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Becoming a Special Education Teacher: Practicum as a Reflective Space of Professional Formation

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Becoming a Special Education Teacher: Practicum as a Reflective Space of Professional Formation

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Abstract: This study examined how pre-service special education teachers experienced and made sense of the teaching practicum as part of their professional formation. Using a qualitative research design, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 10 pre-service special education teachers who had completed their practicum in a teacher education program in Türkiye, Antalya. The data were analysed thematically to explore how candidates interpreted the practicum in relation to professional learning, teacher identity, theory-practice connections, mentoring, and institutional conditions. The findings demonstrated that the practicum was experienced not merely as a setting for applying theoretical knowledge or developing technical competencies, but as a multi-layered professional learning space. Five interrelated themes had emerged. The study highlights that practicum quality depends not only on duration or task completion, but also on continuity, meaningful responsibility, systematic feedback, diverse student experiences, and strong university-school collaboration. The findings suggest that special education practicums should be reimagined as reflective professional learning ecosystems that support candidates in developing pedagogical reasoning, ethical responsibility, and a stronger sense of teacher identity.

Keywords: Teaching practicum, Special education teacher education, Pre-service teachers, Reflective practice, Teacher identity

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Introduction

In special education teacher education programs, the teaching practicum is a central component of pre-service preparation and an important bridge into the profession. It enables candidates to apply theoretical knowledge in real classrooms, understand student characteristics, plan instruction, develop materials, test classroom management skills, and strengthen professional self-efficacy (Aktan, 2023). However, the practicum has often been treated mainly as a program component for developing competencies or identifying deficiencies. Less attention has been given to how candidates interpret the experience, how it shapes their teacher identity, and how contradictions, uncertainty, and reflection contribute to their development as professional agents (İnan et al., 2025; Yılmaz et al., 2026).

Research on special education teacher preparation in Türkiye has similarly focused on teacher competencies, program structure and content, and the organization of teaching practice (Yılmaz et al., 2026). Practice-oriented studies recommend strengthening the relationship between theoretical and practical courses, extending practicum experiences, and giving candidates opportunities to work with different age groups and disability categories (Yılmaz et al., 2026). Yet practicum quality cannot be explained solely through structural arrangements, duration, or competency gaps. It also depends on whether candidates assume meaningful classroom responsibility, are recognized as teachers, develop relationships with students, and learn to respond to uncertainty (Aktan, 2023).

Reframing Practicum Competence in Special Education Teacher Preparation

The teaching practicum plays a central role in special education teacher preparation by providing opportunities to develop professional competence, self-efficacy, and an understanding of teaching responsibilities (Öksüz & Coşkun, 2012). However, these outcomes cannot be explained solely through the acquisition of prescribed competencies. They are also shaped by candidates' experiences of classroom responsibility, interaction with students, feedback, professional recognition, and opportunities to observe instructional consequences. Although teacher candidates are expected to possess subject-matter and pedagogical knowledge, studies have identified difficulties in lesson planning, material development, assessment, and record keeping (Gündoğdu et al., 2018). Limited practicum duration, restricted authority, observation pressure, prejudice, and insufficient feedback may further constrain their development (Kandemir, 2022; Yıldırım Yakar et al., 2021). Thus, practicum competence involves not only demonstrating technical skills but also negotiating professional responsibility, confidence, and teacher identity within classroom relationships and evaluation processes (Kırksekiz et al., 2015; Yücel & Mızıkacı, 2023).

In special education, this understanding of competence is particularly important because teaching requires continuous attention to individual performance, behavioural characteristics,

and changing instructional needs. Beyond general pedagogical skills, teachers need expertise in individualized instruction, behaviour management, intervention, family communication, teaching across disability groups, and monitoring student progress (İnan et al., 2025; Yılmaz et al., 2026). Thus, practicum experiences should extend beyond delivering planned lessons to include assessing students, identifying instructional goals, adapting teaching strategies, and evaluating progress (Büyükköse et al., 2024). Such activities require candidates to interpret individual differences and make decisions in situations where established procedures may not fully determine an appropriate response.

Practicum experiences may help candidates become familiar with different schools, disability groups, and instructional practices (Aktan, 2023). Nevertheless, extensive documentation requirements, unclear expectations, limited feedback, negative mentor attitudes, and insufficient supervision may restrict meaningful participation (Kandemir, 2022; Kırksekiz et al., 2015). These contrasting experiences highlight the dual character of the practicum as it can strengthen professional confidence and instructional understanding while simultaneously exposing candidates to uncertainty, restricted autonomy, and institutional ambiguity. Practicum quality therefore depends not only on the opportunities candidates encounter but also on the conditions under which those experiences can contribute to professional learning.

Effective practicum organization requires clear responsibilities, active supervision, regular mentoring, and sustained communication among stakeholders (Ayvacı et al., 2019; Cengiz, 2021). Difficulties should consequently not be attributed exclusively to candidates' deficiencies, since institutional arrangements and limited collaboration may also restrict professional development (Bulunuz & Bulunuz, 2016). Mentor teachers play a particularly important role by clarifying expectations, providing feedback, supporting assessment, identifying student needs, connecting theory with practice, and modelling classroom management (Bektaş & Ayvaz, 2013). Moreover, the integration of professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes requires systematic preparation throughout teacher education rather than dependence on final-year practicum experiences alone (Batmaz & Ergen, 2020; Görgen et al., 2012). Mentoring and supervision thus extend beyond technical guidance as they shape candidates' opportunities to assume meaningful responsibility, receive professional recognition, and participate as developing teachers (Aktan, 2023; Kırksekiz et al., 2015; Yıldırım Yakar et al., 2021).

Theoretical Framework: The Teacher as a Reflective Practitioner

This study draws on Schön's (1992) reflective practitioner approach to examine how special education teacher candidates interpret practicum experiences and construct professional knowledge. Challenging technical rationality, Schön argues that professional practice involves not simply applying established procedures but interpreting uncertain situations, defining problems, and reconsidering judgments through action. Professional knowledge is therefore constructed and revised through engagement with practice rather than merely trans-

ferred from theory (Anderson, 2019; Jay & Johnson, 2002). Accordingly, the practicum provides opportunities for pedagogical reasoning through interactions with students, mentors, university supervisors, and classroom conditions (Allen & Wright, 2014).

Central to this perspective are problem framing and reframing. Framing involves identifying and organizing relevant aspects of a situation, while reframing entails reconsidering the problem when initial interpretations prove insufficient. These processes are particularly relevant to special education, where diagnostic classifications and predetermined instructional plans may not adequately represent students' varying performance levels, behaviours, and support needs. Encountering such differences may require candidates to reconsider their understanding of instructional needs rather than merely select alternative techniques. Reflective pedagogical judgment is therefore essential in responding to changing classroom circumstances (Ho & Lau, 2025), while experience across diverse disability groups can support this development when accompanied by appropriate guidance and reflection (O'Brien et al., 2024).

