Teacher reflection, efficacy and hope among Iranian ELT Teachers
Mina Sajjadi
Department of English Language Teaching, faculty of Humanities, Tarbiat Modares University, Iran.

ABSTRACT
This exploratory study investigates the relationship among teacher hope, reflection and efficacy and explores the amount of variability it is predicted to be made by the impact they cause on each other among Iranian ELT Teachers. To this end 100 school and institute ELT teachers answered a set of questionnaires, consisting of Snyder's Adult Trait Hope Scale, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) teacher self-efficacy scale (TSES), and Akbari, et al. (2010) teacher reflection instrument. Data were analyzed using statistical techniques such as Pearson product moment correlation coefficient and multiple regressions. The results of the study revealed that there was a significant positive relationship between teacher's hope, reflection and efficacy among Iranian ELT teachers. The results of the multiple regressions also indicated that hope subscales could predict a significant amount of variability in teacher reflection and efficacy components. Also teacher reflection subscales could predict a significant amount of variability in teacher efficacy components and vice versa. The pedagogical implications of the study such as the constructive role of hope, reflection and efficacy in teacher improvement, creation of a teacher hope instrument, and the production of strategies to augment these characteristics in ELT teachers by teacher educators and policymakers are also discussed.

Introduction
The important role of teachers in educating the future members of the society is known to everyone. The task of ensuring children's intellectual growth and preparing each new generation to meet the challenge of the future has been entrusted with teachers work (Hargreaves, 2009). As a result, they help advancing economic, technological development and sustaining well-being of the societies (AbdRazak, 2009). These critical roles have also reflected teachers' perception of the relevance and effectiveness of their contribution to the future of society (Houston, 2009).

In the same vein, high hope teachers might be more likely to help their students to be more disciplined and academically engaged than low hope teachers (Snyder, Feldman, Taylor, Schroeder, and Adams, 2000; Snyder, McDermott, Cook, and Rapoff, 1997; Snyder, Tran, Schroeder, Pulvers, Adams, and Laub, 2000). Nieto, S. (2003) in her search to find out "what keeps teachers going", asserted that "hope is the catalyst for courage....[H] can conquer many fears, and ... endure even when there is little cause for optimism" (p. 61). Snyder, Harris, Anderson, Holleran, Irving, Sigmon, Yoshinobu, Gibb, Langelle & Harney (1991, p. 571) defined hope as "a cognitive set that is based on a reciprocally derived sense of successful (a) agency (goal-directed determination) and (b) pathways (planning of ways to meet goals)".

Snyder’s theory incorporates three major components of hope: goals, agency, and pathways. Goals are projected computation of affairs that people plan or intend to achieve. "Pathways thinking" reflects a person's ability to formulate different workable routes to reach a desired goal. Agency-inducing cognitions convey one's determination, motivation, and capacity to achieve one's goals. They are reflected in the positive person's internal self-talk (e.g. "I can do this." Or "I will not give up.") (Snyder, et al, 2000, 2003, 2005; Bernardo, 2010; Vallee et al., 2006).

To pinpoint this importance of hope, Peterson, S. J., Gerhardt, M. W., & Rode, J. C. (2006) makes a connection between self-efficacy and hope. Self-efficacy is defined as the "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (Bandura, 1997). Peterson et al. (2006) propose that self-efficacy shares some similar properties with agency component of hope. The only difference comes from "the perception of whether one can perform the actions necessary in a specific situational context" which is defined as self-efficacy or one will "initiate and continue goal-directed actions" discussed as hope (p. 1100). Teacher efficacy is another important factor that has been proved to be meaningfully correlated with many teacher and student outcomes. Examples for teacher outcomes are teacher persistence, enthusiasm, commitment and instructional behavior; and for student outcomes are achievement, motivation, and self-efficacy belief. "A teacher's efficacy belief is a judgment of his or her capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of student engagement and learning, even among those students who may be difficult or unmotivated" (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001, p. 783). Teacher efficacy was related to teachers' classroom behaviors, their openness to new ideas, their attitudes toward teaching, and student achievement (Gibson & Dembo, 1984).

Teachers' sense of efficacy plays a significant role in the quality of instruction students receive (Benz, Bradley, Alderman, & Flowers, 1992, Cited in Collier, 2005).

