ELT Teachers` Professional Learning in Turkey

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Declaration

I confirm that this is my own work and the use of all material from other sources has been properly and fully acknowledged.

Zeynep Bütün

"We shall not cease from exploration

And the end of all our exploring

Will be to arrive where we started

And know the place for the first time."

T.S. Eliot

Acknowledgements

Sitting on the chair that I have been sitting on since April 2017 feels different for the first time. This time I am at the end of the tunnel, the tunnel through which I could not see the end for countless times. This time, after hundreds of weeks and thousands of days, I am feeling accomplished and relieved. To everybody who asks me how I am feeling about doing PhD, I have always said "it is a long commitment, full of learning, but just too long". Now, at this very moment, I know in my heart that all crazy days, all ups and downs on the way, all fights with uncertainties and the recent and newest struggles in the days of COVID-19 have been worth it. Leaving my career to pursue my Master`s degree has been one of the best decisions I have made for my life, for myself. And I cannot thank enough to people who have greatly assisted me, without even knowing at times.

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Abstract

This research explores the professional learning (PL) of English Language teaching (ELT) teachers working in different contexts in Turkey, specifically how reflection and collaborative activity facilitate ELT teachers` learning and what factors affect ELT teachers` pursuit of PL.

This research adopted a qualitative multiple case study design using a triangulation of life history interviews, critical incidents and semi-structured interviews. Life histories provided an overview of the ELT teachers` backgrounds and their careers to date, critical incidents captured specific learning experiences and provided details about those incidents, and semi-structured interviews helped to learn more about the teachers` perspectives of PL, their motivations and aspirations. An urban and a rural area were selected for the collection of the data because the available PL opportunities may vary between urban and rural settings, and the data collection tools were piloted before the main study took place. Thirteen ELT teachers formed the sources of the data. The teachers varied with regards to their teaching experience (four to eleven years), their educational background (nine from ELT departments four from English-related departments; and four of them pursued further education after Bachelor`s degree), their responsibilities within their schools and the years they were teaching (public primary, secondary and high schools). A mixture of deductive and inductive analysis was carried out for thirty-nine transcripts (thirteen data sets) and a constant comparative method was used to understand the similarities and differences among the teachers and to modify the emerging codes by making them applicable to all data sets.

The findings revealed that the teachers were engaged in both reflective practice and collaborative working; however, the degree of collaboration the teachers were engaged in was lower than their engagement in reflective practice. Whilst certain models of reflective practice and collaborative working helped some of the teachers to achieve sustained change, not many teachers were able to engage in these activities effectively. Several individual and contextual factors influenced the teachers` reflective and collaborative experiences. The teachers differed from each other with regards to their motivation, self-efficacy and beliefs, and the emerging contextual factors were related to the teachers` external, material and situated contexts. Five phrases stood out which encapsulated the teachers` attitudes towards

PL, which were guided by the level of their proactivity: "I try no matter what", "I am trying because", "I try if", "I am done with trying" and "I will never try".

By bringing reflective practice and collaborative working together, this research provides insights about the factors affecting each practice and how they feed into each other in relation to teachers` PL. Moreover, it sheds light on the existing problems in the Turkish context, and offers suggestions for teachers, schools, pre-service teacher training programmes and authorities to improve the quality of English teaching and learning outcomes.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

In an era of neo-liberal policies and growing emphasis on a knowledge economy, education is now viewed as a driver for countries` economic growth and further development (Peters, 2012). This has increased the value given to education as it is believed to enhance human capital; countries need to stay competitive in the global arena (Fiona, 2013). Achieving this human capital power is only possible through competent teachers, which highlights the importance and necessity of teacher education for educating future generations (OECD, 2009). By prioritising steps to improve teachers` performance, countries expect to see improvements in students` learning outcomes as well (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005).

Looking at Turkish students` performance in national and international exams can provide insights about teachers` competency in Turkey as the quality of a school education depends on the quality of its teachers (McKinsey & Company, 2007). For example, Turkey was ranked 44th out of 65 countries in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2012 (OECD, 2014), and was ranked 52nd out of 70 countries in PISA 2015 (OECD, 2016). In addition, Turkey was ranked 47th out of 51 countries in relation to 15-year-old students` collaborative problem-solving skills (OECD, 2017), and was ranked last by the United Nations Children`s Fund (UNICEF) in terms of providing a good quality of education (UNICEF, 2017). The 15-year-olds were assessed with regards to their basic competency in reading, mathematics and science literacy, and the results showed that only 40.7% of the 15-year-olds in Turkey achieved basic competency in those areas (UNICEF, 2017). The report argues that a failure in achieving basic skills in core subjects leads to lower productivity and wages, higher unemployment rates and inactivity (UNICEF, 2017). This appears to pinpoint the current unemployment rate in Turkey. According to recent Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) statistics, the current unemployment rate of the young population (15-24) was 21.5% for men and 31.4% for women in Turkey, which are higher than the average rates among the OECD countries (17.1% for men, 18.5% for women) (OECD, 2020). The statistical findings of the national exams which students sit to enter a university department in Turkey, unfortunately, do not seem to be very different than the international findings. In 2017, around 2,150,000 students sat for the first phase of the university exam (YGS) and 30%

of them were not able to get even the minimum score (180 out of 500) to sit for the second phase (OSYM, 2017).

In order to improve the quality of national education, Turkey has implemented several significant educational changes across time, and the most recent reform was carried out in 2012 by applying a 4+4+4 approach which divides the education system into three main tiers as primary, secondary and high school (Koc, 2016). With this reform, the length of compulsory education was increased from eight years to twelve years in order to meet the requirements of the European Union (EU) by achieving a higher quality education (Gursoy & Celik Korkmaz, 2013). However, as the international and national findings indicate, the quality of the 12-year compulsory education in Turkey may not be at the `desired` level yet. This, according to Abazaoglu, Yildirim and Yildizhan (2016), is linked to the quality of teaching practice as the researchers argue that a certain level of quality should be achieved by teachers in order to achieve better learning outcomes at students` level. To achieve this, three ways to ensure the quality of teaching force may be pursued: having high entry requirements for teacher candidates, having a thorough pre-service teacher education programme and/or providing good quality in-service teacher support (Gomleksiz, 1999). Compared to the top-ranking education systems (see Section 2.2.1.), the teacher education system in Turkey appears to have weaknesses in all three areas (Odabasi, Cimer & Cimer, 2012).

This research focuses on English language teaching (ELT) teachers` in-service professional learning (PL) activities. More specifically, it looks at the concepts of reflective practice and collaborative working as two key aspects of PL and highlights the factors hindering or supporting teachers` reflective and collaborative PL experiences. With this in mind, this research aims to address the following main research questions:

1. How do ELT teachers working in different contexts experience reflective practice in their PL?
2. How do ELT teachers working in different contexts experience collaboration with their colleagues in their PL?
3. What are the factors that affect ELT teachers` engagement in reflective and collaborative PL activities?

In this chapter, I set out my personal reasons for carrying out this research, then introduce the Turkish context by first focusing on ELT teaching then examining the entry

process and pre-service and in-service phases. This will be followed by the discussion of the rationale and significance of the research. This chapter concludes in Section 1.5. with an explanation of the structure of the thesis.

1.1. Personal Reasons for Doing the Research

I became personally interested in the field of teachers` PL after a course I took during my Master`s degree in TESOL (Teaching English to the Speakers of Other Languages). Before I came to the UK to study for a Master`s degree, I had taught English in different institutions in Turkey such as a public primary school, a public secondary school, a public education centre (teaching adults) and a state university. Even though they were located in different areas and working in universities is viewed as more prestigious, my feelings about teaching and my experiences within my workplaces did not change much across my workplaces.

I felt constantly lonely and frequently lost throughout my teaching career. As an ELT teacher, the only opportunity I could find to talk to my colleagues about students and teaching was the obligatory meetings which were held in order to discuss administrative issues. The lack of interaction with colleagues led me to believe that I was the only one experiencing difficulties and therefore I felt constantly inadequate in my teaching. In each institution I worked, the first day I went was the first day of my teaching as well. I received no formal or informal orientation to be informed about the classes or the broader school context, on the contrary I felt that I was expected to behave as a teacher who knew it all. Therefore, I had to survive on my own and the feeling of inadequacy and desperation led me to make many mistakes.

When I graduated from university, I had this utopian belief that I would not encounter any big problems in my classes, all students would be motivated to learn English and they would not have any difficulty in understanding the content just like what I experienced in microteaching presentations. Therefore, when I started teaching, I followed the techniques I had learned previously. Yet, I soon noticed that teaching in real classrooms was different from doing microteachings and this forced me to experiment. For some extreme situations, when I attempted to ask for guidance and help, I was reminded that my classes were my responsibility and I should have had the skills to deal with the problems on my own. I was like a 'fish out of water' and I continued feeling like this until the very last day of my teaching career.

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As a student and teacher candidate who went through the Turkish education system, I found it very challenging to write a reflective assignment during my master`s degree, and that was the first time I started to question the teacher education system in Turkey. As I read articles for the courses and wrote reflective and critical assignments, and as I became engaged in activities such as group discussions, workshops, pair work, microteachings, all of which provided me with limitless opportunities to receive and give feedback, I felt enlightened and realised how unaware I was as an ELT teacher of the trends and issues in teacher education. To learn more about teacher education, I wrote my master`s dissertation about the teacher supervision process in Turkey and I collected the data by interviewing public school head teachers and ELT teachers. Talking to those teachers helped me understand that I was not the only one who experienced difficulties and I realised they also felt lonely in teaching no matter how experienced they were. And I also saw, even though some of us might survive on our own, some others may need support to avoid feeling suffocated, detached or trapped. This is where my motivation lies for doing this research, and at the end, I hope to contribute back to my ELT colleagues by making suggestions about how to better things for them and how to promote their PL.

1.2.   Context

The learning of English in Turkey is important as it is the lingua franca of international politics, science, technology and business. As such, it is vital for ensuring that non-English speaking countries, like Turkey, are able to engage with international developments in these fields (Kirkgoz 2007). Therefore, after English was introduced in the Turkish education system in 1893, there has been a drive for reforms in ELT to respond to economic and political developments (Kirkgoz 2007). And, with the educational changes carried out in 2012, the starting age for learning English in schools was lowered to year two (7-8-year-old students), which was previously year 4 (10-11-year-old students) (Gursoy & Celik Korkmaz, 2013). This is a positive improvement as earlier and longer exposure to the target language might help to achieve language acquisition (Nunan, 2003).

Yet, despite the amendments made in the policies and the efforts invested in ELT in Turkey, students` learning outcomes are still unsatisfactory (Oktay, 2015). For example, in Turkey the average English test scores for the `Test of English as a Foreign Language` (TOEFL) was 78 out of 120 (ETS, 2016). And, the statistical findings of a national exam for entering

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public high schools (LGS) in 2019 showed that 9.73% of the students were not able to achieve correct answers on the English language test, and the average score among the students was 4.65 out of 10 (MEB, 2019). This may result from the gap between the idealised English teaching approach and teachers` actual classroom practices (Kirkgoz, 2009). And even though the importance of integrating form (grammar) and meaning (communication) is acknowledged in the field of language teaching, the quality of ELT classrooms in Turkey tends to be more didactic and `traditional` as Haznedar (2010) claims. Haznedar's (2010) work, based on quantitative surveys with 530 ELT teachers working in 39 different areas in Turkey, examines the extent to which ELT teachers adapted to the educational changes and how their classroom practices reflected these changes. The findings showed that even though the teachers knew about communicative language teaching techniques (skills-based teaching which includes integrating the teaching of reading, speaking, listening and writing), they preferred `traditional` language teaching techniques in their classes and they typically used repetition, memorisation, dialogues, question and answering, pair work and translation from English to Turkish (Haznedar, 2010). Overcoming such problems, according to Kirkgoz (2009) is only possible through professionally competent and qualified ELT teachers. And a better quality in the teaching force can be achieved through setting high entry requirements and providing a good pre-service and in-service teacher education as was discussed earlier in this chapter. The remaining of this section will look at the issues related to these areas in the Turkish teacher education system.

1.2.1. Entry process

Students enter higher education institutions in Turkey based on a totality of their Grade Point Average (GPA) scores and the scores from a two-fold national exam, with a greater percentage of the latter (Cubukcu & Cubukcu, 2009). This applies to ELT departments as well and there are currently 54 (39 public and 15 private) universities offering ELT pre-service training. Students can enter some of the ELT departments even with very low scores, e.g. in 2017 Okan University (a private university) accepted students who scored 343 (out of 500) by doing 43 correct answers (out of 160) from the sections of Turkish language, Mathematics, Social Sciences and Sciences and doing 20 correct answers (out of 80) from the English language test ("YOK," n.d.). As the entry process focuses on academic success only, students` backgrounds, motivations for teaching, their characteristics, their knowledge of

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pedagogy or general culture are overlooked (Gomleksiz, 1999), and this may set a barrier to achieving an effective teacher education system (Aksu, Engin Demir, Daloglu, Yildirim, & Kiraz, 2010).

Eret Orhan`s (2017) findings seem to support the indicated problems regarding the entry process. The researcher interviewed 43 teacher candidates from different programmes (mathematics teaching, science teaching, primary school teaching, social sciences teaching, Turkish language teaching, English language teaching and computer education and instructional technologies teaching) from seven public universities in order to investigate what they think about the pre-service stage (Eret Orhan, 2017). The participants reported that the entry process was problematic, that it should be multi-layered, and a more selective system should be established (Eret Orhan, 2017). And, some of the participants stated they entered these programmes not because they wanted to become teachers but because their scores were not high enough for the degrees they wanted to study. Based on the findings, the researcher suggests that students should be monitored regularly throughout their educational lives regarding their academic, social and psychological developments so that the ones who have an aptitude to become teachers can be detected and guided at earlier stages (Eret Orhan, 2017). By setting up a well-planned multi-layered entry process, teacher candidates` beliefs and attitudes towards teaching and their background characteristics can be taken at the very central of the process (Eret Orhan, 2017). This problem has been acknowledged by the minister of national education as well. He indicated that the entry process to education faculties was not selective enough and it focused on the numerical scores but not on teacher candidates` attitudes towards teaching or their motivations to become teachers (MEB, 2016). He further explained "students who devote themselves to teaching should be selected as teacher candidates so that they can be good teachers. … not other ones who think like `I will write teaching as my last choice just in case I do not get a high enough score for my primary preferences` since, with these candidates, we cannot achieve a good level of teaching as we aim to" (MEB, 2016).

1.2.2. Pre-service phase

Turkey has developed and implemented various teacher training programmes over the last 170 years ever since the time of the Ottoman Empire (Ustuner, 2004). The history of teacher training programmes goes back to the 19th century when the first teacher training

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institution, i.e. Darulmuallimin, was established (Bilir, 2011). Reforms have been made since then, still there seems to be issues regarding the quality of teacher training and this directly affects the quality of national education (Bilir, 2011).

In order to provide a standardised teacher education across the country and centralise the education in Turkey, the teacher education curricula for the ELT programme (see Table 1) is established by the Higher Education Institute (YOK) (Grossman, Sands, & Brittingham, 2010). Therefore, YOK determines the length of the programme, the title of courses, how many credits to give to each course and the content of courses together with the qualification the programme leads to (Grossman et al., 2010).

Table 1

Pre-service ELT Programme

TERM 1						TERM 5			
Code	Title of the Course	T*	P*	C*	A	Teaching English to Young Learners 1	2	2	3
A	Contextual Grammar 1	3	0	3	A	ELT Methodology 2	2	2	3
A	Advanced Reading and Writing 1	3	0	3	A	Teaching Language Skills 1	2	2	3
A	Listening and Pronunciation 1	3	0	3	A	Literature and Language Teaching 1	3	0	3
A	Oral Communication Skills 1	3	0	3	A	Second Foreign Language 1	2	0	2
GK	Turkish Language 1: Written Expression	2	0	2	GK	Drama	2	2	3
GK	Computer 1	2	2	3	MB	Classroom Management	2	0	2
GK	Effective Communication Skills	3	0	3		**Total**	**15**	**8**	**19**
MB	Introduction to Pedagogy	3	0	3		**TERM 6**			
	Total	**22**	**2**	**23**	A	Teaching English to Young Learners 2	2	2	3
	TERM 2				A	Turkish-English Translation	3	0	3
A	Contextual Grammar 2	3	0	3	A	Teaching Language Skills 2	2	2	3
A	Advanced Reading and Writing 2	3	0	3	A	Literature and Language Teaching 2	3	0	3
A	Listening and Pronunciation 2	3	0	3	A	Second Foreign Language 2	2	0	2
A	Oral Communication Skills 2	3	0	3	GK	Social Service Practices	1	2	2
A	Lexical Competence	3	0	3	MB	Assessment and Evaluation Skills	3	0	3
GK	Turkish Language 2: Verbal Expression	2	0	2		**Total**	**16**	**6**	**19**
GK	Computer 2	2	2	3		**TERM 7**			
	Total	**22**	**2**	**23**	A	Language Teaching Materials Adaptation and Development	3	0	3
	TERM 3				A	Second Foreign Language 2	2	0	2
A	English Literature 1	3	0	3	A	Elective Course 1	2	0	2
A	Linguistics 1	3	0	3	GK	Ataturk`s Principles and Revolution 1	2	0	2
A	Approaches to ELT 1	3	0	3	MB	School Experience	1	4	3
A	English Turkish Translation	3	0	3	MB	Guidance	3	0	3
A	Oral Expression and Public Speaking	3	0	3	MB	Special Education	2	0	2
GK	Turkish Educational History	2	0	2		**Total**	**15**	**4**	**17**
MB	Teaching Principles and Methods	3	0	3		**TERM 8**			
	Total	**20**	**0**	**20**	A	English Language Testing and Evaluation	3	0	3
	TERM 4				A	Elective Course 2	2	0	2
A	English Literature 2	3	0	3	A	Elective Course 3	2	0	2
A	Linguistics 2	3	0	3	GK	Ataturk`s Principles and Revolution 2	2	0	2
A	Approaches to ELT 2	3	0	3	MB	Comparative Education	2	0	2
A	Language Acquisition	3	0	3	MB	Turkish Education System and School Management	2	0	2
GK	Scientific Research Methods	2	0	2					
MB	ELT Methodology 1	2	2	3	MB	Teaching Practice	2	6	5
MB	Teaching Technologies and Material Design	2	2	3		**Total**	**15**	**6**	**18**
	Total	**18**	**4**	**20**					

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T*: Theory-based, P*: Practice-based, C*: Credits

A: Subject-based, GK: General culture, MB: Pedagogy and teaching

Total	Theory-based	Practice-based	Credits	Hours
	143	32	159	175

(YOK, 2007)

As Table 1 shows, the purpose of the first year is to support teacher candidates to improve their language skills by helping them to adjust to the programme (Karakas, 2012). As they progress towards senior levels, the courses they are required to take are varied and more professionally oriented to equip them with both general and pedagogical knowledge in addition to the linguistic support they get (Karakas, 2012). In the final years of their programme, teacher candidates are required to observe classes in prearranged schools. Afterwards, they teach in those schools, and are required to plan lessons and teach weekly under the continuous guidance of their school mentor teachers (Karakas, 2012).

Even though the pre-service phase is critical with regards to helping teacher candidates to build a strong teaching background (Eret Orhan, Ok, & Capa Aydin, 2018), there seems to be issues regarding the quality of it. Karakas (2012), after analysing the current ELT programme in the light of the related theories, models and previous empirical research, concluded that the current ELT programme is not grounded in a carefully considered strategy. Even though it may be strong in terms of combining both pedagogical and theoretical components, it fails in being out of date (Karakas, 2012). The ELT programme was last updated in 2006 and, according to Karakas (2012), it should be updated regularly to be able to catch up with advances happening around the world and the trends and research in the field of language teacher education. Not updating the programme impacts on teacher candidates` knowledge base and, for example, they may not be aware of the varieties of English or the new status of English as a global language may not be conveyed to them (Karakas, 2012). Karakas (2012) further adds that the ELT programme should be more practical-oriented and microteaching activities and classroom observations should be given more place to provide more opportunities to put theories into practice (Karakas, 2012). Also, Tezgiden Cakcak`s (2015) qualitative study found that there was little attempt on ELT pre-service programmes to foster reflective practitioners. These issues may derive from the lack of a strong accountability system. Celik and Atik (2020) highlight that there are no criteria with regards to the standards to be acquired as a result of the current teacher training programmes and

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no system of external evaluation is established to ensure the success of these programmes. According to Ozturk and Aydin (2019), the lack of common expectations around teacher competencies is the likely reason why many teachers fail to acquire skills such as openness for PD, problem solving skills and being creative and innovative in teaching. These issues can be overcome by establishing accountability measures and a well-designed pre-service training which can offer teacher candidates invaluable opportunities to develop their teaching skills and understand their dispositions towards the profession (Eret Orhan et al., 2018; Celik & Atik, 2020).

In addition to these issues, there seems to be problems regarding collaboration among stakeholders and incorporating reflective component in the programme, and these areas will be explained next.

Lack of collaboration among stakeholders

There is a lack of collaboration between ELT departments and practice schools, which, according to Ustuner (2004), directly affects the quality of teaching practicum. Even though teacher candidates are provided with the opportunity to practise in their last years, university departments do not really track their progress, which limits building a feedback loop between teacher candidates and ELT departments (Ustuner, 2004). This brings out questions about the quality of practicum in Turkey, which was investigated by Eret Orhan et al. (2018) through a survey study with 1856 senior year pre-service teacher candidates from seven state universities. The findings showed the participants ranked teaching practicum as the least adequate component of their training, which, according to the researchers, might have resulted from the lack of collaboration between practice schools and university departments and therefore a lack of good mentorship and support (Eret Orhan et al., 2018). Not having collaboration between these two stakeholders can even result in teacher candidates` experiencing unfriendly attitudes within practice schools as Eret Orhan (2017) found in her study.

Additionally, YOK and universities do not seem to work in collaboration either, which may be the reason why the ELT programme falls short in preparing teacher candidates for teaching (Coskun & Daloglu, 2010). The findings of a study carried out with 27 university lecturers working in different universities align with this claim. The data was collected through open-ended questionnaires and five of the lecturers were interviewed, and the findings

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showed that the participants believed they were not involved in the process of changing the curriculum in 2006 (Uztosun & Troudi, 2015). They explained that they were not asked for their opinions or they were not informed about the plan, and after the changes made in the curriculum they did not receive any training or professional support regarding how to implement them, all of which, according to Uztosun and Troudi (2015), highlights a salient lack of collaboration/communication between authorities and university teacher trainers. This resulted in those lecturers` designing the courses according to their interpretations of the general guidelines, which, as Uztosun and Troudi (2015) argue, can turn into a threat to the standardisation of the teacher education across the country.

To avoid such problems, Coskun and Daloglu (2010) suggest that a feedback loop should be established among the stakeholders so that an indirect communication between individual teacher candidates and YOK can be achieved. Eret Orhan (2017) adds that a more careful selection process should be implemented for practice schools and school mentor teachers, which can increase the quality of the practicum. Additionally, university departments need to ensure having follow-up sessions for the practicum by offering opportunities for teacher candidates to gain the habits of reflecting on their experiences, making self-evaluations and future plans, and learning from their experiences (Eret Orhan, 2017).

Reflection as a missing component

In addition to the lack of collaboration among the stakeholders, a lack of reflective activities can be another reason why the ELT programme falls short of being effective. Reflecting (see Chapter 2 for the definition) on their experiences can help teacher candidates to transform their actions (Oner & Adadan, 2011) and develop a critical eye toward their professional growth (Gungor, 2016). By engaging in reflective activities, teacher candidates become able to connect relevant theories with their practices and learn from them (Oner & Adadan, 2011). Therefore, even though teaching practicum is a crucial part of pre-service training, simply increasing the length of the practicum may not suffice as without reflection teacher candidates likely to fail in making sense of their experiences and therefore end up repeating themselves (Oner & Adadan, 2011). The findings in Eret Orhan et al. (2018) support this claim. Their findings pointed out that teacher candidates did not think their pre-service

training helped them to develop skills to deal with diverse students or to determine students` needs and plan lessons accordingly (Eret Orhan et al., 2018). This, according to the researchers, was because of insufficiencies in the feedback and support system, pre-service learning activities and practicum (Eret Orhan et al., 2018).

Coskun and Daloglu`s (2010) findings prove the necessity of reflective component in the pre-service stage as well. In order to understand what fourth-year ELT students and university lecturers think about the ELT programme, the researchers employed questionnaires with 55 teacher candidates, carried out focus groups with 10 of them and they interviewed 3 university lecturers (Coskun & Daloglu, 2010). The teacher candidates reported that they should be provided with opportunities to talk about their practicum experiences, discuss different scenarios they might later come across with and get feedback from their peers (Coskun & Daloglu, 2010). In order to understand how reflective practice contributes to teacher candidates` professional development (PD), Gungor (2016) conducted an action research study with 20 3rd-year ELT students as a part of Teaching English to Young Learners course (Gungor, 2016). The researcher collected the data through 40 video-recorded presentations, 80 reflective journals and 40 negotiated lesson plans and the findings showed that the participants started to develop positive feelings towards such reflective activities (Gungor, 2016). Even though they expressed feeling uncomfortable and intimidated to receive and give feedback initially and feeling embarrassed while watching their presentations together with their peers, they started to perceive this as a routine later on and became more engaged in observing their peers and providing constructive feedback (Gungor, 2016). The findings also showed that the established feedback loop helped them to develop the ability of self-critique and they started detecting the difficulties they experienced and made plans to overcome them (Gungor, 2016). In the light of these findings, Gungor (2016) claims that teacher candidates in Turkey should be encouraged to develop reflective skills such as critical thinking, self-directing, problem-solving and self-awareness through self- and peer-reflection activities (Gungor, 2016).

According to Oner and Adadan (2011), helping teacher candidates to develop reflective skills does not have to be face-to-face as web-based tasks can be implemented as well especially in contexts like Turkey where teacher candidates have very limited reflective opportunities (Oner & Adadan, 2011). With the purpose of examining the impact of web-based portfolios on teacher candidates` reflective skills, the researchers analysed 19 4th-year

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science teacher candidates` reflective journals, biographies and reflective essays which the participants did as a part of their practicum (Oner & Adadan, 2011). After carrying out a quantitative and qualitative data analysis, the researchers concluded that the teacher candidates demonstrated both low- and high-levels of reflective skills, and they found a statistically significant increase in the frequency of high-level indicators between the first and the second reflective tasks (Oner & Adadan, 2011). Having the opportunities of accessing each other`s web-based portfolio, giving feedback on each other`s posts and reconsidering their practicum from multiple viewpoints, according to Oner and Adadan (2011), might have helped the participants become more reflective.

Even though empirical research carried out in Turkey has shown that teacher candidates should be encouraged to become reflective, the concepts of reflection and reflective practice are relatively new in the Turkish education system (Odabasi Cimer & Cimer, 2012). Therefore, incorporating reflection in the pre-service stage may not be very straightforward (Odabasi Cimer & Cimer, 2012). And, in countries like Turkey where teachers generally overwork, they may not have time or energy in order to constantly monitor, improve and change their teaching practices (Odabasi Cimer & Cimer, 2012).

1.2.3. In-service phase

Upon getting their qualifications, ELT teachers can be employed by both private and public institutions in Turkey and they are eligible to teach at all levels from kindergarten to university (Saban, 2003). Yet, the graduates of non-ELT but English-related departments (Linguistics, English language and literature, American culture and literature, Translation) are first required to turn their bachelor`s degrees into an ELT licensure by fulfilling pedagogical requirements of education faculties (Cepik & Polat, 2014). In public schools, ELT teachers have a minimum of 15-hours of weekly teaching and the maximum hours they can teach differs between the school levels (up to 30 hours in primary and secondary schools and 40 hours in high schools) (MEB, 1998).

Given that the requirements for becoming an ELT teacher are not high and the pre-service training has weaknesses, ELT teachers need to take part in in-service PL activities to compensate for the insufficiencies of their backgrounds (Bayar, 2013). However, the lack of the integration of reflective and collaborative elements in the pre-service phase seems to continue into the in-service phase as well, and the available PL opportunities tend to be more

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`traditional` in focus and style (Aksoy, 2008). In addition, it seems that teachers are not held accountable for pursuing PL. Even though MEB has attempted to determine generic teacher competencies and has recently published a strategy document (MEB, 2017, p.14) expecting teachers to engage in "personal and professional development activities", the impact of this is hard to discern (Ozturk & Aydin, 2019). This is because the policy document, 'General Competencies for Teaching Profession' (MEB, 2017), provides a series of recommendations, and lacks clarity about how teachers` performance is to be evaluated based on their competencies and qualifications. Nor does it mention a model to track how teachers develop themselves in the teaching profession. Therefore, engagement in teacher development activity is largely voluntary, with little incentive or compulsion for teachers in such activity. This, according to Ozdemir, Bulbul and Acar (2010), is because MEB has failed to establish the necessary regulations and policies which would help to set high performance and stronger accountability standards, which results in many teachers` reaching the retirement stage without participating in any PL activity (Tezgiden Cakcak, 2015). The remainder of this section will look at the issues regarding the available in-service opportunities in Turkey.

PL opportunities for teachers

The ministry of national education (MEB) has been regulating in-service support for public school teachers since 1998 (Tokoz Goktepe, 2015). These are formed of training courses and seminars and led by MEB instructors who determine what to convey and how to do that (Koc, 2016). Even though MEB tries to improve its provision of teacher training (Kirkgoz, 2009), the offered training courses and seminars are grounded on the idea of "one size fits all" with a purpose of transmission rather than transformation (Nergis, 2011). Moreover, those activities are neither based on a well-thought approach nor meet teachers` needs, all of which indicates PD is, unfortunately, viewed in a traditional way in Turkey (Nergis, 2011). In addition to the MEB in-service activities, ELT teachers, regardless of the level they teach, can access professional qualifications in the form of Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults (CELTA), In-Service Certificate in English Language Teaching (ICELT) and Diploma in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (DELTA) as offered by the University of Cambridge, and they can take courses in organizations such as the English Language Teachers` Association, the British Council and the United States Information Agency (Kirkgoz, 2009). These tend to be formed as one-day courses, seminars, symposiums or online

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workshops focusing on issues such as process writing and learning styles (British Council, 2017). Although these courses may help ELT teachers to improve teaching competence to an extent (Freeman, 1989), they aim to convey pre-determined information to the targeted audience (Richards, 2008).

Apart from the above-mentioned options, opportunities are very limited for teachers in Turkey (Bellibas & Gumus, 2016; Mitton-Kukner & Akyuz, 2012). And this seems to lead teachers to feel stressed (e.g. Cephe, 2010). In a mixed-methods study with 37 English instructors, Cephe (2010) found high levels of burnout. The feeling of not developing and the lack of in-service support and guidance were found to be the macro factors which had a serious impact on the degree of the participants` burnout (Cephe, 2010). In addition, the participants reported a lack of collaboration and communication in their workplaces, which seemed to feed into feeling negatively about the profession as well (Cephe, 2010). Sagir (2014), agreeing on the importance of collaboration within workplaces, claims that teachers favour individual efforts and collaborative opportunities over available in-service activities. By promoting collaboration among teachers, schools as teachers` workplaces can promote teachers` PL in Turkey (Yalcin Arslan, Cinkara, Bagceci, & Kervancioglu, 2016).

In addition to the amount of PL opportunities, the effectiveness of the already available PL activities has been investigated as well. Koc (2016), after analysing evaluation forms from 32 ELT teachers all of whom participated in various in-service training courses, found that the participants did not think those courses were helpful or met their needs. The findings also showed that the courses did not promote active learning methods and what was conveyed to the teachers was not easily linked to their classes (Koc, 2016). The most useful side of those courses, according to the participants, was the opportunity they had to meet other ELT teachers (Koc, 2016). Gungor`s (2016) study aligns with Koc (2016) in terms of the emphasis on the necessity of promoting collaboration and interaction among teachers in their school contexts. Gungor (2016) collected the data through autobiographies and two interview sessions with two ELT teachers, and found that the teachers felt inhibited by their workplaces in terms of their PD. The researcher suggests that establishing PL communities (including a well-tailored in school mentoring system) can enable teachers to reflect on their teaching and facilitate their professional growth (Gungor, 2016). Doing this, as Gungor (2016) argues, can contribute to the quality of teaching in Turkey more than in-service trainings do.

Without such development opportunities, novice teachers may end up replicating the techniques that they learn at the pre-service stage and more experienced teachers are likely to go through a form of plateauing in their teaching career (Farrell, 2014). To avoid that and to stay competitive in the global arena in terms of its educational system (Bayar, 2013), Kirkgoz (2009) indicates that Turkey needs to invest in teachers` PL and a collegial environment should be created in workplaces to encourage teachers to be innovative.

1.3.   Rationale and Significance of the Research

Given that there are issues at the pre-service stage in terms of the lack of collaboration among the stakeholders and the absence of the integration of reflection into pre-service programmes and these affect the quality of the practicum, this research will focus on in-service ELT teachers to explore the issues regarding reflection and collaboration at the in-service stage. The Turkish literature shows that ELT teachers tend to use `traditional` approaches in their classes and the pre-service and in-service trainings seem to lack quality to address such problems. As reflection and collaboration are two PL activities that can improve the quality of teaching and learning outcomes, this research aims to find out more about in-service ELT teachers` experiences of these activities. Even though there has been research highlighting the problems regarding the reflective and collaborative components at the pre-service stage (Eret Orhan, 2007; Eret Orhan et al., 2018; Gungor, 2016), less seems to be known about the in-service stage. By doing this research, I aim to find out how in-service ELT teachers experience reflection and collaboration in relation to their PL, whether or not these activities help them grow professionally and why.

This research attempts to fill several research gaps in the literature. Even though there are numerous international studies focusing on teachers` PL and some investigate this phenomenon under either collaboration or reflection; there is not any empirical research, to the best of my knowledge, that looks at the concepts of reflective teaching and collaborative working in relation to PL. By bringing them together, I will be able to see if there is a relationship between these two concepts in terms of how ELT teachers develop. Additionally, although these concepts are given place in other countries` agendas and they are systematically integrated in teachers` daily routines, it does not seem to be the case in Turkey. A thorough review of the relevant Turkish literature yielded no empirical research examining

in-service teachers` engagement in reflective practice and collaborative working, which will enable me to pioneer a new way of looking at teachers` PL in Turkey.

According to the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), Turkey was ranked last in terms of teachers` participation in PD activities which ranged from seminars and conferences to doing field-related reading or engaging in informal dialogues with peers (OECD, 2009). This suggests, teachers in Turkey do not participate in structured or unstructured development activities as much as teachers in other OECD countries. And this level can be even lower for teachers working in rural areas as resources are scarce (World Bank, 2005), and teachers have fewer opportunities, if any, to take part in development activities (Taneri & Engin Demir, 2011). Training qualified teachers for schools is one of the major problems in Turkey regardless of the school location (Aksoy, 2008) and, for rural settings particularly, teachers need to be equipped with skills to effectively deal with the needs of their students (Kizilaslan, 2012). Despite discrepancies between schools in urbanised and rural settings in Turkey, the literature focuses mostly on teachers in urban settings with less focus on teachers in rural settings. And, to the best of my knowledge, there is no empirical research in the literature which looks at ELT teachers` PD experiences across different settings. To this end, this research will allow me to understand how the adequacy of resources impacts on ELT teachers` pursuit of PL and to make suggestions about what ELT teachers can do themselves to compensate for the insufficiency of resources.

Last but not least, this research will offer rich and illuminating data by employing life histories, critical incidents and semi-structured interviews. Although there are many empirical studies investigating reflective practice or collaborative working through semi-structured interviews, this research aims to bring more through life histories and critical incidents. As such, the data will provide information about how ELT teachers have transformed over time, what particular incidents have facilitated their learning and what had inhibited or supported their PL, all of which will give a richer insight into the existing issues.

Overall, this research will allow an understanding of ELT teachers` experiences of reflective practice and collaborative working, as the literature shows (Chapter 2), they help teachers to increase the quality of instruction yet occur only when required individual traits are in place together with a supportive environment. The findings of this research will serve as a database for future actions in Turkey by informing authorities and researchers about ELT

teachers` needs, shedding light on the existing problems and suggesting ideas about how things can be improved.

1.4.   Structure of the Thesis

This chapter has introduced the research and set out the research questions. A brief overview of the context has been provided together with the rationale and significance of the research. Chapter 2 reviews the literature of PL, conceptualises reflective practice and collaborative working as two aspects of teachers` PL and proposes a theoretical framework to examine the created model for the research. Chapter 3 sets out the philosophical ideas underpinning the research and presents the research design. In addition, the data collection and coding procedures are explained in detail. Chapter 4, 5 and 6 present the findings in relation to three research questions. Chapter 7 discusses the findings in relation with the relevant literature and the theoretical ideas that underpin the research. Chapter 8 summarises and concludes the research. The research questions are answered, and the contributions made by the research are discussed. Implications and limitations of the research are presented, and recommendations are made for future research.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

The previous chapter provided an overview of the Turkish teacher education system in relation to the entry process and pre-service and in-service phases. This chapter briefly looks at the differences between top-ranking education systems and Turkey, then reviews the literature on teachers` PL and conceptualises reflective practice and collaborative working as two key forms of PL. It, later, introduces a relationship between PL and teacher change, links teacher change to their capacity to act, and addresses different interpretations of Agency Theory as the theoretical ideas underpinning this research. Whilst this chapter is devoted to understanding how teacher learning occurs in general without differentiating ELT teachers, some sections narrows it down to ELT teachers to examine the impact of PL on ELT specific areas.

This chapter of the thesis developed as a result of the data analysis. Even though the initial literature review included the ideas regarding when and how to reflect and workplace collaborative learning communities, the sections about Habermas`s (1972) knowledge types, Weiner`s (1972) theory regarding the locus of dimensions of causality (Section 2.4.1.), Johnson and Johnson`s (2005) proposal of interaction patterns among individuals (Section 2.4.2.) and Braun, Ball, Maguire and Hoskins`s (2011) four contextual dimensions were introduced following the data analysis based on the emerging themes. Additionally, as the research unfolded and new themes emerged through the data analysis section, section 2.9.2. was introduced. The previous version of the literature review provided a link between agency and self-efficacy but did not explain in depth regarding self-efficacy and motivation and the proposed relationship between these two concepts. Therefore, it can be claimed that the literature review led the research first by providing initial ideas and these were expanded later by the data analysis.

2.2. Pre-Service Teacher Education

2.2.1. Commonalities in top-raking education systems

Common practices among countries which seem to achieve better than Turkey in international exams (PISA, 2016) and provide a relatively better quality of education (UNICEF, 2017) can indicate how pre-service programmes should be established.

Finland and Singapore, for example, appear to be similar with regards to requirements they set for entering pre-service programmes. In order to understand if candidates are suitable for the teaching profession and to provide them with an opportunity to see what teaching is like, the entry process is structured in a multi-layered way (Lim, 2013; Tucker, 2012). In Finland, teacher candidates are required to take a national test known as "VAKAVA" (Malinen, Vaisanen, & Savolainen, 2012), which is based on a two-stage process (Tucker, 2012). The exam consists of reading academic articles and answering a multiple-choice test which is prepared based on the articles, and it aims at measuring teacher candidates` memorisation and comprehension together with their ability to apply what they learn from the articles (Malinen et al., 2012). Once they obtain a high enough score from the first stage, they proceed to the second stage which requires them to get a passing score on a written exam on teaching and a demonstration of effective communication skills (Hani, 2014). In addition to this standardised procedure, each university interviews three to four times more applicants than their vacancies by using an aptitude test which evaluates applicants` suitability, motivation and commitment to PD and classroom teaching (Malinen et al., 2012). As this suggests, Finland selects the bests among the candidates (Hani, 2014; Malinen et al., 2012), which may be the reason why students in pre-service programmes represent the top percent of high school graduates in Finland (Hancock, 2011). And, after entering the pre-service programmes, they need to complete a 5-year master`s degree to start teaching (Hancock, 2011).

Similarly, in Singapore, the entry process consists of two stages (Lim, 2013). Once candidates are shortlisted based on the set criteria, they are invited to a face-to-face interview with authorities from the Ministry of Education (MoE) in order to be assessed in terms of their communication skills, interests in teaching, goals, aspirations and their openness for PD (Lim, 2013). The inclusion of MoE at this stage is related to the teacher employment system in Singapore as all teachers are recruited centrally by MoE before enrolling in pre-service programmes and sent to the national institute of education for their pre-service training (Low, Lim, Ch`ng, & Goh, 2011). If candidates obtain a good enough score from the first stage, they pass to the second stage which requires them to complete a teaching stint in arranged schools as untrained teachers (Lim, 2013).

In contrast to these countries, the entry process in Turkey consists of only one stage (see Chapter 1) without taking into consideration teacher candidates` aptitude for teaching

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(Aksu et al., 2010). Moreover, while countries like Singapore and Finland have high entry requirements for pre-service programmes and they select teacher candidates very carefully, YOK does not set high requirements for pre-service programmes in Turkey and therefore low-achieving students may enter these programmes or students who do not have high enough scores for other departments may tend to choose teaching as a profession (see Section 1.2.1.) (Eret Orhan, 2017). Additionally, while, for example MoE and pre-service programmes work in cooperation in Singapore in order to train and to recruit teachers (Low et al., 2011), there seems to be a lack of cooperation in Turkey between YOK and MEB which results in having a high number of unemployed teachers.

In addition to being very selective with teacher candidates, these countries design pre-service programmes by integrating theoretical and practical components rather than prioritising theory over practice or vice versa (Hogan & Gopinathan, 2008). The post-graduate certificate in education (PGCE) offered by universities in UK, for example, seems to be grounded on this idea by requiring teacher candidates to spend two thirds of their programme in schools (Smith & Hodson, 2010), which means spending 24 weeks (out of 36) in a variety of schools (Maguire, 2014). Finland, similarly, encourages teacher candidates to start teaching practicum as early as possible, and throughout the practicum teacher candidates are supervised by their university lecturers, university mentor teachers or practicum school mentor teachers depending on the phase and the location of their practicum (Malinen et al., 2012). Moreover, these education systems provide teacher candidates with opportunities such as portfolios, reflective logs, pair works and discussion groups to encourage them to reflect on their practicum experiences and to make sense of their teaching (Malinen et al., 2012). They also make sure that teacher candidates receive enough school-based support by establishing collaboration between universities and practice schools, and between teacher candidates and mentor teachers, all of which helps to build a feedback loop enabling teacher candidates to learn to become life-long learners (Hogan & Gopinathan, 2008; Malinen at al., 2012).

Overall, having a stringent entry process and establishing collaboration among the stakeholders in the pre-service stage seem to be the commonalities among the top-ranking education systems, and Turkey differs from them by having weaknesses in these areas. The next section will show the role of the reflective component in linking theories with teaching practice.

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2.2.2. The importance of the reflective component in pre-service teacher education

The integration of theoretical and practical elements in pre-service teacher education has been the focus of much debate; e.g. whether practice should precede theory or vice versa, or whether they exist in a dialectic relationship (Smagorinsky, Cook, & Johnson, 2003; Ellis, 2010). And, scholars propose different approaches.

Some see teaching as a craft which is "… best learnt as an apprentice observing a master craftsman or woman. Watching others, and being rigorously observed yourself as you develop, is the best route to acquiring mastery in the classroom" as the former British Secretary of State for Education expressed in 2010 at the National College Annual Conference (Gove, 2010). The idea underpinning programmes such as Teach for America, Teach First and School Direct (implemented in USA and UK) is that school settings are the best places for teacher candidates to learn teaching as they provide teacher candidates with opportunities to observe more experienced others and to practise. After selecting students among the elite graduates, Teach for America and Teach First offer students a six-week intensive training and a follow up classroom teaching (Stanfield & Cremlin, 2013). Yet, according to Schneider (2014), the quality of such training is questionable as it may fall short in developing skills related to teaching pedagogy and providing consistent instruction, sufficient materials and training. This may result in teacher candidates` being less effective than the ones who complete a college or university training that leads to a certification (Darling-Hammond, Holtzman, Gatlin, & Heilig, 2005).

Even though scholars agree that schools have a key role in pre-service teacher education as they provide opportunities to practise teaching and doing observation (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Maguire, 2014; Stanfield & Cremin, 2013), the quality of practicum seems more important (Hogan & Gopinathan, 2008). It is acknowledged that trying things out may work to some extent (Smith & Hodson, 2010); however, practice only may not suffice to help teacher candidates to modify their teaching across different settings (Ellis, 2010). This is why, rather than focusing on only one aspect, the integration of theory and practice should be seen at the heart of pre-service teacher education (Shulman, 1986). Darling-Hammond (2003) summarises this by stating that teacher training cannot occur at universities divorced from practice or in schools divorced from theoretical knowledge which is necessary for interpreting practice. And, both settings provide different opportunities for teacher candidates for trying and testing ideas, talking about their experiences and evaluating results (Darling-Hammond,

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2003). All these seem to support the idea that universities` role in pre-service teacher education should be acknowledged and theoretical knowledge should not be undervalued (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005).

Yet, even if pre-service teacher education is grounded in the integration of theory and practice, teacher candidates may still have difficulty in transforming their practice (Smith & Hodson, 2010) and dealing with classroom complexities (Ellis, 2010) as in Turkey. This brings out the importance of reflective components, which is highly promoted in Hagger and McIntyre`s (2006) school-based teacher education model. Their model prioritises the inclusion of both the theoretical part (valued by universities) and the practical part (valued by schools) to help teacher candidates to learn practical theorising (Hagger & McIntyre, 2006). For them, practical theorising is what other scholars call reflective teaching, and they define it as "… both looking for attractive ideas for practice and subjecting these ideas to critical examination" (Hagger & McIntyre, 2006, p.58). As this implies, no matter how much teacher candidates practise teaching in real classrooms as in Teach for America, School Direct or Teach First, the practical part itself may not be sufficient for them to learn from their teaching (Hagger & McIntyre, 2006). And they may not receive enough guidance and support, which points to the importance of establishing a good mentoring and feedback system as it helps teacher candidates to critique the quality of their teaching and make further plans about how to develop themselves (Hagger & McIntyre, 2006). The abovementioned school-based programmes, however, seem to lack in providing such reflective and collaborative opportunities (Schneider, 2014). As such, teacher candidates may not be able to track their progress or not know in what aspects they can improve themselves (Hagger & McIntyre, 2006). Although mentorship has a crucial role in these programmes as accessing mentors` professional craft knowledge is believed to enable teacher candidates to develop their personal thinking and practice (Smith & McLay, 2007), mentors should be qualified and competent enough to work as `learning partners` with teacher candidates and teacher educators (Hagger & McIntyre, 2006, p.154). Moreover, what is observed may not be the best practice but on the contrary it may be a weak practice or the observation itself may not be critical and reflective enough, all of which makes the practice untransferable to other contexts (Harris, 2011).

Researchers (Ellis, 2010; Hani, 2014; Smith & Hodson, 2010) agree on the necessity of teaching teacher candidates how to become reflective practitioners because only then can

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they accumulate knowledge as they accumulate experience and therefore achieve transformation in their teaching. Through reflective inquiry which is defined as an "active, persistent and careful consideration…" (Dewey, 1933, p16), teacher candidates can think about their own work (Swain, 2014) and reconstruct their knowledge as they practise (Ellis, 2010). This helps them to interpret theory through their practice, to connect and reconstruct their knowledge, and to retry it in their schools (Smith & Hodson, 2010). Smith and Hodson`s (2010) findings show teacher candidates prefer more opportunities to practise and to reflect. The researchers did a qualitative study to investigate teacher trainees` experiences of a school-based programme, i.e. the graduate teacher programme, with regard to how they see theory and practice in their training process, and collected the data from seven trainees all of whom had academic study experience and working experience in teaching and other fields (Smith & Hodson, 2010). All trainees reported that theories they learnt throughout their university training was useful and one of them suggested that they should be provided with more opportunities to share their experiences through group discussions or individual tutorials with their mentors (Smith & Hodson, 2010). The trainees also emphasised that trying things out was not enough on its own to transform their teaching and that their teaching experience would be more meaningful by making time to reflect on it (Smith & Hodson, 2010). The researchers, based on the findings, conclude that pre-service programmes should offer supportive learning environments and encourage teacher candidates both to interact with their peers, mentors, other teacher educators and other experienced colleagues and to engage in self-studies, discussions, observations and reviews (Smith & Hodson, 2010). Such opportunities at the pre-service stage help teacher candidates to understand what their teaching is like and how else it can be, and to engage in self-dialogues to shape their future experiences based on their past experiences and to expand their understandings of further actions they need to take (Ellis, 2010). This, if supported by in-service activities, can facilitate PL in the long-term (Ellis, 2010).

