their owner, audience, culture, and historical period, are then inferred. As a result, while what was meant becomes increasingly relevant in content analysis, what was stated is still quite important in descriptive analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

A combination of both approaches was implemented in this study. Content analysis was conducted, employing a coding system to identify emerging patterns. In order to process the data, the interviews that were recorded were transcribed.

Following the data collection process, the transcriptions of the interviews, reflective logs, and Google forms were imported into the Maxqda 2022 software for the purpose of conducting qualitative analysis. The Maxqda 2022 software was employed as a data analysis instrument due to its ability to aid researchers in the creation of codes. The coding labels for the participants were generated, followed by the importation of transcriptions into the software. Subsequently, the relevant portions from the transcripts and written data were identified and highlighted. The highlighted sections were encoded and subsequently grouped together based on shared themes. Following the coding process and thematic analysis, the data underwent a systematic organization. In order to evaluate the reliability of coding, an examination of intra-rater consistency was conducted for the qualitative data coding.

### **3.8 Trustworthiness of the Study**

Validity, which is verified by evaluating the accuracy of the findings from the viewpoints of the researcher, participant, or report reader, is what makes qualitative research strong (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

Quantitative researchers employ various criteria, namely internal validity, reliability, generalizability, and objectivity, to assess and articulate the quality of their work. In contrast, qualitative researchers employ the concept of trustworthiness to address the quality concerns inherent in their studies. According to the findings of Given and Saumure (2008), there has been a shift in the utilization of parameters in qualitative research. This shift involves a departure from the use of quantitatively oriented terms, which enables qualitative researchers to describe their research in a manner that emphasizes the overall rigor of qualitative research, rather than attempting to conform it to a quantitative framework. Qualitative research employs the concepts of credibility, transferability, and dependability to address the matter of ensuring the trustworthiness of the study.

During the phases of data collection and analysis, significant attention was devoted to ensuring the reliability of the data collection and analysis processes, thereby enhancing the study's credibility. Several strategies were implemented to enhance the credibility of the research, including triangulation of data, inter-rater

and inter-coder reliability checks, and the adoption of pseudonyms. The study's data collection phase was executed in accordance with a well-defined timetable. The study employed Maxqda 2022 software as a data analysis tool to enhance the credibility of the research. Additionally, since the proximity of the researcher to the participants in a qualitative case study can pose a risk to the credibility of the research due to the close and cooperative nature of their relationship (Stahl & King, 2020), the current research incorporated a number of steps to bolster the credibility of the study, including data triangulation, peer debriefing, inter-rating, and inter-coding. These actions were taken by the researcher to ensure and augment the trustworthiness of the findings. The subsequent sections will scrutinize the researcher's role and the procedures that were implemented to ensure the credibility of the research.

Additionally, transferability refers to the extent to which the findings of a study can be applied or generalized to other contexts or populations. The question of generalizability to other settings was not a concern in the context of qualitative research. However, the study's findings have the potential to provide valuable insights and lessons for others (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2006) as it can refer to other EFL teaching contexts in private schools in Türkiye.

The inclusion of a comprehensive and detailed depiction of the environment, participants, and topics would facilitate readers in drawing comparisons between the study's findings and their own experiences. This would also allow for the identification of concepts that might potentially be applied within the reader's own context while engaging with the study. In order to ensure transferability, the approach employed involved the utilization of comprehensive and detailed descriptions pertaining to the context in which the study was conducted, as well as the individuals who participated in the research.

### **3.8.1 The Researcher's Role**

In qualitative research, the primary agent responsible for extracting meaning from data is the researcher. Consequently, the act of presenting the reflective self of a researcher through the provision of information regarding their perspectives

and experiences would allow readers to evaluate the potential effects, both positive and negative, of the researcher's standpoint (Yin, 2011).

The researcher possessed insider status in the present study. He is employed within the administrative department of the institution under study. He worked as an assistant principal with administrative and pedagogical duties. That is the reason for the researcher to implement convenient sampling strategy (Creswell, 2012). The researcher served both as a workshop facilitator and as a researcher in the study. In this context, he exhibited a focused effort towards directing and strengthening the individuals in their introspective approach during the workshops. Given that this was a case study, the researcher aimed to gather data from various sources and employ diverse methodologies concurrently.

The act of engaging with research participants is widely regarded as a fundamental characteristic of qualitative research. This practice enables the researcher to seamlessly integrate into the research process and establish a sense of confidence and reliance with the participants. The aforementioned circumstance enables the investigator to obtain immediate entry to the origins of data, leading to the acquisition of comprehension regarding the phenomenon and the ability to interpret and scrutinize it proficiently (Creswell & Tashakkori, 2007).

### **3.8.2 Peer Debriefing**

According to Stahl and King (2020), peer debriefing is an important approach for researchers who perform fieldwork because it enables them to acquire objective feedback from colleagues, researchers and associates who are not directly participating in the study process. As a result, using it to evaluate the methodology of early research and the findings that follow from that study would be quite beneficial. Performing this step requires getting authorization as well as evaluating the validity of research methodology, authorizations, and conclusions with experts in the relevant subject. Peer debriefing is an effective kind of communication that also helps to build trust in others. Using an additional researcher to examine and reply to field notes, which contain the researcher's own interpretations, acts as a validation process that builds an implicit understanding for the researcher. This can be accomplished by employing a researcher to review and respond to the field notes.

Peer debriefing was incorporated into the research process to guarantee that the findings of the study were externally valid and to improve the study's credibility. This method highlights the significance of the peer debriefer's role as a devil's advocate, whose responsibility it is to ensure the researcher's integrity by posing inquiries regarding the methodology, connotations, and interpretations (Lincoln & Cuba, 1985, as cited in Creswell & Tashakkori, 2007). The technique was developed by Creswell and Tashakkori (2007). A colleague of one of the researchers was involved in the procedure described above. She was quite knowledgeable in the field of teaching English to speakers of other languages. She had prior experience in teaching English to speakers of other languages.

### **3.8.3 Inter-rater Reliability and Inter-coding**

The establishment of inter-rater reliability is a crucial aspect in ensuring the validity of a qualitative analysis (Armstrong et. al., 1997). The concept of inter-rater reliability concerns the degree of agreement or consistency among multiple raters or coders in interpreting and coding qualitative data. By demonstrating a significant level of inter-rater reliability, scholars can enhance the validity and dependability of their research findings. Establishing inter-rater reliability is a common practice among researchers, who often employ various techniques to achieve this goal.

It is crucial to establish clear and comprehensive coding guidelines or a coding framework at the outset to guide the coding process. The current guidelines provide a clear outline of the definitions and criteria associated with each code and offer examples to promote consistent interpretation among raters. The adoption of this practice ensures a shared understanding of the coding process among all programmers and minimizes the possibility of biased assessments. Following this, an initial coding stage can be conducted, during which a subset of the data is independently coded by multiple raters. This enables the identification and correction of any discrepancies or inconsistencies in coding interpretations. Through a process of iterative discussions and comparisons, raters are able to improve their understanding of coding guidelines, eliminate any ambiguities, and arrive at a shared agreement on coding determinations. It has been observed that the implementation of an iterative approach can improve the reliability and agreement

among raters. As a result of inter-rater analysis using Cohen's kappa, a substantial agreement was found ( $\kappa = .793$ ).

### **3.8.4 Data Triangulation**

Triangulation refers to the systematic approach of collecting data from multiple sources and methods in order to establish the validity and reliability of qualitative research findings, including descriptions and themes. The investigator scrutinizes every information source and identifies corroborating evidence in favor of a particular theme. The utilization of multiple sources of information, individuals, or procedures guarantees the precision of the study. This approach fosters a sense of motivation in the researcher to generate a report that is characterized by precision and reliability (Creswell, 2012).

The researcher in this study endeavored to enhance the reliability and validity of the findings by employing triangulation, which involved the collection of data from diverse sources using a variety of methods. The study gathered data for a duration of fifteen weeks through various means, including participant reflection logs, recorded online focus group interviews, and Google Forms administered during workshops. The study employed Maxqda 2022 software as a data analysis tool to enhance the study's credibility. In order to maintain coding consistency, the qualitative data coding underwent intra-rater reliability checks.

### **3.9 Conclusion**

A qualitative case study was carried out involving four individuals employed in a private educational institution. The study employed various methods for data collection, including focus group discussions, workshops, and reflection logs. Prior to, during, and subsequent to the workshops, focus group discussions were carried out. Upon the conclusion of the workshops, every attendee was instructed to maintain consistent reflection journals to facilitate the contemplation of their pedagogical practices.

The present investigation employed both descriptive and content analysis techniques. The Maxqda 2022 software was employed as the data analysis tool due to its capability to facilitate the researcher in generating codes. In order to enhance the level of confidence in the findings, the researcher in this particular study

endeavored to employ the technique of triangulation. This involved the acquisition of data from various sources, utilizing diverse methods. In order to maintain coding consistency, the qualitative data coding underwent testing for inter-rater reliability.



## 4. FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to conduct a case study on the experiences of teachers who teach English as a foreign language with reflection on their actions in the workplace. In order to achieve this aim, this study examined how in-service EFL teachers reflect on their classroom actions and how this reflection experience is perceived to contribute to their professional workplace learning and development.

