AKDENIZ UNIVERSITY

THE INSTITUTE OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING DEPARTMENT

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING MASTER PROGRAMME

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRE-SERVICE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN LINE WITH THE EUROPEAN PORTFOLIO FOR STUDENT TEACHERS OF LANGUAGES (EPOSTL)

MA THESIS

Meltem YÜMSEK

Antalya

Şubat, 2014

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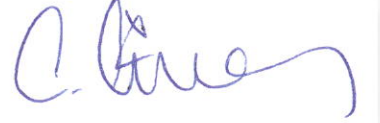
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Antalya

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Akdeniz Üniversitesi

Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü Müdürlüğüne,

Meltem YÜMSEK'in bu çalışması, jürimiz tarafından **Yabancı Diller Eğitimi** Ana Bilim Dalı ~~Doktora~~/Yüksek Lisans Programı tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.

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Tez Konusu:

İngilizce Öğretmen Adaylarının 'Dil Öğretmen Adayları için Avrupa Dil Portfolyosu' (EPOSTL) Kriterleri Doğrultusunda Mesleki Yeterlilik Gelişimleri

Professional Development of Pre-service English Language Teachers in line with The European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL)

Onay: Yukarıdaki imzaların, adı geçen öğretim üyelerine ait olduğunu onaylarım.

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Doç.Dr.Selçuk UYGUN

Enstitü Müdürü

ATTESTATION

I honorably certify that the current study presented as my MA dissertation reports original work by me and was written within the scope of the ethics of research. I verify that the references comprise of the sources I utilized for my research through citation. I notify that I will bear all the ethical and legal consequences in condition that it is refuted.

DOĞRULUK BEYANI

Yüksek lisans tezi olarak sunduğum bu çalışmayı, bilimsel ahlak ve geleneklere aykırı düşecek bir yol ve yardıma başvurmaksızın yazdığımı, yararlandığım eserlerin kaynakçalardan gösterilenlerden oluştuğunu ve bu eserleri her kullanışımda alıntı yaparak yararlandığımı belirtir; bunu onurumla doğrularım. Tezimle ilgili yaptığım bu beyana aykırı bir durumun saptanması durumunda, ortaya çıkacak tüm ahlaki ve hukuki sonuçlara katlanacağımı bildiririm.

27.01.2014

Meltem YÜMSEK

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It would not have been possible to finalize this long and challenging journey without the support of the people surrounding me. I feel indebted to extend my appreciation to some of them and give particular credit to the ensuing people.

Foremost, I owe my deepest gratitude to my thesis supervisor Assist. Prof. Dr. Mustafa CANER; if it were not for his supervision, perseverance and patience this thesis would not have come true. I would like to thank him to have faith in me and to get me back on my legs. At all times I felt so fortunate to have such a considerate advisor cultivating my mind through his insightful comments and suggestions and helping me to acquire the ethics of research. Thus, sheer expression of appreciation here is not sufficient for him.

Besides I would like to offer my particular thanks to Prof. Dr. İsmail Hakkı MİRİCİ for introducing the EPOSTL to me and providing the inspiration for my thesis. It was a great honor to be supervised by him at the beginning.

I am deeply grateful to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Cem Oktay GÜZELLER who made a valuable contribution to my research skills in the course of my MA journey. He supported me to establish my background in conducting research and oriented me to research the unsearched. His warm encouragement in any environment has been always inspirational for me.

I would like to express my greatest regard for Assoc. Prof. Dr. Arda ARIKAN for his valuable comments that helped me to give my thesis its final version. I was honoured to have him in my advisory board.

I am in debt to Dr. Gökçe KURT with whose encouragement and motivation I found myself in my way to doing MA. It is thanks to our discussions with her that I decided what to pursue in my career. She has always illuminated my path and been a great role model for me.

I would also like to express my deepest respect to Prof. Dr. Mustafa KINSIZ who never withheld his moral support as the head of my department and stood behind me at all times.

ABSTRACT

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRE-SERVICE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN LINE WITH THE EUROPEAN PORTFOLIO FOR STUDENT TEACHERS OF LANGUAGES (EPOSTL)

Yümsek, Meltem
Master of Arts, Foreign Language Teaching Department
Thesis Supervisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Caner
February 2014, 160 pages

In recent years, the increasing focus on professional development has resulted in emphasis on reflection. The fact that professional development starts during pre-service teacher education and that pre-service teachers have varying needs has augmented the significance of reflection during teacher education. However, the development of student teachers' reflective skills has been maintained with individual teacher trainers' own efforts. Besides, the identification of strengths and weaknesses of student teachers is somewhat limited. The European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL) is a standard tool to specify professional development of pre-service teachers, along with their strong and weak competences. The purpose of this study is to reveal the perception of student teachers' professional development, strengths and weaknesses in line with the EPOSTL and to discover the benefits student teachers can obtain with its integration.

Ninety-seven third grade ELT students at Akdeniz University participated in the study. The study is a descriptive study spanning one and a half years. In order to find out the degree of development student teachers have undergone and identify their strong and weak teaching competences, adapted EPOSTL survey was administered at the beginning of the third grade. Then student teachers were given a training on the EPOSTL. Upon the completion of their methodology and other teacher development courses, the EPOSTL survey was administered again at the end of the third grade to analyse their professional development. The results of the EPOSTL surveys were compared and the degree of their professional development was identified. Lastly, at the end of the first term of the fourth grade to track the student teachers' progress on the competences included in the EPOSTL, to support the questionnaire results and to specify the student teachers opinions of the EPOSTL an interview was conducted.

The findings of the study demonstrate that the student teachers have progressed considerably and the majority of the student teachers perceive themselves competent on the basis of the EPOSTL in terms of most of the skills. However, within the sections and sub-sections of the EPOSTL there are competences such as teaching writing and pronunciation, student teachers report themselves weak. In terms of some of the competences, a regression is detected even upon the completion of the teacher development courses. Additionally, the interview findings support these results. Finally, the interview results indicate that student teachers have a very positive attitude towards the integration of the EPOSTL. They perceive it as a very worthwhile tool to encourage reflection and promote professional development.

Key words: EPOSTL, professional development, self-efficacy, self-reflection, self-assessment, teacher competences

ÖZET

İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMEN ADAYLARININ DİL ÖĞRETMEN ADAYLARI İÇİN AVRUPA DİL PORTFOLYOSU (EPOSTL) KRİTERLERİ DOĞRULTUSUNDA MESLEKİ YETERLİLİK GELİŞİMLERİ

Yümsek, Meltem
Yüksek Lisans, Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Bölümü
Tez Danışmanı: Yrd. Doç. Dr. Musatafa Caner
Şubat, 2014, 160 sayfa

Son yıllarda mesleki gelişim üzerinde artan ilgi yansıtmanın ilgi çekmesini sağlamıştır. Mesleki gelişimin öğretmen eğitimi sırasında başlaması ve öğretmen adaylarının değişkenlik gösteren gereksinimleri yansıtmanın öğretmen eğitimdeki önemini artırmıştır. Öğretmen adaylarının yansıtma becerilerinin gelişimi öğretmen eğitmenlerinin kişisel çabalarıyla sürdürülmektedir. Yanısıra öğretmen adaylarının mesleki gelişimlerinin ve güçlü ve zayıf becerilerinin belirlenmeside sınırlı kalmıştır. Aday Dil Öğretmenleri için Avrupa Dil Portfolyosu (EPOSTL) öğretmen adaylarının mesleki gelişimlerini, güçlü ve zayıf öğretmenlik becerilerini belirleyen standart bir araçtır. Bu çalışma yansıtma yöntemiyle öğretmen adaylarının mesleki gelişimlerini, güçlü ve zayıf öğretmenlik becerileri hakkındaki düşüncelerini EPOSTL açısından belirlemekte ve öğretmen adaylarının bu aracın eğitim programlarına entegrasyonu ile ilgili düşüncelerini ortaya koymaktadır.

Araştırma Akdeniz Üniversitesi'nde İngilizce öğretmenliği üçüncü sınıfta eğitim gören 97 öğrenci ile gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırma bir buçuk yılı kapsayan betimsel bir araştırmadır. Öğretmen adaylarının mesleki gelişimlerini, güçlü ve zayıf öğretmenlik becerilerini belirlemek amacıyla üçüncü sınıfın ilk döneminde EPOSTL anketi uygulanmıştır. Ardından adaylara EPOSTL ile ilgili bir eğitim verilmiştir. Üçüncü sınıfın sonunda metodoloji ve diğer öğretmenlik derslerinin tamamlanmasının ardından EPOSTL anketi tekrar uygulanarak öğretmen adaylarının mesleki gelişimleri araştırılmıştır. İlk ve son EPOSTL anketinin sonuçları karşılaştırılarak öğretmen adaylarının mesleki gelişimleri belirlenmiştir. Son olarak dördüncü sınıfın ilk döneminin sonunda aynı öğretmen adayları ile EPOSTL'da yer alan öğretmenlik becerileri hakkındaki gelişmlerini takip ederek anket sonuçlarını desteklemek ve adayların EPOSTL hakkındaki görüşlerini belirlemek için bir görüşme yapılmıştır.

Araştırma bulguları öğretmen adaylarının EPOSTL'da yer alan öğretmenlik becerileri açısından büyük oranda gelişim kaydettiklerini göstermektedir.Öğretmen adaylarının büyük çoğunluğu EPOSTL'da yer alan beceriler açısından yeterli olduklarını belirtmişlerdir. Ancak EPSOTL da yer alan yazma öğretimi ve sesletim gibi bazı beceriler açısından öğretmen adayları yeterli olmadıklarını ifade etmişler ve bazı becerilerde de öğretmenlik derslerini tamamlamış olmalarına rağmen bir düşüş gözlemlenmiştir. Görüşme bulguları da bu sonuçları desteklemiştir. Son olarak görüşme sonuçları öğretmen adaylarının EPOSTL'ın öğretmenlik programına entegre edilmesi ile ilgili olumlu bir yaklaşım içinde olduklarını göstermiştir. EPOSTL'ı mesleki gelişim ve yansıtmayı destekleyen çok yararlı bir araç olarak algılamışlardır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: EPOSTL, mesleki gelişim, özyeterlik, yansıtma, özdeğerlendirme, öğretmenlik yeterlilikleri

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEFR: Common European Framework for Reference Languages

EAQUALS: Evaluation and Accreditation of Quality in Language Services

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ELP: European Language Portfolio

ELT: English Language Teaching

ELTJ: English Language Teaching Journal

EPOSTL: European Portfolio for Student Teachers' of Languages

EQ: Emotional Intelligence

ESL: English as a Second Language

HEC: Higher Education Council which stands for YÖK, Yüksek Öğretim Kurulu

INGED: İngilizce Öğretmenleri Derneği (Association of English Language Teachers)

MONE: Ministry of National Education which stands for MEB, Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı

TEFL: Teaching English as a Foreign Language

TESLJ: Teachers of English as a Second Language Journal

TESOL: Teaching English to the Speakers of Other Languages

FUNCTIONAL DEFINITION OF THE TERMS

The purpose of this section is to provide definitions of the terms appearing frequently in the study that might be used interchangeably with other terms in literature. Although different terms are used in different studies with the same meaning in the present study one of the related terms were adhered to in order to avoid ambiguity. Related terms are grouped and throughout the study the first term is preferred. The definition for the term preferred is provided. Moreover, whenever necessary the terms that might represent something different in different contexts are accompanied by a definition.

STUDENT TEACHERS: university students whose majors are teaching. They are sometimes referred as *"pre-service teachers"*, *"candidate teachers"*, *"prospective teachers"* or *"trainees"*. Student teachers are still under their education, yet through their education they are on their way to develop professionally. The present study sticks to the term student teachers, yet it can make use of other related terms in presenting the related research.

STUDENTS and **LEARNERS**: although participants of the present study are students at an ELT department the terms students or learners will refer to English language learners.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE: chances provided for student teachers to attain experience for a period of time by teaching in a real class. The term is also used instead of *"practice teaching"*, *"school experience"* and *"practicum"*. Teaching experience involves micro or macro teachings. The student teacher controls a class individually. Practice teaching gives student teachers an opportunity to employ the knowledge and skills they have studied in their teacher education program and obtain basic teaching skills (Richards & Schmidt, 2002). *"Practicum"* in some contexts may refer to a whole year in which student teachers work with cooperating teachers for the same purpose of teaching experience. Practicum is part of pre-service teacher education but student teachers also earn small amount of money.

TEACHER EDUCATION: the program of study student teachers finalize before they begin teaching. During this period future teachers are introduced basic teaching techniques, skills such as preparing lesson plans, classroom management, teaching the four skills etc. and a broad general background in teaching. They are given opportunities to try out what they have attained with teaching experience. The term can be replaced by *"initial teacher education"*, *"pre-service teacher education"* or *"teacher training"*. However sometimes it is used in a broader sense and used for both pre-service and in-service teacher education. In the present study the term refers to pre-service teacher education dealing with basic teaching skills and techniques, typically for student teachers (Richards & Schmidt, 2002).

IN-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION: education offered to teachers who are already teaching. The purpose of in-service teacher education is to promote continuous professional development. It entails a particular objectives and includes identification of needs, determining objectives, planning content, choosing methods of presentation, implementation, evaluation of effectiveness and follow-up assistance (Richards & Schmidt, 2002).

TEACHER TRAINER: university teachers guiding the student teacher's development and offering suggestions for improvement. They act as consultants, facilitators. Their purpose is to explore aspects of teaching with student teachers via discussions (Richards & Schmidt, 2002). Sometimes the terms *"instructor"* and *"supervisor"* are used interchangeably with it. Yet, supervision is associated more with teaching experience. *"Supervisors"* observe student teachers' micro and macro teachings.

MENTOR: a qualified teacher working in a school who guides and gives feedback to a student teacher during teaching practice. However in some contexts the term is used interchangeably with *"teacher trainers"*.

MICRO-TEACHING: a method of teacher education that gives a chance to student teachers to practice the skills under controlled conditions. Teacher trainees conduct a

small part of a lesson to a group of peers. Microteachings focuses on a specific teaching task and followed by discussion to improve teaching (Richards & Schmidt, 2002).

MACRO-TEACHING: a method of teacher education providing opportunity to practice teaching skills. It is different from micro-teaching in terms of its length. Macro teaching entails conducting a whole lesson.

DESCRIPTOR: an account of the level of performance for a certain level in scale (Richards & Schmidt, 2002). In the present study descriptors represent the competences in EPOSTL, yet they do not have a function to specify a certain level for student teachers.

ITEM: a question in a test or questionnaire that is to be responded (Richards & Schmidt, 2002). EPOSTL descriptors is referred as items in EPOSTL survey.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION

1.0. Introduction

There has been a reasonable emphasis on English language teaching not only in Turkey but also across the world recently due to its role as a global medium of communication. The body of research to enhance language learning at all levels and contexts is growing due to the accumulative demand for language learning. As suggested by Lin (2003), there is a significant increase in the number of English language learners due to globalization. Therefore, language teaching is prioritized by all the interested parties and a quest for new approaches, methods and mediums to teach English in a better way is undeniable.

There is a reasonable connection between effective teaching and student achievement (Horng & Loeb, 2010). Thus in order to facilitate effective teaching, the relationship between learning and teaching has to be comprehended fully. It is vital that teachers have an understanding of how students learn and, what kind of practices are most effective. Thus, teachers as active participants in the language development process should be placed at the centre of attention. As a result of increasing focus on maximization of effective teaching, teachers' professional development has drawn significant consideration and has been referred constantly in literature (Richards & Farrell, 2005). It is suggested by the Richards and Farrell (2005) that the increasing emphasis and significance on professional development caused the re-emergence of teacher initiated activities such as reflecting teaching. Furthermore professional development is among the key skills teachers are expected to obtain. Teaching English to the Speakers of Other Languages International Association (TESOL) puts forth that ESL/EFL teachers performance should be considered in terms of five main domains which are "language; culture; planning; implementing and managing instruction; assessment and professionalism" (TESOL, 2010).

It is evident that professional development is a prerequisite for being a teacher. Moreover, when the demands brought by globalization mentioned above and shifting condition are recalled, professional development is to be placed at the center. Richards

and Farrell (2005), similarly mention the need to change in relation with time or context. Moreover, new policies, practices or implementations also summon development (Solomon & Tresman, 2006). As indicated by Seymen (2012), there is a need for research to be carried out on language teachers. However, it must be highlighted that professional development starts with pre-service teacher education. Great responsibilities are laid on student teachers during their pre-service teacher education. Thus, their teacher education should be taken into consideration and shed light on. Nevertheless, it is an arduous task to generalize the focus of the research conducted on student teachers because contexts in which they are educated and curriculums applied or problems encountered might display variety. When student teachers are put at the centre of the research, their unique needs in their somewhat unmatched environments become a prominent issue. It is thus vital to specify these contextual needs and this is where reflection comes into play.

In recent decades, along with professional development reflection on teaching has become an essential part of language teaching and teacher education field and the studies linked with reflection has become prevalent. According to Strampel and Oliver (2007), as an intellectual activity, teaching is greatly associated with learning and it occurs through systematic and critical reflection which has an impact on learning, understanding, induction of conceptual change and transfer of knowledge. Similarly, as expressed by Al-Issa and Al-Bulushi (2010), teaching does not merely entail the knowledge or the ability to teach well, on the other hand it considers frameworks and the way teachers apply those frameworks.

Teaching is not steady, yet it involves changes for further development through the cycle of action, reflection and improvement. When done with a critical mind, teaching is an opportunity to learn from experiences. Similarly, Strakova (2009) points out that reflection in teaching allows teachers to grow professionally by using themselves as the major source of learning. Teachers should have the knowledge of what they have learnt themselves from teaching practices (Al-Issa & Al-Bulushi, 2010). Reflection enables the discovery of strengths and the potential space for future improvement (Strakova, 2009). Since learning and teaching are innately tied and related, reflection is necessary for effective teaching, thus teachers should be taught how to reflect on their practices. According to Kolb and Kolb (2009), experiential learning as a widely adopted learning approach today also involves reflective method. It is the process of

reconstructing knowledge, and the process can be defined as an idealized learning cycle in which learners experience, reflect, think and act in response to what and how they learn. Real experiences are necessary for observation and reflection and these reflections are turned into abstract concepts from which implications are extracted.

As suggested by Strakova (2009), the first opportunities to develop reflective skills are presented during pre-service teacher education programs and these programs provide student teachers with an experience on which they can elaborate on later. However, student teachers should be guided on what to reflect on and how to reflect (Boud & Walker, 1998). Due to contextual differences and varying needs, what student teachers need should be identified first to help them grow more professionally. Perceptions are substantial since they enable an understanding of actions (Richards, 1996). Solomon and Tresman (2006) also base teaching on knowledge, perceptions and values. They believe that professional development should focus on the judgment of knowledge, perceptions and values. Hence, perceptions of student teachers with regards to their needs are necessary to be uncovered.

In line with the emphasis on reflective practices, the aim of English language teacher education programs in Turkey is not only equipping student teachers with the knowledge of language and language teaching pedagogies, but also encouraging them to adopt practices that require reflection on teaching and learning to a certain extent. To illustrate this, student teachers are guided towards reflective teaching primarily via ELT Methodology courses I and II and other teacher development courses. As indicated in the course specification by the HEC (YÖK, 2007), the aim of the Methodology course I is to familiarize student teachers with designing and conducting needs analysis on language learners' needs (e.g. situational, objective, subjective and language needs), writing objectives that reflect those needs and designing course syllabuses at the macro and micro level. Furthermore, the course specification requires student teachers to be provided an overview of different lesson stages (e.g. Presentation, Practice and Production), lesson planning and course design; various syllabus types and criteria for the selection of appropriate syllabus type according to learner needs, learner age and aims of the course; standards-based teaching, proficiency descriptors, English language proficiency standards and guidelines, Common European Framework for Reference Languages (CEFR) and the European Language Portfolio (ELP); and identity. Similarly, Methodology Course II focuses on

classroom-based research, teacher-directed research and action research, diagnosing learners' language related needs and remedial teaching activities; principles of learner monitoring and the role of learner assessment in lesson planning; national and international professional organizations (e.g. TESOL and INGED) and practical journals (e.g. English Teaching Forum, ELTJ, TESLJ and TESL Reporter) (YÖK, 2007).

However, there is a gap in the literature in relation to student teachers' beliefs and expectations about their "self" and "roles" in teaching (Seymen, 2012). Moreover, due to the lack of the research on student teachers' reflections about their competences and their roles, the degree to which student teachers are ready to teach in real environments might be questionable. Student teachers need to mirror their own competences in order to evaluate the efficacy of their scaffolding. Nonetheless, scholars have not paid sufficient attention to this notion (Çakır & Balçıkanlı, 2012). It is important to use the self to discover weaknesses, to enhance teaching skills and develop as a professional. Ready-made lesson recipes offered in the past are now constrained by the diversity of learning environments, thereby student teachers need to recognize what is going on around them to work out problems, and thus they should reflect on their classroom practices (Strakova, 2009).

1.1. Statement of the Problem

As it can be deduced from course specification the English language teacher education curriculum launched by the HEC, the programs strives to raise reflective and autonomous teachers who will facilitate the autonomy of their own learners. Nevertheless, the content of Methodology I and Methodology II courses and other professional development based courses in the program themselves and teaching practice courses in the fourth grade are not enough to spur reflective skills within future language teachers. The programs are also insufficient to focus on the weaknesses of student teachers to ensure further development. The problem is almost the same in other countries as well. For instance, while reflecting the case in Slovakia, Strakova (2009) claims that during their teacher training student teachers are offered various opportunities such as micro-teachings and completing self-evaluation grids to reflect on their teaching practices. However, these reflections are far from being comprehensive and prescriptive (Strakova, 2009). The previous research carried out to

assess student teachers' beliefs indicates similar results (Seymen, 2012). Moreover, it can be stated that according to the previous research teacher education programs play an important role in shaping the student teachers' practices. Student teachers have beliefs and expectations from their teacher education programs. The current studies conducted on student teachers' beliefs and student teachers' reflections support the need to undermine what student teachers think and how they view themselves.

However, the problem is that there are not sufficient reflective practices to facilitate teacher development throughout coursework. Moreover on the basis of current research it can be put forth that, reflective procedures during teaching practice experience in language teacher education are not adequate. The reflective practices during the teaching practice experience are limited to micro-teachings, reflections written sometimes by referring to the checklists provided by teacher trainers. However, these efforts are constrained to the individual teacher trainers' own endeavors. There is not a unity across universities in terms of reflective tools to monitor to what degree the objectives of coursework or teaching practice are attained. There is not a common medium to guide student teachers to plan their lessons, to evaluate the effectiveness of the materials they design even during coursework. There is a lack of a common instrument to identify the weakness of student teachers. Therefore, there is an urgent need to focus on assessing student teachers' attainments, competences and the degree of readiness to teach in real contexts via reflective practices in order to improve not only the quality of teacher education but also language teaching in line.

Seymen (2012) along with other researchers conducted a study to explore student teachers' beliefs about the self and their roles as teachers in their teaching practice experience; however, the gap in Seymen's (2012) study and similar studies is not applying an already developed global tool to discover the level of student teachers' competences. Perceptions and beliefs of student teachers should be identified at every stage of teacher education to avoid misinterpretations and they should be acted on immediately through dialogue with teacher trainers. As Strakova (2009) argues, student teachers need a more effective tool to be guided towards being more reflective.

The European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL) is a perfect match that might serve as a medium for student teachers to monitor what they have attained in an on-going manner, reflect on their practices, and thus take the responsibility of their teacher education and improve their professional development.

1.2. Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

On account of aforementioned reasons, the present study intends to investigate how competent the student teachers' participating in the study view themselves in terms of the components of Methodology course I and II, and other teacher development courses. Towards that end, this study also aims to encourage student teachers to reflect on themselves via the EPOSTL. Besides, the present study aims to reveal the reasons of any progress or regression detected in terms of teaching competences in the EPOSTL. The study also seeks to examine the student teachers' strong and weak competences with respect to teaching competences covered in Methodology I and II and other teacher development courses. Considering all of the purposes mentioned above following research questions are posed and sought to be answered:

1. What are the perceptions of the student teachers in the ELT department at Akdeniz University with regards to the EPOSTL competences in the pre-test and post-test? Is there a change in terms of competence development with regards to the EPOSTL between the pre and post test results?
2. What are the possible reasons of the progress or regression in terms of the EPOSTL competences in the post-test?
3. What are the self-reported strong EPOSTL competences in terms of teaching skills?
4. What are the self-reported weak EPOSTL competences in terms of teaching skills?
5. What are the benefits of integrating the EPOSTL into language teacher development courses?

1.3. Significance of the Study

As signposted by Grenfell et al. (2003), the need to highlight reflective practices along with critical thinking in language teacher education is growing in many countries. The authors denote, although the need to improve language teacher education is recognized by interested parties such as scholars, teachers and trainers of pre-service teachers, not much has been achieved in this sense. However, they signify that an analysis of initial teacher education might be useful. Moreover, assembling practices and ideas across different countries would be promising to expand the success of language teacher

education. With this objective in mind, upon the identification of the strengths and the weaknesses of the contemporary pre-service teacher education programs, Grenfell et al. (2003) propose practices across countries may be juxtaposed in a systematic way to reveal tendencies, gain an understanding of specified problems and put forward suggestions which in turn will result in an improvement on the national basis. Grenfell et al. (2003) mention the necessity of launching a common guideline for language teacher education. According to the writers, a communal framework for language training community will clarify the teaching qualifications and allow a place for co-operation and mobility. The formation of a conjoint groundwork will not only bring the systems of different countries together to establish standards, but also different institutions within a country.

Grenfell et al. (2003), report a lack of such framework in their Tomorrow's Teacher Project. Nevertheless, this gap has been currently filled by the EPOSTL. The EPOSTL is a reflective tool not only for student teachers to track their progress and specify their strengths and weaknesses, but also a practical instrument for institutions such as language teaching departments to evaluate their programs in terms of their efficacy. The EPOSTL thus, ensures a qualified training for language teachers and besides offers an opportunity for similar institutions to standardize the education provided for student teachers since it functions as a guideline to compare practices. It addresses all the requirements and dimensions mentioned by Grenfell et al. (2003) above.

When all these assets are taken into consideration, the significance of the present study is palpable. In addition to all the benefits accounted above that will come along with the integration of the EPOSTL, the present study will set an example to inquiry the effectiveness of the pre-service teacher education in Turkey with regards to the EPOSTL. It is the first study to be conducted in Turkish language teacher education context with the purpose of identification of student teachers' perceptions on their teaching competences along with their strengths and weaknesses with reference to the EPOSTL. The previous research on the EPOSTL in Turkish language teaching context unfolds student teachers' attitudes on the integration of the EPOSTL itself and glossed over its real function which is to identify student teachers efficacy. Yet, the present study makes it possible to scrutinize teacher education programs through an analysis of student teachers' strengths and weaknesses in terms of their teaching competences.

Considering the results of the study, teacher education programs in Turkey might be reshaped. Secondly, the present study is notable on account of functioning as a guide to explore student teachers' perceptions on their competences, strengths and weaknesses with a standardized framework which is launched and accepted by the European Union language division with which Turkish educational system is quite related through other frameworks such as the CEFR and the ELP. The language teaching policies in Turkey have already been grounded on the CEFR and the ELP and thus European language policies. As it is stated by Mirici (n.d.), Turkey has been a part of Socrates Project which is affiliated with common European educational applications since 2000. According to him, Turkey's participation in Socrates Project verifies the adoption of European language teaching policies. Mirici (n.d.) states that a clear example of this is the Ministry of National Education's (MONE) attempt to develop two ELPs, one for 15-18 age group and another for 10-14 age group. The present study affiliates Turkish language teaching policies with European ones from a new perspective, language teacher education. The present study will be a step to standardize language teacher education and reach the standards of Europe.

1.4. Scope of the Study

In order to understand the reasons behind this study, the context in which the study is conducted is to be described briefly. The present study is conducted within the pre-service language teacher education program at Akdeniz University, English Language Teaching (ELT) department. It specifically spans the third and fourth grade of the ELT program.

Before introducing the program applied at Akdeniz University ELT department, it will be expedient to look through the common framework offered by the HEC. Although a common program is launched by the HEC and the courses are specified to train student language teachers, the content of the courses as well as the applications might vary. Teacher education curricula was reconstructed in 2006-2007 with the purpose of meeting the shifting social, educational, political, national and international requests (YÖK, 2007). Turkey has been one of the participants of European Higher Education Area since 2003 which necessitated educational faculties to be equipped with common standards (YÖK, 2007).

