

The Optimal Role for English Teachers: Reflective Practitioner* **

İngilizce Öğretmenleri için En Uygun Rol: Düşünen Uygulayıcı

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate how English teachers define their current teacher roles. In-service English teachers enrolled in an MA TESOL program and knowledgeable about teacher roles partook in the study. The data in this qualitative study were collected through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews conducted with all of the participants (N=13). Two themes are reached after the thematic analysis. They are identified as 1) the definition of the current role of English teachers, and 2) the ideal role for English Teachers. The findings reveal that the majority of the English language teachers in this study define themselves as reflective practitioners. Although teachers as transformative intellectuals is a reputable role among the participants, it is considered to be unachievable. In addition, some teachers are cautious about this role because it advocates some ideologies. Being a passive technician is not preferable among the teachers and they adopt this role only when the circumstances compel them to do so. Therefore, it is concluded that the optimal role for English teachers is the reflective practitioner. It is understood that teacher roles are dynamic and situated. Based upon these findings, suggestions are presented.

Keywords: *English teachers, Teacher roles, Passive technician, Reflective practitioner, Transformative intellectual*

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ÖZ

Bu çalışmanın amacı İngilizce öğretmenlerinin mevcut öğretmen kimliğini nasıl tanımladığını incelemektir. Çalışmaya İngiliz Dili Öğretimi Yüksek Lisans programına kayıtlı olan ve öğretmen rolleri hakkında bilgi sahibi olan hizmet içi İngilizce öğretmenleri katılmıştır. Bu nitel çalışmada veriler anket ve tüm katılımcılar ile yapılan (N=13) yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yolu ile toplanmıştır. Yapılan tematik analiz sonucu iki temel tema belirlenmiştir. Bu temalar 1) İngilizce öğretmenlerinin mevcut rollerinin tanımlanması ve 2) İngilizce öğretmenleri için ideal rol olarak adlandırılmıştır. Bulgular bu çalışmadaki İngilizce öğretmenlerinin büyük çoğunluğunun kendini düşünen uygulayıcı olarak tanımladıklarını ortaya koymaktadır. Entelektüel dönüştürücü, katılımcılar arasında saygın bir yere sahip olsa da erişilemez olarak görülmektedir. Bunun yanında bazı öğretmenler bir kısım ideolojileri savunduğu için bu role karşı temkinlidirler. Pasif teknisyen öğretmenler arasında tercih edilebilir bir rol değildir ve sadece koşullar onları zorladığında bu rolü benimsemektedirler. Bu nedenle İngilizce öğretmenleri için en uygun (optimal) rolün düşünen uygulayıcı olduğu sonucuna varılmıştır. Öğretmen rollerinin dinamik ve durumsal olduğu anlaşılmıştır. Bu bulgulara dayanarak önerilerde bulunulmuştur.

Anahtar Sözcükler: *İngilizce öğretmenleri, Öğretmen rolleri, Pasif teknisyen, Düşünen uygulayıcı, Entelektüel dönüştürücü*

INTRODUCTION

Defining teacher roles is a complex task controlled by contextual factors as well as teachers' personalities. Affected by these internal and external factors, different roles could be tailored for teachers by scholars, policymakers and teacher educators. Particularly in the last two decades, equity in and through English language teaching has gained significant importance in the field. In the same vein, the number of research about equity and power struggles concerning learning and teaching English increased tremendously such that even journals with a wider readership, e.g. TESOL Quarterly (Dorner & Cervantes-Soon, 2020), published special issues on such topics. These changes refueled the discussions about English teachers' roles both in and out of the classroom.

Teacher role is a phenomenon that is closely associated with teacher identity, teacher agency, and the teaching context. Miller (2009) claims that perceptions regarding teacher identity have changed in time from teachers as technicians who are supposed to have certain knowledge and put this knowledge into practice in a proposed way to a

socially enacted domain which is also related to agency, power, and critical perspectives. It is observed that definitions for English teacher identity suggested by Miller (2009) overlap with the teacher roles investigated in the present study, which are passive technician, reflective practitioner, and transformative intellectual (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). Miller (2009) defines the characteristics of language teacher identity “*as relational, negotiated, constructed, enacted, transforming, and transitional*” (p. 174; emphases original) and states that it is strongly affected by the contextual factors some of which are curriculum policy, social demographics at school, the workplace conditions as well as many others (Miller, 2009; p. 175). Like teachers’ identities, their roles are open for a change and teachers can move “toward one or the other at different moments” (Kumaravadivelu, 2003; p.17). In addition, like identity, teacher roles are prone to the effects of contextual factors (Kanpol, 1989).

Regarding the interplay between teachers’ roles and the context, research studies evidence that the freedom of adopting different roles is primarily dependent on teachers’ agency in the context. In the same vein, Pantić (2015) claims that supporting teachers’ agency makes them consider social inequalities. In other words, in the contexts where teachers are responsible agents, they are motivated to hold transformative roles both at school and in society. Within the boundaries of the present discussion, context may refer to the classroom, the school, and with a broader vantage point to the whole country. For example, Buchanan (2015) conducted a qualitative study with nine teachers and found out that the increasing importance of accountability and standardized exams in US schools affected teachers’ practices and attitudes. Although all the teachers who took part in the research were critical about teaching for standardized exams in their schools, over time they complied with the practices required by the school and even they evaluated their professional success with their students’ achievements in these exams. In other words, no matter how reflective or transformative they used to be in their identities, the context affected their practices and even turned their early negative reactions to the technician roles, which they once criticized, into positive. Tezgiden-Cakcak (2015) investigated a pre-service English teacher education

