



A Critical Review of Reflective Practices in Pre-Service ELT Context: The Turkey Case

İngilizce Öğretmenliği Bağlamında Yansıtıcı Uygulamaların Eleştirel Bir İncelemesi: Türkiye Örneği

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Korucu Kış, S. & Yükselir, C. (2021). A Critical Review of Reflective Practices in Pre-Service ELT Context: The Turkey Case. *Batı Anadolu Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi*, 12(2), 691-704.

Geliş tarihi:09.08.2021

Kabul tarihi:22.11.2021

Yayımlanma tarihi: 28.12.2021

Öz. Yaşam boyu ve bütüncül bir süreç olarak görülen yansıtıcı uygulama, öğretmen adaylarında geliştirilmesi gereken temel yeterliliklerden biridir. Bu açıdan, Türkiye'deki İngilizce öğretmen adaylarının mesleki hazırlıklarında yansıtıcı uygulama kavramı birçok çalışma tarafından ele alınmıştır. Ancak, bugüne kadar hiçbir çalışma, bu konudaki mevcut araştırmalarla ilgili eleştirel bir inceleme sunmamıştır. İngilizce öğretmen adaylarının yansıtıcı yeterliliklerini geliştirmek için Türkiye'de yürütülmüş çalışmaların başlıca amaçlarını belirlemek ve bu konuda daha detaylı bilgiye sahip olabilmek amacıyla sistematik inceleme metodu kullanılmıştır. Makaleler için Eric, Scopus ve SSCI veri tabanları taranmış olup analiz için toplam 25 araştırma çalışması seçilmiştir. Bulgular, en çok çalışılan konunun "İlkeler ve uygulamalar arasında köprü oluşturma" olduğunu ve bunu "Seviyeleme taksonomilerine odaklanmak", "Yansıtıcı araçların rolünü araştırmak", "Yansıtıcı uygulamalar için diyalogun değerini incelemek" ve "Öğretmen adaylarının iç dünyasını incelemek ve yansıtıcı uygulama" olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Sonuçlar ayrıca, bazı çalışmaların araştırma sorularında veya amaç ifadelerinde birden fazla ilgi alanına odaklanıldığını göstermiştir. Bulgulara dayanarak, çalışma, incelenen makalelerin çoğunluğunun yansıtıcı uygulamalarda temel düzeyde kaldığını göstermiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yansıtıcı uygulama, Eleştirel inceleme, İngilizce öğretimi, Öğretmen adayları, Türkiye

Abstract. Viewed as a lifelong and holistic process, reflectivity is one of the key competencies to be developed in prospective teachers. In this regard, specific references are made to the notion of reflective practice (RP) in the professional preparation of English as a foreign language student teachers in Turkey. However, no study to date has provided a critical review of existing research on this subject. With the aim of advancing our understanding of RP areas research studies conducted in Turkey primarily focused on in their attempts to develop pre-service English teachers' reflective capacities, a systematic review method was used. The databases of Eric, Scopus and SSCI were searched for articles and a total of 25 studies were selected for analysis. The findings revealed that the most studied topic was "Bridging principles and practices" followed by "Focusing on leveling taxonomies", "Investigating the role of reflective tools", "Examining the value of dialogue for RP-integrated activities" and "Inquiring into pre-service teachers' inner world and RP". The results also showed that a number of studies had more than one concern of interest in their questions or purpose statements. Based on the findings, the study contends that the majority of the retrieved articles largely focused on basic issues to structure reflection, particularly when starting to reflect.

Keywords: Reflective practice, Critical review, ELT, Student teachers, Turkey

Extended Abstract

Introduction. Viewed as a lifelong and holistic process, reflectivity is one of the key competencies to be developed in prospective teachers. In this regard, specific references are made to the notion of reflective practice (RP) in the professional preparation of English as a foreign language student teachers in Turkey. However, developing a reflective mindset in student teachers is not an easy task since it requires systematic inquiry, self-initiated actions, collaborative experiences, continuity, and intellectual, emotional and spiritual involvement. To date, a number of studies have been conducted in Turkey to address some certain issues in relation to the development of reflective capabilities in pre-service language teachers. However, a systematic understanding of which RP areas research studies conducted in Turkey primarily focused on in their attempts to develop pre-service English teachers' reflective capacities is still lacking.