In addition to educational faculties' association with European Higher Education Area, Turkish National Language Teaching Curriculum is based on European standards, the Common European Framework. This bearing with European educational policies is to be scoped here to better grasp the rationale of the present study. In the new program introduced by the HEC (YÖK, 2007), student teachers are required to participate in field knowledge courses, pedagogic competence courses and general knowledge courses. The first two years of language teacher education program mainly focuses on student teachers' own language development. Student teachers are required to take courses like Contextual Grammar, Advanced Reading and Writing, Listening and Pronunciation, Oral Communication Skills, Lexical Competence, English Literature, Linguistics and so on. As it can be seen the courses taken in the first and second grades intend to raise student teachers' language awareness. The only courses associated with language teaching pedagogy are Approaches to ELT and Language Acquisition which are also introductory courses. However, starting with the third grade, student teachers deal with more pedagogical courses such as Methodology, Teaching Language Skills, Literature and Language Teaching, Language Teaching Materials Adaptation and Development, School Experience and so on. It is evident from the course specification that student teachers begin to associate themselves more with teaching the language. For this reason, the present study focuses on third grade student teachers.

In the ELT department at Akdeniz University the third grade student teachers cover all the courses specified by the HEC in language teacher education program. Within the scope of their teacher development courses, they conduct presentations. Moreover, they carry out micro teachings in their Skills Teaching and similar courses. In the first term of the fourth grade, in addition to their coursework within their School Experience course, they visit real classrooms and observe English classes. They also start doing micro teachings.

CHAPTER II.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. Introduction

The literature review of this study will be carried out in the light of two main themes. First of all, a theoretical background of reflective teaching and reflection in teacher and language teacher education will be presented since the EPOSTL is believed to evaluate language teacher education from a reflective perspective. In order to establish a connection between language teacher education and language learning, the Common European Framework for Reference Languages (CEFR) might be referred. With respect to reflection and reflective teaching theoretical books and articles might be cited.

Secondly, the recent studies associated with the present study will be examined thoroughly in this section. The recent studies to be presented will be examined as follows: the recent studies carried out on the EPOSTL, recent studies related to the EPOSTL and recent studies associated with the theories the EPOSTL addresses. Since there is a lack of research on the EPOSTL, including studies related with the EPOSTL and its theories will reasonable to include here.

2.1. Theoretical Background

As mentioned above, professional development has started to attract much attention in recent years. Researchers in other fields of education have been also appealed by this new trend, and impacts are also visible in the language teaching field. The advent and arising popularity of professional development, oriented researchers to implement it within their research context.

Along with other practices, reflection has been counted to be one of the channels leading to development and quality because as Richards and Farrell (2005) indicate, becoming a teacher is a matter of a developmental process, and this process is bottom-up, and longer term goals are sought in this process to ensure the development of teachers, understanding of teaching and themselves as teachers. Examining various scopes of teaching practice is necessary which naturally results in reflection. Hence,

contemporarily around the world reflective teaching has become the leading paradigm in language teacher education research as well as the programs. For instance, according to Webb (2000) reflection has become the recent "grand idee". Thus, the place of reflection in teacher education recently is undeniable. The current search for growth required teacher candidates to gain reflective skills within their courses in order to become a teacher having "internalized and problematized the issues under study by gauging themselves" (Arıkan, 2006, p. 1). Zeichner and Liston (1987) indicate that the extent of learning escalates and deepens when teachers are stimulated in order to judge the content of learning, the process of learning, and their own exercises and shape their educational environments. According to Hatton and Smith (1995), many teacher training programs defined reflection as their objective; however, its definition along with its implementation are still somewhat vague. This increasing popularity as a recent developmental activity necessitates reflection to be defined here from different perspectives before a rationale for the importance of its integration to teacher education programs is presented.

According to the Kwo (1996), one is involved in continuous discussions with the self, particularly about the conflicting aspects of the self in the process of becoming a teacher. Thus, teacher development comprises reflective analysis of one's own teaching, revisiting beliefs, values and principles (Richards & Farrell, 2005). According to Zeichner and Liston (1987), reflective action involves dynamic, tenacious and cautious consideration of any belief or knowledge in the light of its grounds and consequences unlike the routine action directed by conventions and outside authorities. This definition view reflection as a "self-directed" activity concerning both the groundwork for knowledge and results. Moreover, reflection as a developmental activity calls for the inquiry of the aims and tenets that direct teachers' work, examination of their approaches, perceptions, expectations and teaching practices (Zeichner & Liston, 1996). Similarly, Dewey (1933) asserts that reflection is an activity that derives from the self. The author acknowledges reflection as a system of problem solving which entails an active and cautious link of events, knowledge or beliefs. Hatton and Smith (1995) similarly contend that reflection is naturally about reconsidering actions. Noffke and Brennan (1988) have a similar stance, and they argue that reflection is the vigilant contemplation of practices in consideration of knowledge, beliefs and attitudes and it requires tolerance and accountability.

According to Schön (1983) reflection is the competence to think consciously about what is occurring and adjust oneself rapidly. As Zeichner and Liston (1996) suggests, reflection is especially significant for teacher education since it prepares student teachers for real teaching contexts by enabling them to mirror their practice. According to them reflection allows them start taking the role of being a teacher.

In this reflective direction from the 1990s onwards, language teacher education has been underpinned (Peacock, 2009). According to Kwo (1996), the research on language teacher education has started to highlight the developmental stages in their training. The need for a systematic, regular evaluation in teacher education programs to ensure development has been underlined. This systematic evaluation of training programs are expected to entail reflection by student teachers since student teachers are at the heart of programs and now it is a prerequisite for these programs to unfold their perceptions. Wallace (1996) posits that training programs should not only integrate reflection to student teachers' experiences and values. Reflection should be supported for student teachers to gain insights into their competences which discloses the success of programs.

However, the state of most of the foreign language teacher education programs on the contrary seem to lack the reflective component so far. For instance, in the Taiwan context Liou (2001) stresses that student teachers are viewed as passive receivers. The emphasis is put on what to do but not on why an action is done. Moreover it is important to evaluate the degree student teachers apply the things that they are taught to do. Nonetheless, reflection and self-evaluation as a teacher is needed to be endorsed (Wallace, 1996). In addition, these practices should be characterized as long-term goals of programs.

It is also crucial to identify the benefits of reflection and discuss the reasons why it should be incorporated to teacher education in order to provide a good reason to implement it within teacher education programs. Hall (1985, as cited in Hatton & Smith, 1995) claims that a critical component of preliminary teacher education is self-reflection. Valli (1992, as cited in Hatton & Smith, 1995) in the same light explains that reflection stimulates a dialogue within student teachers themselves. It allows them to discover, challenge, and describe their skills. Jay and Johnson (2002) indicate that reflection has attained its place in educational research. Nonetheless, there is not a consensus on how to teach it since researchers have taken different perspectives on it.

According to the authors, while some researchers studied the content of reflection, others have taken a different stance and focus on the process of reflection. However, the authors put forward that reflection should not be oversimplified since its pedagogy surpasses the above issues. According to the authors, reflection is not only an individual process but also a collaborative one including familiarity and a degree of ambiguity. However, in its complexity, there lies its real value. The authors put forward that one gains extra perspectives, have an opportunity to evaluate one's own perceptions, experiences and values. As indicated by Zeichner and Liston (2011) in their work without questioning one's own perspectives and values, reflective teaching might not occur. According to them, reflective teaching is a re-examination and acknowledgement of beliefs, attitudes, experiences, values and knowledge in order to alter conventional practices. Thus, within a continuously evolving and shifting language teaching field, teachers and pre-service teachers should be equipped with the skill of reflecting.

In his description of the current language teacher training model Liou (2001) states that teacher trainers' main responsibility is to enable student teachers to reach an adequate level of language proficiency and to equip them with pedagogical knowledge so that student teachers can proceed to their own teaching context. On the other hand, student teachers are immediately expected to transfer what they have attained into practice. However as Freeman (1996) asserts, this view of teacher training tends to "deskill" student teachers. This model is also too prescriptive and it lacks the hallmark to enable student teachers to evaluate themselves and see how much they gained from training. Without the reflective component, it might be demanding to find out whether student teachers have acquired the desired knowledge or how much they have acquired. This model might lead to a lack of self-confidence to teach since student teachers are unaware to what degree they can transmit pedagogical knowledge to practice. Student teachers' knowledge of teaching theories can be assessed via certain tests. On the other hand, their confidence in teaching skills can only be revealed through reflective methods. As Liou (2001) indicates, the problems associated with practices or proficiency of student teachers can be neglected as long as student teachers are aware of these problems. Once the awareness is guaranteed, it can bear fruitful results since problems might lead to developmental activities. Thus, it is first required to help student teachers to uncover the problems related to their practices. Similarly,

Liou (2001) maintains that the gap between student teachers' perceived knowledge and their actual practice might merit attention for teacher trainers since the trainers might feel the urge to take some precautions to narrow this gap. Moreover, in order to discover this gap student teachers should be presented with opportunities to reflect. As Liou (2001) posits, once student teachers are aware of the gap and their weaknesses, the problem might be soluble.

Zeichner and Liston (1987) likewise propose that the purpose of teacher education in their context is to equip student teachers with pedagogic knowledge and techniques through an apprenticeship model. The context of the foreign language teacher education in Turkey is similar to theirs in this sense. Programs educating language teachers mainly focus on the acquisition of content knowledge and pedagogic skills. However, they leave a relatively small space for the practice of knowledge and those skills. Yet, as suggested by Zeichner and Liston (1987), this view which is also present in Turkish language teacher education context deviates student teachers from the opportunities of professional growth governed by the self since it doesn't give a place to practices that will stimulate student teachers to reflect or assess their development within its framework. However, a non-conventional model integrating reflective practices like the one Zeichner and Liston (1987) offer promotes autonomy of student teachers, increases participation and thus paves the way to their professional development and increases the quality which is the ultimate goal. Arıkan (2006) asserts that the views of reflective practitioners may be connected with learning, development, thought and action. The bridging of learning, perceptions, reflection and action in turn may result in expanded learning for student teachers and their development.

Hatton and Smith (1995) propose that reflection encourages student teachers to undertake the responsibility of their own learning and become more autonomous since it enables teachers' maintaining the charge of their own learning as an ongoing activity. From a constructivist standpoint Yaylı (2009), defines learning as an activity that is social and the author proposes that learning is created by learners themselves through viewing their experiences and beliefs. Hence, it can be inferred that any kind of learning, learner or teacher, is constructed through reflection. By means of reflection teachers are more likely to get a better grasp of teaching, and increase their familiarity of how to develop. The author appends that reflection should be implemented in

teacher training programs since as stated by Dewey (1933), reflection helps student teachers to develop professionally, shape and monitor experiences.

Liou (2001) indicates three important functions of reflection as; boosting student teachers' awareness of teaching, facilitating more profound comprehension of teaching variables and contexts, and prompting constructive changes in their practice. The author articulates that reflection is one of the most vital features to nurture professional development. Likewise, Liou (2001) and Kullman (1998) also emphasize the consciousness raising function of reflection and note that reflection enables student teachers to discover the appropriate pedagogic practices which in turn will result in an on-going development through their careers. Furthermore Hoe and Richards (1993) advocate that reflection is one of the most substantial practices to promote professional development. According to Abbott and Lyter (1998), self-assessment and self-directed learning, which are parts of reflective practices, should be the aims of teaching programs and continue all through professional life since as Ellis (2001) states assessment activities encourage student teachers to understand the core principles of teaching and pledge deeper learning rather than surface learning. Thus, teacher trainers should incorporate self-assessment procedures to teacher education programs. According to the author, if promoting a capacity for reflective practice is taken into consideration, student teachers and trainers will be prompted to evaluate teaching in a wider context and understand the primary principles of teaching. Ellis (2001) puts forward that self-assessment and peer assessment which are kinds of reflective practices to allow student teachers actively take role in their learning process and thus stimulate change. Moreover, student teachers are empowered to perform as independent learners, exercise evaluation and transmit what they have learned which contribute to the development of professional skills.

Researching the actions and practices of student teachers might reveal what they need to work on to become effective teachers. As Kwo (1996) points out, training programs might be influential if they take students teachers' viewpoints and needs into consideration. Through self-reflection within teacher education programs, more reflective training might be developed and student teachers' needs might be responded. Moreover, as Calderhead (1987) recommends establishing reflectivity within teacher education contexts, organizations and support systems are obligatory. According to Wallace (1996), the changes in language teaching today has been unusually hasty, and

there has been an increase in the liability and consciousness of the role of language teacher education in public and financial growth which all called for substantial professional demands from teachers. The demand requires a "pro-active" perspective that will be able to create its own professional dynamic. On the other hand, a "reactive" perspective will fail to meet the requirement of the shift. In this direction Schön (1983) maintains that self-reflection is the most expeditious approach to develop professional development and meet the demands aforementioned. Moreover, the author claims that teacher trainees might be coached to develop a habit of self-reflection. What teachers and student teachers will gain from the experience is rather apparent. Self-reflection will set the ground for them to merge their theoretical knowledge with practice rather than disassociating the two. Richards and Farrell (2005) respectively propose that it is the experts who determine the content of the training of language teachers, and methodology books present prescriptions through standard formats. However, too much stick-to-it-iveness to these formats has the danger of disregarding the individual needs of student teachers. The only way to adapt these standards and formats for individual and contextual needs is, to empower student teachers through self-assessment and self-reflection. Richards and Farrell (2005) view reflection as a means to better understand one's practices through critical examination of experiences.

In teacher education, reflection shows up as reflective teaching which can be carried out by means of self-assessment, case studies, observation, portfolios etc. to inform the participants about teacher-self. They further suggest that recently teacher education has witnessed a shift from outsider to insider approach. According to the authors, formerly teachers were expected to apply general theories and expert knowledge without questioning; whereas, nowadays they are awaited to reconnoitre their context, build their own knowledge and approaches in their context. In this approach directed by the self, teachers are encouraged to accept the responsibility of their own learning and set their objectives for self-development. This movement towards self-directed approach is a result of realization of the value of experiential and action-based learning. Richards and Farrell (2005) suggest the following components as a part of self-directed learning:

a) Inquiry: Asking questions about one's own teaching practices and seeking the information needed to answer these questions

b) Self-appraisal: Assessing one's teaching and development on the basis of evidence from oneself and others and the ability to critically reflect and a desire to analyse oneself to determine one's strengths and weaknesses

c) Experience: Personal experience becomes the basis and stimulus for learning.

d) Personal construction: Meaning is personally constructed by the learner.

e) Contextualized learning: Learning takes place in a particular context and social setting and is socially constructed. (p.14)

f) Planning and managing. Learning is dependent on the ability to set short-and long-term goals and to select strategies for their achievement. (p.14)

Unlike some of the researchers mentioned above advocating a behavioral change on the basis of reflections, Zeichner and Liston (1987) take a quite different stance like Bean and Stevens (2002) and argue that a behavioral change might not always occur. Their stance is that reflection raises the awareness of student teachers and might lead to a perception change. They argue that a perception change will have an impact on the level of the reflectiveness. Consequently both teachers or student teachers themselves and learners will benefit from expanded reflection. This standpoint is quiet applicable to the situation in Turkey.

The teaching experience for student teachers in Turkey is delayed till the fourth grade, and student teachers are limited to carry out this experience within two semesters as aforementioned above. Even the HEC prescribes student teachers to be allowed to observe classes in the first semester and start their student teaching just in the second semester (YÖK, 2007). However, apart from the teaching experience component pre-service teacher education in Turkey entails other components such as content and pedagogy courses. The limitation of exposing student teachers to a lengthened teaching experience necessitates student teachers to be involved in reflective practices actively through content and pedagogy courses. The reason can be attributed to the fact that if student teachers are encouraged to be engaged with reflective procedures before teaching experience, it might lead to even more reflection and critical thinking for their upcoming experiences (Yaylı, 2009).

As indicated by Zeichner and Liston (1987), teaching experience might not change student teachers' perceptions. On the contrary, they implement the views they have

gained earlier before the experience. Throughout the experience their views do not develop. Hence, as they suggest reflective procedures be set even before the teaching experience and students teachers should be given opportunities to be cognizant of their perceptions to ensure change if necessary. Similarly, Bean and Stevens (2002) advocate that although being reflective is an essential part of teaching what is more important is the form of refection and its role on teachers' beliefs and practices. Therefore, there is still a need to explore how teacher education programs can get the best out of reflective practices.

Though reflection is usually associated with teaching experience, Bean and Stevens' (2002) study points out that student teachers fail to refer to their teaching experience in their reflections. On the other hand, they mainly depend on their theoretical and pedagogical training. The study that is carried out with in-service and pre-service teachers entailing reflection after teaching experience puts forth that student teachers have a tendency to rely on their course texts and their personal thoughts. The study reveals the fact that there is a lack of referring to their practice. The writers state student teachers are not capable enough to consider things at application level. Thus, student teachers need be trained to reflect as early as possible, even before teaching experience. Their reflection should not only refer to what they have studied, but what they can do upon their theoretical training. Similarly, Liou (2001) believes that reflective practices aid pre-service teachers and in-service teachers to be better equipped for their working contexts. To develop reflectivity in their teaching, it is also a must to carry out reflective training. Liou (2001) expands on the issue and states the incorporation of professional development activities and researching how and to what degree student teachers endure in real teaching contexts are necessary to increase the quality of training programs. It is finally suggested that professional development activities comprising reflective training be facilitated right from the beginning of training programs and not be suspended till student teachers attain a certain level of English or teaching skills as Liou's (2001) study shows short-term reflection might not present yielding results or bring change to training programs.

Although reflection has been emphasized to be an effective teacher by many of the researchers around the world, there is still a need to conduct more research to discover more effective forms of reflection, the roles it plays in teachers' beliefs and the ways teacher trainers' can make use of the process (Bean & Stevens, 2002). Hatton and

Smith (1995) mentions the variety of methods to facilitate reflection in teacher education programs. However, some reflective methods such as action research or teacher logs might not be systematic or standard. The authors' remarks seem to be corresponding with this idea when they state criteria for action research is incomplete and negative, and neither the implementation nor reporting is structured. Thus, it is clear that a more systematic, structured method is necessary to foster reflection. Firstly, it is required to raise student teachers' awareness to what they think about themselves as teachers to promote more effective teacher education programs since they are at the center of programs. Any change that will be made to programs cannot go without first underlying their perceptions. As a guided tool portfolios including self-assessment checklists might be recommend to establish reflection as a starting point within language teacher education programs.

In their work Grenfell et al. (2003), discuss the recent developments in European language teacher education and suggest portfolios as a very practical tool for initial teacher education. According to the authors, the training of pre-service teachers are evaluated in numerous ways and portfolios are one of them to spot the degree of their attainment. The authors indicate that portfolios set a bridge between theory and practice. It can be assumed that portfolios might reveal to what degree pre-service teachers have gained the goals of programs, and how much prepared they are for teaching. The authors annotate that portfolios might be exploited for tracking student teachers' development across various skills. The authors propose that theoretical orientations and underpinnings along with core elements of portfolios remain the same despite contextual variations self-evaluation is one of those core components which facilitates reflection. They state that self-evaluation "strongly features" in portfolios. The self-evaluative aspect of portfolios prompt student teachers to ruminate over their strengths and weaknesses and recognize the need areas. With the exploitation of self-assessment component, student teachers become critically aware of their teaching competence, and thus the process itself becomes a good indication of ongoing development.

To improve the standards and quality of teaching and establish professionalism, self-evaluation and reflection on teaching are vital and professional development has been constantly emphasized in the literature (Richards & Farrell, 2008). The EPOSTL is

such a portfolio designed specifically for student teachers. Moreover, it ensures development through self-reflection and self-assessment.

2.2. The EPOSTL: A Reflection Tool

After investigating the importance of reflection in teacher education, it is worth discussing the EPOSTL as a reflection tool here. Newby et al. (2011) defines the EPOSTL as a didactic portfolio, by which student teachers of languages reflect on themselves throughout their teacher education. The EPOSTL helps student teachers get ready for their careers. The authors suggest that the EPOSTL is a tool intended to promote self-reflection and self-assessment on student teachers' knowledge, competence and perception development in an organized and inclusive manner. In other words, the EPOSTL inspires student teachers to reflect on their didactic knowledge and skills which are pre-requisite to teach languages, assists them to assess the didactic teaching competences they acquired, and enables them to track their professional development and record their experiences of teaching during the course of teacher education (Newby et al, 2007).

It is a document the basis of which can be grounded on the European pursuit of further development. Newby et al. (2007) suggest the EPOSTL draws insights from the CEFR, the ELP and the European Profile for Language Teacher Education which are similarly the products of the Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe. The EPOSTL was developed for the European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe by a team of teacher educators (Newby et al., 2007). Newby et al. (2007) denote that the EPOSTL was originally developed with the purpose of harmonizing language teacher education throughout Europe. Thus, it can be assumed that the EPOSTL is a document targeted for students whose majors are language teaching. On the other hand, Newby (2011) proposes three different educational contexts in which the EPOSTL can be implemented: lectures, seminars or tutorials during initial teacher education programs, teaching practice or practicum and in-service teacher training programs. Yet, the author emphasizes in-service context is not the central target. It can be thus inferred that although the EPOSTL is initially developed for student teachers going through their pre-service teacher education, it can be adopted for other contexts.

Although the overall aim of the EPOSTL is clear from its definition, it will be useful to present the aims proposed by the team of developers here. Accordingly the EPOSTL is developed:

1. to encourage student teachers to reflect on the competences a teacher strives to attain and on the underlying knowledge which feeds these competence;
2. to help prepare student teachers for their future profession in a variety of teaching contexts;
3. to promote discussion between student teachers and their peers and between student teachers and their teacher educators or mentors;
4. to facilitate self-assessment of student teachers' developing competence;
5. to provide an instrument which helps chart progress (Newby et. al., 2007, p. 5)

When these aims are considered it can be inferred that the EPOSTL is a document assisting the professional development of student teachers through assessment, reflection and discussion. Newby at al. (2007) view the EPOSTL as the possessions of student teachers to endorse professional development through reflection and dialogue. Furthermore, the EPOSTL contributes to the creation and development of teacher education programs since as stated Newby (2011), one of the aims of the EPOSTL is to explicate and transpire the didactic competences which should be attained by student teachers. According to Newby et al. (2007), it should be appreciated as a means of enhancing reflective and autonomous learning. The EPOSTL is made of the following seven sections that will be presented briefly from this point on as in the following order:

1. Introduction
2. Personal statement
3. Self-assessment
4. Dossier
5. Glossary
6. Index
7. Users' guide

As the name suggests, the Introduction is an initiatory section informing student teachers about the objectives, content and usage of the EPOSTL (Newby et al., 2007). Within the Personal Statement section there are various tasks aspiring to elicit student teachers' universal viewpoints on general teaching issues at the initial stages of their education (Newby et al., 2007). Newby (2011) states that student teachers are invited to recall their learning experiences and reflect on their teaching expectations since

teachers are inclined to be affected by their early experiences as student teachers. According to the author the purpose is to help student teachers gain a critical sense of teaching and learning.

The self-assessment section is the core of the EPOSTL. Moreover, Newby (2011) asserts it is the most taxing part to use. As indicated by Newby et al. (2007), the EPOSTL comprises 195 descriptors of competences, representing the heart of the EPOSTL, associated with teaching languages. Newby (2011) points out the twofold function of the EPOSTL. The first one is the reflection function requiring student teachers to go in a dialogue with themselves, their peers and mentors to contemplate what being competent necessitates on the basis of the descriptors. The second one is the self-assessment function which urges student teachers to judge themselves in terms of teaching competences in a qualitative manner. The self-assessment section is divided into seven categories shoe below. They embody the domains comprising competences that student teachers are required to consider and attain with regards to teaching.
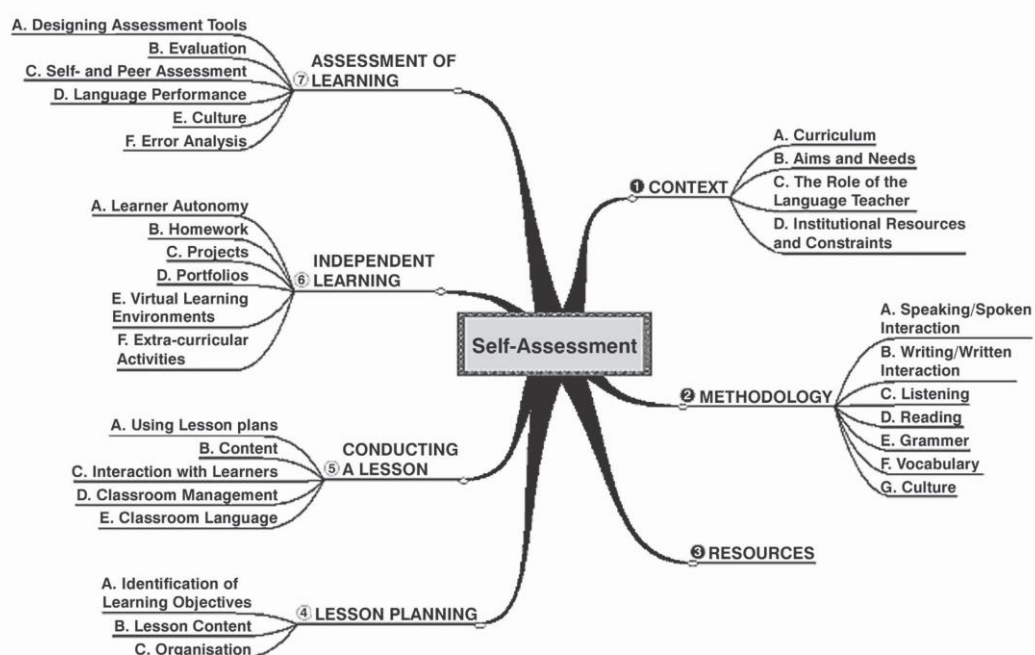
Figure 2.1. Sections and sub-sections of the EPOSTL (Newby et al., 2007, p. 6).

As it is clear from the diagram, each main domain is also divided into sub-categories. Prior to presenting the can-do descriptors of the competences in each central domain, an introductory paragraph is provided to accentuate the general aspects connected with the domain briefly and these aspects are dispensed in detail through the descriptors

(Newby et al., 2007). The authors express that the descriptors are arranged in an order and similar descriptors are organized after one another. However, the order presented in the EPOSTL in terms of domains or descriptors does not represent the importance of the domain or the descriptor. Moreover, it is suggested that the purpose of grouping is to ensure lucidity. Although descriptors and domains are separate some intersections might be encountered since in teaching and learning, all the domains and competences are incorporated (Newby et al., 2007). The authors note that student teachers are not expected to accomplish all the competences recognized at once. Since development is ongoing and the EPOSTL has a developmental dimension. Hence, student teachers are awaited to acquire the competences in a developmental manner representing the nature of the EPOSTL. This developmental nature is also reflected in the self-assessment scales. Student teachers are provided with a bar shown in the diagram below to track their development as teachers. The issues of substituting the bar in the present study will be discussed later under the EPOSTL survey part.

1.   I can create a supportive atmosphere that invites learners to take part in speaking activities.

6.3.06	24.10.06	18.1.07	

Figure 2.2. Self-assessment scale (Newby et al., 2007, p. 6)

According to Newby et al. (2007), the descriptors included in the EPOSTL do not go beyond specifying the fundamental competences of teaching, and do not seek to discuss the key issues underlying them. Discussion is on the other hand left to student teachers and their mentors. The main objective is to promote the professional awareness development by acting as a stimulus.

The main utility of the Dossier section is to give student teachers an opportunity to substantiate what they have asserted in the self-assessment section accurately (Newby et al., 2007). Newby (2011) maintains that this section is the proof of the competences student teachers have attained, thus it bears a resemblance to the ELP. According to the Newby et al. (2007), the Dossier not only verifies the reflection but also sets the bridge between the skills reflected on and the underlying knowledge to attain those skills. However, Newby (2011) claims that as in the ELP it is not a dual-purpose section. In the case of the ELP, dossier has an intrinsic educational motivation and also

extrinsic showcase role. In the EPOSTL, it has a merely pedagogic motivation. Newby et al. (2007) specifies the content of the Dossier as follows:

A. Evidence from lessons the students has given

B. Evidence in the form of lesson observations and evaluations

C. Evidence such as detailed reports, comments, checklists etc. Evidence from an analysis of what student have done as a teacher

D. Evidence in the form of case studies and action research

E. Evidence from reflection (p. 87-88)

The Glossary section provides the definition of the terms used throughout the EPOSTL in order to avoid ambiguity a student teacher may encounter while making use of it.

An Index is also provided to assist any users to locate the terms mentioned in the EPOSTL (Newby et al., 2007).

Lastly, the Users' Guide section is accompanied by the EPOSTL in which users explore aims, rationale, uses and sections deeply.