To this end, this chapter presents the findings of this qualitative study based on the collected data from the Google forms during the workshops, the focus group interviews, and the participants' reflection logs under the themes of reflective practice and workplace learning along with the subthemes. All aspects of data analysis were done in accordance with the research questions:

1. What are EFL teachers' perceptions regarding the role of reflection-on-action practices in their professional development at work?
2. What are the perceived benefits of reflection-on-practices do EFL teachers prefer during their workplace learning experiences? What are the reasons and supporting mechanisms behind teachers' workplace learning reflections?

Below is a comprehensive summary of the themes, codes, and frequencies related to reflection-on-action experiences and their contributions to workplace learning provided based on the data analysis (See table 4.1.). The first section of the table focuses on various aspects of reflection-on-action experiences, including in-service teachers' reflection practices, workplace learning, self-reflection, maintaining reflective journals, student feedback, and observational reflection in teaching. These themes are quantified by their occurrence frequency, indicating the prevalence of each aspect in the studied context. The second part of the table shifts the focus to how reflection-on-action practices contribute to enhancing workplace learning. This section includes themes such as teachers' enjoyment in teaching and learning, collaborative lesson planning, and establishing an effective teaching or work climate. Each of these themes is again quantified by frequency, providing insights into the relative importance or occurrence of these practices in the educational setting. This table serves as an essential tool for understanding the

various dimensions of reflection-on-action in the present research context and its perceived impact on workplace learning.

**Table 4.1**

*Themes and codes for reflection-on-action experiences and their frequencies*

Themes	Codes	<i>n</i>
Reflection-on-action experiences		
<hr/>		
	In-Service teachers' reflection-on-action practices	55
	Workplace learning	24
	Self-reflection	16
	Keeping reflective journal	13
	Student feedback	9
	Observational reflection in teaching practices	2
Reflection-on-action practices' contribution to workplace learning		
<hr/>		
	Teachers' enjoyment while teaching and learning	7
	Collaborative lesson planning	7
	Establishing effective teaching/work climate	6

This section analyzes the qualitative data obtained from the various data sources (e.g., interviews conducted with focus groups and reflective journals). The reflection-on-action experiences of in-service English as a foreign language teachers will be analyzed with regard to the following five themes: reflection-on-action practices; workplace learning experiences; the role of self-reflection; the role of student feedback; the role of colleague observation; and the significance of keeping a reflective journal. In the second section, the contribution of EFL teachers' reflection-on-action methods to their workplace learning will be explored under three primary topics. These themes are the joy that EFL teachers experienced while

teaching and learning, ways that collaborative lesson preparation can be done, and the function that a safe working environment plays.

## **4.1 Reflection-on-action Experiences**

### **4.1.1 In-service teachers' reflection-on-action practices**

The concepts that were investigated in relation to this theme centered on the idea of learning experiences that are both effective and enjoyable, reflective teaching practices, and the dynamic evolution of instructional approaches. These themes, taken as a whole, highlight how important it is to get joy from teaching and learning, to stimulate active and engaged student participation, to utilize reflective approaches to improve pedagogical strategies, and to modify instructional techniques to match the unique requirements of individual students. The insights that were offered by a variety of participants who were at various stages of their teaching journey shed light on the transformative process of instructional refinement.

This process occurs when teachers reflect on their practices, engage in self-reflection, and experiment with new methods to enhance the learning process. These accounts highlight the significance of techniques that are oriented on the student, where flexibility and joy meet to produce an atmosphere that is hospitable to having meaningful educational experiences. Upon examining the participants' perception of reflection-on-action, it can be suggested that their attitudes exhibited variations prior to and subsequent to the workshops. During the focus group interviews, the participants articulated various strategies and conceptual frameworks employed by them to evaluate the level of comprehension exhibited by their students.

Following the workshops, I asked the students, "If you were here, how would you explain this?" Several seventh-grade students were experiencing challenges with certain subject matters. I got very different answers. As an example, one of them stated, "I think I couldn't do anything if I were there". Another student expressed their desire to engage in more enjoyable activities. As an example, I inquired as to what course of action you would undertake. "Well, I can't think of it right now, but I would do something". Asking this question happened to me after the workshops you organized. Because

there was always something like this going on in my head: "What would happen if I did this lesson or this topic like this? How can I change it when children have difficulties understanding it?" These questions immediately start spinning in our minds in the classroom. At that time, I thought, let me ask the child, what would he/she do? (Participant 2, Post-workshop FGI, April 13)

Following certain lectures, I experience a range of emotions and subsequently engage in self-reflection. "We did it like this and I changed the course of the lecture because this student said this, but actually this was my goal". Perhaps my note-taking habits are not consistent, however, there exist numerous approaches to provide reflection and enhance performance in subsequent lessons. I intend to establish a mechanism that ensures the retrieval of this information, thereby facilitating my personal growth and development. (Participant 3, Final FGI, June 1)

In this learning experience, I played a more passive spectator and, when appropriate, a guide rather than an information provider. It was now time for the students to put their prior understanding of the subject into practice. Because of this, I assisted the kids with the sections of the exercises they found challenging when they requested my assistance, but I always allowed them time to rethink and figure out the issue on their own first. (Participant 3, Reflective Log 3, May 6)

In conclusion, as evidenced by the aforementioned quotations, the respondents held varying perspectives regarding their experiences of reflection-on-action. The difference in their comprehension leads to divergent approaches towards teaching, that includes lesson planning, assessment of student comprehension, and reflection of their own pedagogical practices. Teachers must critically evaluate their own instructional practices, beliefs, attitudes, and aspirations, as well as those of their students, colleagues, and the greater teaching profession, in order to achieve this. Therefore, teachers must be aware of the significance of the relationship between theory and practice in order to fully engage in reflective inquiry successfully and responsibly. The results highlight the significance of professional development for teachers in reflective thinking on action. Teachers claim that this has altered how they perceive their teaching methods, routines, and processes.

### **4.1.2 Workplace Learning**

Workplace social interactions and daily tasks usually incorporate workplace learning. According to sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978), learning occurs in the social and cultural contexts of daily life and the workplace. Upon examining the comprehension of workplace learning among the participants, it is evident that they place significance on exchanging their experiences. In addition to facilitating workplace learning, the act of sharing experiences may also create a positive effect in individuals' personal learning paths.

When it comes to fostering professional growth and development within the context of the school setting, it becomes clear that the most important factors are teacher collaboration, appraisal by colleagues, and strategic planning.

The conversations that take place inside these statements highlight the significant influence that open and shared conversations and experiences have on the individual and collective growth of teachers. Participant 1 underlines the catalytic impacts of cooperation by highlighting the fact that through introspective talks with colleague teachers, the burden of obstacles becomes shared, so generating a sense of togetherness in the group. Participant 2 echoes this attitude, pointing out that regardless of experience levels, teachers can learn from one another's perspectives, which might generate scenarios for improvement and change.

According to the explanation provided by Participant 3, this culture of collaboration goes beyond academic goals and adds to an overall sense of well-being. This psychological health acts as a driving force for growth, affecting not just teachers but also their coworkers and pupils as well. The participant emphasizes how sharing one's experiences and difficulties not only gives relief but also adds to the creation of a ripple effect of positivity and improved teaching techniques.

The benefits of shared reflections and peer evaluations in a practical sense are also readily apparent. Participant 4, by realizing the possibility of missing important elements in one's own teaching, shows how peers might bring novel insights that contribute to the improvement of instructional practices. In a similar vein, the viewpoint of Participant 3 is consistent with this concept. According to this participant, engaging in collaborative efforts with one's coworkers enables one to gain a more in-depth understanding of both oneself and one's contemporaries.

According to the assertions of Participant 2, this comprehension translates into an increased capacity to comprehend pupils and provide assistance for them, which in turn amplifies the influence of the teachers' collective progress. Furthermore, the collaborative mindset extends beyond the confines of specific departments, as Participant 1 argues, and highlights the significance of fostering a culture of debate and shared progress throughout the entire institution.

In the end, the collective insights that are highlighted in these remarks shed light on the potentially transformative effects that collaborative practices in education can have.

The sharing of experiences, methods, and points of view among teachers not only contributes to professional development but also helps to cultivate a climate that is conducive to holistic growth, increased well-being, and enhanced instructional practices that have an impact that is felt well beyond the confines of the classroom.

When you do reflection out loud with your fellow teachers, it actually provides a great relief. Because you see that your friends are also experiencing the same kind of problems. No matter how many years you have been a teacher, maybe you learn something even from the first-year teacher. You immediately think of a scenario: “Should I do this or that next time with that child and that class?” As a teacher, I am not perfect. No one is perfect, but everyone is doing something to change things, to improve things, and I am part of it. (Participant 2, Post-workshop FGI, April 13)

It feels good to reflect on my teaching and share it with my colleagues. So, you are not always looking for an academic goal. Feeling of well-being is something that spreads like a butterfly effect. When you share this with your colleagues and you see that they actually have the same feelings, the same problems or the same practices, you feel even better. As you share it, they start to feel better too, and in fact this state of well-being somehow starts to reflect on your students and your children. You start to see more clearly that we are in the same boat when you look at yourself from the outside. (Participant 3, Final FGI, June 1)

As we share this feedback and sharing with our colleagues, I think our joint planning is especially positively affected by this process. (Participant 4, Final FGI, June 1)

In conclusion, it is evident from the participants' concept of workplace learning that they place value on sharing their experiences. Sharing experiences not only encourages their professional development but also enhances their confidence in their personal learning process. According to sociocultural theory, knowledge is seen to be placed within specific cultural settings that are constructed and evolved over time in order to address practical challenges that arise within a given culture and society (Eun, 2010).