To conclude, this section has indicated that it is not "simply the amount of practice but its appropriateness for promoting learning" is what makes it meaningful (Hagger & McIntyre, 2006, p.53), and reflective practice can help to achieve this as it enhances teaching and learning. The next section will present a comparison of the approaches adopted for teacher education and introduce the idea of PL which is grounded in a reflective model.

2.3.   From Teacher Training to Professional Learning

The origins of teacher education can be traced back to the concept of teacher training which, in time, has shifted to PD and that to PL (Easton, 2008). Traditionally, language teachers` knowledge base has been separated into two main components; namely, language and teaching (Graves, 2009). And, the knowledge of the target language has been given more importance, therefore language teachers have been expected to be proficient in the target language, to have the knowledge about the structure, phonology and the like of that language (Graves, 2009). In order to help these teachers to teach the content knowledge, training courses have been offered (Graves, 2009). However, the underlying idea behind these courses is to transmit the knowledge to teachers to help them to get better at teaching (Graves, 2009).

Even though these practices may be helpful for teachers to improve their professional expertise to an extent, they exemplify the craft model or the applied science model both of which, according to Wallace (1991), results in little learning if at all. The craft model focuses on the expertise of a more experienced practitioner and argues that novice teachers or teacher candidates can learn how to teach better by imitating what they observe (Wallace, 1991). The applied science model is more research-based as it aims at proposing scientific knowledge or empirically proven methods to teachers as guidelines to get better at teaching (Wallace, 1991). In both models, either a more experienced practitioner or an expert in a particular field is viewed as the source of knowledge which needs to be conveyed to teachers or teacher candidates (Wallace, 1991). Therefore, the idea behind teacher training seems to be that teachers are `empty vessels` and they should be filled with relevant content and pedagogical knowledge (Graves, 2009).

This may be the reason why training has shifted to PD; however, a change in concepts does not necessarily mean a change in the practice (Easton, 2008), as training workshops, which are grounded in a top-down approach without taking teachers` needs and contexts into consideration (Graves, 2009), still exist under the name of PD. Nevertheless, PD in essence is based on the idea of improving learning outcomes by encouraging teachers to improve their teaching (Whitworth & Chiu, 2015). Workshops, courses and various programmes can be given as main PD examples and they aim at providing teachers with new and innovative ideas, skills and competencies that teachers may need for improving their classroom practice (Fullan, 2007). Yet, PD programmes, even if carefully designed and implemented to be effective, are not always powerful or specific enough to transform teachers, classrooms or

schools (Fullan, 2007). PD is grounded on a top-down approach by empowering directors or other authorities to make decisions on what teachers need to learn and by not including teachers in the whole process (Easton, 2008). This approach renders teachers as "technicians carrying out someone else`s policy" (Priestley, Miller, Barrett, & Wallace, 2011, p.269) by offering them little or no power on their own development process (Easton, 2008). These imply, PD, though can be more innovative compared to training, still puts teachers in a passive position rather than viewing them as main agents of professional growth (O`Brien & Jones, 2014). Therefore, even if teachers value certain practices during a PD activity, they unlikely make any significant changes afterwards (Opfer & Pedder, 2011a).

Teachers need to accommodate themselves in a way that helps them to stay updated and this involves continuous change which is only possible through learning (Frost, 2012). Therefore, it is not the PD activity but the action of learning that leads to change (Easton, 2008). With the recognition of this, there has been a shift from PD to PL the latter of which views teachers as active learners (Easton, 2008; King, 2016; Luka, 2015). To achieve that, teachers ought to move from the idea of being trained and being developed to becoming life-long learners (Easton, 2008) and change agents who own their learning process (Graves, 2009). The change in the perception of teachers echoes on teachers` learning process as well since the purpose now is to help teachers to transform their knowledge and skills rather than to transmit them particular pre-defined knowledge and skills (King, 2016). Furthermore, unlike PD, PL is based on a bottom-up approach starting within schools with teachers as decision makers (Easton, 2008). By deciding what to learn and how to learn and by being more autonomous, teachers can more likely achieve change as their learning process becomes more relevant to their needs and beliefs (Attard, 2007).

Given that teacher training and PD typify the craft model and the applied science model, PL seems to typify Wallace`s (1991) third model, i.e. the reflective model. Wallace (1991) states that PL is only possible through reflection. In order to achieve that, teachers need to engage in reflective practice which is a cyclical process feeding back into both the experiential knowledge (which relates to the professionals` ongoing experience) and received knowledge (which includes the necessary and valuable elements of scientific knowledge) (Wallace, 1991). By doing so, teachers can transform into being independent learners (Bleicher, 2014).

The ideas that have been reviewed so far suggest that teachers need to be seen as autonomous and self-directed learners, and they should be allowed to pursue their professional growth by being at the centre of identifying, planning, actualising and evaluating their own learning (Knowles, 1980). This brings out the importance of the activities teachers are engaged in as a part of their daily basis routine, which will be elaborated in the next section.

2.4.   Teachers` Professional Learning

Thus far in this chapter, pre-service teacher education has been defined as the first stage of teachers` formation on which the foundation of career-long learning is established (Hagger, Burn, Mutton, & Brindley, 2008). From this point forward, in-service stage will be examined, and reflective practice and collaborative working will be discussed in relation to teachers` PL.

Teachers` PL has gained importance to meet the needs of education systems (Burn, Mutton, & Hagger, 2010; Hagger et al., 2008). Therefore, teachers should be seen as life-long learners who not only improve their practice throughout their career but also model for their students the process of continuing learning by enabling them to `learn how to learn` (Hagger et al., 2008). By prioritising improvement in teachers` performance, countries expect improvements in students` learning outcomes as well which ultimately can improve their education systems (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005). To achieve this, a highly selective admission stage should be established (McKinsey, 2007), and pre-service programmes should be implemented in a way that provides teacher candidates with a clear understanding of PL and with skills for being proactive in their learning (Hagger, Mutton, & Burn, 2011). However, no matter how well-designed and well-implemented a pre-service programme can be, teachers need in-service support to learn more about the contexts in which they work and to continue learning how to be more effective (Hagger et al., 2011).

Hagger and McIntyre (2006) indicate that schools as teachers` workplaces can facilitate meaningful learning which may happen both incidentally and deliberately. It may occur incidentally as the primary reason for teachers to be in these settings is to work therefore benefits such as learning is incidental, and it may happen deliberatively as well through structured and planned activities with the purpose of learning (Hagger & McIntyre, 2006). Similarly, according to Senge (2006), schools can serve as learning organizations "…
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where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free and where people are continually learning how to learn together" (p.7). To establish such a culture, positive relationships and trust should be promoted among teachers in schools as the kind of relationship among practitioners is believed to be the corner stone that forms educative environments (Hargreaves, 1997). Once a climate of trust is built, teachers can pool their experiences, ideas and resources, they feel less intimidated to take risks and to deal with complicated issues, and they provide support for others in the face of obstacles (Hargreaves, 1997). Furthermore, since such environments enable teachers to blend the differences and bring about new ideas and challenges (Kwakman, 2003), individual learning can turn into shared learning, which, in turn, increases the individual capacity (Hargreaves, 1997).

Hodkinson and Hodkinson (2005) suggest that schools should be designed as `expansive` learning environments which "presents wide-ranging and diverse opportunities to learn, in a culture that values and supports learning" (p.123). By offering wide-ranging and diverse opportunities, schools can build a culture where teachers feel encouraged for learning, valued and congruent (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005). This requires schools to combine collaborative and individual initiatives together so that teachers can utilize them according to their preferences (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005). Hodkinson and Hodkinson (2005) investigated whether schools can be rich learning environments through a three-year longitudinal case study with two departments of two English secondary schools, and they collected data through document analysis, up to three interviews with 25 teachers and over 50 days observation. The findings suggest that each teacher learns differently, therefore learning opportunities, incentives and support should be maximised in schools (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005). And, they also found that teachers could learn both collectively and individually, and while individual learning occurred through trial and error or through learning from teachers` own teaching, collective learning occurred through discussions, observations and joint activities (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005). That is because, through reflection teachers can analyse and change their practice (Graves, 2009), and consistent and non-judgemental involvement of peers facilitates reflection (Johnston, 2009). These two concepts will be addressed next.

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2.4.1. PL and reflective practice

Reflection receives considerable attention in the literature as it is a core element for learning and teaching (Dewey, 1933; Kolb, 1984; Schön, 1987). Dewey (1933) defines reflective thinking as "the kind of thinking that consists in turning a subject over in the mind and giving it serious and consecutive consideration" (p.3). This makes reflection more than thinking about one`s actions as it is a purposeful act starting with a problem, defining the problem, seeking possible solutions, implementing them and evaluating the results (Murray, 2015). Bailey (2009) defines reflective teaching as teachers` thinking about what happens in their classes and thinking about alternative means of achieving goals or aims. The ones who do reflective teaching, i.e. reflective practitioners, plan before practising, look back over their practice to consider alternative options and reconsider a course of action while practising (Schön, 1983). Reflective teaching is a process enabling teachers to construct and reconstruct their knowledge (Schön, 1987), and as it includes going back to experiences and continuously shaping future actions, it has an iterative structure with loopbacks (Prilla, Degeling, & Heremann, 2012).

> One day a young girl was watching her mother cooking a roast of beef. Just before the mother put the roast in the pot, she cut a slice off the end. The ever-observant daughter asked her mother why she had done that, and the mother responded that her grandmother had always done it. Later that same afternoon, the mother was curious, so she called her mother and asked her the same question. Her mother, the child's grandmother, said that in her day she had to trim the roasts because they were usually too big for a regular pot (Farrell, 1998, p.10).

After telling this story, Farrell (1998) underlines that "teaching without reflection can lead to `cutting the slice off the roast`" (p.10). By engaging in reflection, then, teachers can understand why they do what they do, and reconsider what they learn from their practice (Loughran, 2002). Through reflection, teachers can critique their practice (Burton, 2009) and connect their experiences with possible meanings they make based on their experiences (Denton, 2011), which is a critical process to link theory with practice (Schön, 1983). Additionally, teachers can distance themselves from their practice (Bengtsson, 2003) and this helps them to become more aware of their beliefs, put these beliefs under analysis and restructure them (Korthagen, 2001). Without reflection, according to Dewey (1938), experiences may fail in being educative.

The belief that all genuine education comes about through experience does not mean that all experiences are genuinely educative… for some experiences are mis-educative. Any experience is mis-educative that has the effect of arresting or distorting the growth of further experience (pp. 25-26).

Schön (1983) draws a distinction between reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action according to when they occur. Reflection-in-action refers to "… a period of time, …, during which we can still make a difference to the situation at hand – our thinking serves to reshape what we are doing while we are doing it" (Schön, 1987, p.26). Reflection-on-action, on the other hand, refers to "…thinking back what we have done in order to discover how our knowing-in-action contributed to an unexpected outcome" (Schön, 1987, p.26). Schön`s distinction, though helpful, has been criticised for not providing a clear explanation for the relationship between reflection and learning (Burton, 2009), for not taking into consideration contextual and personal factors affecting reflection (Bailey, 2009), for not showing where exactly and when reflection occurs and for not clearly differentiating between reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action (Moon, 2005). Additionally, Moon (2005) questions the achievability of reflection-in-action, because, as Schön (1987) himself acknowledges, there can be some cases when reflection interferes with action which "… may limit the scope and depth of reflection" (p.275).

Kolb`s experiential learning cycle encompasses Schön`s reflection-on-action and explains how reflective learning occurs (Moon, 2005). Experiential learning consists of four learning modes; namely, experiencing, reflecting, thinking and acting (Kolb & Kolb, 2005), and learning occurs through a process of reflective observation which enables individuals to bring concrete experiences to the state of abstract conceptualisation (Moon, 2005). Experiential learning is grounded on a constructivist theory of learning, which Kolb (1984) explains through six propositions; learning is a process, not an outcome; all learning is relearning; learning occurs as a result of a conflict between the already known and the new; learning concerns adaptation to the world; learning occurs as a result of interaction between the person and the environment; and learning is a process of creating knowledge.

Even though Schön`s (1983) and Kolb`s (1984) theories help to understand when and how reflection occurs, they seem to fall short of explaining the quality of reflection, which, according to Moon (2005), plays a decisive role in whether reflection leads to learning. For this to happen, teachers need to reflect at a critical level by analysing their beliefs, values and

assumptions which underlie their classroom practice (Shabeeb & Akkary, 2014). The forms of reflection Carr and Kemmis (1986) propose based on Habermas`s (1972) knowledge types, i.e. technical knowledge, practical knowledge and emancipatory knowledge, explain which type of reflection can help to achieve change. At the technical level, teachers are concerned with what works in their classes without much consideration of their values, beliefs and assumptions, and they focus on applying instrumental knowledge (in the forms of methods and strategies) in their classes to achieve predetermined goals (Larrivee, 2008). At the practical level, teachers go beyond technical rationality and make an effort to understand and interpret the conditions for better judgement (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). Practical reflection helps teachers to think about theories underlying their teaching, then to make connections between those theories and their practices and achieve consistency between what they say they believe and what they actually do in classes (Larrivee, 2008). As this implies, technical and practical forms of reflection are concerned with classroom teaching. On the other hand, teachers who engage in emancipatory reflection realise their classes cannot be separated from the larger social, political and educational realities, therefore they reflect on the broader context where education takes place (Larrivee, 2008) and strive for more rational, just and fulfilling forms of education (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). Emancipatory reflection involves teachers` examining personal and professional beliefs (Larrivee, 2008) and going beyond the limitations surrounding them, and this provides them with means by which they can organise themselves as enquirers and achieve their own enlightenment (Carr & Kemmis, 1986).

Teachers` judgement of why a particular incident happens in their classes, the way they interpret the situations and their allocation of responsibility (Weiner, 1972) may influence the quality of their reflection. Weiner (2019) defines this as the locus of dimensions of causality, which can be internal and external. According to Weiner`s (1972) Attribution Theory, individuals can be classified based on their level of achievement motivation, and while the ones high in this motive ascribe success or failure to internal factors (the amount of effort they invest), the ones low in achievement motivation ascribe the outcome to external factors. This guides whether they believe they have a control over the situation, whether they take future actions, the intensity of their work, the extent to which they resist in the face of difficulties and the difficulty of tasks they choose to do (Weiner, 1972). As teachers become more reflective, according to Dewey (1933), they tend to take responsibility for the outcomes and become more open-minded to the alternative solutions.

Though highly promoted, reflective teaching is not an easy practice as there are elements that can positively or negatively influence teachers` reflection, such as being open-minded, wholehearted (Dewey, 1933), being ready, willing and able and being a member of a professional community (Shulman & Shulman, 2004). Bishop, Brownell, Klingner, Leko and Galman (2010) argue that a lack of skills and experience, teachers` personal characteristics, limitations of the profession and school environments can serve as major obstacles for reflection in addition to `time constraint and fear of being judged`. Additionally, engaging in reflection, as Schon (1988) points out, can cause tension as it "opens a teacher to confusion, to not-knowing, hence to vulnerability, to anxiety provoked by vulnerability, and to defensive strategies (often automatically) to protect against vulnerability" (p.23). Therefore, teachers` personal characteristics play a determining role for choosing the way to deal with such issues, either by embracing reflection or by avoiding it (Jaeger, 2013).

There are factors related to the nature of teaching profession that may inhibit reflection as well, for example overcrowded and busy classrooms may not allow teachers to think what is going on, or due to work overload and time limitation teachers may find little or no chance for reflection (Fullan, 2007). Such factors, directly, set a barrier to learning as well since without reflection, teachers do what they have always done and they will get what they have always got (Timperley, 2008). And, although teaching is believed to be intersubjective in nature and teachers learn more about themselves through other people (Bengtsson, 2003), school cultures may inhibit that by not encouraging teachers for reflection or by alienating them when they tend to think and talk in a reflective way (Shulman & Shulman, 2004). As can be inferred, reflective teaching is a quite complex issue and it is under the impact of several factors (Shulman & Shulman, 2004). Therefore, for example, teachers who are ready to engage in reflection but lack other requisite characteristics may fail in constructing their practice, or teachers who possess all individual capacities but do not have a supportive school environment may end up with less efficient forms of reflection (Shulman & Shulman, 2004).

Reflection can be initiated at the individual level by teachers` doing trial and error and learning from their experiences (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005), or at the multiple level by teachers` asking for feedback, sharing their knowledge and experimentation and opening their beliefs to critique (Prilla et al., 2012). Collaborative reflection, which involves making sense of the collective work through communication and coordination, helps teachers to learn more about themselves through other people, to craft new knowledge from shared

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experiences (Prilla et al., 2012), and to cultivate reflection as a skill (Fazio 2009). In collaborative environments, therefore, teachers can see multiple perspectives on how things can be done differently and may feel challenged to make changes (Choi & Morrison, 2014).

The relationship between collaboration and reflection in teachers` practice has been investigated by Fazio (2009). The researcher conducted a qualitative study in the USA, and worked with four science teachers and a facilitator to understand how a collaborative action research affects reflection. The project lasted for one year, and the participants were engaged in discussions and reflections during the meetings which were held every two weeks, and they critiqued their current practices, revised action research questions and evaluated students` activities (Fazio, 2009). The data from the meetings showed that collaborative and communal reflection helped the teachers to develop problem-solving and dialogical thinking skills, by also changing teachers` views about their local schools (Fazio, 2009). Although personal tensions occurred during the meetings since each teacher`s perspective of ideal teaching was different, the supportive characteristic of the learning community helped them to overcome those tensions (Fazio, 2009). Fazio (2009), based on the findings, concludes that collaborative and interactive activities such as verbal analysis of lessons, peer discussions, group meetings and reflective talks promote reflection (Fazio, 2009). And, as teachers become more reflective, they start to acknowledge others` and colleagues` expertise to enhance their own teaching and become more able and willing to collaborate with them (van der Heijden, Geldens, Beijaard, & Popeijus, 2015). All these suggest a link between reflection and collaboration in relation to teachers` learning.

This section has conceptualised reflective practice as a way of individual learning for teachers and defined when (during or after) and how (following the reflective cycle) teachers reflect. It, then, has looked at the types of knowledge teachers can gain through reflection, and categorised emancipatory reflection as the most effective form of reflection as it enhances learning. Afterwards, it has discussed the internal and external factors that can affect teachers` reflective practice and suggested a link between collaboration reflection in relation to teachers` PL.

2.4.2. PL and collaborative working

Reflection is a cognitive activity linked to human capacity in terms of teachers` ability to derive meanings from their experiences (Denton, 2011); however, collaboration and

interaction can feed into it as other people`s involvement in the process and their intervention can facilitate reflection as in Fazio (2009). With the recognition of collaboration as a key factor in learning, learning to teach is no longer seen as an individual pursuit (Murugaiah, Azman, Thang, & Krish, 2012), or a private struggle (Berry, 2004). That is, according to Eraut (2000), because there may be certain things that one does not know but others know, which requires individuals` relying on each other to contribute to the current situation.

Teachers are now regarded as learners and schools as learning communities (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002), as a result of which collaborative models have gained attention to enhance staff learning in workplaces. These models, proposed by different scholars, are grounded in common core beliefs: staff development is crucial for improved student learning, collaboration is a crucial element for PD to be effective, and collaborative work should involve inquiries and problem solving in the actual contexts where daily teaching happens (Servage, 2008). As is implied, collaborative communities can help teachers to voice their ideas and expectations and provide teachers with support from their colleagues who share similar experiences (Burbank & Kauchak, 2003).

Workplace collaborative learning communities

PL communities (PLCs) are workplace learning methods for teachers that shifts away from traditional teacher development approach directed by "experts" to continuing PL in a community where teachers are encouraged to share their experience and expertise (Wenger, 1998). This approach to teacher change is concerned with teachers` improvement, growth, socialization, experimentation of different or new ideas, cognitive and affective change and self-study (Richardson & Placier, 2001).

The normal procedure of PLC is to bring teachers together regularly so that they can engage in planning, curriculum study and learning assessment (Servage, 2008). The expected result of this procedure is teachers` gaining the habit of "… sharing their work and critically examining practice with others as trusted members of the school community and always against the standards of excellence defined by the shared vision" (Zmuda, Kuklis, & Klein, 2003, p.179). Through such a procedure grounded in collegiality and collaboration, teachers` beliefs and practices can be altered by moving teachers from isolation to where they can openly examine their beliefs and practices (Tam, 2015). In a four-year longitudinal study with

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12 teachers in Hong Kong, Tam (2015) collected the data through interviews, observations and document analysis. The findings showed that PLC could facilitate teacher learning and provided the teachers with opportunities of interacting with colleagues, getting familiar with different perspectives, sharing their experiences and acquiring new perspectives on teaching practices and school-based curriculum, all of which led the teachers to challenge their beliefs and practices (Tam, 2015). The researcher concludes that establishing such collaborative communities in schools can be more effective than educators` or authorities` top-down intervention to achieve change (Tam, 2015).

Another workplace collaborative learning community is community of practice (CoP) which is defined as a group of people who "share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis" (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002, p.4). As this implies, CoP is a socially situated and practice based approach to teacher learning (Omidvar & Kislov, 2014), and, in essence, it is based on the idea that learning takes place among members of the community rather than in the mind of individuals (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Therefore, the interaction between individuals and social learning systems, i.e. the interaction between personal experience and social competence, is viewed as the key element for learning to occur (Wenger, 2000). In order to be regarded as socially competent, individuals need to have a sense of joint expertise, mutual engagement and shared repertoire (Wenger, 1998).

However, in some cases, learning may still not occur even if CoP is implemented as in Murugaiah et al. (2012). In a project carried out in Malaysia, the researchers designed and implemented an online CoP portal for 20 teachers from five schools, and the findings showed very limited learning and one-way interaction among the teachers. For this study, CoP obviously failed in achieving the expected level of teacher learning, which might be because of a lack of trust among the teachers and a lack of shared physical context (Murugaiah et al., 2012). This indicates there may be certain requirements to achieve effective CoP, and, according to Wenger et al. (2002), these are the `very qualities that make a community and ideal structure for learning- a shared perspectives on a domain, trust, a communal identity, long-standing relationships, an established practice- are the same qualities that can hold it hostage to its history and its achievements` (p.141). At their core, PLC and CoP appear to be similar to each other; therefore, factors that are believed to affect both will be elaborated next without making any distinct differentiation between the models.

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To achieve effective forms of collaboration, it is a prerequisite for individuals to know each other well (Wenger, 2000), which underlines the importance of situated learning (Murugaiah et al., 2012). By sharing the same workplace, teachers can gain a sense of belonging to a group in which they share and develop ideas (Murugaiah et al., 2012). In addition, the workplace should be grounded in trust and mutual respect as emphasised by several scholars (Murugaiah et al., 2012; Servage, 2008; Wenger, 2000). Wenger (2000) claims that trust must exist in two forms, i.e. personal trust and professional trust, so that teachers do not feel intimidated to speak truthfully and they can depend on each other`s ability to contribute to the group. In a workplace lacking in trust, teachers are very likely to avoid sharing their expertise and experience (Wenger et al., 2002), which may result in insufficient learning outcomes as in Murugaiah et al. (2012). Therefore, developing trust, familiarity and mutual respect can be regarded as a prerequisite for teacher learning and a successful transfer of tacit knowledge (Roberts, 2000). The relationship among teachers can be affected by the nature of work relations in school contexts, since in competitive workplaces, for example, teachers may not feel encouraged for collaboration (Roberts, 2006). For school contexts which are grounded in hierarchical control, there can be similar results as teachers may avoid collaboration due to tension and anxiety (Roberts, 2006). This suggests that the context within which a collaborative professional model is embedded plays a major factor determining its success and effectiveness with regards to teacher learning (Roberts, 2006).

As well as contextual factors, teachers` attitudes towards collaboration, whether they are open to influencing others and being influenced by them, determine if collaborative learning can be achieved (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). Johnson and Johnson`s (2005) Social Interdependence Theory seems helpful to understand the interaction patterns among individuals (cooperative, competitive and individualistic) and to differentiate three psychological processes (positive interdependence, negative interdependence and no interdependence). Positive interdependence exists when individuals recognise that they can achieve their goals only if they work cooperatively with other individuals, and this results in promotive interaction (Johnson & Johnson, 2009). Promotive interaction involves offering and receiving help, exchanging sources, communicating effectively, trusting, and encouraging and promoting each other`s efforts to be able to reach shared goals (Johnson & Johnson, 2009). Negative interdependence exists when individuals perceive they can be successful if the other individuals with whom they are competitively connected fail in obtaining their goals

(Johnson & Johnson, 2009). This results in oppositional interaction which involves individuals` obstructing each other`s efforts in order to prevent each other from completing their tasks (Johnson & Johnson, 2009). No interdependence, on the other hand, refers to an absence of interaction (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). Individuals work independently without engaging in any interchange with each other, and as they see themselves detached from the other individuals they perceive they can reach their goals whether or not the others attain theirs (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). Unlike oppositional interaction or no interaction, positive interaction results in challenging each other`s reasoning and promoting critical thinking and helps individuals to transfer their group learning to individual learning (Johnson & Johnson, 2005).

Working collaboratively may not automatically result in learning since collaboration may lack focus, intensity and effort (Fullan, 2016). According to Opfer and Pedder (2011b), the intensity of collaboration is important, and too much collaboration can be stifling while too little collaboration may lead teachers to isolation and therefore inhibit learning. And, there is no single right amount of collaboration as it depends on individuals and school units (Opfer & Pedder, 2011b). Therefore, collaboration should be carefully organized among teachers, the needs of both organisations and individual teachers should be taken into consideration, and teachers should be provided with opportunities to work together, share their experiences and strategies, exchange ideas and reflect on their practices (Guskey, 2003).

This section has conceptualised collaborative working as a collective learning way for teachers and introduced PLCs and CoPs as effective collaborative learning models which can trigger reflection, therefore lead to learning. Then, a set of criteria have been addressed regarding how to successfully establish these models, which has revealed the role internal and external factors play in achieving that. The next section will discuss how teachers can improve their teaching quality through engaging in PL activities.

2.5.   PL and Teacher Knowledge

The main purpose of PL is to increase teacher knowledge (Bleicher, 2014), which Kumaravadivelu (2012) defines as "an umbrella term to cover teachers` theoretical and practical knowledge as well as their dispositions, beliefs and values" (p.22). According to Roberts (1998), the knowledge base of language teachers comprises of six components; namely, content knowledge (of the target language), pedagogical content knowledge (how to

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teach and adapt the content), general pedagogic knowledge (classroom management, repertoire of teaching activities), curricular knowledge (of the official curriculum), contextual knowledge (of school contexts, learners), and process knowledge (interpersonal skills, inquiry skills). Kumaravadivelu (2012), with a broader approach, groups them into three: professional knowledge, personal knowledge and procedural knowledge. Professional knowledge, the knowledge shared by members of the profession, includes the content of the field and a compilation of theories, concepts and facts related to the field (Kumaravadivelu, 2012). In ELT, professional knowledge covers the fundamental concepts related to the language, language learning and language teaching, which can be acquired through several sources such as pre- and in-service education, additional programmes and additional resources (Kumaravadivelu, 2012). While procedural knowledge is basically concerned with classroom management and knowing how to create and sustain a learning environment, personal knowledge is related with teachers` individual endeavours (Kumaravadivelu, 2012).

Even though all knowledge types are of importance for teachers, the content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge, which together are encompassed by Kumaravadivelu`s `professional knowledge`, are believed to directly affect the quality of teaching practice (Bleicher, 2014). Through PL activities, teachers can develop the ability to construct their knowledge on their own accord (Oosterheert & Vermunt, 2001), and increase their knowledge base related to these particular areas (Bleicher, 2014). This requires them not only to continuously evaluate new knowledge with regards to its relevance to their practice but also to update accordingly the knowledge they already possess (Guerriero, 2014). Engaging in such a process and reconstructing their professional knowledge enables teachers to transform their teaching and become a part of a more collective change process (Hargreaves, 1997).

Given that PL activities can help teachers to rebuild their professional knowledge and improve the quality of their teaching, the next section will elaborate the relationship between PL and change and discuss the ideas around change in teachers and education systems.

2.6. PL and Teacher Change

PL emphasises the active role teachers play in improving their knowledge bases, beliefs and practices (Bleicher, 2014). PL and teacher change are interrelated, as change involves learning and learning is a prerequisite for change (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002), and

effective PL is expected to lead to change in teachers` beliefs and practices, and eventually in education systems (Timperley, 2008).

By engaging in PL activities, ELT teachers can move from `traditional` and teacher-centred approach to `progressive`, innovative and learner-centred approach (Gebhard, 2006). This change in the teaching approach enables them to teach English as a communication tool for skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing, make their classes more effective, evoke students` interest by implementing visual and auditory tools, expose students to English as the target language and provide students with opportunities to use English (Gocer, 2010). By "exploring simply to explore" (p.9), ELT teachers can break from one way of teaching, become less dependent on outside sources such as textbooks and more able to make their classes a community of learners where students can freely communicate with each other in English and learn to take responsibility for their own learning (Gebhard, 2006). Such need for exploration and further learning can derive from interactive and reflective activities both of which provides ELT teachers with opportunities to raise questions about their teaching, to search answers to those questions and eventually see new teaching possibilities, which can lead to the development of their beliefs and practices and learning outcomes (Gebhard, 2006).

Yet, achieving real and sustained change may not be straightforward (Guskey & Yoon, 2009; Stewart, 2014) as it is a process rather than a product (Guskey, 2002). Teachers need to own the change process which naturally requires time for goal setting, networking and getting external support (Hobson & Moss, 2011). However, investing long periods of time on change initiatives does not guarantee achieving change (Guskey, 2003), as what makes time effective is not the length but its` being used effectively and wisely (Easton, 2008). Therefore, teachers should be given time which is well-organized, carefully-structured and purposefully directed (Guskey, 2003). Additionally, the structure of the initiatives is important as well, which, according to Easton (2008), refers to the appropriateness of school-based initiatives for a particular school context rather than implementing one best initiative that works well in all contexts.

Even though teachers are now encouraged to initiate the change process and take responsibility for their PL (Le Fevre, 2014), they have traditionally been viewed as the implementers of change initiatives which are set out by others, more specifically authorities (Lukacs & Galluzzo, 2014). In such practices, teachers are expected to implement externally

imposed change initiatives without questioning and the outcome is believed to be a success only if it aligns with others` view of what it should look like (Lukacs & Galluzzo, 2014). These externally planned events, according to Eraut (1994), should not overtake internally planned change since the former generally does not turn out to have a permanent impact. Yet, Day (2000) indicates that externally imposed innovations and change can be beneficial as such practices may challenge the existing practices in schools and have an influence on the organizational and individual cultures. Fullan (2015), disagreeing, argues that change implemented by authorities at the systemic level cannot solve individuals` problems from above, therefore it should be initiated by teachers themselves to achieve sustainability.

Nevertheless, when educational change is considered, external change comes to mind instead of internal change (Goodson, 2010), based on which it can be inferred that change is often seen as a top-down process rather than a bottom-up one. In order to understand teachers` emotional responses to the top-down educational change, Hargreaves (2004) carried out an empirical study with 50 teachers in 15 elementary and secondary schools in Canada. The findings gathered from interviews and focus groups showed that while teachers reported positive feelings about self-generated change, most of them felt negatively regarding external or government-imposed change. Teachers further reported that they associated mandated change with government reforms, and they felt unhappy about it as they felt forced to implement the predetermined changes rather than owning the process (Hargreaves, 2004). Similarly, Fenwick (2003), after analysing professional growth plans based on Michel Foucault`s concept of pastoral power, objects to the top-down approach to change and underlines the necessity of approaching teacher learning from a different aspect by empowering teachers to take responsibility for their own learning. The researcher further adds that the nature of change requires flexibility and time, and teachers` learning occurs at their own pace; however, the top-down approach does not allow that as teachers` knowledge is disciplined and shaped by particular organizational interests without considering if that actually contributes to teachers` knowledge and practice (Fenwick, 2003). This being the case, teachers are likely to resist to change when grounded in a top-down approach (Smith & Nichol, 1981).

This section has addressed the challenges in relation to achieving teacher change and exemplified how teachers can resist change when a top-down approach is adopted, which has highlighted that teachers need to initiate change and act as change agents. The next section

will attempt to understand how teacher change occurs and how broader systems impact on it.

2.7. Beliefs and Teacher Change

Previously in Section 1.2., it was explained that ELT teachers in Turkey tended to adopt a `traditional` teaching approach (Haznedar, 2010), and they lack the competence to use `progressive` education strategies, to utilise effective materials and to prepare a learning environment which could encourage students to efficiently use English (Gocer, 2010). Such issues may be linked to what ELT teachers believe about teaching and learning, which according to Johnson (2018), form "the unobservable or hidden side of language teaching" (p.259). Therefore, investigating ELT teachers` beliefs can provide insights into their decision-making processes, the foundations of their pedagogical decisions and the ways to challenge and change them (Borg, 2009).

Teachers ought to continuously change not only to challenge and renew their expertise but also to deal with the complexities of classes and the diversities of students (Kaasila & Lauriala, 2010; Frost, 2012; Fullan, 2015). Yet, there does not seem to be a consensus among scholars regarding how to conceptualise teacher change and in what order change occurs. Desimone (2009) suggests that change starts with teachers` beliefs and this leads to change in teachers` practices, which ultimately results in change in learning outcomes. The change order Guskey (1986) proposes seems to be completely different as the researcher argues that change starts with teachers` practices and continues with learning outcomes, and this process leads to change in teachers` beliefs and attitudes. Even though there is a disagreement about the order of change, scholars agree that changing teachers` beliefs is the most challenging part in the change process (Clarke & Hollinsworth, 2002; Desimone, 2009; Fullan, 2007; Guskey, 1986). To help teachers to achieve change, it appears important to understand how change occurs (Choi & Morrison, 2014) and what attracts teachers to change.

Guskey`s (1986) model of change consists of four interrelated and sequential stages: PD, change in teachers` practices, change in learning outcomes and change in teachers` beliefs and attitudes. This model contradicts Desimone`s (2009) model which proposes that change in teachers` beliefs occurs after an effective PD, which leads to change in teachers` practices and to change in learning outcomes. Guskey (1986), disagreeing with Desimone

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(2009), argues that the reason why teachers feel attracted to PD is because of their beliefs and attitudes towards change. Therefore, PD programmes that hope for immediate change in teachers` beliefs are likely to fail since they expect teachers to commit without even seeing the results of the new methods and techniques to be implemented (Guskey, 2002). According to Guskey (1986), change occurs in teachers` beliefs and attitudes only after they see positive results of the newly practised teaching techniques. As can be inferred, it is not PD per se, but the effective implementation of the newly adopted instructional approach that changes teachers` beliefs (Guskey, 2002).

Guskey (2002) views the significance of change in relation to change in teachers` beliefs and attitudes; however, according to Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002), change should occur in all three dimensions (teachers` practices, teachers` beliefs, learning outcomes) to be regarded as significant. This is because, teachers may change their practices but not their beliefs, or teachers may change their beliefs and attitudes but it may not influence their practices, or even if change occurs in two domains (teachers` beliefs and practices), it does not lead to any improvement in learning outcomes (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002). In such cases, according to Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002), a real change does not exist.

Desimone`s (2009) and Guskey`s (1986) models are both criticised because they adhere to a linear process and focus on individuals; not taking into consideration the broader context (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2013). According to Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002), change is a more cyclical process and change in one domain can initiate change in another domain, which suggests that change does not follow a predetermined path but rather it involves cyclical movements. Opfer, Pedder and Lavicza (2011), agreeing, add that there is no specific point for change to start as it can be any of three domains, which obviously contradicts Desimone (2009) and Guskey (1986). Additionally, different from Desimone (2009) and Guskey (1986) both of which focus on individuals, Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002) view the change process in relation with the broader context which positively or negatively affects teachers` change process. This is why social, situational and interactional factors should be taken into consideration to fully understand and conceptualise teacher change (Kaasiala & Lauriala, 2010).

Hargreaves and Fullan`s (2013) Professional Capital model is grounded in the idea that teacher change is not a separate phenomenon, and school contexts impact on individual teachers and vice versa. Professional Capital model comprises of three components; namely,

human capital (individuals` abilities), social capital (the collaborative power of the group) and decisional capital (the wisdom and expertise for making reasonable decisions about students) (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2013). Although all three components are crucial, Hargreaves and Fullan (2013) view social capital as the most influential component since it provides the opportunity of using group to change the group. In addition, social capital provides individual teachers with opportunities of accessing other teachers` knowledge and their human capitals, which contributes to individual teachers` knowledge base (Fullan, 2016). And, according to Fullan (2016), individuals whose human capital is relatively low can improve themselves through social capital; however, when a school lacks in social capital teachers may not achieve change at an expected level even if their human capital is high.

Empirical research seems to support the role of school contexts in the change process. Opfer et al. (2011), with the purpose of investigating the relationship between individual teachers and their schools, conducted a quantitative survey study with randomly selected 388 schools (329 primary 59 secondary) in England. The data gathered from 1126 teachers showed that those schools had an orientation to learning including beliefs, support systems and collective capacity for learning (Opfer et al., 2011). The researchers suggest that PL should be regarded as a dynamic process and it cannot be separated from social contexts teachers work in, and therefore schools should shift their thinking about the role they play in teachers` PL (Opfer et al., 2011). In another quantitative study done in New York within 130 school units and with around 1000 fourth and fifth grade teachers, Leana (2011) investigated one-year change in students` achievement scores in mathematics in relation to how those teachers` human capital and social capital interacted. The findings showed that the teachers, whose students showed the highest gains, were more able than the other teachers and they had stronger ties with their colleagues. This, according to Leana (2011), points out to a strong link between teachers` human capital and social capital, and their impact on learning outcomes (Leana, 2011).

Given that change operates at different levels, the next section will provide an overview of contextual and individual factors respectively, then bring them together to understand how the interplay between these factors affects the efficacy of teacher learning.

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2.8. Factors Affecting Teacher Change

2.8.1. Contextual factors

Scholars (Hargreaves, 1997; Oosterheert & Vermunt, 2001; Verloop, van Driel, & Meyer, 2001) argue that contextual factors affect the change process, since, as Cole (1997) indicates, "… conditions under which teachers work generate feelings and psychological states that militate against … professional growth" (p.7). School culture (Le Fevre, 2014), colleagues (Attard, 20017), principals (King, 2016) and collaborative communities (Fullan, 2015) seem to be the main elements forming teachers` workplaces.

School culture refers to the way things are done in schools and reflects the underlying beliefs and values that schools may have (King, 2016). In a school culture that is punitive and is not favour of inquiries, teachers may feel uncomfortable with trying something new as it involves risk (Timperley, 2008). In order to overcome this, the school culture should be grounded in trust and mutual respect (Le Fevre, 2014) so that teachers can feel safer to initiate change (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Therefore, it is important to establish a supportive school culture where teachers are encouraged to take risks and engage in reflective and collaborative PL activities (Fullan, 1993).

In addition to the school culture, colleagues` characteristics seem to determine whether teachers initiate or avoid collaboration. Opfer et al. (2011) indicate that school units consist of several elements including teachers` collective beliefs which constantly interact with and impact on teachers` individual beliefs. This may be why being surrounded by like-minded colleagues is important (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001). Collaboration and having strong relationships with colleagues can facilitate teacher change as belonging to and being a member of a group generates a sense of responsibility, pressure, safety, trust and courage for risk taking (Fullan, 2015). This may lead teachers to believe they can make a difference together, which according to Fullan (2015), is a kind of human evolution through and with others. However, even though teachers work together as a community, change may still not be achieved (Gellert, 2008). This can be linked to the adopted collaboration approach by schools as `contrived collegiality`, administratively contrived interactions among teachers, may even have a negative impact on the sustainability of changes (Hargreaves & Dawe, 1990). As is implied, school principals` beliefs about change and the managerial support they provide for teachers can affect the whole changing process (King, 2016; Luka, 2015).

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While the existence and proper implementation of certain elements helps to build a collaborative school environment, the lack of the very same elements or not implementing them properly enough can result in what Cole (1997) calls, `non or miseducative environments` (p.13). The impact of educative working environments on teachers` change process has been investigated by King (2016). The researcher, after a multiple case study conducted in five Irish schools with teachers and principals, concludes that support for teachers is one of the most important systemic factors which enables them to implement and to sustain changes (King, 2016). The researcher adds that support comes not only from principals but also from colleagues that teachers work with in PLCs, and indicates that having aligned values and beliefs with colleagues is a strong prerequisite for teachers` capacity building (King, 2016). In a qualitative study, Wabule (2016) investigated the pitfalls of the current CPD (continuing PD) in Uganda by mainly focusing on one teacher through interviews and supplemented the data through focus groups with principals, other teachers and students. The initial findings showed that poor school environments resulted in individualism, envy, mistrust, fear and so on, all of which set a barrier to PL. After exploring the problems, the researcher carried out a further action research study with a teacher by implementing a school-based CPD to see how a specifically designed CPD can help schools overcome such problems. The findings showed that a collaborative environment in which teachers and principals worked together could break the barriers of poor communication, isolation and low self-esteem. Wabule (2016) concludes that positive school culture and effective school-based collaborative initiatives can create a strong ownership for change.

In addition to these generic elements, other factors may also affect ELT teachers` change (e.g. Gocer, 2010). With the purpose of understanding Turkish ELT teachers` classroom practices, Gocer (2010) conducted interviews and observations with 26 ELT teachers working in private and public schools. The researcher found that the lack of well-designed English text-books, the importance given to teaching of grammar in the curriculum, the limited weekly lesson hours, teachers` professional and pedagogical competence, students` approaches to English, the lack of technological resources were the main factors constraining ELT teachers from improving their teaching and focusing on skills.

2.8.2. Individual factors

On some occasions, even if educative school environments are established, teachers may still resist change as in Smith (2012). Smith (2012), in order to understand how teachers use school contexts that they work in, conducted a case study with three teachers and collected the data through classroom observations, videotapes and interviews. The findings showed that the way the teachers used their contexts - shaped by an interaction between their beliefs, practices and resources -, was more important than the characteristics of those contexts (Smith, 2012). This, as Smith (2012) points out, suggests teachers` dispositions towards learning and change determine whether to initiate and sustain change. Therefore, even in an ideal environment in which everything is properly implemented, and no noticeable reason exists for not achieving change, teachers` previous experiences, expectations or a lack of motivation may inhibit change (Kaasila & Lauriala, 2010). This may be because change is already a very complex process itself and it requires the head and the heart of individuals, which makes it even more complex (Cole, 1997).

Understanding teachers` dispositions seems critical to bring change to education processes as they "… are closely linked to teachers` strategies for coping with challenges in their daily professional life and to their general well-being, and they shape students' learning environment and influence student motivation and achievement" (OECD, 2009, p.89). Teachers come to school contexts with different backgrounds, experiences, beliefs, values and motivations (Whitworth & Chiu, 2015), all of which form their stance towards change (Hargreaves, 2005). Teachers shape their beliefs and values based on their experiences and their experiences are shaped by their beliefs and values, which enables them to create their meanings and missions they carry with them throughout their careers (Hargreaves, 2005).

Considering that all personal and professional experiences, educational encounters and cultural transmissions feed into the belief system, which Kumaravadivelu (2012) defines as "a coherent set of belief or precepts that govern one`s thoughts, words and actions" (p.60), it is very difficult to change it (Le Fevre, 2014). As such, teachers may avoid change by on the contrary engaging with the new information in a way that confirms their existing beliefs (Hart, Albarracin, Eagly, Brechan, Lindberg, & Merrill, 2009), this is what Le Fevre (2014) calls cognitive bias. Additionally, teachers may prefer to stick to their existing or previous beliefs because of psychological costs that they cannot risk (Timperley & Robinson, 2002). Critiquing themselves and examining their beliefs about teaching may lead teachers to vulnerability and

lower self-esteem, and they can choose to escape from change rather than to embrace it just to avoid those negative feelings (Le Fevre, 2014).

Van Eekelen, Vermunt and Boshuizen (2006) links learning with teachers` willingness. For change to occur, a will to learn which is a psychological state involving a desire to learn, to explore, to see or to try something new that has not been done or seen until that time, should exist (van Eekelen et al., 2006). With the purpose of exploring teachers` willingness to learn, van Eekelen et al. (2006) carried out a qualitative study in a Dutch high school with randomly selected 15 teachers. Based on the findings gathered from both interviews and focus groups, the researchers grouped the teachers into three: ones who did not see any need to learn, ones who wondered how to learn, and ones who were eager to learn (van Eekelen et al., 2006). For the teachers in the first and the second groups, according to Oosterheert and Vermunt (2001), teaching experiences may fail in being educative as these teachers prefer to take their existing knowledge as granted and lack the desire to see something new, which makes their teaching turn into a self-confirmation process. Unlike them, the third group of teachers are more proactive, more open to both new experiences and others` ideas and more aware of their strengths and weaknesses and take more responsibility for their own learning (van Eekelen et al., 2006).

Moreover, teachers with a will to learn attribute success and failure to internal causes rather than external ones (van Eekelen et al., 2006). For example, teachers who do not see a reason to learn or who do not know how to learn may see themselves as victims of external factors such as education systems, classroom situations or students` negative attitudes, all of which ultimately becomes their explicit reason not to take any action or responsibility to improve their current situation. Being willing to learn may also facilitate deliberative learning which is one of the domains of Eraut`s (2000) typology that is based on one`s intention to learn. Engaging in deliberative learning helps teachers to perform systematic reflection on past events, actions and experiences, and develop necessary skills for decision making and problem-solving (Eraut, 2000). The impact of teachers` dispositions on PL has been examined by other researchers as well. Gamlem (2015) conducted an intervention study with three teachers and six students in a lower secondary school in Norway to understand the impact of an intervention on teachers` beliefs and practices. Although teachers were from the same school and they participated in the same workshops, they followed different routes after the intervention, which might be because of their initial beliefs about the intervention (Gamlem,

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2015). The researcher concludes that the intervention was a success; however, the outcome of the intervention differed according to the teachers` initial beliefs in relation to leading to change (Gamlem, 2015).

These issues may result from teachers` perspective of change and not shifting from being recipients of change to initiators of change the latter of which requires them to have a more active role in improving not only themselves but also schools in order to contribute to educational change (Lukasc, 2015). To achieve this, teachers need to act in an intentional way to "shape their own responses to problematic situations" (Fallon & Barnett, 2009, p.12), which can lead them to start considering themselves as having a role in finding solutions to the problems they are experiencing rather than just acknowledging the existence of problems (Luka, 2015). As implied, the main difference between teachers as initiators of change and teachers as recipients of change is that teachers of the former group have an insider drive to change whereas an external drive exists for the second group (Fullan, 1993).

Teachers as change agents need to have the ability to read their working environments - which involves going beyond the four walls of classrooms -, the ability to encourage colleagues and include them in problem-solving processes - which involves working in collaboration-, the skills to detect and cope with problems, and have a sense of owning the problem (Lukacs & Galluzzo, 2014). Empirical research supports the characteristics associated with teachers as change agents as well. For example, Luka (2015) carried out a mixed-methods study to understand possible characteristics of a teacher by firstly employing a survey in a secondary school to find out who the participants considered as a teacher change agent and then by carrying out interviews with the teacher who was pointed out as the one by her colleagues. The findings from the interview sessions showed that teachers had three prominent characteristics: belief in having a role in change, being committed and eager to change and valuing teaching as a profession (Luka, 2015). Having such characteristics together with being autonomous, self-directed and collaborative, according to Fullan (2015), can motivate teachers to change.

2.8.3. Interplay between contextual and individual factors

Change is a complex process as it operates at both individual, organizational and systemic levels (Le Fevre, 2014). The impact of individual or contextual factors may be more salient in some settings; however, these factors are interconnected and can come on the way

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of each other as in Le Fevre (2014). Le Fevre (2014) carried out a single case study with thirty teachers to explore what teachers thought about risk while implementing pedagogical change. The findings showed that when the teachers perceived the level of risk as too high, they avoided changing their practice (Le Fevre, 2014), which may refer to the psychological costs of change mentioned in 2.8.2. The researcher underlines the criticality of creating environments in which risk-taking is encouraged and the perception of risk is moderated (Le Fevre, 2014). Day (2000), after a study with fourteen teachers both from primary and secondary schools, reported two main factors based on what the teachers` stories of change revealed, and these were the contextual issues related to the teachers` working environments and the teachers` personal dispositions.