Method. With the aim of identifying principles lacking in the existing RP research in Turkey and providing an understanding of areas that need further investigation to educate reflective practitioners, a systematic review method was adopted. Systematic reviews help to raise awareness about any particular research field informing researchers about existing topical tendencies. The studies were sourced from Eric, Scopus and SSCI databases using the keywords of "reflect, reflection, reflective, English, language, Turkish, Turkey, and teacher. Truncation was also utilized in reflect*, Turk*, and teacher*. To avoid bias and delimit the scope of the study, a number of inclusion/exclusion criteria were set in alignment with the research purpose of the present review. Out of 423 potentially relevant studies, a total of 25 papers were included in the analysis. An inductive approach was used to identify the main purposes of the retrieved papers.

Results. The findings revealed that the most recurrent theme was "Bridging principles and practices" with the sub-themes of "Reflections on campus-based professional learning experiences" and "Reflections on practicum experiences". This was followed by the theme of "Focusing on leveling taxonomies" including two sub-categories: "Assessing reflectivity levels via existing frameworks" and "Assessing reflectivity levels via self-constructed frameworks". The third most frequently cited aim was concerned with investigating the role of reflective tools focusing on pre-service teachers' perceptions of RP tools and contributions of RP tools to reflectivity. "Examining the value of dialogue for RP-integrated activities" which covers the sub-categories of "Dialogue for fostering professional learning" and "Dialogue for promoting reflective propensities" was another RP area some of the retrieved studies based their research focus on. The final category generated was "Inquiring into pre-service teachers' inner world and RP" consisting of two sub-categories, namely, "Self-image as teachers" and "Interaction of beliefs and RP". The results also showed that a number of studies had more than one concern of interest in their questions or purpose statements.

Discussion and Conclusion. Based on the findings, the study has revealed that although the retrieved studies in the categories of "Bridging principles and practices", "Focusing on leveling taxonomies", "Investigating the role of reflective tools" attempted to promote RP and criticality to support pre-service teachers in their journey of becoming critical thinkers and reflective practitioners, the results of these studies indicated that higher levels of criticality were not achieved by most of the pre-service teachers. The results also revealed that despite its importance in teacher development, teaching practices and reflective engagement, the value of dialogue and pre-service teachers' inner lives were of primary concern to only a handful of studies. Drawing on these findings, the present study suggests that future research focus on the holistic nature and lifelong learning aspects of RP by regarding teachers as whole and social individuals and engaging them in higher levels of reflectivity.

Introduction

Reflection is considered one of the key components of language teacher education programs. Dating back to the theories of Dewey (1933) and Schön (1983, 1987), it is purported to bring numerous benefits to teacher education programs. In its essence, reflection means continuous examination and reflection of an individual in an activity (Edge, 2011). It also refers to teachers checking their practices through various tools such as journals, narrative accounts, video-recordings, transcriptions, classroom interactions and group discussions in a regular pace (Farrell, 2019) in order to evaluate their beliefs in light of facts and amend them if necessary for future activities (Farrell, 2016).

However, it is not an easy task to foster reflection among pre-service language teachers who need firm guidance (Wopereis et al., 2010). In this respect, Richards and Lockhart (2007) state that reflection requires both individual actions and collaborative experiences to develop reflective mindsets. Similarly, Mann and Walsh (2017) note that engaging in self-reflection does not always enhance reflective practices; it requires dialogue with data-led approaches to reflection. Several researchers (Turhan & Kirkgöz, 2018; Uştuk & Çomoğlu, 2021) also put emphasis on the value of collaborative reflection in teaching discourse community and communities of practices in their studies. Hernández-Ramos (2004) states that it can even be seen as a social activity rather than an individual practice emphasizing the role of collaboration in reflective practice (RP).