This viewpoint holds that knowledge is generated collaboratively by experts (e.g., teachers, parents, and mentors) and novices (e.g., students, children, and adult learners) as a result of their involvement in inquiry-based activities that attempt to address real-world situations.

#### **4.1.3 Self-reflection**

Richards (1990) asserts that an essential component of teacher development is reflection. He claims that self-awareness and critical thinking "can help teachers move from a level where they are largely guided by impulse, intuition, or routine to one where their actions are guided by reflection and critical thinking." From what the participants revealed, it is clear that self-reflection encourages self-awareness.

The participants' teaching methods are profoundly impacted by the transforming power of introspection and reflection, which is explored in depth in the collective reflections that are shared in pertinent themes. Their stories all share a common thread: an emphasis on the importance of never stopping to get better, which reflects the fluidity of educational progress.

The first participant dives deeper into the reflections that define their teaching experience, expressing their sense of wonder in the question, "What would I do differently the next time?" This self-reflective investigation, which spans multiple classes, acts as a beacon to illuminate best practices for refining teaching tactics in a variety of settings. By addressing this question, teachers are able to unearth a multitude of insights that extend beyond the confines of the current classroom, which ultimately has a profound impact on the teaching strategies they employ.

The fourth participant is aware of the tremendous shift in viewpoint that has been made possible by the workshops. Their knowledge of their teaching practices, both their strengths and the areas in which they may improve, has increased as a direct result of their comprehension of reflection. This newly acquired awareness has resulted in an abundance of ideas that can be used to make improvements and introduce new ideas.

Participants are given the opportunity to harness the power of contemplation in order to accelerate positive change through participation in the workshops, which serve as catalysts for self-discovery and personal growth in this setting.

The development of a reflective lens as a consequence of participation in the seminars is emphasized by Participant 3.

Their awareness of instructional design and methodology expands, taking on a new dimension as a result of the use of reflection as a lens through which to critically evaluate accomplishments and unmet goals. This reflective perspective, which is strengthened by the workshops, provides a systematic framework that can be used to analyze teaching tactics and recalibrate approaches, which ultimately results in an improvement in the quality of their instruction.

Participant 2 acknowledges the wide range of feelings that might be experienced after attending a teaching session and expresses the desire to make use of this emotional spectrum in order to advance their own personal growth. They recognize the importance of having established systems in place to ensure that the insights acquired through self-evaluation are translated into improvements that can be put into practice. This demonstrates the practical use of introspection as well as the commitment to transforming previously gained knowledge into demonstrable improvements in instructional methods.

The reflections under this theme, taken as a whole, shed light on the transformative potential of introspection and purposeful development. The workshops operate as a catalyst for teachers to analyze their methods, develop understanding, and put into action substantial changes in their pedagogical approaches. This contributes to a continuing cycle of improvement that enriches the educational experience for teachers as well as students.

After I finish the class, I always have something like this in my head: "What would I do if I did this lesson again with this class?" This is actually one of my favorite questions. When I answer this, I actually find an answer to the question of how I would do it not only with that class, but also with the other classes I teach. When I answer this question for that class, I find many answers for the other classes as well. (Participant 1, Post-workshop FGI, April 13)

I can say that I gained awareness with these workshops. I realized that I had never looked at my instructional design process in a reflective way and with your support, I developed a perspective on reflection. From now on, when I am thinking about something, especially in the methodology I use or in many of the lessons I do at work, I realize that if I have a goal and I have not achieved it, it is easy to look at it from this perspective and go back to myself. (Participant 3, Post-workshop FGI, April 13)

After some lectures I leave with different feelings, I analyze myself. I mean, maybe I can't take notes very regularly, but if the aim is to give feedback to yourself and to be better and more developed in the next lesson, there are really many methods and maybe I will apply some of these. I will somehow set up a mechanism to ensure that this information returns to myself and improves me more. (Participant 2, Post-workshop FGI, April 13)

In conclusion, based on the reveals made by the respondents, it is evident that engaging in self-reflection fosters the development of self-awareness. The individuals posit that upon contemplation of their pedagogical approach, they pose intriguing inquiries to themselves. As a consequence of this, they possess the ability to engage in advanced cognitive processes and impart knowledge at an elevated level. Reflective practice is regarded to be necessary if teachers are to learn from both their own and other people's teaching experiences. The key benefits of reflective practice for teachers include a deeper awareness of one's own teaching style and eventually increased efficacy as a teacher.

#### **4.1.4 Keeping Reflective Journals**

Genç (2010) claims in her study that reflective journals have been instrumental in facilitating teachers' ability to engage in critical analysis, enhance their understanding of language instruction, and cultivate the capacity to exercise greater autonomy in making deliberate and well-informed choices pertaining to their educational environments. Based on the accounts provided by the participants,

it appears that maintaining a record of their teaching activities in the form of a journal is not a common practice. The individuals primarily document pedagogical strategies and student behaviors in their journals, but in an irregular way.

The participants asserted that this study provided them with valuable insights into the significance of keeping notes, prompting them to incorporate certain models and strategies, including technological aids, into their note-taking practices.

Keeping a journal helped me a lot when I first started teaching, both in getting to know the student and in many other areas. The notes I took about the plans, the student's learning process, who did what and when. Everything was in that notebook. (Participant 2, Pre-Workshop FGI, February 21)

I was taking notes before when I was reflecting on my teaching practices. I will continue to take notes, but I think I will do it in a little more detail. Among the models I saw in the workshop, especially in Gibbs' model, I discovered some parts that I had not thought about while reflecting. So I will use Gibbs' model to reflect, but if you ask me if I will apply it exactly, I think I will not apply it exactly. I will try to make it suitable for myself again. I will try to make it suitable for my lesson, my plan. But the closest one to me was Gibbs' model. (Participant 1, Post-workshop FGI, April 13)

I've never been a teacher who takes notes. I want to try this as much as I can. Maybe by using a little bit of technology, leaving short summaries, audio recordings for myself. I mean, "this is what happened in this lesson, actually it could have been better." I can try this next time. With some such digital notes, maybe I can actually turn that class into a digital tool that I can listen to without seeing it again, or that I can listen to while relaxing in a calm environment when I come home in the evening. (Participant 3, Pre-Workshop FGI, February 21)

According to the study conducted by Zulfikar and Mujiburrahman (2017), the majority of in-service teachers expressed a positive perception towards reflective journals. The majority of participants regarded the journals as a method for enhancing their teaching practices. A subset of the participants reported that the utilization of the reflective journal facilitated an enhanced understanding of their instructional practices. The results of the study also demonstrated that the utilization of reflective journals had an impact on teachers' instructional strategies, their

perspectives on teacher-student dynamics, and their approaches to developing teaching resources.

In conclusion, participants in this study stated they will include some models and strategies into their note-taking process as the study gave them new insight into the significance of taking notes. This will help them grow in knowledge and abilities.

#### **4.1.5 Student Feedback**

Student feedback is a method employed by teachers to gain insight into the perspectives of their pupils. Seasoned teachers' endeavor to adopt their students' viewpoints in diverse classroom settings to evaluate their instructional methods, cater to their students' educational requirements, and facilitate enduring learning, as expressed by all participants.

Students have certain requests. We go to class with a plan, but in their own minds, they prioritize their own priorities, especially in the younger age group. They talk about whatever the order of importance is at that moment. I realized that the children's wishes are actually a reflection of my lessons. I mean, for example, there are things they want to do. If I listen to them, if I can see them, I can analyze their needs better. I mean, this is something beyond communication. We all communicate, but if there are some activities, events, studies that they cannot express, especially the younger age group, that they want very much, I try to see what they say about them as a reflection of my lesson or how it works. So, I realize that the plan belongs to both sides. The plan is not only my plan, yes, I am the teacher, but when I enter there, we are now in interaction. So, my next plan can also be affected by the interaction that day and turn into something else. (Participant 4, Final FGI, June 1)

I think feedback and results we get from the students will enable us as teachers to see that our teaching practices are working. The curriculum is already being implemented in some way. The important thing is permanent learning. And when we get student feedback, I think we will be able to see that our teaching practices will work. (Participant 3, Final FGI, June 1)

I think that reflective thinking actually affects every stage of teaching practices, but from class to class and from subject to subject, sometimes I think that reflective thinking affects some parts of those practices more. I would like to emphasize

two important points here. The first is student feedback. The feedback we receive from students can also contribute to this process. Secondly, as we share this feedback and sharing with our colleagues, I think our joint planning is especially positively affected by this process. (Participant 1, Final FGI, June 1)

As highlighted by the participants, students play a crucial role as significant stakeholders in the processes of monitoring and assessing educational quality, thus underscoring the necessity of soliciting their perspectives.

Student feedback is considered as a valuable source of information that is both reliable and valid. The utilization of student feedback in teaching is not a universal solution for all challenges faced in higher education. However, it has the potential to enhance instructional effectiveness and consequently enhance the overall quality of education (Seldin, 1997). Experienced teachers will try to see themselves from their students' perspectives in our various classrooms.

Reflective practice is advocated as a way for teachers to understand their students. The provision of student feedback possesses the capacity to exert a beneficial influence on pedagogical practices. Moreover, the act of participating in this practice can additionally bolster the reflective abilities of teachers, provide teachers with valuable insights into the unique requirements of their students, and foster a discourse surrounding pedagogy and the acquisition of knowledge within the classroom (Mandouit, 2018). The research offered valuable insights into the utilization of student feedback as a means to enhance teacher practices.