program in Turkey in terms of its curriculum and the teacher roles that the program offers to English teacher candidates. It was observed that the stated program outcomes aimed to support the development of a reflective identity for pre-service teachers. Nevertheless, the findings revealed that affected by the neoliberal economic policies in the country, the program seemed to discourage prospective English teachers to take active roles at school and in the society and urge them to become passive technicians (Tezgiden-Cakcak, 2015). Different from aforementioned contexts above, which are USA and Turkey where educational standards and norms limit teachers' roles, the educational policy in Finland supports teacher autonomy more than any other countries (Sahlberg, 2011). Moreover, the current discussions in Finland is to train teachers so that they can go beyond being an effective teacher at school and become active agents of the social change (Lanas & Kiilakoski, 2013; Matikainen et al., 2018). For example, Matikainen, Männistö, and Fornaciari (2018) evaluated the principles and the practices of a Finnish teacher education programme for primary school teachers named Critical Integrative Teacher Education. The programme aimed to boost transformational teacher agency of teacher candidates and motivate them to actively take part in the social change. Their findings revealed that the program could achieve its goals from an intellectual perspective but more practice opportunities needed be offered to teacher candidates. Lanas and Kiilakoski (2013) conducted a qualitative study to unearth a Finnish teachers' journey into becoming a transformative agent. The factors that affected the teacher's experiences were listed as personal support, space, professional support and personal emotional resources; however, the researchers, unlike Tezgiden-Cakcak (2019) and Buchanan (2015), did not mention any sociopolitical factors that prevented the teacher from becoming a transformative agent. These differences evidence the impact of context on teachers' roles in that teachers and teacher education programs in agency-promoting settings are more likely to develop a reflective and even transformative perspective; on the other hand, they are mostly under the custody of technicist perspectives in centralized and standards-oriented educational policies.

Teacher Roles

There are three roles that teachers could embrace in an educational context which are identified as passive technician, reflective practitioner and transformative intellectual. Teachers as passive technicians are just “a conduit, channeling the flow of information from one end of the educational spectrum (i.e., the expert) to the other (i.e., the learner)” (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p. 8). Accordingly, professional leaders like teacher trainers and scholars have a prominent role in education and they are the only decision makers on curriculum and pedagogy. Teachers are passive knowledge transmitters in the sense that they question neither the content nor the pedagogical practices. Kumaravadivelu (2003) claims that this approach is “a safe and secure” context for the teachers who are not motivated for taking innovative actions (p.9).

The second approach which defines teachers as reflective practitioners prioritizes teachers as decision makers because reflective teaching “emphasizes creativity, artistry, and context sensitivity” (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p. 10). John Dewey (1933), the pioneer of the discussions on reflection in education, defines the attitudes for reflective action as open mindedness, responsibility, and wholeheartedness. A reflective practitioner is aptly defined as someone who “1) examines, frames, and attempts to solve the dilemmas of classroom practice; 2) is aware of and questions the assumptions and values he or she brings to teaching; 3) is attentive to the institutional and cultural contexts in which he or she teaches; 4) takes part in curriculum development and is involved in school change efforts; 5) and take responsibility for his or her own professional development” (Zeichner & Liston, 2014, p.8). Schön (1982) distinguishes reflection-in-action, which refers to reflecting during the action, from reflection-on-action which is done before or after the action is completed. According to this, teachers as reflective practitioners, reflecting in and on the teaching process, are involved in an ongoing complex decision making activity. That reflective teaching and teacher education paved the way for fostering English teachers’ autonomy in the classroom and providing them with vast professional development opportunities gave momentum to the spread of this approach among distinguished researchers and scholars such as Richards and Farrel (2005) and Richards and Locharts (1997). On the other hand, there

are some criticisms to this approach as well. In particular, the reflective practitioner approach 1) has an introspective perspective and disregards the role of interactions with other stakeholders such as learners, planners, administrators and other colleagues; 2) focuses on classroom practices and ignores the effects of socio-political factors on the reflective actions and has little attempt to limit the control of professionals on practitioners (Kumaravadivelu, 2003).

The last approach, teachers as transformative intellectuals, is based upon the claims of critical pedagogists such as Freire (1970) and Giroux (1988). Therefore, it is not surprising that compared to the first two approaches, this one has a political stance. Accordingly, schools are considered to be “economic, cultural and social sites which are inextricably tied to the issues of politics, power and control.” (Giroux, 1988, p. 3). In this regard, teachers are intellectuals who can seriously question the things they are teaching, the way they are teaching it and the larger goals they are serving for (Giroux, 1988). Moreover, they can raise arguments against different forms of injustice both at school and in society. In addition, they aim to equip learners with the characteristics of critical citizens.

Although the above-mentioned roles define different teacher characteristics, they are not mutually exclusive. Kumaravadivelu (2003) underscores that these roles have some overlaps and they have a hierarchical nature in which one role comprises of the characteristics of the other. He states that transformative intellectuals have some characteristics of the reflective practitioners and hence the passive technicians as presented in Figure 1. Tezgiden-Cakcak (2016) uses the metaphor of *matryoshka dolls* to explain the relationship between the three roles. She claims that the roles are complementary in the sense that transformative intellectual covers reflective practitioner which encompasses the passive technician (Tezgiden-Cakcak, 2016). Accordingly, a passive technician who wants to be a transformative intellectual should first become a reflective practitioner and only then s/he can move into a transformative role (Kumaravadivelu, 2003).

