

Exploring the Relationship Between Reflective Practice and Language Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs (2010-2024): A Systematic Review

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Abstract

This manuscript presents a systematic review of empirical studies conducted between 2010 and 2024, analyzing ten studies on the relationship between reflective practice and language teachers' self-efficacy (LTSE) beliefs. The findings reveal the use of a diverse range of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods approaches, incorporating various data collection and measurement tools. The review underscores how reflective practice has positively influenced LTSE, supported by both statistical and qualitative evidence. Quantitative studies consistently show a positive relationship between reflective practice and LTSE beliefs, indicating that the two are mutually reinforcing, though the strength of this relationship varies across different studies. Qualitative and mixed methods studies add further nuance and detail to this relationship. By examining these dynamics, the review provides valuable insights for language teacher educators and policymakers, offering guidance on how to design reflective practice activities that effectively enhance LTSE beliefs.

Keywords: Reflective Practice, Language Teacher Self-efficacy (LTSE), Language Teacher Education (LTE), Reflectivity

Reflection in teaching is essential as it enables educators to critically evaluate their practice, identify areas for improvement, and adapt their strategies to better meet the needs of their students. It fosters continuous professional growth, enhances teaching effectiveness, and empowers teachers

to make informed, thoughtful decisions that positively impact learning outcomes (Borg, 2011). While questions remain about the relationship between teaching reflection and classroom practice, reflective practice is a firmly established domain of teacher education and research, and few would argue against the benefit of teachers reflecting (Farrell, 2016). On the other hand, self-efficacy—teachers' confidence in their ability to successfully carry out specific pedagogical tasks—has been shown to affect various aspects of teaching practice, but unlike reflective practice, it is a more recent research domain and its role as part of teacher education is not always clear.

Bandura's (1997) concept of self-efficacy highlights four key sources that shape an individual's beliefs about their abilities: personal performance accomplishments, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological states. In the context of language teaching, these sources hold particular relevance, as educators face distinct challenges inherent in language instruction. Reflective practices play a crucial role for language teachers in relation to these sources, allowing them to consider their own (un)successful teaching experiences, the teaching experiences of their peers and others, the verbal feedback they receive from students and other stakeholders, and finally how they emotionally respond to teaching. This reflective process can be a valuable tool in developing and reinforcing language teachers' self-efficacy beliefs (LTSE) in their ability to teach effectively.

The study of language teachers' self-efficacy (LTSE) beliefs has gained significant attention from researchers over the past two decades (Chacón, 2005; Wyatt, 2018; Faez et al., 2021). LTSE beliefs are considered crucial because they directly influence teachers' classroom practices (Choi & Lee, 2018; Karimi et al., 2016). These beliefs are dynamic and can change over time, which makes it important to examine the factors that contribute to these changes (Wyatt, 2018). Research consistently shows that teachers with higher self-efficacy are more likely to implement effective teaching strategies (Klassen et al., 2011). Given this, exploring the relationship between reflective practice and teacher self-efficacy is particularly relevant, especially as teacher education programs increasingly position educators as “thinking decision makers” (Borg, 2003, p. 81). Previous studies suggest that reflective practices positively impact LTSE (e.g., Moradkhani et al., 2017). However, the variety of reflective practices—ranging from formal journal writing to informal peer coaching—, the range of contexts/participants investigated, and the varied methodological approaches used complicates our understanding of how these practices contribute to changes in self-efficacy. One solution to this is to synthesize existing literature, which we do here. This manuscript presents a systematic review of the relationship between language teacher reflective practice and LTSE, focusing on empirical studies published between 2010 and 2024.

Language Teacher Self-Efficacy Beliefs

In language teacher education, there is heightened interest in the psychological aspects of language teaching (e.g., Mercer & Kostoulas, 2018) and confidence in teachers' skills and knowledge (e.g., Freeman, 2020). Self-efficacy, defined as an individual's confidence in their ability to successfully complete a task and achieve a desired outcome (Bandura, 1997), plays a crucial role in shaping human agency. Bandura (1997) argues that these beliefs in one's capabilities have a more substantial influence on people's motivation and behaviors than objective reality. Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs refer to their confidence in their ability to foster and facilitate learning in various "task and context-specific cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and social ways" (Wyatt, 2010, p. 603). These beliefs influence numerous aspects of teaching, including the effort teachers invest, their goals, hopes, and aspirations, their persistence and resilience in the face of challenges, their commitment to the profession, their teaching behaviors, and even their job satisfaction and stress

levels (Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007, 2021; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Additionally, self-efficacy beliefs are context- and subject-specific (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001), with the "fluid and dynamic" nature of these beliefs (Hoang & Wyatt, 2021, p. 11) being influenced by various factors such as classroom composition and size (Guo et al., 2011), context (e.g., Knoblauch & Woolfolk Hoy, 2008), and specific tasks (e.g., Wyatt & Dikilitas, 2019). In essence, teachers' efficacy beliefs shape their decisions and influence their actions.

Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk-Hoy (2001) developed the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) through the conceptual lens of Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory to measure teacher efficacy in general education. The scale is comprised of three factors: Student Engagement, Classroom Management, and Instructional Strategies, and is available in both a long form (24 items) and a short form (12 items). The TSES has become the most widely used efficacy survey to date and is used in many studies in this review; however, its application outside the realm of general education has faced criticism due to its broad categories and tendency to generalize self-efficacy across diverse teaching tasks and contexts (e.g., Karas et al, 2024; Wyatt, 2018;). While the TSES has been widely used to assess language teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, its original design for general education contexts limits its ability to capture the specific tasks of language teaching, even with modifications (Wyatt, 2018).

Given that self-efficacy is a context, domain and task-specific construct, in order to move beyond the TSES, researchers have developed specific scales to assess efficacy for specific purposes and contexts. For instance, domain-specific scales have been created to assess teachers' self-efficacy in inclusive classrooms (Sharma et al., 2012), music and visual arts (Morris et al., 2017), and second/foreign languages (S/FL) (Karas, 2019). The field of language teaching has gone even further with self-efficacy scales focused on teachers' confidence in teaching specific language sub-areas, such as grammar (Wyatt & Dikilitas, 2021), pronunciation (Zhang & Faez, 2024), and L2 writing (Yu et al., 2023). Other studies have aimed to create self-efficacy scales tailored to specific countries or contexts, such as Thompson and Woodman's (2019) language-teaching scale for the Japanese context. While this heavy reliance on surveys in LTSE work is in contrast to the heavily qualitative approach often found in teacher reflection research (e.g., Farrell, 2016), given the potential of reflective practices to enhance LTSE, understanding how these practices contribute to teachers' evolving sense of efficacy is critical for informing both teacher development and effective instructional strategies.

Reflective Practice

Over the past two decades, research on reflective practice within TESOL has expanded (Farrell, 2007; Wyatt, 2010b; Freeman, 2016). Reflective practice is a foundational element of teacher education, enabling educators to gain new insights and critically evaluate and refine their teaching. Dewey's (1933) early work emphasized that the connection between experience and reflection is foundational to reflective practice in teacher education, advocating for reflection to be purposeful, open-ended, and grounded in experience. Later, Schön (1983) expanded on this, proposing that professionals, including teachers, should engage in reflection both after their actions (reflection-on-action), during their practice (reflection-in-action), and when also planning future actions based on past experiences (reflection-for-action). This ongoing reflective process enables teachers to enhance their practice continually.

Another prominent model is Gibbs' (1988) reflective cycle, which includes six stages: 1) describing the experience, 2) reflecting on feelings and thoughts about the experience, 3) evaluating the experience, 4) analyzing the situation to make sense of it, 5) drawing conclusions on what has been learned, and 6) creating an action plan for similar future situations. Although a universal definition of reflective practice remains elusive, Farrell (2015) defines it within the context of TESOL as a cognitive process in which language teachers thoughtfully and systematically examine their teaching practices. This involves collecting data, engaging in dialogue with others, and using the gathered information to make informed decisions about student learning and teaching, both inside and outside the classroom. Farrell (2015) further cautioned against a routine, simplistic approach to reflection, suggesting that an effective model should encompass not only the technical aspects of teaching but also the teacher's internal elements (e.g., philosophy, principles, and theory) and external factors (e.g., social, cultural, and political contexts). Building on this perspective, Farrell (2015) proposed a holistic framework for reflective practice in TESOL, consisting of five stages: 1) philosophy, 2) principles, 3) theory, 4) practice, and 5) beyond practice. Farrell (2019) emphasized that these stages do not develop linearly but instead interact with one another, with the most significant reflection emerging from actual teaching experiences. This aligns well with LTSE theory as previously noted, teachers' (un)successful teaching experiences are the strongest influence on their teaching confidence; thus, reflecting on their teaching experiences is crucial. Farrell's (2015) model remains the most widely used, but classroom teachers are naturally encouraged to find a model that suits their unique context and needs, personalizing these models to support their own teaching practice effectively.