Schön's concept of knowing-in-action further emphasizes the tacit understandings embedded in professional practice. Such knowledge may remain unarticulated until unexpected situations challenge familiar judgments or routines. In special education, decisions concerning student behaviour, instructional adaptation, classroom authority, and individual support may draw on assumptions not fully specified by theoretical procedures. Encountering uncertainty can therefore prompt candidates to examine not only their instructional choices but also the understandings informing those choices. Tacit knowing, in this sense, is distinct from applying previously acquired theoretical knowledge; it concerns the practical judgments underlying professional action.

Schön (1992) also distinguishes reflection-in-action, which involves reconsidering judgments during practice, from reflection-on-action, which involves retrospectively examining experiences and their consequences. Both are relevant to special education, where changing student performance and unpredictable classroom interactions require context-sensitive decisions. Developing reflective judgment involves recognizing knowledge limitations, evaluating instructional choices, and interpreting feedback (deBettencourt & Nagro, 2019; Ho & Lau, 2025). Difficulties in self-assessment underscore the need for structured opportunities to examine professional competence (Büyükköse et al., 2024; deBettencourt & Nagro, 2019). Guided reflection, feedback, and self-evaluation can help transform practical experience into professional learning (Nagro et al., 2017; Taşdemir & Gümüşok, 2023).

However, uncertainty does not automatically generate reflection. Its educational significance depends on opportunities to question initial interpretations and examine instructional decisions (Jay & Johnson, 2002; Schön, 1992). Limited practicum duration, restricted authority, observation pressure, and inadequate feedback may constrain these opportunities (Gündoğdu et al., 2018). Similarly, insufficient familiarity with students, limited opportunities to observe

intervention outcomes, varied performance levels, and unclear assessment expectations may generate uncertainty without necessarily supporting reflective learning (Bulunuz & Bulunuz, 2016; Yıldırım Yakar et al., 2021). Continuity, meaningful participation, and feedback are therefore important conditions for transforming experience into professional understanding.

The reflective practitioner perspective thus extends competency-oriented approaches by shifting attention from performing prescribed tasks to interpreting pedagogical situations, questioning assumptions, and developing professional judgment. It also illuminates how teacher identity is negotiated through responsibility, recognition, uncertainty, and professional relationships. Rather than representing a linear transfer of theory into practice, the practicum becomes a space where theoretical knowledge and situated judgment inform one another (Allen & Wright, 2014; deBettencourt & Nagro, 2019). In this study, Schön's concepts guide the interpretation of candidates' accounts of individualization, instructional adaptation, classroom responsibility, mentoring, and institutional conditions. Because the study relies on retrospective interviews, it examines participants' reported interpretations rather than directly observing knowing-in-action or reflection-in-action. This distinction allows the practicum to be understood as a reflective space of professional formation without attributing unobserved reflective processes to participants.

Aim and Research Questions

This study examines how pre-service special education teachers interpret their practicum experiences and how these experiences contribute to pedagogical reasoning and teacher identity. Previous research has predominantly focused on programmatic conditions and professional competencies, including practicum duration, mentoring, instructional skills, individualized education program preparation, and self-efficacy. Although these studies identify candidates' competencies and challenges, less attention has been given to how they make sense of uncertainty, responsibility, recognition, student diversity, and theory–practice tensions in becoming teachers.

Addressing this gap, the present study conceptualizes the practicum as a space of reflective professional formation rather than merely a setting for acquiring or evaluating competencies. Drawing on Schön's reflective practitioner perspective, it explores how candidates interpret and reconsider pedagogical knowledge through practice and negotiate their emerging professional identities within relationships with students, mentors, university supervisors, and school culture. By foregrounding these meaning-making processes, the study seeks to extend competency-oriented accounts of special education teacher preparation through the following research questions:

1. How do pre-service special education teachers experience and make sense of the teaching practicum in terms of professional learning, teacher identity, and the meaning of teaching?

2. How do pre-service special education teachers interpret practicum duration, student diversity, the guidance provided, and their professional knowledge and skills in terms of preparation for teaching?

Research design

This study employed a basic qualitative research design to examine how pre-service special education teachers experienced the teaching practicum, how they interpreted these experiences, and how they constructed meanings related to becoming a teacher. Qualitative research is appropriate for examining participants' lived experiences, social relations, and professional practices through their own accounts rather than through predetermined variables (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). More specifically, a basic qualitative design is suitable when the primary aim is to understand how individuals interpret their experiences and construct meaning within a particular social and professional context (Tisdell et al., 2025).

This design was consistent with the research questions because the study focused on how participants made sense of professional learning, teacher identity, practicum conditions, and preparation for teaching. It was also aligned with the data collection and analysis procedures. Semi-structured interviews provided access to participants' interpretations of their experiences, while reflexive thematic analysis enabled the researcher to identify and interpret patterns of meaning across these accounts. Thus, the methodological design, research questions, data collection process, and analytic approach were organized around understanding how candidates constructed meaning from their practicum experiences rather than measuring predefined competencies.

Data Collection Tool and Procedure

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, which were appropriate for exploring participants' experiences, interpretations, and meaning-making (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Patton, 2015; Tisdell et al., 2025). The interview form was developed in line with the research questions and relevant literature and addressed practicum experiences, professional learning, mentoring, theory–practice relationships, student diversity, classroom responsibility, and teacher identity. The draft form was reviewed by an expert in special education and qualitative research for relevance, clarity, and alignment with the research questions, and several questions were revised accordingly.

A pilot application was conducted with two pre-service teachers, who were asked to provide feedback on the interview process and suggest additional questions or themes. Based on their feedback, the main thematic areas were retained, while additional prompts were added to selected questions. During the interviews, follow-up and probing questions were also used to

clarify responses, elicit concrete examples, and explore personally meaningful experiences. Thus, depth was supported through participants' elaboration of the core issues rather than interview duration alone.

The face-to-face interviews lasted approximately 30–45 minutes, were audio-recorded with participants' consent, and transcribed verbatim. Written informed consent was obtained after participants were informed about the study purpose, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and the scientific use of the data. As interviews were the sole data generation method, participants' accounts were not triangulated with observational or documentary sources. Therefore, the findings represent participants' interpretations of their practicum experiences rather than direct evidence of classroom practices.