The participants possessed an understanding of what it meant to cultivate positive relationships with students, which facilitated the establishment of a genuine collaborative partnership in the realm of education.

#### **4.1.6 Observational Reflection in Teaching Practices**

In order to derive meaning and acquire knowledge from personal experiences, it is necessary to engage in the cognitive processes of recounting, reconfiguring, and recalibrating them within one's own mental framework. Moreover, the act of experiencing teaching necessitates the act of sharing one's teaching expertise. In the relevant literature, it is claimed that collaborating with

fellow teachers within a pedagogical environment that promotes and nurtures inquisitive intellects (Page, 2017).

Similarly in the present study, participants referred to their experiences based on the fact that effective teaching often hinges on the subtle interplay between self-awareness and the insights gained from observing the practices of others. Within this pedagogical landscape, the themes of *Observational Reflection in Teaching Practices* emerge as key conduits for refining and elevating educational methods.

Participant 1's viewpoint offers a glimpse into the personalized nature of reflective teaching, where they intentionally position themselves amidst students while simultaneously evaluating their teaching strategies. In parallel, Participant 2 provides insight into a broader institutional practice, wherein teachers engage in systematic peer observations and compose reflective reports. These collective narratives underscore the significance of self-observation and the power of objective analysis as catalysts for continuous improvement in the realm of education.

I sit in the classroom among the students, watching my fellow teacher and thinking about my own plans and teaching. (Participant 1, Reflective Log 1, April 22)

As a school, we observe each other's lessons in line with the training of the headquarters. After these observations, we prepare a report. In the report, we try to answer questions such as what could I have done differently, how could I have done it differently, what point would I like to improve? In other words, we write reflections about ourselves. This also improves us. (Participant 2, Post-workshop FGI, April 13)

Based on the gathered data, this study posits that peer observation contributes to the professional growth of teachers and enhances the learning process through the facilitation of reflection, collaboration, and the acquisition of novel skills and teaching strategies. Teachers engage in a reciprocal process of providing feedback to one another, subsequently affecting personal growth and development.

Peer observation has been found to enhance cooperation among colleagues and foster a sense of confidence and trust among them. It has a substantial positive impact on the professional development of teachers (Motallebzadeh et al., 2017). According to the contributes provided by the participants, during the process of

mutual observation, colleagues engage in reflective thinking about their own pedagogical practices, utilizing relevant questions to enhance the design of their instructional approaches.

## **4.2 Reflection-on-action Practices' Contribution to Workplace Learning**

The subsequent section will delve into how EFL teachers' methods of reflecting on their actions contribute to their learning at the workplace.

This exploration will revolve around three key subjects: the sense of delight experienced by EFL teachers during teaching and learning, strategies for collaborative lesson planning, and the significance of a secure working environment.

### **4.2.1 Teachers' Enjoyment While Teaching and Learning**

In the classroom, pupils might be motivated by showing feelings like enjoyment. As participants shared below, according to the teachers in the participant group, the level of enjoyment of teachers is one of the essential factors in determining the student motivation and engagement.

My key word is joy. If there is joy in the work, that is, if I am enjoying myself, I realize that the students also learn by really enjoying themselves while teaching. (Participant 1, Pre-Workshop FGI, February 21)

I realized that when I really have fun, I can teach. When I teach, they learn, and it is permanent. (Participant 2, Post-workshop FGI, April 13)

I feel better when I do something to do better. Then I try to do even better and start to look at other methods, which adds joy to my teaching process. (Participant 3, Post-workshop FGI, April 13)

Based on the data analysis, it can be concluded that the joy of teaching is derived from a delicate balancing act between all the inevitable aspects of a community that comes together for a specific purpose. Thus, every action must be deliberated, and with time, one learns the rhythm of joyful instructing and learning. Nonetheless, it is essential to keep in mind that this varies by class type, student

composition, subject, and generation also play an essential role in tuning into the joy of teaching and sharing these experiences with colleagues.

Additionally, a cheerful teacher is considered as initially a joyful student. It promotes a unique relationship with the students, who develop an enduring connection with learning and with you. In relation, the relevant literature reveals that the joy should contribute to the learner's motivation, the motivation to acquire valuable knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Gerritse, 1979).

According to the participants in the present study, joy plays a significant role in determining the levels of motivation and engagement among both students and teachers. The participants highlighted that when they experience a sense of joy during the process of designing and delivering lessons, it results in increased student engagement, thereby also serving as a source of motivation for teachers.

#### **4.2.2 Collaborative Lesson Planning**

According to the participants, teachers sharing their experiences related to classroom instruction, lesson planning, and student feedback has resulted in a significant exchange of knowledge and insights among them. This process enhances teachers' teaching practices and aids in developing their lesson plans. Such events can arise spontaneously within a department or be intentionally arranged through collaborative efforts involving the entire faculty. Regardless of their level of organization, both entities mutually enhance one another. Workplace-based formal learning encompasses structured learning initiatives to facilitate individuals' acquisition of precise knowledge, understanding, and competencies essential for proficient job performance.

I believe that collaborating with fellow teachers, evaluating each other and making plans are very important in terms of contributing to professional learning at school. (Participant 4, Final FGI, June 1)

We can get more successful results when we share our learning habits. In addition to this, I generally feel that my planning process is differentiated as a result of reflective thinking. I realized that when we shared these with our colleagues, it was obvious that our planning had changed. (Participant 2, Final FGI, June 1)

The provided quotes shed light on the significance of reflective thinking and its impact on teaching practices among teachers. In Participant 2's reflection, it is evident that self-awareness of limitations leads to proactive solutions. Inviting subject experts to contribute to the lesson showcases the importance of recognizing when external expertise can enhance the learning experience for students. Participant 4 underlines the significance of collaboration, peer evaluation, and joint planning in fostering professional growth.

This sentiment is echoed by Participant 2, who notes that sharing learning habits and insights with colleagues leads to noticeable changes in planning approaches, underscoring the impact of collaborative reflective practices.

The quotes collectively highlight how reflective thinking influences teaching practices and professional growth. They underscore the dynamic nature of reflection, its adaptability to various teaching scenarios, and its benefits in terms of improved classroom activities, evaluation methods, collaborative planning, and overall teaching quality. These insights reveal room for discussion on how teachers can optimize reflective thinking, foster effective collaboration, and create a culture of continuous improvement within educational settings.

According to Gutierrez (2020), with the right opportunity and support, in-service teachers could place a high value on their professional growth. Through reflections-on-action, the school-based professional development in the aforementioned study-maintained teachers' regular interactions. According to this study, teachers' individual lesson preparation techniques and collaborative lesson planning have started to "dissonance." Their grade-level teams' collaborative attitude-built community and mutual confidence, which was a welcome "dissonance" from their regular procedures. In conclusion, in order to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, competence, and confidence, it is imperative to engage in frequent and adequately timed professional development activities. The formal allocation of time for professional development is crucial but inadequate as a means for teachers to acquire knowledge and skills.

### 4.2.3 Establishing Effective Teaching/Work Climate

The data provided by the participants suggests that the act of sharing personal experiences can have a positive impact on an individual's personal learning trajectory. The act of sharing experiences not only fosters professional growth but also reinforces self-assurance.

It feels good to reflect on my own teaching process and share it with my colleagues. So sometimes you are not always looking for an academic goal. It feels good to feel good and I think this feeling of well-being is something that spreads like a butterfly effect. When you share this with your colleagues and you see that they actually have the same feelings, the same problems or the same practices, you feel even better. As you share it, they start to feel better too, and in fact this state of well-being somehow starts to reflect on your students and your children. You start to see more clearly that we are in the same boat when you look at yourself from the outside. (Participant 2, Final FGI, June 1)

As a result of these reflection workshops, we will actually understand children better. First, we will understand ourselves and our colleagues better. And this better understanding will bring you another state of well-being. It will bring another development. Therefore, I think the most important effect will bring well-being to me as an individual and maybe to my colleagues. And then it will reflect on my students. (Participant 3, Final FGI, June 1)

Thanks to these workshops you provided us, we felt that reflection is really important, and we talked about it in the department. When you start talking about it, you really feel good as a teacher. Of course, we need to spread this even more. Not just our own department. I think we should continue this in the whole school atmosphere, so that if we all speak the same language, I think we can go much further. (Participant 2, Final FGI, June 1)

In conclusion, participants' stories make it clear that sharing experiences can have a good impact on people's individual learning curves. Their confidence is boosted as a result of sharing experiences, which also supports their professional development. Engaging in reflective and collaborative practices among teachers provides a profound sense of comfort, as it reveals the collective experiences of fellow teachers when faced with comparable obstacles. The act of acknowledging inherent deficiencies and actively participating in a collaborative endeavor to bring about transformation fosters a sense of inclusivity.

The process of engaging in the exchange of diverse experiences and perspectives, which might otherwise be disregarded, but possess the capacity to generate significant changes, cultivates growth in both personal and professional domains.

This process facilitates the improvement of educational quality and overall welfare, as the inclusion of diverse perspectives contributes to a deeper understanding and the resolution of challenges. Reflecting on instructional methodologies and participating in collaborative discussions about these practices promotes a sense of well-being, both emotionally and psychologically, which in turn has a positive impact on individuals within the educational community. Consequently, both students and children experience benefits from this state of well-being.

### **4.3 Conclusion**

The objective of this study was to undertake a case study examining the experiences of teachers who are responsible for instructing English as a foreign language, with a particular focus on their reflective practices within the professional setting. This study aimed to investigate the process by which in-service English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers engage in reflection on their classroom practices and the perceived impact of this reflection on their professional learning and development in the workplace.