Methodology

This systematic review examined the following research question:

How has reflective practice impacted teachers' LTSE beliefs?

In developing this systematic review of empirical studies, we began our search for studies conducted between 2000 and 2024. To qualify for inclusion, we looked for empirical studies published in English examining the relationship between reflective practice and self-efficacy beliefs. We also wanted to include only studies in the field of TESOL and related to language teachers. First, we planned to adopt an inclusive approach (Norris & Ortega, 2006), including both published and unpublished (e.g., dissertations, conference proceedings, etc.) studies. Therefore, to find as many relevant articles as possible, we used several keywords in different order combinations, such as "language teacher reflective practice and self-efficacy," "reflective practice and language teacher self-efficacy," and "action research and language teacher self-efficacy." Action research was included because reflection is an essential component of action research. We searched major databases such as Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), ProQuest, and ScienceDirect. Google Scholar was also consulted after searching databases as a further measure to ensure no manuscripts were missed. Finally, a snowball search was conducted by checking the reference list of studies included. Initially, we identified 32 studies, but after reading the abstract of each study, we removed nine studies that were either related to general teachers or were not within this timeframe. After reading the full text of the remaining articles, we removed studies that did not 1) identify the survey used, 2) appropriately conceptualize self-efficacy, or 3) provide sufficient and detailed methodological information. While this meant we did not adhere to the inclusive approach, we felt this was the best course of action as this enhanced the focus of the review and ensured studies included the necessary information for us to review them. As part of this process, we narrowed our criteria further and only included studies published in Scopus-

indexed journals that maintain a rigorous peer review process. Therefore, this systematic review includes ten studies published between 2010 and 2024 as none of the studies identified were conducted before 2010. These ten studies all explored the relationship between reflective practice and LTSE beliefs. While this is not an exhaustive list of all studies that look at this relationship, the studies included in this review are marked with an asterisk in the reference list and represent an overview of prominent studies in this area. During the coding process, we recorded key details such as the publication year, country of origin, number of participants, participant roles (pre-service or in-service), years of experience, the nature of reflective practice, study methodology, tools or methods used to capture and/or measure reflective practice, methods or scales used to assess LTSE beliefs and the study findings.

Findings

General Characteristics

Nine out of the ten studies focused on in-service teachers, with only one involving pre-service participants. Geographically, six studies were conducted in Iran, two in Oman, one in Turkey, and one in China. As noted by Wyatt (2024) in a systematic review of LTSE research, Iran remains the leading country in terms of the number of LTSE studies. It's also worth highlighting that none of the studies were conducted in an English as a second language (ESL) context. Regarding research methods, three studies were purely qualitative, five employed quantitative methods, and two used a mixed-methods approach.

Of the three qualitative studies, two (Wyatt, 2010; 2013) were longitudinal case studies focused on a single participant, while one (Zonoubi et al., 2017) investigated the impact of two six-month Professional Learning Community (PLC) interventions on the self-efficacy of 10 novice and experienced EFL teachers. Data for this study was collected through interviews, reflective journals, and audio recordings of PLC meetings. The findings highlighted how different elements of self-efficacy—such as classroom management and language proficiency—were influenced for both novice and experienced teachers. Wyatt (2010, 2013) collected data through interviews, observations, and participants' written reflective journals, focusing on the experiences of two EFL teachers enrolled in a three-year in-service BA TESOL program. In his 2010 study, Wyatt examines the self-efficacy development of an experienced EFL teacher using group work with young learners, revealing inconsistent growth across various areas. In the 2013 study, he details the journey of a teacher transitioning from secondary to lower primary English, showing how she boosted her self-efficacy through reflective practice, including revisiting and rethinking the same lesson material multiple times in a single day.