Participants and Sampling

Participants were selected through criterion-based purposive sampling by selecting teachers candidate who were graduated from their program in 2026. A total of 20 pre-service teachers who met these criteria were invited to participate. Sixteen agreed to participate, while four did not respond to the invitation. Data collection began with the 16 volunteers. During the interview period, however, some participants experienced scheduling difficulties due to travel and other time-related constraints. Interviews were completed with 10 participants, seven women and three men. The decision to conclude data collection after the tenth interview was not based on a predetermined numerical threshold. Rather, data adequacy was evaluated iteratively throughout the interview process in relation to the research questions and the richness of the accounts obtained.

In assessing the adequacy of the data set, the researcher considered whether participants had provided detailed accounts of the central issues addressed in the research questions; whether the data reflected variation in practicum schools, student profiles, and mentoring experiences; whether recurring patterns as well as contrasting and contradictory experiences were represented; and whether later interviews continued to substantially extend the developing analytic understanding. By the tenth interview, the data included detailed and varied accounts of professional learning, teacher identity, student diversity, mentoring, theory–practice tensions, classroom responsibility, and institutional conditions. The later interviews largely elaborated patterns already evident in the data rather than introducing substantially different dimensions relevant to the research questions. On this basis, the researcher judged that the data set had reached sufficient depth and diversity for the purposes of the study.

The remaining six volunteers were therefore not interviewed. This decision reflected both the analytic adequacy of the 10 completed interviews and the practical scheduling difficulties experienced by these volunteers, rather than an assumption that a particular sample size is inherently sufficient for qualitative research. Participants were not selected according to the

perceived quality of their practicum performance or whether their experiences were positive or negative. Rather, selection was based on direct practicum experience, voluntary participation, and variation in practice conditions. All participants were assigned code names such as TC1, TC2, and TC3 to protect anonymity.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2019, 2021) approach. The analysis began with repeated reading of the transcripts to develop familiarity with the data. During this phase, the researcher noted recurring accounts, emotional emphases, contradictions, and processes through which participants made sense of their practicum experiences. The transcripts were then coded line by line. Coding addressed both semantic meanings explicitly expressed by participants and more interpretive meanings related to professional identity, uncertainty, recognition as a teacher, mentor relationships, theory–practice tensions, and assessment anxiety. Codes were developed through engagement with the data rather than by assigning participants' accounts to predetermined categories.

Related codes were subsequently organized into provisional themes, which were iteratively reviewed against the coded extracts and the complete data set. During this process, themes were refined, combined, or differentiated to capture coherent patterns of shared meaning. Although the primary coding and theme development were conducted by the researcher, an additional researcher independently reviewed the correspondence between selected codes and their assigned themes. This review provided an opportunity to critically examine the coherence of code–theme relationships and the interpretive consistency of the thematic structure. Consistent with reflexive thematic analysis, this process was intended to support critical reflection rather than establish inter-coder reliability or coding consensus (Braun & Clarke, 2019, 2021). Analytic rigor was further supported through repeated engagement with the data, reflexive analytic notes, and attention to contrasting accounts and alternative interpretations.

Consistent with reflexive thematic analysis, the researcher was positioned as an active interpreter rather than a neutral coder (Braun & Clarke, 2019, 2021). As a faculty member in the university's special education teacher education program with expertise in special education and practicum processes, he had previously taught courses to the participants and entered the study with prior knowledge of both the participants and the institutional context. His role in encouraging participants to critically reflect on the practicum for program improvement provided valuable contextual insight but also introduced the possibility that existing relationships, expectations, and assumptions could influence participants' responses and his interpretations. Recognizing this dual position, the researcher critically examined how his professional experiences and institutional role shaped the analytic process. Reflexive analytic

notes were used to document emerging interpretations, underlying assumptions, contradictions, theme boundaries, and decisions made during theme development, maintaining a clear connection between participants' accounts and the resulting analysis. In line with Braun and Clarke (2019, 2021), researcher subjectivity was thus treated not as a limitation to be eliminated but as an interpretive resource requiring continuous critical examination.

Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

Several strategies were used to strengthen trustworthiness. Participants' accounts were examined closely, themes were supported with direct quotations, and interpretations were checked for consistency with the data and research questions. Attention was given not only to frequently repeated views, but also to contradictions, tensions, and differences across participants. This helped present the practicum as a complex professional experience rather than a simple account of success or difficulty.

The study followed ethical principles throughout. Participants were informed about the purpose of the research, the voluntary nature of participation, their right to withdraw, and how the interview data would be used. Personal information about participants and practicum schools was anonymized, while recordings and transcripts were stored securely and used only for research purposes. Ethical approval was granted by the Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee of Çankırı Karatekin University through decision No. 55 on 16 February 2026.

Findings

The analysis generated five interrelated themes that show how pre-service special education teachers experienced the teaching practicum as a complex space of professional learning and identity formation. Across the themes, the practicum appeared not simply as a setting for applying previously learned knowledge, but as a formative experience through which candidates encountered the relational, instructional, emotional, and institutional dimensions of becoming a teacher. The themes were: (1) time as a pedagogical constraint, (2) learning to read difference for individualization, (3) recognition, autonomy, and the construction of teacher identity, (4) reconstructing knowledge through practice, and (5) becoming a teacher in an institutional in-between space (Figure 1).

The five themes should not be understood as representing uniform experiences across all participants. The analysis also retained differences and tensions within participants' accounts, for example, between feeling peripheral and being entrusted with responsibility, between supportive and limited supervision, and between experiencing student diversity as an instructional challenge and as an opportunity for professional learning. The themes were also

interconnected: time shaped opportunities to understand student differences and revise instruction, while recognition and autonomy were closely related to mentoring and broader institutional conditions.

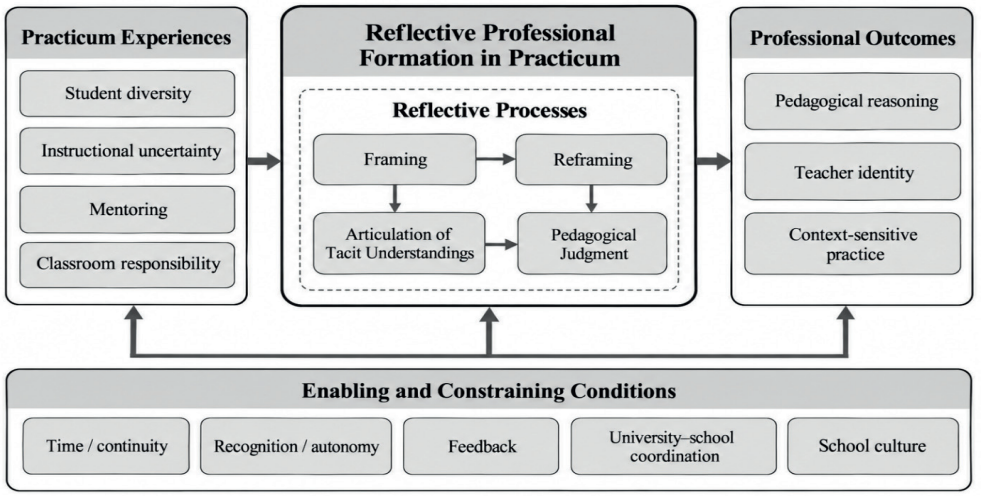


Figure 1. Reflective Professional Formation in Practicum

Theme 1: Time as a Pedagogical Constraint

Participants described practicum time as a pedagogical resource needed to know students, build trust, observe behavioural patterns, test decisions, and evaluate interventions. In special education, knowing a student requires continuity to follow changes in mood, communication, learning pace, environmental influences, and responses to instruction.