Kwakman (2003), in ten secondary schools in Finland, investigated the factors promoting or inhibiting teachers` participation in PL activities. The findings gathered from surveys showed that both personal and contextual factors affected the teachers` learning, but the individual factors were found to be more impactful (Kwakman, 2003). Similarly, Oosterheert and Vermunt (2001) interviewed 30 Dutch secondary school teacher candidates in order to understand individual differences in learning to teach and found that both individual and contextual factors affected the teacher candidates` learning process. The researchers indicate that the working environments should challenge teacher candidates in a positive way so that their orientation towards learning can change and they may need a feel to change or to develop their existing learning habits (Oosterheert & Vermunt, 2001). In a multiple case study conducted in England, Braun et al. (2011) looked at the factors that affected the differences in policy enactments between four similar secondary schools in England. Based on the findings, the researchers propose four contextual dimensions: situated contexts (location, school background, intakes and settings), material contexts (recruiting, budget, buildings, technology, substructure), professional contexts (values, commitments and teaching experiences) and external contexts (support from local authorities, pressures and expectations from broader educational context, legal responsibilities and requirements). The researchers highlight that these dimensions involve both individual and contextual factors, and they are interconnected (Braun et al., 2011).

As can be inferred from the reviewed literature, it is not the contextual factors or the individual factors on their own, but the interrelationship between them that determines the efficacy of teacher learning (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005). This suggests that teacher

learning occurs as a result of the interplay between these two dimensions (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005). Burn et al.`s (2010) longitudinal study in which the researchers collected the data from 17 teachers through observations and interviews seem to support this claim. Based on the findings, Burn et al. (2010) explain that two teachers from the same collaborative working environment may show intentions for PL, but while one has Eraut`s (2000) `deliberative` stance and identifies what she/he wants or needs and creates opportunities to achieve their learning goals, the other may have a reactive approach by acting in the opposite way and expecting learning to happen as a natural product of teaching experience. In the end, while the one with a strong internal mechanism flourishes by taking advantage of the supportive environment he/she works in, the latter is likely to fail in exploiting such an environment to the fullest (Burn et al., 2010).

2.9. Theoretical Ideas

This research project looks at individual ELT teachers in relation to their PL and change. This is why, rather than change theories at the macro level, Agency Theories will be used together to understand how change occurs at the individual level.

2.9.1. Relational agency

The relationship between individuals and collective practices leads to the notion of relational agency developed by Edwards (2005) and her colleagues (Edwards & D`arcy, 2004) which sees agency as a product of social relationships. Relational agency requires "a capacity to align one`s thoughts and actions with those of others in order to interpret problems of practice and to respond to those interpretations" (Edwards & D`arcy, 2004, p.169). Based on this definition, relational agency can be claimed to be about the individual capacity both to ask for and to offer support to others, which means it is an ability to use other people as resources for action while at the same time to be able to be resources for others in order to meet their expectations and needs (Edwards & D`arcy, 2004). The importance given to relationships among individuals may be because they are believed to foster one`s capability (Edwards, 2005). Individuals can go beyond their current position by drawing on others` expertise whom they collaborate with (Grimmett, 2014), and they can develop a lack of capacity they may have in particular areas by relying on others` resources (Burkitt, 2016).

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This may promote dependency among individuals since, as Gergen (1999) claims, there is no empirically existing agency without relationships and agency is constructed through relationships; however, Burkitt (2016) perceives this interdependence as necessary to be effective agents in the modern world. For Edwards (2005), on the other hand, this is not dependency but an ability to see other people as potential resources and a sense of responsibility as well to be resources for others. Edwards (20005) further adds that although the focus of relational agency is on the collaborative-object-oriented action, the main goal is to achieve individual change as a result of joint action. Therefore, relational agency, though may not be without criticisms, can be beneficial as well. For example, Wright (2015) argues that through collaborative work, individuals become familiar with differences and respect to them, which turns into a process that enables them to use differences as resources. Moreover, the ability to work with others, to negotiate and to construct meanings are regarded valuable, and sharing is not seen as a weakness (Edwards, 2005). Through shared experiences and meanings, according to Edwards (2011), it is also possible to construct common knowledge among individuals which can serve as additional resources helping them for collaborative decision-making. Therefore, through PLC or CoP, as ways to establish school-based collaborative working groups, it may become possible to promote relational agency as well as human agency.

With the purposes of exploring how a specifically designed PD affects teachers` thinking and teaching practice and how collaborative working environments facilitate learning, McNicholl (2013) carried out a qualitative research for five months with five biology teachers and a biology teacher educator by employing relational agency to interpret the collaborative work among the participants. The findings showed that the participants, despite being provided with additional resources, mainly relied on each other`s expertise (McNicholl, 2013). And, the participants` sense of agency with regards to their own PD had increased during the project, which, according to McNicholl (2013), might be because of not putting the participants under external criticism but rather encouraging them to self-analyse. Last, but not least, some of the teachers reported they started to feel more confident in terms of improving their teaching, which, according to McNicholl (2013), is the most important finding of the research as it refers to a change in the teachers` perceptions about their agency. McNicholl (2013) defines two reasons for the success of the research, one was the collaborative environment and the other was the teachers` desire to improve their teaching.

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The teachers, as McNicholl (2013) indicates, believed that the project would contribute to their learning and they were keen to work throughout the period, which may be regarded as an indication of strong agency. Another study that Wright (2015) carried out in order to investigate the collaboration between a researcher and a teacher has similar findings. Throughout the exchange the participants experienced, both the researcher and the teacher were found to show not only respect to each other but also willingness to learn from each other (Wright, 2015). The participants also reported that they used each other as resources in order to respond their learners` needs, which, according to Wright (2015), is a sign of relational agency (Wright, 2015).

Ecological model of relational agency

Biesta and Tedder (2007) propose an ecological model of relational agency, which sees agency as "the capacity to act" (Priestley, Biesta, & Robinson, 2015, p.31). According to this model, agency can be achieved through individuals` active engagement with their ecological environments, rather than being possessed (Biesta & Tedder, 2007). Therefore, teachers can achieve agency in one situation while they may fail to do so in another situation, or exercise more or less agency at different times (Biesta & Tedder, 2007). As such, this view of agency helps to understand how individual teachers may feel enabled or on the contrary constrained by their social environments (Priestley, Edwards, Priestley, & Miller, 2012), and how they shape their responsiveness according to the educational contexts they are situated in (Biesta and Tedder, 2007).

Emirbayer and Mische (1998) propose a three-dimensional way (see Figure 1) to understand agency which covers the influences of the past, the orientations of the future and the engagement with the present. The iterational dimension is concerned with the past achievements and understandings which include teachers` personal capacity (skills and knowledge), beliefs (professional and personal) and values (Priestley et al., 2015). The projective dimension encompasses the futuristic element of agency and concerns teachers` aspirations related to their work and their short-term and long-term motivations (Priestley et al., 2015) to bring about a future that is different from the past and the present (Biesta & Tedder, 2007). The practical-evaluative agency, as the third dimension, concerns the day-to-day working environments teachers work in, which consists of cultural, material and structural aspects (Priestley et al., 2015). As this indicates, agency is situated between past

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and future, which makes it important to understand the ecological conditions through which agency is achieved (Biesta & Tedder, 2007).

Figure 1

A model for understanding the achievement of agency

Practical-evaluative
- Cultural
  - Ideas, values, beliefs, discourses, language
- Structural
  - Social structures (relationships, roles, power, trust)
- Material
  - Resources
  - Physical environment

Iterational
- Life histories
- Professional histories

Projective
- Short term
- Long term
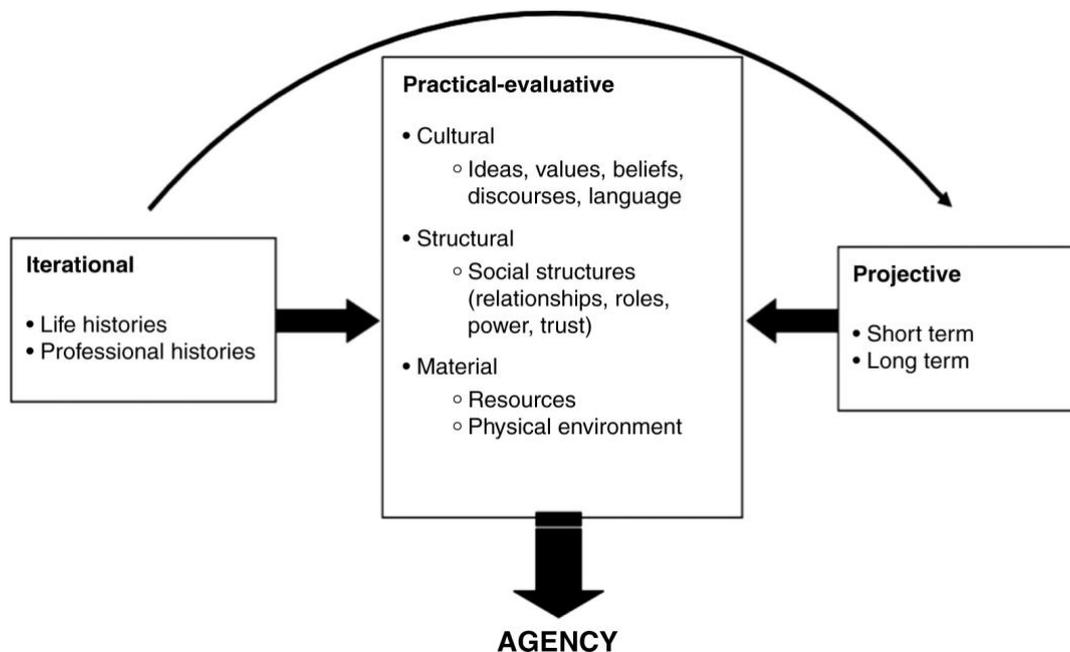
AGENCY

(Priestley et al., 2015, p.30)

In this research, the Ecological Model of Agency will be utilised to guide the data collection process and to assist in the data analysis and interpretation stage. This model and the Relational Agency Theory seem helpful to understand the interplay between the individual and contextual factors, and its impact on teachers` engagement in reflective and collaborative PL activities. And, as they concern "… the dialectical relationship between development of individuals and collective practices" (Grimmett, 2014, p.18), they fit well with my ontological and epistemological positions. Adopting a social constructivist approach (Chapter 3), I aim to look at how teachers achieve agency within their social contexts and understand how the interactions between individuals within their settings and the surrounding world around them affect the agency they exert to engage in reflective and collaborative PL activities. That is, my purpose is to interpret individual teacher agency by exploring its past, present and future elements, thereby will shedding light on the similarities and differences between them. These theoretical ideas have been previously utilised within

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an interpretive and constructivist paradigm by other researchers as well (eg. McNicholl, 2013; Priestley et al., 2015).

2.9.2. Agency and self-efficacy

Self-efficacy, which refers to individuals` beliefs in their power to bring change, seems to be closely linked to agency as it explains individuals` engagement in change, their motivation throughout the change process and the way they react when they face difficulties (Bandura, 2006). According to Bandura (2000), it is individuals` self-efficacy beliefs that affect if they think optimistically or pessimistically, what types of goals and actions they set to pursue, how committed they stay throughout the process, how much effort they make, what they expect from the outcomes they want to produce, the extent to which they persevere when they face obstacles, how much depression and stress they go through while dealing with external demands and achievements they want to realise. As such, low self-efficacy is associated with a lack of motivation for achieving change and therefore individuals give up exerting effort easily in the face of obstacles, while high self-efficacy is associated with high level of motivation where difficulties are seen as surmountable (Bandura, 2006). Moreover, people`s judgement of their personal efficacy seems to affect their selection of environment as well, since while ones with higher self-efficacy undertake relatively difficult activities and select social environments that they think they are capable of dealing with, ones with lower self-efficacy may tend to behave in the opposite way believing those activities and environments are beyond their capabilities (Bandura, 1989). As can be inferred, self-efficacy beliefs have an impact on cognitive, motivational, affective and decision-making processes (Bandura, 2006).

2.10. Summary

This literature review has discussed the criticality of teacher education in relation to countries` education systems and highlighted the need for agentic teachers who can take responsibility for their PL and initiate change. It then, has proposed that reflective practice and collaborative working, as two day-to-day activities teachers engage in within their workplaces, can facilitate learning and help to bring about change. By engaging in deeper levels of reflection, teachers can become more open to collaboration and view others`

expertise as a resource to improve their teaching and being a member of collaborative learning communities can enhance reflection, which signals a link between reflection and collaboration in relation to teachers` learning. Afterwards, a link has been introduced between PL and teacher change and the challenges for achieving change have been explained. In order to transform their teaching, teachers need to have the potential to achieve change which is influenced by the interplay between teachers` personal backgrounds and aspirations and their ecological environments. By bringing reflective practice and collaborative working together, this research will provide insights about the effective models of reflection and collaboration and will shed light on the main factors affecting each concept. In the next chapter I will clarify my epistemological and ontological stance, my research methodology and data analysis stage together with field challenges and ethical issues.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

3.1.   Introduction

This chapter outlines the ontological and epistemological positions underpinning this research and the methodology and methods used to answer the research questions. It also presents the sampling strategy and participants, the data collection process and the analysis techniques together with the research issues and ethical issues.

3.2.   Research Paradigm

The philosophical stance adopted by researchers has a direct impact on their view of reality and knowledge, their choices of methodology, and methods they use for the research (Gray, 2014). As researchers` philosophical stance constitutes how they see the world and what they think about research, philosophical issues are integral to the research and can neither be thought of as separate from the research process nor be ignored at any stages (Scott & Usher, 2011).

This basic belief system that every researcher holds both about the world and about the research is defined as a research paradigm (Thomas, 2013). A paradigm is the representation of the worldview of researchers that guides them through the research process (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). A paradigm consists of four interrelated components; namely, ontology, epistemology, methodology and methods (Scotland, 2012). This interrelationship is one where, ontological positions give rise to epistemological positions which, in turn, lead to methodological considerations and these, in turn, inform methods and data collection (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995). Based on what has been explained so far, it can be concluded that research is concerned with understanding the world and this is formed by how researchers view their worlds, what they understand from understanding itself and what purposes they attribute to understanding (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2005). The way researchers view reality and knowledge informs the research design and the purposes research will serve (Cohen et al., 2005). It then follows that it may be impossible to engage adequately in research before committing to ontological and epistemological positions that underpin the research process (Scotland, 2012).

3.2.1. Ontology and epistemology

"Ontology is the study of being" (Crotty, 1998, p.10), which means ontology is mainly concerned with the nature of existence (Gray, 2014). It focuses on questions such as what is, what is there that can be known about, and what is the nature of reality (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Epistemology, on the other hand, is concerned with knowledge (Crotty, 1998), and focuses on questions such as what it means to know, how do we know what we know, what is the relationship between the knower and what can be known (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The answers given to these ontological and epistemological questions determine research paradigms and positions to be taken by researchers in relation to epistemology and ontology. Positivism and interpretivism are regarded as two leading paradigms in the Social Sciences (Thomas, 2013), and they will be elaborated further below.

3.2.2. Positivism versus interpretivism

Positivism argues that it is possible to obtain knowledge about the social world in an objective way, which indicates that what is seen or heard can be perceived and recorded straightforwardly without encountering many problems (Thomas, 2013). Positivists further claim that there is an absolute knowledge about an objective reality, and researchers are required to stay neutral and objective as much as possible in order to discover that reality (Scotland, 2012). However, although this may work for studying the natural sciences, Thomas (2013) states that it is not possible to study the social world through the same methods used for the natural sciences, and therefore a different mindset is needed to make inquiries into it. This major anti-positivist stance is called interpretivism and it has a focus on people and the way they interrelate, what they think and how they form ideas about the world, and how they construct their worlds accordingly (Thomas, 2013). Interpretivism, in short, looks for "culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social world" (Crotty, 1998, p. 67). As this definition implies, in contrast to positivists, interpretivists argue that there is no objective truth waiting for researchers to discover, since truth, or in this case meaning, comes into existence as a result of researchers` engagement with the world (Crotty, 1998).

An example of a tree may show the difference more clearly between the positivist and the interpretivist mindsets. For positivists, "a tree in the forest is a tree, regardless of whether anyone is aware of its existence or not. As an object of that kind, it carries the intrinsic

meaning of treeness. When human beings recognize it as a tree, they are simply discovering a meaning that has been lying in wait for them all along." (Crotty, 1998, p.8). For interpretivists, however, "a tree is not a tree without someone to call it as tree. Meaning is not discovered; it is constructed through the interaction between consciousness and the world. Consciousness is always consciousness of something" (Crotty, 1998, p.44). Interpretivists elaborate this further by stating that "we need to remind ourselves here that it is human beings who have constructed it as a tree, given it the name, and attributed to it the associations we make with trees" (Crotty, 1998, p.43). As can be inferred so far, while positivist researchers do not leave much room for interpretation since they believe the social world is out there to be discovered existing separately from them (Thomas, 2013), interpretivist researchers believe that value free knowledge is not possible (Scotland, 2012).

The ontology underpinning the positivist stance is realism, which mainly argues that researchers and the researched are independent entities, and researchers are required to possess the capability of studying the object without affecting it or being affected by it (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The discoverable knowledge is claimed to represent the absolute reality and not to be influenced by values or biases since it is not situated in a political or historical context (Scotland, 2012). Therefore, it is possible to make generalizations and to formulate laws based on findings which are accepted as true so long as they can be replicated (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). On the other hand, the ontology underpinning the interpretivist stance is relativism which views reality as subjective and differing from person to person (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Therefore, unlike realism which is based on the idea of the existence of absolute reality, relativism argues that reality is personally constructed which results in as many realities as individuals (Scotland, 2012).

The epistemology underpinning the positivist stance is objectivism which is based on the idea that there is an objective truth and the social world is external to individuals (Cohen et al., 2005). Therefore, the main aim of researchers who adopt an objectivist stance is to discover this objective truth without including their feelings or values (Gray, 2014). Methods such as experiments and surveys can help researchers discover the objective truth by objectifying their values, feelings and understandings (Crotty, 1998). Interpretivism, on the other hand, is closely linked to constructivism which argues that truth, or meaning, does not exist somewhere outside but it is created by individuals through their interaction with the world (Gray, 2014). Constructivists believe that individuals try to understand the world in

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which they live, and they develop meanings based on their experiences in order to achieve that (Creswell, 2014). Researchers are required to rely on these meanings as much as possible without trying to narrow them into few ideas since these varied and multiple meanings can help researchers to look for the complexity of views (Creswell, 2014).

Although positivism aims to reduce the complex to the simple by trying to control and to simplify variables (Scotland, 2012), it has limitations. Scott and Usher (2011) explain this by stating that positivism falls short of understanding the multiplicity and complexity of the world of individuals. Researchers are required to understand and to make sense of the social world first, in order to explain it well (Scott & Usher, 2011), with which Gadamer (2004) agrees by further adding that it is not possible for one to separate themselves from the cultural and historical contexts which constitute their interpretive frame. Therefore, the social reality cannot be perceived straightforwardly as each individual constructs his/her world in a different way, which makes reality complex and multi-layered, rather than being simply out there (Thomas, 2013). As such, it can be claimed that different realities can exist even in relation to the same phenomenon (Crotty, 1998). Since these realities can only be understood from the standpoint of individuals who are the actors of the investigated action, researchers need to look closely at what people are doing by using their own selves and their own knowledge of the world since each has feelings and understandings, and all these influence the way they see and interpret the world (Cohen et al., 2005).

In this research, I adopted an interpretivist-constructivist stance towards reality with the aim of understanding different meanings the ELT teachers attributed to a particular phenomenon, i.e. PL (Creswell, 2014). To achieve this, I conducted deep conversations with them, trying to attend every nuance of their behaviours, which was a complex process that required using my own interpretations and understandings in order to interpret their views and behaviours (Thomas, 2013). As can be understood, I could not stay objective and neutral for this kind of research (Thomas, 2013), which might not be a limitation as I acknowledge that my background shaped my interpretation and my personal, cultural and historical experiences influenced the way I interpreted the data (Creswell, 2014).

Although the interpretivist approach is believed to be appropriate for this particular educational research, I acknowledge that it does have shortcomings. Knowledge that was produced by the interpretive paradigm has limited transferability as it had the traits of a specific context (Scotland, 2012). Moreover, the findings did not enable me to make any

statistical generalizations because the research produced contextualized qualitative data, and interpretations of this data might involve interpretive constructions (Scotland, 2012). However, the aim of this research was not to make statistical generalisations to a larger population (Leung, 2015), but to achieve a deep understanding about the ELT teachers` experiences of PL under the concepts of collaborative working and reflective practice. That is because I believe in the uniqueness of events and individuals and acknowledge the multiplicity of interpretations of and perspectives on single events and phenomenon (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). As such, the interpretivist-constructivist stance fits well for this particular research.

Among the forms of interpretivism, the characteristics of social constructivism seem to echo in the research. Social constructivism is based on the idea that the ways individuals understand the world, the categories and the concepts they employ for every single event are historically and culturally specific (Burr, 2003). What this means is that two people can live in the same context and go through similar things, yet have different experiences and perspectives (Patton, 2015). Therefore, since every individual has a perspective on this common world and that is not identical with others` (Berger & Luckmann, 1967), social constructivist researchers do not seek for a singular meaning or a universal explanation, but they look for multiplicities (Patton, 2015). By adopting the social constructivist logic in this research, I aimed to capture diverse meanings and multiple realities about the ELT teachers` experiences and understandings of their PL (Patton, 2015). After collecting the data, I compared their experiences with each other`s and interpreted the impact of differences on their experiences (Patton, 2015). This analysis allowed me to understand what shaped different experiences (Patton, 2015), which fit in two main categories the literature proposes; namely contextual and individual factors.

3.3. Description of the Research

3.3.1. Research questions

The aim of the research was to explore Turkish ELT teachers experiences of PL and there were three research questions, two of which came with sub-questions:

1. How do ELT teachers working in different contexts experience reflective practice in their PL?

- To what extent do they reflect on their teaching?

- What modes of reflection do they engage in?

- In what occasions do they reflect?

- What do they reflect on?

- How do they reflect?

2. How do ELT teachers working in different contexts experience collaboration with their colleagues in their PL?

- To what extent do they collaborate with their colleagues?

- What modes of collaboration do they engage in with their colleagues?

- In what occasions do they collaborate?

- On what do they collaborate?

- How do they collaborate?

3. What are the factors that affect ELT teachers` engagement in reflective and collaborative PL activities?

3.3.2. Research approach

The alignment between the belief system underpinning research approach, research questions and the research approach itself is believed to be a prerequisite for rigorous qualitative research (Teherani, Martimianakis, Stenfors-Hayes, Wadhwa, & Varpio, 2015). Given that this research adopts an interpretivist-constructivist approach, the reality is believed not to be accessed directly but to be understood from the meanings that people attribute to the social world or to a particular phenomenon, which points to the idea of multiple realities rather than a singular one (Robson, 2011). Then, the main task of interpretivist researchers is to understand those multiple realities of participants through instruments that supply the relevant information (Robson, 2011). As can be inferred here, it is the "words" to which the attention is given to, not the "numbers", and this is viewed as a salient characteristic of qualitative research (Bryman, 2016). As the given information suggests, this study adopted a qualitative approach with a purpose of understanding the ELT teachers` subjective experiences on PL, which aligns with the epistemological and ontological positions the study was grounded in.

Quantitative research, in contrast to qualitative research, is grounded in the positivist belief according to which there is a singular reality and it can be directly accessed through

appropriate experimental instruments (Teherani et al., 2015). Quantitative researchers argue that the numerical data gathered for the undertaken research can be generalised to a wider population as long that the required methodological precautions are taken (Flick, 2014). This contradicts with qualitative research since, according to qualitative researchers, it is not possible to avoid the impact of the social and the cultural backgrounds on the findings no matter what methodological controls are taken (Flick, 2014). Therefore, knowing that contextual understanding of social behaviours is of utmost importance and that they can be investigated only in their natural settings, qualitative researchers focus on the meanings people have and aim at understanding the social world through the eyes of their participants, which is a relatively long process requiring in-depth information rather than numbers (Bryman, 2016).

In this research, I aimed to understand how ELT teachers experienced PL, to what extent PL occurred in the contexts they worked and what kind of meanings they assigned to PL (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). In order to achieve this, I collected the data through life-histories, critical incidents and semi-structured interviews, which reflects two central tenets of qualitative research: "1) … face to face interaction is the fullest condition of participating in the mind of another human being, and 2) … you must participate in the mind of another human being (in sociological terms, take the role of the other) to acquire social knowledge." (Lofland & Lofland, 1995, p.16). By studying the subjective practices of the ELT teachers, I acknowledged that their experiences might be different from each other`s, and in that case, I would demonstrate the variety in their subjective perspectives and experiences on PL (Flick, 2014). As a characteristic of qualitative research, the aim in this research was theoretical generalisation rather than numerical generalisation, the first of which is not concerned with the number of the individuals or the situations studied (Flick, 2014).

3.3.3. Research design

To answer the research questions, a multiple case study design was adopted. Case study is "… a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon in its real-life context using multiple sources of evidence." (Robson, 2011, p.136). Because of the fact that many variables may operate in even a single case, employing multiple data collection tools is important for gathering thick data which enables researchers to make implications for those variables (Cohen et al., 2011).

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Small groups, communities, educational programs, decisions, organisational change, specific incidents, individuals and the like can form the range of cases all of which can be studied as a single case as well as multiple cases (Yin, 2014). For this study, individual ELT teachers formed the primary unit of analysis and I focused on their experiences of being an ELT teacher since the start of their professional careers.

Yin (2014) states that case study fits well in situations when "1) the main research questions are how and why questions, 2) a researcher has little or no control over behavioural events, and 3) the focus of the study is a contemporary (as opposed to entirely historical) phenomenon" (p.2). By investigating individual ELT teachers as cases in their real-world contexts, i.e. schools, and by aiming to provide a deep and detailed investigation of their experiences of reflective and collaborative PL activities without attempting to manipulate them, this study seems to meet those criteria. Building thick descriptions around individual ELT teachers, and gathering information about everything which fed into their PL helped in exploring what was going on in the contexts they worked as well. Therefore, studying the ELT teachers as cases allowed me to understand how the external factors and personal backgrounds, as powerful determinants, determined whether they pursued their PL (Cohen et al., 2011). Even though single case studies may have invaluable implications, multiple case studies are believed to be stronger as they can yield more objective data (Yin, 2014).

The purpose of having more than one case is not to make generalisations to some populations; although, according to Adelman, Kemmis and Jenkins (1980), this is possible since case studies can enable researchers to make generalisations from a unit to a class. However, Yin (1994) strongly disagrees with this by indicating that case studies, unlike experiments, can be generalizable to theoretical propositions (i.e., analytic generalisations) not to wider populations or to universes (i.e., statistical generalisations). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to make analytic generalisations through either similar findings (a literal replication) or contrasting findings for expected reasons (a theoretical replication) (Yin, 2014). Yin (1994) further explains that "a previously developed theory is used as a template with which to compare the empirical results of the case study. If two or more cases are shown to support the same theory, replication may be claimed" (p.31). As this suggests, the first case can provide initial ideas about what is going on and following cases can be investigated to understand if they confirm or disconfirm the theoretical view made based on the first one, which facilitates making theoretical generalisations (Robson, 2011).

3.4. Data Collection

3.4.1. Sampling model

There are no set rules for the size of sample for qualitative studies (Cohen et al., 2011). Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005) argue that the sample should be large enough to gather thick enough and rich data and to achieve saturation; but not too large, which might result in data overload and manageability issues. Warren (2002) indicates that no fewer than 20 interviews can gather thick enough data for qualitative studies, and Patton (2015) explains that this can be done by studying 20 different people if the purpose is seeking breadth, or doing multiple interviews with a smaller number of people if the purpose is seeking depth, both of which might help to achieve data saturation. To that, Mason (2010) adds it is not the number per se, but the quality and the depth of data which enables researchers to achieve data saturation. Moreover, triangulation in data, according to Fusch and Ness (2015), is another method for data saturation since one ensures the other. Therefore, although this research had a small sample, the data gathered from life histories (a very intensive type of interviewing), critical incidents and semi-structured interviews was rich and in-depth enough for allowing me to make theoretical generalisations at the end (Bryman, 2016).

Quantitative studies, in general, involve the use of probability sampling techniques which allow researchers to draw a large number of participants or specifically defined sub-groups from the wider population in a random way (Gray, 2014). Since the aim is to achieve a sample that can represent the wider population (Gray, 2014), the larger the sample, the better it is for quantitative studies (Cohen et al., 2011). As such, by claiming that the sample represents the population, quantitative researchers generalise findings and implications (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). Unlike quantitative studies, this qualitative study had a small sample (13 ELT teachers) and employed non-probability sampling strategies. By choosing non-probability sampling strategies, I acknowledge that the sample does not represent the wider population, but it simply represents itself (Cohen et al., 2011). Among the types of non-probability sampling, a mixture of purposive sampling, convenience sampling and snowball sampling was used for this research (Cohen et al., 2011).

Purposive sampling is defined as judgemental sampling for which researchers consciously select certain subjects or elements to include in their study (Crookes & Davies, 1998). The selection of units can be people, organizations, documents, departments and the like, with direct reference to the research questions being asked (Bryman, 2016). In this

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research, two different levels of sampling were intermingled, which, as Bryman (2016) claims, is a relevant decision particularly for single case studies or multiple case studies. The literature (World Bank, 2005) indicates that there might be differences between rural school teachers and urban school teachers regarding their experiences of PL. Moreover, it is acknowledged that people`s behaviours are affected by contextual factors, which might highlight the importance of sampling contexts as well as participants (Bryman, 2016). As such, the choice of schools was purposive to an extent since I aimed to have different contexts by equally selecting from rural and urban schools so that the research questions could be answered. With this kind of purposive sampling procedure, it is possible to achieve comparability across different types of cases on a dimension of interest (Gray, 2014), which for this study refers to the comparison between rural and urban school teachers in terms of their experiences of reflective and collaborative PL activities. The choice of schools carries the characteristics of convenience sampling as well since I approached schools in a region where my hometown is located as they were easier to access. Unlike schools, there were not any set criteria for the teachers, and variables such as gender, age, degree levels and teaching experience were not taken into consideration in this research. That is because the related literature does not mention the importance of these variables with regards to teachers` PL experiences. Moreover, in terms of my philosophical position, I believe there is no representative experience among individuals and therefore I did not aim at generalising the findings to a wider population (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). Therefore, the participation was on a voluntary-basis, and the ELT teachers who were available at that time and willing to participate in the study formed the sample. As such, mainly convenience sampling was used for the ELT teachers which is based on the idea of choosing units of analysis because they are available to researchers (Bryman, 2016). In addition, some of the teachers identified other ELT teachers who they thought would be interested in participating in this research (Gray, 2014), and that was how I benefitted from snowball sampling as well.

Gay and Airasian (2003) claim that the use of volunteers is a salient feature of convenience sampling, and that using convenience sampling can be advantageous as participants are likely to have a motivation or interest to participate in the research. However, this kind of non-probability sampling might have some limitations as well. That is because it does not represent the wider population which is composed of both volunteers and non-volunteers, and therefore does not allow generalisations (Gay & Airasian, 2003). Yet, as stated

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before, it is not an issue for this research since I believe there is no representative experience and that everybody constructs their reality in a different way (Patton, 2015). Therefore, no matter who forms the sample, their experiences can be slightly different from each other`s even though they may share some features in common (Patton, 2015).

3.4.2. Participants

The data was collected in a city located in the Central Anatolian Region of Turkey in 2018 from September to November. Twenty-two ELT teachers were approached in total, and 13 of them accepted to participate in the study. All 13 teachers were working in public schools at the time of the interview, including primary (7-10-year-old students), secondary (11-13-year-old students) and high schools (14-18-year-old students). Seven of the teachers were working in a rural area, six of them were working in the urban area. The teachers` ages ranged from 26 to 34, and their teaching experiences ranged from 4 to 11 years, which suggests that the sample of this study consists of less experiences ELT teachers and this may bring about limitations (see Section 8.4.). Ten of the teachers are female and three are male. While nine of the teachers are graduates of English Language Teaching (ELT) departments, four of them graduated from English Language Literature departments of universities and took pedagogical formation courses to become ELT teachers. And, four of the teachers pursued further education by doing master`s degree in subjects such as Educational Programmes and Teaching, English Language and Literature and Drama and Education. While four of the teachers were responsible for doing teaching only, eight of them had additional responsibilities such as staying at student dormitories as teacher aides and giving courses on the weekends. And one of the teachers was assigned with managerial responsibilities in addition to 12 hours of classroom teaching. While 12 of the teachers were teaching to either at primary school, secondary school or high school students, one of the teachers was doing teaching to both secondary and high school students as he was working in an integrated school building. Table 2 shows the profiles of the teachers under the pseudonyms given to them.

Table 2

Profiles of the teachers

Teachers	Gender	Age	Marital Status	Teaching Exp.	Educational Background	Current School	Responsibilities	Years	Age groups
Gaye	Female	33	Single	11 years	Bachelors: ELT Masters: (Completed) Educational Programmes and Teaching	Primary school, Urban area	Teaching	2nd, 3rd, 4th	7-10
Esma	Female	29	Single	5 years	Bachelors: English Language and Literature Masters: (Ongoing) English Language and Literature	Secondary school, Rural area	Teaching, Weekend course, Teaching aide	5th, 6th, 7th	11-14
Yeliz	Female	32	Married	6 years	Bachelors: ELT	High school, Urban area	Teaching, Weekend course	9th, 10th, 11th, 12th (Exam group)	15-18
Kerim	Male	34	Married	10 years	Bachelors: ELT	High school, Urban area	Teaching, Weekend course	9th, 10th, 11th, 12th (Exam group)	15-18
Dilek	Female	27	Married	4 years	Bachelors: English Language and Literature	High school, Rural area	Teaching, Weekend course	9th, 11th,12th	15-18
Hande	Female	31	Married	8 years	Bachelors: ELT	Secondary school, Urban area	Teaching	6th, 7th	11-14
Lale	Female	26	Single	4 years	Bachelors: ELT	High school, Rural area	Teaching, Assistant Principal, Teaching aide	11th	15-18

Pinar	Female	32	Single	9 years	Bachelors: ELT Masters: (Completed) Educational Programmes and Teaching	High school, Rural area	Teaching, Weekend course, Teaching aide	9th, 10th, 12th (Exam group)	15-18
Mine	Female	34	Married	5 years	Bachelors: English Language and Literature	Secondary school, Urban area	Teaching	7th, 8th (Exam group)	11-14
Ilker	Male	32	Married	9 years	Bachelors: English Language and Literature	Secondary school, Urban area	Teaching, Weekend course	5th, 8th (Exam group)	11-14
Naz	Female	28	Single	5 years	Bachelors: ELT	Secondary school, Rural area	Teaching	5th, 7th, 8th	11-14
Sedef	Female	28	Single	5 years	Bachelors: ELT Masters: (Ongoing) Drama and Education	Secondary school, Rural area	Teaching, Weekend course, Teaching aide	5th, 6th, 7th	11-14
Okan	Male	29	Single	8 years	Bachelors: ELT	Secondary and High school, Rural area	Teaching, Weekend course	6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th	11-18

3.4.3. Instruments

Three types of data collection tools were used in order to answer the research questions, and these were respectively life histories, critical incidents and semi-structured interviews. While life histories provided the big picture of the ELT teachers` professional learning experiences and gave an idea about how they became their current self by pointing out why and how dimensions (Ward, 2003), critical incidents helped to capture more specific learning experiences. And, as the last step, with semi-structured interviews, I was able to cover any missing issues that were not covered in the previous sessions and to learn more about the teachers` perspectives about PL. These data collection instruments are believed to have been helpful for identifying different forms of agency as well. For example, life-histories allowed me to understand the iterational elements of agency by providing information about how past experiences built upon the teachers` agency and how they transformed across time. Critical incidents helped with the practical-evaluative form of agency by providing information about how the teachers showed responsiveness to their present circumstances and what initiated change. Through the semi-structured interviews, I was able to understand the teachers` plans and motivations to bring about change in the future, which refers to the projective agency.

Life histories

Life histories are defined as "the inner experience of individuals, how they interpret, understand and define the world around them." (Faraday & Plummer, 1979, p.776). As this suggests, life histories enable researchers to invite respondents to look back in detail across their entire life course (Bryman, 2016). Life histories technique can be classified as a type of unstructured interview which are informal and flexible (Robson, 2011), and since this technique covers the totality of individuals` lives, it can provide in-depth data (Bryman, 2016).

Using life histories allowed me to ask the teachers to recall and to recount their experiences with specific changes and developments throughout their teaching careers (Flick, 2014). As to achieve that, I first asked them to define what they understood by the phenomenon of PL to make sure that they had a clear understanding of it; then I asked them to present the history of their PL and to tell all the relevant events in a consistent way from its beginning to its end (Hermanns, 1995 as cited in Flick, 2014). This allowed me to see all

relevant information about the important turning points in teachers` lives, which might have had an impact on increasing or decreasing the likelihood of their pursuing PL (Bryman, 2016). Among three kinds of life stories proposed by Plummer (2001), researched life histories were adopted for this study, which are solicited to respondents with a purpose to seek an answer to a particular question in researchers` mind.

The life histories technique enables researchers to give voice to the experienced lives of their respondents who might be unheard or ignored (Labaree, 2006), which makes it an appropriate method for researchers who are interested in the experiences of the people they study (Josselson, 1996). Moreover, as Cole and Knowles (2001) state, it intends to "advance understanding about the complex interactions between individuals` lives and the institutional and societal contexts in which they are lived" (p.126). Therefore, even though it is believed that life histories fit well into this study, it is not without any limitations. Since life histories is a kind of open-ended interviewing, some of the interviews took quite a long time, and resulted in a practical problem for me as I had to record, transcribe and analyse a sheer amount of data (Flick, 2014). Additionally, no matter how in-depth the data life stories can provide, it may not have been possible to achieve a total immersion into the teachers` PL experiences (Labaree, 2006). In order to avoid that, the data collected through life histories was confirmed through the other tools.

Critical incidents

Critical incidents are defined as "an attempt to identify the most `noteworthy` aspects of job behaviour (which are) based on the assumption that jobs are composed of critical and non-critical tasks … The idea is to collect reports as to what people do that is particularly effective in contributing to good performance and then to scale the incidents in order of difficulty, frequency and importance to the job as a whole." (Oxtoby, 1979, p.230). The incidents can consist of a wide range of topics such as specific events, activities, behaviours, all of which, in common, have an impact on the outcomes of the system or process which makes them memorable to respondents (Schluter, Seaton, & Chaboyer, 2007). And, a critical incident does not have to be something extreme or dramatic in order to be considered as noteworthy for further investigation, and therefore it can be a routine daily procedure (Bell & Waters, 2014). The critical incidents in this study constituted of special incidents or events where the teachers felt they learnt something.

Even though direct observations and written records might be useful when the investigated incident is an explicit behaviour, critical incidents in this study were carried out through face-to-face interviewing method. That is because the main concern is PL, which is an unseen behaviour as it is regarded as a cognitive process (Schluter et al., 2007). Through in-person interviews, I was able to probe for in-depth responses with the help of both verbal information and non-verbal communication signs (Schluter et al., 2007), the latter of which was written down as comments after each interview session. The questions that were directed to the teachers were structured in a clear and explicit way focusing on a specific incident in order to explore how they experienced PL and why they chose those particular ways (Bell, 2010). As Zimmerman and Wieder (1977) propose, four types of questions were asked, which followed the order of what, when, where and how. What questions allowed me with a description of the activity, when questions provided the timing of the activity that was being investigated, where questions gave information about the location of the specified activity and how questions provided me with an opportunity to understand the logic behind the teachers` behaving in a particular way (Zimmerman & Wieder, 1977).

The critical incident technique provided insights regarding how the teachers experienced PL in real life as it took the actual events at the centre into consideration, rather than imaginary situations (Bradbury-Jones & Tranter, 2008). However, this strength of the technique could have turned into a weakness as well in situations when the teachers were not able to give full and precise details about the incident, and this may have jeopardised the research if collected data had been used without confirming its accuracy through the other additional instruments (Flanagan, 1954).

Semi-structured interviews

Robson (2011) defines semi-structured interviews in which "the interviewer has an interview guide that serves as a checklist of topics to be covered and a default wording and order for the questions, but the wording and order are often substantially modified based on the flow of the interview, and additional unplanned questions are asked to follow up on what the interviewee says." (p.280). Bryman (2016) argues that when researchers begin the investigation with a clear focus rather than a very general idea about the topic of the research, it is more helpful to use semi-structured interviews so that more specific issues can be addressed. That is why semi-structured interviews were deemed to be suitable for this study

as the third data collection instrument. Through semi-structured interviews, the teachers had the opportunity to discuss their interpretations of the social world that they lived in, and to express how they made meaning of the situations from their point of view (Cohen et al., 2011). Moreover, the tone of their voice, their facial expressions, and hesitations supplied additional information that other methods might not provide (Bell & Waters, 2014).

Even though semi-structured interviews might be advantageous for this study by helping to gain rich data about a complex and deep issue (Cohen et al., 2011), by serving as a short-cut to directly access what was happening about the teachers` PL (Robson, 2011), the qualitative nature of semi-structured interviews might indicate some disadvantages. This applies to life histories and critical incidents as well. Since interviews are based on people`s own interpretations and nothing else, it produces purely subjective data and this may cause bias (Cohen et al., 2011). This danger of bias may result from researchers as well since they or the way they interact may have an impact on the interviewees (Bell & Waters, 2014). Moreover, interviews may not be the most practical way of collecting data since they are expensive in time and time consuming and tedious in terms of transcribing and interpreting data (Cohen et al., 2011). Additionally, determining the number of the sample for interviews is tricky since there is no standard for that and it can change according to the research (Arthur, Waring, Coe, & Hedges, 2013).

In order to avoid these potential problems that may have jeopardised the study, I took some precautions. Rather than conducting one session for the data collection, or using one method, I triangulated the data collection tools by using three different interviews in three different sessions. "Triangulation means combining several qualitative methods or combining quantitative and qualitative methods." (Gray, 2014, p.196). The main idea behind triangulation is that it is better to view a phenomenon from several points rather than viewing from only one (Thomas, 2013). Therefore, by combining methods, I aimed to compensate for the weaknesses of one method with the strengths of others (Gray, 2014). As such, even if the responses gathered from the first interview session might fail in providing enough detail or reflection, the second or the third sessions would compensate for that and supply the expected level of in-depth reflection (Arthur et al., 2013). Additionally, to make sure that the questions that would be asked in the interview sessions were clear enough and the designed tools covered everything to answer the research questions, I conducted a pilot study, detailed in Section 3.4.4, below.

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3.4.4. Reflections on the pilot study

A pilot study was conducted before the main study in order to assess whether the gathered data answered the research questions. The following steps were taken:

Step 1: Three ETL teachers working in primary and secondary schools in Turkey were interviewed on three separate sessions. Table 3 displays the profiles of the teachers.

Table 3

Profiles of the pilot study teachers

Teachers	Gender	Age	Teaching Exp.	Educational Background	Current School	Years	Age Groups
Ayla	Female	34	8 years	Bachelors: Linguistics Masters: Educational Administration and Supervision PhD: Educational Administration and Supervision	Primary School – Rural Area	2nd, 3rd, 4th	7-10 years old
Cenk	Male	34	12 years	Bachelors: ELT	Secondary School – Rural Area	7th, 8th	12-14 years old
Banu	Female	38	15 years	Bachelors: Biology Masters: Biology	Primary School – Urban Area	2nd, 3rd, 4th	7-10 years old

Step 2: Nine interviews were analysed carefully to determine whether the data collection instruments worked to answer the research questions and if any changes should be made in the interview questions. At the stage of the analysis, I noticed that the teachers did not associate in-school individual and collaborative activities with PL, therefore for the main study I defined what PL is before starting the life histories. And, different to the pilot study, in the main study I started the critical incidents by asking the teachers to reflect on their last classes they could remember so that I would be able to capture a more general

sense of their everyday reflection, which was followed by the questions asked in the pilot study. In addition, based on the pilot study analysis, I made amendments in the questions by adding some prompts to gain more reflections and details from the teachers and by rephrasing them for more clarity. Except for such modifications, the pilot study reinforced the approach I adopted.

Step 3: In the pilot study, after doing initial coding for each interview set, a chronological life story was created for each teacher to see how they transformed their teaching over time (see Section 3.5. for further details). I used diagrams to understand the relationship between school contexts and their motivation levels, and their engagement in reflection and collaboration. Additionally, in order to understand if Biesta and Tedder`s (2007) model explains the teachers in terms of the relationship between their backgrounds, current experiences and future aspirations, I created diagrams for each teacher (see Appendix A for example diagrams from the pilot study analysis stage). The findings of the pilot study provided me with initial ideas about the teachers` experiences of reflective and collaborative PL activities and set the base for the main study analysis stage where I used similar approaches for the data analysis.

3.4.5. Main study data collection procedure

Three face-to-face interview sessions were carried out for each teacher and these took place separately on different days. After conducting life histories with each teacher as the first interview session and having an understanding about the totality of their PL process, I carried out critical incidents on a different day to learn more about specific incidents. Then, I conducted semi-structured interviews as the last session, during which I focused on the teachers` future aspirations and perspectives of PL. Following such a process and doing the interviews on different days provided me with the opportunity to reflect on the interviews, making sense of the data from each interview session and taking notes for the following session. And, meeting the teachers three times helped me to establish a closer relationship, which I believe affected the depth of the data positively. Although this was the procedure for most of the teachers, the second and the third interviews were conducted on the same day for four of the teachers as it fitted better with their time schedule. The time of the interviews was set according to when the teachers were available, either during the school hours or after school. While 11 of the teachers agreed to be interviewed in their schools, two of them

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preferred to be interviewed in another arranged place. All teachers preferred to speak in Turkish. Voice recording was used to record the interviews, and the interviews lasted around 40-45 minutes in average. After the interview sessions were completed, 39 voice records were transcribed, and the transcripts were emailed to the teachers to check if they approved the transcribed versions of the interviews. The interview schedule can be found at Appendix B.

3.5. Data Analysis

A mixture of deductive and inductive analysis was carried out on all three forms of interview data. The theories in the literature served as the departure point and set the ground to look at the ideas such as reflective and collaborative PL activities and individual and contextual factors (Gray, 2014). However, at later stages, the analysis was mostly inductive as the themes emerged from the data themselves, rather than testing themes based on some pre-defined hypotheses (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Throughout the analysis, the steps proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) were followed; namely: familiarising yourself with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, producing the report.

As the first step, three interview transcripts for each teacher were coded on Microsoft Word by employing an initial coding process. Initial coding provided a starting point for me to explore the data in an open-ended way and helped me to remain open to all possible ideas emerging from the data (Saldaña, 2016). As such, I paid attention to every semantically meaningful statement and phase and used short memos and labels with the purpose of not missing anything and getting familiar with all the data (Saldaña, 2016). For an example from the initial coding process, see Table 4.

Table 4

An example of initial coding

Z:	Can you talk about your 4-year training period? In terms of ELT?
N:	I can. Well, we are graduates of the same university. We did a lot of (microteaching) presentations, it came to a point where we were "throwing up" presentations, I can say that. I don't know how you are feeling about that, but I kind of hate those years. I do not commemorate those years very nicely. I felt like it was unnecessarily pushy, and I felt like the purpose was not the quality or whatsoever, but felt like a competition, as if the university was trying to prove something.
	In addition to that, what can I say, but there were very good lecturers really, Dr. A, Dr. B. I had the opportunity to attend their courses, and I am so happy about that, I still remember those courses.
	Then, Ms. …. was really good at English Language and Literature, I do not know if you took her courses? I took her courses, g-re-at, one word, g-re-at. You should have seen her courses, we would analyse texts and watch movies adapted from those texts. There was a section about mystic works, and we watched a movie with Angelina Jolie, an adapted version of what we read.
	That made me feel like, if I go for Master`s degree one day, it has to be in English Language and Literature. I love English Literature.
	So, in terms of the literature and Linguistics it was nice, in terms of the pedagogical formation courses it was okay, but in total it was like repeating itself all the time. I don't know if it was just me, every year was a repetition of the previous year, 4 useless long years where we were stupidly preparing and presenting posters and etc.
	But it would be a lie if I say it did not contribute to my teaching at all. Those endless presentations and the pushiness made me feel like experienced when I graduated. During those years, I was also doing part-time teaching in private institutions, maybe that is why, I was feeling very experienced. For 4 years, I kept working in different institutions. And in the last year, I even worked in a KPDS (language exam) institution in C.
	In that institution, we had speaking classes and there was a teacher doing Master`s at …. University. She would drag me to her speaking classes and we would speak in English together. My speaking improved a lot.
	And working in those institutions, I taught all levels of students, civil servants, high-achieving students, low-achieving students, I worked with primary school students as well. So, I had already seen all kinds of students.