Five studies employed quantitative methods to explore the relationship between reflective practice and LTSE beliefs. Four of these studies were conducted in Iran, and one in China, with participant sizes ranging from 150 (Rahim & Weisi, 2018) to 614 (Han & Wang, 2021). The most used scale for measuring reflectivity was Akbari et al.'s (2010) English Language Teacher Reflective Inventory (ELTRI), utilized in four studies. This scale consists of 5 subscales focused on different types of reflection - practical, cognitive, meta-cognitive, affective, and critical reflection, across 29 items, and focuses on how often teachers engage in each type of reflection. The Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) by Tschannen-Moran & Hoy (2001) was the most frequently used efficacy scale, appearing in four studies as well. In three studies (Nostratnia & Moradi, 2017; Ravandpour, 2019; Han & Wang, 2021), both the ELTRI and TSES were used, making them somewhat comparable. In Babaie & Abednia's (2016) study, efficacy beliefs were measured using

a modified version of Dellinger et al.'s (2008) Teachers' Efficacy Beliefs System (TEBS) scale. Thus, like many LTSE studies, researchers opted to modify a general education scale for language teachers. Ravandpour (2019) examined the relationship between teachers' professional development and self-efficacy, with engagement in professional development assessed using Tabatabaee Yazdi et al.'s (2017) Continuing Professional Development Questionnaire, which includes 21 items across four subscales: Updating, Collaborating, Decision-making, and Reflecting. For this review, the Reflecting subscale is particularly relevant.

The remaining two studies, conducted in Turkey and Iran used mixed-methods. Cabaroglu (2014) used the TSES to assess the self-efficacy of 60 pre-service teachers before and after they completed an action research project. In addition to the TSES, data was collected through reflective journals and a post-course evaluation form. The quantitative analysis focused on measuring teachers' reported self-efficacy changes following the action research component. Moradkhani et al. (2017) collected data from 102 Iranian EFL teachers, using the ELTRI and TSES scales to measure their reflectivity and self-efficacy beliefs, respectively. Additionally, follow-up interviews were conducted with nine teachers to gather further insights. From these 10 studies, we see that the quantitative tradition in LTSE research is maintained with some qualitative and mixed methods studies in the minority. Table 1 provides an overview of the key characteristics and findings of the reviewed studies. It begins with three qualitative studies (1-3), followed by two mixed-methods studies (4-5), and concludes with five quantitative studies (6-10).

Impact of Reflective Practice on LTSE Beliefs

The results from the ten studies examining the relationship between reflective practice and LTSE beliefs, both quantitative and qualitative, consistently, but not always, demonstrate a positive relationship between the two. Five studies used purely quantitative methods, while two employed mixed methods, resulting in a total of seven studies examining statistical relationships. Regardless of the measurement tools, surveys, or correlation metrics used, all seven studies found a significantly positive relationship between reflective practice and efficacy beliefs. However, studies approached this in different ways and not all relationships were statistically significant when looking at reflective practice and self-efficacy subscales. Furthermore, how the relationship between reflection and LTSE has been conceptualized is also interesting to note when looking across studies. Correlational analysis is common when quantitatively analyzing the relationship between reflective practice and LTSE (e.g., Han & Wang, 2022), but often, studies move beyond bivariate analysis and use multiple regression (e.g., Babaei & Abednia, 2016) and other more complex analyses. While bivariate correlations with Pearson's r or Spearman's ρ can present a bidirectional relationship between reflective practice and LTSE (i.e., they both impact each other), multiple regression seeks to 'predict' and measure the impact of variables on another variable, which presents the interesting issue of whether to include reflection as a predictor of self-efficacy (e.g., Nosratinia & Moradi, 2017), self-efficacy as a predictor of reflective practice (e.g., Han & Wang, 2022), or use both as predictor variables, potentially along with other variables, to predict the other (e.g., Babaei & Abednia, 2016).

First looking at the bivariate relationships, reflective practice and LTSE are consistently positively related. Thus, as teachers reflect more, their efficacy increases, but also, as teachers have higher self-efficacy, they seem to reflect more. Han and Wang (2022) found a strong correlation ($r = .601$) and this was significant. Rahimi and Weisi (2018) found a similar relationship ($r = .618$), but Babaei and Abednia (2016) found a much smaller significant correlation ($r = .27$), as did Moradkhani et al. (2017) ($r = .38$). Using Spearman's ρ , Nosratinia and Moradi (2017) found a

strong significant relationship of .763. While the strength of the relationship can vary, it is clear that LTSE and reflection positively impact one another.

