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# Reflection in language teaching: A comparison between preservice and experienced teachers of English

**Ulas Kayapinar**

Department of Liberal Arts, American University of the Middle East, Kuwait.

Teachers' ability to reflect on their performances or reflective teaching has been commonly used and accepted in the educational contexts. However, it has not become a content item or a course in educational curricula so far. For this reason, reflective abilities of teachers or preservice teachers cannot be measured, and there is limited feedback on their reflective performances in the teaching and learning process. The purpose of this study is to provide evidence of reflection and reflective skills of preservice teachers of English (PTE) along with experienced teachers of English (ETE) by measuring the use of reflection in different settings such as classroom settings, colleagues and management settings. Reflection-oriented reactions of ETE and PTE to possible complexities or problematic situations were scored by using Teacher Reflection Scale to reveal if they are reflective practitioners or not. The data were collected from 298 volunteer PTE and 293 ETE. Statistical analyses give evidence that ETE participants reflect more than PTE participants. Among PTE, participants mostly reflect in classroom and colleagues' settings, but not in management settings. Besides, ETE participants also reflect in classroom settings, but not in collegial setting. They prefer to reflect within management setting. Compared to PTE, there is evidence that more ETE in teaching and learning environments reflect on their practices.

**Key words:** Reflection, teaching, teacher development, assessment.

## INTRODUCTION

Dewey (1933) defines reflection as "an active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds supporting it and future conclusions, to which it tends" (p. 43). It is basically being aware of what has been done focusing on strengths and challenges. Schön (1987) defines reflection-in-action as the individual's thinking which serves to reshape what he/she is doing while it occurs. The process starts with

routinized responses such as a surprise or unexpected outcome that the individual brings when there is a situation of action. The unexpected outcome leads to reflection within an action-present. Moreover, the questions What is this? and How have I been thinking about it? make individual's thoughts turn back on the surprising phenomenon. At this stage, the individual thinks critically to restructure strategies, comprehend the

phenomena, or frame the problem. Reflection paves the way to an on-the-spot-experiment which makes the individual think of new methods and attempt new actions to test the understanding of the newly observed phenomena or to confirm the moves with the intention of changing the actions for the better. In brief, reflection is a response, a conscious recall and examination of the experience as a foundation for evaluation and decision-making which leads to planning and action (Shahriari, 2018).

## Reflection in teacher education and development

Teaching is a collection of simultaneous tasks and requires qualified teachers (Mousapour and Beiranvand, 2015). Hoffman and Duffy (2016) states that thoughtfully changing teaching strategies in response to students or situations is called in-the-moment adaptation, which can be seen as a part of reflection. Reflective teaching has adaptation which is done in response to students and/or situations, and it has to be non-routine, thoughtful, proactive, and invented against usual practices. Similarly, Zeichner (1994) states that teachers, as all professionals, need to reflect. They should reflect on their learners' thinking, understandings, interests and developmental thinking because reflection is essential for bringing understanding to the complex nature of classrooms. He further states that teachers should be trained to reflect on the subject matter and the thoughtful application of teaching strategies. Reflection, also increases critical thinking (Korthagen, 2004), provides a source of knowledge construction in teaching (Conway, 2001), and promotes self-regulation in teachers (Boud, 2000).

Not only for teachers but also for preservice teachers, reflection can become a goal in many teacher education and development programs as the more teacher reflectivity occurs, the better the quality of educator (Tok and Doğan-Dolapçıoğlu, 2013). A reflective teacher faces an experience, interprets and describes this experience. Later, she/he generates possible explanations after analyzing, experimenting and testing it (Lee, 2005). When reflective teaching is seen as an approach to teaching, learning, and problem solving that uses reflection as a main tool, it enables teachers and preservice teachers diagnose and understand their classroom contexts and their students' learning better, putting the students' learning at the heart of the teaching-learning process, developing a rationale for their teaching, and taking informed specific actions after they make sound decisions in the classroom (Al-Issa, 2002). Wilson and Jan (1993) described reflection as a process of individual evaluation of self, experience, and learning. Reflection is, in this sense, a beneficial practice to support professional development of teachers and their efforts to improve students' learning (Fendler, 2003;

Hoffman-Kipp et al., 2003). A reflective teacher makes the effort to solve the challenges of classroom instruction and takes responsibility for his or her own professional development (Zeichner and Liston, 1996).