Some researchers have conducted studies to find the relationship between teacher efficacy and teacher reflection (e.g. Giovannielli, 2003). Akbari et al. (2010) present a reflective teacher as "one who critically examines his/her practices, comes up with some ideas as how to improve his/her performance to enhance students' learning, and puts those ideas into practice" (p. 2). Schon's theory of reflective practice (1983, 1988) described a professional development process applied to
teaching and learning contexts that challenged the fundamental assumptions and values held by the practitioner, which yielded a heightened sense of awareness regarding the impact of implicit theories.

After an extensive literature search regarding teachers, hope, efficacy and reflection separately, it was found that only a few studies targeted hope, efficacy and reflection on the part of teachers. Accordingly, the present article sets out to fill this gap in the educational literature by investigating the relationship among hope, efficacy and reflection.

The study
Because of the prominent role of hope, efficacy and reflection in teaching and learning, it seems essential to investigate the relationship among them and explore the amount of variability that may be caused by their interactive influence. In this study the following questions were formulated.

1. Is there any relationship between teacher hope and teacher reflection among Iranian ELT Teachers?
2. Is there any relationship between teacher hope and teacher efficacy among Iranian ELT Teachers?
3. Is there any relationship between teacher reflection and teacher efficacy among Iranian ELT Teachers?

Methodology and methods
Participants
A set of questionnaires, consisting of teacher hope, teacher efficacy, and teacher reflection (Appendix A, B, C) were handed out to 100 English teachers to fill in. They were asked to fill them out carefully either at home or institute. The participants were selected through convenient (availability) sampling procedure. The age of the teachers ranged from 21 to 50. The study was designed in a way to include teachers of all experiences i.e. novice, moderately experienced, and highly experienced (see table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Academic degree</th>
<th>Type of school</th>
<th>Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>English major</td>
<td>Public school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instruments
Teacher efficacy scale
The scale used to measure teacher efficacy is the teacher self-efficacy scale (TSES) developed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001). This research tool classified three areas in which teachers may hold differing level of efficacy: classroom management, instructional strategies, and student engagement (Tschannen-Moran and Hoy, 2001). The obtained total reliability in this study was 0.94 for teacher efficacy scale. This scale includes 24 items, with 9 point likert scale.

Teacher reflection scale
Akbari, Behzadpoor & Dadvand (2010) provided EFL discourse community with an instrument measuring teacher reflection which defines components of reflection as practical element, cognitive element, learner element (affective), metacognitive element, and critical element. The obtained reliability for total reflection was .86 in this study.

The hope scale
The scale used to measure teacher hope is The Hope Scale provided by Snyder, Harris, Anderson, Holleran, Irving, Sigmon, Yoshinobu, Gibb, Langelle, & Harney (1991). The obtained total reliability in this study was 0.84. The Hope Scale includes 12 items, using an 8-point Likert scale. Four items measure an individual’s Agency or Willpower and four items measure a person’s Pathways or Way power. The remaining four statements are distracter items.

Procedure
By the help of two of my assistants, a set of questionnaires, consisting of teacher hope, teacher efficacy, and teacher reflection (Appendix I, II, III), was distributed among 100 ELT teachers. First participants were given enough information about the topic of the questionnaires and how to complete them. The teachers were approached at schools and institutes. They were ensured of the confidentiality of their answers. 110 questionnaires were distributed among the participants, among which 100 were filled and turned back. The response rate calculated turned out to be 90%. By the time when the data were gathered, they were analyzed by means of Pearson product moment correlation coefficients and stepwise multiple regressions using the SPSS 19 program. The normality of the distribution and the reliability of the scales as well as the descriptive statistics of the data were checked. All the research questions of this study were answered by running first a Pearson product moment correlation coefficient to see whether there exists any relation in the variables in the study. Afterwards, some stepwise multiple regressions were run to measure the amount of variance caused by the effect of each variable and its components on the others.

Results and discussion
Research question one
With respect to the first research question concerning the relationship between teacher hope and reflection, the findings of the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient indicated that the teacher reflection constructs, namely, practical reflection ($r = .20$), metacognitive reflection ($r = .49$), critical reflection ($r = .29$) and affective reflection ($r = .35$) were all positively and significantly (at 5% and 1% levels) related to teacher hope; except for cognitive reflection which was not significant at either levels.

After witnessing a kind of relationship, in the next step two multiple regressions were conducted to predict the amount of variability teacher reflection components account for agency hope and pathway hope. The analysis came up with one model in which affective reflection accounted for the variance in the dependent variable, agency hope, among ELT teachers ($R^2 = .206, P < 0.01, \beta = .250$) (See Tables 2).