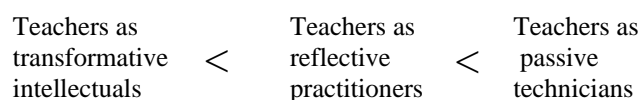


Figure 1. A Hierarchy of Teacher Roles (adopted from Kumaravadivelu, 2003; p. 17)

Doğançay-Aktuna (2006), pinpointing the gradual change in TESOL teachers' roles towards transformative intellectual, suggests an expansion in English teacher education curriculum to increase teachers' sociocultural and political awareness. According to this, current pre-service and in-service teacher education theories and practices should be reconsidered in order to trigger a paradigm shift and encourage teachers to take on more active roles in the system such as reflective practitioner or transformative intellectual. However, the present teacher education policies are far behind a transformative move (Morgan, 2009; Tezgiden-Cakcak, 2016). Morgan (2009), for example, states that in critical EAP classrooms the teacher is supposed to take a transformative intellectual role; however, the present pre-service teacher education syllabus is not suitable to prepare transformative teachers for such language classrooms. Therefore, the researcher suggests that the current syllabus should be enriched with critical theory and practice opportunities by which teachers could learn how to amalgamate theory with practice.

In some cases, teacher training curriculum and policy documents may support a reflective or transformative perspective; however, when the written guidelines are not put into practice during the training process, the outcomes can be incompatible with the aims. Tezgiden-Cakcak (2015), as an example for such a case, examines the documents and the practices in an English teacher education program at a reputable university in Turkey and she figures out that although the program aims to prepare English teachers as reflective practitioners, it actually prepares passive technicians in practice.

It has been substantiated that teachers can be motivated to adopt new roles when their awareness is raised by means of guided practice (Clancy, 2019; Lester, 1993; Liu, 2020; Ural & Öztürk, 2020). Clancy's (2019) study shows that teachers learn from interaction with activists by utilizing online communities of practice and this affects their

transformative identity. In the same vein, Ural and Öztürk (2020) report that in-service teachers enrolled in an MA course on critical pedagogy recognize their roles and the influential factors through reflective practices. According to the results, the participating teachers even start to develop a transformative stance. Similarly Liu (2020) purports that critical reflection through e-portfolios helps transformative learning of prospective teachers.

Practicality of Teacher Roles

Practicality of teacher roles is an important issue to consider. Specifically, reflective practitioner and transformative intellectual roles, which prerequisite teacher agency and motivation for self-development, may not be practical in every context. For example, Afshar and Farahani (2018) investigated the inhibitors of reflective teaching for Iranian English teachers and found out that lack of knowledge about reflection, affective-emotional inhibitors such as low motivation and burn-out, and context (i.e., inflexible and ineffective managers in language institutes) are the factors that constrain teachers' reflective practices. In a study conducted by Tok and Doğan-Dolapçioğlu (2013), loaded curriculum and crowded classrooms are interpreted as factors that prevent Turkish primary schools teachers from spending time for reflective practice.

Hawkins and Norton (2009) highlight that in some contexts being critical towards the power relations may put teachers into a difficult position as they may face political sanctions or potential resistance of learners who are imbued within the dominant culture. In addition, standards-based education and testing systems may prevent teachers to be transformative as teachers do not have opportunities to make changes in the curriculum or the testing policies (Hawkins & Norton, 2009). Likewise, Kanpol (1989) also states that in order to be a transformative teacher, it is necessary to adopt a resistant stance at institutional politics and cultural politics. This stance could be incompatible with the cultural identity of teachers. This fact may restrain teachers' motivations to be transformative intellectuals in some contexts. Hung (2018) provides research-based evidence for these concerns and reveals that teachers in Taiwan are highly affected by Confucian teachings and this affects their involvement in activist

campaigns against the imposed curriculum. In addition, these teachers separate their professional role as a teacher in front of their students from their social movement activities, which is again quite culture bounded.

The above-mentioned discussions on teacher roles can be summarized in a nutshell as; 1) teachers as passive technicians has long been an undesirable role among scholars and teachers, 2) though reflective teaching in teacher education is a reputable practice, it is criticized at the same time, 3) educational moves, such as critical pedagogy, promote the idea of training English teachers as transformative intellectuals, 5) scholars suggest a paradigm shift in teacher education to train transformative intellectuals and they share practical applications, 6) context and culture are significant factors that affect the practicality of teacher roles.

Although previous research investigated teacher roles from different perspectives they are limited in number and to the researchers' knowledge English teachers' perceptions about their roles have not been scrutinized yet. Therefore, this qualitative study aims to understand in-service English teachers' teacher roles by answering the following overarching question:

“How do English teachers enrolled in an MA TESOL program define their teacher roles (i.e., passive technician, reflective practitioner and transformative intellectual)?”

METHOD

A qualitative study was conducted to get a deeper understanding about the optimal teacher roles for English teachers. Having this aim in mind, a group of in-service teachers enrolled in an MA TESOL program was identified as a case for the present research. These teachers completed a Teacher Development course, read assigned articles about teacher roles and involved in classroom discussions on English teachers' roles in their institutions. In addition, they had sufficient teaching experience at schools, ranging from 3 to 16 years, and became conscious about the potential teacher roles in

the school context. Therefore, they form a representative case (Yin, 2003) for this single-case research and can provide a deeper understanding of the issue.