Table 1. Summary of Articles Included in Review

| Article | Context | Participants | Reflective practice | LTSE beliefs | Reported Results |
|-------------------------------|---------|--|--|---|--|
| 1. Wyatt (2010) | Oman | An English teacher on an in-service BA TESOL program | Action research | 1) Interviews and reflective journals 2) Researcher's observations | Action research helped the participant grow his self-efficacy |
| 2. Wyatt (2013) | Oman | An English teacher on an in-service BA TESOL program | Reflective assignments | 1) Interviews and reflective conversations 2) Researcher's observations | Reflective practice helped the participant develop practical knowledge and more positive LTSE beliefs on the particular task. |
| 3. Zonoubi et al. (2017) | Iran | 10 EFL novice and experienced teachers | 1. Reflective Jnl 2. Peer-coaching, collaborative reflection 3. Critical thinking about teaching practice in a PLC | 1. Pre and Post interviews 2. Reflective journals 3. Recordings of PLC meetings | 1. Experienced teachers' self-efficacy improved in instructional strategies and perceived language proficiency. 2. Novice teachers' self-efficacy increased in classroom management, autonomy, and perceived language proficiency. 3. Participants in both groups developed a stronger sense of professional community membership. |
| 4. Cabaroglu (2014) | Turkey | 60 Student teachers in an Initial Teacher Education Program | Action research | 1) TSES: 24 items 2) Reflective journals 3) Course evaluation form | <u>1. Quantitative:</u> Significant increase in student teachers' self-efficacy after the completion of action research projects. <u>2. Qualitative:</u> 1) Managing student misbehavior and enhanced student participation/motivation 2) Positive effects on teacher autonomy, creativity, reflectivity and confidence. |
| 5. Moradkhani et al. (2017) | Iran | 102 EFL teachers teaching general English to adults in private language institutes | English Language Teacher Reflective Inventory (ELTRI) | 1) TSES: 24 items 2) 9 semi-structured interviews | <u>Quantitative</u> 1) All reflection subscales except critical reflection had significant positive relationships with teachers' self-efficacy 2. Metacognitive reflection was the only predictor of teachers' self-efficacy <u>Qualitative</u> Reflection on various dimensions of teaching contributes to teachers' self-efficacy through one of the four main efficacy sources. |
| 6. Babaei & Abednia (2016) | Iran | 300 in-service teachers teaching EFL communicative courses in seven language schools | English Language Teacher Reflective Inventory (ELTRI) | Modified Teachers' Efficacy Beliefs System-Self (TBES): 23 items | 1. Significant but weak positive relationships between general factors of teacher reflectiveness and self-efficacy. 2. Metacognitive reflection is the only predictor of teacher self-efficacy with a medium effect size. 3. Metacognitive reflection significantly correlates with three of four components of self-efficacy: Classroom Management, Instructional Strategies, and Student Engagement. 4. Cognitive reflection and Classroom Management Efficacy had a negative relationship. |
| 7. Nosratinia & Moradi (2017) | Iran | 194 EFL teachers | English Language Teacher Reflective Inventory (ELTRI) | TSES: 24 items | 1. Significant and positive correlation between reflective teaching and self-efficacy. 2. Compared with the Use of Motivational Strategies, reflective teaching significantly predicts the self-efficacy of participants. |
| 8. Rahimi & Weisi (2018) | Iran | 150 EFL teachers teaching general English to adults across 20 language institutes | English Language Teacher Reflective Inventory (ELTRI) | TSES: 24 items | 1. Significant and positive associations between reflective practice and self-efficacy. 2. All subscales of reflective practice significantly and positively correlated with research practice and self-efficacy. 3. Among reflective subscales, practical and cognitive reflection strongly predicted self-efficacy. |
| 9. Ravandpour (2019) | Iran | 247 EFL teachers teaching at different language institutes in Iran | Continuing Professional Development (CPD) survey | TSES: 24 items | All subscales of CPD are positive and significant predictors of self-efficacy: collaborating, decision-making, reflecting, and updating. |
| 10. Han & Wang (2021) | China | 614 Chinese EFL teachers teaching at different educational levels in China | English Language Teacher Reflective Inventory based (ELTRI) | TSES: 24 items | Teachers' self-efficacy and reflection are positively correlated. |