"*I cannot say that a practicum once a week is enough in special education. Because in special education, we try to change behaviour, and getting to know a student is a process full of uncertainty*." (TC5)

Several participants associated limited continuity with difficulties in developing the relational dimension of teaching. Candidates could initiate contact with students, but the available time did not always allow them to develop the trust needed for meaningful instruction.

"*The duration was insufficient for the child to see me and form an emotional bond with me*." (TC1)

Time constraints were especially visible in behaviour change and instructional evaluation. Candidates could not always determine whether limited progress resulted from their own im-

plementation, the student's changing performance, or the fragmented structure of the practicum. They also struggled to observe longer-term outcomes such as generalization, fluency, and maintenance.

"*One day a week was not enough for me to work on behaviour change. I could not understand whether the problem was with my implementation or with the process itself*." (TC2)

"*Generalization, fluency, maintenance… I could not work on any of these. I could not observe any of them*." (TC3)

These accounts suggest that fragmented practicum participation constrained candidates' opportunities to engage in sustained reflective inquiry. TC2's uncertainty about whether limited progress resulted from instructional implementation or from the intervention process itself illustrates the difficulty of interpreting outcomes when opportunities for continued observation are restricted. The problem was therefore not simply insufficient instructional time, but the interruption of opportunities to reconsider initial judgments in light of subsequent student responses. Without sufficient continuity, candidates could initiate pedagogical actions but struggled to evaluate their consequences and determine whether their original understandings required revision. Time thus emerged as a condition shaping the possibility of reflective learning, rather than merely the quantity of teaching experience. In this sense, the temporal structure of the practicum was closely connected to later accounts of individualization and the reconstruction of knowledge through practice.

Theme 2: Learning to Read Difference for Individualization

Participants described the practicum as an opportunity to move beyond diagnostic categories and attend more closely to individual performance, support needs, and contextual variation. Although classrooms were often defined by broad labels, their accounts revealed substantial differences among students in academic performance, communication, attention, and learning pace.

"*Although it was called an intellectual disability classroom, there were students with both autism and intellectual disability. Their performance levels were very different*." (TC7)

Participants' accounts revealed a shift in how they understood student differences and the instructional decisions these differences required. Although diagnostic categories initially offered a general reference point for understanding classroom characteristics, direct encounters with students whose performance levels and learning needs varied considerably revealed the limitations of relying on such classifications alone. TC7's description of having to organize instruction for several different performance levels illustrated how the apparent similarity implied by a shared classroom classification gave way to a more differentiated understanding of students' individual needs. Rather than approaching individualization solely as the

selection of different teaching methods, participants increasingly described it as a process of reconsidering initial expectations, interpreting students' actual performance, and adjusting instructional decisions accordingly. Their accounts thus suggested a movement from general assumptions about student groups toward more flexible and context-sensitive understandings of teaching.

"*It is very difficult to teach literacy to one group and division problems in mathematics to another. I needed to divide it not into two groups, but into three or four groups. Even those five students were different*." (TC7)

Student heterogeneity was not described only as a difficulty. Participants portrayed it both as an instructional burden and as a source of professional learning. Candidates had to consider which method suited each student, what level of support was required, and how instruction should change when planned activities did not match current performance.

"*After working with one child, when I immediately moved on to another child, I had to use a completely different teaching method*." (TC1)

Participants also linked individualization to the need for broader field experience. A placement limited to one school, classroom, or disability group created a sense of incomplete preparation. They understood professional competence as the ability to assess and teach flexibly across different student profiles and educational settings.

"*Every special educator needs to see different disability groups. Because you may encounter children with all kinds of disabilities, and you need to assess them, take performance data, and teach accordingly*." (TC3)

Taken together, these accounts positioned learning to interpret student difference as an important part of professional development. They also connected individualization with the need to adapt theoretical knowledge to changing student performance, a relationship that became more explicit in Theme 4.

Theme 3: Recognition, Autonomy, and the Construction of Teacher Identity

The practicum was also a setting in which candidates negotiated whether they could see themselves, and be seen by others, as teachers. Teacher identity depended on more than physical presence in the classroom. Participants linked feeling like a teacher to responsibility, autonomy, participation in instructional decisions, and recognition by students, mentor teachers, and the school community.

Some candidates remained in peripheral roles and were not given enough responsibility or opportunities to work independently. This limited their ability to experience themselves as teachers.

"*My expectation was completely to feel like a teacher, but I never felt that way. I always felt like a guest in the classroom. I could not be alone with the student*." (TC9)

However, this sense of being a "guest" was not shared uniformly across participants' accounts. By contrast, when candidates were trusted with responsibility and could observe the effects of their teaching, their professional confidence increased. In these accounts, successful participation was associated with a stronger sense of being recognized as a teacher.

"*When I followed evidence-based practices, my teacher told me, 'I have not been able to teach addition and subtraction to these children for weeks, but you taught multiplication in one week.' When I was systematic, showed interest, and tried, I saw that I could succeed*." (TC2)

Identity development was not based only on success. Encounters with uncertainty, inadequacy, and the unpredictability of classroom life showed candidates that teaching requires continuous judgment rather than routine performance.

"*Classroom management is not just teaching a lesson. One student comes and says something, another says something else; which one will you ignore, and what happens if that student loses interest*?" (TC6)

Mentor relationships also varied across participants' experiences and were closely connected to their opportunities for participation. Supportive mentors offered responsibility, feedback, and dialogue, enabling candidates to feel like legitimate participants in the classroom.

"*My teacher's guidance was good; she directed me. We talked, she shared information… I guided her, and she guided me*." (TC4)

Some participants also described learning through practices they questioned or rejected. Practices that restricted student independence, reflected fixed assumptions about ability, or positioned interns as subordinate helped them clarify the kind of teacher they did not want to become.