Participants

A cohort of 13 (4 male, 9 female) in-service English teachers who are enrolled in an MA TESOL program took part in the research. They completed the course “Teacher Development” which primarily covers teacher development practices such as keeping diaries, participating in workshops, doing action research or designing lesson study for professional development. In addition, theoretical issues such as teacher knowledge, teacher identity, teacher cognition and teacher roles are also included in the syllabus. The participants read seminal books, chapters and articles on these topics and participated in classroom discussions. They also found out research articles regarding such issues and presented them to their classmates. A cohort of 15 teachers completed the course and 14 of them volunteered to be a part of this study. One of these volunteers was excluded in the study as he didn’t have any teaching experience. Two of the participating teachers are teaching at the university level and 11 of them are teaching at K-12 schools. Their years of experience vary between 3 to 16 years with a mean of 9 years.

Instruments

The data were collected through a questionnaire and online semi-structured interviews conducted with each participant. The instruments were prepared considering the research question and the relevant literature. They were controlled by another researcher holding a Ph.D. on teacher education and finalized after a discussion session.

Originally the present study is part of larger research investigating the relationship between teacher autonomy and teacher roles and the questionnaire comprises of four parts; A) Current Teacher Roles, B) Intended Teacher Roles, C) Teacher Identity and D) Teacher Autonomy. Within the frame of the present paper, the first two of them are taken into consideration. There are two items in part A. First, answering a multiple-choice item the participant selects the teacher role that defines his/her current role the

best. S/he explains this choice in the second question. Part B has only one open-ended item which requires the participants to explain whether they would like to change their current role or not. The participants received the questionnaire and sent their responses back by e-mail.

The semi-structured interview questions were parallel with the questionnaire and aimed to get further information about participants' ideas. In this present study, only the questions aiming to investigate their perceived roles and intended roles are taken into consideration. Interviews were conducted with all 13 participants through an online platform and video recorded with participants' permission. Each session lasted for 25-40 minutes.

The instruments are originally in English. In qualitative research, to obtain insightful data it is necessary to increase participants' expressiveness. Therefore, the participants were free to choose the language, English or Turkish, to answer the questions.

Compliance with Ethical Rules

Ethical principles and rules were considered in every step of this study. After getting the required ethical permissions (see Appendix 1), voluntary participants were informed about the aims and procedures that would be followed in the study. In addition, it was also ensured that the data would be used only for scholarly purposes and selected quotations would be shared anonymously. Moreover, works cited in this paper were presented in accordance with suggested academic citation rules.

Data Analysis

The role of the researcher should be explained first to clarify the data analysis procedure held in this study. Offering the teacher education course in the MA program, the researcher had a chance to learn about participants and their ideas about teacher roles by observing their classroom discussions for 14 weeks and reading their assignments. Therefore, she was already familiar with the issues raised by the participants and this helped her to interpret the data.

The data were thematically analyzed in two steps. In the first step, the whole data set was revised iteratively and potential codes were elicited to unearth participants' ideas about their teacher roles. Coding was repeated by the researcher at a one-month interval. In the second step, the elicited codes were synthesized into larger themes. In the theming step, the researcher was able "to draw out a code's truncated essence by elaborating on its meanings" (Saldaña, 2009, p. 188) and the findings are presented in the following part.

FINDINGS

This section is constructed upon the two themes which emerged from the analysis: 1) the definition of the current role of English teachers, 2) the ideal role for English Teachers. In each subsection, the most representative excerpts are presented to provide a more apt explanation. The frequency of thematic occurrences are shared when necessary; however, they are simply given to support the explanations and not foregrounded in this qualitative study.

The definition of the current role of English teachers

In the interviews and the questionnaires, the participants were asked to define the teacher role that they have been adopting. As illustrated in Table 1, the results reveal that the majority of the participants claim to have a reflective practitioner role in the classrooms (N=8). Two major factors, which are teachers' beliefs about the good English teacher (f=5) and their classroom practices (f=8), make them define themselves as reflective practitioners. Only a few of them claimed to have the role of the passive technician (N=3) or the transformative intellectual (N=2). The suggested reasons for being a passive technician are the central exams (f=1) and curriculum (f=3). Besides, teachers define the nature of their roles as dynamic (f=5) and situated (f=3), as presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. The current role of English teachers

	f
Teachers define their current roles as	
Passive technician	3
Central exams	1
Curriculum	3
Reflective practitioner	8
teacher	
Beliefs about the good English	5
Classroom practices	8
Transformative intellectual	2
Practices at school for supporting equality and critical thinking	2
Teachers define the nature of their roles as	
Dynamic	5
Situated	3

In-depth analysis of participants' responses provided information about how teachers define their current roles and the nature of these roles. As understood from Ayşe's and Ahmet's explanations, these teachers are affected by their beliefs about the good teacher who prepares a productive learning environment for his/her students. Therefore, based upon their classroom practices, they define themselves as reflective practitioners.

"I try to identify problems and find a solution for them. I also think about the parts that worked well and which did not work after my classes. I pay attention to be not that dominant during my classroom practice. I need to involve students in the learning process actively, and I mainly focus on being a facilitator during the activities and my teaching experiences." (Ayşe/ Female)

"I believe that a teacher should question himself and consistently criticize his techniques, methods, approaches, strategies, and procedures in language teaching and learning to reflect himself in the best way and become lifelong learners. That's why I can describe myself as a reflective practitioner." (Ahmet/ Male)

Although reflective practitioner is the most commonly mentioned role among the participants, they claim that the exam system in Turkey and the dominance of a central

curriculum prevent them from acting more reflectively. For example, Fidan is a hard-working teacher. She has prepared many ERASMUS projects and tried to provide intercultural experience opportunities for her students. By doing so, she tries to motivate her students to learn English. She is an experienced teacher who has taught both in rural and urban state schools and overcome many challenges in years. Still, she currently defines herself as a passive technician as she is teaching 8th graders and preparing them for a national exam.