Margin comments:

Zeynep Butun
Too many microteachings at uni – the quantity rather than the quality

Zeynep Butun
Qualified lecturers – linguistic

Zeynep Butun
Qualified lecturer - literature

Zeynep Butun
The impact of literature class on her possible future plans

Zeynep Butun
Her interest in Literature

Zeynep Butun
General evaluation of her uni education

Zeynep Butun
The positive impact of her uni education on her confidence

Zeynep Butun
Working part-time as a teacher during uni

Zeynep Butun
How her speaking improved with part-time job

Zeynep Butun
Part-time teaching – all levels

Then, I created chronological life stories for each teacher and took notes in the light of the research questions. After doing this for the first five teachers, although the chronological life stories technique helped me to see all the stages the teachers went through and provided a good summary of their professional lives, I noticed it failed in showing the themes that were coming up from the data. As such, I was not able to see what types of reflective and collaborative activities the teachers were engaged in or the emerging individual and contextual factors affecting their PL experiences, and this prevented me from understanding the similarities and differences among the teachers. Therefore, after the first five teachers, I amended the data analysis process by sticking to the initial coding and adding a second coding stage instead of creating chronological life stories.

At the second coding stage, I used axial coding. Axial coding helped me to determine the dominant and less important issues in the data, and this led me to see a broad picture of what was going on (Saldaña, 2016). By using axial coding, I was able to link categories with subcategories, interpret ideas and transform the teachers` words into new phrases (Saldaña, 2016). While I was partly guided by the research questions, the theories in the literature and the pilot study findings; I continuously reflected on the data to cluster the ideas until no new

codes seemed to come up (Saldaña, 2016). At the end of this stage, I turned my themes and subthemes into letter codes to easily apply it for the rest of the teachers (see Table 5).

Table 5

Codes for second coding

CW	Collaborative working		
Ri	Reflection in		
Ro	Reflection on	Sts	Students
		Mtrls	Materials
		O	Others
		T	Teaching
		ID	Individual dispositions
		A	PL activity
CF	Contextual factors	Sts	Students
		R	Resources
		S	Schools
		O	Opportunities
		Collgs	Colleagues
		T	Time
		Sys	Systematic problems
		E	Education system
IF	Individual factors	1	Motivation
		2	Self-efficacy
		3	Agency

		PLI	Personal life interference
		5	Beliefs
PL	PD/PL activities	PLd	Activities done so far
		PLm	Activities for future

For example, `IF` was for individual factors and `IF1` for motivation, `IF2` for self-efficacy and `IF5` for beliefs; `CF` for contextual factors and `CFSts` for students, `CFS` for schools. Table 6 presents an example of axial coding.

Table 6

An example of axial coding

As a requirement of the constant comparative method, after coding all three sets of interviews for the first teacher, for example, I coded the data set for the second teacher with those codes in mind to see if they fitted well and in the cases when they did not, I modified the codes or created new codes which worked on both data sets (Hewitt-Taylor, 2001). This was repeated for each data set until the codes worked on all of them (Hewitt-Taylor, 2001).

Then, a table of codes (Appendix C) was created for each teacher with examples from the data, and this helped me to see the emerging codes as well as the differences and similarities between the teachers (Yin, 2014). After creating the table of codes for each teacher, the codes in each table were compared with each other, which led me to amend the codes and come up with broader ones which were applicable to all table of codes. At this stage I grouped the teachers by rural and urban areas to explore the impact of the school location on their experiences of reflective and collaborative PL activities. Yet, there did not seem to be any specific pattern coming up from this comparison as can be seen in Section 7.6. As can be inferred here, coding was not a `one-off` exercise, but rather it was a cyclical process which required me to go back and forth by reading and re-reading, analysing and re-analysing, placing and replacing, and refining codes (Cohen et al., 2011).

In addition to the table of codes, I wrote short memos about all teachers based on my interaction with them (Appendix D), and I came up with metaphors for each teacher which was done based on the data after reading and rereading the interview transcripts for the first and second coding stages (see Chapter 7). Moreover, as I did while analysing the pilot study data, I created diagrams to depict the relationships between concepts such as reflective practice and collaborative working, self-efficacy and motivation, and motivation and time (see Figure 2).

Figure 2

Diagrams created for Esma
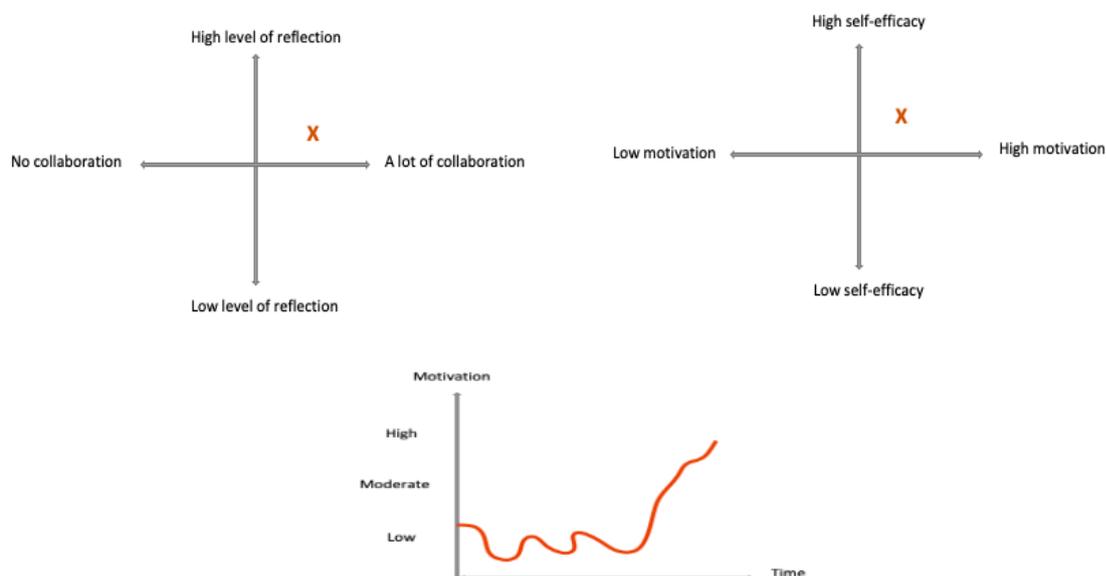
Additionally, I created individual maps for all teachers, which helped me to clearly see the repeated individual and contextual factors by all teachers, how the teachers differed from each other and why (Flick, 2014). Figure 3 shows the individual map for Mine.

Figure 3

Mine`s individual map for reflective practice
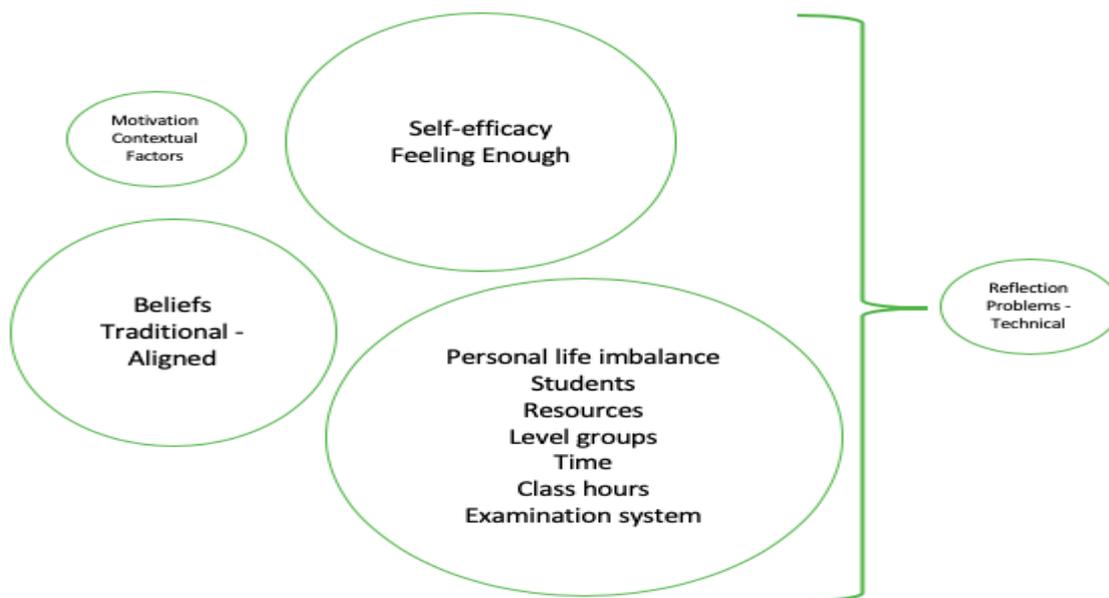
With all these analysis tools, the analysis of the data progressed from describing to interpreting and linking different ideas (Patton, 2015). Given that the study adopted a multiple case study design, a cross-case synthesis was applicable to the analysis of the data. And although each individual was taken separately at the initial stage, an overall cross-case analysis was carried out at the reporting stage which facilitated making theoretical generalisations (Yin, 2014). Figure 4 illustrates the overall data analysis process by specifically highlighting the adopted inductive and deductive approach.

Figure 4

Data analysis process

Initial Coding (open-ended codes)

Axial Coding (themes and subthemes)

Constant Comparative Process

Deductive Coding

Inductive Coding

Reflection → When

On what

How

Collaboration → Type of activities

Openness

Factors → Individual Factors → Motivation

Self-efficacy

Beliefs

Personal life interference

Contextual Factors → Students

Resources

Schools

Opportunities

Colleagues

Time

Systematic problems

Education system

Diagrams

Memos

Individual maps

Metaphors

Table of codes

Inductive Reasoning

(comparison among the teachers)

The extent of reflection

The extent of collaboration

The level of motivation

The level of self-efficacy

The extent of agency

In order to capture the individual and contextual factors affecting the teachers` engagement in reflective and collaborative PL activities, the teachers were asked about their experiences when they felt encouraged or discouraged from learning and examples when they felt a need to change something in their teaching and why they wanted to change. They were also asked what they felt they needed to learn in teaching English and about an incident when they changed/learnt something which was followed by questions such as if anything happened to motivate them and if they encountered any obstacles. The answers they provided for these questions helped me to explore the subthemes for each theme (see Table

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5). Given that the research has a qualitative paradigm, it needs to be noted that I did not use any quantitative assessment for the concepts of self-efficacy and motivation, or reflection and collaboration while doing the analysis. Therefore, the diagrams (Figure 2) and the tables (Table 10 in 6.2.1., Table 11 in 6.2.2.) I used to understand the teachers better were based on my perception and interpretation of the data. By creating a table of codes for each teacher (see Appendix C), I was able to compare and group teachers in relation to each other, which provided me with the opportunity of seeing examples of lower and higher self-efficacy and motivation (see Table 7).

Table 7

Examples from the data as indicative of lower and higher self-efficacy and motivation

	High	*Low*
Self-efficacy	"I was trained to teach this, I have the ability to teach this. Okay, I did not get the pedagogical formation but I know how to teach English" "We teachers know how to teach and what to do" "I am extremely confident about what to do in the classroom" "I believe my teaching is efficient" "I am very sure about my teaching ways and techniques" "My confidence has boosted so much,…, I feel like I can teach everywhere now"	"When I started at the public school, I was puzzled. I said to myself I need to improve my teaching" "I never see myself sufficient enough. As I feel so, I always want to do more" "You feel like am I the problem? Am I not able to teach?"
Motivation	"It is as if you want to do more as you do more" "Achieving something in the classroom makes me happy and pushes me to do more" "You feel like `do more, don't be idle`" "Teaching is a passion for me" "I felt like I needed to leave something good behind me" "The inner motivation I have, it does not leave me alone" "Every year, I come to the school with high levels of motivation" "I persist and keep trying things" "I want to learn more about English" "Nothing can demotivate me. … If I want to do something, I do it"	"I am feeling weak to do more" "I was more idealist" "I have lost my enthusiasm" "I feel lazy to look for different things" "I feel like I am getting less and less excited every year when schools open" "I don't know, I have aged in the profession I guess" "My motivation for teaching English has decreased a bit, that is for sure"

The quotes in Table 7 are indicative of self-efficacy- and motivation-related statements I coded at the data analysis stage. Further explanation about grouping the teachers in relation to their self-efficacy and motivation levels can be found in Section 6.2.

3.6. Research Issues

3.6.1. Bias in the research

The findings of this research are based on qualitative data which are, in general, "… rich, full, earthy, holistic, `real`…" (Miles, 1979). However, the very nature of qualitative data has limitations since it might be biased resulting from both participants and researchers.

The data might include social desirability bias, i.e. response bias (King & Bruner, 2000). Social desirability bias is "… tendency of individuals to underestimate (overestimate) the likelihood they would perform an undesirable (desirable) action" (Chung & Monroe, 2003, p.291). As this implies, the teachers in this research might have a tendency to answer the questions in a way that made them look positive in terms of socially and culturally promoted behaviours (Chung & Monroe, 2003), which may, according to King and Bruner (2000), compromise research findings since in that case the findings fall short in reflecting the reality. Since social desirability bias could be a threat to the validity of the research (King & Bruner, 2000), I took precautions to minimise it.

Doing a pilot study might help to minimise the social desirability bias since it allowed me to test the questions to see if they performed as envisioned (Chenail, 2011). Additionally, the aim of the interviews was clearly explained by reminding the teachers that the results would not lead to any evaluation or assessment, or the head teachers or other authorities would not be reported regarding the results (King & Bruner, 2000). Additionally, the participants were assured that they would be nonattributable and the interviews would stay confidential, which might have encouraged them to be honest in their responses and helped them feel safe during the interview sessions (Chung & Monroe, 2003). And, I did my best to conduct the interviews in a professional way by taking into consideration the teachers` context and cultural backgrounds, by dressing appropriately, by being sensitive towards the problems that arose and by member checking the transcripts of the interviews (Poggenpoel & Myburgh, 2003).

In qualitative research, researchers can be a threat to the trustworthiness of their research (Poggenpoel & Myburgh, 2003). Given that I have an interpretivist-constructivist philosophical stance, it was not possible for me to step outside of my humanity and view the world from a neutral perspective, which is the idea that objectivists favour (Burr, 2003). This points out to reflexivity which is "… active acknowledgement by the researcher that his or her own actions and decisions will inevitably impact upon the meaning and context of the experience under investigation" (Horsburgh, 2003, p. 308). By means of reflexivity, I recognise that subjectivity might have come into place at the stages of data collection, data analysis and interpretation since I could not separate myself from the cultural historical contexts that fed into my interpretive frame (Gadamer, 2004). Therefore, my epistemological and ontological positioning might have affected my view about what was important and significant, which directly influenced the results of the research (Bryman, 2016). However, this does not mean that this research lacks in rigour as I clearly explained all the research process and findings (Horsburgh, 2003). Here, Poggenpoel and Myburgh (2003) warn against researchers` pre-conceived ideas contaminating the research project, which is regarded as bias. In order to avoid that, I stepped back from the data and let it speak by trying not to bracket the data according to my frame of work and experience (Poggenpoel & Myburgh, 2003).

3.6.2. Quality of the research

Reliability is concerned with the extent to which findings of an empirical study can be replicated, and therefore frequently it is not an issue in qualitative research which often focus on unique social settings or cases (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Since the way I interpreted the data would not be identical with others` and the factors affecting the participants may differ, the findings of this research cannot be replicated (Seale, 1999). Validity, on the other hand, is a requirement for both quantitative and qualitative research (Cohen et al., 2011). Since this research has a small sample and focuses on specific cases, external validity which refers to the extent to which findings can be generalised to other settings or wider populations, does not apply to this research (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Only internal validity, which is concerned with the accuracy of research and seeks to demonstrate findings align with theoretical ideas, applies to this research (Gray, 2014).

Yet, as the purpose and focus of the paradigms are different and therefore not comparable, Horsburgh (2003) states that the concepts of reliability and validity do not apply

to qualitative research. Bryman (2016), agreeing with this, suggests assessing the quality of qualitative research under two other concepts which are alternatives to validity and reliability. These are, as Guba and Lincoln (1994) propose, trustworthiness and authenticity the former of which consists of four criteria; namely, credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Therefore, I aimed at complying with these criteria through the precautions I took.

Triangulating the data collection tools, doing respondent validation to make sure I understood the social world of the teachers, and doing the pilot study contributed to the credibility of the research (Poggenpoel & Myburgh, 2003). I provided a thick description of the findings so that a database can be created for the judgements that may be made based on the findings, and this contributes to the transferability of the research (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In order to develop the dependability of the research, I have made the whole research process as transparent as possible (Silverman, 2013). This has been done by explaining my ontological and epistemological positions, elaborating the reasons why the particular research design and data collection tools were chosen, and disclosing the findings through direct quotes all of which provides the information about what has been done, how and why (Silverman, 2013). According to Horsburgh (2003), providing clear explanations about decisions that are made throughout research also contributes to the plausibility by enabling readers to determine if comments or claims made by researchers are justifiable. Bryman (2016) explains that confirmability refers to objectivity which is not an issue in qualitative research since it is subjective in nature. However, I have been careful in terms of not bracketing the data according to my experience, and not imposing my personal values on the teachers all of which contributes to the confirmability of the research (Bryman, 2016). Authenticity, as the second criteria, is concerned with the impact of qualitative research (Bryman, 2016). Based on the findings, I am able to draw implications about the ELT teachers` PL experiences by providing a better understanding of how they learn and what promotes or inhibits learning (Bryman, 2016). This contributes to the plausibility of the research as well since the implications will show how this research is in relevance with the current theories and practices in the literature, and what kind of future theories and practices can be further suggested (Horsburgh, 2003).

3.6.3. Challenges

The biggest difficulty I experienced throughout the data collection process was obtaining permission to conduct my research in my country. As I am a sponsored student by the Turkish Government, I had to gain their permission to be granted a research leave from the University of Reading and to enter the schools in Turkey. Although I applied for the permission before I left for Turkey, due to several issues I was not given a positive answer. This directly affected the research leave, as the University of Reading said I would have to use my holiday leave in that case, which was a very limited time.

Once I arrived in Turkey, I went to the Ministry of Education to consult them and they said they would not grant the permission as I had already carried out a study (my pilot study) in Turkey. Moreover, they expected me to make changes in my study by not focusing on Turkish ELT teachers but comparing them with other ELT teachers from other countries. After our conversation, they agreed to talk to the London Consulate of Turkey to grant the permission. In a week or so I was given the permission to stay for two months, which was the time period I asked from them. Yet, as I had stayed in Turkey for some time for the pilot study within the same year, I would not be able to use all the time I was given for the main study (after two months of staying in Turkey in a year, the scholarship is reduced to a very minimum amount). As such, I finished the data collection as soon as possible and returned to the UK around a month earlier than I planned.

This time limitation for collecting the data impacted on the timing of the sessions. If I had stayed longer, I would not have had to merge the second and the third interview sessions for four of the teachers and would have waited until they were available. Doing this could have given the teachers more space to think about their answers, and it would have also given me the opportunity to reflect on the second interviews before doing the third sessions. And, as they would have seen me more, they could have felt more comfortable with talking to me. Yet, I believe this did not make any noticeable difference to the quality of the data I obtained.

I also had difficulty regarding the interview sessions with Yeliz. With the other teachers I felt I could get answers to my questions relatively easily, yet with Yeliz it was more difficult. I felt she lost track of the topic quite a lot during our first conversation and this made me nervous as I did not know how to take the lead. To minimise it for the second and third sessions, I took notes based on what she said during the sessions and led her with prompts whenever I felt we were losing the track. And I was concerned about her data as I felt it was

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very much about her personal life but not linked to her professional life. Yet, during the data analysis stage I could see this was not a problem as it reflected how she balanced her personal life with her professional life and how her personal experiences fed into her professional beliefs.

Another difficulty for me was at the emotional level. As I built a relationship with the teachers by meeting them three-four times (including the pre-interview stage), spent hours by talking about their personal backgrounds and professional lives, I found it very difficult to distance myself emotionally from the difficulties they were experiencing. And, I felt, from time to time, they expected me to comfort them and give advice throughout the sessions. Yet, I knew I had to remain emotionally detached and let them do the talking the way they would, without me being involved or leading them in any way. After our sessions, I made myself available to all of them by giving my personal contacts and I still talk to them occasionally. By providing as much data as possible from the teachers and telling their story as much as I could, it was my aim to be their voice throughout my study. And I sincerely hope to do that in the long term as well.

3.6.4. Ethical issues

This research involved a direct interaction with the teachers through life histories, critical incidents and semi-structured interviews, therefore it needed some ethical considerations to show that no psychological or physical harm would be done to the teachers, it would not damage the reputation of the schools or the teachers and would not break any laws and infringe the teachers` private lives (Thomas, 2013). Ethical issues concern the appropriateness of researchers` behaviours towards their participants and the moral principles guiding their research (Gray, 2014). This research is believed to be low risk in terms of ethical issues since it did not involve any vulnerable groups, any sensitive topics, any ethnical or cultural groups or an access to confidential records or information (Gray, 2014). Yet, several precautions were taken in order not to jeopardise the research process.

Even though I anticipated no harm to the teachers throughout the research, talking about PL experiences might be disturbing for some of them since the questions might bring some memories which would cause stress or loss of self-esteem (Bryman, 2016). Due to the issues that might have arisen during the interviews, I stayed supportive and sensitive by not behaving in a pushy or judgemental way. And, by staying in touch with some of them, I am

still trying to support them as much as I can. The teachers were informed about their rights through the research information sheets which involved the purpose and the details of the research, the expected benefits of the research, what was expected from them during the interview sessions, possible harm that the research might cause, the issues related to their confidentiality, my contact details, and their rights to withdraw from the research if they wished to do so.

The teachers` trust regarding their anonymity might be specifically important for this research since their PL experiences are work-related issues and the data might include criticisms of organisations or managements (Gray, 2014). Therefore, I used pseudonyms for both the teachers and the schools in order not to compromise their confidentiality and to maintain their anonymity (Gray, 2014). However, in case anonymising them might not be enough for guaranteeing their confidentiality (Robson, 2011), I was careful while presenting the findings to ensure that the teachers were not identifiable or identified (Bryman, 2016). In order to build trust with each teacher, I spent time with them before the life-histories. This helped me to create a relatively friendly and trustworthy environment, and I stayed honest and transparent as much as possible throughout the process.

Additionally, the teachers were asked to sign the consent forms attached to the end of the information sheets. As such, they had the opportunity to ask further questions they might have before they consented to participate in the research. Before the interview sessions started, they were asked to give consent both for being interviewed on three different occasions, and for being recorded during the interview sessions which would form the data and be analysed to be reported at a later stage. They were reminded that they could withdraw from the study if they wished to do so. And, they had the right to choose either to speak in English or to speak in Turkish, and the questions that would be asked to them were prepared both languages. Moreover, the interview questions focused only on their experiences on and perspectives of PL, without including any questions that might cause any discomfort at any stage of the research (Thomas, 2013).

Before approaching the teachers, the gatekeepers, in this case the local authorities and the heads of the schools were approached first to get the required permission to carry out the research in their schools. Although this might result in a situation in which the teachers might have felt they were obliged to participate in the study, they were privately told that they had the right not to do so and that they would not be reported to anyone in

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that scenario. Since the heads of the schools did not know English, a Turkish version of the information sheets was distributed in order to convey the details and the procedure of the research `in a meaningful and understandable way` (Thomas, 2013). And the audio recordings of the interviews and the transcriptions have been kept secure in a locked personal laptop, and they have been used only for this research but not for any other purposes (Thomas, 2013). Ethical approval was gained for this research on 13.03.2018 from the University of Reading, and the Ethics form can be found at Appendix E.

3.7. Summary

This chapter presented the rationale behind this qualitative research and a detailed description of the adopted methodology, which employed life histories, critical incidents and semi-structured interviews within a social constructionist paradigm with the aim of understanding the teachers` subjective reality. It also clarified the adopted sampling strategy, data collection process, analysis and the measures taken to assure the quality of the research. The next three chapters are dedicated to demonstrating the findings for each research question.

CHAPTER 4 HOW ELT TEACHERS WORKING IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS EXPERIENCE REFLECTICE PRACTICE IN THEIR PL

4.1. Introduction

Chapter 4, 5 and 6 present the findings in relation to three research questions. Organising the data around the research questions helped me to make comparisons among the teachers with regards to one common concept. Additionally, I could avoid any repetition that could have been resulted from presenting the data around the teachers, which I believed has made the chapters more concise.

Previously in Chapter 2, reflective practice was defined as one key aspect of PL which helps teachers to learn from their own teaching practice by enabling them to critically examine why they do what they do. By engaging in reflection, teachers can distance themselves from their practice and become more cognizant of their beliefs, which can lead to analysing and reconstructing them. Additionally, as teachers become more reflective, they tend to acknowledge their colleagues` expertise and be more willing to engage in collaborative activities. Yet, as was discussed in Chapter 1, reflective practice is a relatively new concept in Turkey, and pre-service and in-service stages seem to lack opportunities which would help teachers to develop reflective skills.

In this chapter, I examine how the ELT teachers working in different contexts (a rural area and an urban area) in Turkey experience reflective practice in their PL. Under this main research question, I intend to highlight some aspects as well (the sub-questions mentioned in Section 3.3.1.), such as the extent to which the teachers reflect on their teaching, what modes of reflection they engage in, in what occasions they reflect, what they reflect on and how they reflect. As Table 8 shows, all teachers were found to reflect during and after teaching, which equates to Schön`s (1983) concepts of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action (Chapter 2). However, the teachers seemed to differ in terms of what they reflected on. While all teachers reflected on students (behavioural problems, motivation for learning English, needs, levels, backgrounds, age groups, likes), their pedagogical approaches (strategies for teaching English) and individual dispositions (beliefs about how to teach English, goals, personalities, likes, feelings), seven of them mentioned reflecting on others (schools, authorities, colleagues

and parents – expectations, ideas, attitudes), eight reflecting on resources (budget, teaching materials, syllabus, class hours, weekend course), and one reflecting on a PL activity.

Table 8

Teachers with regards to what they reflect on and when they reflect

Teachers	**What to Reflect On**						**When to Reflect**	
	Students	Others	Pedagogical approach	PL activity	Individual dispositions	Resources	In-action	On-action
Gaye	√	√	√		√	√	√	√
Esma	√	√	√	√	√		√	√
Yeliz	√		√		√		√	√
Kerim	√		√		√		√	√
Dilek	√	√	√		√	√	√	√
Hande	√	√	√		√		√	√
Lale	√	√	√		√		√	√
Pinar	√		√		√	√	√	√
Mine	√		√		√	√	√	√
Ilker	√	√	√		√	√	√	√
Naz	√		√		√	√	√	√
Sedef	√	√	√		√	√	√	√
Okan	√		√		√	√	√	√

In addition, the teachers differed from each other with regards to how they reflected, and the forms of reflection they were engaged in seemed to typify Habermas`s (1972) categories of technical reflection, practical reflection and emancipatory reflection (Chapter 2). The data indicated that two of the teachers moved between the forms of reflection depending on the occasion, while five of the them appeared to engage in reflection mainly at the technical level, and six of them moved between technical and practical levels. Figure 5 shows how the teachers were engaged in the forms of reflection.

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Figure 5

Teachers with regards to the forms of reflection
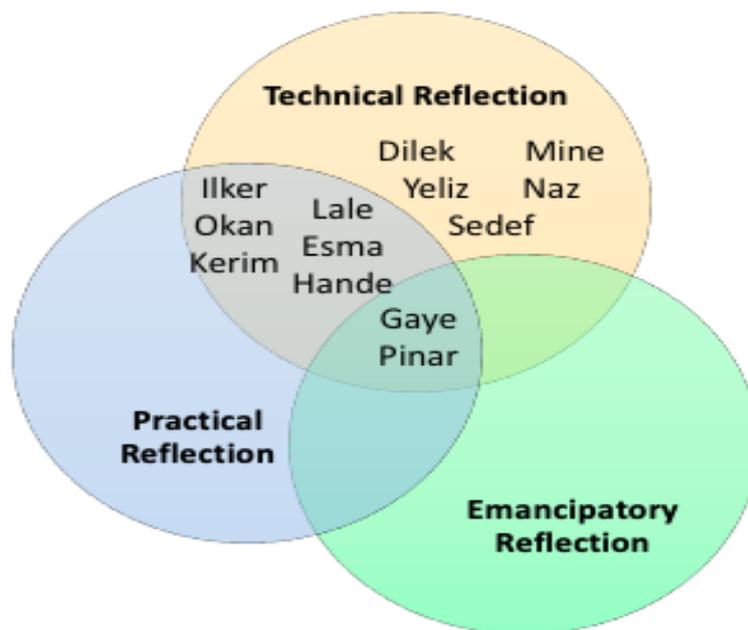
In the rest of this chapter, all these areas regarding reflection will be elaborated further in detail with the examples from the data collected through three interview sessions.

4.2.   When They Reflect

The teachers gave examples of both reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. The areas the teachers reflected on while teaching were mainly about classroom management issues, students` attention span and motivation, their pedagogical approach and available teaching materials.

Sedef, for example, mentioned reflecting on classroom management problems while teaching. She was working in a challenging neighbourhood in the rural area, where she reported most of the students were coming from nearby villages, the parents were not interested in education generally and the male students were spoiled by their parents as they were seen as the ones who would continue the bloodline. She indicated that, due to the lack of parental support, the students did not have educational aspirations, and the male students specifically had severe behavioural problems, which resulted in classroom management problems. To overcome such problems, she mentioned using positive reinforcement and

prizes in her classes which was something she learnt in her pre-service years and felt she had to use it out of despair.

> *Today, for example, I know they (the group with which she experiences problems) have a phase, I felt that was approaching. So, I know, when they are at that phase, even if I talk about the most perfect thing in the world they will not listen. So, today, I said to them, …, if they behave well this class, I will let them watch a movie in the next one. Problem solved. (Sedef, 1ˢᵗ int)*

For Hande, it was not the classroom management problems but her pedagogical approach which seemed to have led her reflect while teaching and come up with various teaching strategies for better learning outcomes. She reported that at the times when she realised her teaching technique would not help students learn, she would feel the need to make immediate changes by trying to reinforce vocabulary learning in an active way.

> *It just comes to my mind, I do not know if that is related to creativity. … It happened recently, for example, for year 7 there is a topic about physical appearance and personality. You are supposed to teach them around 50 adjectives, this is about personality, that is about appearance, etc. But you know, they will not memorise it. … So, I wrote the vocabularies on the board, but they did not seem to have understood, asking if they should write tall for this, short for that. So, I said "Stand up", it just came to my mind at that moment really. I said "Stand up everybody", they were like "What is going on?". I made them raise their hands for tall and lower for short, bend their body for old, etc. They were giggling, they loved it. (Hande, 2ⁿᵈ int)*

As these examples suggest, when the teachers reflected while teaching, the ideas that they could think of worked for that specific moment and therefore served as quick solutions. And in some occasions, the reflection-in-action examples led the teachers to engage in reflection-on-action by requiring them to think further and take actions to improve the situation in the longer term. Lale, who was the least experienced teacher (4 years) and working in a high school located in a rural area as the first school in her teaching career, reported that she was experiencing problems regarding the students` low self-efficacy in English. After noticing that the students were feeling intimidated by reading in English, she advised the students to read stage books (story books designed according to readers` levels, from beginning to advanced levels) in one of her classes to help them overcome their fears.

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She added that she noticed the students did not know about stage books, which led her to think of solutions and come up with the idea of creating a reading corner in the school corridor where would be accessible to all students.

> *Reading in English is like a phobia for them (students). They feel intimidated, they feel like "We can never read in English, we can`t do that", but that is because they do not know there are stage books. So, in one of my classes, I told them that there are stages and they can start from the first stage and if they do that, they will certainly understand what they read. Then I thought to myself; "If I make a reading corner and place it downstairs, it would draw students` attention, and maybe they could see they can actually read in English". That is why I wanted to do something like this. (Lale, 2nd int)*

As this implies, Lale, based on her reflection-in-action idea, came up with a plan and actually put it in action. According to what she reported in the second interview, this required her to ask for permission from the management, buy stage books, make bookshelves with her students and find desks and chairs, which obviously required more time and effort than reflection-in-action ideas did.

All teachers, including Lale, gave examples of reflection-on-action, which can be categorised under six headings. These are reflecting on students, others, pedagogical approach, formal PL activity, individual dispositions and resources. Some of the reflection-on-action examples seemed to have been effective by bringing change to the current situation. For that to happen, the teachers appeared to reflect in a cyclical way by experiencing something, thinking about that experience, planning to make the situation better and taking actions according to their plan. At the end of this cycle, they evaluated the results and thought of other solutions for the problem they were experiencing, which might indicate their reflection was as a continuous process and that they believed there could be multiple solutions for problems rather than only one. However, not all reflection-on-action practices were effective, and some teachers appeared to fail in completing the reflective cycle or did reflect in a quite linear way. In this case, either they could not complete the reflective cycle by experiencing something and defining the problem but not coming up with plans or taking required actions, or they completed the cycle but limited themselves with only one solution. Not seeing multiple solutions for existing problems, they did not focus on what else they could do after trying the first idea they had, which showed they reflected in more of a linear way.

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This might be related to the forms of reflection the teachers were engaged in, which will be elaborated in the next section.

4.3. How They Reflect

4.3.1. Technical reflection

Five of the teachers (Yeliz, Dilek, Mine, Naz and Sedef) were found to do very limited reflection; and when they reflected it was mostly done by simply choosing the easiest option available to them or by applying a prescribed technique by colleagues to their classes without investing much thought. As such, it seemed they reflected basically for problem solving and achieving immediate outcomes, which typifies technical reflection (Chapter 2).

Dilek, Mine, Yeliz, Sedef and Naz reported that they felt their students had a low level of motivation with negative attitudes towards learning English, and that they were struggling to overcome this problem. To solve that, they seemed to be trying various ideas. Naz, for example, stated that she was experiencing classroom management problems in some groups as a result of a school policy according to which the students were categorised and placed in classrooms based on their attainment (setted groups). This, according to her, resulted in having very high-achieving motivated groups as well as "bad" groups where she felt desperate and helpless. She mentioned reflecting on the problems she was having in those groups and consulting the school management about what could be done which seemed to lead her to follow a stricter approach.

> *They have very serious behavioural problems. I had been trying to ignore those behavioural problems for a long time not to worsen their attitudes towards English, I had been trying a soft approach towards them. … Today, I filled out a disciplinary report for one of the students, they became very silent. If I had known this would happen, I would have done this long before. (Naz, 2nd int)*

As this suggests, Naz aimed to solve the problem in the quickest way possible by applying a prescribed technique from her colleagues rather than questioning the reason why the students were behaving that way, which could have led her to alternative ideas and worked better on her students. For Dilek, who was working in a medical vocational high school in the rural area, the problem seemed to be about her students` low interest in learning

English. She stated that the students were not interested in English classes as they were all aiming to have positions as medical staff. To overcome this problem, she mentioned that she would explain why English is necessary, how it is used everywhere even in the medical life, and that she would emphasise some English terminology the students would use when they start working. Similarly, Yeliz complaining about the same problem, reported that she was trying to create a non-threatening learning environment for the students to encourage them to ask questions, and that she would give pep talks about the necessity of learning English and focus on the students` efforts rather than their exam scores. These ideas seemed to have derived from her own learning experiences at the high school as learning English was not easy for her either, which might have shaped her beliefs about good teacher qualities.

> *I always try to comfort the students about learning English, that is because I was a shy student as well, students should not feel intimidated, they should be able to say what they do not understand, again and again if necessary. I tell them "I am here to teach you, do not forget that. If you are sitting there, that is because you are here to learn. … Comforting the students is important, once you do that, then the students start to have positive attitudes towards English, they start to respect you, …, they start to participate in the class. (Yeliz, 1st int)*

As these examples indicate, these teachers reflected on their teaching, detected problems regarding students` motivation or behavioural problems, and came up with quick solutions or applied prescribed techniques. Yet, when asked if these strategies changed the situation for the better, even though they might have had an impact temporarily, all of them reported that they were still having those problems. For example, Dilek mentioned bringing medical life related reading texts to classes so that the students could see how medical terms in English are directly used in the field. This was an idea she tried in one of the previous schools she had taught in and worked well since they were science high school (high achieving school types) students and already interested in English. Yet, for her current school, it did not seem to impact much on the students` motivation.

> *Of course, they (students) do not show enthusiasm to read the texts, but it draws their attention, they seem to pay more attention to what is what. Since they all aim for medical positions, for some it (reading text) does not work at all, but for some, it kind of draws their attentions. (Dilek, 2nd int)*

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Yet, none of the teachers, including Dilek, mentioned any further plans to find better solutions for the problems they were experiencing. As well as these examples, there were also occasions when the teachers engaged in reflection, detected the problem, but chose not to do anything about it. For example, Mine, who was working in a good achieving secondary school in the city centre where the students were accepted to the school based on their grade point average (GPA), reported that her students were having difficulties with pronunciation and speaking in English.

It is important that they (students) listen to stuff, they only hear me when I read out. About pronunciation… If I do not read out either, if I do not do reading out… They pronounce "eyes" as "eyz", "hair" as "hayir", those kinds of silly things. Students pronounce words really weirdly. (Mine, 2nd int)

This suggests she noticed the problem, and in the third interview she acknowledged that the ideal outcome in English teaching would be students` speaking fluently in English;

They (students) can write stuff and understand when they listen, but when it comes to speaking, it is only "What is your name – My name is …". They can only introduce themselves, but nothing else. They cannot really communicate or discuss topics. I would like them to speak. (Mine, 3rd int)

Yet, she did not seem to take this problem into her agenda and do something about it as she did not mention any plans to help the students improve their communication or pronunciation skills in English. It looked as if she almost detached herself from the problem and did not feel responsible for improving the learning outcomes in those aspects, and therefore felt contented with her current teaching.

Without translation, it does not work. GTM (Grammar Translation Method) is what is commonly used in Turkey anyway. What else are we supposed to do, …, speaking? When I start speaking in English, the students are like "What are you saying?". Our speaking is limited anyway to classroom stuff. (Mine, 1st int)

Based on the given examples so far, at the times when these teachers engaged in reflection and completed the reflective cycle, they appeared to tend to see one available

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solution for the problems, and therefore their reflection looked more linear than circular since it lacked continuity. At other times, they did not seem to be reflective at all by detecting the problem but not undertaking any actions, which would require them to do more research, thinking and planning.

4.3.2. Practical reflection

Kerim, Okan and Ilker, experiencing problems regarding students` negative attitudes towards English as the teachers in the first group did, mentioned enriching their classes with different teaching materials and making their classes as interesting as possible for the students. Okan, who had been teaching for eight years at the time of the interviews and had taught in various schools, was teaching secondary and high school students in his current school. He reported that the students had a low level of knowledge base of English as they were coming from nearby villages, and they did not show any interest in the classes. To increase their motivation, he stated that he was using PowerPoints, visuals, activity worksheets and interactive portals, all of which seemed to have helped him to achieve that.

> *If PowerPoints are well prepared, they are really helpful. That is because the students get tired of seeing you only all the time, they want to see different things, hear different things. So, you open the PowerPoint, the background of it, the font, the things that you can click on that, you tell me, videos… I do not know, there are activities, for example, on the interactive portal, I do not prepare these, I just download them. So, when the students see these kinds of things, they feel kind of motivated… I would open them, and they would look at them, then they would want to touch the board, especially touching the board, they love it. … PowerPoints are nice, games, activities and these interactive portals are really nice. (Okan, 2nd int)*

Okan seemed to be innovative by noticing what the students liked and doing more of that rather than sticking to the coursebook only and focusing on grammar or applying `traditional` teaching methods such as repetition, translation, question-answering or reading which would be a `typical` teaching practice (Chapter 1). Similarly, Kerim, when he was asked what he aimed for by enriching his classes with various activities, he said;

> *What is the purpose? Well, you get bored too, and one textbook only is not enough. You see that the students get bored, the same textbook, the same topics for several*

times. You say to yourself "The students have been learning these topics for years now, they must be bored" … So, you do it to be different, or for them to do something different so that they would feel more motivated in classes, that is the ultimate aim; to increase their participation in classes, to make classes fun, that is the aim. (Kerim, 2nd int)

This indicates that Kerim took into consideration what the students liked and prepared his classes accordingly. While teaching to the secondary school students previously, he stated he was using physical games, quizzes and competitions, but with the change in the students` age group, he mentioned using technology-integrated techniques instead. Doing this might have required him to be more attentive to his students` interests, and to spend more time on making sense of the problems he was experiencing.

In addition to these teachers, Lale, Esma and Hande gave examples of reflection which led them to make sense of their experiences, make carefully considered plans, stay committed to achieve their goals and learn from their experiences, which might be claimed to typify practical reflection (Chapter 2). This required them to communicate their experiences to change the situation for the better rather than relying on prescribed solutions as the first group of teachers seemed to be doing. Different from the first group of teachers, these teachers appeared to be more inclined to complete the reflective cycle by experiencing something, reflecting on it, making plans and taking required actions. And rather than thinking of one solution for the problems, they were able to think of multiple, which might have led them to try each and evaluate how it worked. Even in cases when the first idea worked well, they still seemed to have applied other ideas, which might be why the way they reflected looked more circular than the way the first group did.

Lale, Esma and Hande made speaking activities part of their agenda and they mentioned trying different strategies. Lale, when she was asked how she thought she had changed over years, reported she was using more English instruction in her classes compared to previous years. Although she said she had tried using English in her classes previously as well, since her students had not reacted well to it, she had given up and gone back to only Turkish. And she added that she was doing more grammar-oriented teaching in the past as she felt it was what her students expected from her, but now she was doing more skills-based teaching. Changing her perspective about what to teach and how to teach seemed to have derived from reflecting on her feelings about the teaching profession.

The reason for that change was most probably… I thought just because the students were not good, I would not watch myself get worse, I had to improve myself. You know a language, that is a very important thing, and I would not let myself rust. So, just to refresh my knowledge, to refresh myself, I might have changed for that. (Lale, 1st int)

This suggests that Lale made a radical change in her teaching for her own sake, which helped her to develop the learning outcomes as well. She reported that when she first started using English as the instruction language, the students would not understand and therefore she would spend time by repeating herself multiple times and feel exhausted at the end since teaching even something simple would require her to invest a lot of effort. Yet, she indicated that she persisted, and the students got used to the new way in time, and now they could even join her with basic sentences. Her students` growth seemed to encourage her to do more as she mentioned future plans such as organising theatre plays and karaoke and doing a project with students about how to teach speaking through games.

Lale`s example shows that she initiated the change in her teaching by reflecting on her feelings. Similarly, Esma, who mentioned increasing the use of English in her classes, seemed to have made that decision by examining her feelings in the profession and revising previous teaching experiences. Esma had worked as a substitute teacher in different schools for two years before she started as a permanent teacher, and she said that affected the amount of the effort she put in her teaching. She added that since she did not feel she belonged to the previous schools, she did not think much about what more she could do and ended up doing grammar-oriented teaching by using Turkish only, which seemed to be something she regretted later. Therefore, after starting as a permanent teacher in her current school to which she feels a closer connection and noticing that speaking in English with the students would be the only way to avoid forgetting what she knew, she changed the instruction language from Turkish to English. Yet, even then, she highlighted that she was still using Turkish in the lower attaining groups, by using English in the higher attaining groups only. When asked in what ways she thought her teaching had evolved over years, she mentioned that she attended a training given by United Nations Children`s Fund (UNICEF), and this made her think about her practice and led her to increase the usage of English in the lower attaining groups as well in order to be fair and inclusive.

Let me put it in this way, since we have setted groups and I had five of year 6, I was not teaching in English in the last two groups to be honest, I was teaching in Turkish. That is because the students do not even know how to count to ten, I was thinking "How am I supposed to teach them in English, really difficult". But I started doing this, I am teaching in English in those groups as well now, I felt like it was unfair to them not to do that, being exposed to English is their right as well. (Esma, 1ˢᵗ int)

As such, even though the change in her teaching started at the individual level with reflection, it seemed that the collaborative and interactive opportunities at the training fed into her reflection and triggered thinking at a deeper level.

There (at the training), the purpose of reaching all students was conveyed to us very intensely for ten days, the purpose of being able to contribute to each and every student … I criticised myself afterwards, I said to myself "Let`s do some brainstorming", the things they (trainers) told us triggered something inside me, enlightened some things. (Esma, 1ˢᵗ int)

Even though she did not mention any improvement in learning outcomes as it was a recent change, this quote shows that the collaborative opportunity might have impacted on her beliefs about what can be done with the lower-attaining students. In spite of the changes in her practice, whether she stayed persistent and committed to the process is not known. Since the training was a recent experience for her, although she might have felt motivated to apply what she learnt right after the training, it is not known whether she was able to maintain this approach.

Unlike Esma, Hande mentioned changes in the learning outcomes as a result of a wide range of speaking activities she put into practice. Before her current school, Hande had taught all years from kindergarten to high school students in various private and public schools. Having such experience seemed to have contributed to her teaching repertoire as she stated most of the teaching activities she was using were the ones she learnt while working in private schools. Regarding the speaking activities she was using in her classes, she indicated that it all started with noticing the students did not know even basic daily statements, which points out to reflection at the individual level.

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One day, …, I said "Thank you", they could not say "You are welcome", …, they did not know how to say "Enjoy your meal", so it started like that. So, I tried it in one of the groups, I said to myself "I will make a corner for that" … I tried it only in one of the groups, I asked them (students) how they felt about a corner that we would use for writing `the statement of the day`. (Hande, 2nd int)

So, we start with that corner, write the statement of the day, and what is that? It is like, how you respond when someone thanks you, or how to say enjoy your meal in English, I teach the daily statements which are not in the syllabus. … Why do I do that, just for practice. (Hande, 1st int)

Then I told them that I should have a difference as an English teacher, …, that I would not accept "Afiyet olsun", but they should say "Enjoy your meal" instead. I saw that it really worked, when they see me outside they say "See you later teacher", or they say "Have a nice lesson". … I feel like it is working well. (Hande, 2nd int)

In addition to teaching basic daily statements, Hande reported that she was using a wide range of activities to make learning fun and to avoid having monotonous classes. She explained that, after noticing the students liked bringing materials to classes and they liked being active, she started using role play and drama activities more frequently. By using such activities, she said she aimed to show the students that speaking in English was actually fun, that English was not just grammar and that as they used English they would like it more.

In the next topic we have "yummy breakfast". So, I will make an organisation for that, for all year 6. … I have a look the unit first, then think to myself what I can do about that, there are some units that are perfect fits for role plays. … So for this one, it can be 3-4 people going for breakfast, or taking place at home, I leave that to them. I give suggestions like "you be mum, you dad, while you are making the omelette, the other one can do the talking, calling kids to the breakfast, then kids run to the table, etc". And when you add to this, when you tell them to bring real food so we have real breakfast, it is like "Wow"!… We set the table first. We did the same for the birthday topic. The first group comes, I take pictures at that moment and videos. Then I upload those in the smart board so that they get to watch themselves. … They are like "I look like this, I did that?". Then I talk to them. … It is like eating and laughing together. (Hande, 2nd int)

Hande`s focus on speaking and using various activities seemed to have derived from reflecting on what her students liked and what she wanted to achieve with her teaching, which might be an implication for reflection at the individual level. Yet, actually, the private school she worked in her early years might have been where she built her knowledge base and learned how to be a reflective practitioner as well (see Section 5.4. for more details).