In short, the EPOSTL assists student teachers to assess their teaching competences during their teacher education. It raises an awareness of student teachers` strengths and weaknesses. Moreover, it supports them to take actions to overcome their teaching weaknesses and become more reflective and autonomous at the end of their teacher education. As Newby (2011) puts forward, the EPOSTL not only addresses student teachers; nonetheless, it also serves as a mutual language for everybody committed to language teacher education. Therefore, it sets a bond between interested parties for mutual collaboration. Moreover, as it was suggested by Strakova (2009), the objectives of the EPOSTL are pertinent to the development of reflective skills and autonomy in teacher training programs. It is argued that in the past it was possible to offer recipes to student teachers though teaching contexts differ greatly. Yet, student teachers need to observe their contexts and reflect on their practices in order to shape them. Thus, they should be encouraged to discover what the most appropriate practice for their context is. Finally, it expressed that the EPOSTL is a unique tool for student teachers and it enables them to become aware of the details of what teaching and learning is about.

2.4. Recent Studies

There is a scarcity of research particularly on the EPOSTL and the introduction and incorporation of it to teacher education programs. Most of the available studies (Burkert, & Schwienhorst, 2008; Newby, 2012) do not go beyond describing the EPOSTL in depth and they discuss its implications. They are descriptive in nature and just delve into its tenets. Very few of researchers (Mehlmauer-Larcher, 2009; Strakova, 2009) have attempted to explore the results of the integration of the EPOSTL at different contexts and present tangible findings so far. Only one research (Cakır, & Balçıkanlı, 2012) associated with the EPOSTL was carried out within Turkish language teacher education program. Yet, the focus of the research digresses and it is more into teacher autonomy than reflection which is the primary concern of the EPOSTL. Hence, it will be pertinent to explore and include studies carried out on self-efficacy, self-reflection and teacher development besides the EPOSTL here. Self-efficacy, self-reflection and teacher development are the underlying notions of the EPOSTL, and they are directly associated with the purpose of the present study. Firstly, studies related with the theories behind the EPOSTL, self-efficacy, self-reflection and teacher development, will be discussed. Before examining studies related with the theories of the EPOSTL these theories will be explained briefly. Then studies exploring the EPOSTL in theoretical and practical sense will be included.

According to Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk and Hoy (1998) teacher efficacy is the credence of teachers in their ability to act in order to achieve teaching tasks in certain settings. Self-efficacy in teacher development deserves a closer attention particularly in the early phases of teaching experience since as Bandura (1977) suggested, the perpetual progress of self-efficacy is significantly affected and shaped by the early teaching experience. Therefore, in order to view change in efficacy level of student teachers, it should be assessed in different phases. There are various scales existing in literature to measure efficacy level of student teachers and the EPOSTL is a more recent one, though not designated only with this purpose in mind. Nonetheless, it has not been implemented yet to measure the efficacy of student teachers. Thus, the recent studies on self-efficacy will be presented first and then the distinction of the EPOSTL will be discussed shortly.

Atay and Şahin's (2010) study draws a comparison between Turkish pre-service teachers' level of efficacy before and after teaching practice and upon the completion of the induction year. Furthermore, this longitudinal study presents some of the factors that are related to the variations in the level of efficacy. The study took place in an ELT department in Turkey. The researchers adapted the Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001) to gather data. Moreover, in order to support the results of the questionnaire, the researchers gathered qualitative data by means of open-ended questions at the end of pre-service teachers' first year of teaching. The results of the questionnaire demonstrate that there is a substantial difference in the efficacy level of the participants prior and subsequent to teaching during their teacher education. The pre-service teachers particularly perceived themselves more effective in terms of classroom management and student engagement after teaching practice during their training. However, the change in their efficacy level at the end of the first year as in-service teachers was trivial. The qualitative data analyzed also reveal noteworthy results in terms of teacher education. The participants were content with the theoretical education they received. Yet, they all highlighted the need to practice more on the theories they are engaged with to be more effective teachers. The qualitative data brought out some factors affecting teacher efficacy such as the existence of the decent role models, feedback from instructors and colleagues and communion of the experiences. In conclusion, the general efficacy of the participants was respectively higher after teacher practice during their teacher education whereas the efficacy slipped back in the very first year of the in-service teaching. The study is notable due to the results it brought about. It is evident from the study that teacher efficacy is more liable to change during teacher education. However, it should be recalled that pre-service teachers should start engaging with teaching activities throughout the courses they receive, even before teacher practice. Teacher training programs contain courses in which pre-service teachers actively take part in tasks and activities that prepare them to teaching such as methodology, material development and lesson planning courses. These courses are essential for teaching practice that is carried out at different stages. Thus, the diagnosis of the level of efficacy even within these courses should not be postponed to teaching practice and should start as early as possible in order to help student teachers become more efficient and confident.

Atay (2007) carried out another study to manifest the change pre-service teachers have undergone in terms of their self-efficacy. In addition to the shift in their efficacy levels, the aspects leading to the change are also presented. According to Atay (2007), efficacy affects what aims people track, how people think and act, how much effort they commit to those aims in order to accomplish goals. As suggested by the author, self-efficacy among pre-service teachers has substantiated to be prominent. There are a number of studies examining self-efficacy among pre-service teachers. They put forward that there is an association between efficacy and aspects of teaching and teacher roles. The author asserts that changing the beliefs, of the teachers' is an arduous task. Thus, Atay (2007) proclaims that teacher education might play a prominent role in shifting pre-service teachers' beliefs as it will be easier to enable the modification in their beliefs before they are fixed during actual teaching. The study was conducted with 78 pre-service teachers and the data were gathered through the Likert type Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001) adapted for the study. To draw more comprehensive conclusions about the participants' efficacy levels, face-to-face group discussions in which the participants expanded on their student teaching experience were conducted. The efficacy level of the participants at the beginning and at the end of the teaching experience did not present a meaningful difference. On the contrary, when the subscales, namely efficacy of instructional strategies, student engagement and classroom management were analysed, a noteworthy difference can be seen. While the efficacy level decreased respectively in the first two categories, the researcher came across with an increase in efficacy level in the latter. Upon the analysis of the transcripts of the group discussions, the researcher came across with some factors underlying the rise or decline in the efficacy level of the participants. Self-awareness, pre-service teachers' beliefs, cooperating teachers, feedback, established classroom practices were some of the factors identified. Atay's (2007) study reveals vital results. Teaching practice is an important competent of teacher education to make pre-service teachers realize their strong and weak competencies since this awareness might lead them to further development and higher self-efficacy levels (Atay, 2007). Nevertheless, pre-service teachers should be encouraged to identify what they have gained and to what extent they can execute what they have learnt during the course instruction by means of instruments such as the EPOSTL. As Atay (2007), suggests methodology courses should be supported with reflective practices to enable student teachers to reflect on

teaching in general (Atay, 2007). The EPSOTL is a remarkable tool to enable this reflection in the coursework process. The earlier diagnosis of efficacy is a pre-requisite for high-quality language education demand which should not be ignored by policy makers (Atay, 2007).

Koçoğlu (2011), explores the level of teachers' efficacy and its relation to emotional intelligence. She suggested that not only the emotional intelligence but also self-efficacy play an important role since they affect teaching and learning. It is stated that self-efficacy affects teacher behavior, teaching outcomes as it is evident from the previous research. The author asserts that self-efficacy has been an important element of teacher training in recent years. Nevertheless, there has been a scarcity of the research on teacher self-efficacy on the basis of pre-service and in-service English language. In the study, the author intends to find answers to the following questions: a) what are the emotional competences of EFL pre-service teachers? b) what are their self-efficacy beliefs? c) are their EQ and self-efficacy beliefs are correlated? In the study 90 pre-service teachers from all grades of an ELT departments participated. Data were gathered via an emotional inventory adopted from the previous research and a self-efficacy scale also tailored for the research. The results reveal important implications. The pre-service teachers seemed to be average in terms of their emotional intelligence. Independence is found out to be the lowest competence of the pre-service teachers. The student teachers seemed to lack self-esteem. In terms of self-efficacy they seemed to hold high self-efficacy beliefs. They were found out to be better at classroom management and instructional strategies when compared to involving the learners in the lessons. Lastly, the EQ and the self-efficacy are discovered to be related substantially. The author indicated that it is evident from the previous research that emotional intelligence and self-efficacy should be promoted in the course of teacher training. The author suggested there should be an emphasis on the development self-efficacy to enable the pre-service teacher link their beliefs with their acts. The findings of Koçoğlu's (2011) study may shed light on which competences the pre-service teacher need development.

Yılmaz (2011) explores EFL teachers' self-efficacy assumptions in Turkish context and examines the perceptions of their teaching competences in relation to their self-reported proficiency level. According to the author, the research carried out on teachers' perceptions are invaluable since the beliefs of the teachers shape the way

they teach. In spite of the importance placed on the beliefs of teachers', the author points that the research on efficacy of non-native EFL teachers are scarce. Then, the author asserts that the relationship between self-efficacy of teachers and their behaviors, teaching outcomes, language proficiency, and application of new techniques, student achievement, and instructional competences is undeniable. Therefore, this study is conducted to find out the level of the self-efficacy of teachers in relation to classroom management and instructional strategies, their self-reported proficiency, pedagogical strategies taken up by them. The relationship between teachers' self-efficacy levels and their proficiency, classroom management, instructional preferences are also sought. 56 teachers were selected randomly and took part in the study. To gather data from the participants a questionnaire, with three parts, was adapted from the previous research. In the first part, the author intended to learn about teachers' self-efficacy, in the second part the teachers' beliefs about their proficiency level were explored. In the last part, the teachers were addressed questions based on the instructional strategies. The results indicate that the EFL teachers viewed themselves more efficient in terms of instructional strategies. However, they do not seem to be satisfied with their ability to motivate students or let them benefit from language learning process. Moreover, Turkish EFL teachers viewed themselves more competent on reading and writing. Furthermore, these teachers reported to make use of more communicative techniques which is quite satisfactory. Lastly, the level of efficacy increased with the level of teacher's proficiency. In short it has been substantiated that there is a positive correlation between proficiency and self-efficacy of teachers. The findings of the study present important implications. Teacher training programs should put emphasis on self-efficacy since it affects the overall teaching outcomes. Besides this, it is especially essential to identify the weaknesses of the teachers. It is even more crucial to specify weaknesses prior to teaching when the teachers are still under training. If identification is done during pre-service training, weaknesses associated with instruction can be eliminated earlier. Not only prospective teachers but potential future learners of these student teachers will benefit. Once the negative assumptions are created, it will be more difficult to get rid of them. Thus, future research on self-efficacy in pre-service teaching is crucial.

Çakır and Güven (2012) explore the primary school English teachers beliefs of their self-efficacy in terms of certain variables. They intend to identify to what degree

teachers' self-efficacy beliefs are related to their educational background, in-service training, experience and taking special courses to teach in their context. The authors allude to the change in Turkey in relation to identification of the teacher competences. The Ministry of National Education (MEB, 2008), identifies the responsibilities of English teachers as not only to instruct students, encourage the language development process and evaluate them, but also to cooperate with others and maintain continuous professional development. However, the authors cast doubt on the actual properties teachers have in Turkey. Their claim that educational backgrounds of the teachers affect their competences is followed by the description of the education the current English teachers have had at the university level. To substantiate their claim they intend to answer the following questions within their research: does primary school English teachers' self-efficacy beliefs vary according to a) departments they graduate b) in-service training c) experience and d) taking a course to teach in young learners' context. 266 primary school English teachers, most of whom have a teaching experience less than 11 years, participated in the study. The data of the study came from two different questionnaires. The first one intended to collect demographic data related to the participants; while, the second one was developed by the researchers analyzed the beliefs of the teachers related to their competences. The results indicate that there is an essential difference among the teachers in terms of their pre-service education and the courses they take pertinent to teach in their context. However, experience and in-service training did not play a significant role on their perceptions. According to the authors, the graduates of ELT departments can master in teaching and their self-efficacy beliefs are found to be high. Since once the assumptions about the competences are set, they are hard to change. The present study is valuable since it manifests that teacher education programs in Turkey lacks unity. Moreover, the study seeks to find out what belief teachers hold in terms of their competences. It also emphasized the fact that the assumptions of teachers should be identified as early as possible in order to tailor them. Thus, this study is relevant to the present study since it aims to examine the level of competences the pre-service teachers at Akdeniz University have.

Faez and Valeo (2012) carried out a similar study to explore the training of the inexperienced ESOL teachers. For this purpose the researchers intend to measure the degree of novice teachers' readiness on the basis of their own beliefs. Besides, it aims

to compare the change in their readiness after the completion of their training and after their classroom experience. Additionally, the efficacy level of novice teachers is tried to be identified. Lastly, the study is set to evaluate teacher education by attempting to unfold views of the participants related to the usefulness of the teacher training program they went through. According to the authors, in order to recognize their level of effectiveness "how teachers draw on what they know as opposed to what they are taught" (Faez, & Valeo, 2012) should be identified and this is where self-efficacy come into play. For this purpose, the researchers aspire to discern the novice teachers' sense of preparedness and self-efficacy to teach in adult ESOL classrooms after completing a TESOL program. They also examine the aspects and content of a TESOL induction program the novice teacher find useful along with the reasons. 115 novice teachers took part in the study which was executed in two stages. First of all, the participants were asked to respond to an online questionnaire, exploring the level of their preparedness to teach and their efficacy. For the second phase of the study, 8 of the participants on the basis of their preparedness from higher to lower were interviewed to expand on their experiences in their training as well as their teaching process. The results of the questionnaire indicate that the teachers displayed an average level of preparedness upon the completion of their training program. However, the statistics proved that the level of preparedness increased as they become more experienced at the time of the study. The teachers were also found to be the more efficient at classroom management, material selection and planning lessons. Among the reasons the teachers identified to become more prepared, real experience of teaching was the most important one and novice teachers suggested it to be lengthened. On the other hand, extensive theory instruction is perceived to be the least useful part of their training, and the author claims novice teachers are not prepared or competent enough to make use of those theories. A positive correlation between their competences and teaching practice is ascertained. This study is prominent as it voices the perceptions of novice teachers in terms of their preparedness and efficacy. Most of the teachers in the study are reported to have average readiness to teach, and they are most efficient at more concrete skills. They somewhat ignored the theoretical aspect of teaching and put more emphasis on teaching practice. However, it should be kept in mind that theoretical knowledge and teaching practice are interrelated. There is no need to wait until the teaching experience to asses to what extent the novice teachers can exploit what they have attained during their training.

According to Yost, Sentner and Forlenza-Bailey (2000), 21st century requires teachers to maintain analytical, critical and intellectual skills. Attaining these skills call for reflection. As it is indicated by the authors Dewey (1933) founded the basis of reflection. Reflection can be defined as a process which requires subjects to be active, persistent and it demands a thorough analysis of perceptions, underlying motives of those beliefs and any change in future behaviors. Yost, Sentner and Forlenza Bailey (2000) suggest that teachers be knowledgeable about content, materials, and processes of learning, teaching and schooling. Nonetheless, the authors mention that it is essential for teacher educators not only to offer coursework to pre-service teachers, but also to imbue them with chances to bridge theoretical knowledge with experiences. It is plausible to raise reflective teachers, although it is an intricate process demanding various competences and traits. Yost, Sentner and Forlenza-Bailey (2000), advocate uniting the theory and practice to spur reflection in teacher education. Yet, it is not as straightforward as it seems. An instrument combining the most important elements and attributes inherently is necessary. The EPOSTL, was specifically designated to appeal to pre-service language teachers in order to stimulate them to reflect on theories and competences required for teaching, evaluate themselves as teachers, and track their own progress throughout their training (Newby et al., 2007). It unites all the dimensions of reflection, and thus serves as the best available tool. Moreover, the EPOSTL initiates dialogue amongst educators and peers, intends a critical change, links theory and practice through its guided structure. It is obvious that self-reflection has its basis in the theory of the EPOSTL. Hence, it is logical to include some recent studies on self-reflection at this point.

The purpose of Al-Issa and Al- Bulushi's (2010) research is to unfold perceptions of pre-service teachers in relation to reflective practices encouraged by their trainers. Furthermore, the study aims to uncover perceptions about roles of trainers. The authors draw attention to the increasing focus on reflective teaching at teacher education in recent years. According to the authors, trainers play a crucial part in promotion of reflection via practices they make use of. However, they acknowledge that reflective teaching is not easy. Yet, it is a must to make sense of different contexts. The authors highlight that due to its growing importance, teachers are compelled to move beyond their current borders and engage in practices that will advance their existing knowledge, competences and properties. Hence, the researchers' aim is to explore the

roles of trainers to raise reflective teachers and strategies and approaches they implement to enable reflection. 230 senior student teachers enrolled to an ELT department participated in the study. The data for the study came from an online questionnaire designed by the researchers. The questionnaire is classified under certain headings: reflection through self-evaluation, reflection through formal instruction, reflection through observation, reflection through talking, reflection through practical experience and reflection through research. The findings of the study displayed that the trainers make use of various methods for reflective practices; however, the degree of the effectiveness of those approaches is questionable. The participants reported that the trainers incorporated self-evaluation criteria; nonetheless, there is not a uniformity in terms of the criteria amongst the trainers. Furthermore, the pre-service teachers approved reflective notes, journals and portfolios. However, the trainers were claimed to instruct them more than guide, thus what the trainers did and told was contradictory. Furthermore, the trainers are found to dictate what and how to teach which is also contrary to reflective practices. The findings also exhibit that feedback sessions prior and subsequent to the teaching practice supported the pre-service teachers to make use of new methods and techniques. Nevertheless, the trainers were claimed to neglect the contexts they teach, and fail to unite theory and practice. Tasks were integrated to promote reflection inherently, yet the deficiency in harmonizing the reflective approach among the pre-service teachers leads to a contradiction and sets an obstacle for a full reflective approach within the institution. The present study is influential; however, as it is evident from its definition reflection is an individual activity and the emphasis should be turned to the actual responsibility taken by the student teachers. In this study, the student teachers are given too much account and they are viewed as the mere factor to promote reflection within the teachers. Pre-service teachers might be offered an extensive common instrument that will provide a structure for them to reflect, and take the responsibility. This is where the EPOSTL should come along.

Seymen (2012), concedes that available literature lacks studies on ELT student teachers' beliefs and expectations in terms of teaching practice. To compensate this shortcoming and to examine student teachers' beliefs about the self and their roles as teachers in their practical experience, this study was undertaken. Furthermore, the author aspires to present the transformation in student teachers' perception after teaching practice. Seymen (2012), claims teacher expectations and beliefs have the

utmost importance to teacher development, since identifying those leads to improvement of teachers. However, the author criticizes the existing research with respect to the ignorance of qualitative variants within them. Seymen's (2012) study on the other hand is a qualitative one and was carried out in an ELT department with 6 fourth grade students. The data were obtained through interviews and observations. The findings of the pre-practice interviews show that student teachers hold beliefs in relation to their roles. They identified speaking as the core activity in the classroom. They also believed that they must take up the role of facilitator in the classroom. Moreover, an effective teacher must function as an active participant, a guide, a source of knowledge, a counsellor in the classroom. In relation to expectations, tailoring lessons was the most prominent expectation before the practice. Following this, establishing rapport with learners was another expectation. The post-practice interviews displayed a change. The student teachers expected to be acknowledged sufficient by the students. Yet, their perceptions about their roles were the same and they reported that their practices were affected by their perceptions. In terms of its design and the number of the participants the present study is constrained. However, the study fills an important gap in the literature and provides important evidence regarding to the perceptions of student teachers about their roles. As it is indicated by the author, the perceptions and beliefs of student teachers are needed to be altered for teacher development. Further research should take the findings into consideration and research should be expanded for the sake of teacher development. This study is linked to the present study since the purpose of the present study is also to reveal the perceptions of student teachers; however, the focus will be their competences.

Yost, Sentner and Forlenza-Bailey (2000) present a theoretical model to foster critical reflection within teacher education programs. The purpose of the authors is to emphasize the prominence of enabling pre-service teachers to reflect on their actions at a critical level. The authors assert that critical reflection has been long researched; nevertheless, recent research is not satisfactory since they lack the holistic quality to shape the future teacher education programs. The authors pinpoint the importance of reflection and change in any fields including the teacher education. The authors highlight significance of maintaining approaches to promote reflection within the pre-service teachers. The authors also note that the pre-service teachers should be endowed with theoretical knowledge to base their choices and actions. The authors also

addressed to the concept of problem solving. Since problem solving is utilized in process of reflection to better comprehend the professional practice and tailor it by identifying weaknesses and planning improvement. Since the authors view critical reflection as a crucial part of teacher education, they propose four different promising methods fostering reflection. The first is the constructivist method uniting the theory, practice and preliminary beliefs of the pre-service teachers. According to the authors, the dispositions of the pre-service teachers are prominent since they play a crucial role on their actions. Thus, those beliefs should be considered to enable change. The constructivist approach intends to alter existing assumptions of pre-service teachers. The authors believe that teacher trainers should take an active role and provide pre-service teachers certain tasks to empower change. Once pre-service teachers become aware of their beliefs and educators present experiences, change occurs. Another method advocated is dialogue through seminars and discourse to encourage collaboration. The focus of teacher education programs must be shifted from information transmission to dialogue formation. A dialogue between educators and trainees which also facilitates peer interaction should be established. The pre-service teachers should attain the principles of an inquisitive approach. Lastly, the authors mention portfolios and writing experience to stimulate reflection. The authors consent that reflection demands various competences and traits. Yet, student teachers are not given sufficient opportunities to practice reflection. Furthermore, educators themselves are not exposed to adequate literature in terms of reflection. The authors suggest incorporation of methods and a guided curricula to strive for the development of critical reflection. The paper is weighty for the present study since it presents the need for a framework to boost reflection. It substantiates the search for an effective medium to encourage reflection. Moreover, it lists the attributes a reflective instrument should embody.

Self-reflection requires cogitation on the knowledge or competences and it actually entails self-assessment. It is reinforced by the idea that self-assessment tools such as checklists are counted as one of the methods for self-reflection. Hence, it is also legitimate to include the studies related to self-assessment under self-reflection.

The aim of Rossner's study (2009) is to discuss the present work of the EAQUALS on a framework for defining teacher training as well as development. Moreover, it discusses the necessity for creating a criteria for self-assessment and accreditation. The

EAQUALS is an organization founded with the purpose of enhancing the quality of language teaching and learning via inspection and accreditation. The organization intends to contribute to the development of language education through guidance to the implementation of the CEFR, improvement of the ELP and incorporation of any other support materials. The quality of teachers is the primary focus of accreditation of the EAQUALS. Increasing this quality is the mission of the organization. Thus, the organization carries out various projects such as development of measures to compare language and teaching competences across various teaching environments, generating a framework that will permit teacher training courses to be benchmarked to global principles. The organization developed a checklist to outline profiles of teachers with the purpose of contrasting them across different institutions, regardless of the countries and languages taught. The grid was based on the CEFR and it is asserted that it sets a common language to talk about teachers` quality. It is also suggested that it is possible to exploit the grid as a self-assessment tool. Rossner's (2009) study demonstrates the attempts to evaluate teacher education for further development.

Since as Rossner (2009) illustrates there is a search for improvement of language teacher education the present study is significant. Reflection still constitutes a vital part in teacher education. It is evident that in order to promote effectiveness of reflection, there has been improvement and the improvement has been based upon the EPOSTL and similar works. From this point on it is reasonable to embrace studies associated with the EPOSTL to clarify the relationships drawn above between the EPOSTL, self-reflection, self-efficacy and self-assessment. Nevertheless, it must be recalled that the research linked with the EPOSTL is limited, and not all the studies that are mentioned here are experiential. Some of the research presented here has a descriptive quality.

Mehlmauer-Larcher (2007-2011), describes an ongoing project. The author presents integration of the EPOSTL at the CELT (Centre for English Language Teaching), and review the results gathered until 2011. It is stated that the EPOSTL is a novel and creative tool for student teachers to assess themselves and reflect on their didactic knowledge and competences. According to the author, it provides student teachers a record of their teaching and learning experience and permits them to reflect on their progress. For this reason, the EPOSTL has been exploited as a part of the methodology course in pre-service teacher education program in the CELT to support student teachers to develop critical reflection and self-assessment skills. Along with the

methodology course, student teachers have conducted their first teaching practices at a real school environment. The EPOSTL has been integrated into different stages of the project. Before teaching practice at school environments, student teachers have dealt with descriptors referring to their teaching competences in general. During teaching practice process student teachers have been engaged with descriptors that are particularly pertinent to themselves since the emphasis is on self-reflection as an individual. Subsequent to the school practice, the EPOSTL has been implemented to initiate a discussion with teacher trainers. The data for the project is qualitative in nature, and it has been collected via interviews. In order to identify its capacity and constraints, student teachers have been interviewed through a semi-structured process following their first practice. The discussions between the trainers and the student teachers related to their reflections have also been recorded and analyzed. The data gathered and analyzed reveal that most of the student teachers view the EPOSTL as a valuable means of reflection since they have been provided with a framework to reflect on their classroom practices in a structured way. Additionally, the EPOSTL has promoted self-assessment, recorded their progress, provided a springboard for discussion and assisted the student teachers to shape their professional development. In terms of its design, the present project is a well-thought and it is one of the very first examples of the implementation of the EPOSTL in the field. The results can be used by teacher training programmers to plan more effective curriculums. Moreover, the ongoing nature of the study will provide even more data for future consideration.

Burkert and Schwienhorst (2008), display the contemporary state of the EPOSTL as a reflection tool in teacher education. They examine the EPOSTL in depth by revisiting its history, discussing the aims and the structure of the EPOSTL. Additionally, criticism about the present format is included in their paper. The authors also draw the attention to the prominence of learner autonomy in recent years. Furthermore, the relationship between teacher autonomy and learner autonomy is exhibited and the paper emphasizes the need to reflect not just on learning processes but on teaching processes as well. The authors assert that in the previous years the dissemination of the CEFR has been rapid therefore the practices closely related with the CEFR such as autonomy and portfolio learning have also become prominent in the current teaching practices. Yet, portfolio as a practical tool for student teachers which may guide them to reflect on all aspects of teaching has been ignored. Moreover, it is contended that

resources to encourage reflective skills are limited. However, the authors indicate that if teachers are not acquainted with the methods their students exploit, they will not be able to reinforce or support learners throughout the process. They argue that portfolios should constitute a vital part in teacher education programs. It is asserted that the EPOSTL is a practical means to deal with education of the student teachers, reflect on and evaluate it. Since students cannot accept responsibility by themselves or reflect without sufficient assistance, encouragement and relevant tools neither can the student teachers. Therefore, the authors propose that teacher education programs should involve an ongoing reflection and should not be limited to teaching techniques. Besides, the authors mention the lack of efforts to constitute a formal tool to encourage autonomy other than the EPOSTL. Lastly, the authors bring up the question how the EPOSTL can be applied in a real context and they disclose the plans to improve the portfolio further based on the criticism directed to it. According to the authors the present form of the EPOSTL sets a good example. Yet, it requires improvement. First off, there is not a system of reference or a global scale for student teachers` to identify their level of competences. Hence, it is not an objective tool. Secondly, descriptors themselves may cause problems since some of them can be misread by the student teacherss thus may be perceived as contradictory. Thirdly, the EPOSTL does not take the factors such as context, values or personal preferences into consideration, and it can be regarded as the recipe of effective teaching. Nonetheless, the EPOSTL is a remarkable tool to raise the awareness of teacher trainees to the concepts of reflection and self-assessment. It is invaluable for the field since it casts a critical eye on the portfolio and expresses the implications to enhance the benefits for teaching training programs.

Similarly, Balçıkanlı (2009) introduces the EPOSTL as a medium of fostering teacher autonomy. Likewise the author starts his discussion by drawing attention to teacher autonomy and its place in educational schemes. Teacher autonomy is defined as reflecting on one`s own practices and taking responsibilities for one`s own actions. According to the author, the concept of autonomy has become an important part of educational policies regarding to second/foreign language teaching. Along with this, reflection on teachers` role, methods exploited, classroom applications, lesson staging and classroom resources are viewed as crucial elements of teacher competences. According to the author, teachers should be supported to plan, monitor and evaluate

their own practices. Hence, the education student teachers get prior to real teaching is essential to prepare them to apply the aforementioned pedagogical strategies for autonomous teaching and learning. The author recommends the EPOSTL for teacher training programs to educate teachers who can reflect on and evaluate their didactic knowledge as well as didactic competences and keep record of their own progress for further professional development. The EPOSTL is portrayed as an instrument to promote autonomy by means of mirroring the required competences a teacher strains to attain as well as the theories these competences are based upon. It is stated that the EPOSTL also assists student teachers to get ready for various contexts they are going to teach in the future. Furthermore, the author suggest that the EPOSTL initiates an ongoing discussion among student teachers and student teachers and their trainers. Last but not least, it is stated that the portfolio provides an opportunity for student teachers to assess their competences in order to be aware of their strong and weak sides in terms of teaching. It is put forward that the competences of the student teachers can be promoted with the help of the portfolio through the awareness raising nature of it. The portfolio is a tool for pre-service teachers not only to understand reflective practices but also to carry out reflective teaching. Balçıkanlı's paper (2009) is influential to the field of language teacher education as it arouses interests to the current trends in the field and recommends an effective tool to meet the needs brought by the trends. Therefore, the implications presented within the paper must be taken into for the development of language education programs.