“Since I work at MoNE (*state*) schools, I have to catch up with the given curriculum. I cannot make any changes. Yes, I try to use different techniques however the students are totally exam-oriented and consider English only as a school subject. (Fidan/ Female)

In the same vein, Hale’s personality and pre-service education originally make her a reflective practitioner. However, currently, she defines herself as a passive technician. She states that the central curriculum and the assessment system tailor this role to her.

“I seek to employ problem-solving, critical thinking and cause-effect thinking both at the school environment and in the class while teaching. I believe that I attempt to solve any problems related to my classroom practice and I have always endeavored to develop myself as a teacher since the day I graduated from university. These, together with being attentive to the institutional and cultural contexts in which I teach lead me to the practitioner role. ...I think and feel that the curriculum I have to be following and the assessment system of the education program force us, teachers, to do that, and that makes teachers like me a technician, I guess.” (Hale/ Female)

Interestingly, when the participants are explaining their current roles, they also define the nature of these roles as dynamic and situated. For example, the participants who claim to be passive technicians narrated how they have evolved from a reflective practitioner to a passive technician which is caused by the educational policies. This change can be the other way round. A motivating experience, for example, starting the

MA program in our participants' case may lead to a move from passive technician to reflective practitioner. These ongoing flows, either positive or negative, substantiate that the participating teachers define their roles as dynamic.

Yasin, an experienced teacher with 16 years of teaching, states that national education policies that limit the hours of English courses in the curriculum and the ease of reaching knowledge with technological developments have made them passive technicians. Later on, starting the MA TESOL program motivates him to be a reflective practitioner.

Teacher roles have changed in time because of heavy curriculum and limited course times...Another reason is that the students' perception has changed...Now the students can reach information by means of different sources and learn the things in private courses or by the internet. Therefore, the teachers and what he is teaching has lost their value...Indeed I don't think that I was a passive technician when I first started the profession...I knew that each student has a unique learning style and I should use appropriate materials and resources...Now after starting my MA studies, I started to become a reflective teacher again."

(Yasin/ Male)

Büşra shares similar experiences with Yasin. She starts her career as a reflective practitioner, turns into a passive technician with the effects of disappointing experiences, and then she gets motivated to take on her first role back with the effects of the MA TESOL program.

"When I first started to the profession (*teaching English*), I was more motivated and try new ways, ask questions to myself and try to solve the problems. But after a while, because of the environment, failure or many reasons like that decrease my enthusiasm. I was like a passive technician who transfers the information. However, with this M.A. program, I start to ask questions again, I try to observe my teaching and solve the problems. So, nowadays, I begin to reflective practitioner." (Büşra/ Female)

As mentioned above, these roles are not only prone to change in time but they are also claimed to be situated. Teachers may consciously adopt different roles considering his/her learners' needs and characteristics. To put in other words, an English teacher is many at a time. In the excerpts given below, Funda and Sırma explain this situation briefly.

“As a teacher, I do not think that there is a specific teacher role. I should be many and time to time, I change my role to address the needs of learners.”
(Funda/ Female)

“... sometimes, our role can change according to our students' cultures, backgrounds, interests, needs, and skills. So, we can be a passive technician, reflective technician or transformative intellectual.” (Sırma/ Female)

The Ideal Role for English Teachers

The ideal role is the dream one which represents the role English teachers appreciate and want to become. However, because of certain reasons, they may find this role unachievable. Participants' stated dream roles and factors that affect their decisions are presented in Table 2. None of the participants chose passive technician as a dream role for themselves because all of them have negative attitudes towards this role. Some of them chose to be reflective teachers as their dream (f=4) because they associate reflective teaching with having an effective teacher profile. The majority of the participants (N=9) stated that they appreciate and would like to act like transformative intellectuals in the classroom, school and society. Nevertheless, some challenges turn this option into a dream. One of these obstacles is the potential problems that the political and critical nature of this role may cause (f=4). The other one is personal in that the participants claim to have an insufficient intellectual background which hinders them from holding a transformative intellectual perspective (f=2). In addition, some teachers appreciate the role in general however they are prudent at the same time (f=3).

Table 2. The ideal role for English teachers

The ideal teacher role is...	f
Passive technician, <i>because they hold negative attitudes towards the role (f=13).</i>	0
Reflective practitioner, <i>because they perceive it as an effective teacher profile (f=4).</i>	4
Transformative intellectual, <i>but they do not hold a transformative role for the following reasons potential problems associated with this role (f=4); insufficient intellectual capacity (f=2); prudent attitudes toward the role (f=3).</i>	9

Interestingly, although most of the participants stated that transformative intellectual is the ideal role, they do not plan to have this role. Different reasons prevent them to put this appreciated role into practice. The following excerpts are presented to shed light on this intriguing issue.

Ayşe and Önder, for example, define holding transformative intellectual role as an unreachable dream because they don't feel this much liberated in the system. They believe that having a transformative intellectual role would politicize them which would potentially threaten their teaching career in the future. Therefore, they cannot dare to adopt this role.