Studies have also moved beyond bivariate correlations to obtain a more complete understanding of the relationship between the two variables. Ravandpour (2019) used structural equation modelling and found that reflecting was a significant predictor of LTSE. Nosratinia and Moradi (2017) compared the impact of reflection and use of motivational strategies on LTSE with multiple regression and found reflection to be a large and significant predictor of LTSE. However, because the relationship between LTSE and reflection is bidirectional, some studies have used both as predictors. Rahimi and Weiss (2018) found that practical and cognitive reflection significantly predicted LTSE, but then also investigated the impact of LTSE subscales on reflective practice and found that, while classroom management self-efficacy was not significant, “the combination of subscales of self-efficacy strongly predicted the participants’ reflective practice” (p. 767). Babaei and Abednia (2016) noted that only metacognitive reflection predicted LTSE but also found that instructional strategies and student engagement self-efficacy predicted teacher reflectivity. These varied analyses show that there is clearly a bidirectional relationship between reflection and LTSE, but the strength of the relationship varies and further nuanced analysis using reflective practice and LTSE subscales is required. As discussed, most studies rely on the TSES and Akabari et al.’s (2010) ELTRI, which enhances comparability but limits our understanding somewhat beyond these measures.

Three studies used qualitative methods, while two employed a mixed-methods approach, resulting in qualitative data from a total of five studies. Two case studies (Wyatt, 2010; Wyatt, 2013) reported that by connecting with the constructive elements of an in-service course, participants’ reflection on their teaching experiences helped them become more aware of their strengths and develop strategies that led to more successful teaching outcomes. These reflections foster positive “mastery” experiences, enhancing teachers’ sense of competence and reinforcing their belief in their abilities. Furthermore, Zonoubi et al., (2016) and Wyatt (2013) found that self-efficacy improved through reflective practice, particularly when teachers engaged in collaborative activities with peers and coaches. This interaction allowed them to ask questions freely, receive regular feedback, reduce reliance on prescribed goals, and ultimately develop greater autonomy in their teaching practices. Moradkhani et al. (2017) present the contribution of the five reflection subscales from the ELTRI to efficacy beliefs both statistically and backed up with data from interviews. Critical reflection received the lowest rating among teachers’ reflective practices, largely due to institutional policies prohibiting discussions on controversial topics and teachers’ preference to focus solely on language teaching rather than social issues. This qualitative finding from interview data supports the statistical result, which showed a non-significant negative relationship between critical reflection and teachers’ self-efficacy in multiple regression analysis.

Reflective practice led to improvements in various aspects of self-efficacy across several studies. Classroom management and innovative instructional strategies were highlighted by Zonoubi et al. (2017), while reflectivity and confidence were emphasized by Cabaroglu (2014). Wyatt (2013) noted that mastery experiences—positive reinforcement gained through reflection—played a key role in boosting self-efficacy. Autonomy was another factor identified in two studies (Cabaroglu, 2014; Zonoubi et al., 2017). Additionally, teachers reported gains in creativity (Cabaroglu, 2014) and perceived language proficiency (Zonoubi et al., 2017), further illustrating the wide-ranging impact of reflective practice on teachers’ self-efficacy. In conclusion, these findings collectively highlight the significant and multifaceted impact of reflective practice on language teachers’ self-efficacy, boosting both their confidence and competence in various aspects of teaching.

Furthermore, while less clear, LTSE can also seemingly impact teachers' propensity for reflective practice.

Discussion

The statistical findings from the studies indicate a generally positive relationship between reflective practice and language teachers' self-efficacy (LTSE), confirming that engagement in reflective practices tends to enhance teachers' self-efficacy beliefs. However, the statistical results regarding the subscales of reflective practice and their impact on specific aspects of self-efficacy are less consistent, suggesting that while certain elements of reflective practice may have a positive influence, others, such as cognitive and critical reflection, may not always align with increases in LTSE. Furthermore, the qualitative findings offer rich insights into the ways reflective practice influences LTSE beliefs. These insights highlight the depth of reflection as a transformative process, providing teachers with valuable opportunities to enhance their teaching effectiveness and confidence, ultimately contributing to a more nuanced understanding of how reflective practices shape language teachers' self-efficacy. In Wyatt (2013), the descriptive data shows that the participant, in her new teaching role, teaches the same material to three different groups on the same day. After each class, she immediately reflects on the challenges, makes adjustments, and applies them to the next session, continuously solving problems as they arise. This process aligns with Schön's (1983) three concepts of reflective practice: reflection-in-action, reflection-on-action, and reflection-for-action. The teacher's use of all three types of reflection within a single day and for the same lesson material is particularly significant. The qualitative data, therefore, adds depth to the broader findings, emphasizing that reflective practice is crucial for fostering language teachers' professional growth and self-confidence.