Mehlmauer-Larcher (2009) carried out another study at the University of Vienna to manifest the results of the integration of the EPOSTL. According to the author, the EPOSTL is a new and creative document for reflection and self-assessment to spur teachers` reflective skills on teaching competences. Various roles might be assigned to the EPOSTL in pre-service and in-service teacher education. It is enunciated that it encourages teacher/learner autonomy, self-reflection, self-assessment as well as dialogue. The author asserts that it is a practical instrument to enable systematic feedback, reflection and self-assessment. According to the author, reflection is considered to be a part of teaching/learning process and the EPOSTL is a direct, crucial and disciplined awareness-raising tool to fulfil this. Therefore, it is a prerequisite for professional development and can be incorporated in placing student teachers for school practice. The EPSOTL is implemented in a department of English to student

teachers within the methodology course in different stages and along with this the student teachers have conducted their first teaching practices at real school environment. Before the teaching practice at school environment the student teachers have dealt with the descriptors referring to teaching competences in general. During the practice process, the student teachers have been engaged with the descriptors that are particularly pertinent to themselves since the emphasis is on self-reflection as an individual as in Mehlmauer-Larcher's (2007) first study. Subsequent to the school practice, the EPOSTL has been implemented to initiate a discussion with teacher trainers and the data were collected via interviews. The discussions between the trainers and the student teachers related to their reflections were recorded and analyzed. The results revealed that the EPOSTL ensures not only retrospective but also proactive reflection. By nature, it can be reused by student teachers at any time at any stage. Hence, it offers a springboard for future lessons. Moreover, structured reflection is assured and student teachers do not act intrinsically but have descriptors available to consider their practices. The EPOSTL contributes to professional development since student teachers have the chance to assess their current skills and plan accordingly. The study is quite valuable and the results can be used by teacher training programmers to plan more effective curricula.

Strakova's (2009) study examines the integration of the EPOSTL to pre-service teacher training programs in order to encourage better reflection on teaching. The purpose of the study is to understand whether the EPOSTL can create a better approach for pre-service teachers to reflect on their teaching practices. Additionally, the study attempts to identify the benefits of the EPOSTL for pre-service teachers in the course of their learning and teaching processes. Moreover, the study sheds light on how to integrate it effectively to training programs. The author highlights the importance of using the self to discover weaknesses to enhance teaching skills and develop as a professional. During their teacher education students are offered various opportunities such as micro-teaching and completing self-evaluation grids to reflect on their teaching practices, however, the fact that these reflections are far from being comprehensive and prescriptive inspired the researcher to pilot the EPOSTL and assess the efficiency of it as a better reflection tool. The research was conducted in two phases with students enrolled to English language and literature department. In the first phase of the study, student teachers used the EPOSTL to prepare their lessons and reflect on them during

their two week teaching practice. The data for the first piloting were obtained through the questionnaires comprising open ended questions and focus group interviews carried out in the feedback phase. To compare the effectiveness of the EPOSTL in short term basis and long term basis the EPOSTL was piloted again. Some enrichment activities including seminars are added to this phase. Unlike the first piloting in the second phase, the participants utilized the EPOSTL for the enrichment activities as well. The student teachers worked in small groups with an experienced teacher and they planned lessons together to teach small groups of students in these seminars. The data for this phase also came from the questionnaires and focus group interviews. The results of the first phase indicate that the descriptors in the portfolio provided a guided reflection for the students letting them obtain a deeper analysis of their teaching. The participants acknowledged the EPOSTL as a useful guideline since it clarified what they should consider while teaching as novices. However, first piloting revealed that short term integration of the EPOSTL limited the participants to use the full potential of the EPOSTL. The feedback from the second piloting demonstrated that enrichment activities accompanied by the integration of the EPOSTL enhanced student teachers' reflective skills. Seminars provided an opportunity for students to combine theoretical knowledge with real experiences of teachers. In short, the study has a general conclusion that the EPOSTL is an effective means to promote reflective skills, develop the utmost teaching competences and prepare pre-service teachers for real teaching contexts.

Hisamura et al. (2010) modified the EPOSTL to be used in Japanese educational context. The primary focus of their study is on the self-assessment section of the EPOSTL. The researchers aspire to adopt, modify, enhance and prevail the EPOSTL not only among pre-service teachers but also among in-service teachers since the descriptors in the self-assessment checklist embody the core competences a language teacher should acquire. It is stated that Japanese education system confronted with numerous problems lately and there have been attempts from the government to overcome the predicaments faced. Education reform has been one of the major aims of the Japan`s educational paradigm including teacher education. It is put forward that although professionalism is aimed in language teacher education reform, it is not understood adequately and there is a great need to change teacher development in order to differentiate professional teachers from amateurs. Reflection-oriented EFL teacher

education is one of the practices to achieve the shift. There is not a systematized approach in Japan to examine teachers` perception of their experiences. It is believed that bridging theory and practice of reflection will cause the shift mentioned above. It is suggested that theoretical knowledge and skills are not sufficient to develop professionally, thus teachers should monitor their own teaching and try to grasp their practices. According to the authors, to assure reflective practice teaching journals, video recording, interviews are integrated in teacher education programs and proved to effective. However, a more practical tool like the EPOSTL is seems to be necessary for teacher education programs. Teacher education programs need to be modified to allow student teachers to take the responsibility of their own teaching and to become more autonomous. The lack of standards among universities to establish professional development led to the adaptation of the EPOSTL for Japanese context as the EPOSTL is intended for the European context. The descriptors that are not compatible with Japanese education were eliminated by the researchers. For this purpose, the EPOSTL was piloted twice. The fact that the universities lack standards of the skills for language teacher education among themselves and each university has its own policy for practicum make the piloting process reasonable. 178 undergraduate and graduate students responded to the EPOSTL. At the end of the first piloting the checklist comprised 74 descriptors. In order to make the EPOSTL more applicable to Japanese context it was piloted for the second time with novice in-service teachers. 33 beginner teachers responded to the EPOSTL. The results of the factor analysis demonstrated that there were 14 descriptors found unreliable. The remaining descriptors were the practices incorporated by the teachers to their teaching thus they were effective to represent the descriptors to measure the professional development. The study is note-worthy since it proves that the EPSOTL is not an all-purpose strict checklist yet it can be adapted for certain contexts by making adjustments. The study demonstrates that it is possible to modify it to the desired level. It is also evident that the descriptors in the EPOSTL refer to core competences a teacher should attain since Japanese student teachers an in-service teachers had shared perceptions regarding to these competences although they were under different teaching practice policies. In short, the study sets an example for its adaptability and flexibility in different contexts in order to spur teacher development.

The study carried out by Dooly (2011) is different from the ones mentioned above. However, it is still notable since it demonstrates how the EPOSTL can be integrated into teacher education programs even without being the principal concern. It is stated that with the advancement and the spread of the technology many fields including education have been affected by the changes it brought. According to the author, more and more researchers shifted their concerns to this latest trend and they either researched the integration of the technology itself or they made use of it as an instrument to conduct their research. The aim of Dooly (2011) is to explore the professional development of pre-service English teachers located in different places through dialogue and incorporation of technology. Moreover, the researcher intends to study the advantages the participants gained through online collaborative practices. Nevertheless, it is substantiated that encouraging collaboration by the use of technology is not commonplace. According to the author, "telecollaboration" activities entailing the integration of virtual tools to allow student teachers not only to share their experiences but also to expand their knowledge. Incorporation of virtual tools deserves attention to establish meaningful communication. The study is carried out through the collaboration of twenty students in the U.S. and Spain via virtual tools. Prior to telecollaborative activities, the student teachers were asked to assess their competences with criteria adapted from the EPSOTL with the purpose of charting their progress, thus identifying the level of improvement. As the first step of the virtual collaboration the student teachers were introduced to each other via Voicethread an online tool. Then in small groups the participants discussed the various components of teaching sequence such as materials, content etc. to exchange ideas in a forum. Following this a teaching sequence draft was posted on a wiki and the participants were called to edit, adapt or comment on the teaching sequence. Another online discussion related to changes ensued the first one. This procedure is accompanied by online face to face feedback session with peers and tutors in which the student teachers delivered their own teaching sequence. In the second part of the study, the participants are introduced the Second Life a social networking tool to get to know each other more. Subsequently, they developed teaching activities and podcasts and provide feedback to each other on virtual platforms introduced. In short, during the whole process the participants were engaged with various teaching experiences, peers as wells as their tutors in a range of virtual and real environments. The student teachers reflected on their practices and on the practice of the peers all throughout the study. This self and peer reflection backed

up their learning process in an unsettled way. The participants are stimulated to comprehend their practices while revealing them to their peers in a different contexts. In conclusion, the present study is a major one for the field for two main reasons. First of all, it illustrates that it is possible to cross the borders of the universities, cities even the countries to involve students in reflective and professional development activities. Secondly, the present study demonstrates how the EPOSTL can be incorporated into teacher education programs even without being the major purpose.

The next study under scrutiny is an experiential one. Çakır and Balçıkanlı (2012) investigate the perceptions of teacher trainers and pre-service teachers on the integration of the EPOSTL as a tool to promote teacher autonomy. The purpose is to discern how the EPOSTL is viewed in an ELT department as a reflective tool and whether it contributes to the development of pre-service teachers' teaching competences. It is asserted that there is not a clear cut definition of teacher autonomy in the literature and most of the researchers linked the two concepts. The authors touch upon this link between learner autonomy and teacher autonomy and view the two interdependent since a teacher not knowing what is being an autonomous leaner cannot encourage autonomy within learners. They mentioned pre-service teachers` need to mirror their own practices in order to evaluate the efficacy of their scaffolding; however, the authors state the failure to give sufficient attention to this notion. Furthermore, they put forward the importance of encouraging teachers to become autonomous even at their training stage, for previous autonomy training may help them to overcome difficulties to create autonomous learning environments. Besides, the authors refer to the attribution to the CEFR to shape language teaching in Turkish context in recent years and they make mention of its role to encourage autonomy. However, insufficient research on the CEFR and inadequate attempts to train pre-service teachers to integrate the CEFR based and autonomous teaching and learning inspired the researchers to conduct the study. In the study, the researches intend to examine pre-service teacher's and their trainers' perceptions of the EPOSTL. The study was conducted with 25 junior students in English language teaching department and 4 of their trainers participated in the study. The data for the study were collected through questionnaires comprising open-ended items and interviews with the students. The study incorporated four phases. In the first phase, the student teachers were introduced the EPOSTL. Following this step their views on the EPOSTL were

accumulated through the questionnaire. Then, the EPOSTL was implemented for three months as a part of their methodology course. The student teachers did micro-teachings and they reflected on and evaluated their teaching practices on the basis of the descriptors in the EPOSTL. As the last part of the study, the researchers carried out interviews with the teacher student teachers and their trainers. The results of the questionnaires are in accordance with the previous research and indicate that most of the students perceived the EPOSTL as a rather worthwhile tool to reflect on their practices. The portfolio clarified what competences the trainees need to work on and the participants recognized its role to shape their training. Findings from the interviews are also in line with the results of the questionnaire in that both the trainers and the students approved the implementation of the EPOSTL and they considered it a valuable opportunity to think about their strengths and weaknesses. The EPOSTL served its purpose and utilized by the students as a self-assessment document broadening their views on the aspects of teaching. Through the EPOSTL, they not only spotted their weaker sides but also they had the chance to view themselves in the actual teaching settings and criticize themselves by pointing to the relevant theories. Therefore, they were able to associate their theoretical knowledge with their practical knowledge. Trainers judged the EPOSTL as an effective tool to raise awareness, enhance teaching competences and contribute to professional development. They were of the opinion that the student teachers were able to see teaching as a whole through the EPOSTL as it compiles many different aspects of teaching together. They recommended the integration of the EPOSTL at the second grade once the ELT students start taking courses concerning methodology and teaching practices. The study has notable implications. As learner autonomy grows to be a vital subject, teacher education programs should be reconsidered and reconstructed under the light of the findings of this study.

As one of the co-authors of the EPOSTL Newby (2012), intends to discuss possible effective uses of the EPOSTL. For this purpose, in his paper a set of examples drawn from different applications of the EPOSTL across Europe is presented in order to reveal how its integration can be turned into a "good practice" and support teacher education. Newby (2012) maintains that the EPOSTL itself is ground-breaking in nature; nevertheless, its effectiveness lays in its good practice. However, it is also contended that the EPOSTL is not supposed to reform teacher education programs. Its

purpose is to reinforce teacher education. Newby (2012) mentions the flexibility of the EPOSTL by attributing to its widespread use in Europe, translation to different languages and adaptation to Japanese. Newby (2012) defines good practice to combine theory, practice along with reflection then he refers these theoretical concepts besides practices to clarify the benefits of the EPOSTL broadly. He suggests that despite the existence of various teacher educational models such as competence-based model or craft model, the purpose of the EPOSTL is not to be contingent of them but to assemble them without forfeiting its reflective manner. Moreover, the nature of the EPOSTL requires this combination for example the descriptors within the EPOSTL are based on competences. Newby (2012) sustains that applying the EPOSTL in a comprehensive, transparent and coherent way is a good indicator of effective application. The EPOSTL is to encourage self-regulation and allocate a place for autonomy and collaboration. Komorowska (2012) proposes that student teachers are responsible to plan, evaluate and monitor their own progress not be reliant solely on their trainers. Newby (2012) summarizes the aspects of good practice the EPOSTL brings to teacher education programs as follows: raising autonomous teachers, promoting reflection, underpinning teaching theories, transpiring the goals of teacher education programs, clarifying the competences, supporting self-assessment, and ensuring coherence. He then clarifies how the EPOSTL can enable the above practices referring to the EPOSTL and research on the EPOSTL. As it underpinned by Newby (2012), there is the danger of exposing student teachers to too much theory thus assigning them a passive, non-proactive role throughout their education. However, as Widdowson (2003) suggested student teachers are not only expected to acquire those theories but also engage with them and evaluate them. The EPOSTL via its descriptors assign a proactive role. Fenner (2006) associated proactive role with teacher autonomy and sustains that without a framework drawing on the principles on teaching autonomy cannot be ensured in teacher education programs. Furthermore, as suggested by Newby (2012) descriptors facilitate reflection and self-assessment. According to Newby (2012), trainers are not expected to provide an answer or ready-made recipes for the student teachers. Students contemplate and create good examples of good practice themselves. In this sense as claimed by Newby (2012) the EPOSTL is "personalized." The descriptors guide student teachers to think deeply about their competences. Student teachers are not only engaged with self-assessment but a "dialogic reflection" since the EPOSTL allows discussion with peers or trainers. This

feature overcomes another shortcoming. As claimed by Newby (2012) there might be a lack of communication among student teachers, mentor teachers and teacher trainers. Besides, feedback provided by mentors and trainer might lack a focus. However, descriptors in the EPOSTL clarify what student should work on thus feedback can be focused. Through discussion, student teacher also learn to explore competences indicated critically. Newby (2012) asserts that since competences are didactic and translucent in the EPOSTL student teachers can easily grasp what actually they should acquire, which make the overall aims of the education programs obvious. Newby (2012) cites from the student engaged with the EPOSTL. One of the student teachers indicated that with the help of the EPOSTL they can specify what they know and what they do not know. Another student teacher suggests the EPOSTL recommends them what to explore. Moreover, students' reflections are invaluable for the trainers since their deficiencies demonstrate the shortcomings in a program and guide trainers to encourage development (Bagaric, 2011). Newby provides a good outline of benefits teacher education programs can draw however, there is a scarcity of studies associated with the EPOSTL. Moreover, most of the studies conducted until now are carried out by the EPOSTL project members, which does not prove widespread the dissemination alleged. Besides, most of the related studies do not go beyond exploring the EPOSTL from a theoretical perspective so there is a space for further studies.

With the purpose of supporting and maintaining reflection in English language teacher education, Velikova (2013) introduces a pioneering model instrumenting the EPOSTL. The author intends to call student teachers for enquiring their actions, exploring their beliefs critically and becoming conscious about the aspects of teaching and learning through the EPOSTL. Hence, in the research the author presents the phases of a ground-breaking application of the EPOSTL along with its rationale. Moreover, a semi-structured survey is carried out to uncover student teachers' reflections on the implementation of the EPOSTL. Velikova (2013) mentions the need for reflective practices and states that there must be a deeper emphasis on reflection and self-evaluation. Yet, student teachers should be scaffold to maintain reflective skills. Velikova (2013) puts forth that the EPOSTL is likely to foster reflection via its descriptors embodying teaching competences. The author sustains that the descriptors not only can be used for reflection during teaching practice but also during course-work. Since the EPOSTL spurs dialogue besides reflection, Velikova (2013) maintains

that it paves the way to a systematic viewpoint of student teachers' progress and thus is a perfect match to the aims of teacher education programs. In the proposed model the EPOSTL encourages the construction of knowledge, analysis, comprehension and application and action. With these objectives in mind the EPOSTL has been integrated to the English language teacher education program in three phases as follows: ELT methodology course, teaching practice I and teaching practice II. In the first phase, the student teachers are introduced the personal statement section and invited to use it actively as a part or the course-work. Their underlying beliefs and expectations are tried to be uncovered. The author presented some of the descriptors as task during the class to better pinpoint the student teachers' beliefs about teaching. Reflections of the student teacher revealed that they are eager to see their own progress and uncover their weaknesses. During their methodology course the student teachers are asked to delve into a section from the EPOSTL, come up with activities and research to present their peers later on. According to the author, the purpose is to help the student teachers build "personally meaningful knowledge of theories". The purpose of integrating the EPOSTL to teaching practice is to support the student teachers' to reflect based on their real experiences during teaching and observing. In teacher practice II the student teachers are engaged in collecting materials for the Dossier. Lastly, as a part of the research the student teachers are encouraged to carry out an action research related with a section from the EPOSTL. The findings of the survey show that the EPOSTL is found to be a useful tool to promote professional development, self-reflection and awareness of weaknesses among the student teachers. Besides, the author indicates that the EPOSTL not only clarifies the goals of teacher education programs but also the competences the student teachers should attain. Furthermore, the student teachers report that the EPOSTL facilitates continuous development. Teacher trainers' feedback is in line with the student teachers' perceptions. The change in student teachers' perceptions in terms of self-assessment is undeniable and the student teachers are equipped with reflective "habit of mind" (Velikova, 2013).

CHAPTER III.

METHODOLOGY

3.0. Introduction

In this part of the study the research process will be explained in detail. The type of the research along with its rationale will be presented. The data gathering instruments employed will be introduced separately. Besides, the reasons why they are specifically chosen will be identified. The development of the data gathering instrument will be given a place. The participants contributed to the study and the context of the study will be described thoroughly. Lastly, the analysis procedures will be mentioned and validity of the analysis will be discussed.

3.1. Research Design

Since the purpose of the present study is to identify the perceptions of student teachers in terms of their teaching competences a descriptive model is adopted for the study. Gay (1992) put forwards that for some, descriptive research may be viewed as simplistic. However, the purpose is not just to ask the questions and collect the responses. As suggested first of all it is crucial to ask right questions to the right sample of subjects. Furthermore, it is critical to implement the proper instruments that are both reliable and valid and the present study implements an instrument adapted from a global tool that is a product of a project specifically interested in teacher education. As Gay (1992) asserts the purpose of the descriptive studies are to examine the current situation and present it without switching the reality. Besides, the descriptive model is found appropriate since this model examines educational problems and it deals with gauging beliefs, perceptions, attitudes, procedures etc. (Gay, 1992). The starting point of the present study is an existing problem encountered during the teacher education process of student teachers thus it will be expedient to execute this method of research for the present study since descriptive research is convenient to find solutions to the problems in educational context (Gay,1992).

Although there are various types of descriptive studies for the present study self-reported research (Gay, 1992) procedure is determined to be convenient to be applied

since the present study is affiliated with the perceptions of student teachers in terms of their teaching competences. In order to uncover their beliefs about their teaching abilities pre-service teachers are required to report them. Descriptive studies are associated with questionnaires, interviews and observations aiming to disclose the attitudes, opinions, conditions and procedures (Gay, 1992). For the present study a questionnaire and an interview are implemented to the student teachers to get them notify their perceptions related to their competences. Hence, it entails both quantitative and qualitative elements. In the application of the questionnaire pre-post design is employed. This study covers the development of the student teachers from 3rd year to 4th grade thus it is spread over three terms in total, one and half year. The pre-test was implemented in the first term of the third year before the students took Methodology I and II along with the other teacher development courses. Upon the completion of these courses the post-test was implemented at the end of the second term of the third grade. The interview procedure awaited until the end of the first term of the fourth grade. In the meantime the student teachers began their teaching experience at schools. The student teachers not only have the chance to observe real English teachers teaching but also they had the opportunity to teach themselves in the real contexts.

Furthermore, while all these procedures are considered, the present study can be counted as a longitudinal descriptive study since the student teachers' progress in terms of their teaching competences are sought and this method gives the researcher the chance to compare the student teachers' progress over the time. According to Gay (1992) longitudinal studies seek the progress of the same participants over a span of time. Similarly, Richards and Schmidt (2002) defines it as the study of participants in a period of time. Nevertheless, the minimum time required for a longitudinal study is not precise. Johnson and Johnson (1999) propose that longitudinal research studies the development of participants. In their description they have counted a ten month or a thirteen month study a longitudinal one.

3.1.1. Participants of the Study

The study was carried out in English language teaching department at Akdeniz University. The ninety-seven third grade ELT student teachers enrolled to the department participated in the study. The age of the student teachers ranged between 21 and 24. Sixty-four of the student teachers took part in the study were female and

the remaining thirty-three student teachers were male. The group of the subjects can also be divided into two categories in terms the education they were exposed to. While ninety-eight of the participants were taking morning classes, ninety-four of the participants were receiving evening education. Yet, it must be remarked that the education received does not reveal a difference in the morning or evening classes either in terms of content or practice. Moreover, the student teachers attending to evening classes took the courses from the same teacher trainers. Finally, all of the students in the study were taking the Methodology course I and II and other professional development related courses during the study.

Gender	Number of the Participants	Percentage of the Participant
Female	64	66%
Male	33	34%

Table 3.1 Gender Distribution

Education	Number of the Participants	Percentage of the Participant
Morning	48	49.4%
Evening	49	50.6%

Table 3.2 Education Distribution

3.2. Data Gathering Instrument

Questionnaire is the first data collection instrument to be made use of in the study to explore the student teachers' teaching competence perceptions. Although as indicated by Gay (1922) developing a standardized questionnaire requires devotion of skill and time it enables researchers to reach more subjects and in general analysis and collection requires less time. The questionnaire used in the study was adapted from the EPOSTL thus its standardization and validation were already ensured by the project team who developed it. On the other hand, in order to cross-check and ensure that it serves the aim of the study experts in the field were consulted. Their comments on the possible problems that might be encountered were sought and the final version of the questionnaire was attained. The second instrument to gather data is interview. To cross-check the responses of the student teacher an interview was conducted. In the

following part the instruments made use of for the data gathering process will be explained in detail and separately.

3.2.1. The EPOSTL Survey

As mentioned before while introducing it, the EPOSTL is comprised of 195 items as a whole and divided into main and sub-sections. As mentioned by Gay (1992) the feature of a sound questionnaire each item in the EPOSTL addresses a single concept. However, including all of the items would not be practical and feasible since the participants might not be willing to deal with a long list of items. According to Gay (1992) questionnaires should be as brief as possible and user-friendly otherwise the level participation might be at risk. Moreover, two experts one holding a PhD degree in language teaching and the other holding a PhD in assessment and evaluation were consulted. The experts were of the same opinion thus the number of the items posed to the student teachers were reduced. Merely most critical items whose development are less time and experience bound were selected to be included in the questionnaire. For instance, the experts whose advice was sought asserted that competences related with classroom management are more experience bound and teachers improve themselves in terms of managing their classes in parallel with experience. However, competences associated with teaching speaking are less experience bound but knowledge and creativity bound. Another reason for the elimination of some of the other parts of the EPOSTL is that the junior students have not covered all the coursework and their familiarity with some of the sections like evaluation in teaching is somewhat overall and limited. Whereas, the participants were acquainted with all the sub-sections in the EPOSTL survey and they had been taking courses on these components. The aims and the content of the Methodology course I, II along with other teacher development course they were taking were also in line with the EPOSTL survey. Hence, the total number of the items to be involved in the questionnaire was reduced to 88 and the following sections and subsections are involved.

The main parts in the questionnaire are Methodology, Lesson Planning and Conducting a Lesson. All of the sub-sections of the Methodology part, which are Speaking/Spoken Interaction, Writing/Written Interaction, Listening, Reading, Grammar and Vocabulary, are given a place in the questionnaire. Similarly all the sub-sections of the Lesson Planning part, Identification of Learning Objectives, Lesson

Content and Lesson Organization were entailed. Conducting a Lesson is partially used and as mentioned above most critical and less experience related sections, Using Lesson Plans, Content, Interaction with Learners were contained. Moreover, with the advice of the experts the EPOSTL is turned into a five point Likert-type questionnaire in order to gather quantifiable data. The original version of the EPOSTL is designed to specify student teachers' progress via arrows however, arrow style would not be practical to gather quantifiable data. In order not to deviate from the EPOSTL's progressive nature the Likert-type is preferred and the study was designated to be a longitudinal one spreading over one and half year thus a pre and post design was adopted. Lastly, all of the items comprised are construct variables (Gay, 1992). Before administered to the student teachers as suggested by Gay (1992) a cover letter explaining the purpose and significance of the study and pursuing the consent of the student teachers' participation in the study were added to the questionnaire.

3.2.2. Interview

Following the post-test an interview was carried out. The primary purpose of the interview procedure is to track the student teachers' progress over the time. Developing as a teacher is a process and the EPOSTL aims to shed light on the progress of the student teachers. Fusing the interview procedure into the research design along with pre and post implementation of the EPOSTL has brought the study a developmental dimension. Besides, with the help of the interview in-depth responses from students in order to ensure the reliability of the answers they provided for the questionnaire are intended to be gathered. Factors affecting their perceptions were pursued in the interview procedure. Moreover, the interview procedure was added to the study since it generates comprehensive data with smaller groups. Another purpose is to cross-check the data collected through the questionnaire since through a trusting atmosphere honest and accurate answers from the respondents can be guaranteed (Gay, 1992). It is also possible to shed light on the points that is somewhat vague in the questionnaire through the interview procedure thus validating the data gathered via the EPOSTL questionnaire.

The interview is conducted with a randomly selected group of thirteen student teachers. As Gay (1992) suggests to ensure the standardization and comparability of the responses a semi-structured procedure was employed and each interview with each

participant is conducted in the same way. 8 questions were posed to the participants which lasted 10 minutes with each participant. The questions in the interview intended to disclose the student teachers' strongest and weakest teaching competences with reference to the EPOSTL and the reasons of the progress or regression in terms of the EPOSTL competences. After the preparation of the interview questions the same experts were consulted to evaluate the questions in terms of their potential to serve the purpose of the study. The experts evaluated the questions in terms of their being complementary to the EPOSTL survey and their capacity to identify the progress of the student teachers. The interview with each participant lasted 10 minutes. The responses of the student teachers were recorded with iPad mini via an iOS 7.0.4 application called Voice Recorder. Prior to the interview the student teachers' consent for the recording was asked and confirmed. Confidentiality of the recording was warranted.

3.3. The Context / Data Gathering Process

As mentioned before the present study is a longitudinal one so, the collection of the data for the study was spread over three terms namely one and half year. The study was conducted in the academic years of 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. In order to gather data to examine the student teachers' preconditions of their teaching competences the EPOSTL survey was applied to the student teachers at the beginning of the first term of the academic year 2012-2013 before they started their coursework. Subsequently, to inform student teachers about the Common European Framework for Reference Languages (CEFR) which the EPOSTL is based on and the EPOSTL as a reflective tool students were given a two weeks training. The trainings intended to involve the student teachers in discussions and meant to get them reconstruct what they already know or think with questions posed during the trainings. Hence, it was not one way or transmissive. During the training the CEFR was introduced to the students. The CEFR's background and overall purpose were presented. Its place within Turkish language teaching curriculums was also discussed in order to show the relevance of the framework to the student teachers. The necessity of getting familiarized with the CEFR in Turkish context was discussed with the student teachers. After the training on the CEFR the student teachers were introduced the EPOSTL thoroughly. The aims and functions of the EPOSTL were presented to the student teachers as well its basis

and history. Its sections and content of were explained in detail. At the end of the training the benefits were discussed with the student teachers. During the training sessions the students had already begun their coursework. The post EPOSTL survey was carried out at the end of the second term of the academic year 2012-2013. The same student teachers participated in the pre-test responded to the EPOSTL survey for the second time. By the time they completed the Methodology I, II and other teacher development related courses. In order to bring a longitudinal perspective to the study interview procedure was awaited until the fourth grade. By this time the student teachers began their teaching experience in real contexts. They observed lessons and did micro teachings. At the end of the first term of the fourth grade, with randomly selected student teachers who participated both in the pre and post the EPOSTL survey an interview was conducted separately with each student.