RP leading to transformative experiences for pre-service teachers has been investigated by many scholars all over the world (e.g. Akbari, 2007; Karakaş & Yükselir, 2021; Korucu-Kış & Kartal, 2019; Liou, 2001; Mann & Walsh, 2013; Turhan & Kirkgöz, 2021; Unlu & Kulekci, 2020; Yuan et al., 2020). Farrell (2015) defined RP as a “compass that allows teachers to stop for a moment or two and consider how we can create more learning opportunities for students” (p. 15). Based on these premises, it is clear that language teachers can utilize RP activities in their professional development. Moreover, through reflection, they can improve their instructional knowledge and skills along with long-held presumptions and biased attitudes in time to foster their teaching practices and student learning.

Farrell with his various and invaluable studies can be considered one of the leading figures in the area of reflective practice. In one of his latest books entitled “Reflective Practice in ELT” Farrell (2019) states that although many approaches have a very narrow view of reflection “as a one-dimensional, intellectual exercise, reduced to a set of techniques and mainly confined to a retrospective role of questions asking teachers what they did, how they did it and what will they do next” (p. 59), reflective practice is also a non-cognitive activity with affective, moral, spiritual, and aesthetic aspects. Moreover, he suggests that reflective practice is a way of life that requires teachers to engage in a continual process of self-reflection that will allow them to develop their own theories of teaching practice and their teaching identities. In view of these discussions, the present study sets out to undertake a systematic review of the research literature in the area of reflective practice in English language teacher education programs and aims to find out the RP areas research studies conducted in Turkey primarily focused on in their attempts to develop pre-service English teachers’ reflective capacities.

Literature Review

Reflective Practice

In language teacher education programs, teacher reflectivity is one of the features intended to be developed in pre-service teachers by means of deliberate considerations of learning to teach experiences (Belvis et al., 2013; Farrell, 2019). This allows language teachers to build an awareness of

how to grow professionally and provides a basis for future acts. According to Farrell (2019), language teachers regularly (re)examine their teaching practices, beliefs, assumptions, and principles in order to fix the problems experienced in classroom settings and their teaching careers. In fact, this can be viewed not as just solving problems but also embracing a method which affects a teacher's principles and practices both inside and outside the classrooms. From this stance, it is clear that Farrell (2019) promotes RP as a holistic concept and views it as a lifelong process.

According to Farrell (2019), reflective practice (RP) as a way of life requires teachers to systematically inquire into their practices not only throughout the teaching day but also throughout their professional careers. A similar view pointing out that reflective practices involve not only teacher's classroom practices but also their inner lives and previous learning experiences was claimed by Wright (2010). A lifelong RP suggests that teachers are whole persons and reflection is multi-dimensional because it includes moral, ethical, spiritual and aesthetics aspects. This holistic view of RP refers to such teachers as integrated practitioners who are well aware of the intellectual, cognitive, meta-cognitive and noncognitive aspects of teaching practice. Lifelong RP gives account of teachers' inner lives, their everyday practices and activities both inside and outside the classroom. Lifelong RP also requires teachers to make systematic inquiries and informed decisions about their instructional principles and practices through conscious reflections asking some questions to themselves (What do I do?, Why do I do it?, How do I do it etc.) based on evidence (e.g. journals, video recordings) they gather about their work. Last but not least, analysing the data and getting insights from their experiences, teachers reflect and decide whether to make any changes in their future teaching practices. However, self-reflecting may sometimes produce biased thoughts and judgments. Teachers may face challenges while reflecting on unpleasant situations. In such cases, self-reflection can be expanded to critical friendships or teacher reflection groups. A lifelong RP also indicates that teaching is like an iceberg. The seen part consisting of teacher behaviours is immensely influenced by the hidden part involving teachers' philosophy, values, presumptions, and beliefs. Therefore, RP suggests that teachers connect and compare/contrast their principles, beliefs, and assumptions to their classroom practices. Finally, developing reflective propensities requires having certain dispositions. To be reflective practitioners, teachers should possess such specific attitudes as open-mindedness, responsibility, wholeheartedness and directness.