And among the subscales of teacher reflection the metacognitive and affective components accounted for a significant amount of variability in the dependent variable, pathway hope ($R^2 = .245, P < 001$). The Beta is .302 for metacognitive and .198 for affective reflection, indicating a positive direction between pathway hope and metacognitive and affective reflection (See Tables 3).

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The positive relationship between hope and subscales of teacher reflection suggests that teachers with high levels of reflection in their work may have higher levels of hope. Snyder et al. (2000) contends that agency (goal-directed energy) and pathways (planning to meet goals) are made by a cycle of emotions and cognitions. The findings of the present research also confirms this cycle. When teachers have better affective reflections, they get higher goal-directed energy. Teachers who think positively about their teaching experiences gain more positive energy and this helps them to plan more useful goals for themselves. They would think more about their profession, and set higher goals for their future. This will definitely have greater influence on their academic professional life. Also that how hopeful teachers are significantly more probable than non-hopeful teachers to have feelings of being efficacious in their language teaching profession.

Theoretically, Snyder’s hope theory and Bandura’s self-efficacy are linked in some ways. Snyder (2000) emphasizes the similarities between the concept of hope and self-efficacy: they are both goal oriented. He proposes that they only vary in the case that the keys to Bandura’s model are situational self-efficacy (agency) thoughts, whereas both agency and pathways thought are important in hope theory. Efficacy levels influence the outcome of goals which is an inseparable part of Snyder’s hope theory (Shunk & Pajares, 2001). Goal theorists have an appreciation of the role efficacy plays in the development and fulfillment of goals (Zimmerman, 2000). Shunk & Pajares (2001) contend that Goals are cognitively derived and can deflate and inflate one’s level of self-efficacy and outcome expectations as “the consequences expected from one’s own actions”. This definition is somehow the same as what Snyder defines for his hope concept.

The second research question

To see whether there is a relationship between hope and efficacy among Iranian ELT teachers, a Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was again calculated. The significant levels were put at 0.01 level. The results indicate that total hope is most correlated with total efficacy (R = .660), instructional efficacy (R = .657), and then with engagement (R = .551) and management efficacy (R = .263) respectively. By a deeper look into these significant relationships between teacher hope and teacher efficacy components, we will roughly infer that hopeful teachers are significantly more probable than non-hopeful teachers to have feelings of being efficacious in their language teaching profession.

Table 2. Coefficients table for agency hope and teacher reflection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>13.037</td>
<td>2.822</td>
<td>4.619</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>practical reflection</td>
<td>.822</td>
<td>.383</td>
<td>.154</td>
<td>1.477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cognitive reflection</td>
<td>.529</td>
<td>.463</td>
<td>.121</td>
<td>1.143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>metacognitive reflection</td>
<td>.808</td>
<td>.799</td>
<td>.120</td>
<td>1.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>critical reflection</td>
<td>.194</td>
<td>.658</td>
<td>.034</td>
<td>.295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>affective reflection</td>
<td>.887</td>
<td>.362</td>
<td>.250</td>
<td>2.448</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: agency hope

Table 3. Coefficients table for pathway hope and teacher reflection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>9.244</td>
<td>3.749</td>
<td>2.501</td>
<td>.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>practical reflection</td>
<td>-1.415</td>
<td>1.104</td>
<td>-1.292</td>
<td>.198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cognitive reflection</td>
<td>.240</td>
<td>.615</td>
<td>.392</td>
<td>.697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>metacognitive reflection</td>
<td>2.761</td>
<td>1.061</td>
<td>2.597</td>
<td>.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>critical reflection</td>
<td>1.440</td>
<td>.874</td>
<td>1.667</td>
<td>.100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>affective reflection</td>
<td>961</td>
<td>.481</td>
<td>1.998</td>
<td>.047</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: pathway hope

Table 4. Coefficients table for agency hope and teacher efficacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
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<th>Sig.</th>
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<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>14.134</td>
<td>2.206</td>
<td>6.408</td>
<td>.000</td>
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<tr>
<td>instructional efficacy</td>
<td>1.591</td>
<td>.426</td>
<td>.450</td>
<td>3.734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>management efficacy</td>
<td>-.090</td>
<td>-.321</td>
<td>-.029</td>
<td>-.279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>engagement efficacy</td>
<td>.343</td>
<td>.425</td>
<td>.098</td>
<td>.807</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: agency hope