"I would be happy to be a transformative intellectual, but it is not easy to be that kind of a teacher in these circumstances. It would be nice to construct a curriculum and syllabus according to my students' needs, wants, and situations. Furthermore, being able to maximize sociopolitical awareness by employing activities would be really nice." (Ayşe/ Female)

"I want to be more transformative intellectual. Actually, I want to change my teacher role to form the community however I am not allowed to do so by the system." (Önder/ Male)

Beyhan also thinks that the transformative intellectual is the dream role for her. However, she believes that developing an intellectual identity is an essential

prerequisite for reaching this dream. Therefore, she should put effort to reach up the required intellectual level first, and only then she can adopt the role in a real sense.

“First we should become a knowledgeable person so that we can upgrade to the other level (*being transformative*), I mean we should reach that point first.”
(Beyhan/ Female)

It is found out that some teachers (N= 3), though they appreciate the benefits of the transformative intellectual role in society, are cautious about its relatively radical political features as well. They explain that being a transformative intellectual is desirable in the sense that you hold a humanistic and democratic perspective towards the students; however, they do not want to have a politicized position or make students feel forced to think in a politicized frame. For example, Hale, remembering her experiences as a student in a theatre club, does not want to make her students experience a similar thing.

“This role reminds me of the theater group once I used to belong back at university. Upon months and months of studying the play and rehearsing it, I could not participate in the staging as I wanted to leave the group. The reason I decided to impart was that they were trying to impose their political view upon any member and I just did not want to be a bla bla-ist that time as I do not want it now, as well. That experience makes me think that I should show the ways possible to walk to my students and they should be free to choose among them, which will bring richness to the society as well, and in time, if they also develop critical thinking and choose between the good and bad, I will call myself a happy teacher.” (Hale/ Female)

DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

This research aimed to explore how English teachers define their roles with regard to three major teacher roles given in the literature which are passive technician, reflective practitioner and transformative intellectual (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). In order to do so, a qualitative study was designed with in-service English teachers who are knowledgeable about the suggested teacher roles. The participants' responses were thematically analyzed and the findings are organized around the two emerging themes; 1) the definition of the current role of English teachers and 2) the ideal role for English teachers.

Majority of the participants in this study claim to have a reflective practitioner role because they associate it with effective teaching and therefore try to act reflectively in their practices. Three of the participants stated that they unwillingly have a passive technician role because of the pressure of central exams and the standardized curriculum. Only two teachers state that they are transformative in the sense that they can maintain equality in the classroom and support learners' critical thinking skills. When teachers' current roles are compared to their ideal roles, it is found out that there is a huge void in between. Nine of the thirteen teachers dream to become transformative intellectuals; however, they cannot reach this aim for some reasons. First of all, there are *potential problems associated with this role*. As Ayşe and Önder stated in their responses, they are not allowed by the "system" and the "circumstances" to be a transformative agent. Teachers in Turkey are discouraged to have a transformative role even when they are at pre-service education (Tezgiden-Cakcak, 2015). This is, unfortunately, a common case observed in different countries with different socio-economical and cultural backgrounds like Taiwan (Hung, 2018), Turkey (Tezgiden-Cakcak, 2019) and the USA (Buchanan, 2015), except for very limited contexts where teacher agency is ensured by educational policies such as Norway (Matikainen et al., 2018). Our findings support the existing literature in that central exams, fixed

curriculum and the political system are the main problems preventing transformative action in these settings.

Second, the teachers claim to have *the insufficient intellectual capacity* to take a transformative role. This can be explained by the current teacher education system in Turkey which is primarily concerned about equipping teacher candidates with professional knowledge and skills but not preparing them to be transformative agents in society. Beyhan, for instance, states that her intellectual capacity is not sufficient to hold and sustain such a role, and thereby first she should “become a knowledgeable person” and then she can be a transformative intellectual. Although the Higher Education Council in Turkey has attempted to give teacher education faculties freedom of preparing their curriculum (HEC, 2020), the frame suggested by the Council requires the teacher education departments to have courses about content knowledge (45% to 50 %), pedagogical knowledge (30% to 35 %) and general culture (15% to 20%). Within the limits of this knowledge-based approach, teacher candidates cannot find opportunities to develop a profound intellectual background as in the way it is achieved in other teacher education programs (e.g., Matikainen et al., 2018).

Finally, some teachers have *prudent attitudes toward the role*. The transformative intellectual role for teachers may not be practical in some contexts (Hawkins & Norton, 2009) because this role collides with political activism, which can be irritating for teachers’ cultural identities. As in the case of Taiwanese teachers (Hung, 2018), the two teachers in our study are critical about having a politicized role and find it incompatible with teachers’ identities and responsibilities defined within their cultural frame.

Based upon the discussions above, it is understood that passive technician is certainly an undesirable role among the participants. It is mostly adopted when the educational policies and contextual factors force the participating English teachers to do so. They like the reflective teacher role because they are content with their current reflective practices and also associate such practices with effective teacher identity. In addition, majority of teachers in our study define their present role as a reflective practitioner. Participating teachers, in general, have positive attitudes towards transformative

intellectual; nevertheless, they cannot dare to take on this role because of the limited agency in the system, lack of intellectual background and their prudent attitudes. In the light of these findings, it can be suggested that the optimal teacher role for English teachers is reflective practitioner which is applicable in the context, practical in the classroom and satisfying for the teachers.