Taken together, the Farrellian view of RP postulates that RP is more than a method of exploring teaching practices or solving problems; rather it is a way of life encompassing bridging principles and practices, collecting evidence, having inquiring dispositions, engagement in dialogue with others, placing equal weight on both cognitive and affective aspects of teaching, and teachers' being aware of their practices throughout their lives.

Reflective Practice in Language Teacher Education

It is noteworthy to state that understanding and evaluation of reflection and RP in language teacher education has changed over time. In this regard, Finlayson (2015) stated that reflection has evolved "from an internal state to a formal state and from the publication paradigm and the need to formally capture experiences and learn from them" (p. 729). It is clear that finding a common language for defining reflection is not easy when the extant literature is examined. This stems from the ongoing nature of reflection and the continuous process of professional growth in language teacher education.

Previous literature has noted a number of studies in the area of reflective practice addressing some certain issues in relation to the development of reflective capabilities in pre-service language teachers. To illustrate, while some studies explored the use of technological tools such as blogs (Yang, 2009), e-journals (Tavil, 2014), portfolios (Barton & Collins, 1993; Jones, 2010) to promote reflective dispositions, others focused on reflection types (Burhan-Horasanlı & Ortaçtepe, 2016), reflective practice tools (Unlu & Kulekci, 2020), promises and challenges of reflective practice

(Korucu-Kış & Kartal, 2019), the development of reflection among pre-service teachers through online engagement (Mumford & Dikilitaş, 2020), video-based reflective practice (Harford et al., 2010), video-mediated microteaching, (Eroz-Tuga, 2013; Karakaş & Yükselir, 2021; Yeşilbursa, 2011; Yuan et al., 2020), reflective practices in teaching English to young learners through microteaching sessions (Güngör, 2016), and the characteristics of critical reflections of English language teacher candidates (Turhan & Kırkgöz, 2018).

Apart from these studies, Akbari (2007) wrote a critical paper about reflective practices in L2 teacher education. In his reflections on the deployment of the concept of reflective teaching in teacher training institutions, he contended that for the purpose of encouraging teachers to become effective reflective practitioners, the academics neglected some important theoretical and practical considerations such as whether reflective practice should aim to make teachers more integrated into discourse communities or make them more independent; or reflection is an end or a means to an end, and what other possibilities are available for enhanced teacher performance or better student learning if reflective practice does not work. He also argued that much focus has been on the retrospective aspects of reflection rather than prospective ones. He further maintained that there has been a lack of stress on the critical dimension of the concept.

There are also other studies in the literature regarding reflective practice in language teacher education. For example, Lee's study (2007) suggests that journal writing is an essential tool to promote reflective thinking for student teachers. Luk (2008) points out that discourse features of reflections have an impact on the accounts of reflective journals and encourages the quality of discourse reflections to improve reflective ability. Ayan and Seferoğlu (2011) explored the role of electronic portfolios in promoting reflective thinking and improving the connection between theory and practice. In another study, Yuan and Mak (2018) contended that using microteaching and videotaped reflections can assist pre-service EFL teachers to foster reflective learning. Furthermore, in their study, Harford and MacRuairc (2008) concluded that pre-service teachers' reflection and critical dialogue improved with the use of peer videoing tool in the classroom. Unlu and Kulekci (2020) evaluated the use of reflective practice tools drawing on the critical literature on RP. The researchers found out that RP is often criticized due to lack of continued communication among reflective practitioners, use of RP for descriptive purposes and design-related issues (e.g. emphasis on individual processes, undue reliance on the written forms of RP, inappropriate uses of RP tools etc.). Based on their findings, the authors suggested the use of the community of inquiry framework and the principles of the method of triangulation to address these problems in research practices. Examining the reflective writings of third year pre-service EFL teachers, Turhan and Kırkgöz (2018) concluded that reflective writing did not contribute to raise their students' level of critical reflection albeit their belief in the impact of reflection on professional growth and development. This finding is in line with the findings of Yeşilbursa (2011), who also pointed out that participants descriptively wrote down what they noticed in reflective practices through video-based recordings. Against this backdrop, it can be said that increasing the quality of teacher education and professional development lies partly in empowering teaching practices with criticality, critical reflection and closing the gap between theory and practice.