Reflective teachers develop a habit of continuous inquiry and learning from their experiences by framing occurrences of practice from various perspectives, and many valuable attempts have been made to show that teachers' reflective abilities can develop, and their awareness of the potential of engaging in problem identification can be raised through noticing and questioning events of everyday practice (Bulpitt and Martin, 2005; Chiu, 2006; Clarke, 2006; Conway, 2001; Dinkelman, 2000; Garcia et al., 2006; Kemmis and McTaggart, 1982; Lee, 2005; Reiman, 1999; Ticha and Hospesova, 2006; Tillema, 2000; Whipp, 2003). This might be useful in building reflective teacher identities. Gu and Benson (2015) states that pre-service teacher education and the early years of teaching are seen as a crucial period in the formation of teacher identities, as novice teachers try to "make their work match their personal vision of how it should be, whilst at the same time being subjected to the powerful socializing forces of the school culture" (Flores and Day, 2006, p. 220). Although there is evidence to suggest that reflective thinking can be improved by learning (Brown, 1997; Choi et al., 2005; King and Kitchener, 2004; Song et al., 2006), current theories of preservice and novice teacher learning have not accounted for the varied influences of reflection. Thompson et al. (2013) cited that studies on novice teacher learning that attempt to explain differences in uptake of reform-based practice tend to fall into one of two categories which are focused on the development of teacher knowledge and beliefs (e.g., Lee et al., 2007; OECD, 2009) and focus on institutional characteristics such as school climate (McGinnis et al., 2004), but not reflection. Hamiloğlu (2013) studied the practicum process of pre-service teachers and found that professional identities of preservice teachers were influenced more effectively when they were able to reflect. The participants became more aware of the transformation of their emerging identities.

For this reason, professional vision might be identified as an important element of teacher expertise that can be developed in teacher education (Seidel and Sturmer, 2014). Thus, defining and measuring competencies that teachers require for creating learning opportunities should be of particular importance in teacher education (Brouwer, 2010; Cochran-Smith, 2003; Koster et al., 2005).

Even though reflection and reflective teaching practice is seen as teacher's awareness of her/his teaching and one of the popular concepts which has a historical background since Dewey, it is not easy to give a precise and commonly accepted definition for teacher reflection in preservice teacher education. Dewey (1933) states

reflective thinking is valuable because it "converts action that is merely appetitive, blind, and impulsive into intelligent action" (p. 17). Later, Schön's (1987) contribution influenced the construction of reflection in teaching expertise. According to Schön (1987), a practitioner's reflection can serve as a corrective to over-learning because a practitioner, through reflection, can surface and criticize the tacit understandings that have grown up around the repetitive experiences of a specialized practice, and can make new sense of the situations of uncertainty or uniqueness which may be experienced. He states that the individuals find themselves in an uncertain or unique situation which is experienced by surprise, puzzlement, or confusion. Moreover, he puts forth the notions of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action for consideration.

In teacher education and teacher development programs, reflection is usually seen as a way of thinking or reacting against some confusions or problematic situations in the classroom limiting the scope or interpretation of reflection to teaching act or performance in the classroom (Clift et al., 1990; Gipe and Richards, 1992; Gore, 1987). Obviously, more guidance is needed by preservice teachers in learning to reflect on their instructional performances and decision-making processes (Nagro et al., 2017).

The development of teachers or future teachers can be empowered to improve upon the stimuli in the teaching and learning environment, and can become an achievable objective (Yost et al., 2000). It can be taught and learnt as it can be seen as an attitude or a habit of active, persistent, and careful examination of educational and social beliefs asking two basic questions, which are What have I done? and What can I do for the better? (Zeichner et al., 1987).