There, she could find various face-to-face and online training opportunities where she saw how things could be done differently and she also mentioned being a member of an in-school community of English teachers. And, she added that her classes were being recorded all the time, which might have created a feedback loop for her to revise her teaching as the management used those recordings to discuss her teaching and give her suggestions about how to improve. All these collaborative and interactive experiences seemed to have helped her become more reflective over time and more open to learning with/from others. Even her beliefs about what to teach, in addition to how to teach, could have been shaped in those years as she was responsible for teaching all skills at that school. Even though skills-oriented teaching was a requirement in that private school, she stated that she did not limit herself thinking it would not be achieved in public schools. And, in the interviews, she looked very enthusiastic about the things she wanted to achieve and mentioned sparing some of the class hours for speaking in English only and organising an end-of-the-term show with the other English teacher (Ilker) in the school. For Hande, it seemed seeing growth in her students motivated her to do more; as, according to what she said, getting positive feedback was the key to continue for her. Or, maybe the type of the teacher she wanted to become served as a drive for her.

> *I do not do "Come, teach and go", I always aim to be idealist in the profession. I try to think what different things I can teach students, or how I can do that, what I can use for that. … I try to search these things. (Hande, 1st int)*

Her efforts for teaching speaking appeared to result positively as she stated that the students were very active in classes by showing enthusiasm for participating in the activities and using the language as much as they could. In this case, Hande seemed to have learnt from her experiences in the private school and transformed her practice over years, which impacted directly on the learning outcomes.

4.3.3. Emancipatory reflection

Gaye and Pinar mentioned occasions where they reflected in a circular way by thinking of more than one solution for the problems they were experiencing just like the teachers in the second group. Yet, different from the first and the second group of teachers, these two

teachers appeared to have overcome the factors that would limit their practice and stayed determined to achieve transformation in their school contexts, which can be claimed to exemplify emancipatory reflection (Chapter 2). They sounded quite clear regarding what they were doing and how and why they wanted to do it, which seemed to help them to impact on what was beyond their immediate control. While the other teachers could impact on the students` learning outcomes at the maximum level, these two teachers seemed to have gone beyond that.

Gaye, who was working in a primary school in the city centre, reported that she felt the students were not exposed to English at a satisfactory level because of not having a language classroom and the limited class hours. Yet, rather than feeling restricted and focusing on the problems, she seemed to have adopted a more solution-oriented approach.

How could I increase 2 hours (class hours), I cannot just make it 3, or even the head teacher cannot do that, or the local director of MEB. It is above all of us. Then we have to be solution-oriented, there is no point in complaining. (Gaye, 2nd int)

Having such a mindset might have helped her to put different ideas into action. She mentioned she believed that the students could learn implicitly, therefore she would hang flash cards and students` work in classrooms. Seeing positive learning outcomes as a result of this seemed to have triggered further thinking as she came up with the idea of decorating the school corridors and the stairs with the main objectives of the syllabus (`English street`). She believed, as the flashcards she would stick on the corridors would not be removed, the students would always be exposed to English. To achieve this, she had to get permission from the management, ask for help from the other ELT teacher in the school, to fundraise as the school did not have any budget for that, to actually make the flash cards and to stick them on the corridors, which required her to work outside of school hours, and invest a lot of effort.

To expose the students to English outside of class hours as well, we put the topics for year 2 on the ground floor, the topics for year 3 on the first, …, and the topics for year 4 on the third floor. … It took two months, I cut each and every piece and I did the sticking, no one helped. There were times when we did not leave the school until 6p.m. (Gaye, 1st int)

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Yet, she seemed to have persisted to achieve her goal and ignored the discouraging remarks coming from colleagues. When asked what discouraged or encouraged her in the process of doing the English street, she said;

> *While I was doing that, they (colleagues) said that I was trying to preoccupy myself for nothing. I just laugh at those statements. … I do whatever I decide to do, I try things out, trial and effort, if I like it I keep doing that. (Gaye, 1ˢᵗ int)*

Her efforts for implicit learning seemed to have achieved positive outcomes as she reported that the students could learn and remember things more easily. Yet, she did not appear to have settled with that and planned an end-of-the-year show to help the students increase their confidence in English. That might have derived from reflecting on the class hours as well, as she reported that she could not create space and time for practice during classes. Doing the show led her to work with the other ELT as well as parents, to get permission from the management, to fundraise and to spend time outside of school hours.

> *When they (students) saw what was done (once), they still ask every year if they would be able to do such a show again. Reading a poem, singing a song, being a part of something, representing a country and introducing it to the audience, it all drew their attention. Before that show, nobody would show interest in the "countries" topic. … English has become something they could show others and be proud of. (Gaye, 2ⁿᵈ int)*

As well as the learning outcomes, she mentioned change in the head teacher`s attitudes towards her and the parents` approach towards English course. She stated that, in the previous years, she had experienced problems with the head teacher and the parents since they had not acknowledged the importance of the English course and had not treated her with respect like they respected the other primary school teachers in the school. Therefore, when she came up with the ideas of the English street and the show, she reported that she had a difficult time because of the head teacher`s and parents` unsupportive attitudes. However, after seeing her efforts and the positive impact on the students, she mentioned she felt both the head teacher and the parents acknowledged her as a teacher.

The parents` respect to me has changed a lot. Why, because even other teachers, you know when you have a nanny or leave your child with a neighbour, they used to feel like they were leaving the students with me for two hours. And as if the students would just idle around in my classes. But then, they (parents) could see my efforts and only then they felt like I was doing something. (Gaye, 2nd int)

Gaye`s examples imply that she overachieved herself by initially aiming to expose the students to English and help them have experiences with English, but eventually changing the colleagues` and parents` perspectives about the English course. For her, it seemed that she took responsibility for the problem she was experiencing and could think of what she could do about that rather than accepting the situation as it was. Similarly, Pinar gave examples of achieving beyond her reach and transforming the learning culture in the public schools in which she worked. Pinar had worked in a franchised high achieving private school before she started working in public schools. She stated since the private school prioritised learner-centred approach she had difficulty in working in public schools where the students were used to teacher-centred approach. For the previous public school she was working in, she mentioned achieving a radical change in the students` attitudes towards English and the learning culture in her classes. It was a vocational medical high school located in a rural area and the students aimed at becoming medical staff (similar to Dilek`s school), which, according to her, was the reason they saw English as unnecessary. To help them improve their skills in English and to change the learning culture from a teacher-centred to student-centred way, she mentioned exploring what the students liked and doing more of that, which shows she might have reflected on her beliefs and that made her become more observant of the students. And, once the students became more interested in English, she started interacting her beliefs with what students liked. Eventually, she highlighted that the students got used to learner-centred teaching and they would come to her with suggestions about what activities they wanted to do and that constituted the "how" part of her classes.

Throughout three years I worked there, my students improved a lot, especially the students that I took from year 9 and continued to year 11. They improved in speaking, listening and writing, in skills. Initially, I had so much difficulty really since the students were quite stubborn, and they used to see English as unimportant since they were studying at the vocational medical high school. But in time, they adapted well, or I convinced them somehow, to learn English. (Pinar, 1st int)

I tried to make the classes fun, by doing drama techniques, games, or they (students) would bring song lyrics and we would have a look at them together, they loved that. … They liked these kinds of activities, after some time it was like they did not feel bored in classes. They would give suggestions like "Let`s play this? Let`s do that". (Pinar, 2nd int)

In addition to having a say in the classroom activities, it seemed that she helped the students to become independent and take responsibility for their learning by supervising them throughout the classes rather than transmitting the content knowledge.

I believe teaching is supervising, students will learn themselves, you should not tear yourself apart. In my first years, if I am meeting the students for the first time, I tear myself apart too because I need to teach them how to form sentences, or my style of teaching. But, with the groups I establish that, …, we proceed very easily, I show them what to do, I tell them "You will do this and that", they prepare for it in a very enthusiastic way and they present it in their classes with a great pleasure. (Pinar, 2nd int)

Just like her previous students, she stated that her current students were at the stage of being active learners by making decisions about how they wanted to learn and getting involved in creating teaching materials to use in classes. This suggests that, by reflecting on her beliefs about teaching, she achieved beyond her impact area (the learning outcomes) and transformed the way the students approached the teaching and learning processes.

For Pinar, becoming reflective and constructing her beliefs about teaching seemed to have dated back to the pre-service years and enhanced at the private school through interactive and collaborative activities with colleagues. Although she could have given up when she was faced with difficulties or adopted a more teacher-centred approach, she seemed to be quite passionate about her goals, which might be related to her feelings in the profession. She confessed that she was feeling insufficient in teaching and therefore she always felt the need to achieve more and to stay updated in the profession. That, according to her, was through being more observant of students and exploring what they liked, which she may not have needed to do previously in the private school since the students were already very high-achieving and motivated.

For Gaye, on the other hand, it seemed that her personality traits pushed her to achieve more as she mentioned an ideal image for herself. She reported she believed that

primary school English teachers had a huge impact on students` future attitudes towards English and therefore she aimed to help her students to have positive experiences with English. Undertaking such a role as an ELT teacher might be related to her learning experiences as she stated she had very successful peers in pre-service years all of whom mentioned having effective primary school English teachers. As such, contributing to her students as much as she can seemed to be her motive for achieving her goals and staying strong in the face of difficulties.

Based on the examples from Gaye and Pinar, it can be claimed these teachers, engaging in emancipatory reflection, were able to free themselves from obstacles and take control of their teaching despite of external factors. Having strong beliefs about teaching and strong personality traits seemed to have helped them bring change to the outside of the classroom.

4.4. Summary

This chapter presented the findings in relation to the teachers` engagement in reflective practice. It showed that certain forms of reflection could lead to learning/change but the teachers differed from each other in terms of the forms of reflection and what they reflected on, which helped to understand what constituted effective reflective practice. Additionally, it implicitly looked at how the individual and contextual factors affected the teachers` engagement in reflective practice and suggested that the individual factors were more impactful on reflection, which will be explained further in Section 7.4. The next chapter will focus on the teachers` experiences of collaboration with their colleagues.

CHAPTER 5 HOW ELT TEACHERS WORKING IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS EXPERIENCE COLLABORATION WITH THEIR COLLEAGUES IN THEIR PL

5.1.   Introduction

As was discussed in Chapter 1, the teacher training system in Turkey seemed to have weaknesses and this highlighted the importance of in-service activities in helping teachers to develop necessary professional skills. In Chapter 2, collaborative working was defined as one important aspect of in-service PL, which provides teachers with the opportunities of sharing their experiences, making inquiries and engaging in problem solving with their colleagues in a comfortable and non-threatening environment. Additionally, the literature showed that collaborative activities can lead teachers to become more reflective as, through collaboration, teachers see different ideas and benefit from colleagues` expertise to critique and revise their teaching.

In this chapter, I examine how the ELT teachers working in different contexts in Turkey experience collaboration with their colleagues in their PL. Under this main research question, I intend to highlight some aspects (the sub-questions mentioned in Section 3.3.1.) such as the extent to which the teachers collaborate with their colleagues, what modes of collaboration they engage in with their colleagues, and in what occasions and on what they collaborate with their colleagues.

Based on the data, it seemed the teachers were engaged in two types of collaborative activities mainly, which were unplanned and planned activities. Unplanned collaborative activities refer to unintentional and unstructured activities that occur on a daily basis, such as informal talks and discussions with colleagues through face-to-face interaction and online teacher portals. Planned collaborative activities, on the other hand, refer to deliberative and structured activities that the teachers were engaged in both as a requirement from their workplace and as their own preference to achieve a shared purpose. The data showed that planned collaborative activities could be formal as well as informal, and they could occur face-to-face and online. In terms of with whom the teachers collaborated, there seemed to be two main categories as well which are internal and external. Internal refers to in-school collaboration with the colleagues from the same workplace which could occur as planned or unplanned collaboration. And, external refers to out-of-school collaboration, which similarly

occurred as an unplanned or planned activity through face-to-face interaction or online portals. Table 9 presents information about each teacher regarding the types of collaborative activities they were engaged in and whom they collaborated with.

Table 9

Teachers with regards to with whom and how they collaborate

Teachers	How to Collaborate		With Whom to Collaborate	
	Unplanned	Planned	Internal	External
Gaye	√√	√√	√√	√√
Esma	√√	√	√√	√√
Yeliz	√		√	
Kerim	√√		√√	√
Dilek		√	√	
Hande	√	√√	√√	√
Lale	√		√	√
Pinar	√√	√√	√√	√√
Mine	√		√	
Ilker	√	√	√	√
Naz	√	√	√	√
Sedef	√		√	√
Okan	√		√	

*√ refers to limited examples, √√ refers to several examples of the kind.

The teachers differed from each other in terms of their engagement in collaborative activities and they were grouped into three which are minimal collaboration, open to

collaboration and collaborative. All these groups will be explained further in detail in the remaining of this chapter through the examples from the teachers. As the degree of collaboration in which the teachers were engaged was lower generally than their engagement with reflective activity, this chapter might be shorter than the previous one.

5.2. Minimal Collaboration

Five of the teachers (Yeliz, Lale, Mine, Sedef and Okan) gave limited and unclear examples when they talked about collaboration. Yeliz, Mine and Okan seemed to engage in unplanned in-school collaborative activities only. As they were all working with other ELT teachers in the same school, they mentioned exchanging ideas and sharing teaching materials with them. Yet, the range of the collaborative activities they engaged in appeared to be limited to that only. Okan, for example, had worked previously as the only ELT teacher until he joined his current school where he was working with Naz. That might have led him to be more individualistic rather than collaborative and interactive as he did not give any examples of collaboration, but vaguely mentioned exchanging teaching materials with Naz.

> *Now, I have been the only ELT teacher in schools generally, there is that. There were rare situations where I worked with another ELT, this school for example. Teachers exchange teaching materials sometimes, but not much about that. Exchanging stuff or benefitting from each other, that does not happen generally. Generally, everybody just follows the way they have built up in years, to do teaching. (Okan, 1st int)*

This suggests that he was not very open to learning with/from others but rather he preferred his own teaching ways, which might be because of the lack of previous collaborative experience. The data from his interview sessions showed that he was more reflective than collaborative and he did not mention any examples of making changes as a result of collaboration. Similarly, Yeliz, who was working in the same school with Kerim, reported that she was exchanging ideas and teaching materials with the other ELT teachers in the school. For her, it seemed as if having good personal relationships with colleagues was a prerequisite for collaboration.

> *Here, we help each other a lot, we make up for each other`s weaknesses. So, if I feel necessary, I will ask them (the other ELT teachers in the school). Or Kerim and Ayse*

(another ELT teacher in the school) will ask me too. We can ask for advice and help from each other; we have no problem at all. But the thing is, we are compatible in terms of our characters, none of us is problematic, that is why we get along well easily and support each other. (Yeliz, 1st int)

Even though she had friendly relationships with the other ELT teachers and she highlighted that the school had a positive working environment, she did not give any examples of learning with/from her colleagues. This might be because, although she sounded more open to collaboration compared to Okan, she did not have any previous collaborative experiences just like Okan. Therefore, she might have not learnt how else to learn with/from others.

Sedef and Lale appeared to differ from the previous three teachers by engaging in slightly more diverse collaborative activities rather than limiting themselves to unplanned in-school activities only. For example, Lale was working in the same school with Pinar, and as well as having informal talks with her, she mentioned benefitting from online ELT teachers' portals as well where she could find opportunities to see various teaching materials and exchange ideas with other ELT teachers working in different school contexts. Additionally, she indicated that she had previously attended a seminar for ELT teachers which was provided by MEB.

In that seminar, the only topic was the coursebooks, the ones that are used in schools and the syllabus. Except for that, issues such as what can be improved in English teaching, what kinds of things can be provided, or exchanging ideas… These kinds of things were never talked about. … It was just like "You will do this, you will integrate values education in your classes, you will focus on all skills, you will teach this way." (Lale, 1st int)

Although she might have had an opportunity of meeting all ELT teachers working in different regions of the same city, the format and the content of the seminar did not seem to encourage the teachers to interact with each other. Sedef mentioned participating in out-of-school structured collaborative activities as well. At the time of the interview, she was undertaking courses for her master`s degree where she could learn about her peers` classroom practices, brainstorm with them to examine case scenarios related to in-school problems and discuss ideas in relation to how students` learning can be enhanced through

drama-related strategies. Yet, when she was asked in the second interview if those interactive activities had been useful in any way or if she had learnt anything she could use in her classes, she said;

Yes, I read articles and everything, but those are not really related to how to teach English, they are more about how to use drama in classes. I mean, not directly linked to teaching English. (Sedef, 2nd int)

Not seeing those interactive activities as learning opportunities, she seemed to differentiate teaching from teaching English by explicitly stating in the first interview that "*developing your generic teaching skills is something, and developing in how to teach English, developing in a specific field I mean, is another thing I believe.*" Having this kind of mindset might have impacted on the extent to which she thought about the ideas emerging from the interactive activities and what kind of actions she took at the end. As such, although she might have found more collaborative learning opportunities than the previous teachers, she, still, did not mention any learning incidents that might have happened as a result of a collaborative activity.

The above given examples show that these teachers did not seem to have much experience of collaboration. And on the occasions where they collaborated with their colleagues, it was basically in the form of informal talks or exchanging materials. Yet, none of the teachers mentioned a change as a result of such interaction. Another commonality among these teachers was referring to ELT teachers only when they were asked about collaboration. That might be because they were all working with other ELT teachers in their schools therefore saw them as preliminary reference, or because they might have detached English teaching from generic teaching like Sedef did.

5.3. Open to Collaboration

Four of the teachers (Dilek, Naz, Ilker and Kerim) appeared to be more open to collaboration and seeing its value. They could give more clear and diverse examples of collaborative activities they had been engaged in.

Ilker and Dilek were graduates of English Language and Literature departments of different universities. They both reported that their pedagogical formation period was not

effective as it was in the format of lecturing, leaving no room for interaction and they did not have any opportunities to practise teaching or observe other teachers after the completion of the pedagogical formation courses. They added that they might not know as much as ELT graduates as they were not trained to become teachers, because of which they seemed to feel the need to benefit from other ELT teachers` expertise. Dilek, for example, mentioned doing changes as a result of joint decisions she made with another ELT teacher in one of her previous schools. While she was working in a religious vocational school in the eastern part of Turkey, she worked as a team with the other ELT teacher to improve the students` motivation for learning English. To achieve that, she stated that they created an English board, decorated classroom doors with flash cards, made vocabulary cards to facilitate vocabulary learning and assigned the students with speaking projects. Although she mentioned all these collaborative activities she engaged in previously, she did not seem to be doing any of those in her current school. That might be because she was the only ELT teacher in her current school or because she did not know how to initiate collaboration.

> *I do not know, they (the school management) can make suggestions, for example, like doing an English street, doing a corridor of English in the school. Or, for example, I want to ask for a board, but I am hesitating thinking if they would give it to me, or how I would do that, I think about these things. I believe they could take the lead on these kinds of things. (Dilek, 1st int)*

Rather than starting a conversation herself, she seemed to be waiting for others to approach and guide her for the things she wanted to do. On the occasions where she had such an initiator like her colleague in the previous school, she appeared to be open to working under their lead; however, when she did not have that as in her current school, she chose not to reach people and became more individualistic. Similarly, Ilker, who was working in the same school with Hande, was not proactive in initiating collaboration either. He did not mention any collaborative experiences from his previous schools, but in the current school he worked with Hande in a project proposed by MEB and decorated the school corridors with the students` learning materials. In addition, although Ilker did not mention himself, Hande reported that they were both planning to do a show in English and she suggested that they would do it together, which implies Hande initiated a possible future collaboration with Ilker.

Kerim and Naz, though not mentioning such planned in-school activities, gave examples of planned out-of-school activities in addition to in-school and out-of-school informal talks with other ELT teachers. Naz, for example, when asked if she found any collaborative opportunities, referred to the annual ELT meetings (Zumre meetings) which takes place as a requirement of MEB where teachers from the same field meet once a year to discuss issues.

As you might know, there are Zumre district meetings, either at the end of each year, or in the beginning. But, this is not a well-working system here in Kuskonmaz (a pseudonym for the village her school was located in). I have criticised this a lot. I am the head of the district Zumre meetings, but I cannot fix the system, that is just the way it goes. When I was in Ariburnu (a pseudonym for the city her previous school was located in), we used to exchange ideas and suggest resources to each other. Like, if somebody applied something in their classes they would share that with the rest of us, or we would talk about the topics in the coursebook. We used to talk about classroom incidents and we had a portal on Facebook. But we do not have it here. The way people see these meetings is, although we only meet once a year, `Let`s get it over with`. As this is the case, I have not been able to do much here. For example, I set an agenda for the issues I wanted to point out, everybody wanted to leave early and so the things that I wanted to address took a very short time. (Naz, 1st int)

This implies that Naz did not have as effective opportunities as she did previously. Yet, she still mentioned exchanging ideas and materials with Okan and asking for advice from the management about the classroom management problems she was experiencing (see Section 4.3.1.). Therefore, rather than waiting for others to approach her like Ilker and Dilek did, she seemed able to reach people if she felt she needed to.

Being open to learning with/from others and not feeling intimidated by them might have been related to Kerim`s and Naz`s background as well. Kerim and Naz graduated from the ELT department of the same university where they reported that they had found many opportunities to do microteaching and get feedback on it from their peers and university mentor lecturers.

The lecturers coming to our classes, especially our mentor lecturer, she was very direct. She would not avoid saying anything and she would do that in front of everyone. She would not ask you to go with her after the class or anything, she would say things directly as they were, in front of everyone. She would make us feel ashamed by saying

> *"You did that wrong, you pronounced that wrongly". I mean she would criticise us. But that is good for students, you push yourself harder for the next microteaching, you try to do better than the previous one, you try to avoid what you did wrong the last time. (Kerim, 1st int)*

Getting feedback from his mentor lecturer and having the opportunity of seeing his peers` microteaching presentations, Kerim might have realised that interactive opportunities helped him improve his teaching. Although he could have felt demotivated and closed himself to others because of his mentor`s attitudes, when he was asked how he felt about those comments in the first interview he said *"speaking for myself, it was motivating for me. … I would get more ambitious since I like ambition"*.

Different from the first group of teachers who seemingly limited themselves from learning with/from others or engaged in very limited collaboration, these four teachers mentioned benefitting from others` expertise. Ilker, for example, when he was asked what else he would like to learn in the profession and what kinds of learning activities he would like to participate in, pointed out as follows;

> *I believe you (me) are lucky as you can learn about other teachers` teaching practices. Teachers should interact with each other, that is because you can learn lessons not only from your own experiences but also from what others are experiencing as well. Based on that, you can take precautions, etc. I do not know, I feel like, if teachers come together and talk about education and stuff, that would be the most useful and fun way of learning. (Ilker, 3rd int)*

Feeling a need for more interactive and collaborative activities, Ilker appeared to acknowledge others` expertise as external sources and therefore see interactive and collaborative activities as learning opportunities.

As can be inferred from the above given examples, the purpose of these teachers` interaction with their colleagues went beyond exchanging ideas and materials to problem solving and making joint decisions for shared goals. Although Dilek and Ilker mentioned only collaborating with ELT teachers just like the previous group of teachers, Kerim and Naz could give examples with other colleagues as well. Unlike the pervious group of teachers, these teachers` engagement in collaborative activities could bring change. Yet, the extent of the change seemed to be limited by only influencing their teaching methods or classroom

management strategies temporarily, but not having any long-term impact. This might be because they were not provided with very effective interactive and collaborative activities, or because the collaborative activities they were engaged in did not trigger reflection at a deeper level.

5.4. Collaborative

Four of the teachers (Pinar, Gaye, Hande and Esma) were found to be very open to collaborative activities and mentioned several collaborative opportunities where they could learn with/from others. Different from the first group of teachers who were mostly engaged in informal in-school talks, or the second group of teachers whose experiences of collaboration resulted in limited change, these four teachers seemed to engage in a wider range of collaborative activities and some of them resulted in longer-term change.

Gaye, for example, gave examples of both unplanned and planned in-school collaborative activities with the other ELT teacher in her school. She reported that they worked together to create a separate ELT teachers` room for themselves where two of them could decide which teaching materials they would use and talk about their practices and plans.

> *I told Berna (the other ELT teacher) "We have to prove that we are not lazy teachers, what shall we do?". That is when the idea of decorating a room for ourselves came up. Well, I do not have a language class in this school now, but once they gave me a class and that was a great year. … But that opportunity was taken from me. … I could not do much in the teachers` room and I sometimes would get involved in conversations and be late for my classes, which bothers me a lot. So, I talked to the head teacher, I said to him "Can you give that separated section to us? … So that I would be here during breaks, have discussions with Berna about classes, etc." He did not seem to be willing at first but agreed later. It was a dirty stinky room, we cleaned it, created space for ourselves and owned the place" (Gaye, 1st int)*

The idea of creating a room for themselves seemed to have derived from Gaye`s reflection on the head teacher`s attitudes towards them and on the in-school resources. Thinking about how she could overcome these issues might have led her to collaborate with Berna, with whom she took further actions for this shared goal. In addition to that, she indicated that they worked together to decorate the English street and to organise a show in

English. According to her, all these efforts positively impacted on the learning outcomes and the parents` and the head teacher`s attitudes towards them as was elaborated previously (see Section 4.3.3.).

The example from Gaye also shows that her engagement in collaboration was triggered by her reflection on the difficulties she was experiencing. Esma, who was working with another ELT teacher in a school located in the rural area, mentioned a different experience. After she was notified by the head teacher about the district governor`s expectations from their school, her and the other ELT teacher organised a theatre play in English to meet those expectations.

> *They (the local authorities) had been expecting a theatre play in English from us, for two years now, the district governor. That requires a lot of effort, you know. … Cinar teacher (the head teacher) kept saying "We should do that, that it would be nice", etc. We tried doing that previously, I regretted that since it was so exhausting, although we were three ELT teachers, we all got very tired. On the second year, one of the ELT teachers left, then we were just two. But then the arts and design teacher helped us fortunately and we did a good job, it was the snow white and seven dwarfs. They (the students) memorised it very well, we did not make any mistakes, it was perfect and the costumes were really successful. (Esma, 1st int)*

In her case, it seemed that others` expectations required her to work with colleagues and she found herself in a team who were expected to work together rather than having to approach colleagues for help like Gaye did. Different from Gaye, Esma reported that the head teacher was very supportive throughout the process by providing them with all the resources they needed. And, she highlighted that the theatre play had a positive impact on the students.

> *For example, one of the parents came to the school, her daughter was one of the dwarfs. She is a very sweet child, but quite shy. That is why I made her the shy dwarf, thinking she is a good fit. But, then we noticed a big difference in her classroom participation. Her mother came to give thanks, she said her daughter started learning English thanks to us. … She improved incredibly, that is a very big motivator for me. (Esma, 1st int)*

As Esma`s and Gaye`s examples might indicate, these two teachers` engagement in collaboration derived from reflecting on others` expectations or their attitudes towards them.

Yet, they seemed to differ in terms of the nature of drive for collaboration as Gaye appeared to be internally motivated to collaborate with her colleague to achieve her goals while Esma might have had an external drive.

In addition to the examples of reflection followed by collaboration, the teachers gave examples of collaboration leading to reflection as well. Pinar, for example, was a graduate of an ELT department of a top-ranking university where she reported that she found opportunities such as observing several teachers teaching both skills and grammar, attending classes of both Turkish teachers and English speaking teachers and talking about her teaching practice either with peers who would observe and record her teaching, or with a mentor teacher. After the pre-service years, she stated she directly started working in a franchised private school where she was provided with many collaborative opportunities as well. As a requirement of the school policy she had to attend a particular number of seminars and conferences every year, she worked in an in-school community of ELT teachers and participated in online groups to do projects with teachers from other schools in Turkey and abroad. All the interactive and collaborative opportunities she had in previous years seemed to have helped her construct her beliefs about what to teach (skills integrated with grammar) and how to teach it (learner-centred teaching). Even in situations where she faced with difficulties in putting her beliefs into practice as in her current school, she did not seem to give up.

> *Students need to get rid of this mindset, there is still that teaching style which encourages memorisations, they need to get rid of that. I am trying to change these in the school. Colleagues here are young, very dynamic and nice. But somehow, they feel like they need to adapt to the system here, because there is a system, and either you are left out or you have to adapt to it. Sometimes, you cannot change everything on your own. Still, we resist with those colleagues, I am still trying to do things. (Pinar, 1st int)*

Pinar`s feeling of not being restrained by external factors might be because she had built up a strong belief system through collaborative and interactive activities she was previously engaged in and by reflecting on her beliefs she might have found power in herself to stay committed to achieve her goals, which suggests her external motivation for collaboration might have triggered internal motivation for reflection. And she might have

learnt how to become reflective over time with the help of pre-service and in-service opportunities, which led her to adopt a creative and solution-oriented approach towards the problems.

The examples in this section show that these teachers` engagement in collaboration seemed to derive from various reasons such as meeting the requirements of their workplaces, create a product through joint decisions, discussing ideas and exchanging materials and talking about their teaching and getting feedback. Although they appeared to refer to ELT teachers mostly when they talked about collaboration, they all mentioned interacting with non-ELT teachers as well, which might imply they were able to recognise others as learning sources unlike the first group of teachers. Different from Dilek and Ilker in the second group, these teachers were proactive in collaboration and felt comfortable to take the lead. And unlike the other teachers, these teachers` engagement in collaborative activities seemed to bring change in different levels including their practice, their beliefs and learning outcomes. This might be because for them collaboration and reflection did not seem to be separate activities, but one involved the other or one triggered the other.

5.5.   Summary

This chapter illustrated the findings with regards to the teachers` engagement in collaborative activity with their colleagues and suggested that collaboration could lead to teacher learning/change in the occasions when it triggered reflection. The chapter clarified the types of the collaborative activities that were available to the teachers as well as the ones the teachers initiated themselves. It also showed how the teachers differed from each other in terms of their approach towards collaboration and indirectly signalled that the contextual factors were more impactful on the teachers` engagement in collaboration which will be explained further in Section 7.4. The next chapter will focus on the factors affecting the teachers` experiences of reflective and collaborative PL activities.

CHAPTER 6 FACTORS THAT AFFECT ELT TEACHERS` ENGAGEMENT IN

REFLECTIVE AND COLLABORATIVE PL ACTIVITIES

6.1.   Introduction

Previously in Chapter 2, reflective practice and collaborative working were defined as two aspects of PL, and PL was linked to change. Therefore, by engaging in reflective and collaborative activities, teachers can grow and achieve change in their beliefs and practices and learning outcomes. Yet, as was discussed in Chapter 2, change ought to be considered as a process rather than a product, and achieving change may not be straightforward as individual and contextual factors impact on the change process.

In the previous two chapters, I looked at how the ELT teachers working in different contexts in Turkey experienced reflective practice and collaborative working in their PL respectively. In this chapter, I will examine the factors influencing the ability of these teachers to engage in reflective and collaborative PL activities. With this aim in mind, I will first present the individual factors affecting the teachers in relation to their engagement in reflective and collaborative PL activities, which will be followed by the contextual factors affecting reflective practice and/or collaborative working.

6.2.   Individual Factors

Individual factors such as previous experiences, backgrounds, belief systems, values and motivations constitute teachers` stance towards change, therefore play an important role in the change process (Chapter 2). For this study as well, the individual factors were found to impact greatly on the extent to which the teachers were engaged in reflective and collaborative PL activities that shape their current teaching practices and future aspirations. Three key aspects, namely motivation, self-efficacy and beliefs emerged from the data and helped to explain the differences among the teachers. In the remainder of this section, I will give an overview of these individual aspects first, and this will be followed by more details together with the examples from the teachers under each sub-section.

Regarding motivation, the teachers` explanations about how motivated they felt and where their motivation derived from seemed important. While some teachers were found to be more dependent on external sources, others were more internally motivated. As such, the

internally motivated teachers did not appear to feel restricted by the external factors and stayed motivated even when they were faced with difficulties. The teachers with an externally driven motivation, on the other hand, were found to feel easily encouraged or discouraged by the external factors, and the contextual settings they were working in seemed to directly impact on how they were feeling about teaching. Examples such as feeling less excited and less idealistic in teaching, questioning themselves if they wanted to continue teaching, experiencing burnt out and feeling like they have plateaued, were associated with lower levels of motivation, while persisting to achieve their goals, showing willingness for PL, challenging themselves to overcome difficulties and trying to live up to their ideal visions were associated with higher levels of motivation.

A number of positive and negative comments from the teachers had implications about their self-efficacy. In terms of the level of their self-efficacy, some mentioned feeling confident about their teaching, finding their teaching very efficient, feeling satisfied with their teaching, whilst others questioned their teaching abilities, felt insufficient, and did competency self-checks. In addition to their sense of efficacy, what they were disposed towards was also found to be important, meaning whether they wanted to continue to grow or were satisfied with their teaching. While the ones who were disposed towards growth seemed able to check their qualities, detect what they could improve and take further actions, the ones who were more towards feeling satisfied did not appear to see any need for improving as they were content with their qualities. This might be related to whom or what these teachers attributed failure. While the ones who felt satisfied appeared to attribute failure to other factors and therefore did not see themselves as responsible for the outcome, the ones aiming to grow attributed failure to themselves and therefore saw themselves responsible for any outcome. As such, it seemed the first group did not perceive any need to engage in reflective and collaborative activities while the second group did to improve the outcomes.

In relation to their beliefs, the teachers talked about what should be taught and how, their beliefs of ideal outcome and ideal teaching and their perceived responsibilities as a teacher. The type of their beliefs seemed to shape their teaching, and while some were found to have more `traditional` beliefs (teacher regulated, content driven, grammar focused and instructed in Turkish), some seemed to hold more `progressive` beliefs (student centred, participative, skills integrated, exposure to English). The teachers also differed from each

other with regards to whether their actual practice aligned with their beliefs. At the times when they experienced a gap, they seemed to engage in reflective and collaborative PL activities to achieve closer to their beliefs; while, on the other hand, in the cases when their teaching was consistent with their beliefs, they might not have had such a drive.

In the coming sub-sections, the teachers` motivation, self-efficacy and beliefs will be further discussed in relation to their engagement in reflective and collaborative PL activities. Even though I intend to focus on the individual factors in this section of the thesis, the individual and contextual factors are interlinked, therefore there might be some overlaps. Yet, for the sake of clarity, I will look at the contextual factors in Section 6.3.

6.2.1. Motivation

Table 10 displays information about the teachers in terms of the type and the level of their motivation.

Table 10

The type and the level of the teachers` motivation

Level of Motivation	Type of Motivation		
	Externally driven		*Internally driven*
Low	Mine, Sedef Dilek, Naz, Yeliz		
Moderate		Okan, Lale Kerim, Ilker	
High		Esma, Hande	Gaye, Pinar

Mine, Sedef, Dilek, Naz and Yeliz were found to have a low level of externally driven motivation. Sedef, Dilek, Mine and Naz reported feeling less enthusiastic in the profession, feeling tired and worn out, and mentioned burn out even though they had been teaching for five years or less.

I was more excited in the early years, more enthusiastic. But when you experience negative things, you can`t avoid losing that side of you. (Sedef, 1st int)

I feel like, every year, I am less excited when the school term starts... My heart would beat faster in the early years when I stepped in the classroom, now slower. … I do not know, I guess I am losing my enthusiasm. (Dilek, 3rd int)

Their feeling this way might be due to previous experiences and various contextual factors. Naz, for example, indicated that she had done part-time teaching in her pre-service years and after graduating she worked in different schools both as a permanent teacher and a substitute teacher. In one of these schools, according to her, she had suffered from a repressive management and had felt compelled to move school. In addition to such negative experiences, she sounded disappointed about the teaching as a profession as well.

About teaching, when you start teaching for the first time, you expect that you would be respected and all. But I have learnt that that is not happening. (Naz, 1st int)

Going through all these experiences seemed to make her question whether teaching should be her lifelong profession as she mentioned in the first interview; "*I feel like "is this (teaching) going to be it (my life)?". I need to do something about it, something to change it.*"

Okan, Lale, Kerim, Ilker, Esma and Hande seemed similar to the previous teachers in terms of being influenced by the contextual factors to a great extent; however, they appeared to differ from them by having some degree of internal motivation. For example, Okan confessed that the school-related problems and systemic problems had reduced his level of motivation over time and that he did not feel as motivated anymore. Although his teaching seemed to exemplify the `traditional` way mostly, he sounded very enthusiastic about teaching pronunciation and accents in English, which, according to him, was because of his personal interest in those aspects of the language. Having such an interest, he mentioned searching for techniques to how to best learn and teach pronunciation, watching videos and reading various resources.

It (his interest in pronunciation) reflects positively on students, I explain them how British and American accents vary, some say this, some say that, etc. It draws students` attention and I like teaching this kind of stuff. Teaching how to pronounce words correctly, the types of vocabularies, etc motivate me as well. (Okan, 1st int)

This suggests, Okan`s motivation triggered a deeper level of reflection for teaching these aspects of the language and he did not spare taking actions to improve the learning outcomes. Even though he might have seen the contextual factors as insurmountable and did not push himself for teaching skills or instructing in English for example, he did not feel so for teaching what he liked himself.

Esma and Hande differed from Okan, Lale, Kerim and Ilker by showing high levels of motivation to improve their teaching, which might have been because of their positive school environments. Esma`s interview data highlighted how her motivation level increased or decreased across schools. She had worked in three different schools as a substitute teacher before she started in her current school, and she reported that she did not feel accepted or valued as a teacher by her colleagues previously. Such attitudes from her colleagues might have impacted on the time and effort she invested on her teaching, as she admitted that she focused on simply transmitting the content to the students.

When you are doing substitute teaching you do not have that belonging feeling. … Your colleagues treat you as a substitute, I cannot lie about that. Both the management and the colleagues, they all do that. … These are big disadvantages. You do not feel you belong there. And the salary, money is a big motivation tool, the salary is not worth the tiredness. It decreases your motivation too. The students` profile affects you quite a lot, the schools I worked back then were all located in poor neighbourhoods, rough lives. (Esma, 1st int)
In the previous schools, I did not teach in English. … So it was like, you fear thinking the students would not understand. But I believe if I had tried harder, they would have understood it. … There was a coursebook we were using, I followed the book. I tried to do whatever was written in the book rather than trying to get to know the students, that was a mistake. (Esma, 2nd int)

Feeling disconnected to the previous schools as well as other external factors seemed to influence how motivated Esma felt in teaching. Even though she did not mention any previous examples of reflection or collaboration, she appeared to be very open to reflective and collaborative activities in her current school. This might be because she had a stronger sense of belonging to the current school and she felt she was valued by her colleagues.

About my current school, it is my school. My tenure here is 7 years, … This is my school. The management is a big motivator, …, Cinar teacher (the head teacher) supports us a lot. … He is very efficient, he pushes us all the time saying "You can do this" or "What

shall we try this time", he really works hard, ..., for success. ... He pushes us, then we push students and parents, like domino effect. In our school, as I said before, the management motivates us, with their support we improve. (Esma, 1st int)

In addition, other differences between the previous and the current school such as the rise in her salary, the parents and the students and the opportunities she could find as a permanent teacher might have contributed to her level of motivation. And all these, in return, seemed to impact on her feelings as a teacher and helped her become more reflective and collaborative to better her teaching.

To improve myself, I try to explore. Every group (of students) learns differently. ... So according to what students like, I spend time thinking what to do and get help from others. ... I put a lot of effort myself and try to get help as much as I can from others. (Esma, 1st int)

In contrast to the teachers mentioned so far, Gaye and Pinar were found to have an internally driven motivation and they were less affected by the contextual factors.

My teaching is individual, I mean I am not dependent on others. What I am trying to say is, do others affect me? Maybe it is something related to my teaching experience, once I realise that they (others) would not contribute to me in any way, I can just distance myself from them by even creating a space for myself. ... About my colleagues here and everything, I just laugh off, I don't care that much. Except for that (problems she had while doing master's), nothing can demotivate me. (Gaye, 1st int)

Yet, this should not mean they did not perceive the contextual factors as discouraging at all. As was explained in Section 4.3.3., Gaye had gone through some problems with the management and the parents, and she indicated that she had received complaints from the parents regarding her teaching approach.

That day (when she learnt about the complaint), I took a stroll in the city centre, the whole day. I remembered my days at university, all the things I had done until then, my efforts. That is a terrible moment, a very terrible moment. But somehow, you overcome those too. (Gaye, 1st int)

Although such experiences might have been discouraging, Gaye seemed able to persist, which might be because of having an ideal vision for herself. She reported having difficulties in English in her pre-service years and feeling behind her peers whose, according to her, primary school English language teachers were effective. This made her think, as she mentioned in the second interview, *"it (learning English) happens when students first meet English. They first meet me, so I should do as much as I can".* Believing she has responsibilities as an ELT teacher and investing efforts to live up to that ideal vision might have been an internal drive for Gaye to stay motivated. For Pinar, on the other hand, fearing of being insufficient and failing to meet students` needs seemed to be how she maintained her motivation. Instead of settling with what she had achieved, Pinar mentioned feeling a constant need to improve her teaching, which might be related to her background. She indicated that she was trained to teach in private schools, and she started teaching in a high-achieving private school after the graduation, which might have aligned well with the training she received. However, moving to a public school seemed to make her realise she would have to change her approaches to teaching if she was going to meet the needs of the students. Therefore, getting out of her comfort zone and the fear of unknown might have led her to continuously make revisions and stay alerted to get to know her students.

The examples from Gaye and Pinar suggests that these teachers` motivation was grounded on internal mechanisms and fed by their ideal-self visions and fears. As such, even though they might have occasionally felt low in the face of the difficulties, they seemed able to draw on inspiration that transcended the context. Therefore, while the previous teachers became less or more reflective and collaborative depending on the contextual factors, these two teachers were engaged in more efficient forms of reflection and collaboration regardless of the external factors.

6.2.2. Self-efficacy

Table 11 shows information about the teachers in terms of their level of self-efficacy and their disposition towards growing and feeling satisfied.

Table 11

Teachers` sense of efficacy and disposition

Self-efficacy	Disposition	
	Grow	*Satisfied*
Low	Kerim, Lale, Pinar	Dilek
High	Gaye, Esma, Hande	Mine, Sedef, Naz, Yeliz, Ilker, Okan

Dilek, Mine, Sedef, Naz, Yeliz, Ilker and Okan seemed to be disposed towards feeling satisfied with their current quality of teaching. Yet, while Dilek had a low sense of efficacy as she felt inadequate in teaching because of her non-ELT related background, the other teachers had a higher sense of efficacy. The teachers differed from each other in terms of their reasons for feeling contented with their current teaching. Sedef, Yeliz and Naz felt their teaching was effective because they were trained by qualified and competent academics in pre-service years. In addition, their previous teaching experience seemed to boost their confidence as well since they sounded as if they had mastered teaching over years therefore saw almost no reason to revise their qualities.

If you have enough experience, you test it over years and see what works and what does not. And not to waste your time … you directly go to that one (teaching way) so you do not lose time with other methods. (Yeliz, 1st int)
I am very sure about my teaching methods and techniques. (Yeliz, 2nd int)

Similarly, Ilker appeared to associate the efficacy of his teaching with his teaching experience and subject knowledge.

As you study (preparing for classes) and memorise stuff, since it is the same syllabus, you master the syllabus, or you become able to do more than you did in the last year. So, I cannot say my teaching is worse than last year`s, I believe I can teach better than last year. (Ilker, 1st int)

Okan and Dilek, on the other hand, seemed to evaluate the quality of their teaching according to the profile of their students. When asked about PL activities he was engaged in and whether he found PL necessary, Okan said;

We could do more (of PL activities) actually, but we do it to an extent. That is because we do not feel the need, I do not really need to improve myself in MEB (public schools). This (the bit he was doing) is related to my own eagerness. There is nothing that pushes us or no opportunities to improve ourselves, and plus there is not much need. (Okan, 3rd int)

Feeling strong enough for this type of school, Okan did not see any need to improve, which suggests they might feel such a need in more demanding school contexts like Dilek did previously in a science school where she was teaching high-achieving students.

If I worked in a science school, I would feel more anxious because those students are much better, so I would have to study and prepare for the classes ... But our students are much worse, and every year it is getting worse. … So for my current students, I check the coursebook one day before the class, and I see I am going to teach this, and I say to myself "I know it already, I will teach the way I always teach" and that is how I go to my classes. But if it was a science school or a private school, I feel it would be different, I would feel the obligation to do preparation, that is what I believe. (Dilek, 3rd int)

Considering the given examples, there appeared to be little incentive for these teachers to critique and revise their teaching. They seemed to attribute failure to external factors rather than themselves and therefore did not feel any perceived threat to their sense of efficacy, which might have prevented them from being more open to reflective and collaborative PL activities.

Gaye, Esma, Kerim, Lale, Hande and Pinar were found to be disposed towards growth; however, the teachers differed from each other in terms of their sense of efficacy (see Table 11).

I am an example of a teacher who has no resources. But my self-confidence has boosted greatly, whichever primary school they send me to teach, I can teach well. (Gaye, 1st int)

I, for example, never see myself enough. Since I do not find myself enough, I want to do more, all the time, to search for things. (Pinar, 3rd int)

Regardless of the self-efficacy levels, they did not seem to feel satisfied with the quality of their teaching. This was possibly because they felt motivated to achieve more as was explained in Section 6.2.1., and having seen positive outcomes for their efforts might have led them to feel more motivated, which, in turn, might have increased their sense of efficacy.

These things (positive feedback) make me feel like, …, you know when you get more and more motivated as you do, something like that. (Hande, 2nd int)

Another reason might be, these teachers, unlike the previous ones, appeared to attribute failure to themselves and take responsibility for learning outcomes by revising their teaching qualities.

It is constantly changing, the students, the generations, … For example, I did not have any student with special needs before, I came across with one here. I come across with different student types, like, all the time, therefore I need to search for what I can do with them, that is why I am not finding myself enough. (Pinar, 3rd int)

One has to look at themselves first, checking what they can do and what they cannot do, detecting what they are lacking etc, and then they need to keep themselves updated accordingly. (Kerim, 3rd int)

Similarly, Lale mentioned that her students had previously had problems with listening in English and she felt responsible for helping them to improve their skills.

Now, it is my fourth year in teaching. … In the past, when the students listened to something they would not understand it, or even in daily life, when we went on a school trip for example, they kept asking me about the lyrics of songs like "What does it say here" etc, and this bothered me a lot. That is because you are their teacher. … So, I would blame myself thinking I could not teach well. (Lale, 2nd int)

Experiencing such a problem seemed to lead her to look for ideas about how to teach listening strategies, and after implementing those ideas in her classes she mentioned an improvement in the learning outcomes. This suggests, reflecting on her qualities might have served as an internal motivation for her and she undertook actions to feel better in teaching.

Different from the previous teachers who appeared to build up their confidence on the previous experiences, the student profile and their natural capabilities, the sense of efficacy of these six teachers looked more dependent on the current learning outcomes.

6.2.3. Beliefs

Table 12 presents the teachers in relation to the type of their beliefs and the alignment between their practices and beliefs.

Table 12

The type of the teachers` beliefs and the alignment with their practices and beliefs

Type	Alignment	
	Aligned	*Not Aligned*
Mostly traditional	Yeliz, Sedef, Mine, Okan, Naz	-----
Mostly progressive	Pinar, Hande, Gaye, Esma	Ilker, Lale,Kerim, Dilek

Okan, Mine, Yeliz and Sedef appeared to have `traditional` beliefs about teaching English and their teaching reflected their beliefs. For example, Sedef reported she believed that the students should be competent in grammar and vocabulary and that some topics were best taught in the traditional way which was what the students were used to. As such, even though she mentioned using games and other techniques occasionally, her lessons were mainly grammar and vocabulary oriented and teacher centred.

> *When you try to teach through games quite often, …, students do not take it seriously. I agree that learning through natural ways is nice and all, …, but I believe some topics cannot be taught that way. And I also do not like when students feel like they are playing games rather than they are learning… Because of all these reasons, to make them understand that it (learning) is a serious process, I admit that I do not use games, movies and stuff very often. I can say that I am trying to balance, that is all. (Sedef, 1st int)*

In addition to these four teachers, Naz seemed to be teaching in a similar way as well. Although she did not mention much about her beliefs of teaching, she sounded very exam

oriented. In the second interview, when she was asked to reflect on one of her last classes, she preferred to talk about a high-attaining group and how her class with them went as follows;

> *I started using a supplementary coursebook yesterday, I use it with 7/b. It is a very good group, actually it is the best group in the school, there are amazing students there. So, I asked them to buy supplementary coursebooks. Normally, if I tell any average student to finish the first two units on the coursebook, there is no way they will do it. But these students did that. So, we went over the answers for two class hours, incessantly. (Naz, 2nd int)*

Naz may have shaped her teaching according to what was expected from her. Even though she might not have her own agenda for teaching, she seemed content with her teaching as she was preparing the students for the exam. Having no noticeable gaps between their actual teaching and beliefs, these teachers may have felt no tension, which could have served as a drive for them to do things differently.