3.4. Data Analysis

In this part the methods employed to analyze the data will be mentioned briefly. Subsequently the validity and reliability issues will be discussed and evidence showing that the present study is valid and reliable will be presented.

3.4.1. Data Analysis Procedures

Since the data for the study came from two different instruments, different data analysis procedures were conducted to interpret the data. While the analysis of the EPOSTL pre-test and post-test was conducted through a computer-mediated program the analysis of the interview procedure was done manually by the researcher. For the EPOSTL pre and post-tests a descriptive analysis for the interview responses content analysis were conducted.

3.4.2. Analysis of the Data Gathered Through the EPOSTL Survey

The data gathered via questionnaire were analyzed through descriptive analysis. Through a computer mediated program SPSS 17.0 frequencies and percentages were calculated and in addition as indicated by Gay (1992) when necessary responses were compared to draw conclusions and relationships. In this way student teachers' perceptions can be explained with the possible related factors that are identified. The

EPOSTL survey designated as a 5-point Likert type questionnaire. The pre-service teachers were invited to (1) strongly agree, (2) agree, (3) neutral, (4) disagree or (5) strongly disagree with the items. In order to pinpoint positive and negative inclinations in the analysis of both the pre-test and post-test the end points of the scale were summed and evaluated together. While the data were interpreted percentages of "strongly disagree" and "disagree" were fused and similarly the percentages of "strongly agree" and "agree" were gauged together.

3.4.3. Analysis of the Data Gathered Through Interview

In order to analyse the data obtained via interview as suggested by Büyüköztürk et al. (2010) content analysis was conducted. First of all, the records of the student teachers' responses were transcribed by the researcher. Then a categorization of the responses was attempted. For instance, categories such as the course-related factors leaded to progression/regression or participant-related factors caused progression/ regression were identified.

3.5. The Validity and Reliability of the Research

According to Crocker and Algina (1986) (Cited in Büyüköztürk et al., 2010, p.109), reliability means to be able to gather the similar results upon the application of an instrument to the same group of participants for the second time under similar conditions. Leedy and Ormrod (1985) defines reliability as consistency that a data gathering instrument generates through obtaining similar results at each application. Büyüköztürk et al. (2010) list the factors impacting the reliability of the research as instrument related factors, participant related factors and administration related factors. In terms of instrument related factors according to the authors first of all reliability of the research increases in parallel with the number of the items included in the data gathering instrument. Another factor that is mentioned to increase the reliability of the instrument is the transparency and comprehensibility of the items included. An instrument with incoherent and inexplicit items has the risk of yielding different results when applied to the same group again since the participants might interpret the items differently which as result decreases the reliability of the research. Moreover, to increase the reliability of the instrument the authors recommends including homogenous items in the data gathering instrument to ensure reliability.

With regards to participant related factors Büyüköztürk et al. (2010) points that the reliability of the research is affected by the motivation and mental states of the participants such as their anxiety level and attitudes at the time of the application of the research instrument. Lastly, according to the authors at the time of the administration of the instrument the conditions should be standard for every participant. Physical conditions and time allocated for the instrument should not vary among participants. Leedy and Ormrod (1985) also emphasize the necessity of the administration of the instrument in a consistent way to standardize and ensure reliability of the results. Besides Büyüköztürk et al. (2010) state that in the condition of applying the second instrument for the second time the time between the two tests should not be employed within a very short time. Considering all these factors in terms of the reliability of the present study will be discussed next.

First of all, it must be stated that reliability concerns of the EPOSTL was well considered by the project team that generated the EPOSTL. According to Newby (2012) during the course of its development the EPOSTL was piloted twice within two workshops conducted by the project team in Centre for Modern Languages. As it is mentioned by Newby (2012) the first workshop was intended for student teachers while the target group of the second workshop was their educators. A keynote that should be mentioned here is that all the participants were coming from different parts of Europe. According to Büyüköztürk et al. (2010) heterogeneity of the group affects the reliability positively. Newby (2012) notes that the purpose of the piloting was to regard criticism coming from the participants. Newby (2012) asserts that while developing the EPOSTL the main concern was the explicitness and transparency of the items included. Yet, he asserts the piloting process was fruitful since it showed that this aim was not achieved to a great extent. On the basis of the feedback of the student teachers items were clarified and shortened besides for each item a single focus was attributed. Since as Newby suggests (2012) without fully grasping the items it is not possible for student teachers to reflect on them. In addition to the wording of the items Newby (2012) indicated that the number of the items were reduced from 400 to its current number. Büyüköztürk et al. (2010) asserts that reliability of the research is in parallel with the number of the items included however, excessive number of the items in an instrument has the risk of endangering reliability and participants might be intimidated (Gay, 1996). The piloting process of the EPOSTL makes it clear that the factors mentioned above are considered to assure the reliability. It was assured after

the workshops that the items are comprehensive and explicit. Moreover, items are divided into sections according to the domains they cover for homogeneity issues. For the present study not all of the original 195 items were made use of not to ward off the participants and risk the reliability. Instead the items that are believed to be the utmost important were included after counselling the experts. In order to avoid participant and administration related factors decreasing the reliability of the research same conditions were guaranteed for each participant, enough time was allocated for them to respond the items. Before administering the post-test eight months passed. Reliability of the interview procedure is more concerned with explicitness of the questions included and the administration process. The questions in the interview procedure are based on the items in the EPOSTL. The questions were piloted before to guarantee comprehensibility and the same experts examined the questions in the interview procedure in terms of their explicitness. Based on the advisor's suggestions and piloting process the questions were reworded. During the administration a comfortable and non-threatening atmosphere was ensured for participants to feel motivated and relaxed.

According to Leedy and Ormrod (1985), an instrument measures something correctly if it measures it steadily. Thus it can be assumed that reliability and validity issues are interdependent. The authors define validity as an instrument serving its purpose and measuring what it is intended to measure. For the present study content validity which is an instrument's representation of the sample content measured in the research is more substantial (Leedy & Ormrod 1985). In other words according to Büyüköztürk et al. (2010), the items included in the instrument should reflect what is aimed with that single item. To determine content validity each item in the instrument were analyzed in terms of its adequacy to project the purpose. Leedy and Ormrod (1985) mentions the table of specification or expert opinion to enable the validity of the research. Newby (2012) asserts that generating the core language teaching competences were their main principle during the course of the development of the EPOSTL. However, the author admits that after piloting the EPOSTL during the workshops the project team realized there were competences defined in the first draft of the EPOSTL that are more general and related with general pedagogical issues. Hence, the EPOSTL developers excluded these more general items and after this it can be assumed that the validity of the EPOSTL is assured. However, Newby (2012) confesses the criticism received from the experts particularly specialized in each areas.

According to the author, some of these experts complain about the number of items covered related to their area for instance grammar. Nevertheless, Newby (2012) asserts that core competences are included related to each domain. However, it is possible for researchers or teacher trainers to add other competences they view as important and refers to the flexibility of the EPOSTL. Keeping all these issues in mind in order to see whether the EPOSTL serves the purpose of the present research advice of the experts was sought. The experts were of the same opinion with Newby (2012) and found the items included in the survey to cover the competences intended to be measured. The experts also evaluated the interview questions based on the EPSOTL and found out that both the EPOSTL survey and interview questions well serve the purpose of the study.

CHAPTER IV.

RESULTS

4.0. Introduction

The results obtained from the EPOSTL survey and the interview will be discussed in this section. While exploring the results, the order in the research questions will be tracked. First, the findings of the pre-test and post-test in terms of the student teachers' perceptions of the EPOSTL competences will be presented. Any improvement in terms of the EPOSTL competences will be identified. Following this, the reasons reported by the student teachers in the interview procedure related to their progress or regression in terms of the EPOSTL competences will be included in the section. Later, the results of research questions three and four will be addressed and the self-reported strongest competences along with the weakest competences in the post-test will be discussed. Lastly, the student teachers' remarks on their strongest and weakest competences gathered in the interview procedure will be explored in this section. As mentioned before the percentages of "strongly disagree" and "disagree" are joined and similarly the percentages of "strongly agree" and "agree" are gauged together in order to better demonstrate the tendencies.

4.1. Findings of Pre-test and Post-Test

The first research question addressed to the student teachers meant to assess their teaching competences in terms of methodological competences, lesson planning competences and conducting a lesson competences. These main sections are also divided into sub-sections as in the EPOSTL to make the findings more comprehensive. In order to discuss the findings more thoroughly the results of each sub-section will be presented separately under the main headings. Furthermore to better indicate the improvement in terms of teaching competences the results of the pre-test and post-test related to each sub-section will be presented in the same table.

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4.1.1. Findings of Methodology Section of the EPOSTL

In the first part of the questionnaire, the student teachers were called to reflect on their methodological competences. The methodology section is subdivided into categories the first of which is speaking/spoken interaction. In order to evaluate their speaking/spoken interaction competences 12 items were posed to the student teachers. Table 4.1 illustrates the perceptions of the student teachers of their speaking/spoken interaction competences. In general the increase in terms of the student teachers' speaking/spoken interaction competences can be seen when the pre-test and post-test results are compared. Although the increase in some of the items is not great the change in some of the items such as items 7, 8 and 9 is great. In item 7 the student teachers were asked whether they can evaluate and select the activities which help learners participate in ongoing spoken interactions. While in the pre-test 64.9% (14.4 + 50.5) of them agreed this number increased to 82.5 % (23.7 + 58.8). Similarly, in the pre-test while 60.8 (16.5 + 44.3) students indicated that they can evaluate and select various activities to help learners identify and use the typical features of spoken language 79.4 (21.6 + 57.7) indicated an agreement in the post-test. The greatest change is detected in item 11. Only 42.4 (9.3 + 33.0) of the student teachers agreed to be able to evaluate and select a variety of techniques to make learners aware of stress, rhythm and intonation in the pre-test. Yet, in the post study the percentage of the pre-service teachers rose to 63.9% (15.5 + 48.5). Besides, the overall rise in their speaking/spoken interaction competence in some of the items such as 5 and 6 the significance is not as remarkable. The reason might be attributed to the fact that over 85 % of the pre-service teacher already reported to show agreement in these items in the pre-test, 86.6 (24.7 + 61.9) and 87.6 (33.0 + 54.6) respectively. However, in items 10 and 12 the student teachers were found to improve less in the post-test although they did not report high percentage of agreement in the pre-test. In item 10 the student teachers were asked if they can evaluate and select a variety of techniques to make learners aware of, discriminate and help them pronounce sounds in the target language and while 64.9% (17.5 + 47.4) agreed in the pre-test 69.1% (22.7 + 46.4) agree in the post test. On the other hand, this item is found to comply with the item 11 which evaluated the student teachers' competence of teaching intonation, stress and rhythm. Since these two items are closely related we can see that in the post-test approximately same percentage of students reported agreement, 69.1% in item 10 and 63.9% in item

11. Lastly, a less important change is found for item 12 which asked the student teachers to evaluate their competence to select a range of oral activities to develop accuracy. The pre-test results display that 77.3% (27.8 + 49.5) the student teachers are competent to develop accuracy while the post-test result shows 78.4% (15.5 + 62.9) are competent.

Items	PRE-TEST %					POST-TEST %				
	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA	A	N	D	SD
1. I can create a supportive atmosphere that invites learners to take part in speaking activities.	21.6	58.8	17.5	2.1	-	38.1	51.5	7.2	2.1	1.0
2. I can evaluate and select meaningful speaking and interactional activities to encourage learners of differing abilities to participate.	15.5	60.8	21.6	2.1	-	19.6	64.9	12.4	3.1	-
3. I can evaluate and select meaningful speaking and interactional activities to encourage learners to express their opinions, identity, culture etc.	20.6	60.8	18.6	-	-	21.6	68.0	9.3	1.0	-
4. I can evaluate and select a range of meaningful speaking and interactional activities to develop fluency (discussion, role play, problem solving etc.)	18.6	55.7	25.8	-	-	25.8	55.7	15.5	3.1	-
5. I can evaluate and select different activities to help learners to become aware of and use different text types (telephone conversations, transactions, speeches etc.).	24.7	61.9	13.4	-	-	25.8	61.9	9.3	2.1	1.0
6. I can evaluate and select a variety of materials to stimulate speaking activities (visual aids, texts, authentic materials etc.)	33.0	54.6	11.3	1.0	-	36.1	51.5	10.3	2.1	-
7. I can evaluate and select activities which help learners to participate in ongoing spoken exchanges (conversations, transactions etc.) and to initiate or respond to utterances appropriately.	14.4	50.5	28.9	6.2	-	23.7	58.8	14.4	2.1	1.0
8. I can evaluate and select various activities to help learners to identify and use typical features of spoken language (informal language, fillers etc.).	16.5	44.3	30.9	8.2	-	21.6	57.7	16.5	3.1	1.0
9. I can help learners to use communication strategies (asking for clarification, comprehension checks etc.) and compensation strategies (paraphrasing, simplification etc. when engaging in spoken interaction).	20.6	56.7	15.5	7.2	-	34.0	52.6	11.3	2.1	-
10. I can evaluate and select a variety of techniques to make learners aware of, discriminate and help them to pronounce sounds in the target language.	17.5	47.4	27.8	7.2	-	22.7	46.4	22.7	7.2	1.0
11. I can evaluate and select a variety of techniques to make learners aware of and help them to use stress, rhythm and intonation.	9.3	33.0	38.1	18.6	1.0	15.5	48.5	26.8	8.2	1.0
12. I can evaluate and select a range of oral activities to develop accuracy (grammar, word choice etc.).	27.8	49.5	17.5	5.2	-	15.5	62.9	12.4	4.1	1.0

Table 4.1. Student teachers' level of competence on speaking

In the following sub-section the student teachers' perceptions of their teaching writing were sought. Unlike the change in their speaking competence in the pre and post-test the change in their writing competence is less remarkable. The student teachers' agreement with the items exploring their writing competence increased slightly. In the items 14, 16, 17, 23 and 24 the change is no more than 7%. In terms of helping students plan and structure writing, item 19 a change could not be identified. Moreover, in items 18, 19 and 20 a decrease was identified. For instance, while 85.6% (32.0 + 53.6) of the student teachers found themselves competent to help learners gather and share information for their writing tasks in the pre-test in the post-test 77.3% (19.6 + 57.7) students found themselves competent. Only major difference detected in this section is in terms of using a variety of techniques to help learners develop awareness of the structure, coherence and cohesion of a text and produce texts accordingly. In the pre-test 59.8% (10.3 + 49.5) the student teachers indicated an agreement with the item and the agreement increased to 74.2% (11.3 + 62.9) in the post test.

Items	PRE-TEST %					POST-TEST %				
	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA	A	N	D	SD
13. I can evaluate and select meaningful activities to encourage learners to develop their creative potential.	25.8	45.4	26.8	2.1	-	23.7	58.8	12.4	4.1	1.0
14. I can evaluate and select a range of meaningful writing activities to help learners become aware of and use appropriate language for different text types (letters, stories, reports etc).	29.9	49.5	16.5	3.1	1.0	26.8	56.7	13.4	2.1	1.0
15. I can evaluate and select texts in a variety of text types to function as good examples for the learners' writing.	17.5	53.6	20.6	8.2	-	25.8	52.6	16.5	5.2	-
16. I can evaluate and select a variety of materials to stimulate writing (authentic materials, visual aids etc.).	18.6	56.7	18.6	6.2	-	28.9	48.5	17.5	4.1	1.0
17. I can evaluate and select activities which help learners to participate in written exchanges (emails, job applications etc.) and to initiate or respond to texts appropriately.	20.6	55.7	20.6	3.1	-	23.7	57.7	14.4	2.1	2.1
18. I can help learners to gather and share information for their writing tasks.	32.0	53.6	11.3	3.1	-	19.6	57.7	14.4	7.2	1.0
19. I can help learners to plan and structure written texts (e.g. by using mind maps, outlines etc.).	28.9	47.4	18.6	5.2	-	28.9	47.4	17.5	4.1	2.1
20. I can help learners to monitor, reflect on, edit and improve their own writing.	20.6	51.5	22.7	3.1	2.1	23.7	45.4	23.7	7.2	-
21. I can use peer-assessment and feedback to assist the writing process.	27.8	49.5	16.5	5.2	1.0	29.9	46.4	14.4	7.2	2.1
22. I can use a variety of techniques to help learners to develop awareness of the structure, coherence and cohesion of a text and produce texts accordingly.	10.3	49.5	32.0	8.2	-	11.3	62.9	21.6	3.1	1.0
23. I can evaluate and select a variety of techniques to make learners aware of and use spelling patterns and irregular spelling.	15.5	51.5	24.7	8.2	-	15.5	58.8	20.6	5.2	-
24. I can evaluate and select writing activities to consolidate learning (grammar, vocabulary, spelling etc.).	23.7	52.6	21.6	2.1	-	24.7	57.7	13.4	3.1	1.0

Table 4.2. Student teachers' level of competence in writing

The next sub-section in the methodology part is associated with the student teachers' teaching listening skills. The changes in this section are more like the changes in speaking section. There is an overall development in students teaching listening competences. Yet, the rise in the items 25, associated with selecting appropriate texts; 26, designing , pre-listening activities; and 27, using existing knowledge along with item 31, assessing the competence dealing with unknown vocabulary is not much striking. The reason may be attributed to already high agreement of the student teachers in the pre-test results. In item 25 for instance 83.5% (40.2 + 43.3) students in the pre-test and 86.6% (44.3 + 42.3) in the post-test displayed consent. The changes are more marked in the items 30 and 32, 19.6% and 22.7% respectively. In item 32 the student teachers were asked whether they can evaluate and select a variety of post-listening tasks to provide a bridge between listening and other skills. While 62.9% (16.5 + 46.4) of the student teachers agreed in the pre-test 85.6% (38.1 + 47.4) reported agreement in the post-test results.

Items	PRE-TEST %					POST-TEST %				
	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA	A	N	D	SD
25. I can select texts appropriate to the needs, interests and language level of the learners.	40.2	43.3	13.4	3.1	-	44.3	42.3	12.4	1.0	-
26. I can provide a range of pre-listening activities which help learners to orientate themselves to a text.	22.7	56.7	17.5	3.1	-	37.1	47.4	13.4	1.0	1.0
27. I can encourage learners to use their knowledge of a topic and their expectations about a text when listening.	24.7	54.6	17.5	3.1	-	36.1	48.5	13.4	2.1	-
28. I can design and select different activities in order to practise and develop different listening strategies (listening for gist, specific information, etc.)	13.4	45.4	32.0	9.3	-	33.0	46.4	17.5	2.1	1.0
29. I can design and select different activities which help learners to recognise and interpret typical features of spoken language (tone of voice, intonation, style of speaking etc.).	11.3	45.4	27.8	14.4	1.0	19.6	48.5	28.9	3.1	-
30. I can help learners to apply strategies to cope with typical aspects of spoken language (background noise, redundancy etc.)	9.3	34.0	38.1	17.5	1.0	14.4	48.5	33.0	3.1	1.0
31. I can help learners to apply strategies to cope with difficult or unknown vocabulary of a text.	28.9	52.6	13.4	5.2	-	35.1	49.5	14.4	1.0	-
32. I can evaluate and select a variety of post-listening tasks to provide a bridge between listening and other skills.	16.5	46.4	32.0	4.1	1.0	38.1	47.4	11.3	2.1	1.0

Table 4.3. Student teachers' level of competence in listening

In the methodology part the student teachers were also invited to reflect on their teaching reading competences and they were addressed 9 items in this section. The results continue to project the general rise. Nevertheless, in two of the items the student teachers' agreement slipped back though not very sharply. In terms of applying appropriate ways of reading a text in class, item 36, 88.7% (45.4 + 43.3) of the student teachers found themselves competent in the pre-test results whereas in the post-test results 79.4% (43.3 + 36.1) of the student teachers found themselves competent. This may be due to the fact that before taking the related courses the student teachers did not realize the factors considered in selecting text the variety of the reading techniques that can be applied and the courses taken might have made them more aware of these facts. The most noteworthy increase in this section occurred in items 39 and 41, by 19.6% and 22.7%. 62.9% (18.6 + 44.3) of the student teachers indicated that they can evaluate and select a variety of post-reading tasks to provide a bridge between reading and other skills and 52.6% (10.3 + 42.3) of them stated that they can help learners develop critical reading skills in the pre-tests. These percentages increased to 82.5% (35.1 and 49.5) for item 39 and 75.3% (25.8 + 49.5) for item 41 in the post-test results.

Items	PRE-TEST %					POST-TEST %				
	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA	A	N	D	SD
33. I can select texts appropriate to the needs, interests and language level of the learners.	40.2	47.4	9.3	3.1	-	48.5	37.1	13.4	1.0	-
34. I can provide a range of pre-reading activities to help learners to orientate themselves to a text.	25.8	51.5	21.6	1.0	-	44.3	43.3	9.3	2.0	2.1
35. I can encourage learners to use their knowledge of a topic and their expectations about a text when reading.	30.9	49.5	15.5	4.1	-	36.1	46.4	16.5	1.0	-
36. I can apply appropriate ways of reading a text in class (e.g. aloud, silently, in groups etc.)	45.4	43.3	8.2	3.1	-	43.3	36.1	18.6	1.0	1.0
37. I can set different activities in order to practise and develop different reading strategies according to the purpose of reading (skimming, scanning etc.).	27.8	49.5	17.5	4.1	1,0	42.3	45.4	11.3	1.0	-
38. I can help learners to develop different strategies to cope with difficult or unknown vocabulary in a text.	25.8	57.7	14.4	2.1	-	35.1	49.5	13.4	1.0	1.0
39. I can evaluate and select a variety of post-reading tasks to provide a bridge between reading and other skills.	18.6	44.3	29.9	5.2	2,1	35.1	47.4	13.4	4.1	-
40. I can recommend books appropriate to the needs, interests and language level of the learners.	29.9	40.2	21.6	6.2	2,1	33.0	42.3	13.4	8.2	3.1
41. I can help learners to develop critical reading skills (reflection, interpretation, analysis etc.).	10.3	42.3	38.1	8.2	1,0	25.8	50.5	16.5	6.2	1.0

Table 4.4. Student teachers' level of competence in reading

Student teachers' perceptions of teaching grammar were also explored in the methodology section. The changes in the grammar section are not major besides the fall in some items is also noticeable. The highest increase was detected in item 45 which examined the student teachers' use of grammatical metalanguage when necessary, an increase from 54.6% (13.4 + 41.2) to 63.9% (25.8 + 38.1) was seen. Although not very sharp a decrease in item 44, dealing with questions learners may ask about grammar and was discovered. For item 44 the percentage dropped from 76.3% (26.8 + 49.5) to 69.1% (22.7 + 46.4). Yet, it is evident that most of the students are competent with teaching grammar.

Items	PRE-TEST %					POST-TEST %				
	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA	A	N	D	SD
42. I can introduce a grammatical item and help learners to practise it through meaningful contexts and appropriate texts.	22.7	45.4	22.7	7.2	2.1	21.6	53.6	19.6	3.1	2.1
43. I can introduce, and help students to deal with, new or unknown items of grammar in a variety of ways (teacher presentation, awareness-raising, discovery etc.).	24.7	50.5	17.5	6.2	1.0	27.8	55.7	9.3	6.2	1.0
44. I can deal with questions learners may ask about grammar and, if necessary, refer to appropriate grammar reference books.	26.8	49.5	16.5	5.2	2.1	22.7	46.4	18.6	8.2	4.1
45. I can use grammatical metalanguage if and when appropriate to the learners' needs.	13.4	41.2	37.1	6.2	2.1	25.8	38.1	28.9	5.2	2.1
46. I can evaluate and select grammatical exercises and activities, which support learning and encourage oral and written communication.	25.8	52.6	19.6	1.0	10	27.8	48.5	18.6	3.1	2.1

Table 4.5. Student teachers' level of competence in grammar

The last sub-section of the methodology section is comprised of three items assessing vocabulary teaching competence. There is a slight decrease in the first two items. 91.7% (40.6 + 51.0) for item 47 dropped to 86.6% (27.8 + 48.5) and for item 48, 86.6% (27.8 + 58.8) to 82.5% (38.1 + 44.3). The decline might be attributed to the awareness the students might have gained after taking up the related courses. On the other hand a notable increase was found in the last item, the competence to evaluate and select activities which enhance learners' awareness of register differences. The percentage went up from 46.4% (8.2 + 38.1) to 72, and 9% (21.6 + 50.5).

Items	PRE-TEST %					POST-TEST %				
	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA	A	N	D	SD
47. I can evaluate and select a variety of activities which help learners to learn vocabulary.	40.6	51.0	7.3	1.0	-	39.2	47.4	10.3	3.1	-
48. I can evaluate and select tasks which help learners to use new vocabulary in oral and written contexts.	27.8	58.8	12.4	1.0	-	38.1	44.3	12.4	4.1	1.0
49. I can evaluate and select activities which enhance learners' awareness of register differences.	8.2	38.1	47.4	6.2	-	21.6	50.5	23.7	23.7	4.1

Table 4.6. Student teachers' level of competence in vocabulary

4.1.2. Findings of Lesson Planning Section of the EPOSTL

The second part of the questionnaire intended to identify the student teachers' perception of their lesson planning competences. Similar to the methodology section, the lesson planning part was subdivided into categories and each category aspired to assess different competences necessary to plan lessons. The first sub-section of this part explored student teachers' competences of identifying learning objectives. It is obvious from the pre-test results that less student teachers reported higher competence in terms of identifying learning objectives compared to previous sections, yet the increase in post-test results is remarkable. Except item 55, the student teachers were found out to have improved themselves in identifying objectives. Although 77.3% (10.3 + 67.0) of the students agreed that they can encourage learners to reflect the percentage dropped to 69.1% (24.7 + 44.3). Especially items 52, 53, and 54 had respectively higher percentages. In the pre-test 54.6% (8.2 + 46.4) reported an agreement with the ability to set objectives which challenge learners to reach their full potential and it rose to 76.3% (21.6 + 54.6). Similarly, in terms of deciding whether to formulate objectives in terms of skills, topics, situations, and linguistic systems half of the students (50.5%) stated their agreement; in contrast, in the post-test 71.1% of them agreed with the item.

Items	PRE-TEST %					POST-TEST %				
	SA	**A**	**N**	**D**	**SD**	**SA**	**A**	**N**	**D**	**SD**
50. I can identify curriculum requirements and set learning aims and objectives suited to my learners' needs and interests.	16.5	47.4	27.8	8.2	-	24.7	56.7	14.4	3.1	1.0
51. I can plan specific learning objectives for individual lessons and/or for a period of teaching.	11.3	50.5	28.9	7.2	2.1	30.9	46.4	17.5	5.2	-
52. I can set objectives which challenge learners to reach their full potential.	8.2	46.4	34.0	11.3	-	21.6	54.6	17.5	5.2	1.0
53. I can set objectives which take into account the differing levels of ability and special educational needs of the learners.	13.4	44.3	33.0	7.2	2.1	24.7	53.6	18.6	3.1	-
54. I can decide whether to formulate objectives in terms of skills, topics, situations, linguistic systems (functions, notions, forms etc.).	6.2	44.3	37.1	11.3	1.0	15.5	55.7	22.7	5.2	-
55. I can set objectives which encourage learners to reflect on their learning.	10.3	67.0	22.7	-	-	24.7	44.3	26.8	3.1	1.0

Table 4.7. Student teachers' level of competence in lesson objectives

The next sub-section of lesson planning was associated with lesson content. The student teachers responded to twelve items in this section. In general there is a slight increase in the student teachers' agreement with the item in the post test results. Yet, the post-test results represent that the majority of the student teachers are competent in terms of the items in this section. The increase in the items 63, 64 and 66 is very small. However, in the pre-test, 80% and above of the students already agreed with items 63 and 64. When it comes to considering learners feedback for future lessons the increase is not great. 71.1% (13.4 + 57.7) slightly increased to 77.3 (27.8 + 49.5). More students seem to improve themselves in terms of items 57, 58 and 62. In terms of combining activities to ensure the interdependence of the skills in the pre-test 67.0% (10.3 + 56.7) of the student teachers agreed while 84.5% (27.8 + 56.7) agreed in the post-test. This result is compatible with the results in the methodology section since the students indicated a higher percentage in combining skills. Thus, it is clear that the majority of the student teachers are good at integrating skills. In parallel with these results, more student teachers reported agreement with varying and balancing activities to include a variety of skills and competences. 64.9% (8.2 + 56.7) increased to 80.4% (29.9 + 50.5) in the post-test results.