Table 5. Coefficients table for pathway hope and teacher efficacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
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<th>Sig.</th>
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<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>6.348</td>
<td>2.843</td>
<td>2.232</td>
<td>.028</td>
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<tr>
<td>instructional efficacy</td>
<td>1.605</td>
<td>.549</td>
<td>.333</td>
<td>2.922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>management efficacy</td>
<td>-.258</td>
<td>.414</td>
<td>-.060</td>
<td>-.622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>engagement efficacy</td>
<td>1.579</td>
<td>.548</td>
<td>.333</td>
<td>2.881</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: pathway hope
In the next step two stepwise multiple regressions were performed to see how much of the variability in the two subscales of teachers' hope is accounted for by the three subscales of teacher efficacy. In the first one, the analysis is done so as to see the amount of variance the three components of teacher efficacy predict in the dependent variable, agency hope. The analysis came up with one model. In this model among the subscales of teacher efficacy only the instructional component accounted for a significant amount of variability in the dependent variable, agency hope (R² = .258, P < .001, beta = .450) (See Tables 4). Instructional efficacy is "a teacher's confidence to use effective instructional strategies" (Klassen, Bong, Usher, Chong, Huan, Wong, and Georgiou, 2009, p. 68). When a teacher feels efficacious enough to use more useful instructional strategies, she definitely will have more goal-directed energy (agency). So the amount a teacher uses effective instructional strategies will predict her agency hope and the amount of her preset goals.

Another stepwise multiple regressions is run to witness the amount of variance the three components of teacher efficacy predict in the dependent variable, pathway hope. This analysis also came up with only one model. In this model among the subscales of teacher efficacy the instructional and engagement components accounted for a significant amount of variability in the dependent variable, pathway hope (R² = .335, P < .001, Beta = .335) (See Tables 5). Engagement efficacy is a teacher's efficacy to "engage all students in learning" (Klassen et al., 2009, p. 68). Therefore, a teacher who feels efficacious to engage all students in learning process and to use instructional strategies will predict her agency hope and the amount of her preset goals.

The third research question

The results of this research question are discussed from two points of view: first teacher reflection and its relation to teacher efficacy components are discussed; and then vice versa, teacher efficacy and its relation to teacher reflection components are explained. In order to answer the third research question first the relationship between teacher reflection and the components of teacher efficacy is discussed. The significant level was put at 0.01 level. A significant correlation was found between total teacher reflection and the components of teacher efficacy except in management efficacy (p = .220). The results indicate that total reflection is most correlated with engagement efficacy (R = .419), and then with instructional efficacy (R = .406) and management efficacy (R = .124) respectively.

In the next step the relationship between teacher efficacy and the components of teacher reflection is calculated. A significant correlation was found between total teacher efficacy and the components of teacher reflection at both .01 and .05 levels. The significant levels of critical (p = .063) and practical efficacy (p = .085) were not accepted at .01 and .05 levels respectively. The results indicate that total efficacy is most correlated with metacognitive reflection (R = .620), and then with affective reflection (R = .321), and cognitive reflection (R = .238) respectively. Bandura (1993) showed how perceived self-efficacy contributes to cognitive development and functioning. He made a connection between self-efficacy and cognition, and contended that self-efficacy exerts its influence through four major cognitive, motivational, affective and selection processes. He related self-efficacy into academic development in three sections: students' beliefs about their efficacy in their own activities and learning, teachers' beliefs on their efficacy in the kind of learning environment they make for themselves and their students, and faculties' beliefs in their collective instructional efficacy, "efficacy beliefs influence how people feel, think, motivate themselves, and behave" (p. 118).

He even emphasises this connection between self-efficacy and reflection by adding a title named "students' cognitive self-efficacy " (p.135) in his article: "percieved self-efficacy in cognitive development and functioning" (1993). He contends that the students perfect theircognitive capabilities better if their perceived efficacy is higher. "Children with the same level of cognitive skill development differ in their intellectual performance depending on the strenght of their perceived self-efficacy".

After that a kind of relationship was witnessed, in the next step three multiple regressions were performed to predict the amount of variability components of teacher efficacy were accounting for by the three subscales of teacher reflection; cognitive, metacognitive and affective reflection. The results of the analyses revealed that metacognitive reflection predicted a significant level of variability in the dependent variable, instructional efficacy (R² = .323, P < 0.01, beta = .587), metacognitive and critical reflection predicted a significant level of variability in the dependent variable, management efficacy (R² = .126, P < 0.01) The direction is a positive one showing a .335 change for metacognitive reflection, and a negative one signaling a .277 change for critical reflection in instructional efficacy, and metacognitive reflection accounted for a significant amount of variability in the engagement efficacy (R² = 400, P < 0.05, beta = .670).