Another intriguing finding of the present study is English teachers' stated beliefs about the nature of teacher roles. Accordingly, it is figured out that teachers' roles are dynamic and situated. In particular, the roles are prone to change with surrounding influential factors. For example, Fidan in the present study used to be a reflective practitioner in essence; however, she started to take the role of the passive technician when she was to prepare a group of students for a central exam. Some participants, like Büşra and Yasin, claim that they started the profession as reflective practitioners and turned into passive technicians in the system. Now, having been enrolled in the MA TESOL program, they are becoming a reflective practitioner again. These findings are parallel with the theory suggesting that teacher identity (Miller, 2009) and teacher roles (Kumaravadivelu, 2003) are changeable. They also substantiate the previous research claiming that activities such as being involved in communities of practice and taking courses that increase their professional awareness can motivate teachers to adopt new roles (Clancy, 2019; Lester, 1993; Liu, 2020; Ural & Öztürk, 2020).

In addition, it is concluded that teacher roles are situated. Participants in this study claimed that a teacher may reserve all the roles and, dependent on the situation, they can switch these roles. Our findings overlap with the matryoshka dolls, the metaphorical image suggested by Tezgiden-Cakcak (2016), in the sense that roles are not mutually exclusive and one role can encompass the other. In other words, teachers may smoothly move from one role to another (Kumaravadivelu, 2003) considering their students' needs. It is necessary to do further research to understand how and why teachers navigate among the different terrains of teacher roles.

Some suggestions can be presented here. First of all, it is better to redefine the teacher roles as dynamic and situated phenomena that are nested by one another and to

investigate teachers' roles through these lenses. If a teacher can have different roles at a time, it is better to equip them with the characteristic of all the roles so that they can choose the proper one when required. Therefore, current teacher training programs should go beyond the qualities of the reflective practitioner and address the knowledge and skills of transformative intellectuals as it has been done in Finland. In addition, the transformative intellectual is a term that should be defined as a continuum, like from radical to milder. This would allow teachers from different cultural backgrounds to describe their activities on this continuum. Moreover, teacher agency should be promoted in policies and practices so that teachers can feel free to choose the roles that they want to be in. Finally, English language teaching and teacher roles are recent topics of interest in the literature; however, research is scarce on English teachers' roles in Turkey. Therefore, more research studies are needed to unfold the details about this topic in our context.

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GENİŞ ÖZET

Amaç

Öğretmenlerin gerek okulda gerekse toplum içinde edindikleri rolleri anlamak ve bu roller ışığında öğretmen eğitimi politikaları geliştirmek büyük önem taşımaktadır. Bu çalışmada Kumaravadivelu (2003) tarafından tanımlanan üç temel rol dikkate alınmıştır. Bunlar pasif teknisyen olarak öğretmen, düşünen (yansıtıcı) uygulayıcı olarak öğretmen ve dönüştürücü entelektüel öğretmen olarak betimlenmektedir.

Güç ilişkileri ve eşitlik konularının İngilizce öğretiminde yaygın bir biçimde çalışılan araştırma konularından biri hâline gelmesi ile (örn., Dorner ve Cervantes-Soon, 2020) dönüştürücü entelektüel öğretmen rolü ön plana çıkmaya başlamıştır. Ancak mevcut öğretmen eğitimi uygulamaları bu amaca ulaşmak için uygun değildir ve bazı değişiklikler yapılmalıdır (Doğançay- Aktuna, 2006; Morgan, 2009). Bu değişimi gerçekleştirebilecek uygulamalar araştırmacılar tarafından ortaya konmaktadır (Clancy, 2019; Lester, 1993; Liu, 2020; Ural ve Öztürk, 2020). Öte yandan doğası gereği öğretmenlerin direnç göstermesini içinde barındıran bu rol (Kanpol, 1989) bazı kültürler ile tam anlamı ile uyumlu olmadığından öğretmenler tarafından farklı biçimlerde uygulanabilmektedir (Hung, 2018). Bu araştırma İngilizce öğretmenlerinin mevcut öğretmen rollerini nasıl tanımladıklarını anlamayı hedeflemektedir.

Yöntem

Anket ve yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelerden elde edilen veriler ışığında temel soruya cevap bulmayı hedefleyen bu çalışma bir nitel durum araştırmasıdır. Çalışmaya İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Yüksek Lisans programına kayıtlı 14 İngilizce öğretmeni gönüllü olarak katılmıştır. Bu öğretmenler "Öğretmen Gelişimi" dersini alarak öğretmen rolleri hakkında yeterli bilgiye sahip olmaları ve mesleki deneyim sahibi olmaları sayesinde çalışma için uygun bir çalışma grubu teşkil etmektedirler. Veriler çevrimiçi ortamda toplanmıştır. Büyük bir araştırmanın bir bölümünün paylaşıldığı bu çalışmada yalnızca çalışma çerçevesindeki sorulara verilen cevaplar incelenmiştir. Yapılan tematik analizlerden elde edilen bulgular bir sonraki bölümde paylaşılmıştır.

Bulgular

Bu çalışmadan elde edilen bulgular iki temel tema etrafında şekillenmektedir. Bunlar 1) İngilizce öğretmenlerinin mevcut rollerinin tanımlanması ve 2) İngilizce öğretmenleri için belirtilen ideal rol olarak adlandırılmıştır.