Items	PRE-TEST %					POST-TEST %				
	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA	A	N	D	SD
56. I can structure lesson plans and/or plan for periods of teaching in a coherent and varied sequence of content.	5.2	45.4	42.3	7.2	-	18.6	51.5	22.7	4.1	3.1
57. I can vary and balance activities to include a variety of skills and competences.	8.2	56.7	27.8	7.2	-	29.9	50.5	16.5	3.1	-
58. I can plan activities to ensure the interdependence of listening, reading, writing and speaking.	10.3	56.7	27.8	5.2	-	27.8	56.7	12.4	2.1	1.0
59. I can plan activities to emphasise the interdependence of language and culture.	15.5	51.5	30.9	2.1	-	25.8	53.6	16.5	3.1	1.0
60. I can plan activities which link grammar and vocabulary with communication.	21.6	56.7	18.6	2.1	1.0	29.9	47.4	18.6	3.1	1.0
61. I can plan to teach elements of other subjects using the target language (cross- curricular teaching, CLIL etc.).	13.4	42.3	35.1	6.2	3.1	20.6	42.3	28.9	7.2	1.0
62. I can identify time needed for specific topics and activities and plan accordingly.	15.5	53.6	24.7	6.2	-	22.7	59.8	15.5	-	2.1
63. I can design activities to make the learners aware and build on their existing knowledge.	18.6	62.9	17.5	1.0	-	36.1	46.4	15.5	2.1	-
64. I can vary and balance activities to enhance and sustain the learners' motivation and interest.	19.6	61.9	16.5	2.1	-	37.1	50.5	8.2	3.1	1.0
65. I can vary and balance activities in order to respond to individuals learners' learning styles.	11.3	57.7	27.8	3.1	1.0	37.1	44.3	13.4	5.2	-
66. I can take on board learners' feedback and comments and incorporate this in future lessons.	13.4	57.7	27.8	1.0	-	27.8	49.5	18.6	2.1	2.1
67. I can involve learners in lesson planning.	18.6	51.5	21.6	8.2	-	34.0	45.4	15.5	3.1	2.1

Table 4.8. Student teachers' level of competence in the lesson content

The student teachers' perceptions of lesson organization is also sought under lesson planning. As it can be seen in Table 4.8 items 68, 69, 70 and 71 were related to lesson organization. The increase in the post-test results in terms of agreement is obvious from the table. When it comes to promoting oral production the student teachers appear to have improved greatly after taking up the course which can also be seen in item 69. In terms of planning for learner presentations and learner interaction 74.2% (20.6 + 53.6) of the students indicated agreement and more student teachers improved themselves and the percentage goes up to 90.7% (32.0 + 58.8). This percentage is also in line with the results of the speaking section. The results obtained from items 68 and 70 show that more student teachers gained confidence in the post test in terms of deciding on organizational forms and collaborating with other teachers. In the pre-test 59.8% (9.3 + 50.5) of the students identified themselves competent to plan when and how to use the target language and the percentage rose to 74.2% (21.6 + 52.6). Although the increase is obvious 25% of the students still have problems in mind associated with the target language use.

Items	PRE-TEST %					POST-TEST %				
	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA	A	N	D	SD
68. I can select from and plan a variety of organisational forms (frontal, individual, pair, and group work) as appropriate.	14.4	50.5	28.9	6.2	-	32.0	51.5	14.4	1.0	1.0
69. I can plan for learner presentations and learner interaction.	20.6	53.6	20.6	4.1	1.0	32.0	58.0	8.3	1.0	-
70. I can plan when and how to use the target language, including metalanguage I may need in the classroom.	9.3	50.5	34.0	5.2	1.0	21.6	52.6	22.7	2.1	1.0
71. I can plan lessons and periods of teaching with other teachers and/or student teachers (team teaching, with other subject teachers etc.).	16.5	49.5	27.8	4.1	2.1	25.8	56.7	15.5	2.1	-

Table 4.9. Student teachers' level of competence in lesson organization

4.1.3. Findings of Conducting a Lesson Section of the EPOSTL

The third part in the questionnaire was comprised of the items that meant to assess student teachers' perceptions of conducting a lesson. Likewise the other sections this section was split into sub-sections. The first sub-section that will be mentioned is related to student teachers' perceptions of using their lesson plans. The post-test results indicate that about 75% of the students are competent in using lesson plans. A little increase is seen in item 73 (from 79.4% to 81.4%) and a minor decrease in item 72 (78, 4 % to 77, 3). For items 74, 75 and 77 there is an increase of 10%. 68.0 (22.7 + 45.4) of the student teachers can ensure smooth transitions between activities and tasks in the pre-test on the other hand, 78.4% (28.9 + 49.5) of them reported capability in the post-test. Similarly, in the pre-test 66.0% (14.4 + 51.5) of the student teachers indicated that they can finish off a lesson in a focused way; nonetheless, in the post-test results 76.3% (29.9 + 46.4) of them reported to be competent.

Items	PRE-TEST %					POST-TEST %				
	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA	A	N	D	SD
72. I can start a lesson in an engaging way.	28.9	49.5	17.5	3.1	1.0	36.1	41.2	20.6	-	2.1
73. I can be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses.	33.0	46.4	15.5	4.1	1.0	37.1	44.3	14.4	4.1	-
74. I can ensure smooth transitions between activities and tasks for individuals, groups and the whole class.	22.7	45.4	25.8	6.2	-	28.9	49.5	19.6	1.0	1.0
75. I can adjust my time schedule when unforeseen situations occur.	15.5	49.5	30.9	3.1	1.1	27.8	46.4	21.6	4.1	-
76. I can time classroom activities to reflect individual learners' attention spans.	13.4	56.7	24.7	4.1	1.0	28.9	48.5	18.6	3.1	1.0
77. I can finish off a lesson in a focused way.	14.4	51.5	28.9	4.1	1.0	29.9	46.4	19.6	4.1	-

Table 4.10. Student teachers' level of competence in using lesson plans

The next sub-section under the lesson planning is related to lesson content. The student teachers were addressed four items linked with their perceptions of lesson content. As it can be seen from Table 4.11 the least increase is seen in the item 81 which was about relating language and culture. 72.2% (15.5 + 56.7) of the students agreed with the item in the pre-test; on the other hand; in the post-test results the percentage went up to 74.2 (24.7 + 49.5). Although the rise is not great it is clear that the majority of the students are capable of relating language and cultural elements. The highest increase on the other hand is seen in item 78. 66.0% (9.3 + 56.7) of the students indicated that they can present language content in ways which are appropriate for individuals and specific groups of learners in the pre-test in the post test the percentage of the student teachers indicated competence rose to 78.4% (27.8 + 50.5).

Items	PRE-TEST %					POST-TEST %				
	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA	A	N	D	SD
78. I can present language content (new and previously encountered items of language, topics etc.) in ways which are appropriate for individuals and specific groups of learners.	9.3	56.7	32.0	2.1	-	27.8	50.5	19.6	1.0	1.0
79. I can relate what I teach to learners' knowledge and previous language learning experiences.	13.4	63.9	20.6	1.0	1.0	35.1	49.5	14.4	1.0	-
80. I can relate what I teach to current events in local and international contexts.	12.4	54.6	30.9	2.1	-	23.7	51.5	20.6	3.1	1.0
81. I can relate the language I am teaching to the culture of those who speak it.	15.5	56.7	25.8	2.1	-	24.7	49.5	23.7	2.1	-

Table 4.11. Student teachers' level of competence in content

The last section associated with lesson content intended to assess student teachers' capability of interaction with learners. In this last section of the questionnaire the student teachers were invited to respond to 7 items. The student teachers were found to have improved themselves in all of the items in this section. Especially in terms of item 83 the increase is obvious. 57.7% (20.6 + 37.1) of the student teachers indicated that they can keep and maximize the attention of learners during a lesson in the pre-test. In the post-test 73.2% (32.0 + 41.2) of the students indicated ability. Another item worth mentioning is item 87 which explores student teachers' ability to make explicit and help learners develop appropriate learning strategies. The percentage rose from 67.0% (10.3 + 56.7) to 81.4% (26.8 + 54.6). Lastly for the item 86, with regards to the ability to cater for a range of learning styles, 30% of the student teachers are not sure about their ability to meet the requirements of different learning styles although an 11.4% is increase is detected.

Items	PRE-TEST %					POST-TEST %				
	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA	A	N	D	SD
82. I can settle a group of learners into a room and gain their attention at the beginning of a lesson.	22.7	48.5	24.7	3.1	1.0	30.9	51.5	13.4	3.1	1.0
83. I can keep and maximise the attention of learners during a lesson.	20.6	37.1	37.1	2.1	3.1	32.0	41.2	21.6	4.1	1.0
84. I can be responsive and react supportively to learner initiative and interaction.	18.6	51.5	27.8	2.1	-	35.1	46.4	13.4	4.1	1.0
85. I can encourage learner participation whenever possible.	26.8	51.5	17.5	4.1	-	43.3	44.3	20.3	2.1	-
86. I can cater for a range of learning styles.	11.3	46.4	39.2	2.1	1.0	26.8	42.3	24.7	5.2	1.0
87. I can make explicit and help learners to develop appropriate learning strategies.	10.3	56.7	30.9	2.1	-	26.8	54.6	13.4	5.2	-
88. I can take on different roles according to the needs of the learners and requirements of the activity (resource person, mediator, supervisor etc.).	23.7	54.6	18.6	2.1	1.0	27.8	54.6	15.5	1.0	1.0

Table 4.12. Student teachers' level of competence in interaction with learners

4.1.4. Findings of the Interview: Student Teachers' Comments on their Professional Development

The improvement the student teachers made in the third grade after taking Methodology I, II and other teacher development courses is evident from the survey results. In terms of most of the competences in the EPOSTL the student teachers demonstrated progress. The student teachers were also appealed to indicate whether they feel to develop professionally after taking up Methodology courses and other teacher development courses and their responses were uniform with survey results. All of the participants in the interview procedure pointed that they have improved substantially. Methodology and other teacher development courses contributed them pedagogically and they had the chance to base their knowledge on a solid background. After taking up the courses they grasped the rationale behind the theories and took a further step to be better teachers.

> Before taking skills teaching course I could design real-life tasks to involve learners in the lesson in micro-teachings. Yet, in the third year I understood the rationale behind the activity. At the end of the year I completely grasped why I do it, I comprehended the objectives well.
>
> (Student Teacher 1)

> I improved myself in terms of methodological background. In the first and second grade we focused on language itself however in the third and fourth grade we focused on methodology and

approaches. I have acquired the skills to teach a language that I have not encountered before.

<div align="right">(Student Teacher 2)</div>

In the fourth grade more emphasis placed upon practical aspects and I realized that I have developed a lot. For instance we took up teaching young learners course in the fourth grade and in summer I had an experience to work with young learners. I saw that I was able to apply what I have acquired in the courses both the theories and practices. I was able to make use of them and adjusting them to my context.

<div align="right">(Student Teacher 3)</div>

From the third grade on in my opinion I improved greatly, but this is not due to the teaching experience we started this year. The theoretical background I attained in the third year was accompanied by practice, micro-teachings. I realized that I am going to be a teacher in the third and fourth grade in these courses.

<div align="right">(Student Teacher 4)</div>

I have greatly benefited from methodology and skills teaching courses. The presentations we did benefited me in terms of teaching four skills. I had difficulty in teaching and integrating the skills but after the course I built the theories I learned on a solid background. Examples, scenarios helped a lot.

<div align="right">(Student Teacher 9)</div>

…I was exposed to traditional teaching and it was the only way to teach a language in my mind. Yet, third grade courses have changed my viewpoint. In the third grade I made sense of what we have explored thanks to presentations and micro-teachings and I have seen the applicability of all methods, approaches, techniques, tasks whatever in micro-teachings.

<div align="right">(Student Teacher 11)</div>

4.2. Findings of the Interview Procedure: The Reasons of Progress or Regression in term of Teaching Competences

The comparison of the EPOSTL pre and post test results proved the progress the student teachers made in terms of most of the competences appeared in the EPOSTL. Although there is a recognizable positive change there are competences that no or little change was detected. However, the EPOSTL survey intended to identify the degree of

the improvement in terms of teaching competences, not the reasons behind the improvement. The interview was conducted with the purpose of exhibiting the reasons behind the growth. It was carried out to identify the factors affected the development of the EPOSTL competences. Within the interview procedure the student teachers were asked to identify the possible reasons for the progression or regression. The student teachers were invited to recall the process they had been undergoing since the beginning of the third grade and explain the possible reasons of progress in terms of most of the competences in the EPOSTL. The reasons of progression or regression will be presented from this point forward with direct quotations form the student teachers.

When the reasons they put forward were analyzed and it was found out that the student teachers linked the progress in the EPOSTL competences to the teacher development courses in the third grade. Although it was assumed that the student teachers would attribute the progress to the teaching experience, it was the opposite and the student teachers indicated that teacher development courses especially Methodology and Skills Teaching courses contributed to their development. They identified presentations and micro-teachings as more useful in their development than teaching experience. The feedback they received from their instructors were found to be worthwhile and beneficial in terms of professional development. They stated their disappointment in relation to teaching experience and asserted that it has not been contributory so far. One student stated that teacher development courses in the third grade guided them how to present the language knowledge they possess thus enabled their progress.

> We possess the knowledge of the language. We have background in grammar, vocabulary and other skills. Yet, we did not know how to canalize this knowledge, here we learned how to transfer our knowledge of language.
>
> (Student Teacher 6)

Similarly two students initiated:

> In the first two grades we focused on our own language development. We strived to fine-tune our language. Yet, in the third and fourth grade we have been learning how to teach a language. The development is due to this.
>
> (Student Teacher 2)

The reason of the progress is definitely the skills teaching and the methodology courses, the pedagogical background we attained in these lessons.

(Student Teacher 1)

Another student put forward that teacher development courses manifested the rationale behind necessary practices thus raised their awareness to the importance of classroom applications and urged them to make use of them.

In my opinion the development is of course because of teacher development courses. We took various teacher development courses in the third grade. For instance we intrinsically know that an English teacher should use English as the medium of instruction. In the teacher development courses we learned the reasons behind why we should use English. If a teacher speaks Turkish there will be no input for learners or we learn in which cases it is appropriate to use the mother tongue such as clarification. So the courses affected our development as a teacher.

(Student Teacher 5)

All of the student teachers participated in the interview reached a consensus in presentations' and micro-teachings' place in their development as teachers. These presentations and micro-teachings within Skills Teaching and Methodology courses were assumed to put their knowledge on a ground thus gave them a chance to try out what they acquired. Presentations and micro-teachings put forward what they should focus on or build on. They also created an opportunity for the student teachers to link theories with practice.

The reason of improvement is exactly the courses we took, especially skills teaching course. Theory and practice was bridged. At first theoretical background was difficult to grasp. Yet, then we linked theories to practices. We did micro-teachings. At the end of the term I felt myself ready to teach.

(Student Teacher 3)

The reason of the development is exactly related to presentations and micro-teachings. We have discovered what certain age groups or levels have in their background or what they need and how much they can accomplish. For instance I know what a learner of a specific level knows or does not know. It is my personal problem that I cannot decide the words to use or how to grade my language. I have also seen this deficiency during the presentations. Yet, the presentations clarified the background, needs of the learners.

(Student Teacher 4)

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> The progress is because of third year courses like skills teaching. We have acquired how to apply theories. We did presentations, got feedback, and corrected ourselves, presented again. What I mean is we closely dealt with the areas progressed in the survey. We presented over and over again. This was the reason of the development.
>
> (Student Teacher 11)

> In the third grade we produced many projects, prepared materials, and did presentation and micro-teachings. For instance we did not know how to grade our language. Presentations and micro-teachings taught this to us.
>
> (Student Teacher 13)

Lastly, the student teachers asserted that feedback provided by their teacher trainers after their micro-teachings and presentations reconstructed their knowledge and was invaluable for their development. During the micro-teachings and presentations they were able to detect what they can or cannot do. However without the feedback it seems a change would not be accomplished.

> The reason of the improvement is especially in terms of teaching skills due to our courses. Our instructor provided very structured feedback to encourage our development.
>
> (Student Teacher 8)
>
> …The evaluations and feedback our instructor provided were very valuable. Our presentations were evaluated from a lot of aspects that helped my improvement.
>
> (Student Teacher 10)

> …Feedbacks, presentation were very helpful in our development. Our instructors tried to change our viewpoint.
>
> (Student Teacher 13)

> …we did things wrong which we thought we did right. The feedback provided was very effective. In the light of the feedback we received we corrected ourselves and developed a lot.
>
> (Student Teacher 12)

Development in terms of the EPOSTL competences was expected and it is important in terms of the efficacy of the teacher education program enforced. On the other hand in terms of some competences regressions or no change were detected. This result was hard to explain and it is assumed that there might be other reasons caused regression other than teacher development courses unlike the case in development of the competences. The student teachers were also invited to comment on the reasons of progression and as it was considered different reasons were brought forward by the

student teachers and six categories were identified. The reasons were categorized as the student teachers' own background in the related competences, a lack of extra research and practice on these competences, ignorance of some of the competences in the courses, unreal practice opportunities and lastly overgeneralization of the competences and metalanguage used in the EPOSTL. The students in the interview undertook the responsibility of the regression and related it to their own incompetencies in language. They asserted they will not be confident at teaching something they do not feel themselves comfortable. Even though they might have focused on some of the competences they suggested the deficiencies lay in their background.

> …Another reason might be our own background related to these skills, writing, speaking, reflection are the areas we also feel weaker.
>
> (Student Teacher 3)

> It is also associated with our background. Writing is left there and not touched upon a lot. First we should develop our own writing competence.
>
> (Student Teacher 13)

There was also one student who asserted that the lack of the confidence in some of the competences are culturally-oriented.

> The reason of regression is associated with our background. For instance in terms of reflection in writing, we are mostly orientational. We are not open to criticism or criticizing. We are not used to checklists, peer-editing or giving constructive feedback so, it is difficult for us to teach them. Our educational system is on the other hand based on European policies or systems. So we are expected to possess all the skills a European has culturally but our contextual needs are ignored. When these European associated systems are applied we fail. In my opinion our weak sides should be identified.
>
> (Student Teacher 4)

The majority of the student teachers in the interview put forward that incompetence in the areas identified stems from the student teachers' own indifference and neglect with regards to those areas. They asserted that neglect resulted in a certain level of drop in their own competence and caused regression in their competences. Since they do not have the curiosity to research and learn the development remained limited. However,

they suggested that it is their responsibility to carry out more research on their weaknesses or areas not covered in detail in the courses.

> Regression can be linked to our interests. For instance we do not put much emphasis on pronunciation. We are not curious and do not look up and research a lot. When I think about my peers' performance I can say this. They do not put much effort to learn themselves. Another point may be the affective filters we have as teachers in terms of some areas, again such as pronunciation.
>
> (Student Teacher 13)

> The reason of non-development is due to not using those skills or ignoring them for instance pronunciation and teaching pronunciation is generally ignored. If peers do not focus on it, make research on it and try to develop themselves these competences recede not improve.
>
> (Student Teacher 5)

> I agree that some of our skills receded back. Further progress is directly related with the research or practice we do on our own outside the school. For instance in terms of grammar I feel myself less competent since I have not focused on it as closely as I have focused on speaking so in time my confidence normally slips back.
>
> (Student Teacher 6)

> Development should not be limited to classroom. Besides the things we learned in the classroom we should research and practice to develop ourselves more. The regression is directly related with this. For instance writing is not a skill we practice a lot. Hence, getting students practice is a skill we ignore and do not focus on a lot. Another reason might be attributed to the fact that we try out methods in idealized contexts, we are aware of it and we do not know well the real contexts and this creates questions marks in our minds.
>
> (Student Teacher 9)

One student indicated that in micro-teachings weak areas were identified and possible actions were suggested, yet the responsibility should be assumed by student teachers for further development.

> ... They could not make use of the feedback to improve their teaching. They might get the feedback wrong. They might have though they are not competent on this and they cannot do anything to improve. If they have not done research or readings to improve it is normal. It is not course related but self-related.
>
> (Student Teacher 1)

Another reason mentioned by the student teachers' was the less emphasis placed on some of the competences during the course. They claimed some areas were not examined as closely as the others and thus resulted in regression.

> The reason of regression is less importance placed upon those items. For instance writing. We teach writing through controlled activities and do not allow much space for creativity or reflection in the course.
>
> (Student Teacher 3)

> As students we are extrinsically motivated. What I mean is we focus on something if it is discussed in a course or required for a course. Not much has been covered in terms of vocabulary teaching in the courses so we ignored it as a skill and we have forgotten what we have already know.
>
> (Student Teacher 2)

> It is because we have not focused on them. Pronunciation is for example ignored generally by Turkish students since we perceive it difficult. We have difficulty in learning it and teaching becomes more difficult. Thus, improvement in teaching pronunciation is not that straightforward. We have not analyzed teaching pronunciation separately, but we have dealt with together with listening so it might be underemphasized. In terms of teaching reading we have learned the methods and the techniques some of our friends worked on reading during micro-teachings but not all of us. So we need more practice and opportunities to try out those methods.
>
> (Student Teacher 8)

Another reason put forward was unreal contexts the student teachers did their micro-teachings or presentations. The context they practice was artificial and their peers were their audience not real learners. Thus, the student teachers might not be sure the degree to which they can accomplish some of the competences.

> One reason might be we did not have the chance to practice in real contexts. For instance we do not feel the urge to grade our language to a great extent since we present to our friends. The environment is not real thus we can make mistakes and we cannot balance everything. Thus, we doubt if we can really do them.
>
> (Student Teacher 2)

> …There is also the impact of experience. In my opinion some of the competences need time to develop such as integrating vocabulary and writing. Even I cannot say that I am very competent on this. We need time, especially in writing process. We do micro-teaching for 20 min., but we have to see our

performance in lengthier lesson. If we cannot attain objectives in a micro-teaching we might assume that we cannot accomplish it. Writing can be the best example. We might have lost our confidence due to time constraints.

(Student Teacher 13)

Another reason came up in the interview was student teachers' overgeneralizations at the beginning of the third grade. They perceived things so straightforward that some of the competences were easy to accomplish. Nevertheless, when related teacher development courses started, competences became more complex and they identified the actual degree of their performance in the post-test not an exaggerated one.

When you first administrated it at the beginning of the term we exaggerated our competences. It was as if we could accomplish everything written on it. However, during the course of the lesson we saw the reality. We realized what we cannot do. One of the reasons of regression is also this. But culturally we are not used to reflecting but to diagnosing our weakness but it is essential.

(Student Teacher 4)

Another point at the beginning is we were not knowledgeable about the details of those competences. We unconsciously thought we could carry out the competences in the EPOSTL. After the courses we became aware of those details. Courses raised our awareness to different aspects of teaching.

(Student Teacher 12)

Before third grade we carried out activities without understanding the reasons or objectives much. In the third grade we started to understand pedagogical backgrounds. When these details are learned some peers might be afraid of these details and the details learnt might cause them to feel less competent.

(Student Teacher 1)

…some peers might have lost their enthusiasm they had previously. And at the beginning we could not realize the complexity of those competences, I mean a single competence requires us to integrate many things together, we acknowledged this and understood some skills are not as straightforward as we thought at the beginning.

(Student Teacher 2)

One student associated regression with the metalanguage used.

…Another reason might be because of the metalanguage. Actually they do things like bottom-up, content schemata, but when metalanguage is used some peers are afraid. For instance in

an exam our friends failed to explain what they have done pedagogically. Because they do not know the metalanguage.

<div align="right">(Student Teacher 1)</div>

4.3. Findings of the Strongest and Weakest Competences

In the second part of the results the answers for the second and third research questions which are associated with perceived strongest and weakest competences are attempted to be discussed. The research questions two and three are not evaluated separately due to their reliance on each other. The findings presented in this section are only based on the post-test study since these results are obtained more recently than the pre-test results thus represents the current competences of the pre-service teachers more closely. The strongest and weakest competences will be presented under the main categories as in the discussion of the first research question and within each main category the strongest and weakest competences will be explored separately.

When scrutinized closely the findings of the post-test results show that more pre-service teachers found themselves competent in terms of teaching speaking/spoken interaction. The post-test results reveal that most of the percentages representing agreement with each item in this section range between 81.4% and 89.7% which substantiates that a big majority of the students feel themselves confident to teach this skill. Furthermore, higher percentages in some other items (items 69, 84) in other sections also support this confidence. There are also competences (item 10, 11, 12) less high in percentage than the mentioned items. On the other hand teaching grammar seems to be a competence the student teachers find themselves less confident. The percentages representing the student teachers' agreement change between 63.9% and 76.3%. Yet, there is also one item (43) in which the student teachers reported higher agreement by 83.5%. One must be aware of the fact that as indicated in the Council of Europe (2001) as language learners, student teachers, too might not be equally competent in each skill or sub skills. For this reason in this part the strongest and weakest competences will not be evaluated based on the whole survey but based on each section in the survey.

4.3.1. Findings of Methodology Section of the EPOSTL

As mentioned above the student teachers were found to be more competent in teaching speaking/spoken interaction when the results were examined generally. However, the student teachers' competency is not the same all through each item. The strongest competences perceived by the pre-service teachers are item 1, the ability to a create supportive atmosphere that invites learners to take part in speaking activities and item 3, the ability to evaluate and select meaningful speaking and interactional activities to encourage learners to express themselves by 89.7%. On the other hand, the student teachers found themselves least competent in evaluating and selecting a variety of techniques to make learners aware of stress, rhythm and intonation. This result is not very surprising since the student teachers participated in this study are not native speakers of English.

	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD
Strongest Competence	1. I can create a supportive atmosphere that invites learners to take part in speaking activities.	38.1	51.5	7.2	2.1	1.0
	3. I can evaluate and select meaningful speaking and interactional activities to encourage learners to express their opinions, identity, culture etc.	21.6	68.0	9.3	1.0	-
Weakest Competence	11. I can evaluate and select a variety of techniques to make learners aware of and help them to use stress, rhythm and intonation.	15.5	48.5	26.8	8.2	1.0

Table 4.13. The strongest and weakest competences in speaking

In terms of teaching writing the student teachers are most competent at evaluating and selecting writing activities to make learners aware of different texts and use of language by 83.5%. On the other hand when it comes to encouraging learners to reflect on their writing to edit 69.1% agreed that they can deal with the process. It is obvious some of the student teachers still need aid to promote reflection in their own classrooms.

	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD
Strongest Competence	14. I can evaluate and select a range of meaningful writing activities to help learners become aware of and use appropriate language for different text types (letters, stories, reports etc).	26.8	56.7	13.4	2.1	1.0
Weakest Competence	20. I can help learners to monitor, reflect on, edit and improve their own writing.	23.7	45.4	23.7	7.2	-

Table 4.14. The strongest and weakest competences in writing

Like in writing competence a majority (86.6%) of the student teachers indicated capability to select appropriate texts to encourage listening. However, only 62.9% of the student teachers found themselves competent to teach strategical skills to cope with listening texts. This result may be attributed to the fact that the student teachers are not native speakers and strategic listening skills are more complex. The student teachers might not be used to using those strategies and need time to be competent at using and teaching them.

	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD
Strongest Competence	25. I can select texts appropriate to the needs, interests and language level of the learners.	44.3	42.3	12.4	1.0	-
Weakest Competence	30. I can help learners to apply strategies to cope with typical aspects of spoken language (background noise, redundancy etc.)	14.4	48.5	33.0	3.1	1.0

Table 4.15. The strongest and weakest competences in listening

With regard to teaching reading 87.6% of the student teachers reported that they can provide a range of pre-reading activities to help learners orientate themselves to a text (item 34). Besides they can set different activities in order to practise and develop different reading strategies according to the purpose of reading (37). Item 37 seems to be contradicting with item 30 in the listening section. While they report that less confidence in teaching listening strategies they find themselves more confident in teaching reading strategies. This might be due to the fact that strategies for reading are less complex for their students since they will be see the text.

	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD
Strongest Competence	34. I can provide a range of pre-reading activities to help learners to orientate themselves to a text.	42.3	45.4	11.3	1.0	-
	37. I can set different activities in order to practise and develop different reading strategies according to the purpose of reading (skimming, scanning etc.).	42.3	45.4	11.3	1.0	-
Weakest Competence	41. I can help learners to develop critical reading skills (reflection, interpretation, analysis etc.).	25.8	50.5	16.5	6.2	1.0

Table 4.16. The strongest and weakest competences in reading

As mentioned at the beginning the student teachers were found less confident to teach grammar. Nonetheless, there are items they found themselves more confident. For instance their strongest competence in teaching grammar was item 43 which is related with introducing, and helping students deal with, new or unknown items of grammar in a variety of ways. 83.5% of the student teachers were detected to be good at this competence. On the other hand only 63.9% of the student teachers stated that they can use grammatical metalanguage when necessary. It can be assumed that while the

student teachers are competent in introducing grammar they are not that competent at when to use metalanguage.

	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD
Strongest Competence	43. I can introduce, and help students to deal with, new or unknown items of grammar in a variety of ways (teacher presentation, awareness-raising, discovery etc.).	27.8	55.7	9.3	6.2	1.0
Weakest Competence	45. I can use grammatical metalanguage if and when appropriate to the learners' needs	25.8	38.1	28.9	5.2	2.1

Table 4.17. The strongest and weakest competences in grammar

Similarly, the strongest competence identified in vocabulary section is to select a variety of activities which help learners learn vocabulary by 86.6%. The weakest competence is the ability to select activities which enhance learners' awareness of register differences, which is more complex, by 72.2%.