Method

A systematic review was undertaken of the research literature on reflective practice. Systematic reviews help to raise awareness about any particular research field informing researchers about existing topical and methodological tendencies. Such reviews also delimit the advancement of knowledge in a particular domain and contribute to the avoidance of thematic overlaps and the implementation of different instructional/methodological designs. Moreover, "employing a set of pre-determined inclusion and exclusion criteria, systematic reviews enable a relatively more

objective and comprehensive selection of studies on a topic of interest, avoiding the researchers' biases to include only the best-known work" (Chong, 2019, p. 74). Accordingly, the authors examined the RP areas that the studies conducted in Turkey primarily focused on in their attempts to develop pre-service English teachers' reflective capacities. The rationale for performing this study was to identify principles lacking in the existing RP research in Turkey and to provide an understanding of areas that need further investigation to educate reflective practitioners.

Data Collection

The process of data collection began with the identification of keywords to conduct a comprehensive literature search. The keywords used were: reflect; reflection; reflective; English; language; Turkish; Turkey and teacher. Truncation was also utilized in reflect*, Turk*, and teacher* to enhance the quality of search strategy. The studies were sourced from Eric, Scopus and SSCI databases acknowledged to index high-quality papers published in the field of education (Aydın, 2021). The initial search of our keywords yielded 423 potentially relevant studies. To avoid bias and delimit the scope of the study, the following inclusion/exclusion criteria were set in alignment with the research purpose of the present review and the same criteria were appraised to each paper.

- (1) Only research articles were included in the analysis. Book chapters, review studies, editorial notes, conference papers, dissertations or any kind of study that does not fall into the category of research articles were not considered.
- (2) Publications were included only when the promotion of preservice English teachers' reflective capabilities was their primary aim. Articles that utilized reflective tools only for data collection purposes were excluded.
- (3) Only research articles conducted with pre-service English teachers were included. Publications carried out in other disciplines (e.g. mathematics, chemistry, Turkish language etc.) with other populations (tertiary-level learners of English, in-service teachers etc.) were excluded.
- (4) Only papers written in English were included.

After removing duplicates and closely screening the titles, abstracts, research questions and purpose statements of the articles along with reading the full papers when needed, a total of 25 papers were included in analysis.

Data Analysis

An inductive approach was used to identify the main purposes of the retrieved papers. Inductive analysis moves from specific to the general and allows researchers to derive concepts from data. Smaller units of meaning are combined into larger wholes and general statements are formulated to increase understanding about a phenomenon (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). In alignment with this, the analysis process started with open coding. To this end, the researchers read the abstracts, research questions and purpose statements of each publication for several times to familiarize themselves with the content and wrote down all key concepts. Having open coded the data, similar codes were grouped and collapsed into higher order categories. Leveraging content-characteristic words, themes were generated from similar broader categories. Disagreements in coding were resolved through consensus.

Results

Analysis results revealed that the most studied topic was "Bridging principles and practices" followed by "Focusing on leveling taxonomies", "Investigating the role of reflective tools", "Examining the value of dialogue for RP-integrated activities" and "Inquiring into pre-service teachers' inner world and RP". The results also showed that a number of studies had more than one

concern of interest in their questions or purpose statements. The distribution of retrieved studies in relation to areas of interest in the discourse of RP is displayed in Table 1.

Table 1.