"*The child was not given the opportunity to do things they could do independently. They should have supported the students without classifying them as 'these students can do this, these students cannot*.'" (TC1)

Across these contrasting accounts, teacher identity was associated with recognition, autonomy, responsibility, uncertainty, and critical comparison. Importantly, these experiences were not independent of the practicum context; opportunities to participate and feel recognized were also shaped by mentoring and institutional conditions, which are developed further in Theme 5.

Theme 4: Reconstructing Knowledge Through Practice

The practicum changed how candidates understood the relationship between theory and practice. Rather than experiencing practice as the direct application of university knowledge, they described a process in which theoretical concepts became meaningful, situated, and open to revision when applied with real students.

"*We know the implementation steps theoretically, but when we applied them, they stayed with us. When we did it in a real environment, it became better*." (TC6)

Preparing IEPs, using reinforcement, applying prompts, conducting performance assessments, and implementing systematic instruction became more than abstract procedures. They became tools that had to be interpreted and adapted according to student needs and classroom conditions.

"*Preparing an IEP, planning the process, deciding how and when to provide reinforcement, and implementing systematic intervention were made possible through the transition from theory to practice*." (TC8)

Participants' accounts also indicated that theoretical knowledge was not experienced as something that could always be applied mechanically. Students' individual differences required candidates to revise assumptions and personalize instruction. In their accounts, professional knowledge was therefore reconstructed through context-sensitive pedagogical reasoning.

"*Because of individual differences, the profile I draw for students may not always remain valid. Then you adapt, you personalize.*" (TC5)

This reconstruction of knowledge was also evident in participants' accounts of classroom and behaviour management. Candidates learned that teaching requires balancing relational closeness with authority, responding to several students at once, and making rapid decisions in unpredictable situations.

"*Managing the classroom is difficult because balancing being taken seriously and being like a friend was very hard*." (TC2)

Some participants also described a change in how they interpreted student behaviour. Actions initially perceived as problems came to be understood as meaningful responses shaped by individual and environmental conditions.

"*There is a reason behind the behaviour. People outside do not see this, but there is a reason for this action. I really liked investigating it*." (TC4)

TC4's account provides an example of how practicum experience may bring previously un-

examined assumptions about student behaviour into conscious consideration. Rather than treating behaviour solely as an observable problem requiring intervention, the candidate began to interpret it as a response that might have underlying individual or environmental functions. This account can be understood as a possible instance of making tacit understandings available for reflection. Assumptions that might otherwise remain implicit within routine classroom judgments were brought into question as the candidate investigated alternative explanations. The significance of the experience therefore extended beyond acquiring another behaviour-management strategy: it involved reconsidering what student behaviour meant and how a teacher should respond to it. However, the interview account offers evidence of a reported interpretive shift rather than direct observation of reflection occurring during instructional action. This process was closely connected to the individualization described in Theme 2: reading student difference created the need to revise rather than simply apply existing knowledge.

Theme 5: Becoming a Teacher in an Institutional In-Between Space

Practicum experiences were shaped not only by individual learning, but also by relationships between the university and the practicum school. Candidates often found themselves between two institutions with different expectations. When communication between the university supervisor and mentor teacher was weak, they struggled to determine whose expectations to prioritize and how their performance would be evaluated.

"*On one side, I have a responsibility toward my university supervisor; on the other side, I have a responsibility toward the teacher at the school. If there is no communication between the two, I cannot know who wants what*." (TC9)

These experiences were not uniformly negative. For some participants, regular guidance, feedback, and discussion with university supervisors provided a supportive connection between university learning and challenges encountered at school.

"*I learn with my university supervisor, I go to the school, and then I write to my supervisor. This back-and-forth was very valuable for me*." (TC10)

When guidance was inconsistent, however, the practicum depended largely on individual effort. Institutional ambiguity also affected assessment. Candidates sometimes struggled to understand what was being evaluated and whether documentation served professional learning or merely fulfilled bureaucratic requirements.

"*I prepared observation tools, collected performance data, and prepared an instructional plan, but while implementing it, I did not feel that I had control*." (TC10)

One participant's experience also brought safety and professional protection into the institu-

tional dimension of the practicum.

"*I was exposed to violence by a student, I had to go to the hospital, and I did not have insurance. I wasn't sure of my legal protection in this process*?" (TC4)

Participants also described school culture as an important part of their practicum experience. Where collaboration, effort, and student development were valued, candidates felt included in professional learning. These accounts contrasted with experiences of institutional environments characterized by lower motivation, weaker leadership, or limited commitment to special education.

"*Every school has a culture. If there is a school culture that recognizes effort and encourages good practices, other teachers are also influenced by it*." (TC8)

Across these accounts, becoming a teacher emerged as both an individual and an institutionally situated process. Coordination, supervision, assessment, safety, and school culture were described as conditions that could either support coherent professional learning or contribute to a more fragmented practicum experience. This institutional dimension also helps explain the contrasting experiences of recognition and autonomy identified in Theme 3.

Discussion

This study conceptualizes the special education teaching practicum not merely as a setting for acquiring competencies but as a process of professional formation in which pedagogical judgment, knowledge, and teacher identity are reconstructed. While previous research has emphasized practicum duration, mentoring, feedback, individualized education program (IEP) preparation, and instructional competence, the findings suggest that their formative value depends on candidates' opportunities to interpret uncertainty, question assumptions, and reconsider pedagogical decisions. From Schön's (1992) reflective practitioner perspective, these experiences involve problem framing, reframing, and the articulation of tacit professional understandings rather than the straightforward application of theoretical knowledge. The five themes illustrate how such processes are shaped by temporal, relational, and institutional conditions (Allen & Wright, 2014; Jay & Johnson, 2002).

The first theme reveals that practicum duration is significant not simply as instructional exposure but as a condition for reflective inquiry. Although previous studies advocate longer practicums (Aktan, 2023; İnan et al., 2025; Yılmaz et al., 2026), the findings emphasize continuity as essential for interpreting instructional consequences. Candidates who could not monitor behavioural change or intervention outcomes struggled to distinguish ineffective pedagogical decisions from contextual influences. In Schön's (1992) terms, profession-

al inquiry requires opportunities to examine how situations respond to action and whether these responses challenge initial problem framings. Fragmented participation interrupts this process, limiting candidates' ability to reconsider their judgments in light of evidence. Time therefore functions as an epistemic condition of professional learning rather than merely a quantitative resource. This extends research on reflection, feedback, and self-assessment (de-Bettencourt & Nagro, 2019; Nagro et al., 2017; Taşdemir & Gümüşok, 2023) by demonstrating that reflective reconsideration depends partly on sustained engagement with instructional consequences.