Preservice teachers usually have opportunities to gain some practical experience through microteaching simulations during their university courses (Tuluce and Cecen, 2015). They reflect on their experiences when they teach small groups of peers, and discuss possible challenges, problematic situations or confusions, thus reinforcing their strengths. However, this does not go beyond a specific instructional method rather than studying or acquiring a skill of "genuine reflective inquiry" (Gipe and Richards, 1992: 52). Many preservice teachers receive limited guidance to reflect based on the instructor's educational aims (Barnes and Caprino, 2018). Kajder and Parkes (2012) emphasizes that little consideration is taken on the quality of reflection in their study of English and Music preservice teachers' reflections. Hume (2009) reports that reflection becomes challenging for her Science preservice teachers as they do not see models of effective reflections. Several scholars give evidence of preservice teachers' reflection which will improve upon their teaching abilities and suggest teaching reflection (Coulson and Harvey, 2013;

Cruickshank, 1981; Feyten and Kaywell, 1994; Gipe and Richards, 1992: Gore, 1987; Holton and Nott, 1980; Hume, 2009; Ryan, 2013; Zeichner, 1994).

In this respect, reflection is an attribute which can be gained by experience, and it can be developed via education and experience although it is a process of self-observation and self-evaluation. Besides, teacher reflection refers to spontaneous critical scrutiny of teachers' thoughts and behavior in terms of teaching and learning including their beliefs and knowledge as well as practice and effects elicited by those beliefs and knowledge (Sung et al., 2009). Although there has been some research on experiences of identity construction among non-native English-speaking TESOL teachers (Au and Blake, 2003; Gu, 2013; Gu, 2011; Menard-Warwick, 2008; Nemtchinova, 2005; Trent, 2012), there has been relatively little research on the construction of teacher identities in pre-service teacher education and teacher development settings.

Considering related studies (Cole, 1997; Calderhead, 1992; Mena Marcos et al., 2010; Minott, 2009; Poyraz and Usta, 2013; Reiman, 1999; Tok and Doğan-Dolapçıoğlu, 2013; Williams, 2008), which contributed to the field of reflective teaching and practices, this study, unlike the existing ones, tries to reveal preservice and experienced language teachers' reactions and behavior in terms of reflective teaching and makes a comparison between ETE and PTE with a correlative design. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to clarify reflection-oriented reactions of PTE and ETE to possible confusions or problematic situations. In this way, any existing evidence of reflective or non-reflective practice in language teaching will also be revealed. Therefore, this study tries to answer the following research questions:

1) Do ETE and PTE use reflection in the teaching and learning environment?
2) Is there a significant relationship between PTE/ETE reflection scores for classroom settings and colleagues' settings?
3) Is there a significant relationship between PTE/ETE reflection scores for classroom settings and management settings?
4) Is there a significant difference between ETE and PTE total scores of TRS?
5) Is there a significant difference between PTE and ETE means of reflection for classroom settings?
6) Is there a significant difference between PTE and ETE means of reflection for colleagues and management settings?

## METHODOLOGY

This is a correlative study as it analyzes correlations and tries to describe the relationship between ETE and PTE reflection scores to answer the research questions and to achieve the purpose of the study.

**Table 1.** Participants' demographic characteristics

| Gender | N | Experience |
|---|---|---|
| Female (PTE) | 157 | 7-8 Months |
| Male (PTE) | 141 | 7-8 Months |
| Female (ETE) | 160 | 3-22 |
| Male (ETE) | 133 | 4-25 |

## Participants

Convenience sampling method was used to select the participants. The random study group of preservice teachers and experienced teachers provided the data. They comprised 591 volunteers who were conveniently available to participate in the study. No inclusion criteria were identified prior to the selection of the participants apart from being an English teacher and a preservice English teacher. The data were available for 298 preservice English language teachers (seniors in ELT practicum) and 293 experienced English language teachers at primary schools. English language teachers averaged 14 years of teaching experience. The characteristics of the participants are given in Table 1.

## Data collection

### Teacher Reflection Scale (TRS)

In order to collect data, a scale for measuring teacher reflection called Teacher Reflection Scale was employed capturing participants' reflective responses in different settings (Kayapinar and Erkus, 2009). Teacher Reflection Scale, including 22 items, is a standardized scale which was developed to measure teacher reflection. It covers two settings of problematic scenarios which are reflection for classroom settings (RCS) and reflection for colleagues and management settings (RCMS). The response categories of the items have three options: Reflection on the problem, attribution of the problem to external causes, and lack of concern for the problem. Teachers read the items and chose one of the response categories, which can also be seen in the following sample item from the scale:

"One of your students prevents others from learning."

a. I look for the ways to end the situation.
b. I make him/her sit down in the front alone.
c. Everyone is responsible for himself/herself.