Ertmer and Newby (1996) claim that metacognition facilitates the strategic performance of expert learners and that reflection provides the critical link between knowledge and control of the learning process (Phelps, Ellis &Hase, 2001). Based on findings of this research, too, teachers who have more metacognitive reflection will have more instructional management and engagement efficacy. This means they will use more effective instructional strategies, engage all students in learning and have better management in the classroom (Klassen et al., 2009). Another reflective factor which influences teachers' management efficacy is their critical reflection. As a matter of fact teachers who have more critical and metacognitive reflection have more management efficacy. They feel more efficacious to manage their class since they reflect more critically about their class and spend more time to think about all the aspects of it.

In the next section the relationship between teacher efficacy and the components of teacher reflection was examined. Five multiple regressions were conducted to examine the amount of variability caused by teacher efficacy components in each teacher reflection component. The results of the analysis showed that none of the teacher efficacy components were significant to predict any variability in practical reflection, engagement efficacy accounted for a significant amount of variability in the cognitive reflection (R² = .101, P < .05, beta = .381), Instructional and engagement efficacy showed significant variance in the metacognitive reflection (R² = .400, P < 0.05). Beta .456, for engagement efficacy and .275 for instructional efficacy indicates that both the relationship and the direction are positive, none of the subscales of teacher efficacy were predictor of any variance and change in the critical reflection, and the instructional component accounted for a significant amount of variability in the affective reflection (R² = .316, P < 001, beta = .289).

Therefore, teachers who feel more efficacious to engage all the students in learning process have more metacognitive and cognitive reflection about their profession. And teachers who use more effective instructional strategies have more metacognitive and affective reflection. Teachers who think they
can find and use better strategies for their classes, spend more time to think about their classes and the affections of their students in a search to find better strategies which is suitable for their class.

Conclusion

In this study significant relationships were found between teacher hope, efficacy and reflection among Iranian ELT teachers. The results of multiple regressions showed that affective reflection accounted for a significant amount of variability in agency and pathway hope, and that metacognitive reflection accounted for an acceptable amount of variability in the dependent variables, pathway hope and management, engagement and instructional efficacy. Furthermore, critical reflection appeared to be the only predictor variable that accounted for an acceptable amount of variance in management efficacy. In addition, instructional efficacy predicted a significant level of variability in the dependent variables, affective and metacognitive reflection and agency and pathway hope. And engagement efficacy accounted for a significant amount of variability in pathway hope and cognitive and metacognitive reflection.

These findings will act as a guide for teachers, teacher educators and educational policymakers to improve their professional life by increasing their own level of hope, reflection and efficacy. Examining the effect of teachers' hope, reflection and efficacy on students' use of language learning strategies, examining the relationship between some social factors and teachers' hope, investigating how teachers' hope, reflection and efficacy can be improved, and examining the effect of teachers' hope, reflection and efficacy on students' academic improvement are areas of further research proposed for interested researchers.

Limitations of the study

Some limitations must be taken into consideration in interpreting and utilizing the findings of this study:
1. The data collection procedures of this study were based on convenient random sampling and not full random sampling. Thus the generalizability of the findings should be done with caution.
2. The instruments used in this project were all self-report measures and are thus subject to self-flattery or social desirability factor.
3. Gender, age and socioeconomic and academic background of the participants were not controlled in this study. The results, thus, could be modified if these factors were also taken into consideration.
4. The participants of the study were all English language teachers. The findings of the study may not be valid for non-English teachers.

References

Appendices

Appendix A: The Trait Hope Scale

Directions:
Read each item carefully. Using the scale shown below, please select the number that best describes YOU and put that number in the blank provided.

1. = Definitely False
2. = Mostly False
3. = Somewhat False
4. = Slightly False
5. = Slightly True
6. = Somewhat True
7. = Mostly True
8. = Definitely True

___ 1. I can think of many ways to get out of a jam.
___ 2. I energetically pursue my goals.
___ 3. I feel tired most of the time.
___ 4. There are lots of ways around any problem.
___ 5. I am easily downed in an argument.
___ 6. I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are important to me.
___ 7. I worry about my health.
___ 8. Even when others get discouraged, I know I can find a way to solve the problem.
___ 9. My past experiences have prepared me well for my future.
___ 10. I’ve been pretty successful in life.
___ 11. I usually find myself worrying about something.
___ 12. I meet the goals that I set for myself.

Appendix B: The Reflective Teaching Instrument

Appendix C: Teacher Belief – TSES

References