	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD
Strongest Competence	47. I can evaluate and select a variety of activities which help learners to learn vocabulary	27.8	55.7	9.3	6.2	1.0
Weakest Competence	49. I can evaluate and select activities which enhance learners' awareness of register differences.	21.6	50.5	23.7	23.7	4.1

Table 4.18. The strongest and weakest competences in vocabulary

4.3.2. Findings of Lesson Planning Section of the EPOSTL

The first category analyzed in terms of lesson planning is the strongest and the weakest competences in lesson objectives. The student teachers are competent at identifying curriculum requirements and setting learning aims and objectives as it is clear from Table 4.19, 81.4% of them agreed that they can ascertain the aims of the lesson. On the other hand less student teachers were discovered to be efficient at encouraging learners to reflect via their lesson objectives. 69.1% of them reported a capability. This result is not surprising since promoting reflection in terms of reading and writing were also found out to be between the weakest competences.

	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD
Strongest Competence	50. I can identify curriculum requirements and set learning aims and objectives suited to my learners' needs and interests.	24.7	56.7	14.4	3.1	1.0
Weakest Competence	55. I can set objectives which encourage learners to reflect on their learning.	24.7	44.3	26.8	3.1	1.0

Table 4.19. The strongest and weakest competences in lesson objectives

When the post-test results of lesson content section were analyzed it is seen that a large proportion of the pre-service teachers (86.6%) have confidence in motivating learners through a balance of activities. However 62.9% of them have confidence in planning

to teach elements of other subjects using the target language. It can be assumed that since English is not a medium to teach other subjects not much emphasis is put on cross curricular teaching or CLIL. Hence, the student teachers are not that competent.

	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD
Strongest Competence	64. I can vary and balance activities to enhance and sustain the learners' motivation and interest.	37.1	50.5	8.2	3.1	1.0
Weakest Competence	61. I can plan to teach elements of other subjects using the target language (cross- curricular teaching, CLIL etc.).	20.6	42.3	28.9	7.2	1.0

Table 4.20. The strongest and weakest competences in lesson content

Student teachers are quite confident in terms of lesson organization. The student teachers reported higher percentage of agreement in this section. 90.7% of the student teachers for instance indicated that they can plan for learner presentations and learner interaction. As afore-mentioned the competences related to speaking and spoken interaction are the ones the pre-service teachers feel themselves more confident. Thus, the result if item 69 is consistent. Although not really very low, the weakest competence of this section is planning when and how to use the target language, including metalanguage they may need in the classroom. The student teachers seem to be consistent on the use of metalanguage since less confidence on metalanguage is also detected in other sections as mentioned before.

	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD
Strongest Competence	69. I can plan for learner presentations and learner interaction.	32.0	58.0	8.3	1.0	-
Weakest Competence	70. I can plan when and how to use the target language, including metalanguage I may need in the classroom.	21.6	52.6	22.7	2.1	1.0

Table 4.21. The strongest and weakest competences in lesson organization

4.3.3. Findings of Conducting a Lesson Section of the EPOSTL

The strongest and the weakest competences related with lesson planning were also explored. In relation to using their lesson plans the majority of the student teachers are skilful. The strongest competence is linked with the flexibility with the plan and responding to learners interests by 81.4%. However, pre-service teachers are less confident in adjusting their time for unseen situations. 74.2% indicated competence in the post-test results. These results seem to be contradictory while the student teachers report flexibility with their plans they are not certain about time adjustments.

	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD
Strongest Competence	73. I can be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses.	37.1	44.3	14.4	4.1	-
Weakest Competence	75. I can adjust my time schedule when unforeseen situations occur.	27.8	46.4	21.6	4.1	-

Table 4.22. The strongest and weakest competences in using lesson plan

In terms of content the strongest competence was found out to be item 79 by 84.5% which is related with making use of learners' previous knowledge. Not surprisingly the least competent item is found to be item 81 by 74.2% which is related with relating culture with language. As student teachers do not come from English speaking countries they might have a good command of cultural elements.

	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD
Strongest Competence	79. I can relate what I teach to learners' knowledge and previous language learning experiences.	35.1	49.5	14.4	1.0	-
Weakest Competence	81. I can relate the language I am teaching to the culture of those who speak it.	24.7	49.5	23.7	2.1	-

Table 4.23. The strongest and weakest competences in content

Lastly, the interaction with learners was analyzed in terms of the strongest and the weakest competences. 81.4% of the students can encourage learner participation. It must be recalled that they also found themselves competent in motivating students. Yet, catering various learning styles is more complex and 69.1% reported competence.

	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD
Strongest Competence	85. I can encourage learner participation whenever possible.	43.3	44.3	20.3	2.1	-
Weakest Competence	86. I can cater for a range of learning styles.	26.8	42.3	24.7	5.2	1.0

Table 4.24. The strongest and weakest competences in interactıon with learners

In short, it can be assumed that mostly the student teachers can select appropriate activities, tasks, texts to develop skills and apply their lesson plans, which reveals that they are competent at more general teaching skills. However, in more complex ones like taking students' needs into account, promoting reflection less of them feel themselves confident. Nevertheless, it must be emphasized that not all of the student teachers are expected to be highly competent in every skill. However identifying those weaker ones can ensure further development. Moreover, in this section the percentages of the weaker competences might be assumed relatively high. Yet, they are lower when compared with other competences in the EPOSTL survey.

4.4. Findings of the Interview: Student Teachers' Strongest and Weakest Competences

The student teachers were asked to identify the EPOSTL areas they identify themselves stronger in the interview to cross-check the findings of the EPOSTL survey. The interview results manifested that the student teachers' comments in the interview conform to the results in the EPOSTL post-test survey to some extent. However, some of the sections in the EPOSTL survey such as lesson planning or conducting a lesson were totally ignored by the student teachers in the interview and they did not make mention of those areas. On the other hand, they particularly focused on the methodology section of the EPOSTL. The reason might be attributed to the fact as mentioned in the previous sections the student teachers have greatly benefited from Methodology and Skills Teaching courses. First, stronger and weaker areas along with specific competences will be presented in this section.

Most striking results in this section are in relation to teaching speaking and grammar. Although there are some students reported to be better at other areas teaching speaking or teaching grammar was most frequently preferred by the student teachers. Similar to the EPOSTL survey results, speaking was one of the areas the student teachers indicated to be stronger when compared to the other areas. Specifically the student teachers reported to be competent in designing interactional activities and involving learners in interactions.

> I found myself more competent in teaching speaking. Last year in skills teaching lesson we conducted micro teachings. The feedback I got helped me understand more in the lesson. I can help my students with the areas mentioned in the EPOSTL. I also achieved the EPOSTL aims in my micro teachings. I also try to practice the competences in the EPOSTL. I can design meaningful interactional activities. Asking the name of the person we know is not meaningful. I can design tasks based on meaning not on memorizing.
>
> (Student Teacher 1)

> I feel myself confident in teaching speaking and interacting with learners. Since I directly see the output and efficacy of my teaching. I can also teach them in a fun way. I do not feel myself incompetent in the other areas, but they are boring for me to teach.
>
> (Student Teacher 6)

I feel myself more competent in teaching speaking. It is easy for me to create a context, model the language and get them practice.

(Student Teacher 9)

I feel myself very competent in speaking. This is the area I am best at. For 25 years now I am actively involved in speaking English. My vocabulary background, pronunciation and stress are good thus I can help my learners in speaking with confidence. I am also very comfortable in involving students in ongoing discussions and interactions…

(Student Teacher 13)

Although grammar was the section less student teachers reported competencies when compared to other areas, around 60 % of the student teachers indicated that they have a good command of teaching grammar. The interview results comply with the EPOSTL survey in terms of teaching grammar. Also some of the students embraced teaching grammar with teaching vocabulary and reading. The interview results show a similarity with the EPOSTL survey in terms of the strongest item. In the EPOSTL survey the student teachers stated to be quite competent in presenting grammar and in the interview they reported that they feel most comfortable in terms of presenting grammar.

I feel myself competent in teaching grammar because rules make teachers feel safe. When a student comes up and ask a grammar question there is a certain answer to give. Moreover, after you teach grammar it is easy to see if my learners grasped it or not so as a teacher I have the feeling that I have been able to teach it. On the other hand after you teach speaking or listening development of learners are fulfilled after some time. More time and activities should be spent to develop these skills.

(Student Teacher 3)

I think I am better at teaching reading, vocabulary, grammar. Especially in presenting grammar, identifying main ideas in a reading text or locating their difficulties are easier for me this is because I have gone through the same process. Until university we have mostly focused on reading and vocabulary. Even our university exam only covers grammar, reading and vocabulary. I have mastered in these skills.

(Student Teacher 11)

> I am better at teaching grammar and vocabulary since they are controlled. I am better at controlled and structured areas.
>
> (Student Teacher 7)

> I think it is grammar. I myself is better at grammar. I really studied hard on grammar. Thus, I can teach it better.
>
> (Student Teacher 8)

> I feel myself good at teaching reading, grammar, vocabulary for young learners. My background in reading and grammar is strong. Since 4th grade on we focused on these three areas.
>
> (Student Teacher 12)

The reason why the majority of the student teachers indicated to be either good at teaching speaking and grammar is either due to the fact their broad background in these areas or their research on them. However there are student teachers who stated that they view themselves better at areas like reading, vocabulary and listening. In terms of vocabulary teaching they are more comfortable for the presentation stage. In reading the student teachers indicated that they are better at selecting texts taking learners' level and needs into consideration. There was one learner indicated to be better at listening. This result is particularly interesting since the student teachers claimed raising learners awareness' to phonological issues was the skills she feels more comfortable. In the EPOSTL survey this was one of the areas the student teachers found themselves less competent.

> I find myself best at teaching vocabulary thanks to related courses such as material design and my own research on it, my confidence has increased. I learned various methods. I am especially good at eliciting the words and cognates. I designed tasks for teaching cognates.
>
> (Student Teacher 4)

> I think I am better at teaching reading because I took courses on reading and I can design tasks to teach reading, I know different kinds of tasks to teach reading. Especially I am good at selecting texts appropriate to the needs and interests and language level of the student. I can select texts appropriate to learners' needs and interests and levels. I read a variety of materials and I feel myself knowledgeable about learners' background and profile. I know

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the differences between materials I will suggest for university level or primary level because their needs, background are different. I am aware of it.

<div align="right">(Student Teacher 2)</div>

Teaching listening is the area I am more confident. I have been studying the language by focusing on listening since my childhood. I have been watching films and listening to music. I decided to work on language teaching due to my interest in listening. I have no problem in listening thus I will be better at teaching it. Especially in terms of raising learners' awareness to different accents and pronunciation I think I will be successful.

<div align="right">(Student Teacher 10)</div>

When the student teachers were invited to comment on their weaker competences the interview results differed from the EPOSTL survey results. Although around 80% of the student teachers were found to be competent in terms of teaching speaking and listening the interview results demonstrated that seven of the student teachers participated in the interview identified those skills more difficult to teach. At the first sight this result seems to be contradicting the EPOSTL survey. However, when the student teachers are asked to comment on what is particularly difficult for them in terms of teaching speaking and listening the result became more meaningful. Student teachers mentioned that phonological aspects such as pronunciation, stress or rhythm compel them most since they are not native speakers. In the EPOSTL survey item 11 linked with teaching phonological aspects was the weakest competence. Some of the student teachers linked teaching listening with their weakness in phonology knowledge. The student teacher also mentioned their limited exposition to language as a factor for their weakness.

I am myself not very competent in terms of speaking because I do not have a good command of speaking interaction myself. In Turkey we only use English in school context and unfortunately it is very limited. I myself have problems and difficulties. Especially I find teaching pronunciation hard. I as a teacher have difficulty in pronouncing some of the sounds we do not have in our mother tongue. These sounds which do not exist in Turkish will be especially difficult for me to teach. In relation with pronunciation intonation, rhythm and stress are difficult to teach since I am not a native speaker.

<div align="right">(Student Teacher 2)</div>

In my opinion I am not very competent in terms of teaching speaking because I am afraid of speaking. I know theories and practical activities but my own incompetence will obstruct me to apply them. Thus, I think I will not get any positive feedback from learners. I do not think I will be good at teaching speaking. Because I am not sure about my grading of language appropriate to the level of students. My biggest problem is grading language. I realized this incompetence in the EPOSTL survey you have administrated.

<div align="right">(Student Teacher 4)</div>

I have not been exposed to listening and speaking significantly. In general I am not very competent in speaking. Thus, teaching speaking will be difficult to teach.

<div align="right">(Student Teacher 7)</div>

I first encountered with listening and speaking in preparatory class at university so my development in these skills were postponed to preparatory class when the critical period was already over for me. Especially listening is difficult for me since I was exposed to non-native English. I have problems in identifying accents and pronunciation differences. I will have problems in teaching stress, intonation. We took courses on these, but I have to revise over and over because I am not fully developed in these skills. Thus, it will be more difficult for me to teach.

<div align="right">(Student Teacher 11)</div>

…However, my competences in teaching listening and speaking are limited. I can handle teaching these skills to very low levels and this because my own competence level in speaking and listening. Especially I have difficulty in academic listening texts and speaking contexts. I am not very confident in them so while teaching them I will be less effective. I am not excellent at them, but I am trying to develop myself.

<div align="right">(Student Teacher 12)</div>

I feel myself less competent listening because I myself have problems with listening. Sometimes even for me it is difficult to understand accents. Besides while teaching listening the unknown words in the listening text is difficult for me to teach. Again I as a teacher experience problems. Yet, I try to listen to

more in English, such as films, news but if I have started earlier I would be better now.

<div align="right">(Student Teacher 3)</div>

In terms of teaching listening I feel myself less competent because I did not focus on it during the course. Besides the language used by most of our instructors is Turkish. Especially this year almost none of them speak English. We are not exposed to English, there is no input in terms of English here at school. If there is no input in terms of speaking it is not easy to see the output. It will be difficult for me to teach.

<div align="right">(Student Teacher 5)</div>

The other areas reported as weaker are teaching vocabulary, writing and grammar. In terms of teaching vocabulary and grammar similar to speaking and listening the student teachers stated their own background as the cause of the weakness. The student teachers participated in the interview put forth that helping learners using the new words actively and generating ideas for writing were especially difficult. Two students in the interview claimed that they feel weaker in teaching writing. In the EPOSTL survey using metalanguage when necessary was the most problematic competence and student comments comply with this result since they do not know how to teach it without metalanguage.

However I am not as good at vocabulary as other areas. I have difficulty in learning words myself. I may have problems teaching learners strategies to learn new words and use them in context. I am not quite competent how to elicit words, how to help learners use new words.

<div align="right">(Student Teacher 8)</div>

It is more difficult for me to teach vocabulary. It is due to my own problem in learning words, I feel myself inadequate. My background in vocabulary is not strong so I may have difficulty in transferring my knowledge to my learners or helping them to use new words.

<div align="right">(Student Teacher 9)</div>

…On the other hand, I think I need more development in writing. Writing needs more expertise. I have not focused on it as closely as I have focused on listening.

<div align="right">(Student Teacher 10)</div>

I need to develop myself in writing. This is related to our first language. In our first language we are not very competent in writing. We start to read and write academically at the university level however to be competent in writing it is necessary to read and write a lot in English. Thus, I myself have problems to generate ideas before writing so it will be difficult to help learners in this sense. Also learners have barriers that are difficult overcome.

(Student Teacher 13)

I do not feel myself very confident in teaching grammar. Especially when teaching grammar to lower levels I cannot teach implicitly. I know that grammar should be taught implicitly but I do not how to achieve it. I use metalanguage and rules. In my learning process when metalanguage was used I feel confused and afraid. I cannot teach young learners without using metalanguage and this will make young learners afraid. My biggest problem is with metalanguage.

(Student Teacher 1)

I am not good at teaching grammar. Language is formalized, and teaching grammar is usually associated with testing. I have difficulty in linking grammar with other skills and areas.

(Student Teacher 6)

In short, student teachers' comments on their stronger and weaker competences are in line with the EPOSTL survey results to an extent. Although the majority of the student teachers tend to be weaker or stronger in a specific area some student teachers might diverge and state other areas. Since development is not only related to education and affected by personal variables this result is rational.

4.5. Findings of Student Teachers' Insights into the Integration of the EPOSTL

The last research question sought to explore student teachers' impressions on the integration of the EPOSTL. Their reflections on the use of the EPOSTL along with teacher development courses were explored and perceived benefits the EPOSTL will bring about were identified. The benefits of the EPOSTL are self-evident from its objectives. Yet, student teachers' insights are far more elucidative since they are the target audience to make use of it. The benefits or deficiencies they identify are more meaningful and illustrative for decision making process of integrating the EPOSTL.

In the present study the student teachers' viewpoints were in line with the benefits put forth earlier. All of the participants in the interview made very positive comments on the EPSOTL which proves that the EPOSTL was perceived as a very valuable tool for professional development. The benefits student teachers asserted are categorized and will be presented briefly with direct quotations from student teachers in this part.

The first benefit identified by the student teachers was the EPOSTL's function as setting clear cut goals. The student teachers indicated that the descriptors in the the EPOSTL establish the objectives they should attain as teachers. The EPOSTL will guide them in their development, clarify what to acquire or on what to base their evaluations. Since the objectives are made explicit they are motivated meet them.

> In my opinion the EPOSTL contributes a lot to our development. The EPOSTL explicitly demonstrates how things should be taught. It should be also used during the whole process of learning teaching besides at the end to see our progress to benefit more.
> (Student Teacher 4)

> It will benefit us a lot. It identifies the objectives we should attain so it creates motivation. Our teacher trainers should inform us about the related competences they require us to attain. In this way we will be aware of the requirements and be more motivated.
> (Student Teacher 7)

> Objectives are transparent, competences are described thoroughly. Hence, we know what to acquire…
> (Student Teacher 9)

> It sets the objectives that creates motivation among us. It is so very vital for our development and should be used as soon as possible.
> (Student Teacher 10)

> In my opinion when something like the EPOSTL is used we know on the basis of what we should evaluate ourselves. Thus, while micro-teaching or presenting we know which criteria we should consider and we can check our work on the basis of this criteria. We can diagnose what is missing.
> (Student Teacher 1)

Majority of the student teachers mentioned the reflective function of the EPOSTL during the interview. They indicated that the EPOSTL is an opportunity for them to assess their own progress. While assessing their own progress it was pointed out that they can discover their weak and strong competences. While identification of the weak

competences spur their motivation to teach and build their confidence, identification of the weaknesses make student teachers to rethink about them and become proactive about the weaknesses. The student teacher believe that the EPOSTL charts their route to build on their weak competences to fully develop them. They indicated that it is important to overcome those weakness during their pre-service teacher education. The EPOSTL is the best match to display the areas they need further focus since by themselves it might be tough to realize them.

> I have been instructed how to teach speaking. I have been given some techniques, methods yet this is superficial. I have to elaborate on it. I have to deeply analyze every aspect of it. If the EPOSTL accompanied me all through my education I could reflect on my weak competences and I could consider them deeply. The EPOSTL says for instance "I can set objectives". When I see this item I will automatically think about how to do it, I will reflect on it. The EPOSTL gives us opportunity to think about the ways we do something. It helps us to see if we do something right or wrong so it also calls for change and creates a space for more creativity. The EPOSTL informs us about weaknesses we are not aware of. It also helps to build our confidence since it also demonstrates our strong points.
>
> (Student Teacher 2)

> I regret that the EPOSTL has not been integrated until now. If it had been integrated I could have tracked my own progress. I could have diagnosed my weaknesses, the weaknesses identified in the EPOSTL survey. We could have focused on our weaknesses and developed an action plan. I now know that my teaching listening skill is not good enough, but this is what I realize. Maybe there are more weaknesses I have not discovered or realized and the EPOSTL is something to help you to discover those weaknesses. Maybe I am going to discover them when I start to teach, but this is a big deficiency for me. Maybe it will be too late to overcome my weakness. So the EPOSTL is necessary in pre-service teacher education. We as student teachers will benefit a lot. I would be personally very happy to use.
>
> (Student Teacher 3)

> The EPOSTL will be yielding if its sections and sub-sections are employed in the related lesson. For example we have reading writing courses. Reading writing section of the EPOSTL can be employed within this lesson and we may come up with reflections or reports to support the EPOSTL. Even it will be more logical to administrate the EPOSTL first starting up the course then at the end of the course. It will be very effective to see the progress. After all this was the method you employed to us.
>
> (Student Teacher 4)

…Moreover, it displays our weakness. Also the weaknesses we do not realize are unearthed. They are uncovered during our training and not postponed to later when we encounter with learners. This is especially important, we still have time to improve and seek our teacher trainers' advice.

(Student Teacher 9)

The EPOSTL helps us to identify the areas we should develop ourselves. We can focus more on our weaknesses since the EPOSTL displays our strong and weak competences. We have the chance and time to work on those areas.

(Student Teacher 11)

We can find out our weak competences and work on them to improve them. Yet, before integrating the EPOSTL student teachers should be well-informed about the EPOSTL to yield good results and not to integrate it for the sake of integrating. Its aims, benefits should be laid clearly like you did. It should be used consciously. Then it will be very worthwhile for us.

(Student Teacher 12)

The EPOSTL also must be the part of our overall assessment at the end of the courses to see our progress. We learn things in time but forget them in time hence we need to assess ourselves overall to identify progression and regression. The EPOSTL builds confidence since it makes our strengths clear. On the other hand it identifies our weaknesses and shows us the areas we should focus on, it helps us to see what we should develop and build on.

(Student Teacher 13)

… If there is no criteria you cannot identify weaknesses. We suppose we are competent but without assessing we cannot know. We definitely need the EPOSTL. It should be used throughout our progress as teachers. I should attain reflection as a skill so that I can transfer it to my learners.

(Student Teacher 6)

Lastly, the student teachers stated that the EPOSTL is a tool to standardize language teacher education. Employing the EPOSTL will build their confidence since they think they will know this is the way language teacher education programs are enforced in other institutions or within Europe. They claimed that they will possess the competences required by the European standards.

First of all the EPOSTL is a tool to standardize language teaching. If it is used as a part of curriculum everybody will possess most of the competences approved by Europe as a part of teaching languages. Thus, our confidence will be promoted besides we will be equal to teachers in Europe. Beside I could diagnose my

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weakness earlier especially in terms of speaking so that when I graduate I would feel much more comfortable to teach it.

(Student Teacher 7)

If there is going to be a standard it is the EPOSTL. By referring to the EPOSTL I can identify the differences between me and a European teacher and act on my weaknesses. I can identify how much I know…

(Student Teacher 6)

To sum up, the interview results verified that student teachers internalized the benefits of the EPOSTL. They had a tendency to approve the future integration of the EPOSTL to teacher education programs and they had very positive stances for the integration. They suggested that from all aspects the EPOSTL is an invaluable tool for their professional development since it sets objectives for them to attain, assesses their progress, diagnoses their needs, brings out their strengths and weaknesses, sets the path to overcome weaknesses, builds confidence and motivation and lastly standardizes their education.

CHAPTER V.

CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0. Introduction

In this part of the study general conclusions based on the findings presented thoroughly in the previous section will be presented in relation with the purpose of the study. The significance of the study for the context it was carried out and the implications drawn out of the study will be summed up. Besides the challenges encountered throughout the study will be explained briefly and on the basis of the challenges encountered recommendations for future research will be manifested lastly.

5.1. Conclusion

The present study intended to explore the teaching competences, identified in the EPOSTL, the student teachers possess and track the progress they have gone through in the third grade within the scope of Methodology I, II and other teacher development courses. In order to examine the teaching competences, based on the EPOSTL, the student teachers have and to discover whether they have progressed in terms of these teaching competences a pre-post design was adopted and the EPOSTL survey was administered twice, at the beginning of the third grade and at the end of the third grade. In order to cross-check the survey results and display the student teachers' opinions about the EPOSTL a semi-structured interview was conducted at the end of the first terms of the fourth grade.

When the findings were examined it can be concluded that most of the student teachers (ranging between 63% and 90%) possess the teaching competences identified in the EPOSTL. In the interview the student teachers pointed out the professional development they have undergone along with reasons. Although most of the student teachers were identified to be competent in terms of the skills in the EPOSTL, it is misleading to state that this group of the student teachers are competent in all of the items included in the survey. The student teachers were specified to be better at some

teaching skills yet, needed improvement in some others. The student teachers' comments in the interview also supported this finding.

- To sketch out the progress briefly, in teaching speaking the student teachers were discovered to improve themselves a lot in terms of selecting activities to help learners participate in speaking and use communication strategies and features of spoken language such as fillers and informal language. However, when it comes to making learners aware of pronunciation the student teachers seem to progress less and in the interview they pointed out that this is due to the deficiencies in their background as a non-native speaker.

- In general senses the student teachers were identified to develop less in terms of writing. Only in terms of helping learners to develop awareness of the structure, coherence and cohesion the student teachers' progress is great. On the other hand, helping learners gather information for their tasks, to plan their writing and to reflect on their writing to improve the student teachers' progress slipped back. Again in the interview the student teachers associated less development in writing with their background, and less emphasis put on writing in their courses.

- The student teachers' competence development in teaching listening is greater in general. Especially, in terms of helping learners apply strategies during listening and bridging listening with other skills the student teachers' progress is great. Nevertheless, in the interview there was only one student viewed herself stronger in terms of listening.

- The results of teaching reading section also projects an overall development. Particularly, the student teachers developed themselves in relation with bridging reading with other skills and developing critical reading skills such as reflection and analysis. However, in terms of applying appropriate ways of reading techniques the student teachers' ability decreased.

- Although with regards to grammar teaching progress is less marked, the student teachers' progress in using metalanguage when necessary is more notable. The student teachers felt less confident in responding to grammar questions. The interview results on the other hand shows the reverse. There were many student teachers indicating better competence in teaching grammar, reading and

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vocabulary. This result is again linked to their intensive study on these skills as learners.

- The student teachers' vocabulary teaching competence has decreased slightly in terms of some items, designing activities to teach vocabulary and help learners use them in oral and written contexts. Yet, they improved in terms of enhancing learners' awareness of register differences. However, as mentioned above by many student teachers in the interview, it is considered to be a skill the student teachers feel themselves more confident.

- When it comes to identifying learning objectives progress is less remarkable. However, setting objectives to challenge learners, considering learners' needs, levels, and abilities the student teachers have improved greatly. Moreover, in the interview none of the student teachers make mention of competences in terms of lesson planning or conducting a lesson.

- With regards to lesson content, increase is less marked, but the majority of the student teachers are competent in terms of deciding the content of the lesson. The student teachers' progress in relation to balancing variety of skills, bridging the skills, and specifying the time needed for activities is obvious.

- The development in terms of organizing a lesson is also explicit. Specifically, promoting speaking and planning for learner presentations and learner interactions the student teachers advanced their competence.

- Most of the student teachers found themselves competent in using lesson plans on the other hand, the progress in this section is less great. Nevertheless, it can be said that the student teachers' ensuring smooth transitions between activities and tasks and finishing off a lesson in a focused way are the competences in terms of which the development was greater. Although less student teachers reported progress relating culture and knowledge more student teachers acknowledged the progress in terms of presenting language content in ways which are appropriate for learners.

- Lastly, when the student teachers' development in interaction with learners is explored student teacher developed themselves in all of the items. Keeping and maximizing the attention of learners during a lesson, the ability to make explicit and help learners to develop appropriate learning strategies, the ability to cater for a range of learning styles were some of the marked competences.

When all these results are considered it can be deduced that the majority of the student teachers possess the core competences necessary for teaching languages, and it can be inferred that most of the student teachers are ready to teach in real teaching contexts. However, it must be remembered that they still need improvement in terms some competences. The development is not linear there are some competences they feel stronger or weaker which is also clear from their remarks in the interview. Next, the stronger and weaker competences possessed by the student teachers will presented briefly. Although post-test results show that stronger competences intensified around speaking and the student teachers reported that they feel stronger in terms of speaking, it will be misleading to disregard other domains. There are stronger competences reported by the student teachers under each domain. In the interview for instance more student teachers indicated better competence in teaching grammar, reading or vocabulary. When post-test results are examined the student teachers are founded to be more competent in terms of   following competences:

- creating a supportive atmosphere to take part in speaking activities
- selecting meaningful speaking to encourage learners to express themselves
- selecting writing activities to help learner use appropriate language for different text types
- selecting appropriate reading texts to read, providing a range of pre-reading activities to help learners to orientate themselves to a text
- setting different activities in order to practise and develop different reading strategies
- introducing and helping students to deal with, new or unknown items of grammar
- selecting a variety of activities which help learners to learn vocabulary, identifying curriculum requirements and setting learning aims and objectives
- balancing activities to enhance learners' motivation and interests, planning for learner presentations and learner interaction
- being flexible to respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses
- relating what they teach to learners' knowledge and previous language learning experiences and lastly encouraging learner participation whenever possible.
- In the interview the student teachers indicated that in terms of speaking they are better at designing tasks to spur interaction, especially real-life ones; in

terms of grammar and vocabulary that are better at the presentation and the elicitation stage. The student who indicated better competence in listening claimed to better at raising awareness to pronunciation differences. The student teachers also specified that they are better at selecting texts appropriate for learners 'needs and levels.