The second theme highlights reframing as a central dimension of individualization. Previous studies identify performance assessment, IEP preparation, instructional adaptation, and progress monitoring as essential special education competencies (Büyükköse et al., 2024; İnan et al., 2025; Yılmaz et al., 2026). However, participants' encounters with heterogeneous student profiles suggested that individualization required reconsidering how instructional problems were initially understood. Diagnostic classifications offered general expectations but could not adequately explain differences in performance and support needs. Within Schön's (1992) framework, framing determines which aspects of a situation are considered relevant, whereas reframing involves reconstructing that interpretation when experience exposes its limitations. Candidates' accounts suggested a shift from category-based expectations toward individualized, context-sensitive judgments. Thus, diversity was not merely a challenge requiring different techniques; it could unsettle the assumptions through which pedagogical problems were defined. This extends research on instructional flexibility and diverse field experiences (Ho & Lau, 2025; O'Brien et al., 2024) by positioning individualization as an interpretive process rather than solely a technical competency.

The third theme suggests that teacher identity develops through reflection on professional roles, responsibilities, and values. Although practicum participation has been associated with identity formation (Kırksekiz et al., 2015) and self-efficacy (Öksüz & Coşkun, 2012), participants' contrasting experiences indicate that neither emerges automatically from classroom presence. Candidates who remained peripheral described themselves as guests, whereas recognition and instructional responsibility supported professional agency. Mentoring further complicated this process: supportive relationships facilitated participation, while practices restricting student independence prompted some candidates to question established understandings of effective teaching. These encounters suggest reframing at the level of professional identity, as candidates reconsidered not only instructional decisions but also the kind of teacher they wished to become. Professional formation therefore involved both identification with valued practices and critical distancing from questionable ones. However, negative experiences were not inherently developmental; their significance depended on opportunities for critical interpretation.

The fourth theme illuminates how theoretical and tacit knowledge are reconsidered through situated practice. Previous research describes the practicum as a bridge between university

learning and classroom experience (Allen & Wright, 2014; Batmaz & Ergen, 2020; Görgen et al., 2012). The findings instead suggest a reciprocal relationship in which theoretical principles acquire meaning through contextual interpretation. Reinforcement, prompting, performance assessment, and classroom management required judgments that predetermined procedures could not fully specify. This reflects Schön's (1992) critique of technical rationality: professional problems are not simply given but must be interpreted within uncertain situations. Importantly, Schön's concept of knowing-in-action also recognizes practical understandings embedded in professional activity that may remain unarticulated. Participants' accounts of reconsidering student behaviour, balancing authority with relational closeness, and adapting instruction suggest moments when assumptions underlying pedagogical judgment became more explicit. For example, interpreting challenging behaviour in relation to possible individual and environmental functions involved reconsidering what initially appeared to constitute the problem. Such experiences suggest that professional learning includes making implicit assumptions available for reflection, rather than merely acquiring additional techniques.

This interpretation requires distinguishing reflection-in-action from reflection-on-action. Whereas the former involves reconsidering one's understanding during practice, the latter concerns retrospective examination of experience (Schön, 1992). Participants' descriptions of instructional adaptation are compatible with reflection-in-action, but interview accounts more directly reveal retrospective meaning-making. Consequently, the findings cannot establish when reflection occurred during teaching; rather, they illuminate how candidates interpreted uncertainty and reconstructed their understandings afterward. This distinction preserves the study's methodological boundaries while supporting Jay and Johnson's (2002) conceptualization of reflection as engagement with complexity.

The fifth theme demonstrates that reflective learning is institutionally mediated. Previous studies identify difficulties in university–school communication and coordination (Ayvacı et al., 2019; Cengiz, 2021; Kırksekiz et al., 2015; Yıldırım Yakar et al., 2021). The findings extend this literature by showing how institutional relationships shape opportunities for pedagogical reconsideration. Conflicting expectations generated uncertainty about responsibilities and assessment, whereas supportive supervision created opportunities to articulate reasoning, question assumptions, and consider alternative interpretations. Mentoring thus functioned not merely as knowledge transmission but potentially as a dialogic space for reframing professional problems, consistent with research emphasizing systematic observation and feedback (Bulunuz & Bulunuz, 2016; Cengiz, 2021; Nagro et al., 2017). Documentation reflected a similar tension. Although observation tools, IEPs, and instructional plans could support reflective inquiry, unclear assessment criteria risked reducing them to bureaucratic compliance. Their formative value depended on whether they helped candidates interpret evidence and justify decisions (Aktan, 2023; Yılmaz Atman et al., 2023). School culture, professional recognition, and concerns about safety and legal protection further illustrated that reflective participation is shaped by institutional support and vulnerability.

Across the themes, framing, reframing, and the articulation of tacit understandings emerge as interconnected possibilities rather than sequential stages of professional learning. Student diversity could challenge categorical assumptions; classroom uncertainty could expose limitations in established knowledge; and mentoring could facilitate or constrain reconsideration. Crucially, uncertainty alone does not produce reflection, nor does instructional adaptation necessarily constitute reframing. Reflective learning becomes possible when candidates recognize the limitations of an initial interpretation, examine alternative understandings, and reconsider the assumptions informing their judgments. These opportunities require continuity, meaningful responsibility, dialogue, and institutional support.

The study's principal contribution is therefore to elaborate Schön's reflective practitioner perspective within special education teacher preparation by showing that reflective professional formation is temporally enabled, relationally mediated, and institutionally situated. Practicum quality depends not simply on experience or competency acquisition but on whether candidates can question how pedagogical problems are understood and reconstruct professional judgments accordingly. Becoming a special education teacher thus involves learning not only what to do, but how to reconsider what a situation demands. The practicum is consequently a reflective space in which pedagogical knowledge and teacher identity may be reconstructed through experience, interpretation, and institutional relationships.

Conclusion

This study suggests that the special education teaching practicum is not merely a setting for applying theory or developing technical skills, but a formative professional space in which candidates learn to interpret student differences, assume responsibility, reconstruct pedagogical knowledge, and develop a sense of themselves as teachers. The findings indicate that practicum quality depends on continuity, exposure to diverse student profiles, meaningful mentoring and feedback, clear university–school coordination, and opportunities to use documentation such as IEPs and observation tools for reflection and instructional decision-making rather than task completion. Accordingly, practicum programs may be strengthened by providing more continuous field experience, broader placement diversity, structured feedback and professional dialogue, and clearer roles and assessment processes across university and school settings. These implications should be interpreted cautiously because the study was based on a small group from a single teacher education program and relied on self-reported interview data. Future research could use multiple institutions, stakeholder perspectives, observational data, and longitudinal designs to examine how practicum experiences shape professional identity and pedagogical reasoning over time.