Primary research interests of the studies conducted in the area reflective practice

Themes	N	Sub-themes	Author/Year
Bridging principles and practices	16	Reflections on campus-based professional learning experiences Reflections on practicum experiences	Arıkan (2006), Demirbulak (2012), Dikilitaş & Çomoğlu (2020), Erdem Mete (2019), Eroz-Tuga (2013), Güngör (2016), Karakaş & Yükselir (2021), Kırmızı & Tosuncuoğlu (2019), Korucu-Kış & Kartal (2019), Kömür & Çepnik (2015), Önal (2019), Tavail (2014), Turhan & Kırkgöz (2018), Turhan & Kırkgöz (2021), Ürün Göker (2021), Yeşilbursa (2011)
Focusing on leveling taxonomies	11	Assessing reflectivity levels via existing frameworks Assessing reflectivity levels via self-constructed frameworks	Ayan & Seferoğlu (2011), Bener & Yıldız (2019), İlin (2020), Karatepe & Yılmaz (2018), Özkan (2018), Mumford & Dikilitaş (2020), Tuncer & Özkan (2018), Turhan & Kırkgöz (2018), Turhan & Kırkgöz (2021), Yalçın Arslan (2019), Yeşilbursa (2011)
Investigating the role of reflective tools	8	Pre-service teachers' perceptions of RP tools Contributions of tools to reflectivity	Ayan & Seferoğlu (2011), Bener & Yıldız (2019), Güngör (2016), Kömür & Çepnik (2015), Önal (2019), Özkan (2018), Tavail (2014), Tuncer & Özkan (2018)
Examining the value of dialogue for RP-integrated activities	5	Dialogue for fostering professional learning Dialogue for promoting reflective propensities	Eroz-Tuga (2013), Güngör (2016), Karakaş & Yükselir (2021), Turhan & Kırkgöz (2021), Ürün Göker (2021)
Inquiring into pre-service teachers' inner world and RP	4	Self-image as teachers Interaction of beliefs and RP	Cephe (2009), Dikilitaş & Çomoğlu (2020), Eroz-Tuga (2013), Mumford & Dikilitaş (2020)

“Bridging principles and practices” was the most recurrent theme in the majority of the studies (n=16). The rationale underlying these papers was that reflective practices should be an integral part of initial teacher education programs to help pre-service teachers make better sense of their formal training experiences. Accordingly, these studies examined pre-service teachers' reflections on the professional learning experiences they went through either in campus-based courses or in practicum. The studies centred on exploring the benefits and concerns pre-service teachers had during their learning to teach processes. While one of the studies (Demirbulak, 2012) was pertinent to examining pre-service teachers' reflections on the promises and challenges encountered during both university coursework and practicum, ten of them (Arıkan, 2006; Dikilitaş & Çomoğlu, 2020; Erdem Mete, 2019; Eroz-Tuga, 2013; Güngör, 2016; Karakaş & Yükselir, 2021; Korucu-Kış & Kartal, 2019; Kömür & Çepnik, 2015; Önal, 2019; Yeşilbursa, 2011) probed into the pre-service teachers' reflections on the activities undertaken in campus-based courses and five of them were concerned with reflections on practicum experiences (Kırmızı & Tosuncuoğlu, 2019; Tavail, 2014; Turhan & Kırkgöz, 2018, 2021; Ürün Göker, 2021).

“Focusing on leveling taxonomies” was another frequently discussed theme across some of the included studies. Eleven publications investigated into the content and depth of reflection displayed by pre-service language teachers. Nine studies tried to match would-be teachers' thoughts