Ilker, Kerim, Dilek, Gaye, Esma, Hande, Pinar and Lale appeared to have more `progressive` beliefs about teaching, yet they differed from each other as to whether they could put their beliefs into practice. And Dilek, Ilker, Kerim and Lale seemed less able to teach in the way they believed they should have.

> *Actually, we should focus on reading, listening, writing so that skills would improve. … At the weekend course just now, I taught grammar then gave the students tests and they did that. Yes, I correct their pronunciation when they read the sentences aloud, but I do not make them speak or write. If the school had that kind of system, I would try to focus on skills. (Dilek, 2nd int)*
> *But I teach grammar, because that is what they ask in the exam. (Dilek, 1st int)*

The examination system and the school`s expectations from her might have shaped Dilek`s teaching, which seemed to apply to Ilker and Kerim as well since they both reported that the years they were teaching (whether they were exam group or not) played an important role in their teaching approach. Ilker, for example, highlighted that his beliefs about teaching English changed completely after participating in a language course in the US during his bachelor's degree. He reported that he realised having the grammatical knowledge was

not enough to be able to communicate in English after he himself experienced problems with communication, even though he had known the grammar. He mentioned prioritising teaching the skills and daily language, and he seemed to do so in the weekend courses.

> *I have never wanted to stick to the coursebook. In the weekend courses, for example, I do not follow the coursebook. During those courses, I make the students watch the cartoon series I told you about, I ask them to come up with dialogues themselves regarding the topic, then I ask them to talk to each other, just using whatever is given in the cartoon. (Ilker, 3rd int)*

Yet, his teaching did not look very consistent with his beliefs as he emphasised he was able to do so with the smaller age groups but not with the exam groups. This might be because, as in Dilek`s case, he was expected to do exam-oriented teaching.

> *And, the expectations of the school management and the parents are, of course, students` making as few mistakes as possible in the exam. (Ilker, 1st int)*

As such, it seemed Ilker, just like Dilek, put aside his beliefs and tried to meet the exam-oriented expectations instead. In addition to the examination system, the pressure of time may have led the teachers abandon their beliefs. Lale, for example, felt pressured to complete the syllabus within the given time as follows;

> *Regardless of how much I teach something in the class, regardless of how many times I explain it, or how much they write it, it happens to an extent. Then, in that case, English classes start to have no difference from other courses. But, I feel like it would work much better if it is taught in a fun way, through activities, songs, etc. But, there is absolutely no time to do that right now, we have this syllabus to finish at the end, and we do not have materials either. (Lale, 3rd int)*

Experiencing such pressure, Lale might have felt obliged to follow the coursebook rather than enriching her classes with different activities as she believed she should have.

Unlike the previous teachers, the way Esma, Gaye, Pinar and Hande were teaching seemed more aligned with their beliefs. When asked in the third interview about their perspective of ideal teaching, their actual classroom practices looked similar to the ideal

teaching scenarios they described. This was confirmed by the teachers themselves when they talked about how close they believed their teaching was to their ideal teaching scenarios.

I am trying to do everything I have just said, I mean, as far as I can. … I have a clear conscience. It is not like I am describing this ideal teaching scenario and not doing it at all, I am doing all of it. (Pinar, 3ʳᵈ int)

I am repeating again, I am doing things to achieve my ideals about teaching. I do listening activities in my classes, I speak in English, and as I told you before, we are doing speaking classes now, we started doing that recently. (Hande, 3ʳᵈ int)

This implies that the gap between these teachers` practices and beliefs might be narrower compared to the previous four teachers. In this case, their beliefs about teaching might have internally motivated them to become more reflective and collaborative in order to achieve closer to their ideal teaching scenarios.

6.3. Contextual Factors

Contextual factors, in addition to individual factors, impact greatly on the change process as contexts in which teachers work affect their feelings and dispositions towards PL (Chapter 2). In the previous section, I looked at the individual factors and how they impacted on the teachers` engagement in reflective and collaborative PL activities. In this section, I will explore the contextual factors emerging from the data, which were grouped into Braun et al.`s (2011) concepts of external contexts, material contexts and situated contexts as there seemed to be issues at different levels (Chapter 2). External contexts included a lack of PL incentives from the authorities, the examination system and a lack of PL activities; material contexts referred to teaching materials, class and school size, syllabus and class hours. And situated contexts were seen as school location, colleagues, schools` expectations, teaching groups, workload and time, autonomy and in-school initiatives. Table 13 shows the contextual factors affecting the teachers` engagement in reflective and collaborative PL activities. Each of them will be discussed further in detail under the sub-sections in the remaining of this section.

Table 13

The contextual factors affecting the teachers` engagement in reflective and collaborative PL activities

CONTEXTUAL FACTORS		Gaye	Esma	Yeliz	Kerim	Lale	Dilek	Hande	Sedef	Naz	Okan	Ilker	Mine	Pinar
External contexts	Lack of incentives	√	√						√					
	Examination system	√	√				√	√	√			√	√	√
	Lack of PL opportunities	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Material contexts	Teaching materials	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
	Class and school size	√								√			√	
	Syllabus and class hours	√	√		√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√
Situated contexts	School location	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
	Colleagues	√	√	√		√	√	√		√			√	√
	Schools` expectations	√	√			√	√		√			√	√	√
	Teaching groups		√	√	√				√	√		√	√	√
	Workload and time		√			√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√
	Autonomy		√		√				√	√				√
	In-school initiatives					√	√	√			√		√	√

6.3.1. External contexts

The incentives, examination system and available PL opportunities seemed to be the issues at the systemic level. While formal PL opportunities appear to have affected the extent to which the teachers were engaged in collaborative activities, the examination system and the lack of incentives impacted more on their engagement in reflective practice.

All teachers appeared to agree that there were not enough available PL opportunities for them to attend. For example, Okan, when asked what kinds of opportunities he had found in his teaching career, said;

No opportunities have been provided, not for the language itself or for overseas education. I have not really seen many seminars for teachers, or any kinds of trainings etc. There are not many opportunities, the state does not have those kinds of means. (Okan, 1st int)

In addition to the availability of PL opportunities, the nature of the already available opportunities seemed equally important. The teachers all confirmed that there were annual meetings (Zumre meetings), yet these were largely seen as `box ticking exercises` rather than development opportunities.

For MEB teachers, there are generally Zumre meetings in towns and city centres. But these Zumre meetings are empty inside, it goes like "Let`s get it over with". All formality. There are no conversations that might be helpful for our improvement. (Okan, 1st int)

Those are only for show. … For MEB, the only thing that matters is `Done, done, done`. (Esma, 2nd int)

This suggests that the teachers did not find many available or helpful structured collaborative opportunities, which might have affected the type of the collaborative activities they were engaged in by limiting them mostly to unstructured collaborative activities. Additionally, as they were not expected to do more than Zumre meetings, engaging in other collaborative activities seemed to be their decision, which may have led some of the teachers to become more individualistic and relatively closed to others.

Eight of the teachers (Mine, Sedef, Ilker, Gaye, Hande, Pinar, Dilek and Esma) highlighted that the examination system prioritised vocabulary and grammar knowledge over assessing skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking). This, according to them, resulted in people`s associating knowing English with doing well in exams.

> *This is our system, they (authorities) expect us to prove ourselves through exam scores. Our perspective of success is strange. If you are a good teacher, then you should improve the exam scores. The problem is our perspective of success, I think. (Esma, 3rd int)*

> *In our country, knowing English is assessed based on grammatical knowledge; if you can correctly use he, she, it adding `s` for simple present tense, or if you can put -ing after am, is, are in the present continuous tense, that is it. (Ilker, 1st int)*

Having the pressure for their students to do well in the exams seemed to have led the teachers to adopt an exam-oriented approach to their teaching. By doing so, they may have felt they were meeting the expectations already, which might have prevented them from looking for other ideas and therefore engaging in reflective practice. This is because, on the occasions when they experienced a problem or they wanted to improve the learning outcomes and thought of ideas, the importance given to the exam results might have set a barrier, limiting them from taking actions. At the end, they might have chosen to take the safe path by trying to do well on the exams only. Additionally, Sedef, Gaye and Esma discussed that there were no incentives for them.

> *You try once, twice, then you give up too. That is because you look around and see everyone is a teacher, they all get the same salary. Something confuses you, I mean, something breaks your resistance, something demotivates you. (Gaye, 3rd int)*

> *You expect something, like they can give certificates, or they can just put it in our Mebbis (teachers`personal portal established by MEB) records. They can just even put a statement like "A drama activity has been done". … But we do not have that, even that does not happen. (Esma, 2nd int)*

As this suggests, not getting any rewards or incentives for their efforts demotivated the teachers and they might have lacked the motivation to do more than they were required to.

6.3.2. Material contexts

The problems the teachers reported regarding teaching materials, class and school size and syllabus and class hours seemed to be related to the resources inside and outside of their school contexts and they all appeared to affect the forms of reflection they were engaged in.

All teachers highlighted that the textbooks were problematic in terms of the way they were designed, and the focus was on teaching grammatical rules rather than daily language and skills.

I try to avoid teaching grammar to students as much as possible, but the textbook keeps pushing me to do that. I would like to be freer. (Gaye, 3rd int)

Teaching materials should support that (teaching speaking) too. Like, for example, I cannot teach that (speaking) and then give them (students) homework from the textbook. That is because, in the textbooks, they ask students whether to put is or are in the blanks, that is what the textbooks teach. Teachers have to teach what they see in the textbooks, so they stick to the syllabus. What I mean is, there is a disconnection. (Ilker, 3rd int)

In addition to the focus of the textbooks, the efficacy of the textbook activities seemed to be another issue. Dilek, for example, confirming that there were listening activities in the textbooks, emphasised that they were not useful.

Now, MEB coursebooks, listening, …, it is so weak in visuals and all. … It is so boring, so boring. Even I feel bored, I do not know how the students are bearing with it. (Dilek, 1st int)

A lack of supplementary materials appeared to be another problem regarding the teaching materials. Six of the teachers (Gaye, Okan, Ilker, Mine, Dilek and Lale) reported that the only available teaching materials were textbooks and online portals. Yet, as Dilek, Gaye and Mine did not have smart boards in their schools, they did not have access to online portals either, which seemed to impact negatively on their teaching.

But we do not have smart boards, so they (students) can`t do listening. … To be honest, I do not really look for what else I can do because the resources we have are very limited. So, I do not look for other ways. Generally, I use Grammar Translation Method (GTM), it is what is commonly used in Turkey anyway. (Mine, 2nd int)

Not having smart boards, these teachers might have felt restricted in terms of the activities they could apply in their classes and lacked motivation to look for different ideas. And, for the teachers who had access to smart boards, even the provided online portals did not seem to help much.

EBA (the online portal for teaching materials) this year is helpful to an extent. Although there is not much there and although I do not like it really, there are some activities for secondary school students. (Okan, 1st int)

They say we should use EBA, I do not know if you know about that. But it has nothing, nothing in there. I search for things there, but nothing appeals to me. I was having a look at it the other day, found a PowerPoint for example, about causatives. Well, I can prepare PowerPoints too. If it provides different options, alternative activities with songs and games and etc, I can do better in my classes too. (Lale, 3rd int)

Naz, Gaye, Mine and Sedef indicated issues regarding the school and class size as well. Naz stated that she used to use story books to teach vocabulary and track students` reading when she was working in a village school in Ariburnu (a pseudonym). Yet, when she was asked if she was still doing that, she said;

Rather than that (story books), I am using the reading texts (in the teaching materials) now. I cannot do the story books anymore. That is because, I had one class from each year there, from year 2 to year 8. It was much easier. But now I have a lot more students, this school is crowded. To be honest, I cannot put that much effort now. (Naz, 2nd int)

The increase in the number of the students with the change of the schools seemed to have led Naz to thinking that she would not be able to do what she could do with less students, and therefore giving up on looking for different ideas.

Eleven of the teachers (Ilker, Hande, Esma, Kerim, Okan, Pinar, Dilek, Lale, Naz, Gaye and Mine) reported problems regarding the syllabus, the class hours and the imbalance

between them. According to them, the syllabus was either beyond the students` levels or too intensive, having too much to teach for each class hour.

I feel like it would be better if we could teach through games, songs, activities, in a fun way. But we do not have time to do that, at the moment. And, at the end, we have a syllabus to finish on our plates. (Lale, 3rd int)

For example, I have three class hours. And I have this syllabus, in the same coursebook unit I have to teach present tense, comparatives and there is something else as well, I cannot remember it now. And I have to teach all these in three weeks. Present tense on its own can take three weeks already as I want students to learn it well. … So, class hours can be increased. (Esma, 3rd int)

The teachers, as this indicates, might have felt obliged to prioritise finishing the syllabus to meet what was expected from them. And not having balance between the teaching content and the class hours might have limited them from looking for ideas. As such, even on occasions where they reflected on their teaching and felt the need to make changes as in Lale`s case, they might not have taken further actions.

6.3.3. Situated contexts

The problems that the teachers talked about regarding schools` location (including parents and students), colleagues, schools` expectations, teaching groups, workload and time, autonomy and in-school initiatives seemed to be related to their working environments. While in-school initiatives and colleagues were found to impact more on the teachers` engagement in collaborative activities, school location affected their engagement in both collaborative and reflective activities. The other factors, on the other hand, appeared to impact more on their experiences of reflective practice.

Six of the teachers (Hande, Lale, Okan, Dilek, Pinar and Mine) reported that their schools did not promote collaboration and interaction among colleagues.

There is not much communication among colleagues for the classes we teach. Such things do not happen at MEB (schools). (Okan, 3rd int)

Now, to improve this (the system in MEB schools), I believe the things that private schools do can be done in MEB schools too, establishing a feedback mechanism.

Instead of letting people be, we could observe an English class and then give suggestions to each other like "This could be done, we could do that, etc". (Hande, 3rd int)

The lack of such initiatives in their schools might have led the teachers to become more individualistic rather than collaborative and even closed to others` ideas as in Okan`s case which was discussed previously in Section 5.2.

Additionally, colleagues` characteristics, their attitudes towards English classes and having other ELT teachers in their schools seemed to play an important role in the extent to which nine of the teachers (Gaye, Yeliz, Naz, Pinar, Esma, Hande, Lale, Dilek and Mine) were engaged in in-school collaborative activities. For example, Esma confirmed that she had not been engaged in any kind of interaction or collaboration with her colleagues in previous schools since she had not felt accepted by them. Yet, she looked quite open to collaboration in her current school which, according to her, was because of the relationship she had established with the other ELT in the school.

Me with Ferhan (the other ELT teacher), that is something personal, like for example I prepare exam papers and ask her to have a look at them. We were talking about that yesterday morning actually, with other colleagues with whom I drive to the school. We have another colleague, and she has a zumre (a colleague from the same field) as well. She says "I would not show them (exam papers)", she adds "if I show them to her, I know she would look down on me thinking why I cannot do it on my own, why I am asking that, etc". Not having communication between zumre teachers is a problem. I, for example, show things to Ferhan, she does the same. I ask her like "What do you think about this" and she can go like "I think it is a bit heavy, so might be confusing for students" and I remove that item. (Esma, 2nd int)

For Esma, having an ELT teacher who was approachable and not judgemental was important. As well as the characteristics of ELT teachers in their schools, other colleagues` attitudes towards English classes seemed important.

What demotivates me is, always having colleagues who are like "Never mind English, students should learn Turkish". I see even colleagues are narrow-minded like that. That is one of the sentences that pisses me off the most, and they kind of affect students. The students, also, go like "Never mind English, teacher. What use will it do to us?" (Yeliz, 2nd int)

Not being respected or taken seriously as a teacher by her colleagues might have affected Yeliz as to whether she felt comfortable to work with her colleagues, which seemed to be the case for Lale as well.

> *I wish we could be working with people who were more open minded and respectful, and who had more positive attitudes towards English, I mean in terms of the management and the school level. That would be better for us. And in that case, our only job would be teaching English. (Lale, 3rd int)*

Their colleagues` having such negative attitudes towards their classes might have impacted on the extent to which the teachers were able to approach them. This might also have led them to collaborate only with ELT teachers or become more individualistic as in Lale`s case which was explained previously (see Section 5.2.).

In addition, where the schools were located seemed to affect the collaborative opportunities the teachers could find. Naz, Dilek and Mine mentioned having difficulties by not having access to many opportunities because of teaching (and living) in small cities or remote villages. Dilek, for example, when asked what she thought about the available PL options for the ELT teachers, said;

> *I come across trainings and courses sometimes on Facebook groups, taking place in big cities like Istanbul or Ankara, from organisations like British Culture or others, like bringing professors and stuff. And they are open to all ELT teachers. I wish I could have such opportunities, I would love to attend and I would attend for sure. But, unfortunately, I have not come across with such a thing in the city I live. (Dilek, 1st int)*

Not having out-of-school activities might have affected the range of collaborative activities the teachers were engaged in, and the lack of structured and planned activities might have led them to engaging in online and informal collaborative activities mostly.

The schools` location appeared to play an indirect role in impacting on the teachers` engagement in reflective practice as well. It seemed the schools` location was linked to the profile of the students (their academic success and way of behaviours) and the parents (their socioeconomic status), which, according to all teachers, influenced their motivation to a great

extent. Gaye, when asked if she was faced any difficulties, talked about the parents rather than the students.

You can somehow control the students. Why do the students react? That is because they most probably do not understand something about the activity, they feel like they will not be able to do it and having such a fear they go like "I do not want to do this". If you make things clearer for them, they will do it eventually. … But what frustrates me the most is the parents, because they simply do not get it. (Gaye, 2nd int)

Not having the parents` support for her teaching approach or their respect as a teacher was an important demotivator for Gaye (see Sections 4.3.3. and 6.2.1.), which might be linked to the area her school was located, where, according to her, most parents had lower socioeconomic status. For Dilek, the profile of the students appeared to be more important and she gave an example of a previous school where she felt obliged to look for different ideas and teach skills in order to meet the students` needs.

I used to prepare listening activities, look for answers, and go to my classes prepared. … The students would get bored with grammar because they already knew the rules, they had already known everything. When we do (different) activities, they would become interested asking what we were doing for that day, listening to a song or something about some other topic. That is it. (Dilek, 2nd int)

Having a high achieving student profile seemed to serve as an external drive for Dilek to reflect on her qualities and develop her practice. However, in her current school she did not feel such an external push as she felt competent enough for the student profile as was discussed in Section 6.2.2.

The groups the teachers were teaching were found to affect the extent to which they could take initiatives on their teaching. Mine, Naz, Sedef, Ilker, Esma, Kerim, Yeliz and Pinar stated that they were preparing some groups for the exams, and this seemed to have shaped what and how they were teaching. For example, Kerim mentioned applying various teaching techniques in his classes as he believed enriching his classes could work better on the students. However, for the exam groups he was teaching he did not appear to feel as flexible as he did in other groups.

The centre is students, that is what matters. If students learn things, if they can speak English outside of the school, if they feel confident about it, then it means that teacher is successful. How that teacher does that does not really matter, you need to go beyond classical methods anyway. But, as I said before, you cannot do it in language groups (students who choose to take exam from English in the university examination), that is because you prepare them for the exam. … For them, you cannot do listening or speaking activities, you purely focus on grammar and tips on how to do well on tests, why? They do not ask them (speaking, listening) in the exam. (Kerim, 2nd int)

As this suggests, the teachers felt obliged to adopt an exam-oriented teaching approach with the exam groups and therefore they were less able to take initiatives to teach in alignment with their beliefs. In addition to the teaching groups, their schools` expectations from them might have been limiting as well. Sedef, for example, indicated that she wanted to use activities such as games and competitions during the weekend courses as the students liked them; however, after doing that for two weeks, she reported she received a notice from the management asking her to focus on tests and exam preparation.

Students were like "Aren`t there any competitions this week? Let`s have a competition again". I had bought a bar of chocolate for the winner, so they wanted to do that again. But this week I focused on tests as the management told us to do that. For the first two weeks, I tried to do different activities in the classes, but with that in mind I focused on tests this week. The students were complaining "Why tests? So, no games?", but there is nothing to do. (2nd int)

Such expectations from their schools might be linked to wider systemic issues. As the educational system was grounded on an exam-oriented way (see Section 6.3.1.), this might have put pressure on the head teachers who, in return, pressurised the teachers. These expectations and pressures appeared to limit the teachers` autonomy as well. That is because even when they wanted to take initiatives as in Sedef`s example, they might have ended up with seeing no options but to do whatever was expected from them. Not having much autonomy and freedom seemed to be a problem for Esma, Naz, Pinar and Kerim as well.

When you think about the ideal scenario, I would love to be free, autonomous, so that I could focus on teaching four skills. … I should be free, exploring through trial and error, and I would fix it at the end. That responsibility should be mine. (Pinar, 3rd int)

Having limited autonomy and control over their teaching might have impacted negatively on their engagement in reflection as they might not have found space for trying out different ideas.

Nine of the teachers (Mine, Okan, Ilker, Pinar, Dilek, Lale, Esma, Naz and Sedef) reported issues over work and life balance.

> *I teach 30 hours a week, plus weekend courses, plus my home life and my child. … In that school (a previous school where she was teaching in the mornings), I could prepare for my classes, I could find time to open my laptop and download videos, or prepare materials for students. Now, it is not like that anymore. Now, I go home around 16:30. … I will go home, cook, take care of my child… When am I supposed to make time for myself and for preparing for my classes? It is impossible. (Dilek, 1st int)*

In addition to their weekly teaching hours, the teachers were expected to teach on the weekend courses as well, which, according to Naz, did not always happen on a voluntary basis. When asked what demotivated her in the teaching profession, she said;

> *The compelling attitudes of the management are not nice, things like doing compulsory weekend courses. I got rid of it this term, but I will do it on the second term. We shared it with Okan. There is no point in crying over it, it will happen. (Naz, 1st int)*

Similarly, Lale, who had additional managerial duties and staying in student dormitories as a teacher aide, highlighted that she could not find time to focus on her teaching due to overworking.

> *I am here for five days a week, no days off. Sometimes, I cannot even find time for myself. Sometimes, on the weekends, I come for staying here (dormitories) since the students need some stuff or they get sick. So, I have to go there. During the week, I have no time anyway … For that (doing more) you need to put extra effort and spend time for that, which is the problem. We have very limited time, if any. (Lale, 1st int)*

This suggests, the teachers` in-school workload left them limited time for reflecting on their teaching or looking for ideas to improve.

6.4. Summary

This chapter shed light on the individual and contextual factors affecting the teachers` experiences of reflective and collaborative PL activities. And it also explored how the teachers differed from each other in terms of the way they perceived the contextual factors. In this chapter, therefore, it was signalled that individual mechanisms might be more influential on the teachers` learning/change and these will be discussed in detail later in 7.4 and 7.5. The next chapter will discuss the findings from Chapters 4-5-6 in relation to the relevant literature and theoretical ideas addressed in Chapter 2.

CHAPTER 7 DISCUSSION

7.1.   Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of the findings in relation to the relevant literature and theoretical ideas discussed in Chapter 2. Previously, in Chapter 4, Chapter 5 and Chapter 6, the findings of this research were explored with the aim of answering three main research questions:

1. How do ELT teachers working in different contexts experience reflective practice in their PL?

2. How do ELT teachers working in different contexts experience collaboration with their colleagues in their PL?

3. What are the factors that affect ELT teachers` engagement in reflective and collaborative PL activities?

The data obtained through three interview sessions with 13 ELT teachers working in public primary, secondary and high schools in Turkey, showed that the teachers` experiences of reflective and collaborative PL activities varied. And even though there were common factors inhibiting or promoting their PL experiences, the teachers were found to differ from each other in terms of their response to these factors and their way of dealing with the existing situations. The remainder of this chapter is devoted to discussing what results of this research are important in understanding the ELT teachers` experiences of reflective and collaborative PL activities, how the interaction between the individual and contextual factors impacted on their engagement in these activities, and this will be followed by a discussion about the role of agency in teachers` PL. These three main areas will guide the discussion of the findings, which is structured in the following way: 7.2. discusses teachers` reflective practice, 7.3. discusses teachers` collaborative working, 7.4. discusses the individual factors affecting teachers` engagement in reflective and collaborative PL activities, 7.5. reflects back on teacher agency and 7.6. summarises this chapter.

7.2.   Teachers` Reflective Practice

Reflective practice seemed to contribute strongly to the teachers` professional growth with regards to whether or not they made changes in their classroom practice to improve

learning outcomes. The teachers differed from each other in terms of their experiences of reflection, and not all reflection examples they mentioned were found to lead to change. Carr and Kemmis`s (1986) proposition of three forms of reflection which are grounded in Habermas` (1972) concepts of technical knowledge, practical knowledge and emancipatory knowledge will be used to explain how the teachers differed in terms of the level of their reflection. And, Weiner`s (1972) Attribution Theory will be used to understand whether they reflected on solutions or problems. Additionally, Biesta and Tedder`s (2007) Ecological Agency Model will also be of use to explain the differences among the teachers in terms of their backgrounds, present evaluations and decisions and future aspirations, and to understand how the teachers become more or less reflective across settings. Bringing these theories together will show what constituted effective reflection and why the quality of reflection examples varied among the teachers.

Figure 6 demonstrates where the ELT teachers, as the individual cases in this study, stand with regards to the type of their reflection, what they reflect on, and the quality of their reflection. To determine the quality of the teachers` reflection, I looked at whether any meaningful change occurred as a result of their engagement in reflection. And change, in their case, seemed to be linked to how the teachers reflected and what they reflected on. The quality of the teachers` reflection seemed to increase as they moved from descriptive to more critical levels of reflection and as they became more aware of what they could do to solve the problems.

Figure 6

Teachers in relation to how they reflect, what they reflect on and the quality of their reflection
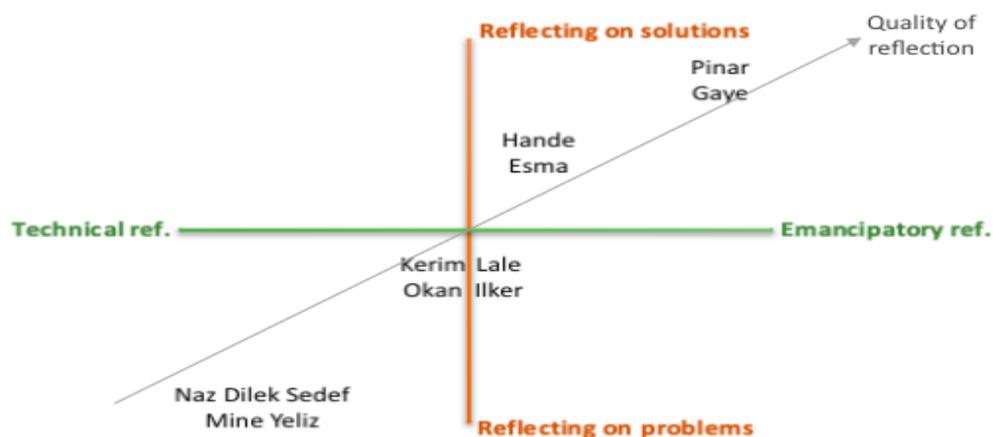
As is suggested, there is a link between the forms of reflection and what to reflect on. Technical reflection seems to be linked to reflecting on problems while emancipatory reflection is linked to considering solutions. For this research, low-quality reflection refers to engaging in reflection at the technical level, reflecting on problems and attributing responsibility to others, while a high-quality reflection refers to engaging in more towards emancipatory reflection, reflecting on solutions and attributing responsibility to self instead of others. While the examples of low-quality reflection seemed to fail in achieving long-term change, the high-quality reflection examples indicated a longer-term change in the learning outcomes, the teachers` beliefs and practices.

The teachers who were mostly engaged in technical reflection seemed to experience reflection at the individual level only, meaning their reflection did not trigger interaction/collaboration with others or vice versa. On the other hand, as the teachers reflected at deeper levels (engaging in practical and emancipatory forms of reflection), the amount of interaction/collaboration involved in reflection increased as well, making reflection the result or the initiator of a collaborative activity. Several factors were found to impact on the teachers` engagement in reflection. These were grouped as individual factors (motivation, self-efficacy and beliefs), and contextual factors (related to Braun et al.`s (2011) external contexts, material contexts and situated contexts). All these areas will be discussed below in relation with the relevant literature.

7.2.1. "When"

The teachers gave examples of reflection during and after teaching, which refer to Schön`s (1983) concepts of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. On the occasions when the teachers were engaged in reflection-in-action, their concern seemed to be to find out what could work at that particular moment, which might be the reason why most reflection-in-action examples seemed to be superficial and lacked depth. This absence of depth might be because of the nature of reflection-in-action itself. Schön (1987) acknowledges that reflection-in-action may lack depth as it is challenging to reflect and simultaneously act. And, since effective reflection requires time and careful planning (Dewey, 1933), the teachers may not have had as much time to think and plan while teaching. As such, the teachers` engagement in reflection-in-action seemed to happen at the technical level and derived from their aim to take control over the situation by implementing short-term

solutions (Habermas, 1972). In most cases, therefore, reflection-in-action examples did not appear to lead to reflection-on-action.

Their engagement in reflection-on-action, on the other hand, could lead to learning and change. This might be because, as Dewey (1933) indicates, reflection-on-action allows time and space which are necessary for practitioners to step back from their practice, analyse themselves from a third perspective, formulate options to improve the situation and take actions for the goals they set. This suggests that reflecting on their teaching enabled the teachers to experience, reflect, think and act, which, according to Kolb and Kolb (2005), are essential steps to link reflection with learning. However, as was discussed in 4.2. and 4.3., the teachers differed from each other in terms of following the reflective cycle. Hande`s engagement in reflection-on-action to experiment different ideas and techniques for teaching speaking, for example, looked like a spiral where she followed each step of the reflective cycle, continuously evaluated the results of her actions and thought of alternative ideas for future actions. Dilek`s use of medical life related reading texts to change her students` attitudes towards English classes, on the other hand, looked more linear where she followed the reflective cycle to try out one single idea only. And some other reflection-on-action examples, such as Mine`s example, where there was no mention of any plans or actions to help her students to improve their pronunciation skills, did not seem to even proceed further than experiencing a problem. In such cases, the teachers` reflection might consist of collecting evidence only, not knowing what to do with it (Shabeeb & Akkary, 2014).

In terms of the relationship between the teachers` learning and their practices of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action, this study is in line with Shabeeb and Akkary (2014). The researchers collected data from 11 teachers in a private school in Lebanon by employing multiple instruments (documents and artefacts about the school, observations and interviews) with the purpose of understanding how an in-house PD programme helped teachers to develop into reflective practitioners. Similar to the teachers in this research, their participants were engaged in reflection-on-action to examine what they did in their classes and evaluate what went well or wrong and what needed further adjustment for improvement (Shabeeb & Akkary, 2014). And, similar to the findings of this research, the researchers found that their participants` learning emerged from their reflection on teaching not from their reflection while teaching (Shabeeb & Akkary, 2014). The researchers, based on their findings,

claimed not all types of reflection led to change or enhanced the teaching practice (Shabeeb & Akkary, 2014), which applies to this research as well.

7.2.2. "How"

The findings indicated that the teachers were engaged in reflection-on-action at three levels, which typify Carr and Kemmis`s (1986) technical, practical and emancipatory reflection. These forms of reflection seemed to determine the teachers` progress of change. While Gaye and Pinar moved from one to another level of reflection depending on what they reflected on (Shabeeb & Akkary, 2014), some (Yeliz, Dilek, Mine, Sedef and Naz) gave examples of technical reflection only, and most of the teachers did not seem able to go beyond practical reflection. This might be because different educational settings triggered different levels of reflection by powerfully shaping the teachers` decision making and action taking processes (Priestley et al., 2015).

After reflecting on their students, Yeliz, Mine, Dilek, Sedef and Naz mentioned either trying out an idea prescribed by others or falling back on their previous experiences and implementing an idea they tested before. Larrivee (2008) explains this is because when teachers are engaged in reflection at a superficial level, they evaluate the results of their actions based on their usefulness and effectiveness to achieve the immediate goals rather than questioning what they want to achieve in the long term. Therefore, engaging in technical reflection might help the teachers to generate known outcomes and facilitate their control over the situations (Carr & Kemmis, 1986), which in their case involved avoiding chaos in the classroom, keeping the students engaged and delivering the teaching content. Although achieving these for that particular class hour may have been perceived as a success by the teachers, their reflection did not seem to lead to a further analysis of their practices, interpretations and situations (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). This, according to Carr and Kemmis (1986), is because the ideas that are being tested do not emerge from self-reflection, therefore experiences of technical reflection may lack authenticity, meaning and depth. Following others` ideas without examining their beliefs and personalities or not being able to tie teaching decisions to their beliefs about teaching and learning processes, the teachers appeared to end up having `a bag of tricks` rather than actually achieving change (Larrivee, 2000, p.294).

On the occasions when the teachers reflected at the practical level, they were able to invest more time to interpret their experiences, think of alternative ideas to improve the situation and give themselves space to explore and restructure their teaching (Larrivee, 2008). After reflecting on their students` speaking skills, Esma, Hande and Lale talked about the importance of teaching speaking to feeling fulfilled in their teaching career (see Section 4.3.2.). This act of visiting their feelings may have helped them to learn more about themselves and their reasons for the actions they were specifically taking (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). Carr and Kemmis (1986) view this as an interpersonal dialogic process which helps individuals to articulate their own concerns, monitor the problems and the impact of their approach, and evaluate the value and the consequences of change achieved at the end. Engaging in such a process seemed to enable the teachers to criticise their own teaching in a constructive way, take responsibility for the students` failure in speaking English, acknowledge the gap between the current and the ideal speaking outcomes and identify ways to achieve desired learning outcomes, which led them to experimenting and taking risks (Larrivee, 2008). This brings to completion, rather than repeating their old patterns or following imposed ideas, the teachers could move towards self-challenge and better self-knowledge (Shabeeb & Akkary, 2014), and achieve more consistency between their beliefs and practice (Larrivee, 2008).

Engaging in emancipatory reflection, on the other hand, appeared to empower Gaye and Pinar to take responsibility not only for developing the learning outcomes but also for improving outer situations that surrounded their educational settings (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). This, in their case, constituted changing colleagues` and parents` attitudes towards English classes (Gaye), and changing the mindset about teaching and learning processes from teacher-centred to learner-centred (Pinar) (see Section 4.3.3.). In contrast to the other teachers, Gaye and Pinar appeared to recognise that they had to think further than their classrooms, free themselves from external controls and constraints and make more autonomous and independent judgements (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). Achieving this may have required them to go through conflicts within themselves, shift their way of thinking from more of a victimised position towards feeling empowered, and see new ways and strategies to respond to the problems, which eventually led to change on and beyond the students (Larrivee, 2000).

In addition, a number of factors impact on teachers` reflection. The material, situated and external contexts were found to affect the teachers` experiences of reflective practice by promoting or inhibiting higher levels of reflection. Teaching materials, class and school size, syllabus and class hours, workload and time, and school location, all of which formed the material aspect of the practical-evaluative dimension of the teachers` agency, may have shaped their decisions and actions, and this, in return, determined the amount of agency they exerted across school settings (Priestley et al., 2015), as in the example of Naz who felt restricted by the large school size and lessened her efforts for her classes (see Section 6.3.2.). Such limitations of the teaching profession may set barriers to reflection (Bishop et al., 2010), by not allowing time and space for teachers to analyse their classes and to think of alternative ideas (Fullan, 2007). Additionally, the autonomy the teachers felt they had for experimenting with ideas in classes might be another factor influencing their engagement in reflection. This seemed to be linked to the groups they were teaching, which in the broader sense, was connected to the existing exam-oriented education system and its impact on schools and what was expected from the teachers. Schools` pressuring the teachers to adopt an exam-oriented teaching may have given them very limited control over their teaching, which is an obstacle to enable teacher agency (Priestley et al., 2015). Performative practices embraced in schools is grounded in the idea of measuring and monitoring student, teacher and school performances in connection to the targets that are externally imposed (Keddie, 2013). Such a performative culture may have led the teachers to split between their own beliefs and judgements about good practice and the expected performance outputs, which appeared to lead them to setting beliefs aside and prioritising what was externally valued and approved as in Dilek (see Section 6.2.3.) and Sedef (see Section 6.3.3.) (Ball, 2003). As such, in the school settings where the teachers did not feel encouraged to experiment and take risks, they may have become less reflective (Timperley, 2008). Yet, the extent to which the teachers felt restricted by such practices and whether they chose the familiar (the accountability demands) or the unknown (experimenting and reconstructing) varied depending on their knowledge, attitudes and skills (constituting the iterational dimension of their agency) to manoeuvre between the externally defined agendas and their own beliefs and commitments (Priestley et al., 2015).

Gaye and Pinar, differed to the other teachers, as they did not seem to feel as constricted by these external factors and they could still achieve higher levels of reflection.

They appeared to be able to integrate deep thinking into their daily practice, become a perpetual problem solver, see their school settings as a laboratory for experimenting and challenge their beliefs, assumptions and expectations (Larrivee, 2000), which may indicate they had a greater sense of agency. This might be linked to their personal characteristics, which, according to Jaeger (2013), play a key role in determining the way teachers engage in reflection. In their case, their motivation, self-efficacy and beliefs may have been more impactful on their experiences of reflection, which will be discussed later in 7.4. This finding aligns with Smith (2012), where teachers` disposition towards learning and their way of utilising their contexts were found to be more important than the characteristics of their contexts in terms of achieving change.

Regarding the majority of the teachers` reflecting at the technical and practical level, this finding aligns with Shabeeb and Akkary (2014). The researchers used technical, practical and critical levels for reflection, and defined critical reflection as the highest level. Surprisingly, although some of the teachers perceived their reflection as critical, the researchers indicated that their understanding of critical reflection was limited, and that none of the teachers could reflect critically. This, according to Shabeeb and Akkary (2014), was because the collective view of reflection in their school context did not go beyond sense-making, and the tools that the teachers used for reflection (unit planners and inquiry indicators) led them to reflect at the technical and practical levels but failed in triggering the examination of their beliefs. The researchers concluded that promoting reflection with others through interactive activities and establishing a community of practice in the school could have promoted critical reflection and brought change (Shabeeb & Akkary, 2014). Similarly, in this research as well, not being provided with many collaborative and interactive activities and therefore reflecting alone might be another reason why the majority of the teachers could not go beyond practical reflection and this will be discussed further in 7.3.

7.2.3. "On what"

The levels of reflection the teachers were engaged in might be linked to what they reflected on, whether on problems or solutions. Whilst the teachers reflected on similar areas which were previously categorised as students, others, pedagogical approaches, PL activities, individual dispositions and resources, they differed from each other in terms of their judgement of the particular situation they reflected on. Reflecting on the problems might lead

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them to feeling powerless about the situation, reflecting on the solutions, on the other hand, may have given them a sense of responsibility and control over the situation.

This may be because perceptions are subjective, and therefore the way teachers interpret the situations or the meaning they attach to a particular incident determine the way they respond (Larrivee, 2000), which seems to trace back to Weiner`s (1972) Attribution theory (Chapter 2). Attribution theory is grounded on "the idea that casual beliefs reside within (internal to) or outside (external to) person" (Weiner, 2019, p.603). As such, people`s different attributions lead them to different feelings, assumptions and expectations, and these, in turn, lead them to different set of behaviours (Dweck, 2018). This may indicate, the attributions the teachers made in a particular situation, or to whom they ascribed the outcome shaped their future actions (Weiner, 1972).

For example, the limitedness of the available in-school teaching materials seemed to affect Gaye, Dilek and Mine`s engagement in reflection, as was explained in 6.3.2. In spite of experiencing the same problem, they differed in terms of their response to it. While Gaye had a more solution-oriented approach by taking responsibility for the learning outcomes and thinking of alternative ways, Dilek and Mine attributed the problem to external sources, which in their case was the authorities and the school management for not providing the essential teaching materials, and therefore did not perceive they had a role in the learning outcomes. This shows, ascribing success or failure to internal sources may have helped the teachers to realise they could have an impact on the outcome by increasing their effort (Weiner, 1972), which may have led them to focus on the solutions. On the other hand, when they ascribed failure to external sources which were beyond their personal control, they might tend to view change as impossible (Weiner, 1972). As such, while the former group might have a higher achievement motivation and could work harder, persist longer when they were faced with difficulties and challenge themselves with harder tasks, the latter group may have lacked such a motive, experienced learned helplessness and failed in recognising that their effort and the learning outcomes covaried (Weiner, 1972).

The differences among the teachers with regards to their perceptions of the situations might be linked to the components of their agency. Priestley et al. (2015) argue that past, present or future elements can become significant in shaping teachers` agency on different occasions. In the cases when the teachers had future aspirations which were strongly rooted in their belief systems (making iterational and projective dimensions more significant on their

agency) (Priestley et al., 2015), they could distance themselves from the practical-evaluative constraints and reflect in a solution-oriented way. According to Larrivee (2000), this is because teachers may become driven by the goals they have, which leads them to open up to a wide range of possible responses. On the occasions where the teachers did not have a strong belief set, skills and knowledge or lacked an agenda for themselves, the practical-evaluative component may have become more significant in shaping their agency. And the lived conditions of the present, facilitating or inhibiting (Priestley et al., 2015), may have filtered their perception. Regarding the link between the level of the teachers` achievement motivation and their locus of causality, this research is in line with van Eekelen et al. (2006). The researchers found that teachers` willingness to learn determines whether they attribute outcomes to internal or external sources. And teachers who are not willing to learn may tend to see themselves as victims of external factors and perceive the existing factors as excuses to exempt themselves from taking responsibility for outcomes (van Eekelen et al., 2006), which seems to apply to the findings of this research as well. The way in which the teachers` motivation, self-efficacy and beliefs affected their sense of responsibility will be discussed later in 7.4.

7.3. Teachers` Collaborative Working

Collaborative working, as well as reflective practice, contributed to the teachers` pursuit of PL and achieving change. However, as was indicated previously in Chapter 5, the degree of collaboration in which the teachers were engaged was found to be lower generally than their engagement with reflective activity. And, not all collaboration examples that the teachers mentioned appeared to lead to change. Johnson and Johnson`s (1989) Social Interdependence Theory (see Section 2.4.2.) will be used to explain the differences among the teachers in terms of their approach towards collaboration (positive interdependence and no interdependence for this research) and the way they interacted/collaborated with others (socially interdependent, socially dependent and socially independent). Unlike reflective practice which occurs mainly at the individual level as it is a largely cognitive activity, teachers` engagement in collaboration involves others and therefore happens at a more collective level. Therefore, Edwards and Darcy`s (2004) Relational Agency and Biesta and Tedder`s (2007) Ecological Agency Model will be used to understand how the teachers, as individuals,

interacted with the outer world (at the school and systemic level) surrounding them. Bringing these theories together will allow me to explain why some of the teachers were more collaborative than the others, how they became more or less collaborative in different settings and whether or not their experiences of collaboration triggered reflection. Figure 7 illustrates the teachers` approach towards collaboration, how they interacted with others, and their position as individuals within external social systems.

Figure 7

Teachers within external social systems in relation to their approach towards collaboration and their interaction way with others
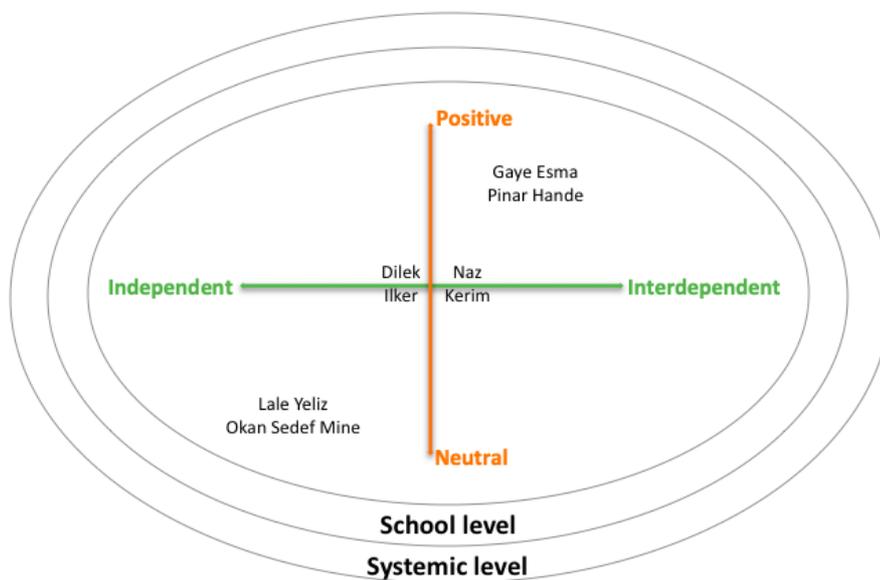
The teachers who had a neutral approach towards others looked more individualistic and independent by failing to see the value in collaboration. On the limited occasions when they were engaged in collaboration, their collaboration stayed as an isolated activity as it did not lead to further thinking. The ones who held a positive approach, on the other hand, appeared more collaborative and were able to recognise the value in collaboration. As they viewed collaborating with others as learning opportunities, they tended to reflect more on their collaborative experiences. And therefore, there seemed to be an overlap between the reflective and collaborative teachers (see Figure 6 and Figure 7). As the teachers became more reflective, they may have become more willing to collaborate with others in order to grow

professionally (van der Heijden et al., 2015), or the collaborative activities the teachers were engaged in may have helped them to develop critical reflective skills.

The teachers` motivation, self-efficacy and beliefs may have shaped their approach towards collaboration and their interaction way with others. And, the situated and external contexts may have influenced the variety and the amount of collaborative activities available to the teachers. These areas will be discussed further with respect to literature in the remaining part of this section.

7.3.1. "The interaction type"

In Chapter 5, the teachers were categorised into three groups in terms of their engagement in collaboration and these were minimal collaboration (Yeliz, Lale, Mine, Sedef and Okan), open to collaboration (Dilek, Naz, Ilker and Kerim) and collaborative (Pinar, Gaye, Esma and Hande). And, there seemed to be a gap between these three groups in terms of the range of collaborative activities with which they were engaged, and whether or not they limited themselves regarding who they were collaborating with. The differences among the teachers may have derived from their approach towards collaborating with others, which Johnson and Johnson (1989) categorise as positive interdependence, negative interdependence and no interdependence. However, two of these categories (positive interdependence and no interdependence) seem appropriate for this research as none of the teachers appeared to experience negative interdependence. Johnson and Johnson (2005) argue that negative interdependence exists when individuals are competitive, they perceive that their achievement is possible through others` failure and therefore they try to obstruct others` efforts to achieve their own goals. Such negative interdependence does not apply to the teachers in this research, and this may be because Johnson and Johnson`s (2005) work is not related to teachers, therefore having competitive roles may not be very applicable to teaching.

Having a neutral approach towards collaboration refers to Johnson and Johnson`s (2005) `no interdependence` and `social independence` categories. The teachers in this group (Lale, Yeliz, Okan, Sedef and Mine) did not appear to be open to being influenced and to influencing others, which Johnson and Johnson (2005) define as inducibility and claim it is a required psychological process for achieving positive interdependence. Not letting themselves be open to others seemed to lead them to working mostly independently from

others and having limited, if any at all, interaction with their colleagues (Johnson & Johnson, 2009). Okan`s preferring his own way over collaborating with others, or Sedef`s adopting a narrow perspective on the collaborative opportunities she found during her master courses (see Section 5.2.) suggest that these teachers viewed teaching as an individual pursuit (Murugaiah et al., 2012), and therefore believed that they could achieve their goals without others` involvement or contribution (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). This might explain why they did not get involved in collaborative activities that would require them to rely on others` expertise and experience (Wenger et al., 2002), but rather they interacted with others mainly for exchanging teaching materials. Johnson and Johnson (2009) view this as a resource interdependence which exists when individuals need others` resources but do not share common goals with them. This kind of interaction, according to Wolgast and Fischer (2017), cannot be regarded as positive as it did not involve the teachers` cooperating with others to reach a shared goal.