Katılımcıların büyük çoğunluğu mevcut rolünün düşünen uygulayıcı (N=8), bir kısmı pasif teknisyen (N= 3), bir kısmı da entelektüel dönüştürücü olarak tanımlamıştır. Düşünen uygulayıcı rolün en çok bahsedilen rol olmasının sebebinin bu yaklaşımın öğretmenlerin iyi öğretmen inançları ile desteklenmesinden kaynaklandığı düşünülmektedir. Bunun yanında mevcut öğretim programları ve merkezi sınavlar öğretmenleri pasif teknisyen olmak durumunda da

birakabilmektedir. Katılımcıların mevcut rollerini tanımlama biçimlerine bakıldığında onların bu rollerin doğası hakkında ne gibi inançlar taşıdıkları da anlaşılmaktadır. Buna göre çalışmaya katılan İngilizce öğretmenleri öğretmen rollerini dinamik ve durumsal olarak görmektedirler. Bir başka deyişle, bu roller zaman içinde farklı etkenlere dayalı olarak değişebildiği gibi bir öğretmen öğrencilerinin ihtiyaçlarına cevap verebilmek için aynı anda birkaç rolü üstlenebilmektedir.

İngilizce öğretmenleri için ideal rol, hayal edilen ancak farklı nedenlerden ötürü ulaşılamayan entelektüel dönüştürücü rolüdür. Bu rolün erişilemez olmasının temel nedenlerini mevcut sistemin buna uygun olmayışı ve rolün gerekliliklerinden olduğu düşünülen yeterli entelektüel alt yapıya sahip olunmadığı yönündeki yeterlik inançlarıdır. Öte yandan bazı öğretmenler (N=3) her ne kadar entelektüel dönüştürücü rolünü beğenseler de bu görüşün politik duruşu nedeni ile tam anlamı ile uygulanması konusunda temkinlidirler.

Sonuçlar ve Tartışma

Elde edilen bulgular öğretmen rollerinin bazı etkenlere bağlı olarak değişebileceğini göstermektedir. Mesleğe düşünen uygulayıcı olarak başlayan, daha sonra sistem içinde pasif teknisyene evrilen öğretmenlerin yüksek lisansa başladıktan sonra yeniden düşünen uygulayıcı rolünü benimsemeye başladıkları görülmektedir. Bu bulgular öğretmenlerin farkındalığını artıracak etkinliklerin onların kimliklerini olumlu yönde etkilediklerine dair yapılan çalışmaları (Clancy, 2019; Lester, 1993; Liu, 2020; Ural ve Öztürk, 2020) destekler niteliktedir. Her ne kadar entelektüel dönüştürücü öğretmen rolü oldukça beğenilen bir rol olsa da bu rol için yeterli özgür ortamın olmayışı ve öğretmenlerin entelektüel becerilerinin yeterli olmadığı yönündeki yeterlik inançları bu rolün benimsenmesini engellemektedir. Ayrıca sistem içinde direnç göstermeyi gerektiren (Kanpol, 2018) bu rol araştırmaya katılan bazı İngilizce öğretmenleri tarafından kültürel olarak uygun bulunmamıştır. Bu bulgu Hung (2018) tarafından elde edilen sonuçları desteklemekte, dönüştürücü öğretmen rolünün kültürel olarak uygun bulunmayabileceğini göstermektedir. Pasif teknisyen rolünün rağbet görmediğini ve dönüştürücü öğretmen rolünün erişilemez veya kültürün dışında olduğunu ortaya koyan bulgulardan yola çıkarak İngilizce öğretmenleri için en uygun (optimal) rolün düşünen uygulayıcı olduğu kanısına varılmıştır.

Appendix 1. Ethics Committee Approval

Evrak Tarihi ve Sayısı: 18.02.2021-2336		T.C. HAKKARİ ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ BİLİMSEL ARAŞTIRMA VE YAYIN ETİĞİ KURULU KURUL KARARI												
Oturum Tarihi 15.02.2021	Oturum Saati 13:00	Oturum Sayısı 2021/13												
Kurul Karar No 1														
<p>15.02.2021 tarihinde saat 13:00'da Prof.Dr. Erdoğan BADA başkanlığında, aşağıda imzaları bulunan üyelerin katılımlarıyla toplanarak gündemdeki konu/konuları görüşmüş ve aşağıdaki karar/kararları almıştır.</p> <p>Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Zeynep ÖLÇÜ DİNÇER'in " İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Öğretmen Roller, Öğretmen Kimliği, Öğretmen Etkenliği ve Öğretmen Özerkliğinin İncelenmesi" başlıklı çalışmasının etik açıdan uygun bulunmasına ve konunun Rektörlük Makamına arzına; Oy birliği ile karar verilmiştir.</p> <p>Kurul Üyeleri:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Prof.Dr. Erdoğan BADA Başkan</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Prof.Dr. Erdoğan BADA Başkan</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Şengül BAĞCI TAYLAN Üye</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Erdal BİNGÖL Üye</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Mehmet BULUT Üye</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Ayhan GÜLER Üye</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Fatih YEŞİLYURT Üye</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Habip DEMİRHAN Üye</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Av. Mehmet TANLAK Üye</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Muhammed Cemal TORAMAN Üye</td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">Raporör: Nurcan ÖNEN Sekreter</p>			Prof.Dr. Erdoğan BADA Başkan		Prof.Dr. Erdoğan BADA Başkan	Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Şengül BAĞCI TAYLAN Üye	Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Erdal BİNGÖL Üye	Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Mehmet BULUT Üye	Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Ayhan GÜLER Üye	Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Fatih YEŞİLYURT Üye	Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Habip DEMİRHAN Üye	Av. Mehmet TANLAK Üye	Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Muhammed Cemal TORAMAN Üye	
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Bu belge 5070 sayılı Elektronik İmza Kanununun 8. Maddesi gereğince güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır.														