If the teacher chooses "a," he/she seems to be responding in a reflective manner and receives 1 point. However, the teacher gets 0 point if one of the other alternatives is chosen. This means the teacher is not behaving in a reflective manner but attributes the problem to external causes or shows a lack of concern. To analyze non-reflection, each option representing an external cause and lack of concern is taken as 1 point against the others which are assigned as 0 point as if each is the correct answer in different analyses.

### Psychometric characteristics of the scale

The internal consistency coefficient of the scale was reported as 0.868, and the reliability of the scale was reported as 0.835. Additionally, the correlation between RCS scores and RCMS scores is 0.634 ($p<0.01$). The correlation between RCS/RCMS scores and the total scores is 0.953 for RCS and 0.838 for RCMS. The correlation coefficients between total sub-scale scores and total scale scores prove that the scale may be used and commented as a whole and/or as independent parts for determining reflection levels according to the settings. Further examinations during the development of the scale demonstrated that the reflection scores do not differentiate according to gender (t=1.494; df=130; p>0.05) and subject areas such as math and social sciences (t=-1.881; df=126; p>0.05). For this reason, this scale was seen valid to be used for English teachers. Additional statistical data of this study were obtained by computing the total scores and sub-scores of PTE and ETE. Pearson product-moment correlation and independent samples t test were used to interpret the scale results.

## Procedure

Each teacher responded to the items individually on a hard copy in an invigilated session reserved at schools where they work. Each preservice teacher also responded to the items individually on a hard copy in an invigilated session reserved at colleges where they study. Each participant was given a short educational session of reflection before responding to the items in the scale.

## Data analysis

To begin with, descriptive statistics results were analyzed to reveal if participants reflect on their practices in the teaching and learning process. The collected data were also computed to measure reflection of PTE and ETE in percentages. Later, the possible relationship between PTE's and ETE's reflection scores for classroom (RCS), colleagues and management settings (RCMS) were examined by correlation analyses. Finally, the total scores of PTE and ETE reflection were analyzed to find out possible significant differences. Independent samples t-test made the comparisons between the reflection scores of PTE and ETE. In order to analyze the data and compute descriptive statistics, SPSS 16.0 was employed. To investigate the correlation between RCS and RCMS scores, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was used. The relationship between total scores of reflection and scores of reflection in classroom settings was examined by computing Pearson Product-Moment Correlation. The relationship between total scores of reflection and scores of reflection in colleagues and management settings was again examined by employing Pearson Product-Moment Correlation. Finally, to examine a possible difference between PTE and ETE total scale and sub-scale scores, t test for independent samples was employed.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results are provided for each research question

**Table 2.** PTE and ETE reflection results based on the total scores.

| Parameter | PTE reflection (%) | PTE non-reflection (%) | ETE reflection (%) | ETE non-reflection (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reflection | 56.43 | 43.57 | 66.34 | 33.66 |
| Reflection (Classroom setting) | 67.58 | 13.03 | 68.33 | 23.63 |
| Reflection (Management setting) | 4.61 | 57.62 | 24.62 | 46.02 |
| Reflection (Colleagues setting) | 27.81 | 29.35 | 7.05 | 30.35 |

**Table 3.** The relationship between PTE/ETE reflection scores for classroom settings and colleagues settings.

| Parameter | PTE | | ETE | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Reflection Cl. Settings | Reflection Col. Settings | Reflection Cl. Settings | Reflection Col. Settings |
| Reflection (Classroom settings) | 1 | 0.570** | 1 | 0.150* |
| N | 298 | 298 | 293 | 293 |
| Reflection (Colleagues setting) | 0.570** | 1 | 0.150* | 1 |
| N | 298 | 298 | 293 | 293 |

*Correlation is not significant. **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

**Table 4.** The relationship between PTE/ETE reflection scores for classroom settings and management settings.

| Parameter | PTE | | ETE | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Reflection Cl. Settings | Reflection Man. Settings | Reflection Cl. Settings | Reflection Man. Settings |
| Reflection (Classroom settings) | 1 | -0.456** | 1 | 0.156* |
| N | 298 | 298 | 293 | 293 |
| Reflection (Colleagues setting) | -0.456** | 1 | 0.156* | 1 |
| N | 298 | 298 | 293 | 293 |

*Correlation is not significant. **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

individually. Data presented in tables and results of scale statistics were used to interpret the results of the research. Tables 2 to 7 present the data and values on statistical significance of differences between the reflection scores for ETE and PTE in different settings.