with the pre-specified categories of such existing frameworks as Lee's (2005) reflectivity levels (Özkan, 2018; Tuncer & Özkan, 2018), Zhu's (2011) levels of reflective thinking (Karatepe & Yılmaz, 2018), Bain et al.'s (1999) reflectivity levels (Bener & Yıldız, 2019; Turhan & Kırkgöz, 2018, 2021), Korthagen and Vasalos' (2005) onion model (Yalçın Arslan, 2019), Hatton and Smith's (1995) levels of reflectivity (Ayan & Seferoğlu, 2011; İlin, 2020), and Taggart and Wilson's (2005) reflective models (İlin, 2020). Two studies, on the other hand, examined whether pre-service teachers engaged in lower or higher levels of reflectivity based on the categories developed by the authors themselves (Mumford & Dikilitaş, 2020; Yeşilbursa, 2011). In the aforementioned frameworks, while reflection at lower levels refer to descriptive accounts of instructional practices, reflection at higher levels indicates an increasing analytical complexity and refers to an awareness of social, political and historical contexts (Hatton & Smith, 1995; Lee, 2005; Zhu, 2011), transpersonal awareness (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005), and awareness of moral and ethical issues (Taggart & Wilson, 2005). All of the retrieved studies in this category revealed that most of the pre-service teachers could not reach higher levels of criticality in their reflections.

Investigating the role of reflective tools was of primary interest to eight papers. Half of these publications explored learners' perceptions of different tools for reflection such as diaries (Kömür & Çepnik, 2015), jargon books (Özkan, 2018), journals (Tuncer & Özkan, 2018) and e-journals (Tavil, 2014). These studies indicated that most of the participants held favorable views toward the integration of reflective tools into their coursework since they made professional learning gains such as developing awareness of their teaching capabilities. The other half focused on how different tools such as electronic portfolios (Ayan & Seferoğlu, 2011), blogs (Bener & Yıldız, 2019), video-recording (Güngör, 2016; Önal, 2019) and diaries (Güngör, 2016) could foster pre-service teachers' reflective thinking. These studies have suggested that such reflective tools engage would-be teachers in thought provoking activities increase their questioning skills, help them analyze and evaluate events more objectively and make decisions based on these evaluations.

Five studies focused on the value of dialogue for learning-to-teach activities integrated with reflective practices. The first group of these research papers examined how receiving feedback through reflective activities would enhance pre-service teachers' professional knowledge and skills. The studies examined how regular feedback on pre-service teachers' teaching performance would support their professional learning and lead to improved practice (Eroz-Tuga, 2013) and how reflective coaching could enhance pre-service language teachers' teaching skills and sense of efficacy (Ürün Göker, 2021). These papers noted that reflective dialogues have a positive impact on pre-service teachers self- and professional development. The second group delved into finding out how dialogue between pre-service teachers and teacher educators could contribute to the development of would-be teachers' reflective capabilities. These papers investigated how receiving regular feedback on their teaching performance could help pre-service teachers improve the quality of their reflective endeavours (Güngör, 2016), in what ways guided discussions impact pre-service language teachers' reflective engagement (Karakaş & Yükselir, 2021) and whether collaborative reflections increase criticality levels of pre-service teachers' reflectivity (Turhan & Kırkgöz, 2021). The studies suggested that collaboration between peers, and pre-service teachers and teacher educators help would-be teachers think on their actions from different perspectives.

Finally, some varying concepts related to pre-service teachers' inner selves constituted the central concern of four publications. Two of them focused on the role of reflective practices in the formation of self-image as teachers and the other two examined the dynamic interplay between beliefs and reflection. To illustrate, both Dikilitaş and Çomoğlu (2020) and Eroz-Tuga (2013) aimed to explore how reflective engagement could help pre-service teachers develop teacher selves and a better understanding of their work. Eroz-Tuga suggested that reflective thinking engaged pre-service teachers in a process of self-analysis as teachers and helped them improve their weaknesses. In their

study, Dikilitaş and Çomoğlu (2020) noted that reflective practices offered pre-service teachers opportunities to discover who they were as pre-service teachers and who they wanted to be as teachers. As to the latter group, while Mumford and Dikilitaş (2020) delved into how pre-service teachers' attitudes influence the processes of learning to reflect and found that different trajectories played a decisive role in the adoption of reflective practice, Cephe (2009) explored whether reflective engagement could change pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching practice and the researcher indicated that methodology courses designed around reflective experiences could lead to changes from behaviorist to constructivist perspectives concerning teaching.

Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore and examine the studies in the area of reflective practice via the methodology of systematic review in order to gain a deeper understanding of the concept of reflection in the pre-service ELT context in Turkey. The studies were selected in line with the inclusion criteria mentioned in the methodology section. The generated themes were "Bridging principles and practices", "Focusing on leveling taxonomies", "Investigating the role of reflective tools", "Examining the value of dialogue for RP-integrated activities", and "Inquiring into pre-service teachers' inner world and RP". Overall, the findings suggested that the majority of the retrieved articles largely focused on basic issues to structure reflection, particularly when starting to reflect. Only a handful of them inquired into pre-service teachers' inner world through reflective activities. However, Farrell (2019) states that reflection is, in essence, a way of life and should be promoted, shared and improved in a regular way via addressing teachers' inner lives as well as cognitive and metacognitive aspects of the teaching practice.

Based on the initiatives taken, it can be discussed that although the retrieved studies in the categories of "Bridging principles and practices", "Focusing on leveling taxonomies", and "Investigating the role of reflective tools" attempted to promote RP and criticality to support pre-service teachers in their journey of becoming critical thinkers and reflective practitioners, the results of these studies indicated that higher levels of criticality were not achieved by most of the pre-service teachers. Critical reflection requires more than thinking about previous assumptions and experiences to opt for future actions (Hickson, 2011) and the use of critical theory for reflection in dealing with the validity of teachers' own assumptions (Brookfield, 2017). Reynolds (1998) states that critical reflection differs from other kinds of reflection stressing the social rather than the individual activity, requiring inquiring dispositions, paying attention to power relations and highlighting emancipation. For the Turkish context, these findings suggest that more studies can be carried out in the area of reflective practice using mixed method and longitudinal studies in order to gain more comprehensive views about reflection and promote critical reflection levels of the student teachers.

The findings also revealed that despite its importance in teacher development, teaching practices and reflective engagement, the value of dialogue constituted the main concern of only five studies. However, reflection is a social practice as well as being an individual act (Farrell, 2019, 2020; Mann & Walsh, 2017; Reynolds, 1998). Taking the discussion a step further, Hernández-Ramos (2004) even states that reflection can be seen as a social activity rather than an individual practice. Hence, another important issue brought forward by this critical review is that more research is needed to extend the use of such collaborative activities as guided discussions, reflective coaching, collaborative reflective engagement etc. by researchers and practitioners while designing learning experiences to cultivate reflective professionals.

Finally, pre-service teachers' inner lives were of primary interest to only four studies. Yet, Farrell (2019) states that RP is a lifelong process suggesting teachers are whole persons and teaching

is like an iceberg. The seen part consisting of teacher behaviours is immensely influenced by the hidden part involving teachers' philosophy, values, presumptions, and beliefs. Therefore, this study contends that the field of RP in the pre-service ELT context in Turkey needs more critical studies and accounts highlighting the inner lives of teachers which include such variables as beliefs, assumptions, identity and affective aspects. According to Farrell (2019), this can allow them to understand the nature of teaching practices better and foster their professional growth and decision-making processes.

In a nutshell, this study suggests that future research focus on the holistic nature and lifelong learning aspects of RP by regarding teachers as whole and social individuals and engaging them in higher levels of reflectivity. Although the findings of this study may open up new insights for further studies, the current study is not without limitations. First, the study was limited to 25 research articles. Book chapters, review studies and dissertations were not included in this critical review. Second, the selected studies were taken from only three databases, namely, Eric, Scopus and SSCI. Finally, an inductive approach was employed to analyse the data with open coding and finding out the similar codes. Future studies can focus on more databases and other types of scientific papers and dissertations by mixing deductive and inductive approaches. More empirical studies are also needed to gain comprehensive view and insights about RP in the Turkish context.

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