The teachers who felt more positively about collaboration differed from the first group of teachers by showing the state of being inducible and viewing others as resources. However, Gaye, Esma, Pinar and Hande differed from Dilek, Naz, Ilker and Kerim as they were able to establish positive interdependence with others. They were able to recognise that they could achieve their goals if their colleagues with whom they were cooperatively linked achieved their goals as well (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). This highlights the teachers did not see others` efforts as unrelated to theirs as the first group of teachers did, and therefore they became interdependent through common goals rather than focusing on individual goals (Johnson & Johnson, 2009). By expanding their self-interest to mutual interest, the teachers could create new goals and motives (Gaye`s starting with an individual plan turned into a mutual goal with her colleague, and was followed by new ones as was mentioned in Section 5.4.), and felt responsible towards their colleagues to do their part in order to achieve the desired result (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). In addition, having common goals seemed to result in the teachers` encouraging and facilitating each other`s efforts for the completion of the task they were involved in (Esma`s mentioning a supportive environment for organising a theatre play) or for reaching the goal they set (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). This refers to Johnson and Johnson`s (2005) concept of promotive interaction which occurs as a result of positive interdependence and consists of giving and receiving help and assistance, exchanging required resources, effective communication and trust. Achieving such a relationship with

others, according to Wenger (2000), can become possible by individuals` depending on each other`s capability of contributing to the outcome, which seems to apply to these teachers.

Similarly, Dilek, Naz, Ilker and Kerim could recognise the value of collaboration and rely on others for the things that they may not have known (Eraut, 2000). However, as was discussed in Section 5.3, they did not appear to be proactive, therefore needed others` initiation or lead to work collaboratively for a common goal. On the occasions when they had such initiations from others, like Dilek did in her previous school, they were able to set joint decisions and felt motivated to strive for the mutual goals (Johnson & Johnson, 2009). Yet, when they did not have that, their interaction with their colleagues seemed to typify what Johnson and Johnson`s (2005) define as social dependence. As in the example of Naz, asking for suggestions from the management for the classroom management problems she was experiencing, the outcomes of their efforts were affected by others, but not vice versa (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). And the absence of mutual goals might result in a lack of shared responsibility and collective identification, which, according to Johnson (2003), is created through only positive interdependence.

The way the teachers interacted with others may provide insights about their sense of agency. The second group of teachers appeared to have a stronger sense of agency than the other teachers as they were able to not only see others as resources but also serve as resources for others in return (Edwards, 2005). Some individual and contextual factors may have impacted on their sense of agency. The first factor might be related to their ability to work with others (Edwards, 2005), which corresponds to Johnson and Johnson`s (2009) concept of appropriate use of social skills. Johnson and Johnson (2009) claim that individuals need to have interpersonal and group skills which are necessary for effective collaboration; however, not all teachers in this research seemed to have these required skills. As was explored in Chapter 5, the teachers` backgrounds and previous experiences were found to play a role in determining the way the teachers interacted with their colleagues, and this highlights the importance of the iterational dimension of agency, which, according to Priestley et al. (2015), lays the base for teachers` professional knowledge and skills. The strength of the iterational dimension of the teachers` agency seemed to differ and shape how they interacted with others. For example, Dilek and Ilker`s not being trained to become teachers may have led them to become dependent on others, Okan`s lack of previous collaborative experiences may have fed into his individualistic view about teaching, and Hande and Pinar`s being a

member of in-school ELT communities in previous schools may have developed their openness to others.

Another factor might be their relationships with colleagues, which can be regarded as a structural element affecting the practical-evaluative dimension of their agency and serving as an enabler or a constraint for their engagement in collaboration (Priestley et al., 2015). Having relationships grounded in mutual respect and trust seems crucial for collaboration (Le Fevre, 2014), and the lack of that, like Esma`s experiences in a previous school where she felt rejected by her colleagues` unfriendly attitudes as was explained in 6.2.1., may have led the teachers to isolation and withdrawing themselves from interacting and sharing with others (Roberts, 2000). Yet, having good personal relationships only may not have been sufficient for effective collaboration, as the teachers who had a neutral approach towards collaboration, for example, were not able to go beyond resource interdependence even though they all mentioned having friendly and positive relationships with their colleagues. This finding seems in line with Le Fevre (2014) where the researcher examined the barriers to the implementation of a school-wide literacy change initiative and collected the data through interviews, observations and document analysis from 12 teachers, the principal and the change facilitator. Despite having close friendships with each other, the participants still felt reluctant and intimidated to engage in peer observation by reporting it was risky for them to make their teaching public even with their friends (Le Fevre, 2014). Based on the findings, Le Fevre (2014) concludes that in-school collaborative improvement requires more than what may result from long standing friendships alone. Wenger (2000) claims this is possible only through professional and personal trust, by drawing attention to the school level as well as the individual level. As was elaborated previously in Chapter 6, the teachers` school contexts impacted on the nature of the relationships between the teachers and their colleagues in terms of whether or not they offered collaborative opportunities, and this will be further discussed below.

7.3.2. "The activity type"

The teachers differed from each other with regards to the range of collaborative activities they were engaged in. The ones who had a natural approach towards collaboration were engaged mainly in informal talks and discussions, while the ones on the other end of the spectrum mentioned engaging in deliberative and structured collaborative activities as

well as the ones on daily basis (see Table 9 in Chapter 5). As such, it seemed that the more positive the teachers felt about collaboration the more diverse their experiences of collaboration became, and vice versa. This points out to a link between the teachers` engagement in collaboration and the collaborative activities that were available to them, as the characteristics of the educational contexts might be important in terms of whether or not the teachers were provided with opportunities to share their expertise, make sense of their experiences and expand their ideas with their colleagues (Wright, 2015).

As was discussed in Chapter 6, there seemed to be a lack of collaborative opportunities at the systemic level, and the limited available opportunities such as annual Zumre meetings and occasional seminars and training courses were found ineffective. This might be because the available seminars and trainings were based on a top-down approach where the authorities decided the content and structure (Easton, 2008). The main purpose behind such activities, therefore, might be to transmit the necessary content or pedagogical knowledge to the teachers (Graves, 2009). The ELT seminar that Lale mentioned (see Section 5.2.), for example, shows that the teachers had not been involved in the planning stage to communicate what and how they wanted to learn, and they did not have any control over the delivery stage either as it was mainly one-way interaction from the experts to the teachers (Easton, 2008). Such a process, in alignment with Tam`s (2015) aforementioned claim, could not go beyond being a top-down intervention and did not enable the teachers to achieve change. The annual Zumre meetings, similarly, failed in enabling the teachers to effectively interact with other ELT teachers in their districts. Even though these meetings may have been more flexible in terms of the content, they were based on contrived collegiality (Hargreaves & Dawe, 1990) and the teachers were obligated to attend the meetings as a requirement of the regulations. Because of their nature, i.e. annual and not situated, Zumre meetings seemed to fail in both serving as frequent cooperation opportunities for the teachers (Wolgast & Fischer, 2017), and allowing them to develop trust, familiarity and respect towards each other (Murugaiah et al., 2012). This finding is in line with Murugaiah et al. (2012) where the researchers looked at the impact of an online CoP on teacher learning and found that the implemented CoP failed in triggering two-way interaction among the participants and resulted in limited learning, which was because of a lack of trust and shared workplace.

Similarly, the schools in which the teachers were working seemed to lack in opportunities for the teachers to collaborate (Chapter 6), and only Hande and Pinar

mentioned working as members of PLC or CoP previously when they were working in private schools (see Section 5.3.). This signalises that the public schools did not have a cooperative climate and therefore even though the teachers shared the same workplace with others, they may not have gained a sense of belonging to a group or being a member of a community (Murugaiah et al., 2012), which contrasts with the idea of teachers` being learners and schools` being learning communities (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002). The absence of situated collaborative opportunities might determine what the teachers collaborated with others on. While they may have felt comfortable enough to share resources and work together in organising events and extra-curricular activities, they might avoid sharing their work and examining their practice with colleagues because of a lack of trust, which could have been built through situated learning communities (Wenger et al., 2002).

Lacking a sense of collegiality and systematic feedback and support systems, the schools did not seem to have the characteristics of a healthy school (Kyriacou, 2001). This corresponds to Hargreaves and Fullan`s (2013) concept of social capital, which in this study seems to be quite low as the schools did not appear to provide the teachers with opportunities to access each other`s knowledge and human capital. In terms of the schools` social capital, the finding in this study contradicts Opfer et al. (2011) where the researchers felt the schools in England served more like learning communities and promoted collective capacity among teachers. This contradiction may be because of the different educational systems adopted by these countries. However, the finding in this research with regards to the public schools` lacking PLC contradicts Bellibas, Bulut and Gedik (2017) as well. That study examined schools` capacity for supporting PLC and collected data through surveys from 492 schools staff members (teachers, principals and assistant principals) working in 27 schools across Turkey. The researchers found that PLC were well developed in the schools and the schools promoted a culture of sharing among the staff (Bellibas et al., 2017). In their study, what the researchers referred as PLC seemed to be the occasional grade-level and subject-matter meetings where the teachers and the management came together as a requirement of the regulations in order to discuss educational programmes and teaching resources, to seek solutions to instructional and disciplinary problems and to learn about up-to-date issues in education. Therefore, the contradiction between the findings of this research and Bellibas et al. (2017) may be because of the meaning attributed to PLC, as in this research the schools did not seem to have situated learning communities which were grounded in the idea of

bringing teachers together on a regular systematic basis to help them engage in analysing and planning their teaching (Servage, 2008). Alternatively, the contradiction may be related to the selected schools as every school is unique within its own setting and may differ in terms of the implementations, or it may be because of the methodological differences, as Bellibas et al. (2017) acknowledge a better picture of PLC can be captured through a qualitative study.

The type of collaborative activity the teachers in this research were engaged in looked important in terms of whether it would lead to reflection and bring change. It seemed the more the interaction/collaboration occurred on an ongoing basis and was initiated by the teachers themselves for common concerns, goals or needs, the more likely it would trigger further thinking. Esma`s thinking further about her practice after voluntarily attending a UNICEF training for a week (see Section 4.3.2.), Hande`s developing reflective skills while working in a private school where she gave and received regular feedback from her colleagues (see Section 4.3.2.), and Pinar`s change in her beliefs about teaching after working jointly with other ELTs in her previous school (see Section 5.4.) show that voluntary attendance, ongoing interaction and autonomy on their agenda may have helped to achieve change. These examples also show that such interaction with their colleagues provided the teachers with the opportunity of exploring different points of view (Johnson & Johnson, 2009) and challenging each other`s mental models (Norman, 1983), which seemed to result in transfer of learning (from group to individual transfer) as the teachers took what they learnt within a group to the individual level (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). Regarding the link between collaboration and reflection, this study is in line with Fazio (2009) where the researcher found informal discussions and reflections among the participants helped them to develop reflective skills and achieve change. And, in terms of the positive impact of PLC on the teacher`s change, this study is in alignment with Tam (2015).

All these external and internal opportunities, in addition to the factors mentioned in the previous section, can be regarded as the structural elements that influenced the teachers` sense of agency (Priestley et al., 2015). The social structures and relational resources, according to Priestley et al. (2015), constitute the nature of teachers` social environments and affect the practical-evaluative aspect of their agency. Within their day-to-day working environments, the teachers appeared to exert more or less agency depending on the dynamics of their ecological environments (Biesta & Tedder, 2007). For example, Naz` seeming more collaborative previously because of the more diverse and effective

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opportunities (see Section 5.3) and Esma`s being more agentic in her current school because of the in-school and out-of-school opportunities which were not available to her previously as a substitute teacher (see Section 4.3.2.) suggest that the teachers felt enabled or constrained by their ecological contexts as they offered different possibilities to foster agency (Priestley et al., 2015). This finding aligns with Priestley et al. (2015) where the researchers collected the data from one primary and two secondary schools (two teachers and one manager from each school) through interviews and observations, and examined how the differences in contexts shaped the participants` responses to the expectations posed by the new curricular policy in Scotland. The data from the secondary schools showed that although the teachers were quite similar with regards to their levels of experience, beliefs and values, they differed in terms of the agency they exerted (Priestley et al., 2015). The reason behind this difference was found to be related to the nature of professional relationships within the schools, while one of them fostered agency by providing support and facilitating a collaborative culture, the other school had a more hierarchical top-down approach that hindered agency amongst staff (Priestley et al., 2015). In the next section of this chapter, how the teachers in this research differed regarding their responsiveness towards contextual factors will be discussed further in detail.

7.4.   Individual Factors Affecting Teachers` Engagement in Reflective and Collaborative PL Activities

The findings indicated that the teachers` engagement in reflective and collaborative PL activities was influenced by several individual and contextual factors. According to Le Fevre (2014), this is because change/learning operates at a multi layered system consisting of individual, organisational and systemic elements, which are interconnected and can impact on each other. This finding is in line with Braun et al. (2011) where the researchers found that four similar schools differed from each other in terms of their implementation of policy enactments, and these differences derived from both individual and contextual factors. I already utilised Braun et al.`s (2011) external, material and situated dimensions to categorise the contextual factors in this research (see Section 6.3.), and the individual factors (teachers` motivation, self-efficacy and beliefs) may correspond to their professional dimension. And, the interrelationship between these individual and contextual dimensions seemed to

determine the efficacy of the teachers` engagement in reflective and collaborative PL activities (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005).

However, the teachers` internal mechanisms (their motivation, self-efficacy and beliefs) were more impactful on their engagement in reflection while the outer factors played a more determining role in their engagement in collaboration. This may be because, as was mentioned in Chapter 2, reflective practice occurs at the individual level as it involves cognitive processing and collaborative working at a more collective level as it involves others. Given that I discussed the impact of the external, material and situated contexts on the teachers` engagement in reflective and collaborative PL activities in 7.2. and 7.3., in this section I will look at the role of the teachers` motivation, self-efficacy and beliefs in their engagement in reflection and collaboration, then explain the relationship between these three individual aspects.

7.4.1. Motivation

One of the individual aspects was found to be motivation, and the level and the source of motivation played a key role in determining the teachers` engagement in reflective and collaborative PL activities. Gaye and Pinar appeared to be driven by their internal mechanisms, which was having an ideal ELT teacher vision for Gaye and fearing of becoming an ineffective teacher for Pinar (Chapter 6). Having such personal agendas, goals and aspirations may have led them to becoming more reflective (Larrivee, 2000) and collaborative in working toward goal accomplishment (Johnson & Johnson, 2005), and served to expand their teaching repertoire. In their case, it seemed the past patterns rather than the present elements were significant in feeding into their motivation and shaping their agency (Priestley et al., 2015). The other teachers` motivation, on the other hand, was more dependent on cultural, structural and material aspects of the present conditions (Priestley et al., 2015). As such, their motivation for engaging in reflective and collaborative PL activities changed across time depending on the available possibilities their workplaces offered (Priestley et al., 2015). Even though all teachers experienced similar contextual problems, the ones who were externally motivated differently perceived and interpreted the enablers and constraints than the ones who were internally motivated (Leijen, Pedaste & Lepp, 2020). This suggests, the teachers with stronger internal mechanisms had a higher level of personal capacity, which according to Priestley et al. (2015) is "important in enabling agency to emerge" (p.31).

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This finding aligns with van Eekelen et al.'s (2006) study which shows that teachers` willingness is a prerequisite for learning. Additionally, as in van Eekelen et al. (2006), the teachers` motivation in this study seemed to affect their decision-making process in relation to whether to attribute the outcome to internal or external causes, which was discussed previously in 7.2.3. In terms of the impact of motivation on the teachers` agency, this study is in line with van der Heijden et al. (2015), where the researchers collected the data from four selected primary schools by interviewing four external experts, four principals and 12 teachers in the Netherlands with the aim of understanding the characteristics of teachers as change agents. The researchers found that having an intrinsic and high level of motivation, having an internal drive to reflect on the quality of their teaching, being aware of needing others to enhance their own teaching and continually striving to improve their expertise in teaching were some of the characteristics that their participants attributed to agentic teachers (van der Heijden et al., 2015). By fostering a collaborative and supportive environment, according to van der Heijden et al. (2015), schools can help teachers to develop such characteristics.

7.4.2. Self-efficacy

Another individual aspect found in this study was self-efficacy. As self-efficacy refers to individuals` perceived ability to be effective and impactful, the teachers` efficacy beliefs seemed to underestimate, overestimate or accurately reflect their effectiveness (Wheatley, 2005). Therefore, rather than the level of their self-efficacy, how they made sense of that (striving to grow or feeling satisfied) appeared to shape their engagement in reflective and collaborative PL activities. For the teachers who felt satisfied with their current teaching, their confidence emerged from several sources, which were their previous teaching experiences (Durksen, Klassen & Daniels, 2017), having the content knowledge (Graves, 2009) and experiencing easy successes which Bandura (2012) calls mastery experiences. For example, this is illustrated in this study by Yeliz`s dependence on her current teaching pedagogy because of her previous experiences (Chapter 6), Ilker`s associating his efficacy to his knowledge of the teaching content (Chapter 6), and Mine`s adopting a widely used approach in her classes (Chapter 4). This suggests, these teachers` sense of efficacy was rooted in past elements, which were their backgrounds and knowledge bases. In this case, it seemed they took their existing knowledge for granted and therefore their classroom teaching turned into

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a self-confirmation process (Oosterheert & Vermunt, 2001). As such, they may have resisted new teaching methods and had little incentive to reflect or collaborate in order to improve their teaching. On the other hand, the other teachers who were disposed towards growth seemed to be either driven by projective elements including their long-term and short-term future aspirations (Priestley et al., 2015), or their doubts about their ability to teach (Wheatley, 2005). Hande`s action of continuously setting new goals for herself and Pinar`s critiquing her ability to deal with the problems she did not come across before are some of the examples showing their drive to grow further, as was explained in Chapter 6. This suggests, their motivations and doubts triggered their engagement in reflection and collaboration to make improvements (Wheatley, 2005). As the comparison between the teachers highlights, their dispositions may have shaped whether their confidence and doubts became beneficial or problematic (Wheatley, 2005).

In terms of the relationship between self-efficacy and agency, this study is in line with van der Heijden et al.`s (2015) study which points out that teachers` having confidence in their abilities as well as their being unsure and feeling insecure about their teaching approaches are some of the characteristics of agentic teachers. However, this research partly contradicts Durksen et al.` (2017) work where the researchers looked at the connection between motivation and teachers` learning across their professional life phases by using the data they collected through questionnaires from 253 teachers in Canada. Their findings indicated that teachers` collaborative and collegial learning experiences contributed to their sense of efficacy, which aligns with this research. Yet, Durksen et al. (2017) also found that teachers` self-efficacy beliefs predicted their later engagement in learning activities and teachers with high self-efficacy tended to have positive attitudes towards learning, which does not align with the totality of self-efficacy related findings in this study. The difference may be related to the methodological differences as, according to Wheatley (2005), the attributed meaning to teachers` self-efficacy has long been explained through numerical levels and therefore may differ in interpretative research. Or, it may be because of the cultural and social differences between the settings, and the individual differences among the participants.

7.4.3. Beliefs

Beliefs was the third individual aspect found in this research. The type of beliefs and the alignment between beliefs and classroom practices appeared to considerably impact on the teachers` engagement in reflective and collaborative PL activities. The type of beliefs the teachers had (progressive or traditional) may have acted as filters by expanding or limiting them as, according to Larrivee (2000), what teachers believe about themselves and learners, and about the nature of learning and teaching processes disclose their operating principles. The teachers who had aligned `traditional` beliefs to their teaching appeared to teach in a way that confirmed their existing beliefs (Hart et al., 2009), which points out to cognitive bias (Le Fevre, 2014). As they tended to avoid challenging their underlying beliefs which would require them to critically examine and interpret them (Larrivee, 2000), their belief sets may have been formed in by either their previous experiences as language learners (Yeliz`s beliefs about good teacher qualities in Section 4.3.) or their schools` agenda (Naz`s exam-oriented teaching in Section 6.2.3).

In the other case where the teachers had more progressive beliefs, not all of them seemed able to align their beliefs with practices, which might be because of the differences between what the teachers claimed they believed (stated beliefs) and their beliefs in action, the latter of which, according to Larrivee (2000), guide teachers` practices. Therefore, for the ones whose belief sets were not strongly formed enough to persevere in a demanding work environment (Durksen et al., 2017), the contextual factors may have guided their teaching (Ilker and Dilek`s putting their beliefs aside in order to meet exam-oriented expectations in Chapter 6). This finding is in line with Shi, Delahunty and Gao (2019) where the researchers looked at the constraints preventing teachers from putting their stated beliefs into practice and collected the data from 6 teachers through classroom observations and interviews in China. Their findings showed that teachers` practices were not consistent with their stated beliefs, and contextual factors such as large class size, teachers` knowledge of students and test-driven teaching situation strongly influenced their ability to achieve that (Shi et al., 2019).

Despite the contextual factors, Pinar, Gaye, Esma and Hande could still manage to teach in the way that was congruent with their beliefs. For them it seemed their beliefs acted as a motivational force involving their personal commitments and aspirations, and these future elements may have guided their classroom teaching (Kramer & Engestrom, 2019). Therefore, different from the teachers whose beliefs were fixed by their early experiences or

the ones who appeared to experience dissonance and dilemma; these teachers could put their beliefs under examination through reflective and collaborative activities, and therefore became able to act more agentically and flexibly (Priestley et al., 2015). Regarding the role of the teachers` beliefs in their sense of agency, this research aligns with Luka (2015).

7.4.4. The relationship between motivation, self-efficacy and beliefs

In the light of the findings and what has been discussed so far, beliefs seemed to play a key role in how the teachers perceived the present situations and how that guided their future actions (Priestley et al., 2015). This indicates, beliefs (iterational patterns) may have formed a base for the teachers` self-efficacy (present-evaluative elements) and their motivations (projective elements). Table 14 shows the relationship between motivation, self-efficacy and beliefs and how the teachers looked in relation to their motivation and self-efficacy.

Table 14

Teachers with regards to their motivation and self-efficacy

BELIEFS			MOTIVATION		
			HIGH	*MODERATE*	*LOW*
SELF-EFFICACY	*HIGH*	GROW	Gaye, Esma, Hande	-------	-------
		SATISFIED	-------	Okan, Ilker	Naz, Yeliz, Sedef, Mine
	LOW	GROW	Pinar	Kerim, Lale	-------
		GIVE UP	-------	-------	Dilek

High level of motivation, regardless of whether self-efficacy was high or low, led the teachers to growth; however, in the cases of low or moderate levels of motivation, growth was linked to distinct forms of self-efficacy. This relationship between self-efficacy and motivation appears to be different from what is proposed in the literature. According to Bandura (2006), self-efficacy operates as a motivator. Bandura (2012) claims self-efficacy beliefs determine how well individuals motivate themselves and low self-efficacy results in a

low level of motivation while high self-efficacy in a high level of motivation. Therefore, "when faced with obstacles, setbacks, and failures, those who doubt their capabilities slacken their efforts, give up, or settle for mediocre solutions. Those who have a strong belief in their capabilities redouble their effort to master the challenges" (Bandura, 2000, p.120).

In contradiction to that, Pinar`s low self-efficacy did not lead to low motivation in the face of the contextual constraints. Instead, in her case, low self-efficacy seemed to have been channelled into continuous effort to achieve the goals she set for herself, resulting in a high level of motivation, which may have played a role in the development of more positive self-efficacy beliefs. Or, Naz, Yeliz, Mine and Sedef`s high self-efficacy, rather than a motivator, appeared to act as a barrier leading them to repetition and disillusionment about their teaching approach (Wheatley, 2005), and by inhibiting them from intensifying their efforts in challenging situations. The contradiction between this research and Bandura (2006) may be because of the nature of Bandura`s work, but may also reflect the importance of cultural context, differences in educational values and settings, and how teachers are perceived.

7.5. Revisiting Teacher Agency

As was discussed in the previous sections of this chapter, the teachers` motivation, self-efficacy and beliefs affected how they perceived the contextual factors, and the contextual factors, in return, appeared to play an important role in their motivation, self-efficacy and beliefs. This interplay between the individual and contextual factors in relation to the teachers` PL is in line with other empirical studies (Day, 2000; Le Fevre, 2014) mentioned in Chapter 2.

The findings in this research, which differ from what Priestley et al. (2015) propose, showed that it was not the interplay between the individual capacities and ecological conditions per se that shaped the teachers` agency, but it was the internal or external drive that emerged from their engagement in reflective and collaborative PL activities, which suggests agency was not a mediator but an outcome (see Figure 8). This contradiction may be because reflective practice and collaborative working have not been previously combined together in relation to teachers` PL, and Biesta and Tedder`s (2007) model has not been empirically utilised to look at these two aspects. Bringing these concepts together revealed different individual and contextual factors feeding into the teachers` reflective practice and

collaborative working, from which motivation emerged as the key requisite for personal growth and change.

Figure 8

Agency as the outcome of the relationship between the individual and contextual factors and reflective and collaborative PL activities
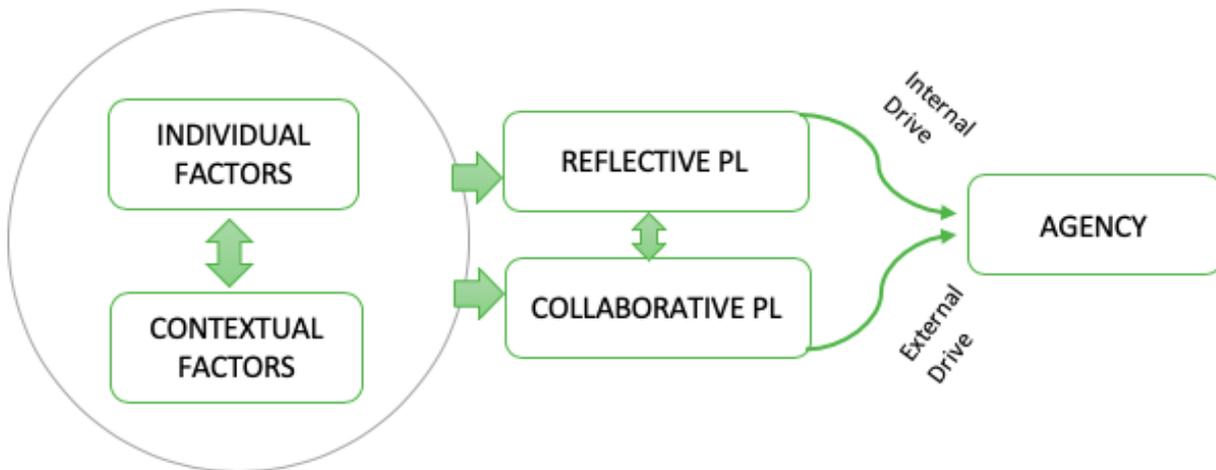

Still, Biesta and Tedder`s (2007) Ecological Agency Model seems useful to explain most of the teachers (Mine, Sedef, Dilek, Naz, Yeliz, Okan, Lale, Kerim, Ilker, Esma and Hande) with regards to the ongoing interplay between their personal capacities and work environments and how that eventually influenced their agency. As these teachers acted through their environments rather than simply in their environments, they felt enabled and constrained by their ecological conditions (White, 2018), and therefore their sense of agency varied across time in relation to their responsiveness according to the educational contexts they were situated in (Biesta & Tedder, 2007). On the occasions when the school structure fostered agency, the abovementioned teachers were able to engage in more effective forms of reflective and collaborative PL activities, which triggered an internal or external drive to exert more agency. Dilek`s experiences of more effective reflection and collaboration in a previous school, for example, fed into her individual capacity by helping her become more proactive and creative (see Section 5.3.). And, when the schools were not agency supportive, these teachers became more individualistic and less reflective, which led them to exerting limited or no agency. Esma`s practice of following a routinised pattern of teaching in a previous school without consideration of alternatives (see Section 6.2.1.), for example, indicates a lack

of agency (Priestley et al., 2015). For them, it seemed that their agency was a product of a process where the interplay between their individual capacities and ecological environments guided their engagement in reflective and collaborative PL activities, and this, accordingly, shaped their sense of agency. Figure 9 shows the process of exercising agency for these teachers.

Figure 9

Teacher agency as the outcome of the interaction between individual and contextual factors, and reflective and collaborative PL activities
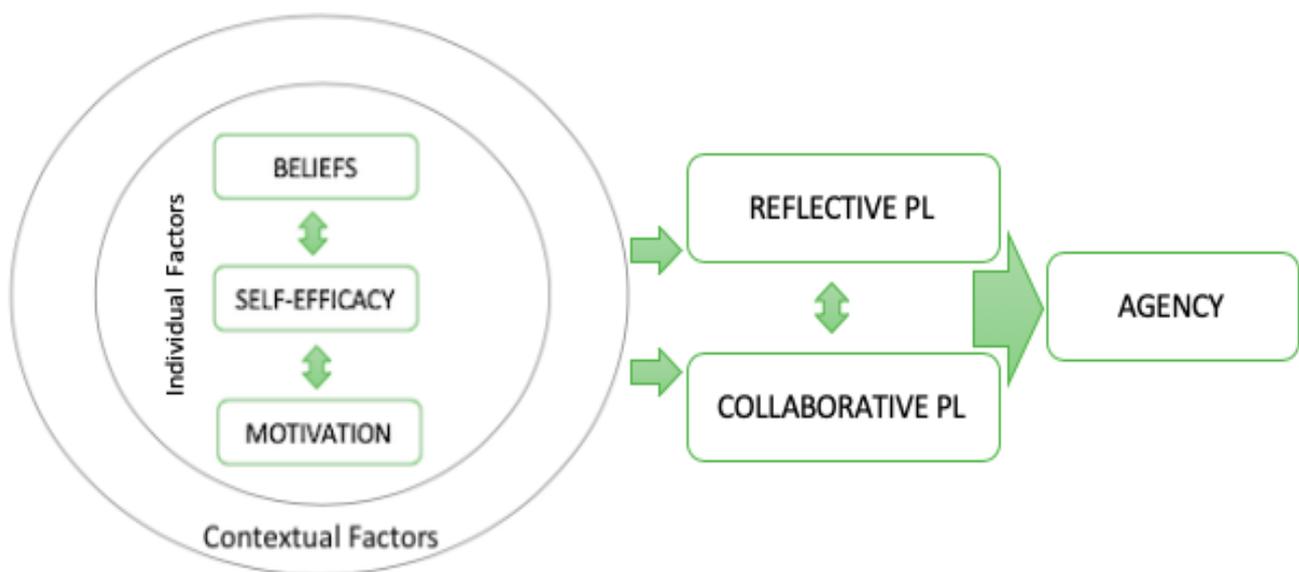
Even though all teachers were affected by the imposed environment, Pinar and Gaye differed from the others with regards to the way they construed and reacted to it (Bandura, 2012). As they felt less restricted by the contextual factors and could free themselves from the constraints, their sense of agency did not vary as much across time and educational settings, which indicates the Ecological Agency Model may not explain Pinar and Gaye. For them, it seemed their individual mechanisms played a bigger role in their engagement in reflective and collaborative PL activities, and shaping their agency. This is in line with Burn et al. (2010) where the researchers found teachers` individual stance towards PL determined the way they utilised their contexts. While for the other teachers, the interplay between the individual and contextual factors determined the efficacy of their reflective and collaborative experiences, Gaye and Pinar, having a high level of internal motivation, seemed able to

engage in more effective forms of reflection and collaboration regardless of their educational environments and exercise a higher sense agency. Figure 10 demonstrates Gaye and Pinar`s process of agency.

Figure 10

Teacher agency as the outcome of the interaction between individual factors and reflective and collaborative PL activities
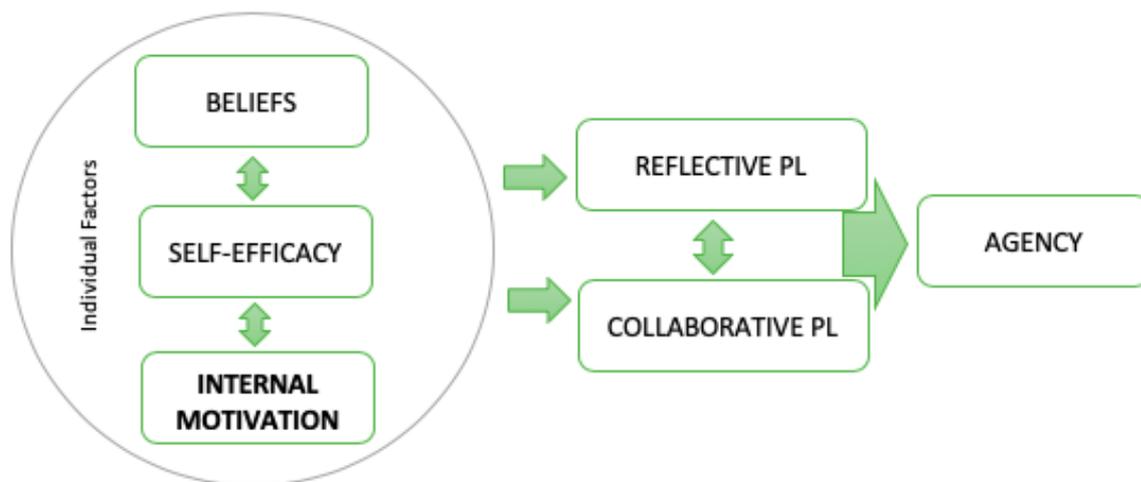
Gaye and Pinar, striving to grow professionally from inside, were able to persevere in the face of the external barriers. The other teachers, on the other hand, having internal barriers already (in terms of their beliefs, self-efficacy and motivation), seemed to need an external drive to continue learning (Parsons, Parsons, Morewood & Ankrum, 2016). These motivational differences among the teachers may have impacted on the level of their proactivity and how they viewed their PL process. While Pinar and Gaye were able to see themselves as initiators of change by being eager to take role in improving their practice and learning outcomes (Luka, 2015), the other teachers differed from each other in terms of the extent they saw themselves as the recipients of change.

The teachers were grouped into five categories in relation to their position towards PL, which were guided by the level of their proactivity. Proactive, based on the findings in this research, refers to initiating change, having a sense of responsibility for PL, making future plans and taking required actions, and pursuing further PL opportunities. Among the teachers who were found to be proactive, there seems to be two stances towards PL: "I try no matter

what" and "I am trying because". While the first group (Gaye and Pinar) were driven by their internal motivation and therefore could act agentically no matter what the circumstances were, the second group (Esma and Hande) appeared to feel motivated partly by their school contexts therefore might not stay as proactive and agentic across different contexts. Reactive refers to taking limited responsibility for PL, needing an external initiative or drive and being dependent on the available opportunities. The teachers who were grouped as reactive (Dilek, Lale, Okan, Kerim and Ilker) seemed to have an "I try if " stance towards PL and they felt empowered or constrained by their context to a great extent, which might reflect on their sense of agency as well. Inactive refers to taking no/little responsibility for PL, not having any explicit plans to better their current situations, favouring ready-made solutions and waiting for opportunities to be created. The teachers who seemed to be inactive lacked motivation, either because of experiencing burnout and feeling detached from teaching (Sedef and Naz having an "I am done with trying" stance) or having high levels of self-efficacy and being content with their current teaching (Yeliz and Mine having an "I will never try" stance), which might lead to exerting little/no agency.

7.6.   Summary

This chapter discussed the findings and related them to the relevant literature and theoretical ideas set out in Chapter 2. The findings revealed that reflective practice and collaborative working could facilitate teacher learning, and there was a link between reflection and collaboration in relation to teachers` PL.

Teacher learning occurred as a result of reflection-on-action as they had more time and space to analyse their teaching and make further plans. To be able to achieve effective reflection, teachers needed to follow the reflective cycle and engage in deeper levels of reflection. This required them to analyse their beliefs and values, and attribute outcome to themselves. Even though material, external and situated contexts hindered or encouraged, reflection, this practice was more closely linked to individual factors and affected by teachers` beliefs and motivations (past and future elements).

Collaborative working led to learning as well, by triggering reflection. Teachers could learn from their collaborative experiences within in-school teacher communities where they were autonomous learners, they met their colleagues on an ongoing and regular basis, received and offered feedback and engaged in discussions and talks to challenge their mental

models. Although openness to learning with/from others seemed to be an important individual characteristic, collaborative working was greatly influenced by contextual factors (present elements). Nevertheless, the findings did not suggest a noticeable difference between teachers working in urban and rural settings in relation to their engagement in collaborative PL activities.

The Ecological Agency Model helped to provide an explanation for the past, present and future dimensions of teachers` agency, and how some teachers exerted more or less agency across settings. However, the findings of this research suggested that motivation, rather than agency, played an important role in teachers` learning resulting from reflective and collaborative activities. In addition, motivation, not self-efficacy, determined the extent to which teachers persevered in the face of difficulties.

CHAPTER 8 CONCLUSION

This research aimed at exploring Turkish ELT teachers` experiences of PL. Chapter 1 introduced the research and examined the teacher education system in Turkey in terms of the entry process and the pre-service and in-service stages. Looking at these areas shed light on the weaknesses regarding each phase and highlighted the gap in which this research is grounded. Chapter 2 provided an overview of the literature in relation to teachers` PL, conceptualised reflective practice and collaborative working as individual and collective learning activities and discussed the factors affecting change/learning. Linking PL to change brought out the question of how to achieve teacher change, and Edwards and Darcy`s (2004) Relational Agency Theory and Biesta and Tedder`s (2007) Ecological Agency Model were addressed as the theoretical ideas underpinning the research at the end of the chapter. Following, Chapter 3 set out the ontological and epistemological positioning, gave reasons for the use of multiple case study design and explained the data collection tools. The data analysis and interpretation stages were explained in detail as well, together with the steps to ensure the quality of the research. Chapter 4-5-6 displayed the findings for each research question, and Chapter 7 provided a discussion of the findings in relation to the relevant literature and theoretical ideas.

This chapter will restate the research questions and provide answers to them. Then, it will identify the contributions to knowledge, consider the implications at the teacher level, university training level, school level and systemic level, discuss the limitations of this research and make suggestions for further research. I will end the chapter with my personal reflections on the doctoral process.

8.1. Research Questions

This research sought to answer the following research questions:

1. How do ELT teachers working in different contexts experience reflective practice in their PL?

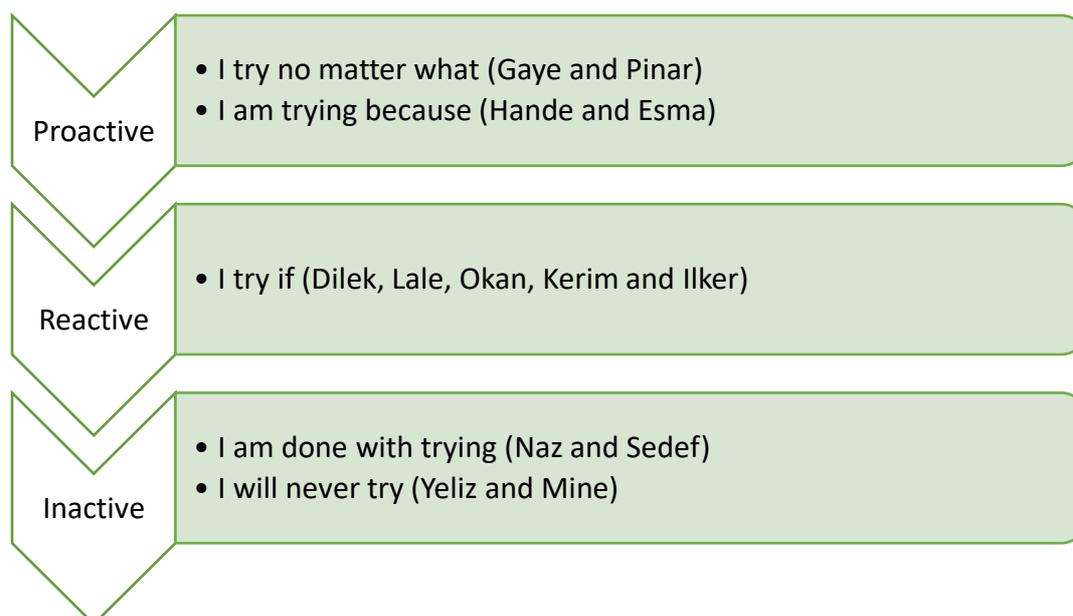2. How do ELT teachers working in different contexts experience collaboration with their colleagues in their PL?

3. What are the factors that affect ELT teachers` engagement in reflective and collaborative PL activities?

Next, the findings in relation to each research questions will be summarised.

8.1.1. How do ELT teachers working in different contexts experience reflective practice in their PL?

The findings presented in Chapter 4 suggested that the teachers reflected both during and after teaching; however, learning occurred mostly as a result of their engagement in reflection on teaching. There were three forms of reflection that the teachers were engaged in, and the teachers differed from each other with regards to whether they reflected on problems or solutions. When engaged in technical reflection, the teachers tended to consider the problems, attribute responsibility for the learning outcomes to external sources and therefore either followed the reflective steps in a linear way by experimenting with one single idea or failed in completing the reflective cycle. This form of reflection brought limited or no change. In the cases when the teachers were engaged with practical reflection, they were more able to think of solutions and take more responsibility for the learning outcomes, which led them to reflecting in a cyclical way by experimenting multiple ideas. This form of reflection helped the teachers bring change to the learning outcomes and their practices. Emancipatory reflection, however, required the teachers to reflect at the critical level by analysing and critiquing their beliefs and values. When engaged in this form of reflection, the teachers were able to surpass their existing constraints and restructure their belief systems, which led to more effective change and professional growth. These differences in reflection seemed to have derived from the individual factors (motivation, self-efficacy and beliefs) and contextual factors (the lack of incentives, examination system, teaching materials, class and school size, syllabus and class hours, school location, schools` expectations, teaching groups, workload and time and autonomy) as these factors affected the degree of reflection the teachers were engaged in and the efficacy of their learning from this practice. Nevertheless, the quality of reflection was found to be more closely linked to the individual factors as was discussed in depth in Section 7.2.

8.1.2. How do ELT teachers working in different contexts experience collaboration with their colleagues in their PL?

In Chapter 5, the findings indicated that the teachers differed from each other in terms of their experiences of collaboration with regards to the range of collaborative activities they were engaged in and with whom they collaborated. Engaging in both planned and unplanned in-school activities with colleagues from the same workplace provided the teachers with the opportunities of talking about their teaching and looking at their practice from a different perspective, which prompted reflection and led to change. Other times, when the teachers did not have such opportunities, their level of collaboration was mostly to exchange resources and organise extra-curriculum events, which led to limited or no change. Overall, the degree of collaboration the teachers were engaged in was interestingly lower than their engagement in reflective practice, therefore most of their learning derived from their reflective experiences. The differences among the teachers in terms of their openness to collaboration (linked to their motivation, self-efficacy and beliefs), and the contextual factors such as the lack of PL opportunities, school location, colleagues and in-school initiatives impacted on the degree of the collaboration the teachers were engaged in, and the efficacy of their collaborative experiences. In contrast to reflective practice, teachers` collaborative working experiences were closely linked to the contextual factors. The findings did not indicate a noticeable difference between the teachers working in the rural and urban area in relation to their engagement in reflective and collaborative PL activities.

8.1.3. What are the factors that affect ELT teachers` engagement in reflective and collaborative PL activities?

Several individual and contextual factors influenced the teachers` reflective and collaborative experiences as was elaborated in detail in Chapter 6. Yet, despite similar contextual factors, the teachers varied with regards to their engagement in reflective practice and collaborative working, which highlighted the importance individual factors relating to teachers` beliefs, self-efficacy and motivation. The teachers differed in terms of the level of their motivation (high, moderate and low) and the source of their motivation (internal and external), the level of their self-efficacy (high and low) and what they were disposed to (striving to grow and feeling satisfied), and the type of their beliefs (progressive and traditional) and whether their practices were aligned with their beliefs (see Table 14 in

Section 7.4.4.). The findings suggested that the teachers who had high levels of motivation could engage in effective forms of reflection and collaboration regardless of the external actors and transform their practice, and that motivation might be the key individual factor affecting the teachers` growth and their sense of agency (see Figure 8 in Section 7.5.). While the ones who had internal motivation could persevere in the face of difficulties and stay agentic no matter what the circumstances were (see Figure 10 in Section 7.5.), the ones whose motivation was more dependent on the existing circumstances exerted more or less agency across time and settings (see Figure 9 in Section 7.5.). The teachers were grouped into five categories with regards to their position towards PL, and these were "I try no matter what", "I am trying because", "I try if", "I am done with trying" and "I will never try". The teachers in the first two categories had high levels of motivation and were proactive in initiating change and pursuing their PL, the ones in the third category were reactive and the power they felt in themselves to bring change was dependent on their contexts, and the teachers in the last two categories were inactive by lacking motivation and waiting for change initiatives from authorities. Figure 11 illustrates the teachers in relation to their positions towards PL and their proactivity.

Figure 11

Teachers in relation to the level of their proactivity and their positions towards PL

Proactive	• I try no matter what (Gaye and Pinar) • I am trying because (Hande and Esma)
Reactive	• I try if (Dilek, Lale, Okan, Kerim and Ilker)
Inactive	• I am done with trying (Naz and Sedef) • I will never try (Yeliz and Mine)

8.2. Contributions to Knowledge

This research contributes to knowledge by:

1. Providing insight that reflective practice is more linked to internal mechanisms (teachers` motivation, self-efficacy and beliefs) and collaborative working is more influenced by outer factors and proposing that these two PL activities feed into each other (see Figure 12). Effective models of collaboration can challenge teachers` thinking and prompt reflection, and as teachers become more reflective, they tend to acknowledge others` expertise and become more open to learning with/from others. The existing literature has not empirically brought these concepts together in relation to teacher learning/change.

Figure 12

Teachers in relation to their engagement in reflective and collaborative PL activities
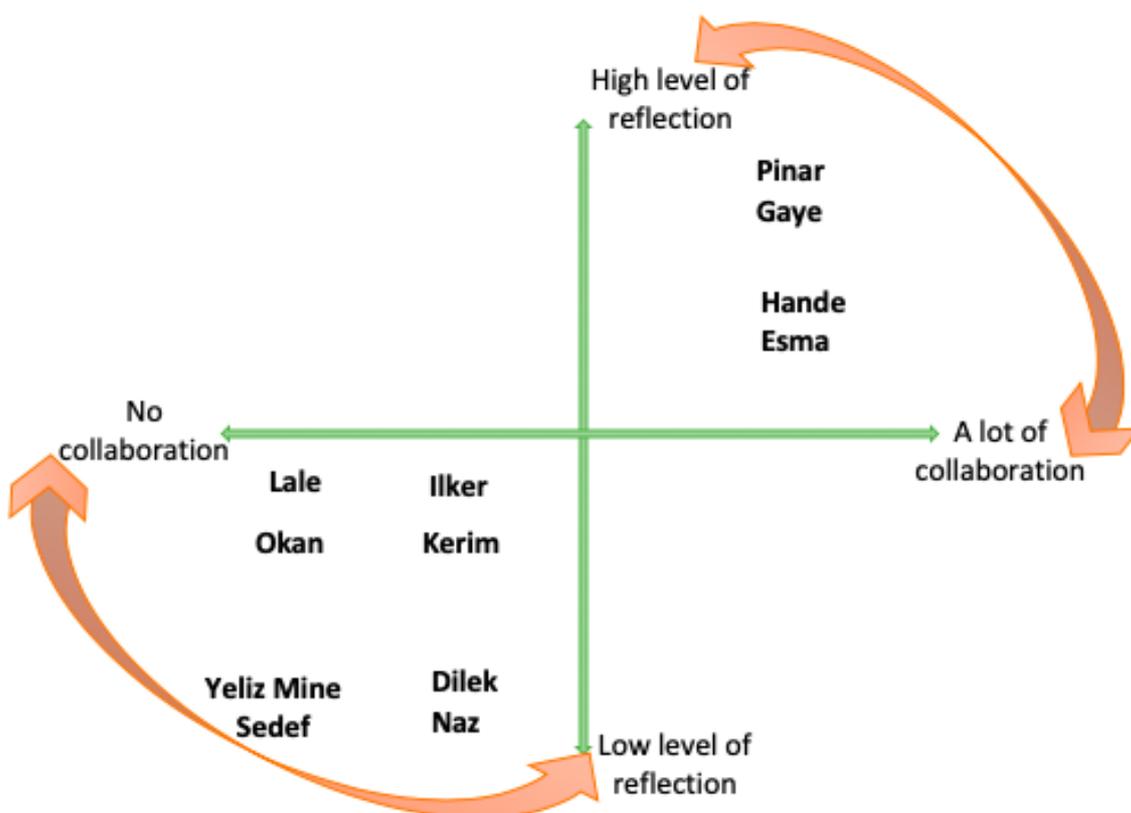
2. Reformulating the relationship between self-efficacy and motivation and offering a new look at the role of motivation in relation to teacher agency. The literature

indicates that self-efficacy determines the level of motivation meaning low self-efficacy results in low levels of motivation and high self-efficacy leads to high levels of motivation, and that self-efficacy is closely linked to teacher agency. The evidence from this research, however, suggests that motivation is not guided by self-efficacy and high levels of motivation, regardless of self-efficacy, leads to growth. And motivation, rather than self-efficacy, may be the key requisite for agency. Research thus far on teacher self-efficacy have tended to be quantitative and assessed teachers` self-efficacy through numerical levels, as opposed to this research which utilised qualitative in-depth data focusing on teachers` personal experiences.