The TSES has been used in six quantitative studies in this systematic review to measure LTSE beliefs. However, its widespread use in assessing efficacy beliefs within language teaching has been questioned (Karas et al., 2024). Some studies have made adaptations to increase its relevance to language teaching contexts. For example, Chacon (2005) added the phrase "in your English classroom" to all items in the TSES. Other studies, such as Choi & Lee (2016), made more significant modifications by incorporating additional items specific to language teaching. Additionally, some researchers have developed LTSE-specific scales (e.g., Karas & Faez, 2021). The general recommendation, as suggested by Faez & Wyatt (2024), is for studies to use scales that are tailored to the specific context, task, and domain when measuring LTSE beliefs. While the overall findings regarding the impact of reflective practice on LTSE beliefs would likely remain consistent, the nuances of which specific aspects of language teaching efficacy are more or less influenced by reflective practice would become clearer by using LTSE-specific scales.

The English Language Teacher Reflective Inventory (ELTRI), developed by Akbari et al. (2010), was used in five of the studies included in this systematic review. While it is a commonly used scale for measuring English language teacher reflectivity, the socio-political contexts of different settings require specific considerations. Therefore, its adoption should be done with caution to ensure it aligns with the unique characteristics of each context. Furthermore, it is important to consider the limitations of using an instrument to measure reflective practice. While LTSE has a rich quantitative history, reflective work is often more qualitative. Surveys are great when looking at large groups of participants, but nuance is lost, and survey items can fail to capture the depth of teachers' reflections. Using the ELTRI, we can learn which practices teachers use most to reflect, but the details and quality of the reflections cannot be noted, which is a significant limitation.

The qualitative findings, on the other hand, highlight the diverse ways in which reflective practice is implemented, providing valuable insights into its role in supporting teachers' growth and strengthening their sense of efficacy in teaching. One prominent approach to reflective practice, *action research*, is reported in three studies (Cabaroglu, 2014; Wyatt, 2010; 2013). This method emphasizes the connection between theory and practice, allowing teachers to bridge the gap between academic knowledge and real classroom experiences. In Cabaroglu (2014), teachers engaged in a 14-week course incorporating action research implementing a 10-step task to help teachers critically explore their classroom contexts and achieve specific teaching goals. In Wyatt (2010), the participant developed practical knowledge by applying course learnings to his classroom teaching. In Wyatt (2013), the participant's knowledge grew through engagement with a "constructivist" course that connected course content to her practice and helped her develop a reflective process. In both studies, interaction with peers, coaches, and advisors was crucial, fostering a collaborative environment that provided valuable feedback and further strengthened the participants' sense of self-efficacy.

Another approach to reflective practice is facilitated through learning communities, as highlighted by Zonoubi et al. (2017). These communities encourage collaborative reflection among peers, fostering a culture of critical thinking while also offering opportunities for peer interaction and consultation. In their study, Zonoubi et al. (2017) integrated reflective practice into two six-month Professional Learning Community (PLC) interventions. Participants engaged in reflective journaling after each meeting, participated in peer observations and post-observation conferences, and reflected on in-person group discussions. This model not only nurtures individual reflection but also enhances collective learning, demonstrating the power of collaboration in the professional development process. Ultimately, such approaches underline the importance of building supportive environments where reflection and peer engagement are central to improving teaching practices.

Limitations and Conclusion

This systematic review has several limitations. The studies included are primarily focused on Asia, with more than half conducted in Iran or by Iranian scholars. Wyatt's (2024) systematic review similarly highlights the overrepresentation of research from Asia, particularly Iran. Additionally, the impact of reflective practice on efficacy beliefs within an ESL context remains underexplored. This is an important research gap to note. How teachers reflect, and what they reflect upon, will likely change based on teachers' contexts and their immediate teaching needs. The research synthesized here strongly points to a positive relationship between reflective practice and LTSE, and this relationship would likely hold in ESL contexts. However, further studies in ESL contexts are required.

Based on the findings from this systematic review and the clear evidence of the positive impact of reflective practice on teacher efficacy, it is essential that language teacher education programs intentionally incorporate reflective practice into their curricula and provide robust support to teachers in developing their reflective capacities (Farrell, 2015). However, what remains unclear is the precise nature of reflective practice itself, as well as the specific types of reflective practices that are most effective in enhancing teacher efficacy. Further research is needed to better understand which reflective strategies or approaches resonate best with teachers, ultimately leading to improved outcomes in their professional development and classroom performance.

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