This study has several limitations. It involved a small group of pre-service teachers from a single teacher education program within a specific institutional and national context; therefore, the findings are context-specific and should not be generalized to all practicum settings.

The study also included only pre-service teachers and did not incorporate the perspectives of mentor teachers, university supervisors, administrators, students, or families. In addition, reliance on semi-structured interviews as the sole data generation method meant that participants' accounts were not triangulated with classroom observations, reflective journals, practicum documents, lesson plans, IEPs, or researcher journals. Consequently, the findings represent participants' interpretations of their practicum experiences rather than independently corroborated accounts of classroom practices or institutional processes. Future studies could strengthen transferability and depth by including multiple institutions and stakeholder perspectives and by combining interview data with observational, documentary, and longitudinal evidence.

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Özel Eğitim Öğretmeni Olmak: Mesleki Oluşumun Reflektif Bir Alanı Olarak Öğretmenlik Uygulaması

Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet

Özel eğitim öğretmeni yetiştirme programlarında öğretmenlik uygulaması, öğretmen adaylarının üniversitede edindikleri bilgi ve becerileri gerçek sınıf ortamlarında sınadıkları, öğrencileri tanıdıkları, öğretimsel kararlar aldıkları ve öğretmenliğe ilişkin mesleki konumlarını geliştirdikleri temel deneyimlerden biridir. Bununla birlikte, mevcut araştırmalar öğretmenlik uygulamasını çoğunlukla süre, mentorluk, uygulama dosyaları, bireyselleştirilmiş eğitim programı hazırlama, materyal geliştirme, öğretim becerileri, sınıf yönetimi ve öz-yeterlik gibi programatik ya da yeterlik temelli boyutlar üzerinden ele almaktadır. Bu çalışmalar öğretmen adaylarının hangi becerilere sahip olduklarını ve hangi güçlüklerle karşılaştıklarını ortaya koymakla birlikte, bu deneyimleri nasıl yorumladıkları, belirsizlik ve çelişkilerle nasıl baş ettikleri, uygulama sürecinde mesleki bilgiyi nasıl yeniden yapılandırdıkları ve kendilerini nasıl öğretmen olarak konumlandırdıkları konusunda daha sınırlı bir açıklama sunmaktadır. Bu çalışma, özel eğitim öğretmeni adaylarının öğretmenlik uygulaması deneyimlerine yükledikleri anlamları ve bu deneyimlerin mesleki öğrenme ile öğretmen kimliğinin oluşumuna nasıl katkıda bulunduğunu incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmanın kuramsal çerçevesini Schön'ün reflektif uygulayıcı yaklaşımı oluşturmaktadır. Bu yaklaşım, mesleki bilgiyi önceden öğrenilmiş teknik kuralların doğrudan uygulanması olarak değil, belirsiz ve karmaşık durumlar içinde düşünme, karar verme, sonuçları gözlemleme ve uygulamayı yeniden düzenleme süreci olarak ele almaktadır. Bu bağlamda çalışma, öğretmenlik uygulamasını yalnızca yeterliklerin denendiği bir alan değil, pedagojik akıl yürütmenin ve öğretmen kimliğinin oluştuğu reflektif bir mesleki oluşum alanı olarak incelemektedir.

Yöntem

Araştırma, öğretmen adaylarının deneyimlerini nasıl yorumladıklarını ve bu deneyimlere nasıl anlam yüklediklerini anlamaya yönelik temel nitel araştırma deseniyle yürütülmüştür. Katılımcılar ölçüt temelli amaçlı örnekleme yoluyla belirlenmiştir. Araştırmaya özel eğitim öğretmenliği lisans programında öğrenim görme ve 2026 yılında öğretmenlik uygulaması dersini tamamlamış olma ölçütlerini karşılayan 20 öğretmen adayı davet edilmiş, 16 aday katılmayı kabul etmiş, dört aday ise davete yanıt vermemiştir. Seyahat ve zamanlama güçlükleri nedeniyle görüşmeler 10 katılımcıyla tamamlanmıştır; katılımcıların yedisi kadın, üçü erkektir. Veri toplamanın 10. görüşmede sonlandırılması önceden belirlenmiş sayısal bir eşiğe dayandırılmamış; araştırma sorularına ilişkin anlatıların ayrıntısı, farklı uygulama

okulları, öğrenci profilleri ve mentorluk deneyimlerinin çeşitliliği, tekrar eden örüntülerle birlikte karşıt ve çelişkili deneyimlerin temsil edilmesi ve sonraki görüşmelerin gelişen analitik anlayışa katkısı dikkate alınarak veri yeterliliği değerlendirilmiştir. Veriler yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yoluyla toplanmıştır. Görüşme formu araştırma soruları ve ilgili literatür doğrultusunda geliştirilmiş; özel eğitim ve nitel araştırma alanında uzman bir akademisyen tarafından uygunluk, açıklık ve araştırma sorularıyla uyum açısından incelenmiştir. Ardından iki öğretmen adayıyla pilot uygulama yapılmış, katılımcıların önerileri doğrultusunda ana tematik alanlar korunurken bazı sorulara açıklayıcı ve derinleştirici sondaj soruları eklenmiştir. Yüz yüze gerçekleştirilen görüşmeler yaklaşık 30–45 dakika sürmüş, katılımcı onayıyla ses kaydına alınmış ve sözcüğü sözcüğüne çözümlenmiştir. Veriler Braun ve Clarke'ın refleksif tematik analiz yaklaşımı doğrultusunda analiz edilmiştir. Analiz sürecinde araştırmacı nötr bir kodlayıcı olarak değil, anlam örüntülerinin oluşturulmasında aktif bir yorumlayıcı olarak konumlandırılmıştır. Araştırmacının katılımcıların öğrenim gördüğü özel eğitim öğretmenliği programında öğretim elemanı olması ve daha önce katılımcılara ders vermiş olması, hem bağlamsal bilgi sağlayan hem de olası etkileri refleksif biçimde izlenmesi gereken bir konum olarak ele alınmıştır. Kodlama ve tema geliştirme sürecinde analitik notlar tutulmuş; varsayımlar, çelişkiler, tema sınırları ve yorumlayıcı kararlar sürekli olarak gözden geçirilmiştir.