3. Offering a new perspective for teacher development in Turkey by proposing reflective practice and collaborative working as two activities that can facilitate in-service teachers` professional growth. Research thus far in Turkey has mostly focused on the entry process and pre-service stage in relation to teacher education, and highlighted the issues around the unrigorous admission process, the lack of collaboration among the stakeholders and the absence of the reflective component in teaching practicum and pre-service programmes. Yet, reflective practice and collaborative working have not been investigated for in-service teachers. While teachers are encouraged to become more reflective and collaborative to foster PD in high-achieving educational systems, teacher development is viewed in a didactic way in Turkey.

4. Developing a better understanding of teacher agency. Whilst external factors may hinder professional growth, teachers with strong internal mechanisms (comprising of beliefs, self-efficacy and internal motivation) can detach themselves from the constraining features of settings and stay agentic across time (see Figure 10 in Section 7.5.). Previous research using the Ecological Agency Model have focused on factors such as beliefs whereas this research has looked at the relationship between agency and reflection and collaboration.

5. Readjusting the position of teacher agency in relation to PL. The literature proposes a close link between teacher agency and PL/change and defines agency as individuals` potential to bring change to the current situation. However, the evidence from this

research indicates that teachers` engagement in reflective and collaborative activities generates internal and external motivation to exercise agency (see Figure 8 in Section 7.5.), which highlights that motivation, rather than agency, may have a key role in teacher growth and change.

8.3. Implications of the Research

By providing insights into ELT teachers` experiences of reflection and collaboration, and the contextual and individual factors affecting their engagement in these PL activities, this research suggests the following implications:

1. With the continuous change in the international arena and the developments in knowledge, students` needs are constantly changing as well. To be able to engage with global developments and adapt themselves to the new trends in teaching, teachers need to understand the importance of improving their practice and change their attitudes towards PD. Also, they ought to change their perspective from being trained or developed, to being life-long learners and take responsibility for their learning process (Easton, 2008). Doing so may enable teachers to detect their own professional needs, determine how to best address them and design their personalised PL programme. In order to achieve this, teachers should view their classes as laboratories where they can experiment innovative and creative ideas and perceive their teaching experience as a basis for conducting action research. They need to be open and eager to engage in critical analysis of their beliefs, values and goals, to make plans, take required actions and reflect on the results, which can help them to refine and restructure their thinking and develop their practice. And teachers need to understand teaching is more of a social practice rather than a private experience that occurs in isolation. Therefore, rather than feeling threatened or intimidated by others, they should be open to sharing their teaching with colleagues and talking about their classroom practice with them, they should consider colleagues as sources for professional growth and develop the skills to benefit from others` expertise. For ELT teachers specifically, engaging in reflective practice and collaborative activities can be invaluable by enhancing their thinking and widening their teaching repertoire. These activities can challenge ELT teachers to critique their current teaching approach, help them

to rebuild their beliefs about teaching and adopt a more progressive approach to teaching English. As the evidence from this study indicates, engaging in effective forms of reflection and collaboration can enable ELT teachers to distance themselves from the widely preferred exam-oriented teaching and commonly used traditional teaching techniques such as memorisation, repetition and translation, and move towards adopting a skills-based English teaching approach in their classes, which may provide students with opportunities to actually use their knowledge of English. And, continuously exploring new ideas may result in less monotonous classes, which may help ELT teachers to change students` attitudes positively and increase their motivation for learning English. This, in the long term, can lessen the gap between the current and the desired learning outcomes.

2. Schools should be designed as learning environments for teachers, not just students, by offering a wide range of individual and collective learning opportunities, incentives and support (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005). The evidence from this research underlines the importance of schools` promoting in-school activities such as making inquiries, experimenting, mentoring, supervising, classroom observation and team working, which provide teachers with systematic and regular feedback and involve individual and collective reflection to enable teachers to improve their teaching quality and pursue PL. To achieve this, teachers` school hours and workload should be arranged in a way that allows them time and space to reflect on their teaching, to meet, share, observe and interact with colleagues. Having such interactive opportunities may help ELT teachers to be exposed to new teaching techniques and to realise how English can be taught differently. And having lessened workload can allow them to make more time for preparing their classes and break out of their routine by trying out new ideas. The findings of this research highlight the role headteachers play in the extent to which ELT teachers have control over their teaching, how valuable and accepted they feel within their school contexts and the dynamics of the relationship among teachers. Therefore, as well as enacting regulations and policies, headteachers should develop a vision about their role in schools which involves encouraging

teachers to be autonomous, supplying educational resources and supporting teacher growth. By taking responsibility for teachers` professional growth, headteachers can create a school environment that strengthens teachers` professionalism and stimulates teachers` voice. Working in such school settings may provide ELT teachers with the resources they need for testing curricular and extra-curricular ideas they may have and with some sense of flexibility to experiment more innovative and progressive teaching techniques and also ELT teachers may feel less pressurised and limited by the exam-oriented education system.

3. Universities should offer opportunities for teacher candidates at the pre-service stage to help them develop skills for reflection and collaboration. The evidence from this research emphasises the role that teachers` backgrounds play in shaping their belief systems and guiding their teaching. To form a strong basis of beliefs about teaching and PL, pre-service programmes should promote reflective assignments as well as discussion groups, group work, peer observation, microteachings to challenge teacher candidates` thinking, to provide systematic feedback for them, and to encourage them to analyse their experiences and link them with theories. Having such opportunities at the pre-service stage can equip prospective ELT teachers with skills to become autonomous and proactive in their PL process, and self-evaluative and reflective in their teaching career.

4. Authorities should consider the following suggestions which involve practical and conceptual change to achieve relatively immediate and long-term improvements:
   i. As the evidence from this research reveals, certain forms of reflection can help ELT teachers to achieve change in their belief sets and classroom practice and students` learning outcomes. Therefore, authorities need to integrate reflective components in pre-service programmes and train teacher candidates to become reflective, which can lead to immediate improvements at the individual teacher level.

ii. It is crucial for authorities to offer incentives and rewards to teachers as a result of their time and involvement in such activities to motivate and encourage teachers for PL.

iii. A monitoring system should be set up to evaluate the efficacy of the already existing out-of-school collaborative opportunities and a feedback loop should be built between teachers and educational planners to make these opportunities more relevant to teachers` needs and to design further activities. Furthermore, ELT-related collaborative opportunities should be offered to ELT teachers, as in the current situation the available opportunities seem to be limited to general teaching mostly. Being provided with opportunities related to their subject area and being consulted about what and how they want to learn can change ELT teachers` attitudes towards these activities and motivate them for PL.

iv. At the stage of designing materials for teaching English, educational planners need to take into consideration the most recent trends in the field of ELT and align the teaching content according to the desired outcomes. Whilst students are expected to be able to understand in English and be fluent in using their knowledge of English, the existing teaching materials published by MEB seem to undermine the teaching of particular skills. Additionally, the annual teaching content for English should be reconsidered in relation to the assigned class hours. Having less content and better designed teaching materials can encourage ELT teachers to explore more freely in teaching.

v. The approach to change should be re-examined and rather than imposing top-down initiatives, authorities should acknowledge that teachers play a key role in achieving educational change and that time is needed for sustained change. The perspective of teacher development should be revised and teachers should be encouraged to take responsibility for their learning. Even though the centralised education system may have benefits to realise MEB`s equality and fairness principles, allowing more adaptability and autonomy in schools can lessen the pressure on teachers and help them take more control over their teaching, which can pave the way for owning the change and staying more committed in the change process. The involvement of teachers in the change

process can impact on the status of teaching profession positively as teachers could start to feel more respected and trusted by authorities.

vi. It is crucial for authorities to provide support systems for teachers within their school settings, as well as outside of schools. A school culture which is grounded in collaboration, trust and respect should be promoted.

vii. Instead of individualising each school unit within itself, interactive and collaborative initiatives can be introduced among schools, and between schools and universities, which can provide ELT teachers with invaluable opportunities to challenge their beliefs and practices and keep up with improvements in the field of English teaching.

viii. Authorities should take cultural and educational differences into consideration while implementing Western theories into the teacher education system in Turkey. While reflective skills can be relatively easily developed by integrating reflective components into pre-service programmes and designing activities that can promote critical reflection, collaborative working seems harder to achieve as there are various layers affecting it. However, to promote collaboration as well, authorities can redesign EBA in a way that would allow teachers to interact with each other, upload from their classes, access to updated sources and online interactive courses. Doing this may smoothly introduce teachers to the idea of PL, which can be further supported by the other suggestions mentioned in this section.

8.4. Limitations of the Research

This research has the following limitations:

1. It is small in scale and it adopts a qualitative approach with a specific focus on ELT teachers; therefore, its findings cannot be generalised to a larger population, or the findings may not be applicable to other teachers in the same field or teachers in other subject areas, which is an inevitable limitation as a result of the very nature of this research. Yet, the findings of this research can be informative for educational researchers about what constitutes effective reflection and collaboration and what factors impact on teachers` PL.

2. The sample of this research had a teaching experience between 4 and 11 years in teaching English. Therefore, I acknowledge that ELT teachers who are more experienced may have different experiences of reflective and collaborative ELT activities, or there may be differences between less and more experienced ELT teachers with regards to the factors affecting their engagement in these activities. As such, the findings of this research may not apply to more experienced ELT teachers.

3. This research targeted public school ELT teachers only as informants and did not include private school ELT teachers. The data from two of the teachers in this research suggested that private schools could differ from public schools in terms of the opportunities they provide for teachers. Yet, it may not be known, for sure, how such opportunities contribute to PL without actually investigating private schools.

4. This research did not adopt a purposive sampling for the schools that the teachers were situated in with regards to whether they had a collaborative culture established, and the findings did not provide many examples of collaborative learning. Therefore, it may not be known, for certain, the extent to which the existence of such collaborative opportunities would impact on the findings.

5. The findings of this research brought out effective models for reflective and collaborative learning. Yet, these models emerged from the teachers` experiences who already had the reflective and collaborative skills and were motivated to learn. Therefore, it may not surely be known how these models would work on teachers lacking these skills, and what specific methods would enhance their development of reflective and collaborative skills.

6. Whilst reflection and collaborative activities can lead to teacher growth as shown in this research, transferring Western theories to the Turkish context without taking into consideration the cultural and religious background of the country and its impact on the education and schooling systems, the differences regarding the status of teaching and the perception of education may bring up questions about their applicability. Currently, there does not seem to be a culture of critical reflection among teachers, and there seems to be a severe lack of collaborative opportunities. Imposing these practices as they are widely suggested in the literature may bring about difficulties and create tension. Therefore, cultural values and factors should be considered and

these activities should be modified accordingly to benefit better when implementing them.

7. The data collection tools may be another limitation of the research. The data were collected through three forms of interviews and the teachers may not have been honest in their responses or may have shared according to what they thought would be acceptable, they may have withdrawn information or may have remembered incidents wrongly. To minimise such issues and ensure the quality of the data, I took precautions which were explained in Sections 3.4.3, 3.6.1., 3.6.2. and 3.6.4.

8. Another limitation may be linked to my own belief and value system and my previous experiences, which can be sources of bias. To ensure the trustworthiness of the research and the quality of the data, I explained every step of the research in Chapter 3 and took precautions which were described in Sections 3.6.1. and 3.6.2.

9. I conducted and transcribed the interviews in Turkish, then coded them in English and translated relevant parts into English. In order to minimise misinterpretations and bias, I sent the interviews back to the teachers for respondent validation and I peer checked with a bilingual colleague to ensure the accuracy of my translation.

8.5.   Future Research Recommendations

1. This research looked at the ELT teachers working in public schools only by excluding ELT teachers working in private schools. A comparative study can be conducted to examine the differences between public and private schools, and to further determine the extent to which teachers` current educational environments can empower or constrain them. Or a comparative study between countries may be carried out to understand how educational and cultural differences shape contextual and individual factors in relation to ELT teachers` engagement in reflective and collaborative PL activities.

2. Future research can be carried out by purposively selecting schools offering collaborative opportunities in order to clearly understand the link between collaborative and reflective learning. And, focus groups can be employed for teachers in a purposively selected school to better identify the individual differences towards the same contextual factors.

3. An intervention study can be designed to help teachers develop reflective and collaborative skills according to the effective forms of reflection and collaboration suggested by the findings of this research.

4. This research was not initially planned to look at the link between teachers` motivation and PL, or it was not expected to find a reverse link between self-efficacy and motivation. Therefore, looking at the link between teachers` motivation and self-efficacy in relation to PL can be an interesting area for further research.

8.6. Reflections on the Doctoral Process

I kept a research diary from the start of my PhD, mainly to be able to control the ideas that pass through my mind. Apart from my doctoral journey, I have always been a diary keeper as seeing things written down provides me with a sense of concreteness, helps me to make sense of those ideas and decide what to do with them. With the same purpose, I wrote down all random ideas that I had for each step of my PhD and reflected on them, which greatly built on my thinking.

I had begun this painfully long but utterly enlightening journey to learn more about a topic I was personally interested in. I had had negative experiences as an ELT teacher throughout my teaching years and suffered from feeling lonely and disliking myself for the mistakes I had been making. Years passing by, I had felt increasingly inadequate in teaching and had been constantly looking for ways to improve myself. To feel more competent as a teacher, I took whatever exam I needed to take to, first, transfer to a university which, according to my thinking, would push me further to achieve more; and, second, to start a Master`s degree in education in Turkey. These, in time, had not felt satisfactory and I took further actions to study abroad, the success of which would have proved myself to me. I can better analyse and understand my past self now, but back then I was, to myself, an ELT teacher simply trying to do more.

By the end of the Master`s degree, I had decided what I wanted to focus on for my PhD. Yet, I cannot claim I knew much about the literature, and certainly did not think in depth about the concepts I had in my mind. And I was not aware of the complexity of doing a PhD. I was naïve to believe that it would be a linear process, I would know what I would be doing, and as long as I do my part everything would be under control. My fondness of certainty and control has turned into a big challenge throughout my doctoral journey.

Once I started reading the literature, I was amazed by the limitlessness of the articles and books that were available and terrified knowing I would not be able to read them all and therefore would miss something important. My initial ideas began to develop as I read more about reflection and collaboration, and why engaging in these practices was not as easy as I thought it would be. When I got to the point where I was thinking about my theoretical framework and teacher change, I was lost in the theories and did not know which one to choose. The way Guskey (1986) described the change process made sense to me as a former teacher, but Clarke and Hollingsworth`s (2002) model was also sensible and maybe change does not occur linearly. Or, the dilemma that I had like, should I choose agency theory or think about teachers within their school contexts and maybe take into consideration organisational change and read more about contingency and complexity theories, or can I use them all? I was – maybe still sometimes am – the type who used to see things as black or white or expect a yes or no answer - most probably because of my educational and cultural background - and not giving a definite answer to my questions was very challenging.

Designing my research was equally challenging because of the responsibility I felt I was taking by making all the decisions. Yet, I must confess, the hardest part was trying to understand what my epistemological and ontological positioning was, and how it actually guided my thinking and the whole research process. I found myself reading and reading even more to comprehend those philosophical ideas, and thinking how everyone was the same and yet very different, how everything we do was very subjective, and amazedly questioning is it the same yellow we all see? Despite its complexity, I loved and enjoyed thinking about how the way we see things guides our lives, and how it is shaped by our education and culture.

The timing for my confirmation and doing the pilot study could not have been better; I could interview the teachers just before the schools closed for summer holiday in Turkey. And having the summer, before I started the main study in September 2018, gave me the time to actually analyse the pilot study data, link it to the literature I had read and made sense of the bit that did not fit in the literature. Doing such a thorough analysis for the pilot study gave me the opportunity to present my work at European Educational Research Association (EERA) 2018, Italy. That was my first academic interaction with researchers coming from around the world, the first time I felt like a researcher, not a student, by presenting my work to other researchers and by being able to inform the academia. And it was a very big opportunity for me to be able to listen to the scholars like G. Biesta whose model I used to

ground my research in, and admire the great minds and their thinking level, all of which inspired and motivated me greatly.

I believe I was extremely lucky being able to find the teachers for the main study in a relatively short time and the deep data they provided. But I cannot say it was without any difficulties. As I had to travel between the urban and the rural areas all the time to interview the teachers, transportation was a problem for me. And I had to organise my interview schedule very carefully to avoid any clashes and to update it as the teachers asked for changes. At the times when I had multiple interview sessions with different teachers in the rural area on the same day, I would wait for the following sessions at the bus station as it was comparatively detached from the residents of the rural area who were very conservative and the public places like parks and cafès were dominated by and reserved for men. Another difficulty I experienced at the data collection stage was when I asked the teachers to reflect on their teaching. This was an opportunity for most of them, as they reported, which they had not had before. Once they reflected on a specific learning incident and traced it back to how it happened, they seemed to be amazed by noticing how they could learn from their own teaching or from their interactions with their colleagues. And, when I asked them to reflect on their teaching, they seemed to like having the chance to talk to someone about the way they teach and their fears and visions of teaching English, and they were equally surprised by exploring, through our conversations, why they did what they did. Going through such a process with the teachers was both heart-breaking and hope-inspiring for me.

After the completion of the data collection and the transcription stages, I, excitedly, started the analysis with the hope of finally seeing what I had in there. But I could never imagine that the analysis itself would take almost the half of my doctoral process and I would not be able to clearly see what I found until towards the end of my PhD. The most challenging and gruelling period throughout my research was the data analysis stage, maybe because of the length of the analysis and the decrease in my motivation as I spent more and more time in the data, or maybe because of the energy I spent continuously thinking about the data and writing down every thought I had or voice recording all possible interpretations and links that occurred to me. I remember crystal clear the exact moment I came up with Table 14 in Section 7.4.4.; I was at the gym running on the treadmill trying to clear my head from the data. To analyse the data thoroughly, I had to stay alert to my thinking and that was exhausting. Yet, it would be a lie if I say I did not enjoy the pain as it led to learning more about my research

and myself personally. For example, my initial Literature Review did not involve the forms of reflection and what teachers can reflect on, or I did not know anything about how individuals differ in terms of their attitudes towards collaborating with others. And even regarding the agency theory I had already written about initially, I had not thought in depth about how I would use it. The analysis and the findings guided me regarding what new literature to look for and how to better benefit from the theories which were already in my Literature Review.

At the stage of the analysis, I went to the United States to participate in American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL) 2019. Attending that conference was surprisingly informative as I did not expect to interact with as many researchers as I had not focused on linguistics or classroom English teaching. There, I noticed how other researchers looked at my research and thought of possible theories that could have been used, which showed me that there was not one way of doing the research and somebody else would maybe have used a different literature to explain the same findings, and that doing research was very subjective indeed.

The second most challenging period throughout my research has been the last few months since March 2020. I have been using every fibre of my motivation to survive mentally in the face of the pandemic and write up my thesis according to the timetable I had planned. It has been very frustrating and slightly depressing for me to be away from my family in Turkey, to helplessly worry about them, then to feel sorry for myself for being alone while almost all of my friends left for home. In the midst of these psychological ups and downs and the fight with the uncertainty, I had to find ways to motivate myself to write my Discussion and prepare for submission. It has not been easy, at all. I had to think about my priorities, the things I could control relatively easily and the ideal vision of myself, which led me to creating a personalised plan for the things I wanted to achieve academically, mentally, spiritually and physically.

Writing, rewriting, thinking, editing and reediting the chapters of my thesis made me understand that I was very wrong assuming PhD would be very straightforward and linear. It is full of complexity and uncertainty, and it is certainly cyclical. Every time I took a step back from what I was reading or writing and went back to it later, I could perceive things slightly differently or explore what I could not see initially. Hence the quote from T. S. Eliot and me arriving where I started and knowing what I had not looked for.

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APPENDIX A

Pilot Study Example Diagrams

Ayla`s motivation in time

Banu`s motivation in time

Cenk`s motivation in time
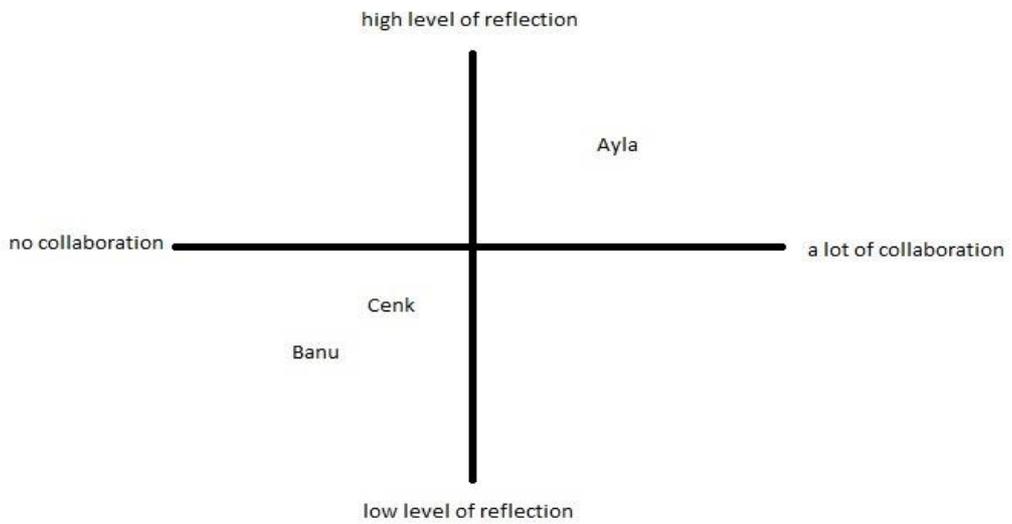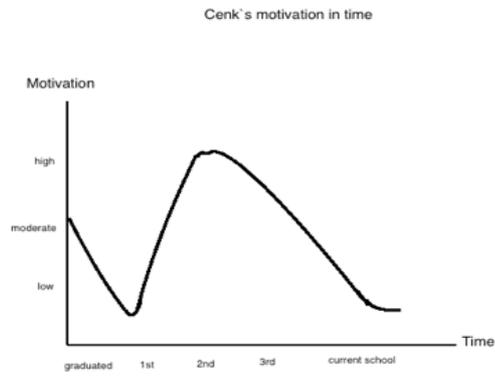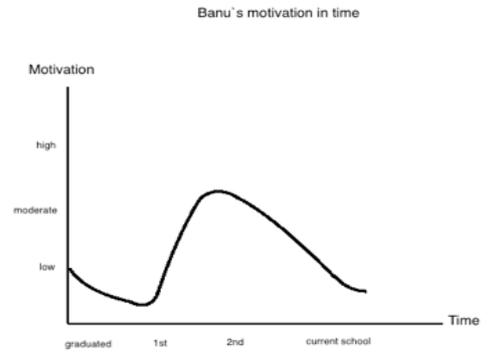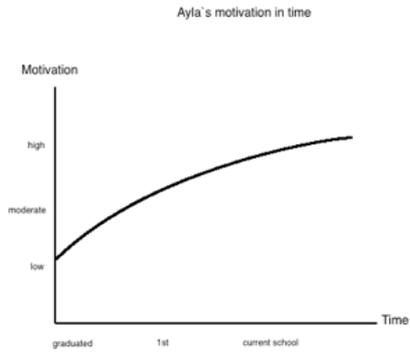
1st Part — PAST

External
Reasons → Financial concerns
→ Easier to be recruited as an ELT t

Educational Background

Bachelors in Linguistics
- theory-based courses
- learning academic Eng.
- Not being exposed to enough spoken language

Pedagogical Formation
- Basic intro to ELT methods and techniques
- Limited time and opps. for practice

Internship
- Very limited time
- Overcrowded classes
- Not enough opps. for observing and teaching
- Not like real-class teaching

Masters in Education

PhD in Education

Previous Experience

Teaching
- Teaching Academic English
  → Reflects on
    - sts' low level of interest
    - sts' low learning outcomes
  ✗ Searches for different ways
  → Buys a teaching set
    - the negative school culture
    - too much content
    - can't use them
  → Tries to use Dyned in the school
    - not well-working computers, microphones, internet
    - can't use it

Activity
- MEB compulsory adaptation traing for novice ts
  – very limited time & content
  – expert to teacher
  + some teaching ways for young learners (posters & flashcards)

- Dyned (compulsory MEB) seminars for ELT ts
  - lectures
  - no opportunities to practise

Beliefs
→ Not being able to focus on 4 skills
  → Sts' negative attitudes towards English
  → Sts' not achieving well
→ Her negative beliefs about herself as an ELT t, feeling insufficient
  → "I'm not a good teacher"

Collaborative Acts

with ELT ts
① Discussion groups ab-road →
  - how to teach English
  - learning how other count-ries teach Eng.
  → Pronunciation + Daily life conv.
  + vocabulary teaching

② An informal in-school talk with an ELT
  - after seeing his sts' success in a national exam
  - the way he teaches vocab

with other ts
① Informal talks with fri-ends
  - their sts' success and increasing interest
  - how the online portals help sts' learning

Reflective Acts

on
→ Her way of teaching
  • Her beliefs about being a competent speaker of English
  • Her con & pronunciation skills compared to others
  → A change in her belief about what to focus in English teaching

② • Sts' learning outcome
  • her feeling insufficient
  • her self interest in technology
  → Participating in cou-ses to learn the smart board

③ • Sts' low level of motivation to learn Eng
  → Read an article about how to give oral & written feedback to sts

---

Teaching — NOW

Teaching how to use the lang is very important

Having less content
Positive school env.
Conscious parents
Smartboards in the school

① More focus on skills and daily-life use of lang through online portals & smartboard
  - to enrich classes
  - to increase sts' learning
  - to help sts learn pronunciation and listening

  ✗ not focusing on speaking that much
  - time limitation ✗ too much content
  - the pressure of the syllabus / no flexibility

  (time consuming vs sts' positive atts and learning outcome (even slow-learners do well))

② Vocab teaching through stories
  Vocabs are important to communicate
  ↑ Sts' interest & learning outcome

③ Giving oral & written feedback to sts
  Sts should get moti-vated to learn Eng
  ↑ The feedback has a positive impact on sts

Beliefs
① Methods she has been using have positively affected sts' attitudes towards Eng and their learning outcome
  → Sts do better and remember what they learn

② She is more confident about her teaching, still ques-tioning her sufficiency

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Reflective Acts

on
① • Sts' not being good at pronunciation
  • Sts' feeling confused about spoken-written Eng difference
  • Watching a random (not teaching related) video on youtube

② • Sts' interest in speaking
  • Sts' motivation for extra activities
  • Seeing other ELT ts use drama plays

FUTURE

Teaching — Short term

① Teaching pronunciation through spelling games and acts

② Improving sts' speaking through a drama play
  → another ELT, capabilities
  → share of work for a shared product

③ Courses for
  → teaching Eng to slow-learners
  → teaching Eng more effectively
    ↓
    to update teaching methods   to keep up with sts' needs

Herself — Long term

① Becoming an academic

② Going abroad to improve speaking & pronunciation
  - lack of financial support from MEB
  → ts aren't allowed to take a break from teaching

③ Speaking and pronunciation courses

④ Reading and being knowledgeable about different things → to do interdisciplinary teaching

APPENDIX B

Interview Schedule

3 OCT WED	Gaye 14:10 (1st) Esma 17:10 (1st)	**16 OCT TUE**	Ilker 10:20-11:00 (1st) Naz 15:00 (1st)
4 OCT THUR	Yeliz 10:10-10:50 (1st) Kerim 16:00 (1st)	**17 OCT WED**	Naz 15:00 (2nd)
5 OCT FRI	Gaye 14:10 (2nd) Kerim 16:00 (2nd)	**18 OCT THUR**	Hande 09:30 (2nd) Sedef 13:30 (1st)
6 OCT SAT	Dilek 13:30 (1st)	**22 OCT MON**	Mine 11:10 (2nd and 3rd) Okan 14:50 (1st)
8 OCT MON	Esma 17:10 (2nd)	**23 OCT TUE**	Ilker 10:20 (2nd and 3rd) Naz 14:00 (3rd)
9 OCT TUE	Kerim 10:20 (3rd) Gaye 14:10 (3rd)	**24 OCT WED**	Okan 14:50 (2nd)
10 OCT WED	Esma 17:10 (3rd)	**25 OCT THUR**	Hande 09:30 (3rd) Sedef 13:30 (2nd and 3rd)
11 OCT THUR	Hande 09:30 (1st) Yeliz 12:30 (2nd)	**26 OCT FRI**	Lale 09:30 (2nd) Pinar 11:00 (2nd)
12 OCT FRI	Lale 09:30 (1st) Pinar 11:00 (1st)	**1 NOV THUR**	Yeliz 15:40 (3rd)
13 OCT SAT	Dilek 13:30 (2nd and 3rd)	**2 NOV FRI**	Lale 09:30 (3rd) Pinar 11:00 (3rd)
15 OCT MON	Mine 11:10 (1st)	**7 NOV WED**	Okan 14:50 (3rd)

APPENDIX C

An Example of Table of Codes

Collaborative Working	CW Daily or Purpose	Peer observation at uni		+Given responsibility by the mentor lecturer
		With ELTs at … – Theatre plays, Exchanging ideas and materials		+Helpful and coordinated colleagues +Community of Practice in the school +Collaborative culture in the school
		With ELTs - Seminars, Trainings, Book writing club (for kindergarten), Workshops, Online workshops (doing projects together)		+Provided opportunities by …
		Colleagues – Master`s courses, discussions, talks		+Problems relatable to her student profile
		ELT seminar - Introducing the new syllabus		+Provided opportunity +Informing about how to apply the new syllabus
		With the ELT – Exchanging ideas		+Close friends
		With ELTs – In high schools or uni levels, Exchanging ideas and materials		+Teaching similar age groups +Having similar concerns "I talked to a friend who has a language class as well"
Reflective Practice	Students	1.Unmotivated Before: Making classes fun through activities, Lyrics every week, School-wide cupsong activity – Change in sts` attitudes, Sts being involved in the learning process (making suggestions for the class), Improvement in skills Now: Decorating a language classroom (implicit teaching), Encouraging sts to use the language through wide range of	Mtrls Ri	Not having story books or exam books, Starting an online material campaign, Getting books from ELTs Changing teaching way when sts get bored (using physical activities), Classroom management problems (using assistantship, giving sts responsibilities) – less behavioural problems

		activities - Increase in sts` motivation, Improvement in skills

2.Age groups:
Private school - Sts like games and activities (young learners), Teaching through games, flash cards and songs + Vocab-based teaching (grouping)
MEB – Forming sentences and phrases, Sts like social media and technology - Quote of the day board, Creating a blog for every group (sharing and commenting in Eng) + Sts like creating characters, Speaking and Writing activities by using drama technique, Sts preparing for classes, Detective story, Instruction giving, Doing a school-wide fortune telling activity – Increase in interest + Skills improvement

3.Levels:
PS – Sts background strong - Warm up listening, Fluent in Eng – Teach in Eng
MEB - Sts` background weak, Sts general knowledge weak - Implicit teaching (grammar and general knowledge) through reading first then other skills, Very low-achieving - Tr + Eng

4.Needs:
Well-being (Sts having economical or parental problems), Addressing the problems first then teaching
Exam (Sts wanting to prepare for the language exam), Using weekend courses for exam preparation, Starting the book campaign
5. Exam groups: 12th grades not taking English seriously, Fun stuff not working for them, Giving up | Teachng | Depending on the age groups: Vocab and skills (young learners) or Forming sentences and skills (teenagers) through wide range of activities + Using Eng at the maximum level |
| | | | Goals | Sts learning how to form sentences – Focusing on skills, Having a library – Starting the book campaign, Create games – Asking sts to create games (Using games in the class hour, Presenting games in …), Establishing her teaching way – Preparing sts by teaching how to form sentences + Solving problems (Just supervising, showing what they need to do, Sts taking responsibility) |
| | | | Beliefs | Supervising rather than tearing herself up - Learner-centred teaching (drama, sts creating games, blog), Implicit teaching (flash cards on the wall), First education then teaching |

Contextual Factors	CFSts	PS: High achieving Prev: Unmotivated, Okay achieving Now: Very low achieving, Unmotivated, Weak backgrounds, 12th grades not taking Eng seriously	CFO	Opportunities: Lack of ELT related opportunities, Lack of abroad opportunities, EU projects too difficult process, Formality Zumre meetings, MEB seminar for ELTs (useful)
	CFR	Having smart boards, Language classroom, Weak coursebooks, Not having story books or exam prep books, Not having technological equipment for sts to interact with each other	Collgs	Used to doing nothing, Feeling enough with their teaching, Not pursuing PL, Defeated by the system "either being isolated or adapting"
	CFS	PS: Teaching from kindergarten to 8th, Rooted high achieving school, ELT CoP, PL opportunities, Collaborative colleagues, 10+ hours for English, Using Eng actively in school and seminars, Management later (mobbing) Prev: Profession-oriented, Okay achieving school, Uncrowded teacher population, Like-minded (fighter) colleagues, Only ELT, Idealist head teacher (positive impact on sts and teachers), Head teacher providing everything she asked for, Location-wise problems (distance-tiring) Now: Low-achieving school, Exam oriented school, A language classroom, Smart boards, Head teacher good person, Crowded teacher population, Having difficulty in getting what she wants, Eng seen unimportant, Relaxed school environment (negative impact on sts), Unsupportive parents, Discouraging management (not hanging things on walls), Colleagues unsupportive reactions (making fun of the class)	SysProb CFE Time	Compulsory service in villages disadvantage, Not enough class hours, Not having a well-thought teacher recruitment way (Non-ELTs, Unqualified ELTs teaching in primary schools), Problematic pre-service training (teachers not being taught to be reflective, ELTs not knowing how to teach, Microteaching not reflecting real classes), Not having an evaluation system for teachers, Heavy syllabus (beyond sts` levels)  Seeing teaching Eng as teaching grammar  Doing master`s teaching and warding at the same time (why not for additional PL opps)
Individual Factors	IF1	Motivation: Feeling she has seen the bottom in …, Feeling a bit detached from the profession, Feeling less enthusiastic compared to before (putting everything she had in …), Feeling less happy in the profession compared to before, Feeling tired of fighting with CFS, Feeling she is being	IF5	Beliefs: <u>What to teach:</u> Skills + Vocabulary + How to form sentences <u>How to teach:</u> Wide range of learner centred activities

		wasted, Having a repressive management demotivator, Management`s discouraging attitudes demotivator, Unmotivated sts demotivator (12th grades), almost giving up on 12th grades, Seeing motivated sts motivator, Continuous questioning herself about how to better contribute to sts, Needing to search for new ways to meet sts needs, Needing to improve herself further (masters), Having an encouraging working env motivator (if not ts step back)		Ideal teaching: From early years + More class hours + Implicit grammar teaching until secondary level + Skills + First speaking listening then reading writing + Integrating technology into teaching Teaching: Learner-centred (supervising sts, letting them do), Not memorising, Implicit teaching (decorating walls) Prerequisite for effective teaching: Classroom management + Sts need to be prepared for learning (needs) – All activities can be done MEB schools: Education then teaching Reference: ELTs (ideas, materials, shared purpose projects), Teaching experience (using blog, drama, posters on the wall), Thinking (what sts like), Colleagues (masters – suggestions about how to solve problems), Pre-service (learner-centred teaching)
	IF2	Self-efficacy: Feeling insufficient in her language skills, Unconfident in how to help sts` personal problems, Feeling insufficient with changing sts needs and profiles, Feeling scared when graduated (not knowing sts), Feeling unsatisfied except for some groups, Confident in classroom management compared to before, Confident in knowing how to respond to sts differences, Confident in teaching compared to before (teaching experience), Believing she is doing her best (not much to regret), Has a clear conscience about 9th and 10th grades		Teachers` power: Motivating sts is in ts` hands Collaboration: Joint decisions and acts necessary in Eng teaching PL: To improve the language skills (not to lose what you know) + Internal necessary plus external push needed, To keep up with sts needs, Not grammar but teaching techniques, Two parts (self-development and teaching), Searching works well for her What can be done with sts: Sts learn differently according to age groups, Some groups education before teaching
	IF3	Agency: Trying to change things in the school, Resisting the system with like-minded colleagues, Not looking for available formal opportunities, Feeling helpless about 12th grades, Fighting in the current school system, Taking initiatives on the syllabus to do other activities, Trying to teach in the way she believes she should, Teaching basics to sts before the content		

PL	PLd	Voluntary: Doing master`s in education, Watching and reading in Eng, Article reading for master`s, … project based on created games Compulsory: Seminars, Workshops, Trainings provided at PS (online and face to face), Doing projects with other ELTs, Writing books for Eng at kindergarten level (learning how to arrange activities according to age groups), CoP at PS, MEB seminar (introducing the syllabus – how to integrate values education into the syllabus)	PLm	Doing PhD, Abroad opportunities (doing observations in schools), Trainings during summer periods, Opportunities to practise in Eng with ELTs, Collaborative opportunities to create ideas and materials, Online portals to be created to share materials, How to approach sts, Learning styles, How to use technology more effectively, Eng teaching ways (activities), Opportunities for peer observation and feedback, Opportunities for idea exchanging between academics, MEB teachers and private school teachers, Interactive opps to share teachings

APPENDIX D

Mine`s Story

She became interested in learning languages in early years, and after getting a good quality education at high school, she chose the language department. According to what she says, the high school Eng education was skills-based. At uni, she studied English language and literature. Although she sounded she loved literature, it is a fact that she was not trained to become a teacher. Although she took pedagogical formation courses and did internship, she said she never liked the educational courses, and she had limited opportunity to practise during internship. Therefore, although she might be good at literature, her teaching side did not improve at uni. This seemed to impact on her current teaching practices, that is because the translation method she used at university is still the most common way as her teaching way. She accepted that she commonly used GTM, writing on the board, and making sts write, that kind of traditional teaching ways. Her teaching was shaped by her learning experiences from high school and uni.

Since her first school was in a problematic area and she had to deal with different kinds of problems, she says she could not prioritise teaching English. And to me, it seemed like the time there was traumatic for her and this led her to feel exhausted already in the beginning of teaching years. After working there for almost a year, she started working in her current school. And in this school, she complains a lot about the setted classes. But she did not sound that she is happy with the students either, and to me it seemed like she is having problems with parents as well. I did not feel like she felt she belonged to the school, or that she had any positive feelings towards the school. She sounded like everything about teaching was a problem for her and complained about everything. Only when everything is perfect, maybe she would be happy in teaching.

So far, she has not attended many formal activities, and she is not even very active on online portals. She seemed like she cannot balance her professional life with her personal life, and that her personal life interferes with her professional life. She could not give any specific examples of her teaching past vs present, which might be because of the lack of PL activities. Although she has informal talks with her colleagues, she does not really collaborate. Or she is not a reflective person at all, when (if) she asks herself what else she can do for better

learning, she seemed to limit herself by believing that is all she can do. According to her, everything is problematic about teaching, school, students, parents, books, system itself…

The fact that she has not had many PL opportunities, having her first teaching in a problematic area, the imbalance between her personal and professional life, not having learnt how she can teach differently, this "I do not know" situation, all of these seem to have contributed to having a low level of motivation, feeling too weak to make changes, and feeling rusty and old in the profession. Because of all these, I believe her agency is low. She has limited ideas about what can be done, but "unfortunately" not happening. Just trying to serve the aims of the exam-oriented system, not having a separate agenda herself.

APPENDIX E

Ethical Approval from the University of Reading

University of Reading
Institute of Education
Ethical Approval Form A (version May 2015)

University of Reading

Tick one:

Staff project: _____   PhD _√_   EdD _____

Name of applicant (s): Zeynep Butun

Title of project: ELT Teachers' Professional Learning in Turkey

Name of supervisor (for student projects): Dr. Richard Harris

Please complete the form below including relevant sections overleaf.

	YES	NO	
Have you prepared an Information Sheet for participants and/or their parents/carers that:			
a) explains the purpose(s) of the project	√		
b) explains how they have been selected as potential participants	√		
c) gives a full, fair and clear account of what will be asked of them and how the information that they provide will be used	√		
d) makes clear that participation in the project is voluntary	√		
e) explains the arrangements to allow participants to withdraw at any stage if they wish	√		
f) explains the arrangements to ensure the confidentiality of any material collected during the project, including secure arrangements for its storage, retention and disposal	√		
g) explains the arrangements for publishing the research results and, if confidentiality might be affected, for obtaining written consent for this	√		
h) explains the arrangements for providing participants with the research results if they wish to have them	√		
i) gives the name and designation of the member of staff with responsibility for the project together with contact details, including email. If any of the project investigators are students at the IoE, then this information must be included and their name provided	√		
k) explains, where applicable, the arrangements for expenses and other payments to be made to the participants		√	
j) includes a standard statement indicating the process of ethical review at the University undergone by the project, as follows: 'This project has been reviewed following the procedures of the University Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct'.	√		
k) includes a standard statement regarding insurance: "The University has the appropriate insurances in place. Full details are available on request".	√		
Please answer the following questions			
1) Will you provide participants involved in your research with all the information necessary to ensure that they are fully informed and not in any way deceived or misled as to the purpose(s) and nature of the research? (Please use the subheadings used in the example information sheets on blackboard to ensure this).	√		
2) Will you seek written or other formal consent from all participants, if they are able to provide it, in addition to (1)?	√		
3) Is there any risk that participants may experience physical or psychological distress in taking part in your research?		√	
4) Have you taken the online training modules in data protection and information security (which can be found here: http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/imps/Staffpages/imps-training.aspx)?	√		
5) Have you read the Health and Safety booklet (available on Blackboard) and completed a Risk Assessment Form to be included with this ethics application?	√		
6) Does your research comply with the University's Code of Good Practice in Research?	√		

	YES	NO	N.A.
7) If your research is taking place in a school, have you prepared an information sheet and consent form to gain the permission in writing of the head teacher or other relevant supervisory professional?	√		
8) Has the data collector obtained satisfactory DBS clearance?			√
9) If your research involves working with children under the age of 16 (or those whose special educational needs mean they are unable to give informed consent), have you prepared an information sheet and consent form for parents/carers to seek permission in writing, or to give			√

parents/carers the opportunity to decline consent?			
10) If your research involves processing sensitive personal data[1], or if it involves audio/video recordings, have you obtained the explicit consent of participants/parents?	√		
11) If you are using a data processor to subcontract any part of your research, have you got a written contract with that contractor which (a) specifies that the contractor is required to act only on your instructions, and (b) provides for appropriate technical and organisational security measures to protect the data?			√
12a) Does your research involve data collection outside the UK?	√		
12b) If the answer to question 12a is "yes", does your research comply with the legal and ethical requirements for doing research in that country?	√		
13a) Does your research involve collecting data in a language other than English?	√		
13b) If the answer to question 13a is "yes", please confirm that information sheets, consent forms, and research instruments, where appropriate, have been directly translated from the English versions submitted with this application.	√		
14a. Does the proposed research involve children under the age of 5?		√	
14b. If the answer to question 14a is "yes": My Head of School (or authorised Head of Department) has given details of the proposed research to the University's insurance officer, and the research will not proceed until I have confirmation that insurance cover is in place.			√
If you have answered YES to Question 3, please complete Section B below	√		

Please complete either Section A or Section B and provide the details required in support of your application. Sign the form (Section C) then submit it with all relevant attachments (e.g. information sheets, consent forms, tests, questionnaires, interview schedules) to the Institute's Ethics Committee for consideration. Any missing information will result in the form being returned to you.

A: My research goes beyond the 'accepted custom and practice of teaching' but I consider that this project has no significant ethical implications. (Please tick the box.)	√

Please state the total number of participants that will be involved in the project and give a breakdown of how many there are in each category e.g. teachers, parents, pupils etc.

They will be 6-10 ELT teachers in public schools in Turkey.

Give a brief description of the aims and the methods (participants, instruments and procedures) of the project in up to 200 words noting:
1. title of project
2. purpose of project and its academic rationale
3. brief description of methods and measurements
4. participants: recruitment methods, number, age, gender, exclusion/inclusion criteria
5. consent and participant information arrangements, debriefing (attach forms where necessary)
6. a clear and concise statement of the ethical considerations raised by the project and how you intend to deal with then.
7. estimated start date and duration of project

The title of the project is "ELT Teachers' Professional Learning in Turkey". The aim of the study is to explore ELT teachers' experiences of collaborative working and reflective practice. Although teachers' collaborative working and reflective practice are given place in other countries' agenda such as the UK, Finland and Singapore; the situation in Turkey seems to be different. That is why, I want to explore how teachers experience professional learning under the concepts of collaboration and reflective practice. In order to gather the required data for the study, triangulation will be done in the data collection tools. Firstly, in order to understand the big picture of ELT teachers' professional learning lives, life histories will be employed. Secondly, in order to capture more specific experiences related to professional learning, critical incidents will be used. As the last step, semi-structured interviews will be conducted in order to cover what has been missing from the previous sections. These sessions will be done separately and after transcribing and analysing the data gathered from life histories and critical incidents, the last session will take place for the last set of data. The participants of the study is 6-10 ELT teachers working at public schools in Turkey. Since participation in the study is on a voluntary basis and there are no specific criteria for choosing participants, convenience sampling will be used for this study. The heads of the schools will be asked for their permission to approach to the teachers and the teachers will be asked for their consent to be interviewed and to be recorded. The teachers will be informed about their rights and they can withdraw from the

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[1] Sensitive personal data consists of information relating to the racial or ethnic origin of a data subject, their political opinions, religious beliefs, trade union membership, sexual life, physical or mental health or condition, or criminal offences or record.

study at any time they want. And they will be given the opportunity to choose the language they would like to be interviewed. No harassing or sensitive questions will be asked during the interview sessions, and the teachers will only be asked about their experiences of professional learning. I intend to do the pilot study (with 2-3 ELT teachers) in April, 2018 and it may last up to one month. The main study, after checking if the questions are clear and well-structured enough, is anticipated to take place from September to December, 2018.

B: I consider that this project **may** have ethical implications that should be brought before the Institute's Ethics Committee.	

Please state the total number of participants that will be involved in the project and give a breakdown of how many there are in each category e.g. teachers, parents, pupils etc.

Give a brief description of the aims and the methods (participants, instruments and procedures) of the project in up to 200 words.

1. title of project
2. purpose of project and its academic rationale
3. brief description of methods and measurements
4. participants: recruitment methods, number, age, gender, exclusion/inclusion criteria
5. consent and participant information arrangements, debriefing (attach forms where necessary)
6. a clear and concise statement of the ethical considerations raised by the project and how you intend to deal with then.
7. estimated start date and duration of project

C: SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT:

Note: a signature is required. Typed names are not acceptable.

I have declared all relevant information regarding my proposed project and confirm that ethical good practice will be followed within the project.

Signed: ………… Print Name. Zeynep Butun… Date.01.02.2018

STATEMENT OF ETHICAL APPROVAL FOR PROPOSALS SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE ETHICS COMMITTEE

This project has been considered using agreed Institute procedures and is now approved.

Signed: 'rint Name……13|3|1P Date…J - PORTER
(IoE Research Ethics Committee representative)*

* A decision to allow a project to proceed is not an expert assessment of its content or of the possible risks involved in the investigation, nor does it detract in any way from the ultimate responsibility which students/investigators must themselves have for these matters. Approval is granted on the basis of the information declared by the applicant.