Likewise, although the student teachers acknowledged themselves weaker in terms of teaching grammar it is spurious to indicate that in all other domains the student teachers feel themselves very competent. The following are specified to be the weaker competences the student teachers reported:

- selecting a variety of techniques to make learners use stress, rhythm and intonation
- helping learners to monitor, reflect on, edit and improve their own writing
- helping learners to apply strategies to deal with listening
- helping learners to develop critical reading skills
- using grammatical metalanguage when necessary
- selecting activities to enhance learners' awareness of register differences
- setting objectives to encourage learners to reflect on their learning
- planning to teach elements of other subjects using the target language
- planning when and how to use the target language, including metalanguage
- adjusting time schedule when unforeseen situations occur
- relating the language and culture and lastly catering for a range of learning styles
- In terms of weaknesses in the interview it can be concluded that weaker results are in line with the EPOSTL survey. The student teachers reported weakness in speaking particularly due to phonological issues. Similarly, the student teachers admitted weaker competence in listening to phonological aspects. In terms of writing, the student teachers indicated that it is difficult to help learners develop ideas. Lastly, as in the EPOSTL survey while teaching grammar using metalanguage is the most problematic area. The student teachers were also unsure how to grade their language.

Finally, it can be concluded that the student teachers regard the EPOSTL very valuable to be incorporated into the language teacher education programs for the following reported benefits:

- The EPOSTL makes the objectives of the language teacher education explicit.
- It has a diagnostic function.
- The student teachers can identify their strengths in terms of teaching a long with their weakness.
- They can track their professional development reflecting on the EPOSTL.
- The EPOSTL provides guidance to develop themselves.
- It has a developmental feature.
- It is a tool to reflect.
- It enables self-assessment.
- The EPOSTL creates motivation.
- The student teachers can build on their confidence by using the EPOSTL.
- It standardizes the language teacher education.

5.2. Discussion

In this part of the study, the findings will be discussed in relation with the previous research. However, it must be recalled that the present study features as the first study in literature to attempt to uncover professional development of student teachers with regards to the EPOSTL. The previous research conducted on the EPOSTL intended to elicit either perceptions or attitudes of student teachers on the EPOSTL itself. Therefore, they do not go beyond presenting student teachers' insights about the EPOSTL. Since the previous research on the EPOSTL have not made an effort to identify student teachers' professional development competences based on the EPOSTL, the findings obtained from the present study will be related to the previous research on self-efficacy, self-reflection and teacher development. Only the last research question of the present study which is also associated with student teachers' viewpoints of integrating the EPOSTL will be related to the studies on the EPOSTL.

The first and second research questions intended to identify the progress in terms of teaching competences the student teachers underwent in the pre and post-test. It can be seen from the findings that in terms of the majority of the competences the student teachers progressed and attained the objectives of their teacher education program. It is worth remembering that majority of the student teachers participated in the study were found to be competent in terms of most of the teaching skills included in the

study. The interview results assured the survey results since all of the student teachers participated in the interview agreed upon development in terms of teaching and went one step further and explained the development with its reasons.

Atay and Şahin's study (2010) shows similar results. It was found out that pre-service teachers' efficacy level changed substantially before and following their teaching practice. Koçoğlu (2011) came across with similar results and identified the participants in their study with high self-efficacy beliefs. Whereas, Faez Valeo (2012) discovered that the participants in their study had an average level of preparedness although this level increased in conjunction with teaching experience. Although in the present study teaching practice is not represented as a variable for the EPOSTL pre and post-tests or level of preparedness was not the focus of the study when the test results are compared the change in the competence level of the student teachers are noticeable. Moreover, the student teachers in the interview indicated that teaching experience had not been contributory to their development so far. Similar to Atay and Şahin's study (2010) student teachers associated their progress with the teacher development courses. However in line with Atay's (2007) study the level of competence did not reveal an overall improvement in terms of some of the competences. In Atay's study (2007) before and after teaching experience pre-service teachers' efficacy level did not change greatly some the change in terms of some of the competences in present study share the same result.

When it comes to stronger or weaker competences Atay and Şahin (2010) found the pre-service teachers to perceive themselves more effective especially with regards to classroom management and student engagement. Classroom management was not a domain meant to be assessed in the study; on the other hand, the results of the present study manifest that engaging learners in the lesson is also one of the strongest competences in the study. The majority of the student teachers were confident to encourage learner participation whenever possible (item 85) and to vary and balance activities to enhance and sustain the learners' motivation and interest (item 65). On the contrary, Yılmaz's study (2011) displayed that participants were not satisfied with their ability to motivate the learners or let them benefit from the language learning process. Atay and Şahin (2010), Atay (2007), Yılmaz (2011) all proved that participants in their study were generally more efficient in relation to instructional strategies. Although variables included under this domain in their studies remains

relatively limited the present study shares some common variables and displays similar results. Atay and Şahin (2010), Atay (2007), Yılmaz (2011) included the following variables under instructional strategies in their study and their correspondence in the present study is as it is shown: alternative teaching strategies (items 56 and 57), responding to learners (item 84), adjusting lessons for individual students (item 53), and helping students think critically (items 55 and 76). The findings obtained from the post-test results proves that about 70% of the students are competent at above mentioned instructional strategies. Moreover, Yılmaz (2011) expresses that participants were more competent in teaching reading and writing yet, they asserted to make use of communicative strategies. On the contrary, Seymen (2012) did not intend to assess the level competence, yet it is obvious that participants view speaking as the core activity. Based on the post-test results it can be assumed that majority of the student teachers are confident to teach reading and writing. However, unlike Seymen's study (2012) in the present study teaching speaking/spoken interaction goes beyond an important skill to teach the student teachers and more student teachers indicates competence in comparison to teaching reading and writing in the survey and also teaching speaking was one of the most frequent competences the student teachers indicated better competence. In the interview there were also student teacher who viewed them relatively weak in terms of teaching writing. Faez Valeo's study (2012) established that in addition to classroom management planning lessons were the variables participants identified to be most efficient. The present study explored the level of competence in terms of lesson planning too. However, more variables are comprised when a comparison is drawn between two studies. Majority of the student teachers in the present study were found out to be competent in terms lesson planning, especially with regards to lesson organization.

Thirdly, with regards to factors affection development different factors contributed to development of the student teachers. For instance Faez Valeo (2012) ascertained that participants perceived theory instruction as the least useful part contributing to their development. The author asserted that participants did not seem to be prepared to apply the theories acquired. On the other hand Atay (2007) unearths that pre-service teachers were satisfied with their coursework and theory instruction, but they need more opportunities to practice the theories they attained. The interview findings revealed similar results with Atay's study (2007) that the student teachers in the present study

were content with the coursework. They believed the progress in their development is the result of the theory instruction they received and the micro teachings they conducted during the coursework. The student teachers pointed that they have especially improved in terms of methodological skills and strategies. They asserted that Methodology and other teacher development courses make a great contribution to their pedagogic and theoretical background. Besides, they suggested that these courses created the opportunity for them to ground their on a ground. The student teachers related their professional development in terms of the EPOSTL competences to the teacher development courses they take in the third grade. When it comes to regression in terms of the EPOSTL competence the results seem to support Newby's (2011) point. Newby (2011) suggests that student teachers are liable to be impressed by their early experiences as leaners. The interview findings conform with it since the student teachers linked the regression in terms of the EPOSTL competences to their own experiences and background. For instance they asserted that they feel themselves inadequate to teach speaking or writing due to their own incompetencies in these skills.

It is also obvious from the comparison of the pre and post-test findings that the student teachers have progressed in terms of the EPOSTL competences to some extent. While the progress is great in terms of some domains such as teaching speaking/spoken interaction it is minor in terms of other domains such as teaching grammar. However, even within the domains that a great progress is detected there are competences in terms of which the student teachers' progress did not change or slipped back such as item 5 and 6. On the other hand, within the domain that in general not much progress is recorded there are competences under this domain in terms of which the student teachers have improved themselves such as item. Moreover, an individual student teacher might report certainty or uncertainty in terms of different competences under the same domain. Thus, it can be assumed that the language teaching development shares similarities with language learning development. As it is indicated in the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001), language learning process is constant and discrete. Each individual develops in or her own way and the competences they have might vary even though two individuals are native speakers. Furthermore, they do not progress in the same way in terms of language competences. For this reason, specifying levels is arbitrary, yet it is on the other hand necessary for curriculum design, test development and so on. The present study manifests that language teaching too is continuous and

individual and student teachers do not progress in the same way even though they receive the same education. Although a level of specification is not attempted the importance of identification of the level of competences along with strengths and weaknesses in terms of teaching competences is apparent for teacher education curriculum development or revision.

The interview results also support Bean and Stevens (2002). They put forth that student teachers do not refer to their teaching experience in their reflections on the other hand they mainly focus on their theoretical and pedagogical training. The interview results of the present study is in line with Bean and Stevens' (2002) finding. While they were reflecting they particularly made mention of the teacher development courses they took. They ignored the teaching experience and they indicated their dissatisfaction with teaching experience.

Lastly, in Mehlmauer-Larcher's study (2007-2011) the student teachers perceived the EPOSTL as a valued method of reflection .They asserted that the EPOSTL set the framework for them to reflect on their classroom practices in a structured way. The EPOSTL is believed to encourage self-assessment, record their progress, and shape their professional development. Likewise Strakova's (2009) study put forth that the EPOSTL guided reflection for student teachers and enable a deeper analysis of their teaching. The student teachers in the study recognized the EPOSTL as a useful guide clarifying what they should consider. In Çakır and Balçıkanlı' study (2012), student teachers also acknowledged the EPOSTL as rather worthwhile tool for reflection. They suggested that the EPOSTL made the competences they needed to work on explicit. The student teachers asserted that the EPOSTL enabled them to think about their strengths and weaknesses. The EPSOTL functioned not only as a self-assessment document expanding their views on the aspects of teaching but also diagnostic to spot their weaker side. Teacher trainers in Çakır and Balçıkanlı's (2012) study judged the EPOSTL as an instrumental tool to increase awareness, boost teaching competences and contribute to professional development. They believed that the student teachers were able to perceive teaching as whole thanks to the EPOSTL as it compiles many different aspects of teaching together. The EPOSTL is also specified to be a useful to encourage professional development, self-reflection and awareness of the weaknesses among the students by Velikova (2013). Besides, the author suggested that the EPOSTL makes the goals of teacher education programs clear. Findings of the present

study back up the previous ones. It is obvious from the interview results that the student teachers grasped the advantages of the EPOSTL. They all acknowledged it as a very valuable reflective tool to be incorporated into the teacher education programs. They believed that the EPOSTL is an invaluable tool for their professional development from many aspects. Like the student teachers in the aforementioned studies that put forth that the EPOSTL sets objectives for them to attain, assesses their progress, diagnoses their needs, brings out their strengths and weaknesses, sets the path to overcome weaknesses, builds confidence and motivation and lastly standardizes their education.

5.3. Implications

The HEC (YÖK, 2007) unfolds that the most striking feature of the reconstructed teacher education programs is that from most of the perspectives these reconstructed programs correspond to the European teacher education programs to a great extent. The reconstructed programs aim to develop student teachers' ability to solve problems and teach learning which in turn necessitates reflective teachers. It must be also recalled that language learning programs in Turkey has been based on European policies such as the CEFR. According to Hişmanoğlu (2013) although there has been attempts to affiliate teacher education with the CEFR before, these attempts have been inconclusive due to the fact that language teacher education departments in different universities follow their own path to present European principles. As Hişmanoğlu (2013) asserts the EPOSTL is an instrument to bring the systematization among the language teacher education programs in different universities in terms of the CEFR. Through promotion of reflection on teaching competences and observation of the teacher development, the EPOSTL ensures bringing European teacher education policies to Turkish context in a real sense.

The present study sets the very first example to assess student teachers' competences with a standardized tool reflecting European perspective. The present study also presents the evidence that strong and weak competences of student teachers can be identified in the light of a validity ensured instrument. Besides, the present study exemplifies that reflective practices do not necessarily await until teaching experience. The early diagnosis of especially the weakest competences of student teachers increases the opportunity of focusing on them and reconstructing them. According to

Bandura (1977), professional development of student teachers is considerably affected and constructed by the early experiences. Hence, the present study is an evidence to make this outcome possible. By integrating the EPOSTL to current teacher education program, not only a European reflective perspective will be merged into the programs but also an opportunity to reshape the current programs will be generated. Teacher trainers providing the teacher education can reshape their programs in the light of student teachers' strengths and weaknesses.

In the condition that the EPOSTL is applied within all of the language teacher departments in Turkey a unity of the programs will be ensured among these programs. The differences among teacher education will be minimized. Moreover, teacher education in Turkey will be better harmonized with teacher education in Europe and European teacher education standards will be reached. Thus, the present study suggests that the EPOSTL should be merged into the teacher education programs officially in order to attain the above listed benefits.

5.4. Recommendations for Future Research

It is suggested that the present study be replicated in other contexts to juxtapose the results with the current one. Furthermore, it is difficult to generalize the results with a single study; therefore, the future studies may address to larger samples in order for more generalized results. It will be also worthwhile to employ the same study in different universities simultaneously to compare the results and draw conclusions. Another suggestion is that the EPOSTL even can be implemented at earlier stages, as early as the second term of the second grade when student teachers first start to take their teacher development courses. The application number of the EPOSTL and the EPOSTL surveys might be increased. Furthermore, the content of the EPOSTL survey might be broadened, and the other parts of the EPOSTL such as self-assessment, portfolio teaching etc. may be added and employed within relevant courses and grades to track student teachers' progress in an extended sense.

This study is an evidence of student teachers' progress during the track of their teacher education although in terms of some teaching competences progress is less marked. Hence, it is crucial to identify those weaker competences to work on them. As Atay (2007) suggests, the teacher education student teachers receive has a significant role

with regards to changing their perceptions and during the course of their education since it is easier to adjust their perceptions and help them develop professionally during this period. However, first it is necessary to specify in terms of which competences they feel themselves less competent via an instrument. According Atay (2007), methodology courses should comprise reflective elements to enable student teachers to reflect on their attainments.

The present study proved that the EPOSTL is a worthwhile standardized global tool to incorporate to any stages of teacher education programs. With the help of the EPOSTL as mentioned by Atay (2007), earlier analysis of student teachers' competences and incompetencies will lead to teacher education programs of high quality and improved language teaching. Thus, the present study requires the attention of the policy makers. The EPOSTL has a potential to reshape the teacher education programs to make them promote reflection, self-assessment and as a result development. The study proved that the EPOSTL is an instrumental tool to cast a critical eye on programs to enhance and extend program benefits in order to increase the quality of language teaching and language learning.

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APENDICES

1. **Appendix A.** The EPOSTL Survey

2. **Appendix B.** Interview Questions

3. **Appendix C.** Sample Pages from the EPOSTL

4. **CV/Özgeçmiş**

APPENDIX A. EPOSTL SURVEY

We are interested in your priorities for your classroom. We know that classroom life is fast-paced and challenging, requiring you to prioritize some beliefs and practices over others. The purpose of this questionnaire is to better understand your priorities.

In the below of the page, you'll see some statements and five categories ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree". Put a cross on each column of the category that best matches your beliefs about the statements.

We realize all of these statements may be important to you. We are trying to understand your priorities. Even if all the statements are important to you, place those that are least important in the lower categories and those that are the most important in the higher categories.

Strongly Agree	(**SA**)	Agree	(**A**)
	Neutral	(**N**)	
Disagree	(**D**)	Strongly Disagree	(**SD**)

Name: _____   Age: _____

Class: _____   Gender: F / M

STATEMENTS	LEVEL OF AGREEMENT				
	SA	A	N	D	SD
I can create a supportive atmosphere that invites learners to take part in speaking activities.					
I can evaluate and select meaningful speaking and interactional activities to encourage learners of differing abilities to participate.					
I can evaluate and select meaningful speaking and interactional activities to encourage learners to express their opinions, identity, culture etc.					
I can evaluate and select a range of meaningful speaking and interactional activities to develop fluency (discussion, role play, problem solving etc.)					
I can evaluate and select different activities to help learners to become aware of and use different text types (telephone conversations, transactions, speeches etc.).					
I can evaluate and select a variety of materials to stimulate speaking activities (visual aids, texts, authentic materials etc.)					
I can evaluate and select activities which help learners to participate in ongoing spoken exchanges (conversations, transactions etc.) and to initiate or respond to utterances appropriately.					
I can evaluate and select various activities to help learners to identify and use typical features of spoken language (informal language, fillers etc.).					
I can help learners to use communication strategies (asking for clarification, comprehension checks etc.) and compensation strategies (paraphrasing, simplification etc.) when engaging in spoken interaction.					
I can evaluate and select a variety of techniques to make learners aware of, discriminate and help them to pronounce sounds in the target language.					
I can evaluate and select a variety of techniques to make learners aware of and help them to use stress, rhythm and intonation.					
I can evaluate and select a range of oral activities to develop accuracy (grammar, word choice etc.).					
I can evaluate and select meaningful activities to encourage learners to develop their creative potential.					
I can evaluate and select a range of meaningful writing activities to help learners become aware of and use appropriate language for different text types (letters, stories, reports etc.).					

I can evaluate and select texts in a variety of text types to function as good examples for the learners' writing.					
I can evaluate and select a variety of materials to stimulate writing (authentic materials, visual aids etc.).					
I can evaluate and select activities which help learners to participate in written exchanges (emails, job applications etc.) and to initiate or respond to texts appropriately.					
I can help learners to gather and share information for their writing tasks.					
I can help learners to plan and structure written texts (e.g. by using mind maps, outlines etc.).					
I can help learners to monitor, reflect on, edit and improve their own writing.					
I can use peer-assessment and feedback to assist the writing process.					
I can use a variety of techniques to help learners to develop awareness of the structure, coherence and cohesion of a text and produce texts accordingly.					
I can evaluate and select a variety of techniques to make learners aware of and use spelling patterns and irregular spelling.					
I can evaluate and select writing activities to consolidate learning (grammar, vocabulary, spelling etc.).					
I can select texts appropriate to the needs, interests and language level of the learners.					
I can provide a range of pre-listening activities which help learners to orientate themselves to a text.					
I can encourage learners to use their knowledge of a topic and their expectations about a text when listening.					
I can design and select different activities in order to practise and develop different listening strategies (listening for gist, specific information, etc.)					
I can design and select different activities which help learners to recognise and interpret typical features of spoken language (tone of voice, intonation, style of speaking etc.).					
I can help learners to apply strategies to cope with typical aspects of spoken language (background noise, redundancy etc.)					
I can help learners to apply strategies to cope with difficult or unknown vocabulary of a text.					
I can evaluate and select a variety of post-listening tasks to provide a bridge between listening and other skills					
I can select texts appropriate to the needs, interests and language level of the learners.					
I can provide a range of pre-reading activities to help learners to orientate themselves to a text.					
I can encourage learners to use their knowledge of a topic and their expectations about a text when reading.					
I can apply appropriate ways of reading a text in class (e.g. aloud, silently, in groups etc.)					
I can set different activities in order to practise and develop different reading strategies according to the purpose of reading (skimming, scanning etc.).					
I can help learners to develop different strategies to cope with difficult or unknown vocabulary in a text.					
I can evaluate and select a variety of post-reading tasks to provide a bridge between reading and other skills.					
I can recommend books appropriate to the needs, interests and language level of the learners.					
I can help learners to develop critical reading skills (reflection, interpretation, analysis etc.).					
I can introduce a grammatical item and help learners to practise it through meaningful contexts and appropriate texts.					
I can introduce, and help students to deal with, new or unknown items of grammar in a variety of ways (teacher presentation, awareness-raising, discovery etc.).					

I can deal with questions learners may ask about grammar and, if necessary, refer to appropriate grammar reference books.					
I can use grammatical metalanguage if and when appropriate to the learners' needs.					
I can evaluate and select grammatical exercises and activities, which support learning and encourage oral and written communication.					
I can evaluate and select a variety of activities which help learners to learn vocabulary.					
I can evaluate and select tasks which help learners to use new vocabulary in oral and written contexts.					
I can evaluate and select activities which enhance learners' awareness of register differences.					
I can identify curriculum requirements and set learning aims and objectives suited to my learners' needs and interests.					
I can plan specific learning objectives for individual lessons and/or for a period of teaching.					
I can set objectives which challenge learners to reach their full potential.					
I can set objectives which take into account the differing levels of ability and special educational needs of the learners.					
I can decide whether to formulate objectives in terms of skills, topics, situations, linguistic systems (functions, notions, forms etc.).					
I can set objectives which encourage learners to reflect on their learning.					
I can structure lesson plans and/or plan for periods of teaching in a coherent and varied sequence of content.					
I can vary and balance activities to include a variety of skills and competences.					
I can plan activities to ensure the interdependence of listening, reading, writing and speaking.					
I can plan activities to emphasise the interdependence of language and culture.					
I can plan activities which link grammar and vocabulary with communication.					
I can plan to teach elements of other subjects using the target language (cross-curricular teaching, CLIL etc.).					
I can identify time needed for specific topics and activities and plan accordingly.					
I can design activities to make the learners aware and build on their existing knowledge.					
I can vary and balance activities to enhance and sustain the learners' motivation and interest.					
I can vary and balance activities in order to respond to individuals learners' learning styles.					
I can take on board learners' feedback and comments and incorporate this in future lessons.					
I can involve learners in lesson planning.					
I can select from and plan a variety of organisational forms (frontal, individual, pair, and group work) as appropriate.					
I can plan for learner presentations and learner interaction.					
I can plan when and how to use the target language, including metalanguage I may need in the classroom.					
I can plan lessons and periods of teaching with other teachers and/or student teachers (team teaching, with other subject teachers etc.).					
I can start a lesson in an engaging way.					
I can be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses.					
I can ensure smooth transitions between activities and tasks for individuals, groups and the whole class.					
I can adjust my time schedule when unforeseen situations occur.					
I can time classroom activities to reflect individual learners' attention spans.					
I can finish off a lesson in a focused way.					

I can present language content (new and previously encountered items of language, topics etc.) in ways which are appropriate for individuals and specific groups of learners.					
I can relate what I teach to learners' knowledge and previous language learning experiences.					
I can relate what I teach to current events in local and international contexts.					
I can relate the language I am teaching to the culture of those who speak it.					
I can settle a group of learners into a room and gain their attention at the beginning of a lesson.					
I can keep and maximise the attention of learners during a lesson.					
I can be responsive and react supportively to learner initiative and interaction.					
I can encourage learner participation whenever possible.					
I can cater for a range of learning styles.					
I can make explicit and help learners to develop appropriate learning strategies.					
I can take on different roles according to the needs of the learners and requirements of the activity (resource person, mediator, supervisor etc.).					

APPENDIX B. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. When you evaluate yourself in terms of the following teaching competences areas in term of which one do you feel most confident? Why?

   o Teaching Speaking / Spoken Interaction
   o Teaching Writing/ written Interaction
   o Teaching Listening
   o Teaching Reading
   o Teaching Grammar
   o Teaching Vocabulary
   o Identification of Learning Objectives
   o Preparing Lesson Content
   o Organizing Lessons
   o Using Lesson Plan
   o Interacting with Learners

2. Within this area in terms of which teaching skill do you feel the most competent? (Student teachers are shown the teaching competence area in EPOSTL) Why?

3. When you evaluate yourself in terms of the following teaching competences areas in term of which one do you feel least confident? Why?

   o Teaching Speaking / Spoken Interaction
   o Teaching Writing/ written Interaction
   o Teaching Listening
   o Teaching Reading
   o Teaching Grammar
   o Teaching Vocabulary
   o Identification of Learning Objectives
   o Preparing Lesson Content
   o Organizing Lessons
   o Using Lesson Plan
   o Interacting with Learners

4. Within this area in terms of which teaching skill do you feel the least competent? (Student teachers are shown the teaching competence area in EPOSTL). Why?

5. If you are asked to evaluate your professional development from the beginning of the third grade until now to what extent do you feel you have grown professionally? How can you attribute this growth to your teacher development courses?

6. On the basis of the findings of EPOSTL in terms of some competences there is a significant progression among student teachers? For instance:

o I can use of grammatical metalanguage when necessary
o I can vary and balance activities to include a variety of skills and competences
o I can plan when and how to use target language

What may be the possible factors of this progression? Can you relate the progression to your teacher development courses?

7. On the other hand On the basis of the findings of EPOSTL in terms of some competences there is regression among student teachers? For instance:

o I can evaluate and select a variety of techniques to make learners aware of, discriminate and help them to pronounce sounds
o I can applying appropriate ways of reading a text
o I can deal with questions learners may ask about grammar and, if necessary, refer to appropriate grammar reference books

What may be the possible factors of this regression? Can you relate the progression to your teacher development courses?

8. Do you think that an instrument like EPOSTL will be beneficial to be integrated into your teacher development courses? What may be the possible benefits?

APPENDIX C. SAMPLE PAGES FROM EPOSTL

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Your name: ....

Institution: ....

Date of beginning to use EPOSTL: ....

The aim of the personal statement is to help you to reflect on aspects related to teaching in general and to think about questions that may be important at the beginning of your teacher education. Below you will find some questions concerning the teaching of languages which you may like to reflect on. At the end of this section, you can read some comments on the role and value of reflection.

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EPOSTL

Descriptors – Contents

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Context

Introduction

Decisions relating to teaching are strongly influenced by the educational and social context in which teachers work. This context is mainly predetermined by the requirements in the national and/or local curricula. However, there may also be international recommendations and documents, which will need consideration. Institutional constraints are another factor to be considered as they may have considerable impact on the work of teachers.

A further dimension of the language learning context includes the overall aims and specific needs of learners, which, when identified, determine what the teacher does.

Language teachers have a number of roles to play. In addition to teaching their subjects they may need to promote the value of language learning among learners, parents and society in general and build on and make the most of what learners bring with them.

Teachers need to ensure ongoing professional growth through self- and peer-assessment, as well as keeping up with information available in the field.

A. Curriculum

1.   I can understand the requirements set in national and local curricula.

2.   I can design language courses around the requirements of the national and local curricula.

3.   I can understand the principles formulated in relevant European documents (e.g. Common European Framework of Reference, European Language Portfolio).

4.   I can understand and integrate content of European documents (e.g. Common European Framework of Reference, European Language Portfolio) as appropriate in my teaching.

B. Aims and Needs

1. I can understand the personal, intellectual and cultural value of learning other languages.

2. I can take account of overall, long-term aims based on needs and expectations.

3. I can take into account differing motivations for learning another language.

4. I can take into account the cognitive needs of learners (problem solving, drive for communication, acquiring knowledge etc.).

5. I can take into account the affective needs of learners (sense of achievement, enjoyment etc.).

6. I can take into account and assess the expectations and impact of educational stakeholders (employers, parents, funding agencies etc.).

7. I can take into account attainment target levels set in curricula (e.g. deriving from the *Common European Framework of Reference*).

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C.   The Role of the Language Teacher

1.   I can promote the value and benefits of language learning to learners, parents and others.

2.   I can appreciate and make use of the value added to the classroom environment by learners with diverse cultural backgrounds.

3.   I can take into account the knowledge of other languages learners may already possess and help them to build on this knowledge when learning additional languages.

4.   I can draw on appropriate theories of language, learning, culture etc. and relevant research findings to guide my teaching.

5.   I can critically assess my teaching on the basis of experience, learner feedback and learning outcomes and adapt it accordingly.

6.   I can critically assess my teaching in relation to theoretical principles.

7.   I can accept feedback from my peers and mentors and build this into my teaching.

8.   I can observe my peers, recognise different methodological aspects of their teaching and offer them constructive feedback.

9. I can locate relevant articles, journals and research findings relating to aspects of teaching and learning.

10. I can identify and investigate specific pedagogical/ didactic issues related to my learners or my teaching in the form of action research.

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D.   Institutional Resources and Constraints

1.   I can assess how I might use the resources available in my school (OHP, computers, library etc.).

2.   I can recognise the organisational constraints and resource limitations existent at my school and adapt my teaching accordingly.

Full version can be reached at: http://archive.ecml.at/mtp2/fte/pdf/C3_Epostl_E.pdf

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FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING DEPARTMENT

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING MASTER PROGRAMME

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRE-SERVICE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN LINE WITH THE

EUROPEAN PORTFOLIO FOR STUDENT TEACHERS OF

LANGUAGES (EPOSTL)

MA THESIS

Meltem Yümsek