The current chapter provides an overview of the study's findings, which were derived from the analysis of the collected data. The findings are organized according to the overarching themes of reflective practice and workplace learning, as well as their respective subthemes. The data analysis procedures were conducted in alignment with the research inquiries.

## **5. DISCUSSION**

This section provides a concise review of the research outcomes, which are then analyzed within the context of the study's research inquiries and backed up by pertinent literature. The implications for teaching and limitations of the research are also examined before concluding the chapter with recommendations for future research.

### **5.1 Discussion**

The focus of this case study is to investigate the reflective practices of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in-service teachers employed at a private secondary school. The central objective is to gauge the extent to which these teachers, who are responsible for teaching English to non-native speakers, engage in reflective activities to assess and improve their pedagogical methods. Additionally, the study aims to uncover the impact of this reflective process on the teachers' overall professional development.

To achieve these objectives, the research employs a multi-faceted approach by utilizing various data collection tools. These include focus group discussions, workshops, and reflection logs. Through these means, the study seeks to gain comprehensive insights into the teachers' reflective practices and how these practices contribute to their ongoing learning and growth as professionals.

The dual purpose of this study can be broken down into two key facets. Firstly, it seeks to delve into the intricacies of how in-service EFL teachers engage in reflective practices within their professional environment. By doing so, the study aims to offer a detailed understanding of the dynamics of workplace learning among these teachers through reflective methods. Secondly, the research intends to capture the viewpoints of these teachers regarding the ways in which reflective practice facilitates their professional development. By eliciting their perspectives, the study aims to shed light on the potential benefits of reflective thinking for teachers' growth and effectiveness in the classroom. Importantly, the findings of this study have the potential to provide valuable insights to various stakeholders within the educational sphere.

Educational administrators, scholars, and decision-makers can benefit from the study's outcomes by gaining guidance on how to effectively support and promote teachers' continuous professional development. This research thus not only contributes to the understanding of reflective practices and their impact on EFL teachers but also offers actionable information to enhance the overall quality of English language instruction and teacher support within the educational institution. The study sought answers to the following research questions: What are EFL teachers' perceptions regarding the role of reflection-on-action practices in their professional development at work? What are the perceived benefits of reflection-on-practices do EFL teachers prefer during their workplace learning experiences? What are the reasons and supporting mechanisms behind teachers' workplace learning reflections?

The study employed focus group interviews, workshops, and reflective journals as means of data collection. Prior to, during, and subsequent to the workshops, focus group interviews were carried out. Following the conclusion of the workshops, all participants were instructed to maintain consistent reflective journals to facilitate introspection regarding their pedagogical practices. This study employs three distinct data collection instruments, particular workshops, focus group interviews, and teacher reflective journals. In this section, the findings will be discussed based on the relevant literature.

### **5.1.1 Reflection-on-action Experiences**

#### **5.1.1.1 In-service Teachers' reflection-on-action-practices**

Upon analyzing the participants' perception of reflection-on-action, it is evident that their views differed before and after the workshops. The participants in the focus groups shared various approaches and conceptual frameworks they employed to evaluate their students' comprehension levels. The respondents' viewpoints regarding their experiences with reflection-on-action were diverse. Given the varying levels of comprehension, teachers adopt several methods when preparing lessons, assessing students' levels of understanding, and reflecting on their pedagogical practices. In relation, Schön's definition of reflection on one's activities is, according to Leitch and Day (2000), thoughtful reflection and

retrospective analysis are essential practices for teachers to gain knowledge from their own experiences.

To achieve this goal, teachers must thoroughly evaluate not only their own instructional methods but also their own beliefs, attitudes, and objectives, along with those of their students, peers, and the broader teaching profession. Hence, to actively engage in reflective inquiry with success and integrity, teachers must recognize the significance of the relationship between theory and practice. The integration of reflective practice is crucial in all settings where professional learning takes place, including higher education and teacher training programs. Moreover, education professionals ought to utilize reflective practices as a means of constructing significance and driving action. This would augment their professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes across diverse contexts (Isik-Ercan & Perkins, 2017).

The findings emphasize the value of teacher professional development in reflective thinking and action. Teachers assert that this has changed how they view their instructional strategies, practices, and procedures. It can be concluded that teachers who regularly and iteratively reflect on their instruction can address their needs and improve their comprehension of teaching (Aslan et al., 2022). By reflecting on their actions, teachers can assess how well they did in the classroom. Institutional support is also crucial for instructing and enticing teachers to participate in reflective processes.

Teachers must motivate themselves to increase their knowledge of and training in reflective practice (Tosriadi, 2018). In order to strengthen one's professional skills, Schön (1987) emphasized the need for reflective practice and highlighted it as a crucial tool for prospective teachers to employ. Additionally, he asserted that the majority of a teacher's learning is acquired through ongoing reflection and engagement with everyday challenges.

### **5.1.1.2 Workplace Learning**

It is difficult to describe and includes a complex issue to discuss the broad topic of workplace learning, which goes beyond training and development (Matthews, 1999). Daily responsibilities and social interactions at work typically include workplace learning.

Sociocultural theory holds that learning takes place in the social and cultural circumstances of daily life and the workplace (Vygotsky, 1978). It is clear from looking at the participants' understanding of workplace learning that they value sharing their experiences. The act of sharing experiences may have a good impact on people's personal learning paths in addition to helping to learn at work. It is clear from the participants' conceptions of workplace learning that they value exchanging experiences with others. Sharing experiences helps them grow professionally while also boosting their self-assurance in their own learning process. Knowledge is described by sociocultural theory as "situated in specific cultural contexts created and developed overtime to solve real life problems that occur within that culture and society" (Eun, 2010, 405).

According to this theory, knowledge is created by experts (such as teachers, parents, and mentors) and amateurs (such as students, children, and adult learners) together through the use of inquiry-based activities that aim to address real-world problems. The integration of professional learning within the school culture is imperative. Establishing a school environment that prioritizes professional learning is instrumental in instigating transformative shifts that position professional development as a central component of teachers' responsibilities, thereby fostering a deep-rooted appreciation for ongoing professional growth throughout their professional trajectories. According to Fullan (1995), professional development should function as a means to drive reform. One potential approach involves establishing educational settings that facilitate both informal and formal opportunities for professional learning. According to Fullan (1993), the attainment of success is contingent upon engaging in the innovative process of generating novel maps.

### **5.1.1.3 Self-reflection**

According to Richards (1990), reflection is a critical component of teacher growth. He asserts that critical thinking and self-awareness are necessary to move teachers from being guided mainly by habit, instinct, or intuition to the point where reflection and critical thinking direct their behavior. Self-reflection is a valuable tool for teachers to evaluate their own learning journey during the different stages of unit design and implementation.

Self-reflection, as highlighted by Yurtseven and Altun (2017), plays a pivotal role in directing individuals towards effective problem-solving strategies and enhancing personal behaviors. This concept resonates strongly with the insights shared by participants in the study, underscoring the link between self-reflection and heightened self-awareness. When teachers engage in self-reflection, examining their teaching methodologies, it prompts them to delve into new and intriguing inquiries. Such introspection not only elevates their educational approaches but also facilitates advanced cognitive processes, enabling them to impart knowledge more proficiently.

Furthermore, the findings align with the broader literature on the necessity of reflective practice for teachers (e.g., Habib, 2017; Sellars, 2012; Parsons, 2005). Reflective practice emerges as a critical tool for learning from one's own teaching experiences, as well as those of others. By reflecting on their instructional strategies, teachers gain deeper insights into their approaches, leading to continual improvement and effectiveness in their teaching roles. Thus, the study's outcomes underscore the essential nature of self-reflection in fostering a more informed, reflective, and ultimately more effective teaching practice.

### **5.1.1.4 Keeping Reflective Journals**

Based on the data analysis from this study, it is recommended that to improve the effectiveness of reflective journal writing, teacher educators should offer structured guidance on crafting reflective journals. This support would create an empowering environment where student teachers can freely express their opinions, engage in critical examination of their teaching beliefs and values, and thoughtfully refine these aspects in a constructive way. This approach not only enhances the reflective journaling process but also fosters a more insightful and

meaningful development of teaching practices. Reflective journal writing is widely recognized by teachers as a valuable tool for fostering teachers' awareness of their implicit beliefs regarding English Language Teaching (ELT) (e.g., Abednia, 2013; Donyaie, 2019; Elhussain, 2020).

This practice enables teachers to revisit and enhance their reasoning abilities, as well as develop their skills in self-expression (Abednia et al., 2013). Numerous studies have demonstrated that workplace learning provides an environment in which students can actively develop practical knowledge and critically analyze their pedagogical practices. Contrary to conventional notions of professional development, engaging in critical reflection on both the process and content of pedagogy can yield substantial enhancements in the efficacy of teaching and learning. The utilization of reflective journaling has been demonstrated as a means of attaining this objective (Dreyer, 2015).

The integration of reflective journal writing can be incorporated into the curriculum of teacher education programs. Reflective journals serve as a valuable tool for aspiring teachers to cultivate their leadership abilities and enhance their teaching skills. This particular form of training can significantly contribute to the establishment of collaborative efforts and potentially serve as a viable approach for enhancing teacher effectiveness in both pre-service and in-service settings. Furthermore, it can serve as a cost-effective and viable resource in various educational settings (Göker, 2016). According to the participant accounts, it doesn't seem that keeping a journal to document one's teaching activities is a typical habit. In their notebooks, the persons primarily—though erratically—document educational techniques and pupil behaviors. According to Lohman (2005), informal learning refers to any learning that takes place while on the job, is employee-driven, requires mental, physical, or emotional effort on the part of the employee, and ultimately leads to the development of professional skills and knowledge.