Bulgular

Analiz sonucunda birbiriyle ilişkili beş tema oluşturulmuştur: (1) pedagojik bir sınırlılık olarak zaman, (2) bireyselleştirme için farklılığı okumayı öğrenmek, (3) tanınma, özerklik ve öğretmen kimliğinin inşası, (4) bilgiyi uygulama yoluyla yeniden yapılandırmak ve (5) kurumsal bir arada kalma alanında öğretmen olmak. İlk tema, öğretmen adaylarının uygulama süresini yalnızca niceliksel bir yetersizlik olarak değil, öğrenciyi tanımak, güven ilişkisi kurmak, davranış örüntülerini izlemek, öğretim kararlarını sınamak ve müdahale sonuçlarını değerlendirmek için gerekli pedagojik bir kaynak olarak gördüklerini göstermiştir. Haftada bir günlük ve parçalı uygulama yapısı, özellikle davranış değişikliği, genelleme, akıcılık ve kalıcılık gibi uzun süreli süreçlerin izlenmesini güçleştirmiştir. Bu nedenle zaman, yalnızca daha fazla uygulama yapma fırsatı değil, eylem–gözlem–yeniden düzenleme döngüsünü mümkün kılan reflektif öğrenme koşulu olarak ortaya çıkmıştır.

İkinci tema, öğretmen adaylarının öğrencileri tanı etiketlerinden çok bireysel performans, destek gereksinimi ve bağlamsal özellikler üzerinden değerlendirmeyi öğrendiklerini göstermiştir. Aynı sınıftaki öğrenciler arasındaki akademik, iletişimsel ve davranışsal farklılıklar bireyselleştirmeyi soyut bir ilke olmaktan çıkarıp günlük öğretimsel kararların merkezine taşımıştır. Öğrenci çeşitliliği yalnızca bir güçlük olarak değil, öğretmen adaylarını hazır öğretim rutinlerini sorgulamaya ve farklı yöntemleri denemeye yönelten bir mesleki öğrenme kaynağı olarak da deneyimlenmiştir.

Üçüncü tema, öğretmen kimliğinin yalnızca sınıfta bulunmakla gelişmediğini; sorumluluk alma, bağımsız hareket edebilme, öğretim kararlarına katılma ve mentor öğretmenler tarafından mesleki bir özne olarak tanınma ile ilişkili olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Bazı adaylar kendilerini sınıfta "misafir" gibi hissederken, sorumluluk verilen ve öğretimsel katkısı fark edilen adayların mesleki güvenlerinin arttığı görülmüştür. Mentorluk deneyimleri de tek yönlü biçimde olumlu değildir. Destekleyici mentorlar geri bildirim, diyalog ve katılım olanağı sağlarken, bazı olumsuz modeller adayların benimsemek istemedikleri öğretmenlik biçimlerini fark etmelerine ve mesleki değerlerini eleştirel karşılaştırma yoluyla netleştirmelerine katkıda bulunmuştur.

Dördüncü tema, kuram ve uygulama ilişkisinin doğrusal bir bilgi aktarımı olmadığını göstermiştir. Bireyselleştirilmiş eğitim programı hazırlama, pekiştirme, ipucu kullanımı, performans değerlendirme ve davranış yönetimi gibi kuramsal bilgiler gerçek öğrencilerle çalışıldığında bağlama göre uyarlanması gereken araçlara dönüşmüştür. Öğretmen adayları, aynı yöntemin her öğrenci için aynı sonucu üretmediğini ve öğretim kararlarının öğrenci performansına göre sürekli yeniden düzenlenmesi gerektiğini deneyimlemiştir. Bu bulgu, Schön'ün teknik rasyonalite eleştirisiyle uyumlu biçimde, mesleki bilginin uygulamada yeniden üretildiğini ve pedagojik akıl yürütmenin belirsizlik içinde geliştiğini göstermektedir.

Beşinci tema ise öğretmenlik uygulamasının üniversite ve uygulama okulu arasında kurumsal bir "arada kalma" alanı olarak deneyimlenebildiğini ortaya koymuştur. Üniversite danışmanı ile mentor öğretmen arasındaki iletişimin zayıf olduğu durumlarda adaylar beklentiler, değerlendirme ölçütleri ve sorumluluklar konusunda belirsizlik yaşamıştır. Buna karşılık düzenli danışmanlık ve geri bildirim, kuram ile uygulama arasında anlamlı bağ kurulmasını desteklemiştir. Uygulama dosyaları, gözlem araçları ve performans değerlendirmeleri bazı durumlarda reflektif düşünmeyi desteklerken, ölçütlerin belirsiz olduğu durumlarda bürokratik bir yük olarak algılanmıştır. Ayrıca okul kültürü, mesleki katılım ve tanınma olanaklarını etkileyen daha geniş bir bağlamsal unsur olarak öne çıkmıştır.

Sonuç

Araştırmanın temel katkısı, özel eğitim öğretmenlik uygulamasını yalnızca önceden tanımlanmış yeterliklerin uygulandığı bir süreç olarak değil, zamansal olarak mümkün kılınan, ilişkiler aracılığıyla şekillenen ve kurumsal koşullar içinde gerçekleşen reflektif bir mesleki oluşum süreci olarak kavramsallaştırmasıdır. Bulgular, daha uzun uygulamanın tek başına refleksiyon üretmediğini, mentorluğun her zaman geliştirici olmadığını, öğrenci çeşitliliğinin yalnızca güçlük olarak değerlendirilemeyeceğini ve dokümantasyonun kendiliğinden mesleki öğrenmeye dönüşmediğini göstermektedir. Öğretmenlik uygulamasının niteliği; öğrencileri ve öğretim sonuçlarını izlemeye olanak veren süreklilik, farklı öğrenci profilleriyle

çalışma, anlamlı sorumluluk, yapılandırılmış geri bildirim, öğretmen adayı özerkliğini destekleyen mentorluk ve üniversite–okul arasında açık koordinasyon sağlanmasına bağlıdır. Bu nedenle uygulama programlarında sürekliliğin artırılması, farklı yetersizlik ve yaş gruplarıyla çalışma fırsatlarının genişletilmesi, geri bildirimin pedagojik akıl yürütme ve refleksiyon etrafında yapılandırılması ve BEP ile gözlem araçlarının görev tamamlama yerine öğretimsel karar vermeyi destekleyecek biçimde kullanılması önerilmektedir. Bununla birlikte çalışma, tek bir öğretmen yetiştirme programındaki küçük bir katılımcı grubuna ve öz bildirime dayalı görüşme verilerine dayanmaktadır. Bu nedenle bulgular tüm uygulama bağlamlarına genellenmekten çok, benzer kurumsal ve mesleki koşullara sahip ortamlara aktarılabilecek bağlama duyarlı çıkarımlar olarak değerlendirilmelidir. Gelecek araştırmalarda farklı kurumların, mentorların ve diğer paydaşların sürece dâhil edilmesi; görüşmelerin gözlem, belge ve boylamsal verilerle desteklenmesi, öğretmenlik uygulamasının mesleki kimlik ve pedagojik akıl yürütme üzerindeki uzun dönemli etkilerinin daha kapsamlı incelenmesini sağlayabilir.