#### *"Do ETE and PTE reflect in the teaching and learning environment?"*

The total scores of reflection of the two groups were calculated and the percentages of the participants who reflect in the teaching and learning environment are presented in Table 2.

Here, the mean of the total scores that PTE collected is 56.43%. This might mean that the mean scores do not seem sufficient for PTE to be reflective. In this sense,

they can be called partly reflective. Among the ones who reflect in the teaching and learning environment, the percentage of PTE who reflect in classroom setting is found 67.58; it is 4.61 in management setting, and it is 27.81 in colleagues setting. The highest score among the sub-tests belongs to classroom setting, and the lowest score belongs to management setting. These results might emerge from the intensive teaching of theory and practice of methods and techniques in language teaching curricula. Unlikely, teaching of reflection and relationships with management and colleagues do not seem to take an important part in the curricula as the scores indicate. All in all, the scores might give evidence that there is not a systematic study of reflection and reflective teaching in language teacher education curricula, and the reflective teaching skills of PTE are just limited.

Table 2 shows higher results for ETE. The mean of the

**Table 5.** The difference between ETE and PTE means of reflection total scores.

| t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean difference | Std. Error difference |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7.146 | 589 | 0.000** | 1.94977 | 0.27286 |

**Table 6.** The difference between ETE and PTE means of reflection for classroom settings.

| t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| -1.468 | 589 | 0.143* | -0.17468 | 0.11903 |

*Correlation is not significant.

**Table 7.** The difference between ETE and PTE means of reflection for colleagues and management settings.

| t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. error difference |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| -5.489 | 589 | 0.000** | -0.35526 | 0.06472 |

*Correlation is not significant.

total scores that ETE received is 66.34%. This might mean that the mean scores do not seem sufficient for some ETE to be reflective. In this sense, they can also be called partly reflective even though it is higher than the PTE reflection result. Apart from the total scores, reflection sub-test mean in classroom settings is found to be 68.33; it is 24.62 in management setting, and 7.05 in colleagues setting. The highest score among the sub-tests belongs to classroom setting, and the lowest score belongs to colleagues setting. This might indicate a change in behaviour and attitude in time. This change might be a result of the effect of experience in teaching and learning environments with considerable knowledge of theory and practice or methods and techniques in language teaching. In addition to this, a variety of factors or variables might cause a difference in teachers' reactions to management decisions or regulations, so the scores of reflection in management settings become pretty higher than the ones PTE received. Unlikely, reflection in colleagues setting is pretty lower than the ones in management settings and the ones PTE received. This might mean that, reflection in colleagues setting may not take an important part in teachers' practices as they become more experienced. All in all, the scores might mean that there is not a systematic practice of reflection and reflective teaching in language teaching environments, and the reflective teaching skills of ETE are also limited.

The table also shows the percentages of PTE who do not reflect on their practices in different settings. The results show that 43.57% of the PTE who participated in the study did not give reflective answers at all, not only in

RCS but also in RCMS. Within this percentage, 13.03% were not reflective for classroom settings, 57.62% were not reflective for management settings while the 29.35% were not reflective for colleague settings. The results show that the highest percentage of non-reflection belongs to reflection in management settings. This is also supported with the PTE results of reflection in management settings, which is the lowest among others. This might be caused by the curriculum content and the lack of experience of working in an educational environment in which PTE should report to. Next, colleagues setting takes the second highest value with 29.35%. The least amount of non-reflection comes with 13.03% in classroom setting. This might also support the idea that there is limited or no content for colleagues and management in the curriculum content of teacher education. Moreover, 33.66% of the ETE who participated in the study did not give reflective answers at all, not only in RCS but also in RCMS. Within this percentage, 23.63% were not reflective for classroom settings. This is comparatively a higher percentage for the ones who reflect. Management setting has the highest percentage with 46.02% while the 30.35% were not reflective for colleague settings. The choice analyses also present interesting results on the tendencies of PTE and ETE. More than half of PTE who do not reflect have a tendency of lack of concern (53.78%) while almost half have a tendency of attribution of the problem to external causes (46.22%). In addition, more ETE (58.14%) have a tendency of lack of concern when they have a problematic situation, and 41.86% of them have a tendency of attribution of the problem to external causes.