As a result of this study, participants have come to the conclusion that they must incorporate specific models and strategies into their note-taking process after their teaching experiences. This newfound awareness after the workshops and reflective logs have made the teachers in the participant group realize the importance of doing so, and they become more confident that they will be able to

gain new professional skills and knowledge while going forward in their professional experiences.

#### **5.1.1.5 Student Feedback**

For teachers, getting positive student feedback is crucial. Teachers who receive unfavorable feedback from students tend to experience heightened negative emotions associated with the feedback, which in turn increases the likelihood of implementing unwarranted modifications to their instructional practices. Furthermore, these teachers possess a lower level of teaching experience. Teachers who have accumulated more years of teaching experience tend to receive a greater amount of positive feedback from their students. Additionally, these experienced teachers tend to exhibit more positive emotions in response to the feedback they receive. Furthermore, they are less inclined to make unnecessary alterations to their teaching methods based on this feedback. Nevertheless, it is important to note that a significant majority of teachers possess a strong sense of professional pride and integrity, and thus refrain from making what they perceive as unwarranted modifications to their instructional practices based on student feedback.

However, it is crucial to acknowledge that this is contingent upon the subjective interpretation of each teacher, which may be influenced by factors such as the perceived credibility of the feedback and a hesitancy to deviate from established instructional approaches (Flodén, 2016). When teachers develop an inclination towards collecting student feedback on teaching and learning, it has the potential to foster a mutually beneficial form of classroom research. However, this practice also raises ethical considerations (Hoban & Hastings, 2006).

Teachers use student feedback as a tool to better understand their students' viewpoints. Experienced teachers make an effort to consider their students' perspectives in a variety of classroom situations in order to assess their teaching strategies, meet their students' educational needs, and promote long-lasting learning, as expressed by all participants. Communication is a requirement for everyone involved in education, including students. To learn effectively, both teachers and students must reflect. In our various classrooms, seasoned teachers will make an effort to view themselves from the viewpoints of their students.

### **5.1.1.6 Observational Reflection in Teaching Practices**

According to Cosh (1999), individuals engaged in peer observation have the opportunity to evaluate their own teaching practices in relation to the teaching practices of others. Additionally, Donnelly (2007) suggests that implementing a reflective model of peer observation can serve as a preventive measure against teacher isolation and the development of monotonous and repetitive teaching methods. While it is not being argued that all language teachers should constantly engage in self-critique (Blommaert, 2005), it is still proposed that peer observation plays a significant role in promoting critical evaluation of practice and improving teaching and learning (Harper & Nicolson, 2013).

It is a prevalent occurrence that teachers exhibit reluctance towards classroom observation, despite its widespread recognition as a significant element in professional growth and evaluation. Bollington et al. (1990) assert that classroom observation, as a significant method for professional growth, should not be limited to evaluators observing those being evaluated. It is conceivable to conduct classroom observations that are exclusively focused on professional growth and detached from personnel evaluation.

The utilization of classroom observation that is separate from the evaluation process enables teachers to effectively engage in peer coaching without the concern of being assessed on their performance. The inclusion of classroom observation remains a crucial element within the framework of a teacher evaluation system. Nevertheless, it is both feasible and advantageous to construct a classroom observation model exclusively intended for the enhancement of instructional practices and collaboration among colleagues (Lam, 2001).

Workplace learning strategies are the techniques people use to pick up new knowledge and perspectives. Observing other people is said to be one of the strategies used, according to Hara (2001). The participants' contributions indicate that during the process of reciprocal observation, coworkers reflect on their own pedagogical practices and use pertinent questions to improve their teaching strategies.

In conclusion, the arguments presented underscore the vital role of peer observation and classroom observation in enhancing teaching practices. As Cosh

(1999), Donnelly (2007), and others have noted, these methods offer significant opportunities for teachers to critically evaluate their practices in relation to others, fostering professional growth and mitigating the risks of isolation and stagnation in teaching methods. While constant self-critique, as cautioned by Blommaert (2005), may not be necessary, the use of peer observation as a tool for critical evaluation and improvement is invaluable (Harper & Nicolson, 2013). The reluctance of teachers to engage in classroom observation, as discussed by Bollington et al. (1990), can be addressed by separating the observation process from performance evaluation, thus encouraging peer coaching and collaborative learning. This approach, as Lam (2001) suggests, not only enriches instructional practices but also strengthens collegial collaboration. Furthermore, workplace learning strategies, as highlighted by Hara (2001), show that observing peers in action leads to reflective and improved teaching strategies. Ultimately, the incorporation of these observation techniques within educational settings promises a more dynamic, reflective, and effective teaching environment, benefiting both teachers and learners alike.

## **5.1.2 Reflection-on-action Practices' Contribution to Workplace Learning**

### **5.1.2.1 Teachers' Enjoyment While Teaching and Learning**

The experience of joy is crucial for cultivating a positive perception of the teaching experience. Additionally, the support of colleagues plays a vital role in fostering a sense of belonging and acceptance within a group. Emotional security, solidarity, and the feeling of being valued are essential prerequisites for effective collaboration and integration among teachers. Engaging in the practice of vocalizing one's thoughts and engaging in unstructured writing to express the pleasure derived from the act of teaching and learning, as well as discovering satisfaction in novel and innovative forms of collaboration, facilitated the acquisition of a more profound comprehension of the difficulties inherent in the role of a teacher.

There is a need to conduct further investigation into the methods by which we can enhance the overall achievement of all students. This can be achieved not only through the continuous development of innovative solutions, but also by

fostering a culture of care and support among individuals within the educational community. The significance of joy is evident in its role as a fundamental emotion that motivates the achievement of both teachers and learners (Mag et al., 2021). In order to cultivate a sense of joy in the process of learning and teaching, it is imperative for the educational system to adapt to the demands of the 21st century and concurrently revamp the curricula at multiple levels to enhance their pertinence and inclusivity. There is a necessity to reassess the emotional dimension of the pedagogical process in order to reinstate a sense of joy. This necessitates a greater emphasis on the enhancement of teachers' abilities within teacher-training institutions to effectively integrate the human element into the process of teaching and learning.

It is acknowledged that additional research is warranted in this domain, and it is posited that teachers who cultivate a sense of delight in the learning process will inevitably encounter a corresponding sense of gratification in their instructional endeavors (Omidire et al., 2021). Teacher happiness is a significant factor in determining the motivation and engagement of students. Students may be inspired in the classroom by expressing positive emotions like joy. According to Toraby and Modarresi (2018), a teacher's level of joy may have an impact on how well pupils think they are learning from them. One of the crucial elements in determining the motivation and involvement of students is the level of joy that teachers exhibit, as participants discussed during the study.

#### **5.1.2.2 Collaborative Lesson Planning**

The establishment of a conducive environment is imperative for facilitating teacher collaboration. According to Lindahl (2011), school leaders are required to offer ample time, appropriate physical environments, effective incentive systems, and well-established communication frameworks in order to facilitate collaborative efforts among teachers. Furthermore, it is imperative that department heads assume a prominent role in cultivating an authentic culture of collaboration within their respective work environments. Therefore, it is imperative for department heads to collaborate with teachers and establish efficient communication strategies, fostering an environment where teachers feel comfortable and secure in voicing significant inquiries and expressing diverse perspectives during their collective professional

endeavors (Senge, 2006). In addition, it is crucial for teachers to recognize collaboration as a significant avenue for their professional growth (Hipp & Huffman, 2010) and adopt an active and introspective approach in their collaborative endeavors (Timperley et al., 2007; Yuan & Zhang, 2016).

According to the study participants, there has been a tremendous flow of knowledge and insights among them as a result of teachers discussing their experiences relating to lesson design, classroom instruction, and student feedback. This procedure improves teachers' instructional strategies and facilitates the collaborative creation of lesson plans. Such events may occur accidentally within a department or may be purposefully planned through group efforts including the entire faculty. Regardless of how well-organized they are, both entities complement one another.

Workplace-based formal learning includes structured learning programs that are designed to help people acquire the specific skills, knowledge, and understanding needed for successful work performance. It is crucial that informal learning reinforces and complements formal education for it to provide the desired results (Barnett, 1999; Ellström, 2001). As described by Garavan et al. (2002), informal learning is a collection of processes that take place in particular organizational settings.

The main emphasis of these processes is on the accumulation and integration of a wide variety of knowledge, abilities, values, and emotions. The main result of this learning is a change in behavior, both on an individual and a team level. Therefore, it is possible to argue that informal and formal schooling have a positive feedback loop.

According to study by Nye et al. (2004) as well as Sanders and Horn (1998), it has been discovered that the effectiveness and competence of the teacher have a significant impact on the quality of a child's education. Sociocultural theory, according to Eun (2010), defines knowledge as being placed within specific cultural settings that were created and evolved over time to meet real-world issues that arise within a specific culture and society. It is crucial to participate in frequent and strategically timed professional development activities in order to support the acquisition of information, competence, and confidence. Although essential, the

official allotment of time for professional development is insufficient for teachers to gain knowledge and skills.

### **5.1.2.3 Establishing Effective Teaching/Work Climate**

The importance of trust and positive relationships among teachers within communities of practice is apparent. Thus, it is imperative for teachers to actively participate in collaborative learning, fostering mutual understanding and agreement. Collaborative endeavors are imperative for teachers to function as cohesive teams and cultivate trust and professional rapport over an extended period. However, achieving this necessitates a concerted and collective endeavor from teachers, along with the backing of their colleagues. The organization of learning activities should facilitate an environment where teachers can freely engage with one another, without apprehension, in order to foster support and promote their professional growth.

The creation of a congenial learning environment is imperative, as it fosters an atmosphere conducive to open communication and collaboration among teachers. By cultivating a friendly ambiance, teachers are afforded the opportunity to freely exchange ideas and establish meaningful connections with their peers. (Akinyemi et al., 2020). Enhancing the institutional safety measures of the school contributes to the development of in-service teachers' human capital through the enhancement of professional learning opportunities and the fostering of a conducive teaching climate within the school environment.

In broad terms, it can be inferred that educational institutions that adopt a collaborative leadership approach and foster a secure institutional climate have the potential to enhance the professional growth of their teachers. This can be achieved through the establishment of a supportive environment for professional learning and teaching, as well as through investment in ongoing professional development initiatives (Belay et al., 2021).

The information provided by the participants indicates similar findings that sharing personal experiences can benefit a person's personal growth trajectory. Thus, sharing experiences not only promotes professional development but also boosts confidence. It is evident from the accounts of the participants that exchanging experiences can positively affect each person's personal learning curve.

## 6. CONCLUSION

This section provides pedagogical implications, limitations of the study, and suggestions for future research in the light of the findings of the study.

### 6.1 Pedagogical Implications of the Study

This study delves into the critical aspects of educational dynamics, focusing on the pedagogical implications that stem from key areas of teacher development and collaboration. The core elements explored include reflective thinking, peer and colleague collaboration, teacher professional learning, and structuring teacher reflection processes. Reflective thinking is examined as a fundamental tool for teachers, enabling them to introspectively analyze and enhance their teaching methodologies. Peer and colleague collaboration is highlighted as a vital component for fostering a supportive and dynamic educational environment, encouraging shared learning and growth. The aspect of teacher professional learning is scrutinized in relation to ongoing development and adaptation in pedagogical practices. Lastly, the study emphasizes the importance of structuring teacher reflection processes to ensure systematic and effective professional growth. These elements collectively offer a comprehensive understanding of how teachers can evolve and excel in their roles, ultimately leading to improved educational outcomes.

The study highlights the crucial importance of reflective thinking for teachers and its significant contribution to their professional growth. It is imperative that teachers engage in deep and critical reflection about their pedagogical approaches and educational experiences. This initiative creates an atmosphere that promotes transparent and fearless expression of thoughts and ideas by teachers, thereby eliminating any concerns or reservations about potential criticism or evaluation. Reflective thinking fosters a culture of open conversations and active listening, empowering teachers to identify their strengths and areas for improvement. Additionally, it aids them in cultivating profound insights by employing reflective questioning techniques. Teachers can enhance their instructional strategies and help their students learn more effectively by engaging in reflective thinking and professional development.

Peer collaboration is encouraged, and the study may also support professional development by highlighting its advantages. Teachers might be urged to work with peers to reflect on their pedagogical strategies. This also promotes discussion groups or peer reflections in order to cultivate a range of perspectives and facilitate collective learning. Group settings offer individuals the chance to engage in dialogue and interaction, thereby presenting opportunities for them to challenge and broaden their own cognitive perspectives.

The facilitation of teacher preparation plays a critical role in ensuring that teachers possess the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively address the diverse needs of their students and establish productive learning environments. The study must aid in the creation of new teacher preparation courses that prioritize the value of action-based reflection in the workplace. These initiatives should focus on compelling teachers to learn reflectively, critically analyze their teaching practices, and consider alternative approaches.

Structured reflection activities must be incorporated to help teachers develop their reflective thinking skills. Teachers may experience an increase in their sense of agency as they become more self-reflective and committed to their ongoing professional development. This might produce better results for both teachers and students. Teachers cultivate a profound comprehension of their pedagogical craft, enhance their instructional methodologies, and engage in judicious decision-making regarding their teaching endeavors. Through the utilization of reflective practices, teachers enhance their autonomy in shaping their pedagogy and professional development, while also adjusting their instructional approaches to meet the diverse needs of their students. Furthermore, they foster collaboration with fellow teachers in order to collectively make informed decisions regarding instruction.

In conclusion, the study illuminates the significant role of reflective thinking, peer/colleague collaboration, professional learning, and structured reflection in shaping the pedagogical landscape. Reflective thinking emerges as a cornerstone for personal and professional growth in education, allowing teachers to critically evaluate and refine their practices. The importance of peer and colleague collaboration is underscored as a means of fostering a community of shared

knowledge and support, enriching the educational experience for both teachers and students. Teacher professional learning is reaffirmed as a continuous journey, vital for adapting to the evolving demands of education. Structuring teacher reflection processes is identified as key to ensuring that this development is both purposeful and impactful. These findings highlight the interconnectedness of these aspects in contributing to the overall effectiveness and advancement of educational practices, underscoring the need for a holistic approach to teacher development.

## **6.2 Limitations of the Study**

The first obvious drawback of this qualitative case study was its timeline. The study was initiated in Covid-19 pandemic. It was an exhausting time of the year for participants with all Covid-19 restrictions at school. The study's findings may have been influenced by various Covid-19 related restrictions, such as lockdown measures and the shift to online learning, which could have impacted the outcomes of the study. Although participants were volunteers for the study, it was clear that attending workshops after school time and being in collaboration with colleagues at school with protection masks and sharing experiences was difficult for them. This led to data quality issues, such as low response rates and thus potentially undermined the depth of the data analysis.

Another limitation was the study's brief duration due to Covid-19 precautions, which was only four months, from February to June 2022. Due to time restrictions and participant workload, it was not possible to extend the study's data collecting procedure to a single school year. This would have allowed for a more complete, in-depth, and deeper comprehension of the teachers' reflective practices and workplace learning techniques.

The study has limited focus on a single case study may result in a narrow scope that fails to comprehensively encompass the intricacies of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher reflections across diverse contexts. Given the fact that it had alternative educational curricula, the researcher might gather much more data on teachers' reflective practices and workplace learning.

Although generalizability is not the primary objective of this study, the small sample size does raise considerations about how well it represents the broader population of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers. A more extensive sample could potentially offer a wider range of perspectives, implementations, and insights into the reflective practices and workplace learning strategies of these teachers.

Although the study is designed as a case study, it is important to recognize that its findings may have limited applicability beyond the specific participants involved. Due to the nature of the study, individual, cultural, or social biases could influence the outcomes and interpretations. Notably, all participants were colleagues of the researcher at the same school where he serves as an assistant principal, establishing strong professional connections. This relationship may have impacted the interpretation of the study's findings. However, it is crucial to note that this established rapport with participants provided a foundation of trust from the beginning of the study and created a comfortable environment for data collection.

### **6.3 Suggestions for Further Research**

The study's conclusions and limitations can offer valuable guidance and suggestions for future research endeavors. To enhance the generalizability of the findings, future studies may consider increasing the sample size and expanding the geographical area under investigation. This approach will facilitate the inclusion of a more diverse range of perspectives regarding the reflective practices of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers and their professional development within the workplace.

A potential approach for examining the influence of reflection-on-action on the professional growth of teachers over an extended period of time is through the implementation of a longitudinal study. A comparative study may be undertaken to examine and compare the effects of reflection-on-action within various teaching and learning environments.

The utilization of a mixed methods approach, which involves the integration of qualitative and quantitative data, has the potential to yield a more comprehensive

comprehension of teachers' reflection-on-action experiences. An interventional research endeavor may be undertaken to examine the efficacy of reflection-on-action training programs in augmenting teachers' capacity for reflection and professional growth, specifically within the realm of online education.

An additional proposition for subsequent inquiry entails examining an alternative educational setting. The participants have been engaged in a setting that adheres to a standardized curriculum established at the national level. The presence of diverse educational settings, characterized by varying curricula and instructional methodologies, such as those found in international programs, will afford researchers with enhanced prospects for data collection.

In conclusion, future research endeavors may seek to gain a deeper comprehension of the cognitive processes involved in reflection, as well as the specific content upon which individuals reflect. Additionally, it would be valuable to investigate the perceived benefits of workplace learning resulting from engagement in reflective practices. The field of cultural analysis could benefit from future studies that explore the potential influence of cultural factors on teachers' experience of reflection-on-action. Such investigations would provide valuable insights into cross-cultural variations and their associated implications.

#### **6.4 Conclusion**

The primary objective of this qualitative inquiry was to undertake a comprehensive examination of teachers' encounters in instructing English as a second language, with a particular emphasis on workplace learning and subsequent reflection. The present study examined the reflective practices of English as a foreign language (EFL) teacher and their impact on professional development within the workplace. The objective of this study was to expand the existing body of literature concerning the viewpoints of teachers in two specific domains. The primary objective of this study was to elucidate the viewpoints of teachers regarding the significance of reflective thinking in their ongoing professional development. This study seeks to elucidate the viewpoints of teachers regarding the manner in which reflective practice facilitates the process of knowledge acquisition within professional environments.