This might mean that some ETE become more unresponsive when they face a problem or confusion in teaching and learning environments.

### "Is there a significant relationship between PTE/ETE reflection scores for classroom settings and colleagues' settings?"

PTE who reflect in classroom practices also reflect in problematic situations with colleagues. To see if there is a significant relationship between use of reflection in these two settings, the results of the analyses are given in Table 3.

As shown in Table 3, although the percentage for the PTE colleague settings was low, the correlation between reflection scores for the classroom setting and the colleague settings is significant. This might mean that anyone who reflects in classroom practices might also reflect in colleagues setting. Table 3 shows that the correlation between ETE reflection scores for the classroom settings and the colleague settings is not significant. This means that there is no meaningful relationship between reflection for the classroom settings and colleagues' settings. As seen in the percentages in Table 2 previously, ETE reflect with an amount of 7.05% in colleagues setting, whereas in classroom settings it is at 68.33%. This might support the idea that ETE ignore their colleagues, or they do not reflect on problematic situations in which they are involved with their colleagues. Pennington and Richards (2016) report that teachers' personal identities become more work-related and instructional through processes of negotiation, experiences, and interactions with others. PTE might be more connected to negotiation and interactions with their colleagues as they are classmates most of the time, go to schools together, have more time to share and discuss while ETE's connections, in time, might grow lack of concern and attribution of the problems to external causes depending on the environment. The relationship between ETE reflection for the classroom and management settings is given subsequently.

### "Is there a significant relationship between PTE/ETE reflection scores for classroom settings and management settings?"

The relationship between reflection for the classroom settings and management settings for PTE is shown in Table 4. The results in Table 4 indicate that most PTE who were reflection-oriented for the classroom settings were not reflective in the management settings. There is more of a negative relationship between reflection for the classroom settings and management settings than the relationship between reflection for the classroom  settings

and colleague settings. In other words, as the reflection scores increase for classroom settings, they decrease for the management setting.

The table also indicates that the relationship between ETE reflective behavior for classroom settings and ETE reflective behavior for management settings is not significant. The coefficient (-0.156) related to the relationship between the two might mean that there is no linearity between these components. In another way, reflecting on classroom settings does not mean reflecting on management settings accordingly.

### "Is there a significant difference between ETE and PTE total scores of TRS?"

The Table 5 presents the significant difference between ETE and PTE means of reflection total scores. This table indicates the group of participants who reflect more as a whole including settings of classroom, colleagues and management.

The statistical analysis shows that ETE and PTE differed significantly on their total reflection performances. This might give evidence that, in time, teaching and learning environments let ETE gain some insight for reflection even if they are not possibly able to formulate theories about reflection specifically. Supportively, Dicke et al. (2015) report that, by the transition into the profession even after completing their preparation, too many teachers state they are unprepared and feel stunned before they enter the classroom.

This result also shows that PTE definitely reflect less than experienced teachers when reflection is taken as a whole. This might pave the way to the idea that reflection should be included in the curriculums of teacher education as a specific subject to make PTE formulate theories about the problematic situations or confusions in the teaching and learning environments as PTE need more guidance in learning to reflect on their instructional decision making (Nagro et al., 2017).

### "Is there a significant difference between PTE and ETE means of reflection for classroom settings?"

Table 6 gives the results of a t-test which does not indicate a significant difference between ETE and PTE means of reflection in the classroom settings.

The legend of the table indicates that ETE and PTE scores did not differ significantly on their reflective practices in classroom settings. Another implication might be that their limited reflective practices for classroom settings do not meaningfully differ. This means that both parties are partly reflective even though the scores of ETE are higher than the scores of PTE, as given previously  in  Table 2. It might be difficult for experienced

and preservice teachers to reflect on their practices as they are not taught how to reflect in classroom settings, or they might not be aware that they can reflect on them in order to improve their performances and find sound solutions to take effective action. For this reason, a context, framework, or model for reflection should be provided for PTE (Coulson and Harvey, 2013). This would help and encourage PTE to look into their experiences in practice and pave the way to engage in reflection by taking reflective action.

### *"Is there a significant difference between PTE and ETE means of reflection for colleagues and management settings?"*

Table 7 gives the results of a t test which indicates a significant difference between ETE and PTE means of reflection in the colleagues and management settings.

ETE and PTE differed significantly on their reflection performances for colleagues and management settings. ETE might reflect on problematic situations with colleagues and the management in the teaching and learning environment as they work together, and they need to gain some experience and share the same working culture for some time. As Pennington and Richards (2016) stated, the sense of teaching is developed in an interactive way. However, PTE do not have real life experiences and working culture as they do not work together with their peers for a long time in the same teaching and learning environment or an institution. Still, PTE reflect more on colleagues setting than ETE, and ETE reflect more on the management than ETE. This might be driven from the work culture and experiences that they have had in the teaching and learning environments. Additionally, most teaching curriculums do not have specific emphasis on working culture, working with colleagues in a social environment, and stimuli driven by a real management system in the teaching and learning environment. Adiguzel and Karadas (2014) found in their study with 548 teachers that the perception level of teachers on organizational commitment is not satisfactory, and professional seniority makes a difference in teachers' organizational commitment. Teachers' organizational commitment and reflection on management settings grow in time as they experience a variety of situations in the teaching and learning environment. These are not specific components of teacher education curricula and programs. These might be the reasons for PTE not to reflect on management settings more than they do for colleagues.

### Conclusion

Gore (1987) mentioned, "claims about reflective teaching

are in advance of any solid evidence" (p. 35). To collect solid evidence and make valid and reliable comparisons, this study uses an empirical measurement tool presenting some evidence of reflective practices performed by experienced teachers of English and preservice English teachers. Assessment of reflection using a scale is supposed to contribute and pave the way to the field of reflective practice in teacher education with the increased attention to the quality of teacher education as reflective teaching is a way teachers think about goals and lessons in a thoughtful, analytical, and objective way, and they assess the origins, purposes, and consequences of their work at all levels (Cruickshank, 1981; Zeichner and Liston, 1990).

It gives findings of reflection performances in different settings such as classroom settings, colleagues and management settings in the teaching and learning environments. An examination of the findings shows that the results of the correlations applied to the reflection scores of ETE and PTE revealed a statistically significant difference. It can be inferred that ETE reflection scores in classroom settings are not statistically and significantly more different than PTE scores. However, an implication can be stated as the curriculum or learning environment might be prompting for ETE's reflective practice in colleagues and management settings. In Yorulmaz (2006) study, teachers stated that any type of in-service training related to reflective thinking was not provided to them. However, the findings and results give interesting evidence that more than half of ETE did attain higher reflection when compared to PTE. There was also a statistically significant and meaningful difference between the means of the mentioned groups' total reflection scores. Apart from all variables or factors which cannot be controlled including external and environmental stimuli, experienced teachers of English reflect on their practices to some extent more than preservice teachers of English, or their level of reflection improves significantly in time. This result might mean that experienced teachers' experiences in colleague and management settings might lead them to develop reflective skills in their practices in time while reflective skills of preservice teachers of English do not show any significant difference in higher education. This might be because preservice teachers are not taught reflection in language teaching curricula even though experienced teachers are introduced to classroom practice innovations from time to time, and a teacher's enthusiasm to new practices makes an impact on classroom practice implementation (Sansom, 2017). Kerimgil (2008) also states that more imposition of constructive curriculum could be more convenient for the development of PTE reflective thinking. Still, this study is limited with only primary school teachers. Further studies might be held on reflection for larger samples, not only for English teaching but for all areas, in correlative and/or experimental designs to

produce more data and results. Some questions might arise for the effect of reflective thinking and teaching, the change in teacher attitudes, beliefs, and performances. This might lead to far-reaching implications for decision makers and teacher educators to question the possibilities of reflective thinking and teaching for all preservice teaching curricula since PTE gain insight and increase higher levels of reflective thinking by becoming reflective agents while challenging problems and having opportunities for learning and practicing reflective skills.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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