The findings of the study demonstrate that the participants' perceptions of reflection-on-action exhibited variability in their perspectives both prior to and subsequent to the workshops. The results underscore the significance of teacher professional development in fostering reflective thinking and action. Participants maintain that this phenomenon has altered their perspectives on instructional strategies, practices, and procedures.

The participants' perceptions of workplace learning indicate a strong appreciation for the exchange of experiences with their peers. The act of sharing experiences facilitates professional growth and enhances self-assurance in one's own learning journey. The data provided by the participants also clearly demonstrates that engaging in self-reflection facilitates the development of self-awareness. The individuals assert that during the contemplation of their pedagogical approach, they engage in the formulation of inquiries directed towards themselves. The statements provided by the participants indicate that engaging in introspection promotes the development of self-awareness. The individuals contend that when considering their instructional strategy, they engage in the formulation of thought-provoking inquiries. Based on the reflections of the participants, it appears that maintaining a journal to record one's pedagogical endeavors is not a customary practice.

As a result of the study, participants reached a consensus to incorporate certain models into their note-taking practices, recognizing the newfound significance of such approaches to gain additional skills and knowledge. As articulated by all individuals involved, experienced teachers demonstrate a proactive approach in acknowledging the viewpoints of their students across diverse classroom scenarios, with the aim of evaluating their instructional methods, addressing their students' educational requirements, and fostering enduring knowledge acquisition.

The findings suggest that, in the context of reciprocal observation, participants engage in self-reflection regarding their pedagogical practices and employ relevant questioning techniques to enhance their teaching strategies.

Participants engaged in a discussion regarding the correlation between the motivation and involvement of students and the level of joy demonstrated by

teachers, highlighting it as a critical factor. Based on the accounts provided by the participants, it is evident that a significant exchange of knowledge and insights has occurred as a direct consequence of teachers engaging in discussions pertaining to their experiences in areas such as lesson design, classroom instruction, and student feedback. This procedure enhances the instructional strategies employed by teachers and fosters the collaborative development of lesson plans. These occurrences may arise unintentionally within a department or may be deliberately organized through collaborative endeavors involving the entire faculty. Irrespective of the level of organization, both entities exhibit mutual complementarity.

The act of sharing experiences not only facilitates the enhancement of one's professional development, but also serves to bolster an individual's self-assurance. The testimonies provided by the participants clearly indicate that the act of sharing experiences has a beneficial impact on the individual's personal learning trajectory. The act of sharing experiences contributes to the development of individuals' confidence, thereby facilitating their professional advancement.

In light of these findings, it can be concluded that understanding the role of reflection-on-action practices has altered EFL teachers' perspectives on instructional strategies, practices, and procedures.

The participants' perceptions of workplace learning indicate a strong appreciation for the exchange of experiences with their peers. The act of sharing experiences facilitates professional growth and enhances self-assurance in one's own learning journey (Coolahan, 2002). Thus, the ongoing renewal of the teaching profession is widely recognized as crucial for unlocking its full potential and attaining desired educational reforms. The principle of lifelong learning should be considered as the primary factor for the future revitalization of the teaching profession.

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## 8. APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1: Reflection Workshop Slides

**DEFINITION**

Think about what reflection means for you.

There is no one correct answer:

[Google Form](#)



**REFLECTION-IN-ACTION**

Schön divided teachers' actions into reflecting-in-action and reflecting-on-action (Schön 1983).

- ❖ Reflection-in-action happens when action and reflection are **simultaneous**: the learner constantly adjusts and changes the new information assimilated **while performing**.
- ❖ Reflecting in-action, practitioners **can stop during an action, make necessary adjustments, make informed decisions**, and, if necessary, change the way of accomplishing the task.

## APPENDIX 2: Reflective Practice and Reflective Models Workshop Slides

### PROS & CONS OF REFLECTIVE MODELS

PROS	CONS
Gives you a structure to follow	Implies that steps have to be followed in a certain way
Provides a starting point	In the real world you may not start at the 'beginning'
Allows you to assess all levels of situation	Models may not apply to every situation
You will know when the process is complete	Reflective practice is a continuous process

Can you think of any other pros and cons?

[Google Form](#)

### TYPES OF QUESTION IN COMPARATIVE REFLECTIVE CONVERSATIONS

- ♣ What different strategies might I use in my teaching?
- ♣ What are the advantages or disadvantages of using particular strategies for diverse learners?
- ♣ How might colleagues and/or students explain what is happening in my classroom?
- ♣ In what ways can I improve the ineffective elements of my teaching?
- ♣ How do colleagues accomplish these same objectives?

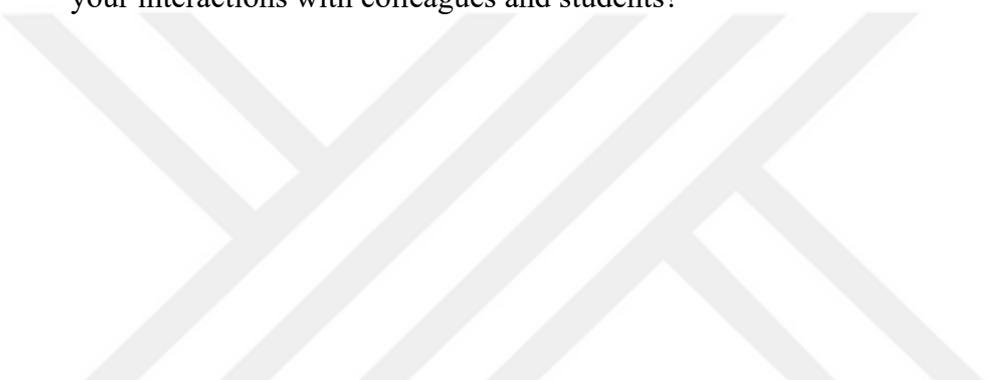
### APPENDIX 3: Reflection-on-action Workshop Slides

## SUGGESTED PROCEDURES FOR REFLECTIVE TEACHING IN EFL CONTEXTS

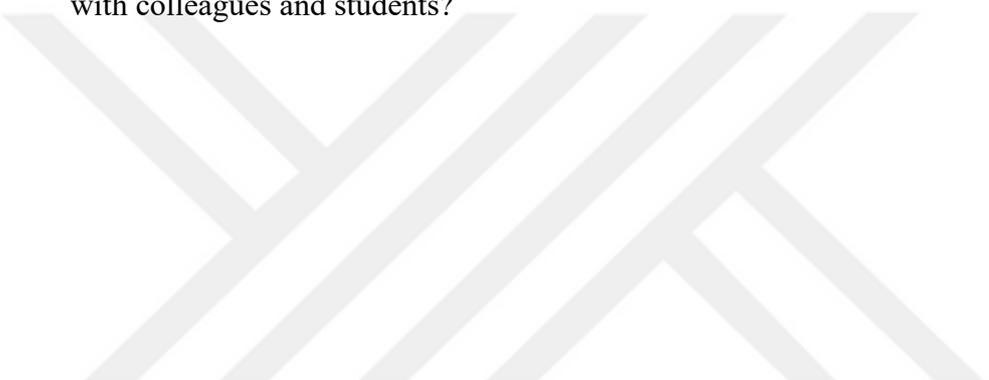
- ❖ **Collaborative action research** requires the intervention of several participants to **gather different perspectives** of situations encountered in the classroom.
- ❖ **Observing** one's teaching through video and audio recordings: for both individual professional **self-assessment** and **peer-assessment**.



#### **APPENDIX 4: Pre-Workshop Focus Group Interview Questions**

1. What methods do you use to assess and understand the effect of your teaching on student learning?
  2. How do you reflect on your teaching practices? Do you use any tools or models to reflect? How often do you reflect on your teaching practices?
  3. Do you utilize any methods, such as journaling, to reflect on your teaching practices? How might such reflection contribute to your professional development as a teacher?
  4. In what ways do you believe that reflecting on your teaching practices influences your interactions with colleagues and students?
- 

## **APPENDIX 5: Post-Workshop Focus Group Interview Questions**

1. How do you think the reflection workshops will influence your habitual teaching practices and your understanding of reflection as a teacher?
  2. How will you reflect on your teaching practices? Are you going to use any tools or models to reflect? Is there a favorite model that you think applies to your teaching experience?
  3. What are your thoughts on the potential impact of reflective practices on enhancing your teaching methods?
  4. How might reflecting on your teaching practices influence your relationships with colleagues and students?
- 

## APPENDIX 6: Final Focus Group Interview Questions

1. What impact do you believe the reflection workshops had on your routine teaching practices and your perspective on reflection as a teacher?
2. How would you assess the insights gained from your reflections on teaching?
  - a. Were there any particular questions or prompts in your reflections that you found especially engaging or thought-provoking?
  - b. Did the reflection process introduce you to any new questions or perspectives you hadn't considered before?
  - c. Have you shared any of your reflective insights with colleagues, and if so, what was the outcome of that sharing?
  - d. In your view, has reflecting on your teaching experiences contributed to the way you interact with students?
3. In what ways do you anticipate that reflection might enhance your teaching practices? Are there specific aspects of your teaching practices that you tend to focus on more during your reflection process?
4. Have you observed any instances in your before teaching-while teaching or post teaching experiences after reflecting on your teaching?
5. Are you willing to implement critical reflection into your teaching experience? why? If not, what could be the reasons?

## **APPENDIX 7: Weekly Reflective Journal Prompts**

My strengths in this teaching experience:

My weaknesses in this teaching experience:

My role in my learners' learning experience:

Will I share this experience with my colleagues?

Alternative ways to adapt my teaching practices:

